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Introduction to *Matter's* genealogies

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Editorial

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Matter: Journal of New Materialist Research is a group of feminist researchers strongly dedicated to social justice, and the creation of horizontal practices of knowing and learning. They take the entanglement between matter and discourse as the ethico-onto-epistemological framework that not only studies but is also generative of worlds. This journal is responsive to this creative generativity, through two driving forces: 1. the need to maintain and materialize an affective network created through the COST Action IS1307 New Materialism: Networking European Scholarship on 'How Matter Comes to Matter' and; 2. the need to present and to make present interdisciplinary knowledge situated vis-à-vis, and committed to, contemporary challenges that we are facing academically, politically, environmentally, and economically. Between 2014 and 2018, Iris van der Tuin (chair of the Action) and Felicity Colman (vice-chair of the Action) catalysed a network of feminist researchers that broke through disciplines, nationalities, and generations in order to find how our embodied practices, geo-temporal situations, researching ways, and political strategies *matter*.

The editors and co-editors of the journal have been working together on these themes since 2014, and we strongly believe that it is about time that interdisciplinary knowledge on matter provides the basis of political policies, pedagogical engagements, and historiographical classifi*x*ations and cartographies (van der Tuin, 2015). Understanding change as an affirmative social transformation (Colman, 2014) the scholarship that we want to document and discuss in this journal is committed to thinking the world differently by enhancing bio-socio-economically inclusive and horizontal *relata* and relations produced in relatings (Haraway, 2003; Barad, 2007) throughout intergenerational dialogues that are *able to respond*

(Revelles-Benavente & González, 2017) to the material-discursive complexities with situated methodologies.

In order to reach these ends, we have organized our journal into four different sections that seek to be respond-able to the need to also complexify knowledge production itself. Firstly, we have the part titled “Affecting Affirmative Reviews” that responds to our commitment to affirmative critiques that solidify the knowledge that has been produced before and contemporary to us. Therefore, we will also welcome suggestions to perform re-views of, and for, contemporary but also past books that, given a differing angle, serve as a solid pillar to produce feminist strategies for the here and now in motion. The affirmative reviews can also be diffractive readings (van der Tuin, 2011) of two or more authors since we believe that generating knowledge is always already entangled within multiple cartographies.

Secondly, and directly derived from one of the COST Action disseminating goals, we have the “Almanac” that, contrary to a stable glossary, presents different concepts and how a new materialist researcher understands them. Therefore, they are open to re-writes and affirmative criticisms, and they will be subject of discussion in our multiple forums. We strongly believe in the concept as a method (Taguchi, 2017), as part of our methodological tool box; but precisely, being part of the methodological strategy means that concepts are always already part of the entanglement of researcher and research. Therefore, the concept is a living matter able to think and become otherwise depending on the relation performed (Rogowska-Stangret, forthcoming).

Thirdly, we have the “Intra-views”, a section devoted to intergenerational dialogues between different researchers with similar or differing points of view. Thinking, as matter, is a living practice that requires a constant revision and a performance of these dialogues - resulting in the generation of a knowledge that clearly departs from the individual conception of it and moves towards a collective one. These intra-views will be presented in various formats. Inter-generational dialogues belong to the dearest mentoring practices so necessary for junior and senior scholars;

providing the basis for an affective network, such as the one that we have been creating.

Last, but not least, we present the scientific articles, which will be divided into five different sections that respond to differing departing points of view in order to present an intra-disciplinarity that can respond to contemporary social injustices. These sections are: “Quantum Mapping”, “Praxiography*: Practices and Institutions”, “Creating Language and Theorizing Literature”, “Sciento-metrics”, “Media Arts and Culturing” and “Ethics, Affects and Pedagogies”. The scope of the sections is fully described on the journal webpage (as well as the other parts) and these scope descriptions aim at focusing and distributing the knowledge generated. This first issue presents five different articles that deal with each of the sections as introductory ones or points of departure. To begin with, Felicity Colman (co-editor of the section “Media Arts and Culturing”) introduces a “feminist modal logic” able to “understand the nationalist and populist mode of relation today, as it continues to affect the ethical and compassionate understanding of difference in the world” (p. 5). Using as a study case a concrete empirical case as it was policy making in the city of Barcelona, she proposes “to practice *feminising politics*” (p. 18), which means “to consider the material and temporal modal constitution of your community and ask how your daily ethical ecology can be better constituted” (ibid.) through positive actions. Afterwards, Monika Rogowska-Stangredt and Olga Cielemęcka (co-editors of the Praxiographical section) present the materialization of a dialogue around vulnerable academic practices. This article is, at the same time, a methodological experimentation with Barad’s diffractive mode of writing. Departing from ourselves, they invite us to “[t]o speak our bodies, to let the voice be heard comes with a risk; it is scary” (p. 31). This journal is meant to be precisely that, a platform that is able to speak vulnerable bodies, knowing the risk and taking that risk, or using Haraway’s words “stay with the trouble”. Thirdly, Malou Juelskjær provides a pedagogical entry point to observe “how feminist new materialist thinking may offer a resource for re-orienting pedagogy in light of pressing global issues such as climate change and political unrest” (p. 52). Thinking through Taylor’s concept of “bildung” (in ibid.), she offers a learning strategy that looks for the “coming into being” of competences (p.

57). Rather than offering an individualistic approach to the learning processes, she shows us how a relational one can improve the process of learning through a "geo-affective pedagogy" that departs from pedagogies of place and the affect theory. Fourthly, Monika Rogowska-Stangredt and Olga Cielemęcka curate a roundtable with five prominent feminist scholars, who are Gurminder K. Bhambra, Andrea Pető, Jessie Loyer, Mariya Ivancheva, and Nanna Hlín Halldórsdóttir. These scholars come from different generations, countries, disciplines and epistemological departing points but they are gathered together in order to think through the contemporary political dimension. They present a diffractive reading of what the co-editors of the praxiographical section identify as the objectives of feminist new materialisms: "knowledge production, canons, and classifications and, specifically, by thinking how to destabilize them" (p. 83). In order to do so, the invited speakers reflect upon five different notions: resistance, collaboration, solidarity, care and kinship (p. 83-84). The last one of the articles is written by the co-editors of the section theorizing language: Helen Palmer and Beatriz Revelles-Benavente. They look for the materiality of matter through the concept of *bodywording,* defined as "the enfleshing of words and the building of language-bodies" (p. 112). Providing an example of how to defamiliarize language and move beyond representationalist practices, they "aim at providing a writing methodology that intra-acts the material, the researcher and the reader while providing scenarios beyond representationalist practices" (p. 115). The literary becomes a materialization that moves beyond self-referentiality or anthropocentric views of language.

To continue, in this first special issue the reader will additionally find two intra-views, two entries for the word "almanac" and two book reviews. The first intra-view is a dialogue with Jacqueline Barreiro and Melisse Vroegindeweij (co-editors of the section) and Fernando Hernández-Hernández (co-editor of the journal), Iris van der Tuin, Nathalie Sinclair, Olga Cielemęcka and Monika Rogowska-Stangret. They begin their conversation questioning themselves about their first encounter with new materialisms and the different voices diffract with one another according to their thematic relations. Thus, the conversation produced is not linear, neither is it produced physically at the same place. Explaining what do they mean by new

materialism but also, at the same time, questioning some of the controversies that might enrich the field itself. The second intra-view is a classical one with Maria Tamboukou and Beatriz Revelles, who discuss methodological and genealogical approaches of feminist new materialisms. David Gauthier and Sam Skinner (co-editors of this section) define the first term of the journal, as well as the very concept that explains the section, which is the very word "almanac". Mainly, they explain this section and the concept itself as having a "nature […] of endless evolution and oscillation between relevance and expedience, orientation and trajectory, frequency and position" (p. 175). Maria, on the other hand, defines this concept as unexpected stories accidentally discovered (p. 177). To conclude with the contents that the reader will find in this first issue, Silvia de Riba and Paula Estalayo will provide affirmative reviews of the books *Deleuze and Masculinity* (written by Anna Hickey-Moody) and *Space After Deleuze* (written by Arun Saldhana) respectively.

Enthusiasm and hard work will be part of this journal and we really hope to be able to cross paths with many different academic researchers. We have always believed in the power of feminist networking and in the driving force of care. Not only for each other, but also for what we do. We expect this journal to be a platform for voicing social injustices and for imagining roads to bio-socio-economical justice in their myriad ways; as well as to promote innovative knowledge creation and production in the light of new materialist approaches. We encourage you, the reader, to submit to us any inquiry, innovative approach, social concern, or feminist endeavour since we expect to provide a scientific and activist platform able to engage with multiple affective subjectivities (Colman, 2010). Each one of the editors has worked at her best to present a rigorous and enlightening corpus based on feminist values and we are ready to rock!

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Feminising politics: notes on material and temporal feminist modal logics in action

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Abstract

Feminist activism aims to work to change the inequitable structures of the world. But feminists themselves get bound up in actions and intentions that are tied to their large object of critique (the patriarchy, the planet, the media, the canon, etc), and the micropolitics of the subjects constituting and constituted by those objects can be swept up in humanistic rhetorical gestures and words. How can we teach the modalities and the genealogy of feminist actions that offer tools for everyday living and for a community practice, and which also offer some ways to engage with the affective matter of the world from a posthumanist perspective, and thereby work to shift cultural attitudes? In addition to the valuable work done by those that tirelessly figure methods of communicating social inequities, the work of research led feminist informed teaching and governance can not only excavate the histories of social, political, speciesist, and biological inequities, but also offer a critique of these positions by the terms of their epistemological construction, and provide different modalities of practice. This article focuses on the latter, discussing how we might design curriculum and engage a pedagogy of recognition for a feminist modal ethics. How modes of feminist new materialist practice take the questions of affect, and agency, to enable ethical political practices is a pressing concern for many communities concerned with generating a planetary ethics. How new materialist methodology is useful for thinking the vernacular political reality was the topic of an

intensive discussion and debate that took place in November 2017 in Barcelona. Taking an example of the concrete work undertaken by Barcelona Councillor Gala Pin in relation to the neighbourhood of *Ciutat Vella,* the article proposes that we explore and extend the genealogy of a feminist modal logics.

Keywords

Affect, Arendt, Barcelona, Ciutat Vella, feminist, Gala Pin, Grosz, new materialism, modality, temporality

Introduction: *Modal logics in an age of neoliberalism*

In the second decade of the 2000s, the question of political emancipation came to a head with many cultural, economic, and ethical schisms appearing across mainstream political public debates. Which communities were actively engaging in the political governance of life, and who were claiming to be political, but being disengaged? Was 'democracy' really secular, and indeed 'democratic' in its processes? If an 'individual' or community fundamentally disagreed with another's cultural beliefs, or planetary practices (distribution of resources, ecological care, and so on), did that give them 'the right' to act in a hostile, aggressive, or violent manner as a reaction toward different sentient values? Perhaps a better way to frame the issues would be to ask what are the modalities at work here, driving these narratives, and generating these values? If the domains of governance, the law, the work-place, and the media are expressing events in the world in terms of 'post-truth'; 'post-race'; 'post-secular,' and post-human' etc., then there is more than just an articulation of the histories of ideologies, legal frameworks, gender relations, and ecological data required to engage. The world is not a simple place, and the complexities of its conglomerations, constructions, and dynamic matter require us to not just teach its domains, but to teach how to think the temporality of its movements, and the actions of its vectors.

Working with the modalities of feminist actions, enables us to firstly capture the patterns of feminist movements, and then secondly, explore how the type of modal frameworks of different feminist new materialist methods offer concrete ways in which to not just think through or with a political event, but offer practical tools for confronting the inequity, or predicated moment of the modal. Modal logics belong to a family of philosophical logics that assist us in thinking, narrativizing, and acting according to the conditions and situations we experience, and which determine that situation in the world. Modal logic can be purely analytical, but here I draw on metaphysical modal models (cf. Grosz, 1998; Stang, 2016), with the intention of developing a feminist modal logics. Modalities frame the questions of possibilities (*what if* we all voted for equality), and the factual accounts of life (*here are* the harsh conditions that refugees of war must endure). A feminist modal logics is one concerned with the ethics of relational conditions. Questions of agency and affect – as material, and as power relations – are what come to constitute these conditions.

The United Kingdom held a public vote to leave the European Union in 2016 and the Brexit was voted for after an anti-immigration (economic), and nationalist-cultural campaign focus by those pushing both to leave and to remain. In the 2016 United States presidential election an openly racist, sexist, and misogynist president was elected on the a nationalist and populist (cultural backlash against the 'non' nationalist values) rhetorical platform. Bitter and divisive public debates followed both of these events (and other similar events in Austria, Chile, Poland, to name a few where populist parties entered into forming coalition of leading governments), with the agency of the communication tools of governments, politicians, and the 'media' held to blame for the dis-information and ideological debates surrounding governance modes, and their legal validity. The cultural divides that populist and nationalist ideologies work with are predicated on gender, but also by ethnicity, age, ability, class, and economic status; above all, a hatred of difference, and a desire to curtail freedoms of individuals and of certain groups of people. This political narrative of restricted life took form in the first twenty years of the 21st century, with those ideological signals found in political and public behaviours recalling the pre-fascist movements across Europe in the 1930s (pollical rallies; calls against different ethnic

and minority groups; protectionist moves with the aims of limiting and controlling free trade and restrictions and tighter surveillances imposed on the movement of people). The affective agency of political communications are seen in countless such examples of the processes of national governance politics in action, and feminist political theorists and philosophers were quick to note these shifts in governance as patterns of neoliberalist modes, and offer analyses of their social implications (cf. Brown, 2017; Fraser, 2016; Patel & Connelly, 2019). The ontological modal processes of hate regimes are based on populist narratives of the world; engendering hierarchically structured societies, economically biased towards barely-there majority politics that advocate 'post-truth' conditions (Jasanoff & Simmet 2017). This legitimation of truth and of reality is indeed a crisis – that is generative of increasingly violent actions - that undermines the sense of a future as being socially cohesive and welcoming for all people, and one that endangers the abundant fecundity of the planet demonstrated by its lack of care for the natural environment (IPCC 2018). Instead, vernacular and indeed, any sense of "future societies" are expressed as "social," rather than "political" places where the State is devised as a "giant household" to maintain its sovereign citizens (Brown 2017: 118). The problem with this of course, is that it tends to be exclusionary on the basis of "not-family"; "not one-of-us" type of family; not to mention the enabling of the pathology of nationalism, generative of hatred of 'others' (cf. Braidotti, 2008; Fraser, 2016). There is such power in naming and providing inclusion in a "familial" community, and conversely, the agency of exclusion or difference (real or imagined) has terrible consequences. This 'truth' of the everyday of the early part of the twenty-first century is not the utopia that was imagined at the end of the last century; rather the 'truth' is predicated on data sets of human capital within the *algorithmic condition* (cf. Colman et.al, 2018; Dixon-Román, 2017). Feminist actions continually strive for representation at the table – to be able to counter the need for continuing conflict and refuse the use of military violent actions, address the need for better education of all in issues of diversity and difference, address the need for better health care, address the unequal distribution of resources, and undertake better planetary management of the world. Equality and diversity in leadership, management, and at all levels of political and

social governance is a priority for feminist actions in the face of the bias and non-inclusive, and violent agendas of populist ideologies.

How are we to understand the nationalist and populist mode of relation today, as it continues to affect the ethical and compassionate understanding of difference in the world? The Philosopher Hannah Arendt in her 1951 book *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, describes the processes of what we describe now as genocidal political domains; the results of colonial and European imperialism which continue under economically sanctioned fora that are related to modes of militarism which are likewise contained into specific territories (Arendt, 1958, p.123). In the post 9/11; 2001 decades, the vernacular conditions for the flourishing of the pathologies of totalitarianism are enabled in an even more intensive way; with digital algorithms communicating the ideological dogma of politicians who are intent on restricting freedoms for an ideally homogenous people messaging the divisive rhetoric slightly faster than the printed presses' propaganda posters of the previous century. Arendt's thesis is that totalitarian rules in motion; unlike a building it is structureless, but in its 'movement' (in the literal sense of a political party's movement), modes of totalitarianism destroy old frameworks even as they create new authoritarian territories in an endless cycle of restructuring (Arendt, 1958, p.398-99). Arendt's insights into the how totalitarian ideologies emerge through new authoritarian practices that engender propaganda through political controls and social communications describe the stages of how a political framework is dynamic, and not only the result of singular figures who push for certain positions, but forms through a synthesis of behaviours and events. Arendt comments: "Totalitarian movements are possible wherever there are masses who for one reason or another have acquired the appetite for political organization." (1958, p.311) Arendt argues that ideological reasoning is "emancipated from the reality that we perceive" (p.470) and describes: "Once the movements have come to power, they proceed to change reality in accordance with their ideological claims." (p.471)

References to Arendt's work on *Totalitarianism* in public media forums became noticeable after the 2016 political events. Mainstream media including the American

business journal *Forbes*, and the British newspaper *The Guardian* regularly invoked Arendt's work, to try to provide for their readers a framework for the authoritarian rhetoric that was winning the popular vote, and radically shifting the cultural and political landscape (cf. Denning, 2016; Illing, 2019). In addition to thinking of the agency of political movements upon communities of minority groups, for vulnerable groups of women, girls, and for those identifying as transgender women, the agency of neoliberalism's economic governance of and upon their lives needs to be accounted for and protected against the forces that only wish to profit from them as a 'living capital body' (Colman, 2016, p.189), but not care for them in any ethical manner (cf. Brown, 2017).

External forces, such as the movement of totalitarian forces described in Arendt, and the internal governance of bodies by neoliberal; neocapitalist forces, operate as material modalities. By this, I mean that the models of neoliberalism - including their frameworks for assembling raw capital – manipulate sentient and non-sentient matter through a political agency that aims to produce the maximum profit through control over the production of things, information, and concepts under the rules of the marketplace, with little or no regard for the ethics of their production. Models that use material modalities refers us to the material conditions of a society. Material modal conditions thus point us toward what is the 'truth' being constructed in any given social situation, as the material includes the legal, as well as the "feasible"; "factual actuality" in terms of the technological conditions of the material (Poser 2013: 111).[1] As such, the very construction of a material modality offers itself as both a recognisable pattern or paradigm, but further, and provides, through analysis of the artefacts and type of use of matter, a range of processes, methods and tools that can be deployed to create new forms and new conditions for living.

1 For example, to describe a material modality includes consideration the kinds of contemporary technological conditions that give rise to social and political situations; the kind of technology Marx addresses in terms of worker's conditions in the industrial era of the 1840s is very different to the digital-industrial work situation of 2010s.

Feminising politics: materialist model logics

The meeting of new materialist feminist thinkers in Barcelona in 2017 proposed an alternative model for feminist education in neoliberal times. Instead of thinking "crisis", they joined to listen and respond to various new materialist models of thinking how agential forces can work together; relationally – to both model and produce better ways of living, being, thinking, and planning together – as communities. The questions this community of scholars, activities, and artists debated included: How to recognise the pathways of totalitarianism? How to avoid the pitfalls of living in neocapitalist economies? How to stay positive in the face of shifting political landscapes debating the old and dangerous issues of national identity? Most importantly, how to activate new ways of living? The group shared ideas, examples, methods about how to do this. "We" as a group are implicated in the creation and maintenance of this situation that "we" also inherited. How should we be forming governance structures that prioritise care and compassion rather than ignorance and hatred; fear of difference, and fear of change? How do we teach in a post-truth world? What tools we teach to deal with these conditions are incredibly important. An activism cannot just be a series of voices and disruptive actions. An ethical activism is one committed to a genuine ethics of care, the critique of unethical forms of agency of the infrastructural organisation of matter, and a desire to see diversity flourish.

A clear example of a new materialist modelling came from a discussion between politician and activist Gala Pin, and feminist curator and activist, Whitney Stark.[2] Stark spoke of her work with the *Reclaim our Pride* movement, and the strategies around working outside of non-ethical funding models, and of how to do collective work safely in the face of extreme political affects that endanger freedom (Stark, 2017). Given the location of the meeting in Barcelona on 2017, these comments on practicing safety in collective public situations were timely. Within this setting, the

[2] November 20-22, 2017, 4th New Materialism meeting Training School, "Art & Activism" at Arts Santa Monica, Barcelona, Spain. Conversation between Gala Pin, councillor for neighbourhood of Barceloneta, Ciutat Vella, Barcelona. Whitney Stark, research fellow at BAK, basis voor actuele kunst, Utrecht. The moderator of this conversation was Ana González Ramos. Transcriptions of conversation by F.Colman. The Training School was funded by COST Action IS1307 New Materialism: Networking European Scholarship on 'How Matter Comes to Matter'.

discussion focussed on the work of Councillor Gala Pin, who spoke of Barcelona's interculturality plan, which is mapped out in the official 'Economic Development Plan of Ciutat Vella 2016-2021' (ECV, 2016). This plan seeks to address the complexities of the Ciutat Vella neighbourhood. In particular, Pin spoke of the economic stresses on the multiple communities living particularly in the area of La Rambla, which have faced the brunt of neocapitalist expansion, with dire consequences for the community (see Jiménez-Pacheco, 2018, p.93-95; Degen, 2017).

Pin described the kinds of strategies used to 'make a different reality for women' who live in her neighbourhood, particularly around El Raval. Pin described how this area had more than 80 different types of communities living closely together – comprised of a range of different ethnicities, practicing different cultural beliefs, and using different languages - but also making its own self-community through what she described as 'co-living.' Speaking of this recent work on neighbourhood cohesion, Pin described aspects of the education plan and further, providing a specific example of environmental planning as a feminist. Pin spoke of two kinds of education issues for her neighbourhood; the first being ensuring gender equality in schools, given the second point of the diversity issues outside of the school yard. 52% of the population is from non-Spanish backgrounds, and a majority of these include women that stay at home to work are migrant women. For the women who live in La Barceloneta, many do not speak Catalan (the local language) or Spanish (the official language). They are mothers whose children are entered into a language education system not their own. The children go to school and come home working in the language of Barcelona, which their mothers can become more and more isolated. The majority of women's concrete daily unpaid work is in the labour of housework and of mothering. The education programme in the neighbourhood came up with the idea to offer the original (natal) language to the children, and Catalan language to the mothers; so that both groups are able to participate in the significant cultural situations in which they are immersed. Many of these women, said Pin, have no other connection to the city other than with the school that their children attend, so the council also offers programs for intercultural mediation, in order to integrate with Catalan parents. In addition, there are many programmes that the council runs

extending to work around issues of gender related violence, and the access of all genders, including transgender, to medical support (Pin, 2017).

External and internal community politics thus cause a range of affects to be enacted upon individuals and social groups. In addition, as Pin described, the external challenges for this community include not only the extremes of social inequity posited by the tourist and disparities between economic factors in the neighbourhood, but the larger external political instabilities that impact directly and often most harshly upon vulnerable women. Security for women and girls in communities is a global problem, but in Barceloneta, the security factors encompass the neighbourhood and also aggressive public infrastructures and their affective manifestations (mass tourism), the media, and political arenas; such as changes in Government policies, recent State withdrawal of funding, which halts large policy work, together with anxieties over personal safety, and economic worries after the La Rambla attack (August, 2017).

To counter the neighbourhood's feeling of political instability and restlessness, Pin's multi-modal strategies worked on the need to enable collaboration of the intra-affects between actors in the community, manage the gender politics of all stakeholders in Ciutat Vella, and simultaneously enable the creation of a self-identity within the community. First, she said was to discuss with her team: "*How do you gain confidence with the people who have heard promises many times? - confidence has to be built - you must show with practical results what your position is*" (Pin, 2017). The second main strategy was one common to all grassroots feminist thinkers; to find out from those marginal yet inside a situation what is their experience and use of an environment. For both strategies, both Pin and Stark advocated using theory as 'tools' for education on issues of diversity, equality, and intercultural positive practices.

Pin described an example of where she and her team worked together on a specific project of constructing playgrounds for the heritage sites in Barcelona. Working with different community members including women with young children and nursing babies, who needed to access a playground near their home, which in Ciutat Vella

is always in close proximity to an historical site with heritage significance, and is a place that attracts a lot of visitors. The built environmental questions for a playground at a heritage site were: How could some of the women be able to be in a public space, yet be comfortable, be secure, at the same time as a wide range of tourists and officials would be occupying the space? The result was to build an environment *in consultation with the women who would use it* that itself was a physical, material enabler of different modes of engagement; offering a shield against prying eyes, but multiple vantagepoints for seeing the matter that mattered: for the carer's supervision of the children; comfort for the female perspective; and for the tourist's sight of the heritage site/s.

The material question developed through consultation became: How do you design a space that is useful for tourists and for communities? This is a material modal question in that it is concerning the relationality of the matter. Significant for educators to note, a relational modal is different to other forms of modal questions (such as contingency and necessity) (see Poser, 2013; Colman, 2019). Pin is considering the matter of the site itself as well as the human elements in order to devise a response to the intra-affects of the community politics that arise – in this case- from the activities of site sharing as a community. Amongst others, these affects include fear (individual women in public), as well as desire (that of the child wishing to play; the carer wishing to partake of the community; the tourist wishing to engage in a heritage site). Pin gave this example of the design of a collaborative built environment as a way of educating on 'feminising politics.' This, as both she and Stark discussed, it is not just a matter of expressing the actions being engaged – as we might with a range of political theories that name patterns of actions without either offering counter-measures, or understanding the consequences of demonisation (see Glaser, 2018). Rather, as Pin described, 'the action is not the goal [of a feminist politics]'. Rather, it is 'in the address of the affects –and how to use them' where the feminist space can be made. Pin stressed that 'talking about affects like anger and hate is not productive', but rather consideration here is not only observing the action making affects (which belongs to a different modality), but also asking the questions: 'how affects are mobilised?'; 'how do you use affects?' To this, Whitney Stark added that

'we often discuss the form and structure but not the ethics of the occupation of the form; so that it is not co-opted' (Stark, 2017). All of these factors contribute to our understanding of the material modalities that affect the relations of infrastructures, materials, and community groups. Naming and questioning those modalities helps educate on the kinds of material conditions that organise how a community is living. In this way Pin's focus on the material modalities of her neighbourhood, offers an ethical practice that critically negotiates a pathway through the oppressive agency of neoliberal forces.

Consideration of the logical modality (the necessities of a situation, and also the possibilities) governing the material modality of a community further enables a more accurate measure of the social conditions, enabling decisions concerning positive and ethically responsible action. *Feminising politics* as the strategy practiced by both Pin and Stark (also found in the latter's work with different community groups) embraces this understanding of how the conditions of a society are governed. Feminising politics means engaging material modalities that are responsive to the different governance strategy levels, *and* the different community experiences, *and* the different social and cultural backgrounds participating in those communities, *and* the genealogical trajectories of the people, other sentient creatures, and materials, *and* the material and social infrastructures that create that communal environment. Each of these things affect the agency (as power) of a community and larger society.[3]

Once the agency of specific human elements, materials, governance of them (eg; who controls the matter of the heritage site; its natural ecology – the plants and animals that might also reside in it; the tourist market; the physical estate of a neighbourhood, infrastructural controls etc.); all of the intra-activities and potential and actual affects are identified and mapped out, then a view of how participation and the kinds of activities that might involve a number of different activities and actors can be consolidated. As Jiménez-Pacheco discusses (and diagrammatises), the

[3] "Agency" holds a very specific meaning in new materialist theory; and to invoke it refers us to consideration of infrastructural powers, and their affects in operation (cf. Bargetz, 2018; Colman 2018).

complexities within this neighbourhood offer a study of material modalities that require particular strategies in order to address their internal processes and systems as well as – as Pin identifies – their conglomerate infrastructures which can and are being utilised to offer educational as well as logical modes. Jiménez-Pacheco (2017) observes that: 'if the Rambla is not in essence a meeting space, but rather a repeated space of flows, the road towards its neighbourhood appropriation becomes more complex' (p.95). Pin's practice is to 'make politics to transform reality', and she works in this vein to change of existing structures or remove them, uses the strategies of *feminising politics* as tools to make changes, and she stresses that there are different ways to be productive, and that consolidation of the work happens over time; and it may happen slowly. Overtime, things change, and their affects may be experienced and used in different ways – for example, the long term affects of children and their carers interacting in the Barcelona education programme may not be seen for a while.

Affect belongs to a range of modalities that are used to express conditions of change in the world, and the cognition of those worlds. As a relational modality, affects chart the shifts in ethics and forces, (of social, industrial political-ecologies), so tracing the genealogies of affects provides further cues for feminising politics. The material modality used in feminising politics is one of the transformation of affects. The modal sets up the ethical relation between the modal (in this case, the model of governance) and its use. An affect is a tool, that is usually used to describe some kind of force or agency. It can be used to describe artefacts (the children's playground), but it is also the result of matter as ecofacts; such as the affect of a warm light shining upon the seedling; an affective agency is enabled. If we describe affect in terms of events, then through attention to their modal conditions can provides a more robust account of their situation. From events come affects and feelings - in relation to the political situations that we find ourselves in our own homes and communities. Identification of modal shifts in values raises the issue and the activity of what activism actually does; asking what should be intervened in; what should be changed? ; what practices of the past are chosen to be repeated and remembered? Why shouldn't we intervene

and react and reject? So that when we think about affect, it is in its specific function as a modality, as it is framing a 'what if?' proposition as well as defining a situation.

