In Between Art and Anthropology: from G. Bateson and T. Ingold
This article will mainly discuss the body and nature with regard to the theme “between art and anthropology,” and the relationships among nature, body, and anthropology will be clarified, and then the significance of these relationships will be discussed.

Anthropology and other branches of the humanities and social sciences have developed arguments that assume a dichotomy between nature and culture. For example, artwork is considered an artifact of human technology. This seems to have positioned “nature / culture” in a dualistic confrontation. However, is it possible to pick up independent “natural” and “cultural” events? Rather, “nature / culture” should be considered as part of “the same spectrum.”

Nature/culture can be seen to exist as parts of the same spectrum, and differences, such as the cultural state or natural state, are not essential problems but are dependent on differences in light, air, and our perception. Therefore, this paper considers art as differences in light, air, and our perception rather than as a “completed artifact.”

Moreover, another problem is the “body” that supports our perception. The body has both natural aspects and cultural aspects, but our body has already experienced something akin to death. Although we tend to have the misperception that we have one body that integrates our past (perhaps because of psychological economic activity), the skin and cells of which we were composed at birth have already been lost and replaced with new ones.

Based on the above, our body is a “live or dead” scene; human beings are being used by bacteria as things, but also living nature stands. In view of these contradictions, the anthropologist G. Bateson tried to capture from the viewpoint of “grace,” and the anthropologist T. Ingold tried to capture from the viewpoint of “line.” This paper considers the experience of Cuban musicians based on the discussion between Bateson and Ingold, and consider the first step in the experience provided by art.

When we review the arguments of Bateson and Ingold, we will encounter the following problems: we live in a fragmented environment, not in the movement of a “line,” but as if it were forcibly tied in a straight line ignoring the environment.

In order to restore the relationship (wholeness) between the environment and human beings, it is necessary to live along the “lines”; artistic experiences have the potential to integrate fragments of the environment, like Bateson’s “integrated whole including contradictions”; humans live in this world as being in the world (not occupation).

Based on the above, it can be said that the theme “between art and anthropology” emerges as a phase of restoring the relationship of nature - body - art - anthropology.
1. Introduction

This article will mainly discuss the body and nature with regard to the theme “between art and anthropology.” First, the relationships among nature, body, and anthropology will be clarified, and then the significance of these relationships will be discussed.

Anthropology and other branches of the humanities and social sciences have developed arguments that assume a dichotomy between nature and culture. For example, artwork is considered an artifact of human technology. This seems to have positioned “nature / culture” in a dualistic confrontation. However, is it possible to pick up independent “natural” and “cultural” events? Rather, “nature / culture” should be considered as part of “the same spectrum.”

To illustrate this, let us imagine the differences in aspects of colors. For example, “black and white” as an idiom means to “judge between right and wrong.” That is, black and white are considered to be the opposite of each other; however, the difference between white and black is mainly due to the brightness (brightness of color) caused by the reflectance of the object, i.e., white and black are not separate but consecutive. Thus, these differences in colors are generated from the same spectrum and they represent events that look different under certain conditions in a manner depending on light. By way of example of music, it is possible to understand it in a similar way. The differences in music are not essential, but due to differences in air and our perception.

Based on the above discussion, nature/culture can be seen to exist as parts of the same spectrum, and differences, such as the cultural state or natural state, are not essential problems but are dependent on differences in light, air, and our perception. Therefore, this paper considers art as differences in light, air, and our perception rather than as a “completed artifact.”

Moreover, another problem is the “body” that supports our perception. The body has both natural aspects and cultural aspects, but our body has already experienced something akin to death. Although we tend to have the misperception that we have one body that integrates our past (perhaps because of psychological economic activity), the skin and cells of which we were composed at birth have already been lost and replaced with new ones.

Based on the above, our body is a “live or dead” scene; human beings are being used by bacteria as things, but also living nature stands. In view of these contradictions, the anthropologist G. Bateson tried to capture from the viewpoint of “grace,” and the anthropologist T. Ingold tried to capture from the viewpoint of “line.” This paper considers the experience of Cuban musicians based on the discussion between Bateson and Ingold, and consider the first step in the experience provided by art.