Temporal modal logics

In narrativising a particular affect in terms of its modal logic, we ascribe a temporal measure. And this temporal measure may change over time. The temporal is a measure but also a value that communities and societies use for mapping out the duration of things. *How long does a political regime last? How long did the community last? How long does a relationship last?*

The temporal itself is a non-material abstract concept, but it names and gives form to matter, to a block - units of matter, units of experience in a Baradian sense. The duration of things enables a comparison of matter, that's made into material agency. And I think this is kind of a really interesting point to think about affect and agency, because one of the most significant invisible changes occurs in societies and communities, is in the ways in which the conceptualisation and then realisation of information and ideas, are given process and form.

How the temporal as an abstracted form is applied; as a measure between various relations of matter, can tell us a lot about the forms of political agency and this is one of the core factors that mobilises feminists' interaction. These are the processes that various organisations manifest, for example as media images that we see around political campaigns, in order to produce and maintain their political subjects and positions. The question is, how then do we articulate the temporality of matter as it forces itself into agential forms? There are a number of feminist thinkers that provide a genealogical framework of feminist durational concepts for consideration of how our current conditions of communication, transformational potentials, and a planetary ethical life may be reimagined, through the appropriation of agential forms (cf. Smith, 1987; Braidotti, 2002; Braidotti & Hlavajova, 2018). A thinker who offers feminist actions through a temporal mode is Elizabeth Grosz, who works carefully through the Deleuzean inflected Bergsonian durational lexicon, as it might produce a more open appreciation of sexual difference (Grosz ,1994, p.2005).

In this nod to both Deleuze (who often pointed out the untimeliness of his own work), and Bergson (Grosz's point is that the 'future' that feminism / feminist theory looks to is one that is 'bound up with change' (Grosz, 2010, p.48); Grosz reminds her readers, just as Mona Livholts and Maria Tamboukou point out (2015), of the importance of undertaking feminist work with a conceptual temporal framework in place, to enable the value of any empirical research to be made visible. Grosz thus advocates what she terms a 'revivifying activity' for feminist work; that is, in order to 'bring about a new future' then we can follow the example of Nietzsche and 'reactivate a past in the present', and feminist theory can thus 'leap into a future it does not control [only] through finding something untimely in the patriarchal present and past' (Grosz, 2010, p.49).

Grosz goes so far as to call upon feminism to direct itself toward change, and to 'changing itself as much as to changing to world' (2010, p.49), in order to develop what she calls 'feminist theory' as a discipline that will be 'a movement able to adequately address the real in all its surprising complexity' (Grosz, 2010, p.49). Articulating this real is what Grosz apologetically describes as 'what is most abstract and useless, what is most speculative and cosmological, in order that transformation, upheaval, and change become conceivable' (Grosz, 2010, p.51). This is a question for identifying not only the framework (epistemological and metaphysical) used to describe the 'truth' of the world; its ethical reality, or its collective, community ethos, but its modality. What are the modal practices engaged to generate the methods of practicing within the framework? For example, as Stacey Alaimo reflects about the modality of one of her edited books: "*Material Feminisms* seek to maintain modes of incisive and necessary discursive critique while also accounting for the many material forces that may interact with the discursive." (Alaimo 2014a, p.16)

There is potentially a problem of just narrativising in "real" time within the paradigms already established; thus repeating the status quo. This is what feminist education, and politics aim to avoid by attending to the affective modes in action. Grosz provides a practical, applied methodological framework to approach the empirical, to consider how this real of the present may be first of all mapped, and thus conceived and made

perceivable. Articulating the modal framework is the task that new materialists often set themselves.

Grosz sets three tasks for feminist theory to embrace: First: A return to the question of materiality: 'We need to return to the question of matter, its forms, nature, and capacity, in order to address the direct objects of feminist investigation'. Secondly: A rethinking of 'biological questions' is required, in order to provide a direct - not linguistic - address of 'the material bases of the body's development (as male, as female, as raced, sexed, and historically encultured)' (Grosz, 2010, p.50). Grosz notes that we should look not only to those feminist theorists of science (and she names Evelyn Fox Keller, Anne Fausto-Sterling, Patricia Gowaty, and Sandra Hardy), but also to look to feminist cultural theorists, (Elizabeth A Wilson, N. Katherine Hayles, Catherine Waldby, Greit Vandermassen). Thirdly: Feminists need to become interested in 'material forces, 'discernible through their effects on [material] objects' (Grosz, 2010, p.50). Grosz notes that these forces are to be found in the 'unspoken assumptions of feminist politics and struggle', but primarily, she says, through a 'direct analysis' of 'the force of temporality' (Grosz, 2010, p.51). And this third point is where I will conclude this article, directing the work of feminist new materialisms to attend to the temporal modality in their accounts of affect and agency (the forces of temporality upon matter), such as we see exemplified in the work of Gala Pin within her community.

Conclusion: feminist modal logics

Rather than just being an assumed factor, or an event in history; the empirical and conceptual investigation into the constitution of a 'material environment' is what enables the political reality to be named. Examining a temporal mode of a community gives us their artefacts for measuring their histories, but also a genealogy of their value systems; their "truth". Rather than just being an assumed factor, the empirical and conceptual investigation into the constitution of what is our material environment, is what enables the political reality to be named- within and by its temporal modality.

These are the coordinates of bodies, and things; as they are spatially, temporally, materially organised and represented; as artefacts and ecofacts, able to be observed, collected, collated, classified and thus located and put to work within infrastructures and systems. The affects produced through temporal modes include notions such as anticipation, anxiety, longing, hope, pain, and desire. Determining how political agency changes the forces of temporality, of course, is a [meta] question that allows us to make, first of all, some generalised observations under the thematics we cling to for example, in terms of a Cartesian perspectivalism. Extending the work of Arendt from a totalitarian genealogy to the terms of a neoliberalist framework, the demands for feminist activist interventions must be to work with the ethical demands of the posthuman algorithmic condition (see MacCormack 2012; Braidotti & Hlavajova, 2018).

Modes and their modalities signal how agency comes to be organised, distributed, and shaped into both ephemeral and rigid infrastructures of governance. Attention to the modality of a political narrative – of the infrastructures of things, people, resources, materials- provides researchers, teachers, practitioners, students, and politicians, with the tools to action a legitimate ethical modality. The feminist new materialist practitioners refer to modal organisation in terms of the Bohr/Barad onto-epistemological investigation of 'how matter comes to matter' (Barad, 2003). Offering a critique of the epistemological narratives of practice-forming ontological 'truths' (that are used for example, to great effect in the work of Braidotti; Barad; Latour; Haraway; Alaimo, 2014b), is evidence of new materialism's deep commitment to transforming politics into a more ethical practice. New materialist strengths have been working on introducing and reintroducing discourses and practises of thinking and working with matter and its material and cognitive infrastructures, sometimes framed as empirical methodologies, or narrative research, but always concerning material modalities (eg. Alaimo & Hekman, 2008; Bennet 2010; Hayles, 1999; Livholts & Tamboukou, 2015; Iovino & Oppermann, 2014). No matter how abstracted or complex theory theoretical framework is, the new materialist theories continually serve to provoke and intervene and to remind theorist practitioners of all kinds, that all positions arrived from the material processes in the world. We need to continually ask what is matter? Why is

it glorified or vilified? How do we undo the negative structures it has been put into service for that are destructive and harmful for the environment, and ask this very critical question of how matter comes to matter? The feminist activity engaging with such questions has led to very exciting possibilities, that Barad and Haraway and others opened up, such as how quantum discoveries of the 20th century opened the infinite dimensions for engaging with matter. Matter is an active, not passive agent, and to pay attention to its modal use requires an active engagement with the politics of the use of matter.

The ethical-political mantra of the new materialist position is to engage a material modal possibility, to ask - *what if?* This question enables the possibility of finding what will engender better conditions for all forms of life. Consideration of the question of which practices of the past that we choose to not be undone, and which ones do we choose to undo, and reform, is the task of educators and practitioners; to practice *feminising politics*. Rather than to only consider vernacular modes that imagine "futures" or deify "historical" narratives, instead consider the material and temporal modal constitution of your community and ask how your daily ethical ecology can be better constituted. The feminist modal logics enacted in the practical work of Gala Pin, and advocated by the conceptual model put forward by Elizabeth Grosz, are examples of feminist ethical philosophical, political practices which offer and remind us of how positive actions can be taken up; applied; and used to engage real change in the governance of political trajectories, and the sentient creatures creating communities.

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This paper takes the shape of a dialogue – it is a continuation of a conversation that we have been engaged in for several years now as philosophers, feminists, untenured researchers and collaborators who are interested in questions of access and power in academic spaces, as well as in how such conditions directly impact our lives, bodies, hopes, ambitions, and dreams. We take up the topics of voice and silence to ask about standards of legitimacy and hierarchies of voices in academia and offer *vulnerability* as a device that can disturb them. We understand vulnerability to be a source of collective empowerment rather than a weakness. We weave together our personal and embodied experiences, philosophical reflections, and critiques of predominant institutions, philosophical canons, and classifications. Moreover, this ongoing project is a conversation amongst ourselves, yet it keeps an eye (and an ear) open to our readers and in the hopes of opening up this dialogue and inviting others to join. This is also why this dialogue has an open-ended structure; rather than summarizing the discussion we wish to establish an openness that allows for the diverse voices of academia to be heard. This dialogue does not have a closure; we would like to see it as an inspiration for debates about, within, against, and beyond academia.[1]

1 We recognize the existing tendency to quit academia present among feminist researchers. We observe it in our communities as well as in broader discussions (see Lomax, 2015; Ahmed,

In this conversation we diffract (Haraway, 1997; Barad, 2007) our voices through one another, letting the concepts that we think with, the ideas and experiences that we share amongst ourselves, and the vulnerabilities that we reveal to each other overlap like waves, creating new pathways for our dialogue(s). As such, diffraction is indeed "a lively affair" (Barad, 2014, p. 168) to us, a means of wondering and wandering about our own situatedness within, against, and beyond academia with the aim of "breathing new life into it" (Barad, 2014, p. 168). This approach is also a way to destabilize fossilized subject positions and to unsettle our own positions that we may take for granted, and, instead, search for collective-building strategies that emerge from our thinking about academic labour. As well, applying diffraction towards this line of inquiry effectively undermines the concept of vulnerability as a weakness[2] and, by making differences matter (Barad, 2007), it attends to patterns of relationality, solidarity, and possibilities, that emerge from encounters between variously situated and vulnerable subjects.

In this dialogue we mobilize an experimental mode of practicing thinking that involves both theorizing and feeling. We call it a "vulnerable academic performance," a method aimed at troubling traditional academic conventions, such as the rules dictating the format of scholarly articles or the stylistic expectations governing a conference presentation or lecture. We first presented this method at a New Materialist Politics and Economies of Knowledge conference in Maribor, Slovenia in 2015 (Rogowska-Stangret & Cielemęcka,

2016; Maldonado & Guenther, 2017) – so pervasive is this tendency that there is even a whole emergent literary genre of "quit lit" (see Schuman, 2013; Dunn, 2013). Taking into account our own precarious situatedness, the question of changing professional path has crossed our minds. However, there are multiple factors that influence this sort of decisions. That is why we recognize the need to think simultaneously within, against and beyond academia respectful of those who exit, those who stay, and those who are temporally in and temporally out. See also Nanna Hlín Halldórsdóttir's short essay *Academic Praxiography* in this volume. We thank Maria Tamboukou for bringing our attention to the phenomenon of quitting academia and pointing out some of the discussions held.

2 Other researchers have also undertaken this task of reconfiguring vulnerability, repurposing it towards political goals by use of various (interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary) methodological devices; see for example, the concept of weak resistance in Ewa Majewska's work (2018).

2015), performing it in front of an academic audience well aware of the conventions and expectations already mentioned. With this move we hoped to offer a recalcitrant alternative to standardized academic performances by bringing the personal and the affective registers of scholarly presentation to the forefront of our talk. Herein, diffraction allows the meaning to arrive from within our conversing voices, from within our encounters – in the form of a response.[3] Vulnerability plays the essential role of a pre-condition to enter into a collective dialogue. It allows for an openness to that which emerges without us ever fully predicting or controling its trajectory, conditions reminiscent of Elizabeth Grosz's (2010) epistemological reflection on feminist theory as an always already open-ended project. *Open-endedness* is part and parcel of what we envision to be a performative, that is, an embodied, located, and relational dialogical practice. The range of meanings and uses of "performance" and "performativity" are both expansive and overwhelming to the point that parsing through their prolific application exceeds the scope of this piece. Yet we do evoke these terms to signal this conversation's strange position as both staged and spontaneous, curated and unconstrained, contained and open-ended. A vulnerable academic performance calls in the embodied, the experiential, the excitable, and the personal aspects of our existence and, consequently, disturbs, if only momentarily, the rigorous norms of speaking in academia. Furthermore, "vulnerable academic performance" is also a method of engaging with ourselves in academic life – within/in, against, and, we hope, a way of moving beyond academia defined as an institution of higher learning and research, foregrounding instead academia as a workplace and as a web of (power) relations that cuts across established institutions, canons, classifications, disciplines, rules, and hierarchies, involving both humans and non-humans as both subjects and objects. As such this method and this dialogue are a "power-sensitive

3 In our article "Stigmergy as a Collective Research Practice" (Cielemęcka & Rogowska-Stangret, 2015) we further develop the importance of relationality, response-ability, com(mon)passion, collectivity, and experimenting for research practices today in advocating collective and collaborative approach to research.

conversation" (Haraway, 1988, p. 590), particularly aware of the murmuring of power relations within and across academia.

Olga Cielemęcka:

> "…the torment of getting up to speak. Her heart racing, at times entirely lost for words, ground and language slipping away – that's how daring a feat, how great a transgression it is for a woman to speak – even just open her mouth – in public…"
>
> (Cixous, 1976, p. 880).

Have you ever felt this way?

Hélène Cixous's words have been with me, like a kind companion, for a long time. They helped me through my own doubts and difficulties as a feminist thinker and a woman in philosophy, while also pointing to a larger framework in which voices are either legitimized or silenced along the lines of class, gender expression, race, ethnicity, and ability, which designate the standards and expectations imposed on certain bodies within a simultaneously neoliberal and elitist institution.

I remember myself trying to speak; I would take a deep breath, I wanted to speak, I wanted to speak so badly, and I was just about to say something, but then no words would come out of my mouth. At other times, I would build up courage and speak up, and with this my own words would come back to me estranged, like an echo, as if they had just encountered some sort of an invisible obstacle from which they bounced back and came back to me: nude, vulnerable, deformed – nobody responded to them.

In *How to Do Things With Words* (1962), the British philosopher of language John L. Austin described a special kind of sentence – he called them "performatives." Performatives are acts of speech that do not just describe the reality of the speaker but also actively change it – these utterances "do" things. However, Austin failed to recognize that words can likewise (trans)form bodies… the body reacts to them. Words hurt, and they continue to hurt for generations;

they shape bodies, their histories, and their possibilities (see also Butler, 1997; Sedgwick, 2003). Herein, a feminist intervention was in order, and, sure enough, thinkers like Donna Haraway (1992) filled in the gaps left by Austin and his acolytes by pointing to an integral enmeshed reality in which the material, including the body, is affected by words – a so-called semiotic or discursive reality.

Monika, you have said that ours are "vulnerable academic performances". And you invite me to perform with you and to be vulnerable with you. What is this space of performance in academia? Where is it? "To perform" means to execute and to fulfill, but it also means to produce and to enliven. Performance encompasses re-creation, a certain repetition akin to sticking to a preordained script or scroll, but it is also a creation of something new; a staging as well as becoming. In this vulnerable performance I turn to you with an invitation to speak. I offer a space for you to speak within and from. But it is never completely safe for a woman (let alone other marginalized genders and bodies) to speak in the world of academia. To speak our bodies, to let the voice be heard comes with a risk; it is scary.

Monika Rogowska-Stangret: You began this conversation and, in this very gesture, you opened a space for your voice to be heard – that is a powerful moment. Just now, you invited me in by falling silent and changing registers towards listening rather than talking – that is when you performed a space for *us* to be heard. Very simple and very powerful at the same time. For me this is what academia should be about. I think that right now we are indeed performing academia as a space of dialogue: speaking up, thinking while talking, listening, keeping quiet – all done collectively, in collaboration, as a community-building practice. But the affects that are percolating through your voice also resonate with me. Risks are attached. These risks are connected to a variety of examples that illustrate the struggles of women and feminist researchers around censorship and sexual harassment, of being unheard, neglected, ridiculed, and of having one's career blocked or one's achievements unrecognized and attributed instead to

male colleagues (known as the "Matilda effect"), of being gaslighted or criminalized.[4]

Academia is not usually a space of dialogue, of heterogeneous yet equal voices recognized, heard, listened to, and taken into consideration. Academia is a battlefield, it is not free of power relations – though it sometimes claims to be such under the guise of objectivity (which I will discuss below with reference to Donna Haraway), but quite on the contrary. It has its gatekeepers, who guard the territory, it has its strategies of survival, it has its successful and unsuccessful tactics, its stratagems, its clubs, its allies and its enemies. All covered over nicely with a promise of openness and objectivity. However, the promise of an objective point of view has been indicted and uncovered by Haraway in her boundary-challenging essay "Situated Knowledges: *The Science Question in Feminism* and the Privilege of Partial Perspective" (1988), wherein she exposes how scientists striving for objectivity perform what she terms the "god trick," a supposedly objective perspective from which one can observe and analyze phenomena. Objectivity is here understood to be a "view from above, from nowhere" (p. 589) or as a "[way] of being nowhere while claiming to see comprehensively" (p. 584); otherwise put, the "god trick" is being everywhere and nowhere in particular, yet still encompassing all points of view. Moreover, objectivity, as Haraway (p. 581) puts it, is

> a conquering gaze from nowhere. This is the gaze that mythically inscribes all the marked bodies, that makes the unmarked category claim the power to see and not be seen, to represent while escaping representation. This gaze signifies the unmarked position of Man and White.

In this, objectivity erases the actual bodies, the specific material conditions, and the ingrained privileges of those engaged in the production of knowledge. At the

[4] Number of scholars have put forward examples of their experiences as female-identified academics. See for example: Butler (2018), Romero-Hall, Aldemir, Colorado-Resa, Dickson-Deane, Watson, and Sadaf (2018) (thank you to Sam Skinner for bringing our attention to this article), Ahmed (2017), Sullivan (2015), or Flood and Gill (2010).

same time, the god trick helps to maintain a very particular power position under the guise of detachment and disembodiment.

As a response to a god trick that no longer does the trick of performing objective scientific inquiry, Haraway offers an alternative to prevailing notions of objective inquiry through her concepts of "situated knowledges" and "partial perspective" to assist in fomenting more accountable scientific research and knowledge production. Nonetheless, "situated knowledges" is rarely put to action in institutional settings. Trying to speak from one's own particular situatedness, from one's own embodied position always comes with the risk of being accused of propagating non-objective knowledge claims, of contaminating scientific methods with subjective or relative perspectives, of including accidental properties, and thus, of being unworthy of recognition and consideration. So, be aware when entering academia. It does not keep its promises. One may end up asking

> why did you let me through the doors in the first place
> If you were just gonna turn around and force me out?
>
> (Tagore, 2011, p. 37)[5]

I am wondering: was I ever invited to speak? Or, rather, was I directed to speak ("go, perform your academic self!"), which left me with nothing to say, with my silence, panic, and an urge – as I felt it – to disappear. This led me to thinking about the relationship between performance and certain spaces that you also mentioned – a space within me – do I have a space for my voice to be heard? Do I know my voice? – and outside of me – is it safe for me to speak? Does the academy – as an institution – provide a space for a feminist woman-philosopher to speak?

At a time we are facing misogynist movements growing in power across Europe, supported and spread by the increase of right-wing parties in governmental structures (for more on the subject see Kováts & Põim, 2015; Kuhar & Paternotte, 2017). Such political shifts have resulted in a failure to recognize gender studies

[5] We would like to thank Whitney Stark for introducing us to Tagore's poem.

as a worthy academic discipline, or, as is currently the case with CEU Central European University in Hungary (Petõ, 2018), the assumption of power by right-wing parties can lead to official policies that target existing, accreditated gender studies programs. What risks do I face? What are the frames of legitimacy? What topics are justified, what words, what ways of speaking? Would it be possible for me to fit in those frames? Or am I left aside? To paraphrase Luce Irigaray – when one asks me, "what am I thinking about?" I can only reply: Nothing. Everything (Irigaray, 1993 [1985], p. 29).

Female-identified (and others marginalized based on their bodies and gender expression) philosophers are dropping out – one by one – from academia, discontinuing their academic careers, facing being ridiculed on social media, and becoming objects of hate speech and censorship. How right was Michel Foucault (1972 [1971], pp. 228–229), when, in his inaugurating lecture at Collège de France on 2nd December 1970, he reckoned

> [...] it seems to me, a certain fear hides behind this […] apparent logophilia. It is as though these taboos, these barriers, thresholds and limits were deliberately dispossessed in order, at least partly, to master and control the great proliferation of discourse, in such a way as to relieve its richness of its most dangerous elements; to organize its disorder so as to skate around its most uncontrollable aspects. […] There is undoubtedly in our society […] a profound logophobia, a sort of dumb fear of these events, of this mass of spoken things, of everything that could possibly be violent, discontinuous, querulous, disordered even and perilous in it, of the incessant, disorderly buzzing of discourse.

The fear of a "disorderly buzzing of discourse" is indeed a powerful emotion that mobilizes various policing tools and forms the gatekeepers' actions in guarding an academic territory – not allowing for the buzzing to enter, silencing it with a more tolerable representation of such disordered buzzing. Such a buzzing might be connected to, among other things, a symbolic or representational feminine, or

it may be identified with feminist practices that shape knowledge production today, for instance, the development of explicitly feminist approaches to science, physics, politics, or philosophy. Take as an example the image of a "reasonable feminist" – she is a figure produced by the guards that police academic territories in order to justify their existence and function: these guards point to the "reasonable feminist" in order to mark their own openness and tolerance towards difference. They say: "Hey! See, we accept feminists, but the ones who are being reasonable! These feminists are simply insane, hysterics, unsuited for academia!" In this way, institutional gatekeepers reformulate and repackage the problem: it is not about politics, it is only about those individuals who are simply too stupid – too disorderly – to enter our land of wisdom. That resembles how Judith Butler (1993, p. 44) commented on Plato's *Timaeus*: "[…] in authorizing a single representation of the feminine [here: a feminist], [Plato] means to prohibit the very proliferation of normative possibilities that the undesignatable might produce."

Fear of a disorderly buzzing of discourse often comes with a fear of different, confusing, or ill-defined bodies that need to be mastered and controled. We are, willy-nilly, left to perform in-between, if we are willing to (have strength to) perform at all. It struck me how dangerous but also exciting it is to perform in the space of borderlines (Anzaldúa, 1991). The "unruly edges" (Tsing, 2012) of such material-discursive academic performances make us both vulnerable and creative. The "unruly edges" of the cuts, where the proliferation, fermentation, gemmation take place are both painful and soothing, providing or opening up the space for more and more of us to perform.

OC: For many traditionally-oriented philosophers, particularly those that work in the analytical tradition, "feminist philosophy" is an illogical impossibility; it is, as you say, just a buzzing to their ears… I myself was trained in this tradition and thus very attached to a certain canon in which philosophical study necessarily means rational argumentation, rigorous rules for thinking, and established logics. And these characteristics have, seemingly, nothing to do with the body and its extensive needs

and affectations, nor are they connected with the here and now of the many struggles for justice internal and external to academia proper. Needless to say, like many others, I oppose such an understanding of philosophy. If philosophy is not grounded in our stories, in the stories of our communities, in the solidarity networks that we build with each other, and in the specificity of our politics and ethics, then it is useless as a tool of interpreting, understanding and changing the world.

This brings me to a question of legitimacy: which discourses are permitted, legitimate, and legit, in academia? Who legitimizes them? What are the rules by which some arguments are listened to and even published, while others remain *sin papeles* in the world of contemporary academia? Who decides what, and on what grounds? In his essay "Critique of Violence" (1996), Walter Benjamin refutes this entire problem altogether. For Benjamin, legitimization is always based on violence – violence is both the source and the fundament of legitimization (see also Butler's (2012) exciting reading of this essay) – to which we could simply say: "Okay, boys – I'm done here; I refuse to take part in this game which you call philosophy, because I reject the rules by which you force me to play by." Or, following Donna Haraway (1988, p. 578), we could respond with: "They're just texts anyway, so let the boys have them back."

An alternative approach is to perform with and within, to position oneself against the rules of the game so as not to give up any ground, and, eventually, to manifest a challenge and change to these rules from within existing forms and practices. I believe we can extrapolate this strategy for academia generally but before we do so, we must acknowledge that the academic labor market is very difficult and unstable, and the working conditions within academic institutions are precarious and often exploitative. This, among other reasons, is why so many people quit – some are forced to do so, some knowingly choose to leave a suboptimal working environment. Sometimes such decisions come with a feeling of loss (see Bartram, 2018) and other times exiting such conditions brings much needed relief.

For a feminist philosopher to remain working within the field of academic philosophy means that she must commit herself to an abiding quest for spaces in which she can perform. You called these spaces – evoking Anzaldúa *(1991)* – "borderlines." You write: "It struck me how dangerous and exciting it is to perform in the space of borderlines." Borderlines are the spaces of in-betweenness, which separate and delimit but, at the same time, remain indeterminate: unsettled, undecided, doubtful, and dangerous. And then, again, a "borderline" is also a type of personality disorder, one which is diagnosed mainly in women and associated with "hysterical" impulsivity, emotional instability, and sexual promiscuity. In our feminist archive, thinking with borderlines also evokes the work of feminists of color. For Anzaldúa*,* borderlands are the areas susceptible to *la mezcla* – hybridity, zones similar to the borderlines that you describe as being unruly and rebellious, constituted through morphogenic edges where vulnerability goes hand in hand with creativity. Borderlines are thus prolific: cuts, wounds, and injuries disturb the homeostasis of the body surface and, simultaneously, they set in motion the processes of healing, re-growth, regeneration (of tissue), and formation (of a scar) in which bodily capabilities are mobilized.

However, having recognized the above, I need to stop here. There are cuts that will not heal and injuries which cannot be recovered from. Some damages are beyond repair, but only when we think of repair as an individualized process in which a sense of harm or loss is seen as unproductive and where change is unwelcomed.

Being silenced will not teach us how to speak. Just as being called "stupid" will not make us feel smart and confident. For this alchemical process in which vulnerability is transformed into empowerment to take place, it seems to me that yet another element is indispensable. The harm is not enough for the body to heal; rather, it is the mobilization of a collective effort of a body's cells that provides for such healing. In "The Phoenix, the Spider, and the Salamander," Catherine Malabou presents three different paradigms of recovery. The first one is represented by the figure of a phoenix: a mythological figure that is cyclically

regenerated or reborn. “In the paradigm of phoenix,” Malabou (2011, pp. 74–75) elaborates in Hegelian terms, “true regeneration is resurrection […] to recover means ‘to be present once again,’ to return to the scene. Healing implies a reconstitution of wounded presence, an annulment of the defect, the mark, the lesion.” It is in and through this first paradigm that the skin regenerates without leaving a scar.

The second paradigm is based on a figuration of a spider symbolizing deconstruction: “[…] the tissue, the web of the text are covered with marks, nicks, scratches that are so many scars of the impossibility of reconstituting the origin or taking on a new skin. These marks, however, do not show themselves and do not promise any vestige” (pp. 76–77). The third paradigm presented is that of a salamander – an animal which possesses auto-repairing, self-regenerating capabilities through which it can grow a new limb to replace the one surrendered. In this process, regeneration involves the shuffling around of cells at the wound site and the (re)assigning of a new specialization to them. What is fascinating in this particular model is the relation of the regenerative processes to the emergence of a scar. Malabou (2011, pp. 82–83) writes that

> when a lizard’s tail grows back, it leaves no trace of amputation at all. […] The organ reconstitutes itself without scars, but this healing process does not raise life to a form of completion. The organ grows back different from the one it replaces – in size, weight, form. There is no scar, but there is difference. […] Here “to recover” implies a finite survival […], [t]he regrowth does not annul finitude, rather it is one of its expressions.

The paradigm of a salamander, just like the model of fermentation that you offered above, points to alchemical processes in which something entirely new emerges.

How, then, do we become more like salamanders with their endlessly regenerating tails? How can fermentative processes, which are in essence

processes of breaking down and metamorphosis, foment something new and promising?

I think these questions are particularly timely now. In the era of #MeToo, issues of voice and silence have taken center stage as we listen to and learn from the personal stories of being silenced and of speaking up against this silence. We also learn to recognize the systemic as well as the daily, "small" acts of violence that misogyny inflicts on bodies. This moment calls for a reorganization of the entire culture through a process of collective healing and regrowth.

MRS: I really enjoyed the example you provided from Malabou and how you challenged me with your questions. Being aware of my privileges and idiosyncrasies, I do not feel legitimized to speak using "we" in regard to vulnerability or in relation to the ways of coping with harms.

But, to go back to Malabou, I feel that we do not have any guarantees – we do not know for sure that our tails will regrow, that we will manage to create something anew, that we will be able to heal ourselves. The category of openness that I find so fascinating in this respect is only a promise, a condition that might enable "something new and promising to come to light," but it also may not yield anything productive at all. While openness raises hope, this – of course – may be jeopardized. Openness comes with risk – a very real one – of failing. Openness confirms and affirms the fact that we are not in the position to control – neither our bodies, nor our language. It is at this point where the autonomous, self-controlling, and self-centered subject turns out to be a pipe dream. To recognize and to admit this openness as the ground on which we are funded makes a difference in several ways that I will now address.

When I think of the policing practices I have experienced or encountered in academia, what strikes me is their self-referential character. These practices seem to be more like self-satisfied performances of hatred than akin to the open discussion they usually claim to be. They are closed in a vicious circle of hate,

resentment, and defense via offense. It was a great relief when I realized that people who employed these practices were not talking about me, nor about any of us. In fact they were not discussing my projects, papers, academic performances at all – all they were doing was sharing their logophobia with others. In fact, the real object of those attacks are often fantasies about who is a woman-philosopher, a feminist-scientist, and how she may harm the status quo. Stating that does not mean that I am not aware of (or that I diminish) the fact that this "phantom war" may cost you your job. To silence us would – for the hegemonic power relations – mean to survive, to let us speak would entail castration, deprivation of voice, power, body. The logic of castration or deprivation implies that one is taking from me something I own, something that I feel is mine, my property. This logic is deprived of its infectious potential by the concept of the subject's openness – what is it that I own? What is it that I control? I would say – only phantoms. Phantoms haunt us with a false claim of ownership. Phantoms that we created ourselves and overinvested with pain, refusing to let go of the harm and our narcissistic ego. Phantoms of the castrated phallus – was it ours to begin with? Please don't get me wrong, I don't mean to ignore anybody's pain, I just need to find a place for the joyfulness and play that comes with performance. And it is not even that… it is not only about making it possible for joy and playfulness to enter into my academic performances. It is much more and – at the same time – much less than that. The stakes are higher. It is about finding a place, where living an academic feminist life could be possible at all.

That's why I would reformulate your question: How do we then become salamanders whose tails regrow? I propose we ask instead: How do we detach ourselves from the lost tail, how do we get rid of the phantom of the lost tail, or at least how do we tame it – the phantom? Negotiate with it? How can we cherish and enjoy the regrown tail without being haunted by painful memories of what was lost? How can we separate ourselves from the feeling of loss, being a helpless and impotent victim so that we do not end up overwhelmed, blocked, unable to continue our work and life?

I refer to Grosz again (1994, p. 73), who reckons that

> the phantom is an expression of nostalgia for the unity and wholeness of the body, its completion. It is a memorial to the missing limb, a psychical delegate that stands in its place. […] The phantom limb is the narcissistic reassertion of the limb's presence in the face of its manifest biological loss, an attempt to preserve the subject's narcissistic sense of bodily wholeness.

A phantom is also a condition of possibility for the replacement of the lost limb with a prosthesis (p. 71). Again, a vicious circle – the "I" demands a phantom out of misery and a longing for integrity, the phantom enables replacement and substitution. The logic of openness that I am arguing for here is the logic that resists narcissistic, self-sufficient subjectivity; it denies the possibility of replacement and it appreciates the opportunity to find new "tails" – new collective and individual solutions.

From this perspective it is always about breaking the vicious circle of loss-nostalgia-replacement. "Given the choice between conformity to the limitative demands of adaptation and death, it [instinct – MRS] invents a third way: the excess invention of a more to life. An inventiveness immanent to the topology of experience, one with its lived qualities, at its most subjective leading edge, spontaneously responds to adaptive pressures" (Massumi, 2014, p. 18). How might we – individually and collectively – invent third ways that are simultaneously with/in and against academia?

And again the borderlines are to be addressed urgently. The power of the phantom remains a constant "memory irritation" – we cannot forget about our losses, that's why we feel impotent. According to Rosi Braidotti (2008, p. 22) this is the really negative effect of negative affects – blockages. This is the state where one forgets about "an inventiveness immanent to the topology of experience" (Massumi, 2014, p.18). How much can I bear? What are my limits of harm? I don't know, it is yet to be performed. You said: "Being silenced won't teach us how to speak. Just as being called 'stupid' won't make us feel smart," and this is true. But these postulates may reveal some of our limits: can we stand the pain and not fall apart? How do we

perform while being "out of joint"? Can "third ways" be born out of this state of "out-of-jointness" without – however – sanctifying, sublimating, or idealizing pain and vulnerability? But instead recognizing the conditions of precarious knowledge production – in regards to both limits and potentialities – and putting into action vulnerable academic performances and collective becomings that destabilize well-established canons and traditional classifications.

This leads me to an appreciation of Foucault's preoccupation with care for the self (1988 [1984]), considered in conjunction with Judith Butler's question: "Under what conditions does self-poiesis become a relational category?" (2013, p. 67). Vulnerable academic performances are – to my mind – precisely about being "out of joint," about being in the borderlines or spaces of in-betweenness, as you dubbed them, and they are also about performing the self as a relation with others, escaping the false choice between adaptation and death, conformity and resignation.

All this having been said, I wish to direct our attention again to matters of voice and silence in academia. And I ask: how to speak, listen, and keep quiet in academia? How to survive with/in/against or even beyond academia proper through performing vulnerably? How to produce knowledge in precarious times? How to bring collectives together?

OC: "Time is out of joint" is a quote from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* with which Jacques Derrida was quite fascinated. I believe we are witnessing a moment in which things are stirring and buzzing, and I would like to hope that these are moments of dislocating and of throwing the old patriarchal order out of joint. Past injustices are brought up to light, calling out the misogynist foundations of our institutions, our intimacies, and our everyday interactions. While the #MeToo movement gains momentum as more survivors of sexual harassment and violence speak out, it carries a promise of a change. Audre Lorde (1984, p. 41) famously wrote

> My silences had not protected me. Your silence will not protect you. But for every real word spoken, for every attempt I had ever made to speak those truths for which I am still seeking, I had made contact

> with other women while we examined the words to fit a world in which we all believed, bridging our differences.

The politics of voice and silence are gendered – as much as they are raced and classed. Audre Lorde wrote about this extensively in reference to violence against Black and queer women. But by "voice" here I don't only mean its discursive register, but also the very materiality of voice – things like vocal timbre and height ("does it sound 'masculine' or 'feminine'?") or a voice's fluidity and accent ("does it sound 'native' or 'foreign'?") (see also Cielemęcka, 2017). Speech pathologist David Azul brings our attention to this aspect of speaking when writing about the materiality of trans and gender diverse voices and the voice-lessness that is imposed on them by the violence of gender dichotomy. Azul predicts that one day "in the foreseeable future, […] we will be able to 3D print standard-sized male or female voice organs and implant them into suitable pharyngo-laryngectomized throats in a simple organ replacement procedure" (Azul, 2018, p. 130). However, instead of cherishing this possible transhuman future, Azul celebrates the hums of difference, the non-conforming vibrations and richness of multiple, variously gendered voices.

I believe that the momentum generated by #MeToo allows us to recognize that the question of silencing and speaking goes much deeper and reaches beyond the specific problems of sexual harassment. It calls for a systemic critique of these frameworks – misogyny, racism, classism, cis-hetero-normativity, ableism – that legitimize some voices and not others. The same frameworks are entrenched in academia, actively regulating knowledge production. Let me one more time refer to Shaunga Tagore's poem "A Slam on Feminism in Academia." Tagore pulls no punches when exposing academic feminism as more often than not giving voice to the white, privileged, "able-bodied and -minded enough/ to be given luxury of enjoying sitting in a corner reading 900 pages a week" (2011, p. 39).

So what are we to do? I would like to turn to Sara Ahmed (2017, pp. 260–261) to guide us here:

> Even if speaking out is not possible, it is necessary. […] But feminist speech can take many forms. We become more inventive with

> forms the harder it is to get through. Speaking out and speaking with, sheltering those who speak; these acts of spreading the word, are world making.

MRS: Speaking or voicing ideas, thoughts, and intuitions, engaging in dialogues – like the one we perform here – is indeed world making. It accomplishes this in the sense that we – as feminist philosophers – often lack institutional support and are unable to enter or perform in spaces provided for philosophical thinking and related practices. We need to make a stage for our vulnerable academic performances. Akin to birds of paradise or bowerbirds that set themselves a stage on which to perform and attract a mate, we need to build our own stages, our own "bowers," and our own academic spaces in order to provide for ourselves the conditions of possibility for feminist research to happen, to be voiced and to be heard. These stages are built for ourselves, for other women-identified-philosophers, for feminist researchers, as well as for scholars of marginalized genders and bodies. They should be built and supported collectively in hopes that others, too, will feel welcomed to perform on them. Importantly, the process of preparing the grounds for such performances must be recognized as work, as labor that consumes time, energy, and emotional, social, and cultural resources.

In describing the formation of a new social class, namely the precariat, Guy Standing addresses a phenomenon dubbed "work-for-labor" (2011, pp. 120–121), which involves "filling in forms, queuing, commuting to employment exchanges, commuting in search of jobs, commuting to job training and so on" (2011, p. 48). Building a stage for ourselves in academia is even more than "work-for-labor;" needeless to say, academia as a work environment is becoming more and more precarious, and with its reliance on adjunct and contract-based teaching labor, the academic work force feeds directly into the ever enlarging precariat.[6] This is what is needed for one to labor – the stamina that it takes to be capable of doing it day after day, one rejection

6 Standing recognizes how academic work environment changes and how education is commodified (see 2011, pp. 67–72). A number of references mentions precarity as depicting conditions of academic work in neoliberalism. In feminist context see for example Taylor & Lahad, 2018.

after another, of surviving being the object of hate speech or ridicule one time after another. It takes time, as well as emotional and collective energy and endurance, but it also invites creativity and resourcefulness in order to find the ways that these stages can be built. This is what elsewhere I called "politics of squatting" and in this context I would call us "squatters of academia." Squatting here is a metaphor and a practice "useful to grasp the mechanism of creating and producing the time and space for the new" (Rogowska-Stangret, 2015, p. 66). In the "politics of squatting" it is also crucial to uncover the previous and existing efforts taken to build spaces for (vulnerable) performances, to reveal the process required for one to get to the position of speaking, exposing the conditions of im/possibility of using one's own voice.

Above you mentioned an essay by Catherine Malabou depicting three models of recovery. The first one was a phoenix – a figure that represents regeneration that does not leave a scar. In many ways throughout academic life this ideal prevails. The time, energy, and emotional work put to work for academic purposes is erased or subsumed – only the final outcome and bottomline matters. In other words, the scar of unrecognized work is there, only invisibilized. As Malou Juelskjær and Rogowska-Stangret put it:

> All the hard work that went into enabling "results" (grant applications, experiments, data production and analysis, developing and dismissing theories, consulting with colleagues, engaging with other researchers' results, and so forth) is made invisible, "at the end of the day or project, the product of the physicists' activity is freed from any marks of this work" (Schrader, 2012, p. 119). These mechanisms do not apply solely to physicists, but resonate with, and might be also used to investigate, products of the work of researchers in other academic disciplines. (Juelskjær & Rogowska-Stangret, 2017, p. 3)

A phoenix in this respect is a fake that invisibilizes the work that is put to work, the efforts put towards living a feminist academic life, and the conditions that make feminist research im/possible. Scars should not be erased but rather revealed and

appreciated. They are materialized signs of what it takes to endure. You opened our conversation with a quote from Cixous about “the torment of getting up to speak” (Cixous, 1976, p. 880). This torment materializes also in our voices: trembling, of different timbre, accent, stammering, too quiet or too loud, considered to be too polite or too aggressive, too slow or too quick, sometimes estranged or alienated, out-of-joint, sometimes intimate and revealing so much of the struggles of (and it is worth repeating) “…the torment of getting up to speak” (Cixous, 1976, p. 880). Those vulnerable voices of ours are also and at once our stages, our academic performances, and our scars. Do not hide them succumbing to an illusion offered by a phoenix. Because the scars, the scarred and vulnerable voices do matter and they are woven into how academia today sounds. Just listen to the borderlines, the spaces in-between, the “unruly edges.”

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Mattering pedagogy in precarious times of (un)learning

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Abstract

This paper considers how feminist new materialist thinking may offer a resource for re-orienting pedagogy in light of pressing global issues such as climate change and political unrest. The paper applies feminist new materialist thinking to develop a new pedagogical agenda. I argue that pedagogies are always already normative or are engaged in practices that play a role in opening up to various and un-usual ways of relating and being in and to the world. Pedagogy is a worlding practice as it facilitates diverse ways of relating, thinking, sensing, acting, and is thus involved in the shaping of a 'collective intelligence'. In this paper, I argue that one fruitful approach to pedagogy may be to focus on entanglements and affects and on finding ways of facilitating a 'sensing' living/being of such entanglements. The paper concludes by introducing affective geology to suggest possible steps towards a transformation of our ways of knowing, sensing, and relating.

Keywords

Pedagogy, geo-affective, entanglements, affects, Anthropocene

Introduction

Feminist new materialist thinking about pedagogy is proliferating in precarious times, as this paper will demonstrate. There is a clear need for help to (re/un)learn how to live in ways that have a less destructive impact on the world, that is, to (re/un)learn how to relate to the role and responsibility of 'the human species' in pressing ecological and geopolitical problems. It is becoming increasingly evident how non-human and more-than-human forces could be regarded as though they are trying to teach humans something, or to put it another way, that there are lessons to be learned - whether or not we are ready to listen and learn. A central question then is *how* to enable (radical other) learning. As pointed out and exemplified by, for example, Tallbar, Bird Rose, Blaser & de la Cadena, some possible ways of engaging in learning involves turning to various non-Western and Indigenous knowledges and philosophies, to help to develop capacities to listen to and co-live with the surroundings. In this engagement, however, *unlearning* arrogance/ignorance is crucial. Mario Blaser and Marisol de la Cadena note in their introduction to *A world of many worlds* (2018) that "now the colonizers are as threatened as the worlds they displaced and destroyed when they took over what they called terra nullius" (2018, p.3). They underline that non-Western communities have long suffered the destructive effects of Western lifestyles and geopolitical actions, and they find a common "unsurprising – if discouraging" (ibid.) trait in the current purported solutions to the ecological crisis, remarking that "it seems almost impossible to imagine a response to the ecological crisis that does not take the world that is responsible for the plausible destruction of the planet as the exclusive starting point in a conversation about the current condition of the planet" (ibid.). Their observations testify to the ongoing production of inequalities and injustices that need to be addressed; indeed, such inequalities and injustices need to be of central concern and care in the search for possible solutions for living less violently/living with less violent effects/living-creating live-ability for all beings. As decolonial theorists such as Mignolo, Walsch and Quijano alongside Hinton, Mahrabi and Barla (and many others) demonstrate, there is much to be done to push back against colonialism and Western-centrism. They underline the urgency of doing so, an

urgency that also applies to pedagogical relations and research. Patrick Degeorges and Serpil Oppermann argue that what is needed is a "deep change in human collective intelligence […] in order to meet the irreversible, catastrophic and systemic consequences of the Anthropocene" (Degeorges and Oppermann, 2019[1]).

This situation is now one in which posthumanist and feminist new materialist pedagogies can make significant changes, onto-politically, and practically. Feminist new materialist theories and intellectual resources may assist us, for example, by reorienting the subject and object of pedagogy; by attending to natureculture agency and matter's vibrancy; by addressing (anew) the iterative natureculture material-discursive production of inequalities and differences, in/justices and justice-to-come (Barad, 2010, Derrida, 1992), and by reorienting pedagogy's matters of concern (Latour, 2004) and matters of care (Bellacasa, 2011, 2017)[2].

Pedagogies

One way of beginning is with a broad definition of pedagogy. Pedagogy is concerned with scientific, theoretical, and practical questions and challenges in relation to upbringing, learning, teaching, *bildung*, education, and the specific means and methods thereof[3]. It is also concerned with the ongoing questioning, critiquing, and re-theorisation of 'itself' (pedagogy), questioning and critiquing the ways in which pedagogies and societies relate or are interwoven, that is, to engaging in and questioning the normative, ethical, and political dimensions of pedagogies, alongside their effects and concerns (Korsgaard, Kristensen & Siggaard Jensen 2017).

1 No page number, quote from https://bifrostonline.org/reclaiming-the-entangled-colors-of-life-in-the-face-of-the-anthropocene/

2 While also meeting the concern voiced, for example, by Zakiyyah Jackson (2015) that "appeals to move 'beyond the human' may actually reintroduce the Eurocentric transcendentalism this movement purports to disrupt, particularly with regard to the historical and ongoing distributive ordering of race" (2015, p. 215). See also Zembylas, 2018.

3 For a discussion of the concept of bildung and steps towards a posthumanist reconceptualization, see Taylor 2016

Of course, historically, different societies and cultural contexts have had different visions as to the concerns of pedagogy. In Nordic states, for instance, leading pedagogical visions have been concerned with promoting (relative) equality, democracy, and the development of active citizenship/civil society, which is in line with these countries' status as social welfare states (Korsgaard, Kristensen & Siggaard Jensen, 2017). In countries practising other forms of government, the pedagogical visions differ correspondingly[4]. Conventionally, the human (cultivating, liberating, emancipating the human) is placed in centre of attention in pedagogy and pedagogical thinking. In this respect, much pedagogy and pedagogical thinking has played and still plays a role in the staging of the human as privileged and 'exceptional' beings in the world (Snaza 2015, Sonu & Snaza 2015, Taylor 2016), as pointed out by feminist new materialist inspired research in sustainability and climate change education (see for example Taylor, 2017; Verlie, 2018; Mannion, 2019; Johns-Putra; 2013). Furthermore, many pedagogical theories set at their heart the development of the (white) child into a (flexible) citizen as their im- or explicit concern (see for example Hultqvist & Dahlberg 2001, Fendler 2000 for such observations and critique). Another concern is the education and normalisation/'integration'/'assimilation' of the Other (for example Gillborn & Ladson-Billings eds. 2004; Gillborn, 2003, 2008; Staunæs, 2004; Kofoed, 2004, Haavind et al, 2015; Phoenix, 2009).

Posthumanist, decolonial and feminist new materialist approaches to pedagogy, teaching, and learning advance an implicit and explicit critique of such concerns. The literature on this is now extensive, for example: *Teaching with Feminist Materialisms,* edited by Hinton & Treusch (2015); *Pedagogical Matters: New Materialisms and Curriculum Studies,* edited by Snaza et al (2016); a special issue of Gender and Education titled *Material Feminisms: New Directions for Education,* edited by Taylor & Ilvinson (2013); a special edition of Gender and Education titled *Shifting*

[4] However, one could note that pedagogical ideals and practices undergo changes and standardisations vis–à-vis years of impact of the 'OECD-ification' of education via ranking of the educational standard/quality of countries, cities, and schools through technologies such as PISA, transnational reforms and standardisations of higher education (Brøgger, 2016).

education's philosophical imaginaries: relations, affects, bodies, materialities, edited by Todd, Jones & O'Donnell (2016); and *Socially just pedagogies: Posthumanist, feminist and materialist perspectives in higher education,* edited by Braidotti, Bozalek, Shefer & Zembylas (2018), alongside a themed special issue of Parallax on *Posthuman Pedagogies* edited by Bayley and Taylor (2018)[5]. It is important to note that many of the assumptions and objectives found in prominent pedagogical theories have long been questioned by proponents of feminism, postcolonialism, emancipatory pedagogy, norm-critical pedagogy, queer theory and post-structuralism (for example Cooks & Simpson 2007, Davies 2000, Halberstam 2003, hooks 1994, Kumashiro 2002, Lather 1991; 2012, Frosh, Phoenix & Pattman 2001, Lenz Taguchi 2010, Rodriguez & Villaverde 2000, Staunæs 2004, Walsh 2015, MacLure 2003).

Subject-object divisions are continuously made in education and pedagogy. Students in Western contexts tend to be taught relations of externality, as they are supposed to learn about something that is in the world 'out there' and which is delineated in relation to them while granting agency to the human (for such observations in schools see for example Sonu & Snaza 2015[6]). They are taught to think of time as evenly spaced out linear sequences 'designed' to measure action and being, and to think of space as context, demoted to mere container, and of materiality as something passive, without agency (or with an agency that humans (attempt to) control/master). The language that is used constantly separates and divides and hierarchizes (Juelskjær & Plauborg 2013, 2017).

These separations and hierarchies can be considered part of the global problems that we now face. Sonu and Snaza (2015) suggest, "It is a task of pedagogical research to keep investigating what is it that impedes the possibility of acknowledging our entanglement with nature" (Sonu & Snaza, 2015, p.259). I would add that it is

5 The bibliography contains additional resources to those cited in the paper. This is intended to gesture towards the richness of the field, and hopefully inspire further readings.
6 "[..] the history of Western educational thought continues to centralize the human as the only sole proprietor of agency, with the teacher as the intervening subject to potentiate this agency and thus transform the world (Sonu & Snaza 2015: 259).

perhaps not 'only' about gesturing towards what are the possibilities of acknowledging (instead of impeding) entanglements, but also the 'sensing' living/being of such entanglements. Perhaps pedagogical research and pedagogy can facilitate ways of 'sensing' living/being of such entanglements? To this end, let us now engage with some contributions to feminist new materialist thinking that may enable us to work (sense, learn, be, act) from within entanglements instead of subject-object binaries.

Mattering pedagogy

Karen Barad's onto-epistemological theorizing can provide inspiration in approaching humans' entanglements with the world. Barad states, "Practices of knowing and being are not isolable; they are mutually implicated […] we know because we are of the world. We are part of the world in its differential becoming" (Barad 2007: 185). Humans are not an exceptional species with individual status/life, but co-emergent and differentially enacted with natural, spatial, technological and biosocial milieus, as well as with more-than-human others/companions. In this understanding, we come to know/learn as beings of a world in ongoing becoming or 'worlding'; all distinctions are effects of specific entanglements, enacted in specific phenomena (Barad 2007).

When enacting these insights in pedagogy and pedagogical research, the everyday, taken-for-granted teaching-learning ontology, with its distinctions between theory/practice, subject/object, time/space, content/competences, and discourse/matter, is actively disrupted and re-imagined. In learning processes, the qualities of 'content' and 'competences/skills' are understood as coming into being as intra-active forces of materialization; forces that, as mentioned, are not only human. In addition, the ontology of competences (as competences could be said to be a 'target' of pedagogy) shifts from something acquired, individually held, and 'transportable' (Biggs and Tang, 2011; Chapman and O'Neill, 2010) to radically entangled becoming with no fixed beginning or end (Juelskjær, 2017). In turn, this fundamentally changes the pedagogical situation and arrangement. However, this does *not* mean that nothing is acquired, nothing is changed (Plauborg, 2018), but

rather that the definitions in feminist new materialist thinking of *what, who, how, where, and to what effect* in relation to pedagogy and didactics are reoriented[7]. Taking further inspiration from Barad's theorizing, one could say that these categories or parameters are placed in a state of ontological indeterminacy. Quantum in-determinacy (in Barad's conceptualization) is an ever-present, vibrant ontological in-determinacy of being/nonbeing of all possible beings (and all possible entanglements of a specific phenomenon). Space and time as we know them are put out of joint and we inherit all possible pasts and all possible futures. "'Now' is […] an infinitely rich condensed node in a changing field diffracted across spacetime in its ongoing iterative repatterning" (Barad, 2014, p.169). Consequently, we can never be certain what is being learned, nor when learning something is 'fully' achieved (Juelskjær & Plauborg, 2017).

When foregrounding ontological (quantum) indeterminacy in relation to pedagogical matters (see also for example de Freitas & Sinclair, 2018), rather than a conventional understanding of the acquisition of skills and competences, there is an argument for focusing instead on a fundamentally different ability: a *capability* (not a competence) to levitate, to postpone resolution (Staunæs & Brøgger, 2019), to remain open to what may be/come. This capability of levitating also entails opening up for sensing/being as *response-ability;* that is, of rendering each other (each possible other) capable of response (Haraway, 2016; Despret, 2016). It entails a sensibility or sensation of being part of specific entanglements, of 'lacking' individual existence, while responding *specifically* as part of that phenomenon. In other words, it is not a (psychotic) openness to everything at all times. Responding and enabling response with human, as well as non- and more-than-human bodies, demands affective

[7] 'Didactics' is understood in different ways in different traditions. Within *this* context it concerns the goal and the bilding aspect of schooling and, more practically, the how, what and why of the practical planning, carrying out and evaluation of teaching and learning (Plauborg 2011). Didactics therefore concerns a certain professionalization of the teacher's work. Didactical questions are generated for use in "[…] reflective planning processes and analyses of ongoing teaching: what is being taught and learnt, how is this effected, and why – with what purpose – is this carried out" (Osbeck, Ingerman & Claesson 2018: 12).

attunement and a concern for un-othering 'the other' in pedagogy. I will return to these points a little later.

That there are affective components to relating and becoming, or that becoming involves intensities and forces of affecting and affected more-than-human and human bodies, is taken into account by many scholars - often inspired by Deleuze's work on affect - and is furthermore theorized in relation to pedagogy (see for example Bergsted 2017b, de Freitas & Sinclair 2014, Lenz Taguchi 2010, Ringrose & Renold, 2016). For example, Hickey-Moody argues, "the materiality of affect, as a meta-subjective exchange, can be considered a posthuman pedagogy" (2009, p.273). Compared to a conventional understanding of pedagogy (as outlined above), there is a substantial shift in the focus of 'who' is teaching 'whom' 'what' and 'how'. Hickey-Moody draws on Deleuze's concept of *affectus*, defined as "'an increase or decrease of the power of acting, for the body and the mind alike' [...] *Affectus* is the materiality of change: 'the passage from one state to another' (Deleuze, p.49), which occurs in relation to 'affecting bodies'" (2009, p.273). Hickey-Moody further explains *affectus* to be a

> rhythmic trace of the world incorporated into a body-becoming, an expression of an encounter between a corporeal form and forces that are not necessarily 'human'. Literature, sound, and dance are creative media that prompt affective responses and generate *affectus*. Through creating subjective change (or a modulation) in the form of affectus, such media are posthuman pedagogies: meta-subjective material forces of change. [..] The enmeshment of individual, 'human' subjective traits with a non-human medium (word–sound–movement) is *affectus*, and it is this enmeshment that is a kind of pedagogy: a rhythmic trace of sensation incorporated into the body-becoming. (Hickey-Moody 2009, p.274).

Enmeshments, assemblages and phenomena are all concepts for 'sites' of entangling relations that produce what comes to matter. In the above passage from Hickey-Moody, enmeshments are the coming-into-being of something in particular;

a (sensation/sensorial) difference is produced. Attention to how these differences are produced, and to what effect, is important.

To what effect?

Learning is phenomenal (Lenz Taguchi, 2010); it is always enacted in specific arrangements that effect specific entanglements. A fundamental insight of quantum in-determinacy (as explained previously) is that the world is in an ongoing process of iterative becoming, and at some stage, there is no way of settling or knowing what is or will be, as in-determinacy keeps all possible effects and causes open and active. With in-determinacy, there is always much more (and much less) present than that which we are focused on 'fixing' or achieving. As we participate in the determination of something, the world and we are enabled, we are worlded, in a specific way. Following this line of thinking, there will be consequences for how to engage in practices within formal education of measuring learning, measuring skills and in assessing which learning environments to consider as 'better' than others. O'Donnell uses this in-determinacy productively to consider the terms for 'identifying' and facilitating effective educational atmospheres:

> What makes an atmosphere effective in education is not susceptible to being captured by a generic model; however, we can be certain that where we find a deadening homogeneity, education will be ineffective. Education requires a heterogeneous milieu, but what will create this heterogeneity cannot be prescribed in advance. The atmosphere of education supports (or destroys) the capacity to receive the unpredictable and to invite surprise, allowing us as teachers and students to undergo the event of a pedagogical encounter. Cultivating the disposition to welcome and take care of the singularity of the other helps to conserve such an atmosphere. As educational practitioners, part of our role is to prepare this invisible terrain in order to facilitate the possibility of an event or an encounter that will lead to transformation. (O'Donnell, 2013, p.281)

This attention to atmospheres also implies attention to the arrangements, the sites (both physical and virtual) of activities, as "[p]edagogies of places negotiate flows and create spaces where matter, desire, human and more-than-human come together to modulate the self in relation to the world" (Duhn, 2012, p.104). In other words, pedagogy may become environmental (Massumi, 2009), involving the orchestration and negotiation of place, affects, activities and relations. Pursuing these ideas, I will conclude this paper with a brief outline of how to 'eventalize' and 'sensorialize' teaching and learning (and the planning, carrying out and evaluation of teaching), with inspiration from affective geology.