2. Bateson’s “mind”

Let us explore Bateson’s discussion based on his concepts of “grace” and “wisdom.” Grace is important, especially for human beings, regarding “integration of mind.” For example, given that one pole of the mind is consciousness and the other is unconsciousness, grace integrates a variety of levels of the mind between the two. This means that the mind is related to balance.
The problem suggested by A. Huxley and W. Whitman, however, is that only human beings lose the grace with which gods and animals are equipped. Therefore, Bateson pays attention to the process of psychological activity in art to restore “grace,” as integration, balance, and circulation of the mind.

According to Bateson, the mind is an integrated network. The living human body is also a complicated and integrated system. However, it is impossible for a helpless lone consciousness to sense the mind and body system without phenomena, such as art, religion, and dreams. Consciousness will cut off the circuits because it can only grasp the short arc which human's intention can reach.

Next, let us look at a painting from 1937 by Ida Bagus Djati Sura, a painter from Batuan Village, Bali, that was discussed by Bateson. This work shows a condensed bush of leaves and from there, the viewer can simultaneously see the uniformity and the rhythmic form of the shape of the leaves. This level of craft is made possible by the accuracy of muscular sensation which can be learned by repeated
movements using the body. How is one leaf differentiated from the others? High-order diffuseness will arise by “disguising” low-order uniformity, and its diffuseness will be linked to a larger pattern. This connection between the craft and pattern is universal in appreciation of beauty, and a distinctive esthetic effect appears where it is introduced by design by an artist and a natural physical system determines the shape.

The next section will present a summary of Bateson’s references of the composition of Sura’s work.

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<td>1</td>
<td>This picture shows the scenery of a funeral which is familiar to people in Bali. However, there is no center of view, and all of the picture is drawn like fading out, indicating a “non-worldly” atmosphere.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The dense painting gives an uneasy impression. This can be understood psychoanalytically as a sign of “uneasiness” and “obsession.”</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>We can see the peoples’ strenuous movements in the lower half of the painting, and the composition of an upward spiral can be seen. In contrast, in the center of the painting, the men standing on the tower look down below to block such strenuous movements and spiral. However, the upper half is governed by quietness in which women are seen balancing baskets on their heads and men seem to be sitting, holding musical instruments.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>There are some sexual motifs in the painting. For example, the two monuments of the heads of elephants lead people to the “narrow entrance” of the tower. This painting shows a double theme of starting of cremation as well as the phallus and cunnus. That is, it is related to sex, social organization, funerals, and other things at the same time.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>The subject of “funeral” is not strongly emphasized in the painting. In fact, both the tower and coffins are painted indistinctly, and the men and women do not have significant roles. Therefore, the theme of the painting becomes ambiguous.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>This artwork can be summarized as the situation of coexistence of contradictions, such as “life and death” and “ferments and silence.”</td>
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This painting represents certain areas, such as sex, social organization, and death. The two poles, “ferments and silence,” are apparently antipolar, but in fact they are interdependent on each other. This is experienced by the integration and absorption of the artwork. Bateson considers the “whole,” which is integrated including such contradictions, as “graceful.” He also thought that the art work leads to truth, such as “grace,” in the process of making or seeing.

Based on these discussions, Bateson changed the old question “what does an artwork tell about the personality of the creator?” to a new question regarding human existence; “what kind of modification of the mind will be brought toward ‘wisdom’ by creating or appreciating art?”

3. Ingold’s “lines”

This section will focus on Ingold’s concept of “lines.” This is a conceptual device to track all of the processes that shape human life—i.e., walking, weaving, observing, singing, narrating, drawing, writing—as “lines” of something. The aspects of his concept of “lines” will be examined below.
First, lines are divided into two categories: threads and traces. Threads are tangled and extended out. G. Semper suggested that architectural art was founded in this artistic skill. On the other hand, A. Riegl regarded “trace” as a basic component of art. Traces involve adding (overspraying a base) and cutting (filing away materials from a base). As we can see in “A Line Made by Walking” (1967), it is an aspect that it is possible to create a line only by the act of “pulling” on their own body without adding any material.