Un-othering otherness – entangled differentiations

'Who' is teaching 'whom' 'what' and 'how' becomes de-naturalized in feminist new materialist pedagogy. What constitutes a 'who' when attempting to break free from human exceptionalism? Who is in need of listening, learning, doing? And what are the relations of obligations? Who gets to judge? One way of troubling human exceptionalism is to conduct research on non-human learners (Despret, 2016; Haraway, 2008). Simon Ceder analyses the presence of a dog that accompanies students in learning situations: "The literacy dog is viewed as a natureculture phenomenon that decenters the idea of what it means to be an educational subject/relata. The decentering process contributes to rethinking the body's release of oxytocin and other bodily functions as intra-relational materiality" (Ceder, 2015, p.150). What might be the (learning) capabilities enacted in the student-dog intra-actions? (see also for example Nxumalo & Pacini-Ketchabaw, 2017). Ceder's example both highlights humans' co-presence with companion species (Haraway 2008) and negotiates and rethinks the materiality of the body and its borders: Where does one body end and the other begin, and how is what enacted in relations of learning? Feminist new materialist reworkings of the concept of the body have had, and continue to have, a profound productive impact on rethinking pedagogy (de Freitas & Sinclair 2014, de Freitas 2018, Taguchi 2009 and many others). Related to questions of the body is *that and how* bodies are marked and come to matter.

Mattering involves differentiations as well as processes of delegitimization. Continuously, with every intra-action, education may be considered as "crucial material assemblages for racializing, engendering, and identifying human subjects" (Snaza et al 2016: xix); in other words, as processes of differentiating and hierarchizing. This is 'old bad news' in critical social thinking, and feminist new materialist thinking regarding pedagogy may address such issues by joining forces with and drawing inspiration from other approaches, such as critical race scholars and decolonial thinking (see, for instance, *Socially just pedagogies: Posthumanist, feminist and materialist perspectives in higher education* (2018) edited by Braidotti, Bozalek, Shefer, and Zembylas).

A pedagogy of entanglements involves the understanding that relations to others – be it other humans, non- or more-than-humans – are not relations of externality:

> Entanglements are relations of obligation—being bound to the other—enfolded traces of othering. Othering, the constitution of an "Other," entails an indebtedness to the "Other," who is irreducibly and materially bound to, threaded through, the "self"—a diffraction/dispersion of identity. "Otherness" is an entangled relation of difference (*différance*). Ethicality entails noncoincidence with oneself. (Barad, 2012, p.217)

Attending to matters of differentiation is not optional but is how mattering takes place; something that we are all differentially enabled through and response-able in relation to. Furthermore, entanglements are not relations of Euclidian proximity; we are bound to others that we have not yet even begun to sense, that we are indebted to and are co-becoming with. A brief glance at sustainability education in different areas such as the Global South (Mendoza-Zuany, 2019, Masoga & Shokane 2019) and Scandinavia (Olsen, 2018) could testify that while we are all in this crisis/this situation of urgency often referred to as the Anthropocene, we are differently enacted, conditioned, concerned and un/privileged, sensing effects and taking action in different ways (Blaser & de la Cadena 2018, Nelson et al 2018, TallBear 2015, 2017, Nxumalo & Cedillo 2017). This calls for a shift in attunement to the ongoing production of 'the distant others'. A pedagogy may start grappling with how to

experiment with ways of enabling sensing and caring, where "caring means becoming subject to the unsettling obligation of curiosity, which requires knowing more at the end of the day than at the beginning" (Haraway, 2008, p.36). As such, the questions of how to come to know, and what constitutes the matter/s of knowledge, are crucial.

Tuning the sensorium

> The most compelling contribution of the new materialisms is not conceptual or analytic, strictly speaking, but sensory. The attempt to attend to the force of liveliness of matter will entail not just a reawakening or redirection of critical attention, but a reorganizing of the senses, departing from the limitations of the Aristotelian model. (Dana Luciano in interview, Roudeau 2015, p.7)

In this last part of the paper, I turn to Dana Luciano's reflections on affective geology, pointing towards a pedagogy (and pedagogical research) engaged in facilitating ways of 'sensing' living/being of nature/culture, human/more-than-human, self/other entanglements.

There is a complex process of (re/un)learning involved in turning sensing rooted in divisions, hierarchies and otherings into sensing stemming from entanglements, enmeshments and assemblages: a faculty of sensing-being and sensing-acting, a becoming-being of the world/worlding, which has no natural, *a priori* delimitations. This involves a profound redistribution of relations of sensing. The term 'sensorium' comes from the Latin *sensus*: the faculty of perceiving (Jones 2006, Juelskjær 2016). It is a term denoting the totality of those parts of the brain that receive, process and interpret sensory stimuli. The sensorium is the supposed seat of sensation, the place to which impressions from the external world are conveyed and perceived. The sensorium also refers to the entire sensory apparatus of the body (Jones 2006, Juelskjær 2016). With a posthuman framing, however, the faculty of perceiving - the borders of where the body begins and ends, what's inside and outside, what sensing

'is' - is not given once and for all. Existence, sensing and learning are not individual affairs. And sensing is not a 'here-and-now' phenomenon - contained in one moment in time, located in one place. Instead, sensing opens up multiple specific spatio-temporalities (Juelskjær 2016)[8].

Atmospheric pedagogy

Foregrounding the sensorium in relation to pedagogy also means that pedagogy and teaching practices are strategically aestheticized, or, as Michels and Beyes (2016) argue, become atmospheric. An atmosphere, argues Stewart, is not an inert context, but a force field in which people find themselves (Stewart, 2011, p.452). Atmospheric encounters, then, are a framing of the quality of the aesthetic eventalization of teaching and learning (see also O'Donnell 2013). Turning something into an 'event' (Foucault 2000) opens up for speculation and innovation: "In eventalization the invitation is the point. Not as a superficial gesture, but as a committed offer, at the same time transparent and closing around itself, because only under these conditions will eventalization remain worthy of eventalizations yet to come" (Born, Frankel, and Thygesen 2006, p.212). Events are diffracted with other events reconfiguring specific entanglements of meaning-matter, skills and capabilities.

Pedagogies of place, affective geology, assemblage pedagogy, slow pedagogy are just some of the terms for approaches currently exploring new ground and thereby offering inspiration regarding how to enable a different sensorium by facilitating events. Walking labs, art-based practices, listening to deep-time and stone walks are

[8] One could also draw inspiration from Manning's theorizing of the senses: "If we understand sensing as more than a motor response, we are in a position to explore the unknowability of sense. In other words, sensing need not express a sensation we have already experienced. To sense may also be to know differently, in excess of my current appreciation of 'my' body. It is in this regard that sensing can be considered a prosthetic to the biological body. To sense may be to create a new body. If new bodies are what is at stake, new politics will have to be created. A democracy-to-come cannot know in advance what or where or who the body is. Democracy as a sensing politics is a movement toward making sense(s), towards new orientations of experience". (Manning 2016: 131)

all examples of what could be termed a 'geo-affective turn', which is also a turn towards new ways of sensing, being of and with the world:

> Against the alleged sensory deadening of an anthropocentric and linguistically-focused criticism, the geological or geo-affective turn might help to launch an effort to learn to think less of ourselves as we learn to sense more of the world. (Luciano in interview, Roudeau, 2015, p.7)

An example of this is the project and performance series *Sound of Mull*, developed by Ann Rawlings (Rawlings, 2019) as part of her dissertation work as artistic practice-as-research into how to perform geochronology in the Anthropocene. Rawlings worked at different sites along North Atlantic foreshores where collective performances offered direct or imagined engagement with the multiple temporalities and more-than-human co-constituents. Based on these performances, Rawlings published an art book, which also contains concrete and very evocative strategies for how to sense/listen to deep time. Luciano states that "[s]ensing in geological time places different pressures on how one thinks about what can be felt in the body" (Luciano in interview, Roudeau, 2015, p.2): Could deep-time pedagogy be one way (of many) of tuning into a more-than-human sensorium and articulating transmaterial and transcorporeal entanglements?

Similarly engaged with temporality and with human and more-than-human bodies is Neimanis and Loewen Walker's (2014) work on "weathering" and "weather writing", a transcorporeal take concerning climatic intra-actions and concerning how human and non-/more-than-human intra-actions are weathering the world. The concept of weathering acknowledges human impact on climate, but insists that this should not efface the material agency of non-human participants. Weathering argues against the idea of humans as omnipotent masters of the weather or climate (Neimanis 2015, p.141), developing specific notions of temporality to work through the aporia of the inbuilt (and deadlocked) temporalities in the concept of climate change: "This project reminds us that we are not masters of the climate, nor are we just spatially 'in' it. As weather-bodies, we are thick with climatic intra-actions; we are makers of climate-time. Together we are weathering the world" (2014, p.558). Neimanis and Loewen

Walker suggest 'thick time' as a "a transcorporeal stretching between present, future, and past—in order to reimagine our bodies as archives of climate and as making future climates possible" (Neimanis and Loewen Walker, 2014, p.558).

Exit: adding resources to the field

I find that the above mentioned examples of geo-affective research practices resonate with facilitating the previously mentioned capability of levitating: a capability of postponing resolution, rendering each other (each possible other) capable of response, entailing a sensation of being part of specific (spacetimematter) entanglements, a sensibility or sensation of 'lacking' individual existence, while responding *specifically* as part of an enacted phenomenon. Affective geology is a "turning of the necessarily speculative work of geology into a form of aesthetic and sensory experience" (Luciano in Roudeau, 2015, p.2). We may think of the research examples here presented as examples that may be used to develop a geo-affective, atmospheric pedagogy that involves response-ability and engagements that are sensitive to differentiations. Such a pedagogy must focus on what a posthumanist sensorium might look like and how to achieve such a sensibility: an ethics of response-ability for all entanglements. Projects such as these may be fruitful for speculative moves of eventalizing (the planning, carrying out and evaluation of) teaching and learning from within a response-able pedagogy that aims to "lay the human subject on a horizontal vulnerability (as opposed to a vertical relation of hierarchy) in order to build a mutual constitution from which an ethics of naturecultural entanglement may grow" (Sonu & Snaza 2015: 259), and may initiate the transformation of ways of knowing, sensing and relating.

In moving forward with feminist new materialist analyses of pedagogy, I think it would be fruitful to think about natureculture pedagogies of the sensorium and to begin to develop frameworks through which these pedagogies may be researched. Policy agendas that facilitate such research would also be welcomed, with a view to reversing climate change and building sustainable educational futures.

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Roundtable discussion: Thinking together from within the times that worry us

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Abstract

The inaugural section of "Praxiography: practices and institutions" of *Matter: Journal of New Materialist Research* features a roundtable discussion between five scholars who address matters pertaining to practices, legacies, and affects that comprise today's academia. Preceded by editors' introduction, Gurminder K. Bhambra, Andrea Pető, Jessie Loyer, Mariya Ivancheva, and Nanna Hlín Halldórsdóttir offer their reflections on ways of organising, living, and imagining various research and academic praxes by means of thinking with the concepts of resistance, collaboration,

solidarity, care, and kinship and consider them from feminist, de-colonial, Indigenous, and other anti-oppressive perspectives.

Keywords

Academic practices, higher education, decolonization, precarity, feminist practices of care

Introduction

We are worried. About job security and student debt. About political climate and climate change. In Hungary the right-wing government of Viktor Orbán withdrew accreditation and funding from gender studies programmes; in Turkey, academic freedom is under threat and signatories of the "Peace Petition" (organized by a group Academics for Peace and circulated in January 2016) face prison time; and the anti-LGBTQ and anti-feminist sentiments are on the rise. For us, as curators of this roundtable, being worried about the state of things provided an impulse to offer a space and a time to worry together as a collective practice of hearing each other out: acknowledging others' concerns, sharing our own and thinking how we as academics could respond to what preoccupies us. We are researchers working within academia – sometimes against it, at its fringes, and sometimes beyond it. This is why in this panel discussion we wanted to situate and start a conversation about things that trouble, upset, and fill us with worry with regards to "our own backyard," the world of academia. Academia is a heterogeneous terrain – in terms of power relations, communities it affects, includes, and excludes, voices it mis/represents, narratives it legitimises, wipes out, or creates. Academia is a microcosm of a sort, in which precarious working conditions, neoliberal exploitation, and hopes for the better future percolate through each other. We wish to zoom into some of those worries and dreams, lessons and strategies, "values and facts […] cooked together as part of one brew" (Barad et al., 2012, p. 16) in today's university.

As editors of a section "Praxiography*: practices and institutions"[1] of a new academic journal *Matter: Journal of New Materialist Research* we wanted this roundtable discussion to provide an opportunity to engage with topics of research practices, critique of institutional structures, and to host bold explorations of ways of organising, living, and imagining various research/academic praxes. Thus, we aim at politics of new materialisms that is about putting feminist new materialisms to work (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012, p. 101) through diffracting theoretical reflection, personal experiences and practice in search for more just and liveable ways to think, feel, and act. To this effect we invited five scholars, whose activism and theoretical inventiveness have been an inspiration to us, to share their insights on the state of today's university from their own situated (Haraway, 1988) perspectives. The voices gathered here contribute to the politics of feminist new materialisms by directing our readers' attention to questions of knowledge production, canons, and classifications and, specifically, by thinking how to destabilize them. These objectives – to our minds – are central to feminist new materialisms.

Our intention was to bring together their distinct voices and feminist, Indigenous, decolonial, and anti-oppressive perspectives on practicing as researchers, teachers, and activists – rooted both in academic environments and in our respective communities. The invited contributors are not necessarily coming from feminist new materialisms' perspectives or identify themselves with this body of work. We strongly believe that offering spaces for dialogue across disciplines, theoretical standpoints, methodologies, generations, and various feminist genealogies to which we are indebted constitutes an effort to break outside of the often limiting borders and classifixations (van der Tuin, 2015) and to share worries, struggles, experiences, coping strategies, and solidarity beyond them.

[1] The term "praxiography" was coined by Annemarie Mol (2002) and, independently, developed by members of working group "New Materialisms: Tackling Economical and Identity Political Crises and Organizational Experiments" of COST Action IS1307 New Materialism: Networking European Scholarship on "How Matter Comes to Matter". See Allhutter et al. (2019).

Thinking about our own worries and shared concerns from within our academic situatedness and wondering about the ways in which academia may respond to contemporary political, environmental, and social crises and systemic violences, we encouraged our invited authors to approach the following five notions:

Resistance: We asked: In times of "anti-gender mobilization", the rise of anti-migrant sentiments and the far-right, which forms of organizing and resisting make you hopeful? What are we up against and what tools to respond do we have as members of the academic community?

Collaboration: How can we imagine academic practices and collaborations otherwise, be it through, for example, (more collectively oriented) research, teaching, organizing (e.g. academic events, work, institutional structure, etc.), peer-reviewing, writing, or publishing?

Solidarity: It seems that today we're seeing many examples of intersectional and transnational practices of solidarity. We're thinking for example about the support for Polish struggles against the abortion ban coming from all over the world, especially places like Argentina or South Korea. From your perspective, what is your take on how solidarity and support travel between various contexts or struggles? This also makes us wonder what needs to be done for gestures of "solidarity" and support not to reproduce the same-old white and western routes of power?

Care: Within neoliberal institutions of higher education academics face challenges concerning the quality of their lives, precarious forms of employment, and responsibility as teachers and researchers for both their work and its relevance and for their students, mentorees, colleagues, and collaborators. We see care as an important term that could help us negotiate between resilience, self-care, and the care for one's (academic) community. How might care be practiced in academia?

And finally, kinship, as a notion that makes us think about how practicing care, solidarity, and collaboration is rooted in our own "situatedness", meaning the concrete context or place from which we speak. This situatedness includes, among other

things, our feminist histories or traditions, genealogies, and intergenerational influences. How does such "locality" inform your own practice?

Those questions were meant as an inspiration and a gesture of welcoming to enter a conversation. We felt grateful and touched by the depth of the received responses, and the generosity of the contributors as they shared their insights, strategies, and experiences with us and the readers of this journal.

This assemblage of feminist voices is opened by Gurminder K. Bhambra, scholar of postcolonial and decolonial studies. In her reflexive piece she identifies colonial legacies and the stakes of decolonizing the university: which communities the universities serve, which kinds of narratives create which kinds of worlds, and how to "do the work"? Gender studies scholar, Andrea Pető, shares reflections on how to "do the work" of feminist resistance in the context of "anti-gender mobilization" in Hungary and the lessons learnt from it. She encourages the reader to think how resistance may emerge from within shared precariousness and vulnerability. Jessie Loyer, an Indigenous (Cree-Métis) librarian, talks about responsibility for and accountability to her genealogies and communities and how it grounds her work. How to mobilize notion of academia that responds to the needs of a collective, how to produce knowledge that "actually *creates* collective" (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2012, p. 203), how – being an academic – to be attentive to the fact that – paraphrasing Haraway – everything comes with its world. Anthropologist and sociologist Mariya Ivancheva directs our attention to how new technologies (initially promising) work in neoliberal university contributing to community-unbuilding practices and performing new forms of exclusion, exploitation, and precarity. How are we to respond? Feminist philosopher Nanna Hlín Halldórsdóttir shares a personal account of her struggles within, against, and beyond neoliberal academia. She meanders between the economic crash and health problems, speeding up and slowing down, learning and unlearning, individual tiredness and collective efforts. "Why am I still here?" asks Halldórsdóttir and we learn how much energy and tiredness the response requires.

There is a political dimension to being worried, preoccupied, tired, disappointed. Much as there is to anger (Lorde, 1984), complaint (Ahmed, 2018), or depression

(Cvetkovich, 2012). The recognition of possible modes of resistance, care, or solidarity needs time to think, to worry, to create connections, and to take responsibility for how we produce knowledge and imagine academia. We wish to invite readers to read the following five short essays. They are distinct in many ways: writing styles, academic backgrounds, their author's situatedness, and theoretical approaches. They diagnose different reasons to be worried about and offer various ways to stay with what worries and act. We do not wish to close this variety with concluding remarks from the curators as we believe we are just in the middle of grasping what political stakes may emerge from sharing worries. We think of this roundtable as an open and ongoing invitation to rethink resistance, collaboration, solidarity, care, and kinship with our authors and readers.

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Decolonising the university: some reflections

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In recent years, there has been a coalescence of various movements and campaigns under the broad term, "decolonising the university" (see Bhambra et al., 2018). These have included movements such as Rhodes Must Fall and Fees Must Fall in South Africa, as well as Rhodes Must Fall Oxford in the United Kingdom, and broader movements for curriculum reform across a variety of countries. This, in turn, has provoked – too numerous to cite – media commentators, politicians, and academics from the UK, Hungary, Australia, Brazil, among other places, to warn against the threats posed to the very foundations of Western civilisation and its institutions if such calls are heeded. It is quite illuminating how quickly and how intense the pushback against any call for change within the university has been. The university, as John Dewey argues, is one of the vital repositories of the common learning of communities (see Holmwood, 2011). If we accept this understanding of the university then we should also recognise that, as those communities change, so our understandings of the present and the past are also transformed. What people seem to be concerned with, then, is the changing composition of the communities that universities serve. Let me use gender here as a way to illustrate the issues and point to how such

concerns are longstanding. While I will focus on the UK, I suggest that the arguments I make are pertinent across a variety of sites.

When universities in the UK opened up to women in greater numbers in the postwar period, and especially after reforms which created a system of mass higher education in the 1960s, one of the first things that women found was that women could not be found in these institutions. For some female scholars, this absence required address. In terms of the curriculum – of knowledge production – this was done by seeking to identify women as both the objects and subjects of research and by coming to argue for the need of a feminist perspective across disciplines and other areas of study (see Bhambra, 2007). They addressed both what was to be taught as well as who should teach and, in the process, changed these institutions. Within the UK, it is not a mainstream opinion to suggest that the curriculum or universities are being distorted or disfigured by the inclusion of women and feminist perspectives. So, what are we to make of those who criticise the call to decolonise our institutions?

Just as some men found gender equality a challenge to their sense of self, it's not surprising perhaps that those whose sense of self is intimately tied to the idea of Empire having been a force for good in the world, are unsettled by arguments to the contrary. In this context, what I find surprising is how they locate such criticisms as forms of identity politics when it is quite clear that the only politics of identity being peddled here is their own.

Any number of commentators, on being confronted by the trade in human beings, often respond by saying, yes that was bad, but we did abolish the trade. It is correct that Britain did abolish the trade, after over 200 years of profiting from it, but this is not the only thing that was done. As Catherine Hall and Nicholas Draper have made publicly known, Britain also paid compensation of £20 million – or £65 billion in today's money, or the equivalent of 40% of GDP – to those people who had lost property in the process (see Hall et al., 2014). Just to be clear, enslaved people *were not compensated for their loss of liberty*; rather the people who had *owned other people as property were compensated for their loss*. This money was used to fuel the

industrial revolution, build country houses, and endow public schools, Oxford and Cambridge colleges, and art institutions.

In February 2018, the Treasury rather ineptly tweeted that "we", that is British taxpayers, did not finish paying off the bond that had been raised to pay out this compensation until 2015. Yes, current taxpayers, and their parents and grand-parents and great-grand-parents – not just in the British national state, but *across its imperial provinces* – paid through taxes to compensate British slave-owners and their descendants for ending the abomination that was slavery. This fact either rarely makes it into standard discussions of abolition or, if it does, there's usually some muttering about the rule of law and the necessity to compensate for the loss of property however distasteful we might find the fact that people – in a different time, with different moralities, etc. – regarded it legitimate to own other people.

This claim, however, is not then followed by agreement with the idea of more general reparations to compensate those across the colonial empire who had lost property. That is, those who were dispossessed from their lands, whose right to property in themselves was taken from them, or in compensation for the resources that were extracted – to the tune of $45 trillion from India alone as the economist Utsa Patnaik (2017) has calculated. If the rule of law and the right to be compensated for property lost is central to who we think we are – is central to all articulations of British values – then why not generalise the process and compensate all those others? What is the obstacle to doing so? Saying that "we know that slavery was wrong because we abolished it" erases the historical narratives of those who had always opposed slavery – including successfully as in the Haitian Revolution (see Bhambra, 2016). It also pretends that we knew it was wrong prior to others telling us so, even as we argue that it is not possible to judge the past according to the standards of the present. Which is it? Because logically you cannot have it both ways.

The reason for presenting this extended example is to say that decolonising the curriculum, fundamentally, is about transforming the "common-sense" narratives we have about how the world we share in common was configured. What I have argued about British colonialism is true of the colonialisms of other European countries. It

also includes those who believe themselves to be exempt because their own states were not significant contributors to colonialism and imperialism. Yet, all settler colonies were constituted by the "emigrationist colonialism" of populations across Europe – including Northern and Eastern Europe. For example, during the nineteenth century, over two million Polish people moved to the lands that come to be known as the Americas, as did over a million Swedes, constituting about a fifth of the total Swedish population. This was a movement of populations that benefitted those that remained as well as those that moved. If we do not adequately understand the shared histories that produced us, we have no hope in constructing a politics that will effectively address the many challenges we face.

Our institutions of learning are complicit in such reproduction to the extent that they do not adequately challenge the politics of selective memory that is reproduced every time we evade our past instead of confronting it directly and honestly. Yet, standard philosophies of science argue that knowledge proceeds through changing previous "selections", opening up to new "objects" of inquiry, and reconstructing concepts and categories to provide new understandings of what we thought we knew. "Decolonising" is properly thought of as integral to what constitutes the very meaning of a curriculum.

To end, I want to offer three suggestions of what could be done to transform our curricula and our institutions of learning. Firstly, do the work, whatever you understand the work to be in the context of the broader projects of social justice that are the necessary ground for any work within the university. Do not let, in Tuck and Wang's (2012) widely cited refrain, decolonisation be a metaphor and do not think that decolonisation is going to happen primarily in the university (although it is also needed in the university). Secondly, following Toni Morrison (1975), don't get distracted; whether by social media or by those demanding you prove the legitimacy of your own existence. Just do the work. Thirdly, remember that the injunction to self-care was not an end in itself, but that if you did not look after yourself you couldn't serve your community. The processes in need of being dismantled and transformed

have been in train for over 500 years and so the work that continues to be needed is extensive and requires us to work together.

There is little that matters in this context other than doing the work. And, in doing the work, we are doing the work of the university as properly understood – as constituting the university as a repository of the common learning of communities.

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After resistance: Lessons learned from banning gender studies in Hungary

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In October 2018, the Hungarian government’s decree revoked license of a two-year study program in gender studies without giving any explanation and without having consulted with professional institutions nor the accreditation committee (Pető, 2018a). There were two universities in Hungary where this accredited Master’s program was taught: at Central European University (CEU), a private university in English that receives no public funding since 2006, and at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), a public university in Hungarian with public funding from 2017 (Pető, 2018b). The Hungarian government crossed the line when intervening in the field of education with an ideological agenda and its action evoked bad memories of communist censorship.

Gender recently became the centre of political debates. To explain how that happened, based on our analyses of situations in Poland and Hungary, together with Eszter Kovats and Weronika Grzebalska we came up with the concept of “gender as symbolic glue”. Symbolic glue is a metaphor that is somehow able to tap into people’s feelings of uncertainty about the world around them and direct them against equality issues. It also generates dynamic discussions. Gender works as a symbolic glue in different ways. First, the notion of gender is constructed in such a way that it becomes perceived as a threatening concept. The right has united separate contested issues and attributed them to the umbrella term of “the progressive agenda”. And then there

is the concept of "gender ideology", which is constructed by those who consider gender as a concept to demonstrate the failure of liberal democracy. The opposition to this so-called "gender ideology" has become a means of rejecting certain facets of the current social and economic order, from the prioritisation of identity politics over material issues such as labour conditions or housing to the weakening of people's social, cultural and political security. Secondly, the demonization of "gender ideology" has become a key rhetorical tool in the construction of a new concept of common sense for a wide audience, a form of consensus of what is normal and legitimate. It is important to note that this social mobilisation against "gender ideology" and political correctness does not just demonise the worldview of liberal democracy and reject the human rights' paradigm which has long been the object of relative consensus in Europe and North America. But the anti-equality movements also offer a livable, viable alternative centered on the family, the nation and religious values, as well as freedom of speech. This alternative to the neoliberal progressive narrative is widely attractive because it offers a positive identification of individual's own choices, and it promises a safe and secure community as a remedy for individualism and social atomisation. Thirdly, the opposition to "gender ideology" is also a possibility for the right to create a broad alliance and unite various actors that have not necessarily been eager to cooperate in the past. That is why fighting against those forces who use the concept of gender and equality to mobilize hate and exclusion is an imperative not only for gender studies scholars independently. It is also an imperative to admit that we have lost a battle in this war. "Gender as symbolic glue" has an impact on those who have been attacked and it creates very clear fronts gluing together those who are victims of these vicious attacks, they stick together in collective resistance.

I am, nevertheless, optimistic because I believe that the lessons learned during the past years living, working and teaching in illiberal Hungary will help the fight for academic freedom. Previously scholars of gender studies were marginalised, even spatially: working in their offices in the attic or in the cellar of the university building. Now due to the anti-gender studies campaign, Hungary, a country of ten million inhabitants, became a country of ten million gender experts! Everybody seems to

have an opinion about the course curricula and reading lists, learning outcomes or the labor market opportunities of gender studies' graduates.

The first lesson learned in this struggle was the importance of networks, international contacts and press relations. Responding to media inquiries, prioritizing media outlets, explaining the complex situation for often unprepared and overworked journalists required time and special media skills we had to acquire. The second lesson was the understanding of the surprising weakness of European feminist infrastructure. It was not major organizations, such as AtGender (European Association for Gender Research, Education, and Documentation) that collected signatures in support of gender studies programs in Hungary. It was a dedicated and politically savvy scholar, David Paternotte, who collected more than a hundred signatures from Masters' programs in gender studies across European Union. The European professional organisation of gender studies scholars and professionals, AtGender works well in "normal" times as it became just another fee paying professional organisation, which is organising academic conferences. But gender studies have never been and will not be just another profession especially not now. Therefore, AtGender failed to serve as a major lobbying and interest protecting tool during major crises partly because it defined its role in academic setting when academia is losing its lobbying power more and more. The quick and effective support came from established professional networks and institutionalized organizations; from feminist sociologists, historians, political scientists who quickly wrote protest letters (and organized letters sent by their universities) and signed petitions despite their own workload. And that is another lesson learned; that writing letters and signing manifestos is not enough. European professional organizations like European University Association and All European Academies issued statements calling for protection of academic freedom and gender studies but they all received the same standardized general answer from the Hungarian government. The protest and support letters are evidence that there are scholars and institutions that are resisting and despising the politics of the Hungarian government and its attack on gender studies but in practice their protest had little impact. The EU Commissioner whose portfolio is to protect academic freedom and European values

ignored the event referring to education as national competency. (It is not an accident that this Commissioner, Tibor Navrasics who was appointed by FIDESZ party previously played an active role building up the present 'System of National Cooperation' (NER) of Hungary). Education is a national competency in Europe therefore the national governments can regulate it as they wish. When the nation state is captured by a small group then it can do whatever its members want regarding regulating education.

During the debate around gender studies it became obvious that feminist academics trained to describe and define social and political contexts, may be missing some essential political skills: how to think and achieve what can be and not only write peer reviewed articles about theories of resistance. The lack of political imagination beyond the feeling of upset and protest needs to be critically examined in the future. Constant reflection, deconstruction and analysis of what has happened and why cannot substitute effective strategizing about the future.