Secondly, as another state of the line, Ingold took up the “surface” and “damage of the surface.” As W. Kandinsky mentioned, the line has “the power to form a surface.” On the other hand, the line is generated again by “breakage of the surface,” such as “crease” or “crack” created by human beings and nature. For example, in Finland and Lapland districts, people carve wounds and names in reindeer’s ears with a knife. Carving is an act of breaking the surface, while the notch forms a pattern, identifying the reindeer’s owner. From ancient times, patterns that appeared in this way were “words,” and the act of engraving was regarded as “description.”

These classification methods leave something to be desired, as Ingold admitted himself. Still, the nature of the lines can be seen as movements to escape from the classifications imposed by human beings and to extend out, shaping the world. Let us now see how such aspects of movements can be understood.

It is argued that lines are dynamic and have freedom of time, expressing continuation (P. Klee expressed lines as “free to go for a walk”). This is because lines are created from movements of points and because the points can move freely in any direction. When the eyes read the movement, they track the same way as the lines. On one hand, the movement appears as a trace of a gesture. On the other hand, the points create such movement and trajectory as a trigger of the point-to-point connectors that connect points and points.

These free movements can be understood the way of life as “lines.” For example, the Inuit moved along a way, while the British traveled across the surface of the planet and navigated. In the case of Inuit, they need to monitor and respond to the environment, and then live while co-existing with the environment and perception.

Especially walkers, like going out for a walk freely, coexist with different environments to create a line (=life). This is precisely our attention as human’s power to live. Walkers are always “somewhere” during the walk. This “somewhere” is the possibility to go somewhere else. In other words, such “line” and “movement” that pedestrians create have a place where people live in the environment (as “being in the world”), and have the possibility of creating a world (“being in the world”) by building such places.

On the other hand, migrants using transport rather than walking ignore the various lines already on that land and tie them to a specific location on a straight line. This is imperial power, not as “being-in–the-world,” but “occupation.”

S. Feld described that, for the Kaluli, all places exist along a way and each place name is memorized.
by a story or song of the travel, or by lines. Thus, the knowledge of inhabitants is a pathway of movement to penetrate the world, and the workers create the world from point to point along the lines of the environment.

The lines of Ingold begin to reconstruct a place made for occupation and environments as segments in modern cities. It can be said that the line spreads freely anywhere, and it is a movement to build a new relationship between the environment and human beings.

When we review the arguments of Bateson and Ingold, we will encounter the following problems: we live in a so-called fragmented environment, not in the movement of a line that is made according to the environment, but as if it were forcibly tied in a straight line ignoring the environment. In order to restore the relationship (wholeness) between the environment and human beings, it is necessary to live along the “lines”; artistic experiences have the potential to integrate fragments of the environment, like Bateson’s “integrated whole including contradictions”; humans live in this world as being in the world (not occupation). Subsequently, we look at the experience of “whole” in art, especially music, specifically taking the case study of Cuban musician’s practices.

4. Into Cuban Classical Music

4.1. Looking for the “place”

First, we shall discuss Juan, a 20-year-old man, majoring in flute at ISA (Instituto Superior de Arte, National University of Art in Cuba). Juan, who was born in the provincial city of Cienfuegos, joined a local children’s choir with his friends at the age of 9 with strong encouragement from his grandmother. His father, who had died, was a great dancer, and he therefore also took ballet lessons. However, when he heard his elementary school teacher, a flutist, play the flute one day at school, he was powerfully attracted to it. He borrowed a flute from a nearby school with the help of his teacher. His teacher also introduced him to Joanna, who is famous across Latin America. He is currently in year 5 at ISA and is preparing for his graduation exams where he will be playing Piazzolla, Mozart, Messiaen, and Lecuona. Although Juan has a wealth of musical experience, as can be seen below, his practices appear to be focused on the seemingly prosaic basics.