The ban galvanized students and young people to take action. Gender studies scholarship is not dead in Hungary. An increasing number of applications for the CEU Gender Studies Program, now moved to Vienna, Austria, demonstrates that gender studies are considered a "cool" discipline. We have lost the accredited program in Hungary but our gender studies community is facing this failure with dignity and united. The same courses are being offered in Hungarian at ELTE but they do not count towards a degree in gender studies. CEU continues to offer MA program in gender studies accredited by the State of New York. For the academic year of 2019-2020 more applications were submitted to CEU Gender Studies than ever before, unfortunately the students start their study program in Vienna as the Hungarian government does not accept the US accreditation.

The recent strike on 18th November 2018 at the universities of ELTE, Corvinus and CEU proved that gender is more relevant than ever. During this protest, professors of these three universities in Budapest discussed issues that previously were mostly ignored, such as incorporation of gendered perspectives in the curricula of various university courses, referencing female authors and promoting their work. What is this

if not gender mainstreaming in the best sense of the word? These issues would not have been brought up had the government not banned a discipline of gender studies. The ban was a wake-up call for all of us to save not only the discipline but to fight for free academic research as such.

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Engenderings. Blog by LSE Gender Studies features several case studies as well as theoretical insights https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/gender/.

Genealogies of an Indigenous librarian: How nêhiyaw (cree) kinship laws might structure reciprocity in teaching research

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When Indigenous researchers state their tribal affiliation, they are performing a rhetorical act of accountability. When I say that I am a Cree and Métis researcher and librarian, it's not a fun fact about my genetic makeup; it's not percentage-based

identity or blood quantum politics. Researchers in Indigenous Studies, when they state their affiliation, are letting their audience know who they are responsible for and accountable to. This statement marks the communities that make this research possible.

The ways we explicitly call our communities into our writing and our presentations lays out a foundation of accountability and responsibility and helps to position researchers in a genealogy. It confronts the myth of a single scholar toiling alone. None of us emerge from nothing: we are all the result of generations of relationships.

There are so few Indigenous librarians that we are often the only one in our library system. But I begin my career as a student librarian at the only Indigenous academic library in Canada, working at the Xwi7xwa library at the University of British Columbia. My colleagues, Kim Lawson (Heiltsuk) and Sarah Dupont (Métis), were my mentors. Being one of three Indigenous librarians granted a freedom from singularity, to not need to be all things to all people. When I began incorporating more theory in my practice, I encountered the work of Loriene Roy, an Anishinabe librarian, who writes about an ecology of Indigenous librarianship that focuses on community rather than self, with "less emphasis on tools than on the relationships between people and their connections to traditional knowledge" (Roy, 2015). Roy's interest in relationships is echoed in the work of Deborah Lee, a Cree-Métis-Haudenosaunee librarian, who found that the university, and by extension, the library, fails to be reciprocally responsible: Indigenous students felt that libraries had "a lack of services recognizing the Indigenous values of 'being in relationship' and reciprocity" (Lee, 2001). We are called to maintain good relations and reciprocal relationships as a means of survival and well-being for both librarians and students.

Both Lee and Roy embrace relationality as a key focus for librarianship from an Indigenous perspective. For us, information literacy instruction – the way that librarians teach students about how to find, assess, navigate, and use information – is primarily concerned about relationships. And, if we are in relationship, we need to be reflective about being reciprocal members in that relationship.

Reciprocity within a nêhiyaw and Michif legal system asks us to be responsible in very particular ways to the people we teach. We know our relatives through wâhkôhtowin; miyo-wîcêhtowin directs us to be in good relationship. Kinship connections here extend beyond the family, to the rest of creation, grounded in the land. This legal system extends from the land (see Campbell, 2007; Macdougall, 2010; Innes, 2013; Adam, 2015).

With wâhkôhtowin animating my teaching as a librarian, my work is informed by Caswell and Cifor's ideas about radical empathy shaping what a feminist ethics of care looks like in cultural memory institutions. Unsurprisingly, their vision is centred in relationships: "archivists are seen as caregivers, bound to records creators, subjects, users, and communities through a web of mutual affective responsibility" (Caswell and Cifor, 2016). We recognize that research is more than a mental exercise, and navigating academic structures by doing research is never a solitary act. Academic structures tend to privilege certain structures of relationality: citation, for example, is a kind of genealogy (Ahmed, 2013; Tuck, Yang, & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2015). Yet, in the same way that my literature review positions my paper's particular genealogy, when I say I'm Cree and Métis, from Michel First Nation, raised in Calahoo, I mark my kinship responsibilities and accountabilities.

If we consider positionality as a key feature of research, we start by querying how a writer came to their question. Indigenous researchers have long known that their research is animated by their communities and their connection to their territories, but researchers of all kinds might consider the ways that their research is reciprocal, or insurgent, responsive to the needs of communities rather than extractive (Gaudry, 2011). A framework of insurgent research might be a fundamental way to not only articulate genealogies, but to make this kinship practicable. Imagine how the research landscape could be radically shifted if we began all projects by asking what the community needed.

The work I do is grounded by my genealogies: from the work of Indigenous librarians who see the primacy of relationships in teaching information literacy, from the Cree legal traditions, particularly the laws of wâhkôhtowin and miyo-wîcêhtowin, and from

an ethic of care that sees research as insurgent, not extractive. It is grounded, in all things, by the land that sustains me, as I attempt to nurture ongoing, reciprocal research relationships.

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Unbundling: A new gendered frontier of exclusion and exploitation in the neoliberal university

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Unbundling is the process of disaggregating educational provision into its component parts likely for delivery by multiple stakeholders, often through public-private partnerships and the use of digital approaches (Swinnerton et al., 2018). A neutral definition, it relates to a process that is all but neutral to higher education. Having done research on unbundling South African and English universities, on a project focused on teaching and learning processes, I could not help but realise the extent to which this process affects much more than student learning and online teaching material curation patterns. Under the premise of widening access, it contributes to a potentially profoundly gendered casualisation, automation, deprofessionalisation, and fragmentation of academic labour to new unforeseen degrees. In this, unbundling reveals a new frontier of exploitation and exclusion at universities that we need to be aware of and organise against.

Initially unbundling followed a commons- rather than market-led imaginary (Mansell, 2017). Radical educators saw digital technologies' potential to democratise education and widen access. Shorter, low-cost, flexible unbundled curricular units could be made available online and used by atypical students still at a disadvantage in education: women, people with caring responsibilities and disabilities, mature full-time working students. Employers could support job-tailored workers' education, and communities could become more involved with universities, demanding need-based content. Such a radical "digital disruption" of the original elite "bundle" of residential university degrees could challenge elite distinctions and transform university education through technologically innovative pedagogies.

Yet, unbundling did not happen in vacuum. It happens in the era of neoliberal globalisation that sees rampant commercialisation of the higher education marked by quantified competition for excellence and success measured by metrics of individual performance and world rankings. This homogenising vision of the global field of higher education (Marginson, 2008) gives an upper hand to research over teaching, makes English-language publications the only valid academic currency, introduces new governance systems into academic work and services, and raises student fees, debt, and anxiety. It makes research dependent on external funding and research-only precarious staff, and teaching – on a growing number of teaching-only staff bought out to replace fundraising core academics.

To understand to what extent workers and students carry out the burden of this system: in the UK alone (a public-mostly system of higher education with over 160 universities) there was a record £44 billion surplus in higher education (Bennett, 2018). Yet in the same year academic pensions fund USS was to be put on the market and individual contributions raised (Povey, 2018). And while universities try to compete for "teaching excellence" to allow them to uncap already exorbitant student fees (Hale & Vina, 2016), students are taught by over 50% precarious faculty (UCU 2013; 2016) and student debt has risen to £1 billion (CBDU, 2018). In this scenario, it is rather cynical that online learning, rather than better investment in faculty recruitment and stability and student stipends, is considered a panacea by managers. The way this argument looks, taken to its logical consequences: content can be automated, put online, and facilitated by workers often trained to a post-graduate or post-PhD level with ever more precarious deprofessionalised contracts: content curators, forum managers, online support officers – their job descriptions proliferate and they are invisible, fragmented and isolated. Meanwhile universities use public-private partnerships with billion-revenue corporations to provide technology and online platforms where these courses "take place". Such corporations – around 60 world players on a market currently estimated at over 3 billion (out of a 30+ billion edtech market worldwide) and predicted to reach 7.7 billion by 2025 (HolonIQ, 2019) – are increasingly endowed with the financial and the symbolic capital of universities to run online short-courses and programs on their

behalf. They reap the benefits from online learning on two levels – first by being paid hefty sums for content to be disposed on their platforms, and a second time – for the "learning analytics" big data they collect from the growing student population joining online courses worldwide and sell it to big businesses to hone their local and global marketing strategies.

This process is paralleled by a growing casualization of higher education – a process that affects not only contractual relations, but also means a broader "existential and structural uncertainty" of academics and workers in general (Butler, 2009). It allows university workers to be contracted with ever shorter, more flexible fixed-term conditions, in which basic justice (Frazer, 2016) redistribution (rights and benefits), recognition (visibility and career development options), and representation (in decision-making and union contestation) is increasingly curtailed. In academia this process happened since the 1970s through the erosion of tenure that leaves many at jeopardy of lack of security to plan ahead personally and professionally. In this, precarity becomes more than contractual insecurity and starts being the lack of (self-)care and access to practices of love, care, and solidarity, of control of one's own time and space, and enclosure of academic freedom from the market pressures exposing workers to such arrangements (Ivancheva et al., 2019). The careless lives of monastic scholars is now extended onto a very diverse post-PhD population doomed to the Hobson's choice of (hyper)mobility vs (hyper)flexibility (Ivancheva et al., 2019).

Academics are pushed to constantly look for employment outside their area of residency making a return to their original place of origin impossible (Stalford, 2008). With public systems of welfare, child- and elderly-care curtailed by privatisation and austerity in Eastern and Western Europe alike, and not even available in many contexts beyond Europe, moving becomes a taxing effort of losing immediate kinship networks providing such services out of necessity. Women are at a double disadvantage. Partnered women, who have to make decisions around childbirth and childcare within certain age limits (ESF, 2009; Ivancheva et al., 2019) are discriminated against by recruitment panels based on being mothers (González et

al., 2019) or the improbability of male partners moving location to stay with female spouses (Rivera, 2017). The latter scenario makes single women with(out) children the only mobile female academics, but as they are often doing more emotional and admin work, they often are at disadvantage of ever forming a family (Ivancheva et al., 2019). Black and Minority Ethnic faculty and even less so Black faculty's (Joseph, 2019) probability of women being hired in permanent academic position at all is in times lower than female white or any male candidates (Advance HE, 2018).

Thus, women and members of ethnic minorities are pushed into the raising teaching-only contracts, made invisible for research positions, and career development (Courtois & O'Keefe, 2015). In this, they are made perfect hyper-relational workers for online platforms, where emotional labour is ever more needed as students lack the support of peer-groups and university support staff, unlike in residential degrees. This produces a gendered new frontier of exclusion and exploitation that the academic profession needs to be aware of and resist. It presents one of the biggest challenges to feminist and progressive scholarship and activism in the next decades.

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Academic praxiography

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Thinking about academia, I often ask myself "Why am I still here?". I have endless discussions with colleagues about the wrongs of the system both on a local and a global scale. Not only about the wrongs of precarious employment and pointless hierarchies, but also the dry air during long days under fluorescent lights in standardised, impersonal class rooms. Many of us appear uncomfortable, and I experience a lot of tension in academic relations. I am not asking for a system of luxury nor perfectly comfortable space. But I need to rest, to digest and to interact with others without losing my own pace.

I used to be a fast-paced person. I grew up in and I live in Iceland. For many my country has been a sensation for the past few years, the newest "it" for the tourists, combined with what appears to be a vibrant cultural-scene and a paradise of equality. Of course, Iceland is none of those and simultaneously all of those. If I did not acknowledge the level of equality that we do have, I would be dishonoring the struggles of women and working-class people for the last decades and centuries, for example, early 20th century labor movements and the feminist Red-socks-movement in the 1970's (Þorleifur, 2012; Olga, 2011).[2] But for me, Iceland is just home with the goods and bads a home can have. It is the place I know best. I have lived in other

[2] According to the Icelandic naming tradition, one should refer to one's given names, such as Þorleifur, since 'Friðriksson' is strictly speaking not his name, but refers to his paternity. Although this confuses systems of reference within the English language, I do think it is more important to honor different naming traditions as English has become the language of international discourses and debates, both theoretically and more generally.

places in Europe, and I have seen other places of the world with the privilege of my passport, white skin and blue eyes. I have come to realise that for many, having a home is a privilege.

When I grew up, Iceland was going through a rapid pace of neoliberalisation. As a micro-society without deeply rooted traditions, a change in hegemony happens fast in Iceland. Before the economic crash in 2008, people were excited about the neoliberal change and sincerely believed that the handsome banksters were conquering the worlds like Vikings 1000 years earlier. In this environment, I grew up as a fast-paced individual who believed I could compete and maybe win a little in the game of equal opportunities. Fortunately, the unquestionable hegemony of neoliberalism began to dismantle although the aftermath of the economic crash has been difficult and neoliberal capitalism most certainly still relies on a passive consensus from the public in accordance with Gramsci's interregnum (Rehmann, 2013; Gramsci, 2003). Unfortunately, I soon discovered that the fast pace I had embraced had never really been mine, as I had been ignoring repeating signs of chronic symptoms. In a healthcare struck by austerity I tried to find out what was wrong with me. Now, a decade later, I know that I am living with the chronic illnesses of ME/CFS and fibromyalgia.

In the state of chronic illness, academia has been a mixed blessing. I cannot work nine-to-five but I managed to complete my PhD in 2018, and now I can work as a scholar and a university teacher if I find employment. When I have a relapse in my symptoms that seems to take no end, when I cannot leave my bed, when the physical world becomes grey and dark, the fact that I have a desire for my work is a great solace. But I belong to a group of precariously employed academics and it provides me with stress and existential insecurity. Am I betting on a hopeless future? Should I be doing more in terms of securing my own academic career? My partner and I, we need to provide a stable environment for our son, academic flexibility such as getting a post-doc in Singapore or a position in the US, is not an option.

How am I to listen to my own rhythm, my own pace in this enormously competitive system of work? I came to philosophy because of a sense of wonder, frustration and

a longing for transformation through critique, how do I stick to that path? Academia is supposed to be a system of knowledge, exploration and critique. But I have seen time and again how it punishes the people that execute a fair critique within it and out of it. How can I stick to this longing and still provide a livelihood? It has greatly empowered me to come across a critical literature on academia and how it is making us sick, such as Ann Cvetkovich's *Depression: A public feeling* (2012) and the collaborative article "For slow scholarship" (Mountz et al., 2015) as well as meeting colleagues internationally concerned about the very same system we find ourselves in. One of my solutions has been to go into activism concerning precarious employment in academia. As a doctoral student at the University of Iceland I started to be vocal about our situation: The lack of PhD and post-doctoral funding in Iceland, the lack of hiring tenured academic staff, the heavy burden and low salaries of sessional lecturers. I started opening up about the difficulties I had been experiencing as a doctoral student only to find out that this was not an individual story but a structural problem. Through FEDON (The University of Iceland's Association of Doctoral Students and Post-docs) we have managed to get the funding increased and to provide a voice for precariously employed early-career researchers in Iceland.

I am thankful for all the time I have had for reading, contemplating in solitude and conversing with other people, who have also been a great support through my own difficulties. But often I am surprised by all the time I have needed to *unlearn* having been moulded as a neoliberal subject, and all the books I have needed, to get to the point where I am at right now. I keep being surprised by the ever-new dimensions of my mind that yearn for recognition and desire to win the competition. These senses dispossess me and I enter a new learning curve. I am still here in academia because I want hierarchies to be smashed and learning environments to be changed but I have also come to realise that I cannot change the world by myself. Thus, I try to focus on the local spot where I am, with people sharing the same spot, and do what I can. Changes take a great amount of energy, I am tired, I need to rest but I will enter a new cycle.

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Decomposing Matter: From literary critique to language creation

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Abstract

This article provides a context for the section "Creating Language and Theorizing Literature". The editors of the section discuss both contemporary and historical articulations of the materiality of language from a new materialist perspective. The new materialist project comprises looking for the immanence of language via three realms: its relation, its theorization, and its creation. Therefore, moving away from representationalist practices demands a definition of language as animate, sensory material requiring creative labour for its realisation. The article provides an example of this materialization of language, via the concept of *bodywording*.

Keywords

Materiality, Language, Algorithm, Defamiliarisation, Bodywording.

Once upon a time
Once there was
One day, a very long time ago
Once there lived a King
Once and a time

Once upon a time the world was round and you could go on it around and around.[1]

Once upon a time and a very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow coming down along the road met a nicens little boy named baby tuckoo[2]

A long long time ago in a galaxy far, far away[3]

A very very long time ago
Long ago, long ago
Long, long time ago
In a time already long past, when it was still of use to cast a spell
In the ancient time

Behind seven lands and seas
Beyond nine seas, beyond nine lagoons

There was, once upon a time
There was, there was not
There was, and there was not, there was

There was once a time, a time that includes the present[4]

Time was time

This is an old story.

1 Gertrude Stein, *The World Is Round* (1939), p. 2
2 James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist As A Young Man* (1916), p. 3
3 George Lucas (director) *Star Wars* (1977), opening credits
4 Vicki Kirby, *What If Culture Was Nature All Along?* (ed.), Introduction, p. 1.

Language – is – data – is – information – is – matter. Beginnings and endings are markers of time, and these markers may differ through languages, though again they differ once we begin to translate. Beginnings and endings presuppose an axis of time through which language irreversibly passes. Listed above are some utterances and sentences, clearly marked as beginnings. Some are stock beginnings to folk or fairy tales, translated from a number of different languages into English. Others are literary or filmic beginnings which take as their inspiration those stock folk beginnings and translate them into a different genre or realm. Theory-creation splices temporal dimensions. The perception of language as an object or a force stretched across variously ordered spatiotemporal axes has been since the early 20th century, at the very least since Ferdinand de Saussure revolutionised linguistic study by proposing synchronic rather than diachronic perspectives for language (Saussure, 1959 [1916]). The effect of listing each of the above matter-realisations of linguistic temporal markers paradigmatically is that linear syntactical sense is obscured, whilst the repetition foregrounds the materiality of the words themselves. This syntactical strangeness produces an effect not dissimilar to the strangeness that comes from algorithmic language-creations, both deliberate – as in the case of AI (Artificial Intelligence)-composed nonsense poetry, and mistaken – as in when games are played with the predictive text function of iPhones (as discussed below). This estrangement from transparent meaning is part of the modernist tradition of linguistic experimentation, which we argue is given new life in a posthuman articulation. Beyond representation, beyond human authorial agency, these matter-realisations are productive of new worlds of meaning.

New materialism emerges out of a vast conflation of humanities and science research, described as “a paradigmatic shift” by Vera Bühlmann, Felicity Colman, and Iris van der Tuin in their “Introduction to New Materialist Genealogies” (2017, p.47). Feminist new materialisms uphold *enfleshed*as a key term, demonstrated by Rosi Braidotti’s presentation of the “enfleshed Deleuzian subject” (Braidotti 2006, p.182). Moreover, where the body is foregrounded as a threshold, “the very axis around which all the binarisms (such as sameness-otherness, body-mind,

nature-culture, the inside-the-outside, I-other) are falling apart" (Monika Rogowska-Stangret, 2017, p.61).

In light of the above, this article deals with what we develop as the feminist new materialist project on the embodiment or *enfleshment* of language, or the linguistics of matter. We argue that language itself, the material of words, is data and information that can be used, challenged, channeled, changed in order to provoke certain transformations in the way processes are developed in oppressive regimes of power. The introductory texts demonstrate how language is submitted (while at the same time materially changing) to certain active contexts that require its development to be situated (Haraway, 1988) constantly. Stacey Moran Nocek points to the need to retain the significance of language within new materialist discussions: that within these discussions, "language is not a thing we can simply throw out [...] Quite the contrary: it is the binary opposition between reality and language that needs to be redrawn" (Nocek, 2016 p.270).

In writing this article we have two objectives. Firstly, to create and materialise language wherein aesthetic properties are perceived and felt as politically valent. Secondly, to analyse writing methodologies which situate language beyond human practices in order to avoid dualist distinctions that consequently enhance privilege and power. These objectives are finally enfleshed through the process of *bodywording* – the enfleshing of words and the building of language-bodies – as demonstrated in our concluding linguistic experiment which writes with and through multiple others.

Beyond referentiality

Pronouncing everything as discursively constructed entails two problematic aspects in the attempt to understand the nature of a concept. The first one is that language becomes a self-referential concept which is defined according to the same parameters that structure it. Self-referentiality is a relative understanding that leaves its definition empty, as knowledge that is taken for granted. In this

way, language paradoxically produces the impossibility of understanding. On the other hand, the second aspect has to do with how language provides the point of departure for explaining everything else. As Toni Morrison writes in *Beloved* (1986, p.190), "definitions belong to the definers, not the defineds", referring to how white people define black people in relation to animals. Thus, when we define something, first we are establishing it with the same parameters in which that thing is going to be explained, and secondly, we are encapsulating that thing into a passive entity in need of representation. Already in the 2000s, Karen Barad denounced the fact that "language [had] been granted too much power" (2003, p.801). This article presents the section "creating language and theorizing literature" since we believe that at times, 'language' has become a self-referential concept inserted in our common sense and academic vocabularies but defined within its own terms. According to one of the editors of this section, "[i]n order for the language to simultaneously create and self-theorize, it must depart from representation" (Palmer, 2014, p.54).

Nevertheless, departing from representation without falling into it is extremely difficult. We are sure that you, the reader, have tried to make sense out of the first text and perhaps the predicting function of the phone was not the first thing that came to your mind. For this article, we propose to depart from a very concrete situation which is literary language; but before moving forward, we would like to situate the explanation with Judith Butler's *Precarious Life* (2004). In this book Butler argues that nowadays life can only be recognized when we understand the interdependence between peoples and nations. A literary language brings a relational space for a precarious interdependency in order to provide methodologies able to assess contemporary life, since as Leyshon (2012) explains the relationship between power and writing can be an individual form of resistance.

In *Animate Literacies* Nathan Snaza describes the *literacy situation* as the situation where "intrahuman politics of race, class, gender, sexuality and geography shape the conditions of emergence for literacy events that animate

subjects and the political relations with which they are entangle" (Snaza, 2019, p.4). Literacy for Snaza is an animate practice, which requires not the destruction of writing and reading but rather their insertion into other networks and other narratives. One of the aims of this journal, and one of the aims of new materialist studies is to understand *naturecultures* (Haraway, 2008) from a monist perspective. According to Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin (2012, p.115), "new materialist cultural theories are not relational in a negative, reductive manner, but rather are structured along the lines of an affirmative intensity, which in the ends turns into a non-dualism, a monist philosophy of difference, or more precisely, *immanence*". Thus, following Spinoza and Deleuze (in Saldanha, 2017), the authors of this article and editors of the section look for the immanence of language, which we argue is based upon its relation, its theorization and its creation: a non-self-referential materially enacting definition of language. That is to say, language will be considered a relational materialization of determined encounters, not a linguistic representation of a passive reality.

Language matters

In order to understand the materiality of language, we would need to start by understanding what we mean by matter. Feminist contemporary theory is revitalizing definitions of matter by providing genealogies that trace back to Aristotle (Bianchi, 2019) and contemporarily to philosophers such as Manuel DeLanda, Claire Colebrook, and Iris van der Tuin among others. Language is body is flesh: the link between matter, language and the female is analogically displayed. As Mayra Rivera points out in the *Poetics of the Flesh,* "the efficacy of words is intricately connected to the experiences of bodies" (Rivera, 2015, p.9). Rivera distinguishes between body (*soma, corpus*) and flesh *(sarx, caro*), pointing out 'flesh' is often linked to the passive feminine. In a sense, feminist new materialisms reappropriate this feminist material passivity and articulate it as not only active, but also self-organising. Colebrook also shows that literary language can prove this through a discussion of its materiality. "It is when language is

material – or literary – that it resists relations and vibrates in itself" (Colebrook, 2008, p.59). Matter can be described as being "understood as [an] encompassing force, motion, vitality, vibrancy, and agency […] with which to counter the many social and physical violences" (Bianchi, 2019, p.393). Texts are made to matter via the intra-active process of reading (Kaiser, 2014), which at the same time entails paying special attention to the methodological process itself. Barad (2007) specifies the need to include in the phenomena of research the researcher, the object of research, methodologies and all the contextual factors surrounding it. Therefore, in thinking through the nature of language it seems unavoidable to also know how texts come to matter as well. As previously stated, for some authors the reading process is paramount. Nevertheless, reading also implies interpretation and because of that, falling into a relativistic practice that might make us fall into what Donna Haraway denominated the God Trick (1988). From a new materialist project, we aim at providing a writing methodology that intra-acts the material, the researcher and the reader while providing scenarios beyond representationalist practices.

When outlining a new materialist cartography around language, it is important to introduce Julia Kristeva's work. In *Language: The Unknown* (1989) Kristeva refers to two differing but complementary ways in which language matters: first, language is *concrete matter* and second, *objective laws* framing it. The concrete matter she refers to is "the phonic, gestural, or graphic aspects that *la langue* assumes (there is no language without sounds, gestures, or writing)' and the objective laws are 'the laws that organize the different subsets of the linguistic whole and that constitute phonetics, stylistics, semantics, etc" (Kristeva, 1989, p.18). In the division of *langue* (the abstract system of language) and *parole* (its concrete enactment) derived from Ferdinand de Saussure, Kristeva posits both as material. She also describes the relation between language and the "real"; language and the world; as one of "isomorphism" (Kristeva, 1989, p.36). These two gestures are important, firstly because they present language as material in its articulation and its signification, and also because they present language as

inseparable from the world. Rather than viewing language's materiality as a step away from the political, Kristeva sees it as inherently political from every angle.

All of the above composes what we believe is one possible genealogy for understanding a new materialist approach to language. What we propose in the following is a possible definition that, in line with this genealogy, conceives the concept, language, beyond representationalist practices and self-referential definitions.

In this journal section we will try to build understanding of the materiality of language (or linguistic matter-reality) via three realms (although it is not limited to these): re-conceptualizing the aesthetics of the literary piece, thinking through writing methodologies that produce differences that matter; and a relational notion of language that emphasize how this language is beyond a human characteristic depending on the terms of its intra-action. As a result, we expect differing languages such as the language of technology, the language of mathematics, the language of more-than-human beings, and also the other cultural definitions of language.

Defamiliarisation and the sensory: Re-conceptualizing the ahesthetics of the literary piece

The stratagems for perceiving language and literature *anew* within new materialist discussions require critical and creative processes of defamiliarisation and disidentification. This process is generative of its own new feminist new materialist genealogy, as we can see from Rosi Braidotti's outlining in *The Posthuman* of defamiliarisation as "a critical distance from the dominant vision of the subject" (Braidotti, 2013, p.88). As Carolyn Lau explains in the *Posthuman Glossary,* dis-identification involves the concurrent processes of creativity and critique, and perceives *memory* as *imagination* and *creation* as *becoming,* allowing for the creation of new conceptual personae and figurations (Lau, 2018, p.347). Helen Palmer's work takes up this feminist new materialist articulation

and thinks it alongside queer as a concept; *queer defamiliarisation* as a process that is "necessary to awaken us from automatic habits in our perception, creation, destruction and infinite reimagination of the categories of identity formation"(Palmer, forthcoming 2020), and what is needed for us to feel both ourselves and beyond ourselves is the sensory.

In terms of the field of feminist new materialisms and literature we can identify two strands of thought: firstly one which conceptualises the literary text as a specific instance of active and resistant materiality, which we can perceive Claire Colebrook's Derridean readings (Colebrook, 2011); and secondly one which does not perceive materiality of the signifier in the same way as the materiality of the object, but rather as a site of affective creativity, as discussed in the work of Stacy Alaimo (2016), Mayra Rivera (2015) and Jane Bennett (2009). These figures emphasise literature's affective and sensory potential for transforming the perceptual sensibility of the reader. Tobias Skiveren proposes a "carncacriticism" which would engage it "as an affective and imaginative site for witnessing what it *feels* like to live as a specific corporal configuration, subjected not only to the powers of discourse, but also to the recalcitrant materiality of the flesh" (Skiveren 2019/forthcoming, p.14). This is in line with what Rita Felski has called 'postcriticism' – a type of theoretical engagement which does not work *against* the text it encounters but rather works with or alongside it, in order to produce new affective patterns (Felski, 2015). Within feminist new materialist thought we have seen this develop primarily in the work of van der Tuin and the practice of diffractive reading (van der Tuin, 2011), but this is now expanding exponentially into multiple disciplines and intra-disciplines.

As several scholars have pointed out, new materialism and the realm of the sensory have much to say to one another (Tompkins, 2016; Luciano 2015; Shomura, 2017; Huang 2017). The linguistic aspect of this encounter is made most concrete in Michelle N. Huang's provocation that "we might root the experimental power of language in its challenge to our sensory-perceptual apparatus" (Huang, 2017). What this field can particularly offer can be gleaned

from its perspective on transversality (and the trans* prefix matters here in all of its multiple figurations) – an analogous perspective can be seen for sensory perception.