Juan arrived at ISA at 09:30 in the morning. He went to a space facing the garden at the entrance of the music building and placed his instrument case on a bench to the side. He took out his flute and placed his mouth on the mouthpiece. Fa. He readjusted the flute and held it up again. He blew longer. Faaaa. Stronger. Faaaaaa. Weaker. Faaaa. Three times. Faaaa, faaaa, faaaa. From slow to gradually faster. Fa, fa, fafaafa... After 30 minutes, he proceeded to practice the scale, fa-so-la-ti-do-ti-la-so-fa. He removed his mouth from the flute and readjusted it. Fa-so-la-ti-do-ti-la-so-fa. It gradually changed. Slur (do-re-mi-fa), marcato (do-re-mi-fa), skip (do-re, mi-fa), staccato (do, re, mi, fa), trecet (do-do-do, re-re-re), quaver (dodo, rere), marcato in trecet (do-do-do, re-re-re).

He then played swiftly at once, fa-so-ra-ti-do-re-mi-fa-mi-re-do-ti-ra-so-fa. After another 25 minutes, he started to pace in a circle centered on the place where he had been standing. He adjusted the flute, walked, readjusted the flute. A violin student entered and started to practice nearby. Juan held the flute in his hand and started to walk again. He started to practice the scales again while walking. A little distance away, the sound of a saxophone being practiced could be heard. Several scales started to mingle and resonate. One hour and 45 minutes after the practice started, Juan stopped completely. He quietly put away his instrument and left.

At an individual practice after a lesson with the teacher, Joanna, he practiced the 2-second phrase “do re do ti ra mi,” in which he had been cautioned regarding his finger control in the day’s lesson. First, he slowly played dooo reee doo tiiii raaaaa miii. At staccato, do, re, do, ti, ra, mi. He then repeated “ra mi” only. Ra mi, ra mi, ra mi... After 10 minutes, he strolled with the flute in hand. He played it while
walking, and repeated the notes. Do re do ti ra mi, do re do ti ra mi... After 30 minutes, he said, “break
time.”

The practice of scales and phrasing, which are considered important basics in art music, is also a
physically repetitive practice. However, Juan says he perceives it in various ways.

“I am constantly thinking while playing. It is not simple. I am looking for the “place” to produce
sound. When I get it, sound naturally starts to flow. However, when I finish playing the brain is
empty... There are times when I am not thinking about anything. Like when I move the keys.
It is fun. I often fiddle with the keys without breathing into it. Just pressing. It is the best feeling
when I can get to that place without being conscious of it. There, everything can come together as
one. The sound is resonating even when I am walking. Music is always calling me.”

When viewed from the perspective of internal experience, the practicing of scales and phrasing
for Juan is “finding the place” in a multilateral way. The series of actions, i.e., moving the fingers,
controlling the instrument, and playing music, for the purpose of “entering that place,” become difficult
to distinguish. Such a process is acknowledged as “a great feeling.” Based on this experience, he is
influenced by music, as he is being “called by music” even when he is not playing.

4.2. Tuning to the music

Let us look at the example of Mariana, a woman in her 40s, a viola player, and a member of a
philharmonic orchestra. Mariana began to learn the violin at age 5, encouraged by her parents who
were physicians. She studied music in elementary and secondary schools, and majored in viola from
the age of 18 because there were not enough viola players in the school’s orchestra. As her chances
of playing the instrument increased, she began to aim at becoming a professional player. After
graduation, she joined a philharmonic orchestra and has worked as a professional player for about 18
years.

At the first orchestra rehearsal, the timing and pitch of the orchestra were not in tune and the
conductor stopped the performance midway. They started again from the beginning. As they came to
the part where they were out of tune, Mariana glanced several times at the conductor and the soloist.
At the same time, her bowing changed. She moved the bow wider than before, while the back stroke
was played carefully. With that, the movement of her torso became larger, and her intake of breath
became deeper. In doing so, the timing of the orchestra became in synch and the conductor shouted
“That’s it!”

During the break, when asked about this change, Mariana responded, “I didn’t feel anything.”

“I didn’t change anything. I was just tuning to the music.” The change seen in Mariana appears
to be different to Juan’s act of aiming for reproducibility. However, their practices can be
perceived collinearly. They are the same actions in the sense that they are both tuning to music.
On the other hand, compared with Juan’s individual practice, various elements come into play
in the practice of an orchestra. As such, the music can be considered to change in the sense that
situations have the tendency to change easily.