In place of the conventional localisation and segregation of sensory perception, Florence Chiew proposes the transversal processes sensory substitution or cross-modal plasticity. Chiew defines sensory substitution as "the process by which information ordinarily acquired through the pathway of one modality is instead obtained through those that process another" (Chiew, 2017, p.49). This is precisely the sensory substitution that takes place with synaesthesia. Chiew also gives the examples of Braille reading as a cross-modal interaction between visual and tactile information processing, and also of the enlargement of the cortical representation of the reading finger in Braille readers, which evidences "the malleability and adaptability of sensory function" (Chiew, 2017, p.49). Similarly, the success of TVSS systems (tactile vision substitution systems) demonstrate not only ways of seeing *with* touch but of seeing *as* touch (Chiew, 2017, p.56). Chiew gives these examples as part of a general critique of the notion of deficiency in perception as a lack of 'normal' function; in other words, "the logic of substitution or compensation is not a productive way to appreciate the complexity of *individual* perception as a *field,* because it is grounded in a restricted binary opposition between deficiency and recovery, or cast in quantifiable terms of more or less, addition and subtraction" (Chiew, 2017, p.64).

There are similar attempts at a re-orientation of sensory systems in the work of Jasbir Puar and Xin Liu, in terms of racialised visual encounters and ways in which the haptic can subvert these channels of automatized perception and defamiliarise the senses. Liu points out that Jasbir Puar's critique of ocularcentrism brings it within the new materialist field with a focus on racialised visual encounters (Puar, 2007, p.189). As Liu points out, Puar goes for the haptic rather than the visual. What Liu and Puar are arguing is that visuality as seeing through the eyes is "an overdetermined, epistemological and cultural construction where power's intention is to restrict and to prohibit" (Liu, 2017, p.144). In all of

these examples we therefore gesture here towards a de-familiarisation and de-hierarchisation of the senses in favour of a transversal approach.

Differences that matter: The literary conceit revitalized, defamiliarised and queered

As Kathryn Bond Stockton writes, provocatively and deliberately, in her book *Making Out,* some words are weightier, heavier or more impactful than others. Historically perceived as a literary device dating from Renaissance metaphysical powerhouses such as John Donne (Donne 1994), the conceit is an elaborate, extreme or even surreal extended metaphor used for hyperbolic effect. “Perhaps the word ‘dildo’ has arrested you. Perhaps it hits you differently than my other words. Maybe you like it. Maybe it repels you. Or just jolts you. It is now in you” (Stockton, 2019, p.100). This utterance is strikingly – yes, arrestingly – resonant with Austin’s descriptions of performative language in the sense that something is *done* through its enunciation, though the relationship is somewhat different in that the words perform something different – there is a gap, perhaps – between the words and the thing that is heralded or being done. Stockton’s reading-as-barebacking, word-as-dildo analogies operate as vivid conceits for our present arguments concerning the materiality of the signifier. As Stockton writes earlier, “Gay male barebacking is like dildoing is like kissing is like reading: it’s a *fetishizing of sign and surface* that must get inside us […] the word births in us, with us, and through us, as we take it in: courtesy of us, it’s allowed to *breed an intimate estrangement of itself*” (Stockton, 2015). Estrangement both *is* and *as* queer defamiliarisation: it is these words we must focus on here, in the moment of arresting luminosity when the word-thing arrives within our perceptual field. If we think of the process of barebacking narrated multifariously in Stockton’s texts– deliberate thrillseeking unprotected sex – it sets off a chain of reactions which will differ in each reader, but overall they encapsulate the very process of perception without the *contra*-ceptive sheath of linguistic prescriptivism. Put simply, meaning is untethered; the seeds, *semina,* are without their protective husk. Or, more

crudely, amorphous sausagelike stuff of meaning is squeezed out of its sack. Whichever conceit-strewn pathway is chosen, it is precisely queer defamiliarisation that Stockton elucidates here; precisely through a conception of the materiality of words. What Stockton describes as tumescence of words – their getting fat inside us – is the process of shifting our perception of those words as they are perceived anew. It is through *writing, mattering* and *making strange* that this striking image – the word inside us – is born.

In the preface to her *Playing in the dark: Whiteness and the literary imagination* (Morrison, 1992, p.x – xi), Toni Morrison claims that her literary project is to struggle "with and through a language that can powerfully evoke and enforce hidden signs of racial superiority, cultural hegemony, and dismissive 'othering' of people and language." To this, she adds a possible solution, "to free up the language from its sometimes sinister, frequently lazy, almost predictable employment of racially informed and determined chains" (ibid xi). As mentioned at the beginning of this article, it might seem easier to see the predictive processes that language suffers when technologically related. Nevertheless, literature proves that these predictions are materially charged and they potentially provoke certain feelings and affects in those participating in that writing process. When we try to provoke a queer defamiliarisation in our writing process, we are at the same time attributing a multiplicity of images to certain signs and surfaces. In *A Mercy* (Morrison, 2008), the walls of the haunted house are written with the story of a woman who is raped and enslaved so that her daughter (Florens) is able to connect with her (since she does not know who her mother is). The narrator starts questioning the reader with the following: "Don't be afraid. My telling can't hurt you in spite of what I have done […] Stranger things happen all the time everywhere. You know. I know you know. One question is who is responsible? Another is can you read?" (Morrison, 2008, p.3). In this novel, the walls become the materiality of the writing, the surface in which spacetime tries to merge in order to identify a self-definition of her own identity. Her lover tells her that she is a slave in the house, and a slave because of the love she has for him, to which she answers: "What is your meaning? I am a slave because Sir trades

for me." (ibid, p.141). To this, his answer is: "No. You have become one [because] your head is empty and your body is wild" (ibid). This strangeness that the reader finds in the haunted walls is there to intra-relate with; to start making their own meaning, to try to understand in the distance of physical time that the walls will be forever haunted, because that story can't pass on, just as at the end of *Beloved.* As Florens explains at the beginning to her reader, "Other signs need more time to understand" (ibid, 4). The walls, like the words, are inside us.

The predictive function of language is present in all the forms and surfaces that material meanings are enhanced. The problem with its prediction is that the force is beyond human agency and knowability. Again, following a new materialist perspective entails engaging with productive instances in which the materiality of language can enforce changes to structural hierarchies. As Morrison claims, freeing language from its representationalist nature is one of them. Another example that we can find in literature is with Nell Leyshon's *The Colour of Milk* (2012). There we can see how Mary, the protagonist, writes her book with her own hand, which also means with grammatical mistakes, without capital letters and lacking some punctuation marks. Mary is a girl from 1831 who learns how to read and write in the house of her master. In her act of writing, in our act of reading the novel, in our ability to relate with the book itself is how meaning becomes material. Those instances in which we see that language is not what we expect on the surface are precisely when those words become heavier. Certainly, when reading the pronoun "i" without its capital letter in English, we see how language covers certain signs of injustices. Who is allowed to self-define? How are we to find instances of resistance in a writing that is not our own? Or, as Florens asks, who is able to read?

Differing languages: Fictioning

One of the caveats that Bianchi (2019) sees in Baradian theory is how the physical discourse is translated and transposed to every sphere of reality. A

transposition is “the discovery of the limit and then the stretching and breaking of this limit” (Palmer, 2014, p.27). Nevertheless, transposing a specific discourse to every other sphere also provides “too much power” to that specific discourse. Thus, we see the limitations of the physical discourse, in order to provide linguistic transpositions we need to stretch and break that precise limit. Bianchi (2019) points out the limitation in the impossibility of translating the micro-world present in quantum physics to the macro-world that contemporary society offers. Nevertheless, what do we mean by translation again? The prefix *trans* “presupposes a metamorphosis, a difference or spatiotemporal change or relocation” (Palmer 2014: xii). Thus, translating physics to contemporary society entails relocations and metamorphosis. According to Braidotti (2002), a metamorphosis is a process of becoming that entails new figurations and differing social representations. Therefore, if we look for the limits that these new figurations have (as the ones provided by Bianchi’s critique), we can provide those differing materializations. In this section, we argue that literary language can provide the site for these metamorphoses, for stretching the limits, and for translating and transposing social realities.

Serenella Iovino (2018, p.233) defines literature as possessing the “power to act as a privileged means of liberation and of emancipation […], especially if considered in the framework of an ecology of culture”. That is to say, it performs in an agentic capacity within specific socio-cultural discourses. It entails a micro level frame of action providing certain intra-actions between novels, themes, writers and readers; while at the same time, they are also part of a macro-level in which past, present and future are conflated.

Important to this discussion for understanding differing ways in which a literary language becomes a material tool for social (feminist) transformation (and beyond representationalist practices) is the work of Moira Gatens and her presentation of fiction as a philosophical praxis. According to Gatens (2013, p.1), “[p]oststructuralist literary theorists came to question what they saw as George Eliot’s naivety in supposing that language could be a transparent medium for the

representation of reality". Scientifically speaking a particular canon was created around Eliot's novels which clearly identified one definition of language based upon a concrete reading of Eliot's writing. Language was defined as a representative signifier for a particular reality based upon a concrete canon that identified who was considered a great novelist and who was not. This assumed two particular facts: that there was a concrete definition for what "language" as a concept means, as well as, a set of conditions pre-defined in that time that could clearly identify a set of characteristics prior even to the moment of reading the novel. Gatens asserts that Eliot and her partner were some of the first theorists who understood that "the novel cannot be distinguished from science or philosophy on the basis of truth versus falsity, the real versus the ideal, or facts versus imagination. Scientists, philosophers and novelists all rely on the power of the imagination in their respective pursuits" (Gatens, 2013, p.10). This is why this article includes creations of language itself (philosophical and literary constructions) and theorizations of the relations that it creates. As in Eliot's works, for future articles devoted to this section and what we are aiming at start theorizing in this article is examples "of an interventionist practice that aims to transform the ethical frame of human [and more than human] action through a forceful revisioning of reality" (Gatens, 2013, p.13).

The concept of *fictioning* as praxis (see Palmer, 2019; Burrows and O' Sullivan, 2019) is vital if we are to think about the relation between words and worlds. Skiveren begins his article on the relationship between fiction and new materialism by pointing out (quite rightly) that Slavoj Žižek's criticism of new materialism which aligns it with the fictional world of Lord of the Rings misses the mark, because it does not perceive fiction in the way that it is understood by thinkers such as Donna Haraway, Jane Bennett and Astrida Neimanis: that is, "preferred way to assert new worlds of vibrant, intra-active, trans-corporeal, and sympoetic matterings" (Skiveren, 2019, p.1). Sympoeisis, drawn from Haraways's use of the term as a word for "worlding-with, in company" (Haraway, 2016, p.58), is defined alongside sympathy in Elizabeth de Freitas' article in *Posthuman Ecologies* as "a process of *becoming other that does not erase the*

other"(de Freitas, 2019, p.89). Or, again, taking Toni Morrison's words (1992, p.4), "imagining is not merely looking or looking at; nor is it taking onself intact into the other. It is, for the purposes of the work, *becoming*".

How, then, do we become-with-writing? Setting as an example the preromantic Karl Phillip Morritz, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari define writers as sorcerers (Deleuze & Guattari, 1978, p.265). These sorcerers are responsible for feeling the unknown, the affect as "the effectuation of a power of the pack that throws the self into upheaval and makes it reel" (ibid). Yet again, another question remains open here since we cannot single out the possibility of the affect in a human sorcerer, so how are we defining here responsibility? Following Haraway (2008), responsibility is the materialization of the capacity to respond at a micro-level that influences somehow (reeling and shaking) some macro-structures. Coming back to Morrison again, the combination between "individual freedom *and* mechanisms for devastating racial oppression" is the point of view of a responsible writer (Morrison, 1992, p.xiii). Morrison explains that when we take this view "seriously as agency, the literature produced within and without it offers an unprecedented opportunity to comprehend the resilience and gravity, the inadequacy and the force of the imaginative act" (ibid). That is to say, when we become with the previously mentioned example, *The Color of Milk,* the impossibility of the capital letter "i" already opens up this effectuation of power in which we are combining this individual freedom of a woman in the 1831 who, even in vulnerable circumstances (first exploited in the farm with his father and then sold to be maid), learns to read and to write to express the inequalities of that time. Also, when we become with the Florens' writer, we intra-act with those material walls in which oppressive letters have become our responsibility. As readers, we cannot feel the oppression that Florens is feeling, but precisely the unknown is the locatedness of the relationship between all the elements partaking in the moment of reading, where possibilities and multiplicities come to the front.

Rather than exclude language at the expense of matter we look towards a site of commencement, which is also the place precisely where the body was disavowed

from language. As Vicki Kirby points out, the 'outside' of signification is a site of gendered exclusion, read as impenetrable 'matter' and therefore feminine, excluded through phallocentric somatophobia. Following Kirby, we may see the relation between ideality and materiality in the signifier as a "productive entanglement" (Kirby, 1997, pp.54-55). We must consider our textual worlds as material at the same time as we consider our material worlds a textual. To create language within itself is *itself* a theorizing of naturecultures from a monist perspective; while, at the same time, articulating an agentic capacity of matter to perform feminist political moves.

Playing with language: IPhone or stein?

Through the advances of technology we now find ourselves not in the postmodern condition but rather the algorithmic condition, which according to Felicity Colman et al in their report 'Ethics of Coding: A Report on the Algorithmic Condition', the algorithmic condition "extends beyond, and fundamentally changes, such spatial modes of relating by foregrounding the temporal logics upon which both interfaces and navigational practices rely" (Colman et al 2018L, p.11). If the interface we are considering is language itself, or a chosen medium with which to express it, the order of 'once upon a time' sequential linearity is glitched: sometimes consciously, sometimes imperceptibly.

Once upon a time it is so much better then it is so fun to be a nice app for a good few hours of playing

Once upon a time to be a great person I would be a great friend and a wonderful family

Once upon a time I will have to wait for the last few days to get the fuck out of the woodwork

Once upon a time to get a chance to see if you need to be on the same night as well as the event by visiting recording in surveillance

Once upon a time with your family, I think I realised that you were on the way to be a little bit more than the average person in the world

Once upon a time to be able to I have a great idea of how much fun it would have been for you in the first day is a good is a good next time

Once upon a time it would have been better for you to come back from your lunchtime meeting and then we could try something really outrageous that you might just want

The nonsensical beginnings listed above emerged from a game that you can play at home; variants of which you may have already played at home. Let's presume for now that you, the reader, have a smartphone with a predictive text function, and that function is switched on. The function predicts words which are most likely to come directly after the word you are currently typing. These words are generated algorithmically, and are based upon a philosophy of what is known in computational linguistics as 'disambiguation'. The keyboard learns your typing habits and together you and the keyboard move harmoniously towards the elimination of ambiguity and maximum communicative efficiency. And yet. Ambiguity, error, equivocation, wordplay and the deliberate manipulation and subversion of expectations are what fuel the movement of language; its mobile sense of variation. In *What If Culture Was Nature All Along?* Kirby discusses the Enigma Code used at Bletchley Park in the UK during WWII. The code is a cipher code; it is both broken by algorithms and exhibits algorithmic patterns itself. It just so happens that the algorithmic pattern of the code is also the pattern of a language. "How can a superposition of recognisably different codes, an essential de/coherence, nevertheless appear as *one* language? How can any individual language have myriad manifestations, or translations *within* it?" (Kirby, 2017, p.13). Kirby's point here is that *all* languages have myriad manifestations and translations within them: as variation, language itself varies.

The italicised sentences above were generated by typing 'Once upon a time' and then following this with the middle word of the three words suggested

automatically by the predictive text function. Each of the sentences above was typed by a different human animal into their phone, and consequently each result was different. This dual sentence construction, halfway between human and algorithm, is interesting both in terms of its questionable or multiple authorship but also because of its spatiotemporal strangeness. The resemblance between the quasi-nonsensical statements above and deliberate modernist or avant-garde syntactical deformations demonstrate the significance of the move away from transparent representation and the foregrounding of linguistic materiality. It is this resemblance that causes us to foreground precisely this – materiality – as the very thing that links up the seemingly indecipherable aspects of avant-garde linguistic experimentation with current preoccupations of materiality in general. It is through opacity – thickness – unreadability – that language departs from representation and tends towards something other. Rather than linguistic opacity as something within the realm of the privileged, we present it here in all is glorious singurality, following Édouard Glissant who employs a material metaphor to convey the significance of this concept for post- and de-colonial discourse: "Opacities can coexist and converge, weaving fabrics" (Glissant, 1990, p.190).

If we take Gertrude Stein as an example, her style has been described as something approaching unreadable due to its opacity but perhaps more specifically its syntactical irregularity. If we take the first sentence of 'Composition as Explanation', for example: "There is singularly nothing that makes a difference a difference in beginning and in the middle and in ending except that each generation has something different at which they are all looking" (Stein, 2004 [1926], p.21). Repetitions of words do precisely the opposite of what they purport to do; the first 'a difference' means something different to the second, and so, context-bound, time-bound variation is consistently, playfully suggested here. Far from being consigned to a fairly recent historical period of early modernism at the beginning of the twentieth century, the playful linguistic tripwires that we observe in Stein are not so much divested as supercharged with meaning. This syntactical irregularity is produced because of a deliberate manipulation of spatiotemporal

lines. It is this niche of literary and linguistic production that we would like to propose as inextricably linked to the project of new materialism.

The advances of technology for the purposes of communication have historically sustained an ambivalent relationship with the styles associated with poetic experimentation. As Natalia Cecire narrates in her article on Steinian unreadibility, there is an amusing moment in the 1935 Fred Astaire film *Top Hat* wherein a difficult-to-comprehend telegram is dismissed as sounding "like Gertrude Stein" (Cecire, 2015, p.284). This is of course a rather glib comparison on the part of the character as Cecire points out, because the repetition of the word 'stop' in a telegram carries a very specific purpose and would be read as such by the unseen telegraph workers, who are usually women. In a feminist materialist reading, Cecire points out that the opacity in Stein's writing has been historically read corporeally: quite literally as a *failure to work.*

To draw a conclusion, we think diffractively with three linguistic materialists: A-B-C: Acker-Bahktin-Cixous: in order to sculpt, or, after Acker, to bodybuild, or, after us, to *bodyword* our critical/creative argument for linguistic mattering.

A-B-C of Bodywording: A Primer[5]

-To speak and/or to enthing?

(1) the phonic side of the word

luminous torrents

(the raw material)

-Yet should we still suppress the thing of it?

(1) the musical constituent proper

5 The first column of questions are our own; the lines in the second column come from Bakhtin's enumeration of the materiality of language in *Art and Answerability* (1924); the third column is from Hélène Cixous' 'The Laugh of the Medusa' (1976) and the fourth is from Kathy Acker's 'Against Ordinary Language: The Language of the Body' (1993)

sold for a stinking fortune

(after each workout, I forgot to write)

-The material yes and/or the material no?

(2) the referential meaning

ebullient, infinite woman

(what is the picture of the antagonism between bodybuilding and verbal language?)

-Is the anti/thetical sense of every word?

(3) the constituent of verbal connections

you punished yourself for writing

(It is in this geography of no language, this negative space, that I can start to describe bodybuilding)

-From transparency/invisibility to opacity?

(4) on the psychological plane – the emotional-volitional

as when we would masturbate in secret

(the verbal language in the gym is minimal and almost senseless, reduced to numbers and a few nouns)

-Is opacity agential?

(4) theaxiomatical directedness of the word

Write, let no one hold you back

(let us name this language game, the language of the body*)*

-A nomenclature of category-bending?

(4) the diversity of the speaker's axiological relations

imbecelic capitalist machinery

(the closer I am moving toward foreignness and strangeness, the more I am losing my own language)

-When is a word a cheat?

(5) the feeling of verbal activeness

lovely mouths gagged with pollen

(as long as we continue to regard the body, that which is subject to change, chance, and death, as disgusting and inimical, so long shall we continue to regard our own selves as dangerous others)

-What of sirens?

(5) active generation of signifying sound

we the labyrinths

(when a bodybuilder is counting, he or she is counting his or her own breath)

-Does the saying do beyond the sayer?

(5) all motor elements – articulation, gesture, facial expression, etc.

libidinal and cultural – hence political, typically masculine – economy

(I always want to work my muscle, muscular group, until it can no longer move: I want to fail)

-Does the transcendental signifier still hold sway?

(5) the whole inner directedness of my personality

the very possibility of change

(meaning approaches breath as I bodybuild, as I begin to move through the body's labyrinths, to meet, if only for a second, that which my consciousness ordinarily cannot see)

-Are we sitting on a branch then sawing it off?

(5) actively assumes through utterances

Nearly the entire history of writing is confounded with the history of reason

(this sign is also the sign of patriarchy)

-Do I mould what I mean?

(5) a certain value-and-meaning position

the invention of a new insurgent writing

(the language of the body is not arbitrary)

-----*They all lived happily ever after.*

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New Materialist Becomings and Futurities: A Panel Intra-view

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Abstract

Derived from Karen Barad's intra-action, the term intra-view aims to do justice to the continuous process of becoming that is evident in the asynchronous, generative dialogue of this panel. This panel intra-view provides readers with the opportunity to think with the participants, Fernando Hernández-Hernández, Iris van der Tuin, Nathalie Sinclair, Olga Cielemęcka and Monika Rogowska-Stangret, and their encounters and engagements with new materialism, and how they in turn affect our scholarship.

Keywords

Intra-view, becoming, futurity, asynchronous dialogue, encounters

The term *intra-view*[1] is derived from Karen Barad's intra-action which "signifies the mutual constitution of entangled agencies" (2007, p. 33). In other words, entities emerge out of performative relationalities in a continuous process of becoming. Through intra-action, worlds are (re)configured in diffraction patterns (Barad 2007;

1 We first heard the term intra-view from Nathalie Sinclair.

2014). Following Karen Barad's intra-action we conceptualize intra-view to show the mutual constitution of questions, responses, comments and technologies (Google Docs, email, Skype, computers, etc.) from which new understandings and questions emerge. In curating this interview we have made specific cuts by posing questions and bringing people and ideas together. It is our hope that as these bodies of thought come into contact and affect each other creating diffractive patterns that new possibilities and virtualities are opened for the reader.

This panel intra-view took place digitally, via email and Google Docs in the period between June and November 2019. Entangled in this intra-view are Fernando Hernández-Hernández (FHH), Iris van der Tuin (IvdT), Nathalie Sinclair (NS), Olga Cielemęcka (OC) and Monika Rogowska-Stangret (MRS) as respondents; and Jacqueline Barreiro (JB) and Melisse Vroegindeweij (MV) as co-editors. We chose the respondents among the section editors of the journal because we thought it would be interesting to hear the different voices of the scholars involved in producing the very first issue of Matter: Journal of New Materialist Research.

In choosing the questions[2] for this first intra-view, our aim was to provide readers with the opportunity to think with the participants about the different ways in which each of us encountered new materialisms, how we engage with new materialist theories, and how they in turn affect our scholarship. This aim is represented in questions 1 and 2. Questions 3 and 4 invites us to think critically about new materialisms and some of the issues that have been raised within the field. Question 5 opens the conversation and encourages us all to speculate on the futurities of new materialisms.

In a first instance, participants were emailed the questions and invited to respond. Responses were then compiled in one document. In a second instance the participants were invited to respond to the responses of others via a Google document. In a third instance, and given the asynchronous timing of their responses, some of the comments, requests for clarification or questions posed to each other, were sent via email to participants to invite them to respond or clarify. We have tried

2 We would to like thank Suzanne Smythe and Nathalie Sinclair for their feedback on our questions.

to represent this process in the text by indenting the responses and in some instances inserting a commentary in parenthesis.

In bringing together the responses of the participants we realized that the conversation was indeed generative because although the questions were posed to the participants, the asynchronous dialogue created by their responses and comments highlights the rhizome of our thinking together.

Last but not least, we want to express our appreciation to Fernando Hernández-Hernández, Iris van der Tuin, Nathalie Sinclair, Olga Cielemęcka and Monika Rogowska-Stangret for the time and energy they put in engaging with our questions and each other's thoughts.

Intra-view

JB, MV: How did you first encounter new materialism, and what drew you to it?

IvdT: I first encountered new materialism as an intuition, a vague idea or feeling that what I was teaching (Sandra Harding's 1986 monograph *The Science Question in Feminism*) was not what I was reading (Sara Ahmed, Karen Barad, Rosi Braidotti, Claire Colebrook, Vicki Kirby, …).

> IvdT: Here, I am talking about the Sara Ahmed of *Differences that Matter*, for example, Ahmed's 1998 PhD book that traverses postmodernism and marxism. And about books such as *Strange Encounters*. I was not worried about Ahmed's later dismissal of new materialism or about new materialism as a label. I was simply teaching a certain set of texts and reading another, and wondering about these two sets as disjunctive.

[IvdT answer continues]: Upon the occasion of a PhD seminar with Barad,[3] offered by the thematic gender studies unit at Linköping University in Sweden, I developed

3 March 2005, PhD Course "From Social Constructivism to New Materialism: Feminist Perspectives on Epistemology and Knowledge Production" offered by the Nordic Research School in Interdisciplinary Gender Studies (Linköping University)

the idea that something was happening on the intersection of generationality and theories of meaning, body, and matter. I coined this intersection 'third-wave feminist materialism' and had a topic for my PhD dissertation!

> NS: Interesting to think of waves as they relate to diffraction. A third wave not in the sense of coming after a first or a second one, but more.

FHH: I cannot say there's a moment, a first encounter, like an epiphany. This question makes me think that I already had a materialistic attitude before I heard of the 'New Materialisms.' One of the first research projects I was involved with explored the relationships between pedagogical models and the materiality of two early childhood classrooms. Although my initial training was in psychology, since I was an undergraduate, I considered behaviour is not placed in a vacuum, but linked to and affected by the materiality and discursive frameworks with which it intra-actuated. That's why I was interested in the ecological perspective of psychology, although I was conscious of its functionalist character.

MRS: I really like Fernando's notion of having a 'materialist attitude' before he heard of new materialism. It relates well to me with Iris's 'intuition, a vague idea' and with how Fernando writes below about dissatisfaction with research to which he was being trained – which, I believe – was also Olga's and mine case with traditional Western philosophy. It makes me think that we have always already been new materialist, that we have felt it more at first than knew it.

IvdT: I am thinking about the difference between an attitude and a methodology? I think an attitude helps one, even a student, intuit a method's potential. Strong intuitions may guide one's choices. Alternatively, or in conversation with this, there is the potential of grounded theory, where the research materials guide or co-define methodological choices.

The latter point by Monika can be pushed to an interesting instantiation of new materialism itself, an entanglement of matter and discourse, or to a definition of discourse that gives equal importance to words ('new materialism') and material

practices (a certain way of reading, a certain feeling). It also demonstrates the emancipatory force of 'labels' whereby something felt, but not known, suddenly becomes an established academic practice. With labelling and emancipation obviously also comes exclusion: where does new materialism end? And who can be a new materialist?

> NS: I think Iris's comment on attitude and methodology connects well with some of the indigenous methodologies that are being written about and underscores the ethics of methodology. I heard yesterday an indigenous research talk about the protocols of research…[4] 'Protocol' derives from 'first' and 'glue.' What an interesting word: first+glue.[5] Very material!

[FHH answer continues]: Later, my interest in ethnography brought out the role of the material and the immaterial play in social relations. Another important moment was the discovery of actor-network theory, and the consideration of how the different actors (human and non-human) are affected within the systems to which we pay attention. After this trajectory there comes a period where my dissatisfaction with the kind of qualitative research I was doing brought me to read about the post-qualitative turn and, as part of it, the new materialism became part of my agenda of interests. In this journey, in the stage that I now find myself, the collaboration with Beatriz Revelles Benavente in our research group[6] contributed to having an interlocutor with whom to share readings and debate on new materialism in the seminars we organized in the doctorate of Arts and Education. Thanks to her, I also participated in a COST[7] meeting where I could appreciate the value of the international network of colleagues that shares their interest in new materialisms.

> MRS: I love how certain topics link our voices with one another – collaborations were also important for Olga and me and are linked directly

4 It was Vicki Kelly, from Simon Fraser University, who talked about protocol in a faculty meeting.
5 For its etymology, see: https://www.etymonline.com/word/protocol.
6 The research group refers to ESBRINA: Subjectivities, visualitites and contemporary learning environments. See: https://esbrina.eu/en/home/.
7 The COST meeting refers to COST Action IS1307 New Materialism: Networking European Scholarship on 'How Matter Comes to Matter' (2014-18).

> for us to how one practices feminist new materialist research, or – to use Dolphijn and Van der Tuin's (2012) term – how new materialisms are put to work.
>
> And then there's also a question of generations here – and it links to Iris's comment (generationality) and Nathalie's comment below that mentions her former PhD student and above – about the waves that are more than linear organization of knowledge production. It is interesting to observe how new materialisms have emerged (also) out of those generative inter- and intra-generational meetings, readings, discussions…

NS: My first encounter with new materialism was through the work of Karen Barad. I had a PhD student at the time—Sean Chorney, now my colleague—who was very interested in the topic of agency as it relates to the mathematics classroom. We had noticed that while Andrew Pickering was willing to talk about material agency in the case of science, mathematics was somehow treated differently. Given my interest in the relationship between mathematics and machines, fuelled in part by Brian Rotman's work, but also by my own research on the use of digital tools for mathematics learning, I found Pickering's account wanting. But Barad's agential realism provided a way to think about the materiality of concepts more generally, and of mathematical concepts in particular. At the same time, with Elizabeth de Freitas, we had been reading Gilles Châtelet, whose material account of mathematical invention seemed to work so productively with Barad.

OC, MRS: Feminist new materialisms were – for us – always already a research practice and a collaboration-building practice. The two of us have been sharing the new materialist journey together from the very beginning. On the one hand, coming from the field of philosophy, new materialisms offered a breathing space away from masculinist, human-centric, hierarchical, and highly disciplined traditions of philosophizing to which we were trained. We were PhD students at a time in an institution formed by the tradition of analytical philosophy, the Lviv-Warsaw School. On the other hand, gender studies research in Poland was mainly coming from social sciences and literary studies. As much as we appreciated the feminist and queer

knowledge production in our region, because we used philosophical disciplinary discourses and methodologies (and not those of social science or literary studies) we were also feeling a bit alienated in terms of its concepts and methodologies. New materialisms were an interdisciplinary playground for us, where we could experiment with concepts, imagine practicing philosophy otherwise, and even unlearn deep-rooted theories' genealogies.

JB, MV: Can you mention some of the thinkers and concepts in new materialism that you are working with? How have their insights affected your own scholarship?

OC, MRS: We fathom feminist new materialisms as a process with which we intra-act through various concepts and thinkers, some of whom do not consider themselves as new materialist (think Elizabeth Grosz, for instance). New materialism provides tools that can be inspiring for different aims and that reorient us to take unanticipated paths. We are wary of seeing new materialism as a static set of ideas on a way of becoming a canon. For us it is rather, again, a conceptual playground that allows us to stay with – as Anna Tsing (2012) would have it – 'unruly edges.' However, it is also a blanket always too short. Other feminist, queer, environmentalist, anti-oppressive traditions are no less important to us.

> NS: "A blanket always too short" is very nicely said! Too short but especially, always in need of new foldings.

IvdT: I have worked a lot with the theorists -- Ahmed, Barad, and Colebrook -- who were the 'case studies' in my PhD. Afterwards I started working on *New Materialism: Interviews and Cartographies* (2012) with Rick Dolphijn and we reached out to Manuel DeLanda, who coined 'new materialism' whilst Braidotti coined 'neo materialism,' and to Quentin Meillassoux, who worked on 'speculative realism' whilst Barad worked on 'agential realism.' Both DeLanda's and Meillassoux's creative responses to good-old realism made us decide to include them in the new-materialist category. In the end, the traversing of Harding's feminist empiricism, on the one hand, and, on the other, feminist postmodernism was what defined new materialisms for us. Earlier I had taken this argument from Donna Haraway's engagement with Harding in "Situated Knowledges" (1988).

> NS: So why is it that these speculative philosophers are not usually brought into discussions of new materialism? I have often thought that it was their less political bent (esp. Meillassoux), but what else is going on?
>
> IvdT: I always think this is mainly a matter of genealogy. Speculative realists do not ground themselves in discussions about Marxism and feminist standpoint theory. Or in feminist discussions about realism, for that matter. They don't read Lynn Hankinson Nelson who, by the way, published one of Barad's (1996) earliest agential realism papers!

NS: I would say that Barad is the main one, but with and through her, many of the ideas of prior thinkings, such as Deleuze and Whitehead, have resonated in new ways.

> MRS: And here again inter- and intra- generationalities and waves disturbing linearities are at play!

[NS answer continues]: I think that the concept of intra-action has been particularly generative as a way to think about ontological aspects of concept formation in the mathematics classroom and also the idea that tools can be productive of concepts, and not just mediators of pre-existing mathematical concepts. The kind of diffractive analysis that Barad uses has also been important methodologically in my work. And at a more general level, the kind of 'yes, and' thinking of new materialism has influenced my scholarship in pushing me to find new ways to think about how different theories or sets of assumptions can work side-by-side, without necessarily ever cohering. This new kind of logic is highly relevant to current questions in British Columbia such as, how do we indigenize the mathematics curriculum?

> IvdT: Can you say a few words more, perhaps, about this process of indigenization?
>
> NS: I think that at this point, through work that Elizabeth de Freitas and I have done, the main question has been around how to recover/repeat a minor mathematics, and how to do so in a way that it is not already a secondary, 'ethno' mathematics (like the shape of teepees). I think there is something to

be pursued in relation to aesthetics/ethics, that is, the values at stake in a minor mathematics.

MRS: It makes me think of the roundtable discussion Olga and I have curated for this first issue of *Matter* – we have a short essay from Professor Gurminder Bhambra who addresses the question of decolonization of curriculum.

FHH: There are three concepts that I consider most present in my trajectory. Barad's (2007) intra-action, because it has made possible to consider the whole 'non-human' dimension and to explore, on its basis, what post-humanist research and pedagogy may become. The notion of affection, because it allowed me to reread Spinoza's work from another perspective and appreciate his figure and contribution from another frame. One of my interests is related to affective pedagogy, or if you will, to the consideration of learning as a process that takes place when someone feels affected by others and the world, in the sense that there is a change of gaze of themselves. In this issue, the contributions of Anna Hickey-Moody and Dennis Atkinson – especially Hickey-Moody's contribution to a genealogy of the notions of affect and affection and her linkage of learning with the notion of event have been particularly influential. Finally, and just to cite three, the notion of 'sympathy,' as is explored by Elizabeth de Freitas, helps me to expand the meaning of sharing and opens me to a new praxis on my work as an academic and citizen.

MRS: I like how in Fernando's comments academia and life 'outside' of it (that is never really outside) entangle! I read it as an effort to think academia and theoretical research in an response-enabling way, accountable to our communities, away from an image of academia as an ivory tower. But also as an invitation to rethink our material, everyday practices!

JB, MV: New materialist theory has been criticized for not having (enough) political potential, for example, as being reductionist, positivist, or too centered around Western philosophy. In a world of climate change, neoliberalism, and the rise of the political far-right, what is the political potential of new materialism? How can new materialism create a better future?

IvdT: Haraway has argued that all scholarship is partial: incomplete and biased. Partial perspectives are (to be) privileged because they demonstrate (as in: point out) an awareness of their own situatedness. Besides that she argues that we should, as situated scholars, actively construct the best possible perspectives for our work. OncoMouse™ was such an active construction of her own making, a living creature that requires care and an abstract(ed) figure to think with. She constructed the figuration in the late 1990s as to learn more about the technoscientific laboratory than STS scholars in the tradition of symmetrical anthropology possibly could (Haraway 1997). Colleagues critiquing the new materialisms for its deficient political potential want to push 'us' in the direction of a better partiality, a partiality that allows us to see more patterns of in- and exclusion and—I would add—more interesting outliers and diffraction patterns. This discussion has had an important impact on new-materialist research in Europe. Think about the Euro-Australian research on 'interfaith childhoods' by Anna Hickey-Moody and on terror/ism by scholars such as Evelien Geerts, working on Belgium and France from the Netherlands and the USA, and Katharina Karcher, working in the UK on German case studies primarily.

FHH: I would not say that the foundations of the new materialisms are positivist, since their onto-epistemology is radically different. But sometimes it can be interpreted as sustaining a certain authoritarianism. In the sense that it is configured as an opposition, on the basis of a kind of a moral supremacy. However, as Bruno Latour stated when speaking of constructionism, this positionality against something or someone, eludes the fact that what is proposed from the new materialisms is because other colleagues have reflected on these issues from other directions. In this sense, I believe that the challenge is to think from and not against. Although I can understand that, in the context in which the new materialist turn began, was as a reaction to the imposition of a hegemonic vision of what research in education and social sciences should be.

> NS: This [the idea of new materialism as oppositional] is not my impression at all. I think that in the Van der Tuin and Dolphijn (2012) book, there is an explicit argument that new materialism is not about opposing or replacing at

> all. It is perhaps when we write papers, we are coerced back into this situating our work (usually by pointing to difference) that it is easy to fall back into 'supremacy' and here is where methodology can ripple through much wider than it is usually assumed to—this probably resonates with the conversation around attitude.

[FHH Continues]: Another problem pointed out in this question has to do with the relation of new materialisms with some spheres of reality (whatever reality means). The forgetting of the postcolonial position is a good example, and the criticism of some Australian colleagues[8] on this issue seems to me to be well founded, and necessary to learn from it. I have the impression that the new materialisms, as well as the post-qualitative turn, began with a certain dazzling by authors such as Deleuze, Braidotti, Barad or Massumi and this led to a notion of research considered as an expression of thought. This approach, which has been necessary to rethink the onto-epistemological-methodological and ethical foundations of an alternative approach to research, now requires research that can offer other ways of understanding the social phenomena we are interested in. If we manage to create this bridge – in our research group we are trying to do so by approaching how teachers learn – I see a promising path that can lead us to carry out another kind of research.

NS: Yes, I am familiar with this critique. Of course, it is hard to understand how the work of people like Haraway, Barad and Bennett is not seen as political. But I think this has a lot to do with the attachment of critical theories to certain ideas around identity, which new materialists are disturbing. This can make it seem like certain issues facing minorities, such as achievement gaps amongst Indigenous students in Canada, cannot be adequately addressed by new materialism because the particular history of the genocide of Indigenous people in Canada is not taken to matter enough. In recent years, I have read more Indigenous scholarship as well as critical race theory literature, and have learned so much. Fred Moten, for example, is very convincing in his analysis of the racism inherent in philosophy since Kant, in the very

[8] See for example Gerrard, Rudolph, and Sriprakash (2017).

shaping of 'our' European ideas of what it means to know, to think, to value. While this is in line with Barad's general point about boundary-making practices[9] (and Rancière's [2004] approach to the politics of aesthetics), the specifics of these Baradian cuts matter enormously. Speaking for myself, rather than for new materialism more generally, I think that the 'yes, and' of new materialism can help avoid an appropriation of non-Western philosophical ideas and instead allow me to think both, as precisely as possible, at the same time.

> IvdT: How does this work in a situation where canonization is still a power-saturated affair? Where libraries are still bastions of discrimination and exclusion? Where knowledge is still firewalled? This more Foucauldian take on discourse needs a place in our analysis, too, besides a Deleuzean one, perhaps.
>
> NS: Yes this is a good point. Petra Mikulan and I have experimented with what she calls a methodology of stratigraphy that tries to do this kind of reading at different scales of mattering that do not converge (necessarily) or even tell any coherent story (anathema for a research paper!). But either it is not satisfying or I have to change what I consider to be satistfying!
>
> MRS: I very much like the openness to learn from others that – from my reading of this intra-view – emerges out of our responses! It is – to my mind – one way of destabilizing canons: experiment with reading lists and class syllabi and it links again to one of the voices in the roundtable curated by Olga and myself, that of Jessie Loyer, an Indigenous (Cree-Métis) librarian.

OC, MRS: The way we see it, new materialisms value unlearning, as they train us to perceive the world through relations first and foremost (rather than objects, subjects, goals, categories, norms, etc.). Thus, new materialisms are one of many different ways of telling stories about the world. Concepts however, can take us on different journeys, and not always where we want to go, they can be ab/used to serve different political agendas. The systemic nature of neoliberalism, environmental challenges,

[9] MRS: See also: Haraway, 1988.

and social injustices needs to be addressed by both conceptual inventiveness and direct political action. [IvdT: Is conceptual inventiveness a form of indirect political action?]. New materialisms stem from academia, thus inherit its problematic pasts, institutional hierarchies and reproduced privileges. In many ways new materialism participates in market economy (new materialism as a brand). This also requires our response and being mindful of our own situatedness and privilege.

JB, MV: New materialist ontologies disrupt 'conventional' research practices (see e.g. Elizabeth St. Pierre's work). To what extent should we 'do away' with methods and/or methodologies? How should we approach research in a way that adequately responds to the world in which we are entangled?

FHH: I consider pertinent the criticism that Jennifer Greene made in 2013 of some of the tensions she observed in the new materialisms. In my research group, experimenting with this perspective has generated intense discussions about why to move forward our relaxed trajectory within qualitative narrative research. On this point, I think that what new materialisms are proposing is an opportunity to review the foundations of the research. However, sometimes I get the impression that we are creating a new elite that, although brilliant in its way of articulating ways of thinking, moves away from the daily problems that require complex thinking and acting. In a world ruled by fake news, we also need not only articles for the initiated academics, but also for teachers, students, and social collectives to be able to think about their own struggles and challenges.

IvdT: We should not do away with any methodology or method whatsoever. We should re-read or refine what we are familiar with. Haraway refined anthropological science studies in the 1990s by inserting it with 'SF,' speculative fiction. This did not involve a doing away with anthropological fieldwork. Her in(ter)vention implied an inter- and transdisciplinary endeavour so as to shift unwanted assumptions (anthropocentrism, for one thing, or a blindness to what Braidotti has called 'methodological nationalism' [see e.g. 2010]). I have recently seen Elizabeth de Freitas (2017), and Felicitas MacGilchrist and colleagues (2019), pick up speculation in/on sociology and education, respectively. The latter new materialists refine

Haraway's ongoing scholarship and re-read canonical approaches in specific fields of scholarship.

NS: New materialism is not in the business of doing away with anything, that is, of replacing other modes of thinking. If there is anything that new materialists can do is help the research community become aware of the ontological and epistemological assumptions that their current methods entail so that the contingencies of the questions asked and methods used are clearly acknowledged. While currently limited in number, I think that some of the post-qualitative methods that have emerged already—such as Petra Mikulan's stratigraphy, but also diffraction—are very promising, even though some early uses of them are still uneasily wrapped up in qualitative methods—and that new ones are likely to emerge. A challenge, at a more general level, will be the increasingly reductive techniques now available in fields such as the Neurosciences, but also, as Isabelle Stengers points out, in the sciences in general. Scholars such as Elizabeth Wilson, who are wading into the sciences with their new materialist eyes are helping us not only appreciate the entanglement of our world, but showing that it is critical for philosophers and social scientists to engage with science, to push science to ask questions that reckon with the entanglement—and this will certainly require new methodological approaches.

OC, MRS: We agree with Iris and Nathalie! Methodologies are always political and 'doing away' with them may be an illusion invisibilizing other feminist and queer theories and activisms, especially those outside of academia. What guides us in our research and teaching is the imperative to stay alert and, to quote Deleuze, "attentive to the unknown knocking at our door," open to the possibility of being surprised (in Puig de la Bellacasa, 2012, p. 212). It resonates well with us what María Puig de la Bellacasa (2012, p. 212) wrote: "[…] we do not know in advance what world is knocking [at our door], inquiring into how we can care will be required in how we will relate to the new."

JB, MV: Lastly, what possibilities and opportunities do you foresee for the future of new materialism? How do you see the field of new materialism growing in the near future?

FHH: I think that my diagnosis on the future of new materialisms has been raised with the answers that I have been thinking and sharing to the previous questions. I come from an academic culture that works on collective proposals, that tries to confront binarism as a political attitude and make a contribution to another project of common life. It seems to me that it is necessary to generate collective projects – this journal could be an opportunity to do that – where others feel invited – not excluded – to take part. Even for those who do not fully share what is being proposed. It will be the only way not to create the sect of new materialists.

> MRS: This relates to me again with the roundtable discussion Olga and I have curated for this issue of Matter – we invited scholars who are not always feminist new materialist to partake, which as I believe is a practice that addresses the question of canonization and classifi*x*ations (Van der Tuin, 2015).

NS: This is a difficult question. I wonder if it is worth asking whether new materialism could also not have a future, and what that would mean. Could some of the ideas that we have associated with new materialism find better or just different homes elsewhere? Does being a thing, and 'ism,' get in the way of becoming, of thinking, of feeling?

> OC: I find this remark so thought-provoking! Indeed, 'we' often seem so attached to the idea of future, of growth, and expansion. What would happen if we let go of it? What new openings, new transformations of thought would become possible then?

OC, MRS: We wish to care for the ways of thinking that stay away from canonizations, that cultivate engagement, and avoid having – to use Judith Butler's (1997) expression – 'the last word.' It might be our responsibility to keep new materialisms alive, immune to stagnation, self-congratulatory approaches, definite answers or solutions. In a way, new materialism will stay what it was for us from the beginning – community building practices, in which ethics stays at the forefront and informs our unorthodoxas.

IvdT: The sections of this journal—MATTER: Journal of New Materialist Research—are my leap into the future. [MRS: Yes!]. The section description page shows us where new-materialist research is going, I think. Collectively developing the ideas for the sections, under the inspiring leadership of Beatriz Revelles Benavente, was very inspirational to me.

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Doing new materialisms: an interview with Maria Tamboukou

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Including an interview as part of the issue responds to one specific question that has to do with the production of scientific knowledge. During the Training School (November 2017, Barcelona, Spain), the context in which this interview is framed, we highlighted the importance of creating inter-generational knowledges able to transverse across disciplines and the historicity of matter itself. We believed in the plurality of the voice as an intersection that allows de-centering the figure of the author as a hegemonic representation of scientific knowledge. This interview was performed in a very specific context and was opening the training school in order to find out how an onto-epistemological definition of new materialisms could affect a contemporary definition of feminist politics in order to elaborate a framework for non-hierarchical pedagogical practices. The interview that we are transcribing in this journal represents this specific moment between Beatriz Revelles-Benavente (co-editor and co-organizer of the Training School together with Ana M. González) and Maria Tamboukou, a recognized scholar on new materialist methodologies. The interview is divided into four thematic questions and we have reproduced the dialogue almost as it happened during the event:

1. New materialist methodologies

Beatriz Revelles Benavente (BRB): I would like to start this training school by retrieving one specific definition of new materialisms from Nick Fox and Pam Alldred (2015, p.399), "New ¿or neo? Materialism […] concerned fundamentally with the material workings of power, but focused firmly upon social production rather than social construction […] how desires, feelings and meanings also contribute to social production." This implies conceptualizations of research and research inquiries as "assemblages", "processual", "affective", and many other qualifiers that situate the kind of research that is open up by this ethic-onto-epistemological umbrella that attempts to describe how matter comes to matter. This article reflects upon a processual methodology that embeds and embodies alternatives to realist or constructionist methods, the de-centralization of human agency, the conceptualization of research-assemblage and a moving towards an assessment of the micropolitics of the social. Taking into account that our speakers here are key figures in what seems to configure methodological strategies of new materialism. I would like them to explain to us how genealogies (van der Tuin, 2015) and narrative entanglements (Tamboukou, 2016; 2018) contribute to the reconfiguration of "material-discursive" practices of the world, on the one hand. And, on the other, taking into account that methodologies can be considered intra-actively working with ontologies and epistemologies in how practices matter, how these methodologies reconfigure a "new materialist" conceptualization on their own. That is to say, how can we practice methodologies engaging with the relation between acting and thinking (Tamboukou, 2016).

Maria Tamboukou (MT): In responding to this first question, I need to make an initial cartography of my theoretical and methodological approach to narratives.

1) Narrative research focuses on singularities, addressing the question of 'who one is'. At the heart of this proposition lies a philosophical tradition that focuses on difference rather than sameness and identity. In his major philosophical work, 'Difference and repetition' Deleuze (2004) has forcefully put forward the concept of pure difference, not different from, but different per se. I have expanded elsewhere

on Deleuzian approaches to narratives (see Livholts and Tamboukou, 2015), but what I want to underline here, is the narrative interest on singularities, on the unique existent, the unrepeatable, who breaks away with the tyranny of representation and transferability, 'validity criteria' that have long been interrogated, particularly within the field of qualitative research in the human sciences. The narrative interest on the uniqueness of human beings is not however individualistic, an important point that brings me to my second proposition of the political matrix within which narrative research is deployed.

2) Narrative research is immanently situated within the political as conceptualized in Hannah Arendt's thought: I have used the Arendtian conceptualization of speech and action as the modes par excellence 'in which human beings appear to each other' (Arendt 1998, p.177), revealing as it were the uniqueness of the human condition. Indeed, action in the presence of others is a sine-qua-non condition for the emergence of the political subject. However, Arendt (1998) has pointed out that action is lost as the fleeting moment in the passage of time, if it is not transformed into a story. In thus following Foucault and Arendt, stories should not be conceived only as discursive effects but also as recorded processes wherein the self as the author/teller of his/her story transgresses power boundaries and limitations following 'lines of flight' in its constitution as a political subject. It is this very process of storied actions, revealing the 'birth' of the political subject that the political in narrative research is about. This political dimension should not therefore be conflated with 'the politics of emancipation' that narrative research has occasionally be hailed to: the researcher's emancipatory task of giving voice to the research participants, a trend and belief that has recently received quite important criticism. (See, Elliott, 2005)

3) Narrative research traces the constitution of 'the narratable self' (Cavarero 2000) This self is exposed from birth within the interactive scene of the world and through this constitutive exhibition, the self comes to desire the tale of his or her own life story to be told or written. The 'narratable self' is thus constituted within collectivities and out of culturally marked differences. But social milieus and collectivities are always in flux. The narratable self is therefore, discursive, provisional, inter-sectional, and

unfixed. It is not a unitary core self, but rather a system of selves grappling with multilevelled differences and taking up subject positions, not in a permanent way, but rather temporarily, as points of departure for nomadic becomings.

4) Narrative research is a site of embodied knowledge: in Spinoza's monistic philosophy, mind and body are the same reality, though expressed in different ways. The body in its closed unity to the mind is therefore a site of auto/biographical knowledge because memory itself is embodied. In Cavarero's (2000) articulation of the narratable self, the auto/biographical exercise of memory is not about the self becoming 'intelligible'; it is rather about the experience that the self has of being narratable and therefore familiar. Each one of us knows that who we meet always has a unique story. And this is true even if we meet them for the first time without knowing their story at all. Moreover, we are all familiar with the narrative work of memory, which in a totally involuntary way, continues to tell us our own personal story (2000, p.33)

5) Narratives open up to the importance of the imaginary in what counts as research: Moira Gatens has underlined Spinoza's line of thought that without imagining that we can do something, we will actually never become able to do it (cited in James 2000, p.47). In this light, Genevieve Lloyd has further argued that Spinoza's philosophy has opened up possibilities for a reconceptualization of the imaginary and has discussed how Antonio Negri has read Spinoza's formulation of imagination as a path giving access to the realities of the social world: 'Imagination can play a constitutive role, rather than just a distorting one; in understanding its fictions, reason reflects on the real social world in all its confusion and contradictoriness' (Lloyd 1996, p.63).

6) Narrative research is closely interwoven with space /time deployments. In considering time and memory in narrative research, linear conceptualizations of time are abandoned: narrative research is not about linear temporalities; but rather about time contractions and rhizomatic formations, stories that contract the past that have made them what they are, starting from the middle, going back and forth, making connections with other stories of other times and other places. Narrative research raises questions about how the past is contracted in the telling of stories, what allows

memory to have access to the pure past, how cultural memory works in the production and indeed narration of stories. These problematics around time and memory are further interrelated with question around spaces and places.

7) Narrative research is deployed in the whirl of the dance between power and desire: Desire in narrative is a theme much discussed and written about. As Teresa de Lauretis has put it: 'A story is always a question of desire' (2000, p.112). However, how desire is conceptualized and used is in itself an unresolved question analogous to that of the question of narrative and obviously psychoanalysis has been the field par excellence wherein questions of desire have been discussed and debated.

8) Stories however, are not just effects conditioned by relations of power, knowledge and desire. Stories do things: they produce realities. Narrative research is therefore about the constitutive power of stories in producing realities and indeed the subject. In my own research I have theorised women's narratives as technologies of the female self (Tamboukou, 2003). I have argued that women's narratives have operated as a critical technology of their self-formation, suggesting various and often contradictory political and ethical ways of 'becoming a subject'. However, narratives work with multifaceted power effects. As I have already argued narrative research informed by Foucauldian insights is concerned with the processes, procedures and apparatuses, whereby truth and knowledge are interrelated in the production of narratives and in their effects.

These eight propositions about narrative research are by no means exhaustive or final. I would rather suggest they be taken as research trails that can always be bent into different directions. They have been offered as tools in those strands of narrative research, exploring the multiple connections that difference in narratives can generate. Having recognized the fact that narrative research is a complicated field with multi-faceted levels of analysis, this does not mean that any route chosen within the narrative approach cannot be rigorous and systematic, creating of course its own norms, rules and taxonomies that work within particular contexts, what drawing on the work of feminist theorist Karen Barad (2007), I have called 'narrative phenomena' (Tamboukou 2014). What is at the heart of Barad's theorization is the recognition that

entities can never be pre-defined, they always emerge through 'intra-actions' (Barad, 2007) within phenomena. Drawing on quantum physics, Barad has introduced the neologism of 'intra-actions' as a theoretical juxtaposition to the usual notion of interactions. In doing this she denotes a significant difference: while interactions occur between already established and separate entities, 'intra-actions' occur as relations between components. Entities—both human and non-human—actually emerge as an effect of these intra-actions, without having stable points or positions.

In this light the task of the narrative researcher is to map 'the narrative phenomena' she is working with and trace the emergence of entities, be they stories, themes, discourses, modes and of course narrative figures. In research, this question is explored on two interrelated planes: a) a theoretical plane wherein Foucauldian, Deleuzian and feminist lines of thought are making connections and b) a post-narratological plane where I chart how conventions of classical narratology are bent and how differentiations within various sub-genres of life writing, namely autobiographies, diaries and letters, emerge. What is central in this approach is the recognition and discussion of the fact that we are part of the storyworlds we seek to understand and therefore there can never be a clear-cut separation between 'the subject' and 'the object' of the research process.

Making connections between intra-actions in scientific experiments in the field of quantum physics and narrative research in the social sciences, what I want to argue here is that 'the researcher', 'the documents of life' and the 'research strategies of narrative analysis' cannot be taken as separate and pre-existing entities that interact in the final stage of the research process, the writing of an article or a monograph. The 'research findings' and consequently the published outputs rather emerge through the multifarious entanglements—both material and discursive—between 'the researcher', 'the research object' and 'the research context'. As a matter of fact, 'the narrative researcher', 'the documents of life' and 'the research context' are not pre-defined entities either: they are constituted through entangled intra-actions and their particular constitution can only hold within the conditions of the research process, the experiment or rather the 'narrative phenomenon' within which they emerge. Having

mapped some of the complexities and intricacies of the field of narrative research, I can now retrace some of my research practices and methodological moves in the light of new materialism:

Being a Foucauldian from the very beginning I always start with a problem and throughout my work this problem has been understood as the emergence of female subjectivity within particular public milieus: education, art, work and in my very recent project in science and particularly mathematics (see Tamboukou 2003, 2010, 2015b, 2018) In this context I have always worked with narratives as traces of this emergence. And since you find such narratives in archives, I have also become very interested in what it is that we do when we work in archives. There are therefore two planes of entanglement that I am interested in while working with archives and narratives: a) entanglements of discourses and practices that have left their traces in narratives and b) entanglements of discourses and practices within the archive (see Tamboukou 2016)

In thus turning to the part of the question of what was reconfigured through this neo-materialist approach I will offer two examples from my work with 19th century French feminists (Tamboukou 2015b) that respond to the two levels of entanglements I have identified above:

Narratives and discourses have been central in writing a feminist genealogy of women working in the garment industry. What has also emerged as a catalytic event is the question of 'how matter matters' (Barad 2007) in the excavation of the conditions of possibility for the seamstress to emerge as a labour activist, a political subject, a writer of history and a creator of culture. While doing the literature review for this research, I was indeed quite struck to realize that women workers' role in the emergence of the autonomous feminist movement in Europe has been shadowed and marginalised in the history of feminism. More specifically, the fact that the founders of the first autonomous newspaper in Europe, 'La Femme Libre' were seamstresses, was just a footnote, a biographical detail that had not played any role in feminist historians' analyses, particularly in the way they have presented different trends and differences within this movement. To put it simply, my analysis took as its

starting point the materiality of the seamstresses' work in understanding and ultimately reconfiguring the multiple becomings of feminist ideas in nineteenth-century France and beyond.

Revisiting the archive of nineteenth-century feminism with a sensitivity to the materiality of its life documents has opened up different vistas of conceptualization and understanding. In the process of my research I have allowed myself to drift along the rhythms of the documents that I have been reading, analysing and writing about. Following Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis (2004), I have tried to listen to the rhythms of the documents I was reading, imagine the space/time continuum of their production, as well as the social and political conditions of their emergence. Locating for example the various addresses of the first feminist newspaper was in itself a concrete experience in the spatiality and materiality of the first feminist movement: it was from their homes that the seamstresses wrote and published, the same places where they would most probably work to make up for the meagre wages of their needlework. When an editor withdrew, the address would also change. From a neo-materialist perspective then, the geography of the newspaper revealed an intriguing history, or maybe the history of the journal can be starkly traced in its geography: its different addresses are thus the material traces of economic and social differences in the editorship, as well as in the theoretical and political orientation of the journal.

In finally responding the last part of the question about how we can enter into methodologies engaging with the relation between acting and thinking let me first summarise that in my approach the archive is taken a) as a living organism, and thus as a process in becoming but b) it is also theorised in the light of the philosophies of 'the event'—that is my argument is that the archive is 'an event', an eruption that marks discontinuities and ruptures in our habitual modes of understanding and knowing.