This was clear from the Juan’s first recital. At the recital, the phrase “do re do ti ra mi ra,” which
he practiced repeatedly for reproducibility had changed to deeper tones. Juan explained this change
excitedly as, “It was because the piano was being played with passion. So, I went with it. It felt great...
Thinking of it now, the performance today might have been different from when I was practicing.
However, I think the place I was in when I practiced and where I was today are both the same. It is fine
if I am in a place that I can see in the moment. I won’t go against that. That’s what I’ve learned today.”
Juan, Isabelle, and Mariana’s examples show that changes in music emerge through the internal experience of “tuning” to music and entering its zone. However, Juan’s case is different from Mariana’s, and we can state that “one cannot go against music,” as we acknowledge this difference. This is evident in the fact that the sound one produces is externally perceived in the act of “tuning.” This is simply indicated by the words of Daniel (a man in his 30s):

“When music plays, I am dominated by it. In me, music is always playing. When I play music, it is when music pours out of my body. Sometimes I cry as I am taken aback by the melody that comes out.”

4.3. Going back and forth

In the examples discussed above, we glimpsed the process of going toward “music,” as musicians look for the place where music is, and immerse themselves in it, in their internal experience. However, they also naturally talk about many experiences they have had with differences and variances in music. Let us focus on this point before the conclusion.

It is very interesting that, in the process of immersing himself in music, Juan categorizes it by linking it with existing music genres.

“When playing jazz, I am thrown into a mesh and through me, sounds emerge. When I’m playing, I become sensitive toward what’s around me. I can even hear the words a man is saying to seduce a woman, sitting far away. However, there are times I can’t remember what I’d played. With classical music, too, the sensation of sounds emerging from the body is similar. However, with classical music, I go further afield (not in a mesh). I also remember very well how I’d played. For me, jazz is Now!, and classical music is Forever.”

In contrast, the viola player Mariana emphasizes that the difference in genre is “meaningless.” “Music is music. They are all the same.” Shaking her hips sideways, she said, “Gershwin is fun though.” Then, she exhaled deeply and said, “Borodin’s music is deep and passionate.” She then stuck her left hand out and while carefully moving it as if drawing small waves in the air, she spoke about the “categories” of music as she perceives them, saying “Bolero has these kinds of lines”—folding her hands together and while flipping the palms and backs of her hands—she said, “at the same time, it goes back and forth.”

There are clear contradictions in the internal experiences of Daniel and Mariana. Daniel understands the variances he feels in his experience of abandoning himself to music that comes his way (letting music emerge) by linking them with existing musical genres, i.e., classical and jazz. Meanwhile, Mariana sees her internal experience, i.e., the difference in emotion, fun, the passion, and the differences in the layers, as firm benchmarks for understanding the variances of music.

As verifying these discrepancies would depart from the objective of this article, this will be reserved for another future paper. Let us learn from Juan’s words that perhaps there are aspects of music that contain both of these elements.

“The categories of music are found in one great music. Without music, there will be no categories. Without categories, there may be no music either. Music is created for we go back and forth there (to the area distinguished by the term ‘genre.’ Music is music when I feel good and you feel good. What do you think?”
5. Holding and Opening Dimension

This article mainly discussed the body and nature with regard to the theme “between art and anthropology.” From the viewpoint of Bateson, through the work of Sura, a painter from Batuan Village, Bali, he showed the two poles, “ferments and silence,” and the “whole,” which is integrated including such contradictions, as “grace.” On the other hands, Ingold’s concept of “lines” indicated that the “lines” spread freely anywhere, and it is a movement to build a new relationship between the environment and human beings.

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Based on the above, it can be said that the theme “between art and anthropology” emerges as a phase of restoring the relationship of nature - body - art - anthropology. As suggested by the words of Spinoza and Vygotsky at the beginning, this is also what art and body have already done. The composer J. Cage discovered that we finally hear music (the sounds of the arteries and veins) in our body that we do not normally hear by listening with our ears or going to an anechoic chamber. That is, the task of exploring “between art and anthropology” is considered to find “lines” living along the nature - body - art - anthropology.

Bibliography