What I have therefore suggested is that the materiality, temporality and sociality of the archive is crucial for the entire research process and that as researchers we should not separate the physical, social and intellectual dimensions of the archival research we carry out.

2. Causality in new materialist methodologies

BRB: At the beginning of the two-thousands, feminist contemporary theory (in Grosz, 2004) already warned feminism to move beyond static results because they were already part of the past. Some voices of new materialist research claim the necessity to move away from linear causalitations in research. For example, the work of Iris van der Tuin (2015) specifies two imbricated movements in order to produce knowledge. On the one hand, she encourages to think through quantum leaps that enable a reiteration of past, present and future in order to avoid claxifying feminist genealogies. On the other hand, she interpellates the unknown since since "what happens next is unknown, because every end result is always already a new point of origin." (van der Tuin, 2014, p.231) In your work, you explain knowledge as "emerg[ing] through new begnnings and unexpected connections in the web of contingent relations that constitute reality." (Tamboukou, 2015a, no page)

Nevertheless, without the predictability that certain areas of social research provide to social problems, certain approaches remain vague or obscure since static results are not possible for this kind of approach. How would you explain this conceptualization of causality for interdisciplinary contexts? What would be the empirical application of this nonlinear causality? And how does this affect to individual/and/or agential capacities? Your work is predicated on affirmation, on the power of the conjunction "and", in order to configure a theorization of new materialism. How can we configure this "and" (instead of a linear result) as the catalyst for political transformations in society? Could we say that this is potentially the openness of a radical future and the territorialisation of the social in New Materialism?

MT: What I think is at the heart of understanding the debates and problematics around causality is the important notion of 'the event'. Early on in my work I was very much interested in what Foucault had configured as 'eventalization' (1986) in a genealogical understanding of history. Put it simply I got interested in the question of

how we deal with unexpected eruptions, counter discourses and revolutionary events in the order of discourse, the status quo of social realities and ultimately the flow of history.

We are continuously confronted with such events, take the Parisian May events in 1968, or more recently the Arab spring events and in my recent research, the emergence of the first autonomous feminist movement in France. These were all 'untimely' events to put it in Grosz's words (2004) and their linear causalities were constructed a posteriori in the historiographical operation or in sociological and cultural analyses of their geographies and times. To put it bluntly, it is always easy to look back at an event and discern and map linear causalities. In my work I have instead raised the question of how sociologists can study temporal and singular events in a continuous process of being modified, influenced by Whitehead's understanding of reality as process (1985). As Steven Shaviro (2012, p.17) has succinctly put it, for Whitehead 'the world is made of events, and nothing but events: happenings rather than things, verbs rather than nouns, processes rather than substances'. And here is the leap to quantum physics which has revolutionized our understanding of the deep structure of reality. Material objects have dissolved into wave functions that lack well-defined properties, interact non-locally, and collapse into particles in non-deterministic ways that are inseparable from the subjects who measure them. Barad's (2007) work has of course been influential here particularly in showing how quantum processes are not only relevant for the most microscopic level of reality; but also for explaining consciousness, and by extension, human social life.

Drawing on Whitehead I have actually problematized and questioned the notion of serendipity, arguing instead that it is our entanglement in and emergence from the world in the midst of entangled causalities and events that makes serendipity as a recurrent theme in how we frame for example our findings and understandings in the archive (see Tamboukou 2016). So to go back to your question about 'the relevance' of non-linear causalities within particular social and political contexts, I suggest that instead of linear causalities, we should be interested in 'causal efficacy', a notion in

Whitehead's process philosophy which according to Michael Halewood 'points to the manner in which our material being and our beliefs and actions are always located within a realm of efficacy, of a passing-on of date, of reasons, of motions, of feelings'. (2013, p.54-55) This is not to say that any of these are strictly caused by that which precedes them, ie linear causality, but it does point to the absurdity of denying cause altogether or locate it as a natural or human phenomenon easy to discern and identify.

I believe it important to start accounting for contingencies and becomings: how to unsettle linear analyses about 'social facts and social orders', which have been the traditional objects of sociology, but also how to include in the analysis possibilities that have not been actualised but can be considered within a plane of radical futurity. Here I have followed Deleuze and Guattari's suggestion (REF) that societies should not be defined by their order, but by what escapes their order; in this line of thought, as researchers we should become more sensitive to the untimely, the inventive possibilities of life and its power to open up the future to the unpredictable, the unforeseen, a world yet to come. That is why I would rather follow Shaviro's (ix) pithy observation that Whitehead's understanding of reality as process moves the analytical interest from the philosophical question of 'why is there something rather than nothing' to the more sociologically driven one of 'how is it that there is always something new?'.

3. The object of feminism: w(o)m(a)n?

BRB: Now it is time to turn to the much of the contemporary debate of feminism, that is the concept of woman. From queer theories and other non-anthropocentric theories the concept of woman seems to be in dispute, as much as it was the concept of gender at the beginning of the two-thousands. Nevertheless, it is important that from a feminist angle we are able to discuss and reflect upon how do we envision the object of feminist theory, the (im)possibility of defining such a concept. Using a new materialist framework, or rather in your own words, what is the configuration of "woman" or "female" or a "feminine identity/subjectivity" through a new materialist

sense? Does it make any sense to maintain categories such as woman or women or feminine or gender for a feminist conceptualization of politics? If not, how do we build a feminist politics of new materialism?

MT: This is a fair question that is always being posed when we enter new materialism territories and debates and of course there have been various and contradictory responses to this question, which I believe could be answered from two entry planes of thought that are the onto-epistemological plane and the ethico-political frame:

1. The onto-epistemological plane that links with the first question in this dialogue:

Gender relations, femininities, masculinities, gender-based violence and so on and so forth belong to what Whitehead (1985, p.129) has configured as 'the stubborn fact' of the past. Whitehead's philosophy configures reality on both a microscopic and a macroscopic level and highlights the fact that process should be understood as both flux and permanence. On the one hand, there is the problem of following the process wherein each individual unity of experience is realized. On the other hand, there is a recognition of some actual world out there, already constituted, 'the stubborn fact which at once limits and provides' according to Whitehead (ibid.); that is, the reality of matter that stays on while passing through flows and transformations. In this light, 'the stubborn fact', which belongs to the past, inheres in the flowing present wherein actualities are being constituted. This coexistence of permanence and flux creates conditions of possibility for the future, which is anchored in the present but has not been actualized yet. Attentiveness to 'the stubborn fact' is the weak link of all modern philosophies, Whitehead has remarked. (ibid.) 'Philosophers have worried themselves about remote consequences, and the inductive formulations of science. They should confine attention to the rush of immediate transition', to the fact that 'we finish a sentence because we have begun it, we are governed by stubborn fact'. (ibid.)

Put it simply, there is a world out there solidified and crystallized with phenomena and problems that we need to address, simply because we have no choice. New materialist approaches are actually enhancing our understanding of the complexities of 'the stubborn fact of the past' (Whitehead 1985, p.129).

2. The ethico-political plane of response:

As an archive of knowledge, feminist theories have actually been pivotal in such understandings and analyses. Kathy Ferguson (2017) has recently argued that despite its many differences, feminist theories are not only about women, but about the world: reliably suspicious of dualistic thinking, generally oriented toward fluid processes of emergence rather than static entities in one-way relationships, and committed to being a political as well as an intellectual enterprise. We have already discussed how neo-materialist approaches are at the heart of these areas. What is important to remember here is that new materialism is a toolbox of approaches to the problems of our actuality, not its solution.

In light of the above, when we talk about 'women' or 'men', female and/or feminine identities, subjectivities or even stances and subject positions we refer to this 'stubborn stuff' of the past that has already been solidified as women's historicity, oppressive gender relations and intersectional power regimes that we cannot disregard in the name of the slow, on-going flows and changes. This acknowledgement of the 'stubborn fact of the past' however, does not throw us back to essentialism. It just makes us aware of the fact that apart from their historicity in the philosophy of process, 'women' and 'men' as embodied and intersectional entities create ethico-political platforms and situated positions for changing gender relations and the subject, amongst other critical areas of challenging the status quo of this world.

4. Towards a feminist scientific canon

BRB: To conclude with this set of questions, and in order to provide a framework that transverses different angles important for feminism and for pedagogies in general, I would like to turn now to the problem of the scientific canon. This was already voiced by Donna Haraway (1988) under the primacy of vision. What gets to be transmitted pedagogically and historically, how do we construct knowledge upon certain powerful regimes and not others, how do we know what we know without falling into God

Tricks (ibid). Taking into account that new materialism is an emerging framework that aims at explaining reality through processes and not static results, how do we envision our contemporary archive. What do you think is it the relation of contemporary theories of new materialism with, for instance, Hemmings' (2011) politics of citation? Do you think that there is a trend to homogenize the knowledge of new materialism under the names of few contemporary and non-contemporary philosophers? Do you consider that the diversity present in disciplines, approach to politics, and feminist traditions is widely represented for a lack of a better word?

MT: First of all I think that Clare Hemming's politics of citation (2011) is a very useful angle to look at how the archive of feminist theory is being constituted as we speak. However, Hemming's approach creates its own system of classifications and taxonomies and this inevitably includes some lines of analysis and excludes others, since there is simply no system of ordering that does not work through continuous openings and closings, inclusions and exclusions. My question therefore is not about whether exclusion is at work, but rather who or what gets excluded and with what effects.

Since archives of knowledge, feminist theories and new materialist approaches included, are always constituted through inclusions and exclusions, all we can do is to keep adding 'and, and, and,' instead of trying to add and frame the field, whatever the scheme we use. For example, I have found Hemming's (2011) tripartite schema of 'progress', 'loss' and 'returns' very restrictive: not only does it include, as much as it excludes, it also 'forces' citations and works within its categories. What we have tried to do within the network is to create some tools that could challenge hierarchies of knowledge [and citations]. Instead of creating a glossary for example, we have created an 'almanac' of notions, instead of creating a bibliography, we have instead opted for an autobibliography. The idea of the 'almanac' offers a more playful image of how archives of knowledge are crafted and recrafted. (see http://www.newmaterialism.eu/almanac) The notion of autobibliography shows how we create bibliographies through our own experiences of reading and learning, that is from specific and situated positions (see http://newmaterialism.eu/auto-

bibliography). I am not saying that this will solve the problem, but at least in can be a playful engagement with the archive.

Having situated my position vis-à-vis Hemming's and indeed any politics of citation, I do think there is a problem with putting everything under the umbrella of new materialism. We are more or less in agreement by now that we cannot take 'new materialism' in the singular, so the epistemological move towards creating a plane of consistency in grappling with the incoherence of knowledge within new materialisms and beyond is I think an important contribution. Some of the conceptual novelties that emerge from making cartographies within this new materialism plane include amongst others:

a. the Spinozist material turn towards affect-laden subjectivities and epistemologies (see Lloyd 1996);

b. an intensification of theorizing the concept of nature and challenging the fallacy of bifurcation led by Isabelle Stenger's insights of Whitehead's philosophy of process (see Stengers 2011);

c. a deep engagement with philosophies and genealogies of 'the event' from Whitehead up to Foucault and Deleuze (see Shaviro 2012);

d. the philosophical problems and prospects offered by the movement of speculative realism in challenging our ways of thinking 'the real' (see Debaise 2017);

e. the various discussions and interpretations revolving around the Baradian ethico-onto-epistemology and its effects (see Barad 2007);

f. the acknowledgement of the political significance of the posthuman turn that Rosi Braidotti's philosophical work has brought to the fore (see Braidotti 2013);

In light of the above, taking seriously the collapse of the subject/object divide and acknowledging non-human agencies in doing research is I think a major contribution of new materialism inspired methodologies. Manuel Delanda's exposition and reconfiguration of Deleuze and Guattari's notion of the assemblage as the

methodological underpinning of new materialist research is in my view a major contribution (2006). As I understand it however, assemblage approaches in the field are still thin on the ground and they often appear as wooly and fuzzy; we need many more dissections and nuanced expositions of situated research case studies, but this phase will come later, since we are still in the phase of experimenting and trying to understand what it is exactly that we have been doing.

Having identified the most important contributions of new materialism conceptually and methodologically, it is also important to trace epistemological and philosophical trajectories leading up to the plane of new materialism as I see it today:

a. Spinoza's Ethics (1677)

b. Locke's (1690) and Hume's (1748) empiricism

c. Marx's dialectical materialism (1845)

d. Bergson's philosophy of time (1893)

e. James' radical empiricism (1807)

f. Whitehead's process philosophy (1929)

g. Langer's aesthetics and theories of art (1951)

h. Lefebvre's spatial analytics (1991)

i. Foucault's genealogies (1986)

j. Deleuze's radical immanence (2004)

k. Deleuze and Guattari's assemblages (1988)

l. Serre's philosophy and histories of science (2006)

m. Laruelle's non-philosophies (2013)

n. Haraway's situated knowledges (1988)

o. Latour's actor network theory (2005)

p. Material feminisms (Alaimo and Heckman 2008)

Given their diversity and multiplicity then, if we are to summarise the epistemological and political contributions of new materialist perspectives and methodologies, taken as an assemblage rather than as a framework, I would argue that they intensify our awareness of our entanglement with the world, our immersion in on-going processes of transition and change, as well as the ontico-ethic (?) responsibility and effects of our thinking and action. New materialist perspectives radically change the way we see and understand nature and the social and force us to think differently whether as researchers, educators, citizens, political activists, or simply, human beings.

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Almanac I

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Nautical almanacs give the positions of bright celestial objects relative to a specific geographic meridian, the line of longitude, at regular intervals throughout the year. Navigators may ascertain a ship's 'local time' by comparing timed observations from the ship to relevant figures in the almanac. The time difference is then converted to degrees of longitude and combined with the line of latitude, deduced by measuring the height of the sun and stars above the horizon, enabling a position to be 'fixed' for an instant. Fundamental to nautical almanacs' utility and production is their continual renewal to account for the changing positions of celestial bodies. Thus new observations and calculations must be made in perpetuum for almanacs to remain dependable and useful.

What would it mean for scholarly work to be captured as part of an almanac? This is the main question we, and others, posed ourselves when we first began to pursue the idea of a new materialist almanac (newmaterialism.eu). Echoing the character of nautical almanacs, this almanac seeks to provide tools and figurations for traversing the earth, albeit within more discursive and scholarly vessels. The nature of the almanac is one of endless evolution and oscillation between relevance and expedience, orientation and trajectory, frequency and position. Perhaps it might support inquiries into the questions: where do we find ourselves and where we do want to go? And particularly, within a context of new materialism we ask: how can

we continuously move beyond or around binary modes of travel and enquiry, simplistic conceptions of time, space, and place, which deliver only propositional knowledge. We hope a new materialist almanac will aid and bolster such renewable materialisms, situated knowledges (Haraway 1988; Rogowska-Stangret 2018), diffractive excursions (Geerts and van der Tuin 2016), and situationist dérives, which together may lead or drift toward new lines of flight and the rediscovery of older vanished paths.

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Almanac II

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We all think we know what an almanac is, but do we really? Almanacs have some unexpected histories that I accidentally discovered when doing archival research for a feminist genealogy of the Parisian seamstress (Tamboukou, 2015). When in 1851 Jeanne Deroin was released from the Saint-Lazare's Prison in Paris, serving a 6 months' sentence for political conspiracy against Napoleon Bonaparte's government, she went back to her political work and among other activities she published the first volume of *L'Almanach des Femmes* (Women's Almanac). In her introduction to the first volume Deroin felt the need to justify the title to her readers: 'Today an Almanac should not only indicate variations in temperature and the course of the stars, but also the variations in the diverse tendencies of the spirits and the progress of the social truths that contain the prophesy of a better future' she wrote (Deroin, 1852, p.9). The title was obviously chosen to avoid censorship, but soon after its publication, Deroin took the role of exile to London to avoid the persecutions of Bonaparte's coup. While in London and struggling to survive, she published two more volumes of the Almanac in 1853 and 1854. The 1853 edition was bilingual, the first feminist bilingual publication marking the internationalization of the feminist movement and confronting issues of not being lost in translation that are still prevalent in contemporary feminism and beyond.

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Review of the book: *Deleuze and Masculinity* (Hickey-Moody, 2019)

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Deleuze and Masculinity is a book that works as an assemblage of significant knowledges for masculinity studies (Butler, 1988; Carrigan, Connell and Lee, 1985; Horroks, 1994). Revising the work already generated in this field and contributing with new visions, Hickey-Moody writes six chapters examining how masculinity is valued, produced, performed and consumed. It is to say, "what its affects are" (p.11). Deleuze work operates as a machine creating affective relations through the book contributions. In doing it, Hickey-Moody is able to reimagine masculinities from a critical and feminist point of view, showing the urgency to challenge patterns of hegemonic performances as a way to enable social change and gender justice.

In the first chapter, Hickey-Moody underlines the relation between the production of hegemonic masculinities and cultural politics: "Masculinity is largely taught and learnt through embodied and symbolic sets of practices that take place in a range of places and are distributed across often quite complex networks" (p.1). Masculinity is "learnt as something that can be achieved" (Connell in p.18) and it configures a fantasy of an essentialist idealized masculinity which generates anxiety about failure. Although masculinity is culturally produced in myriad ways, toxic masculinities performances are affecting not only those who perform gendered identities far from hegemonic ideal of man but also natural resources, economic power, human rights or knowledge. Thus, gendered dynamics of contemporary culture are a problem working from global structures, as the State power, to invisible practices. Hickey-Moody underlines that

negative cultures of masculinity need to be disputed: “the hegemonic form needs not be the most common form of masculinity” (Connell in p.20). More efforts should be made in removing fixed representations of masculinity valuing “ways of doing masculinity ‘differently’” (p.11). Being pioneer in blurring Deleuzian thought and methods with masculinity studies, the author shows how Deleuze work can operate as a set of theoretical tools enabling rethinking critically pedagogies of gender.

In the second chapter, Hickey-Moody analyses what performativity, assemblage and affect “do”. The Deleuzian concepts configure a theoretical framework that allows reconstituting masculinity. Butler’s work on gender performativity is underlined as it understands masculinity not an individual agency but as “an embodied practice of citation” (p.13). It is a contextual and dynamic construction performed as a powerful and complex social fiction which humans and materials reproduce. In thinking critically gender performativity, masculinity norms such as power, domination and privilege can be transformed.

Understanding assemblage as a set of factors coming together being "itself performativity” (p.36), masculinity can be thought as an assemblage of affective economies connecting machines such as global structures, human agencies, matter, ideas, contexts and acts identified as masculine. Masculinity is more than human: “Matter and thought exist in relation to each other” (p.39). Affects produced in the assemblage also challenge the rigid and unachievable ideal of masculinity. Affect is a powerful concept which understands body as a changeable assemblage responsive to a particular context and it emerges within material and expressive forces. Hence, “masculinities are a creative, non-human force with no allegiance to the male body other than its capacity to affect it or be affected by it” (p.50).

As empirical thought should be developed through experience, Chapter 3 is dedicated to examine contemporary performances of young masculinity. The frontiers between materialist and psychoanalytic readings are blurred in the first part of the chapter, contributing to understand the connections and divergences of Freud and Deleuze and Guattari thoughts about boyhood. Examining the Little Hans text as a key piece for sexuality in childhood studies, Hickey-Moody points out the

problematic Freud theory of child-subject and its impact on the boy construction theories. The Freudian boy-subjectivity is a sexed and gendered subject: a model for “heterosexual psychological development” (p.73) which limits the boy into a unified social organism. Moreover, the text is characterised by “interpretosis” (Deleuze and Guattari in p.65) which ‘overcodes’ empirical experiences to affirm theoretical ideas. Although Deleuze and Guattari writings can be also characterised by “interpretosis” and they have not explored young masculinity broadly, their thought contributions offer possibilities for research.

In the second part of the chapter, Hickey-Moody engages with an ethnography in order to “think about empirical worlds of masculine youth” (p.14). Focusing in the sociology of education which “maps the lived experience of gender” (p.97), Deleuze work and Feminist New Materialism are intersected in order to pay attention the negotiation of masculinity in those young sexed as ‘male’. Ethically, the author shows how the construction of gender masculinity is related to "space, time, language, the body, curriculum" (p.97). The Deleuzoguattarian concept of ‘smooth space’ opens the possibility to rethink the gendered curriculum. Hickey-Moody claims for the importance of learning as “a process of becoming in relation to experience” (p.83) uncrumpling rigid gendered discourses. Focusing on protest masculinity which characterises some children acts, Hickey-Moody shows how anger is a learned performance of masculinity intersected by race, class and gender identity. The author goes beyond the psychoanalytic boy to examine how Deleuze thought can reconstruct how gender identity is learned questioning critically the striated space of dominant masculinity subjectivity.

Sociology of disability is introduced in the fourth chapter in exploring the affective and political relation of disability and masculinity in public culture discussions. Considering that media operates as public pedagogy, Hickey-Moody analyses media representations to put in question how disability is seen as something to overcome to success as a man. Popular discourses of “normalicy” (p.104) perpetuate 'what a man should be' narratives impacting on the self-esteem of disabled man. Gendered hierarchies between feminized invisible disabilities and the visible ones are an issue

which also affects. Nonetheless, media should be a struggle tool overcoming the unachievable ideal of masculinity due to “limited representations of disability encourage impoverished models for understanding the cultural value of people with a disability” (p.131).

Hickey-Moody also points the need of transforming the extended medical discourses of disability to a more "comprehensive model" (p.126). The imagined ‘normal’ body is a model limiting the capacity of disabled men: it creates sad affects in forgetting the complexity of the subject formation in disability cultures, reproducing gender and sexuality in stereotypically heterosexual ways. Hence, discourses about masculinity absence in disabled man can generate ‘Hypermasculinity’ (p.120). It is to say, "extremely hegemonic, homosocial masculinity” (p.112). Nonetheless, Deleuze understands body as “always in becoming in/around assemblages” (p.124) and related for its capacity to affect, not for its embodied limits. This conception distances the discourse of “wholeness” (p.119) and opens how disabled man bodies can be experienced.

The author calls for making visible “the gendered politics of the lives of men with a disability” (p.101) providing knowledge about the relation between disability, gender and sexuality. Pedagogical efforts should be made in generate critical thinking about sexuality and gender equality, specifically with people with intellectual disability. In set aside infantilizing, surveilling and regulating, it is possible to blur sexuality and disability as a transgressive reconfiguration of modes of sex from a posthuman position. Activating “understandings of the agency of embodied connections” (p.127) and supporting narratives of ‘what bodies can do’ are ethical ways to reconfigure masculinity and disability.

Last chapter before the book conclusion provides a deep insight about gendered economies of matter and knowledge. Linking Deleuze critique of capitalism, feminism and masculinity studies, Hickey-Moody analyses how toxic masculinities performances are affecting the environment in reproducing patriarchal domination through capitalism. In focusing on the gendered ways in which matter works as an

agent of globalization, she underlines that masculine economies and cultures of carbon are generating a global sad affect.

Through the chapter, the author explains how the carbon financial fiction operates. Its politics are mapping spaces of the global masculine narratives of capitalism. Carbon production and its energy cultures intensify masculine performativity perpetuating domination and appropriation of knowledge, power and "feminized natural resources" (p.177). Feminists have already pointed that climatic change is broadly related to masculinity cultures. Hence, in challenging gendered performances we can transform masculinist politics and economies of the capitalism. Gender equality can improve environment care enabling social change. Hence, "we must explore how we can do masculinity differently, think masculinity in new ways and invent new, sustainable, gendered futures" (p.188).

In conclusion, Deleuze and Masculinity is a book that shows the importance of reconfiguring how to 'do' masculinity and how to think masculinity studies. The different chapters of the book show the urgency to challenge the fix and hegemonic masculine performativity as it is affecting molar and molecular structures. Deleuze's thought and methods are useful tools for praxis: they help to understand and affect the world. In thinking thought it, Hickey-Moody demonstrates how masculinity cultures can be reconfigured from a Feminist New Materialist point of view. In transforming the question about what gender "is" to understand what it 'does', new paths are opened to comprehend masculinity economies in an accessible way. Hence, this book is a point of departure for reconfiguring alternative masculinities through new modes of thought, contributing to the masculinity studies field in proposing new ways to 'do' masculinity and new ways to understand research.

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Review of the book: *Space after Deleuze* (Saldanha, 2017)

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Space after Deleuze is an entrance to Deleuze's thinking focusing specially on the concept of space. The author's objective is to show that Deleuze's work is geographical and that it provides "one of the best philosophical resources for continuing and refining the project of giving a dynamic thickness to space" (p. 3). Thus, Arun Saldanha invites us to open the possibilities for thinking that Deleuzian space brings to a contemporary political project due to four main reasons. First, "space encompasses not only urban space and other landscapes [but also] cosmic spatiality of physics [and] its heterogeneous, intensive, and embodied workings." (p. 2). Second, space entails an ethical consideration entangled with the world's own going; that is to say, actively changing, the coming of the world is triggered by the ethical dimension of space itself. Thirdly, *A Thousand Plateaus* has been widely explored via the concepts of "assemblage", "rhizome", or "becoming", but less so via the concept of space. And, fourth, space is real, material and far from Kantian assumptions. In Saldanha's words, it "is difference, multiplicity, change and movement, not some separate formal realm that would frame them" (p. 3).

The first chapter, *Earth*, situates Deleuze within a long tradition of continental philosophy that covers from Plato to Descartes. Within this genealogy of thought, Saldanha locates Deleuze between Kantian immanence and Copernican radicality of de-centering the human subject. Deleuze's ontological project is defined as "geo-philosophy", that is, "the creation of concepts as more-than-human and emergent

from “the earth” (p. 13). In other words, it seeks to generate new concepts; that is, the iteration of the process of thinking itself as “radically open and undetermined” (p. 12). Geophilosophy then, is a topological and critical approach that provides lines of flight to apply an “earthly politics” (p. 33) according to the needs of the entanglement between researcher and research, situated within the Anthropocene era.

Our current moment, defined as the Anthropocene, is understood by Saldanha as the collapse or the self-destruction of the capitalist system. Therefore, the Anthropocene, climate change, and the current crises of the planet force us to rethink the different temporal space layers of globalization, in a more-than-human way. These realities require rethinking the Earth but not as a deconstructive move, but rather as “creat[ing] and multipl[ying] ‘smoother spaces’ within the geographies of capitalism” (p. 43).

Deleuze identifies a clear political dimension in the creation of concepts because they must produce non-capitalist environments and collectives (Deleuze & Guattari, 1991 in Saldanha, 2017). Philosophy serves to create a new world, a different globalization. Thus, understanding critically this global phenomenon is achieved through a notion of space that emphasizes interdependencies and inequality between places, and denounces the provincialisms that perpetuate these inequalities. A new Earth and new people are required, which is not based on the principles of the neoliberal democratic system.

In chapter two, *Flows*, Saldanha explores the relationship between flows and society (understood this last one as population, war and capitalism) (p. 104) through a Deleuzian geographical analysis. This allows to explore how they understand politics (breaking through molar and molecular as binary oppositions) and ethics. These interactions are materialized through “flux” is the “basis of how a Deleuzian ontology of population, committed to ethics and inseparable from politics. Deleuze's political project wonders about how difference is distributed in an unfair way, and reconfigures not only the flows and desires of capitalism, but also social structures.

Capital is central to Deleuze's thinking. He argues that there is only one world, the world of capital, "which is internally split and re-split as insecurities multiply" (p.87).

The political economy of Deleuze and Guattari understands how capital penetrates other flows and meanings, and it is the axiom that rules in production, circulation, but also in subjectivation and politics. In their political economy, deterritorialization maintains the comprehension and expansion of money as fundamental in the modifications of the earth's crust. Successive movements of deterritorialization create new reterritorializations that lead to the accumulation of capital: "Something is deterritorialized only to be reterritorialized within a new configuration" (p. 113).

For Deleuze and Guattari, "it makes no sense to analyze the geography of money without analyzing the strata of the unconscious and everyday spaces through which money can flow and bodies are enslaved" (p.82). Nevertheless, at the same time, these bodies organize as well physical geographies (molar differences like class, race or gender) since "Deleuzian control happens [...] not only upon bodies but through bodies." (p. 90). If Deleuzian control happens through bodies, the main political problem of the flow is to think "how people could undercut law and state altogether [...]" (p. 65). Deleuze and Guattari were interested in what exceeds these territorializations of capital, what happens in the margins and in the periphery such as the ghettos, the combat, the war machine, and in nomadism.

The framework exploring how human beings build their geographies is presented in chapter three, *Places*. This chapter is particularly important for feminist contemporary theory and politics since it gives us an entry to think the concept of identity otherwise. Deleuze and Guattari and critical geographers agree in stating that movement and desire are prior to the human "and hence constitute place and identity." (p. 105). That is, identities are conformed by movement, desires and spatiotemporalities even before the human being is presented. That is to say, identities (politically speaking) are affective flows, or as Felicity Colman (2010), "affective selves". For Deleuze, any territory or place comes from the interaction of bodies with the environment, matter and energy, and the process by which something is temporarily stabilized, regulating these flows of matter and energy, what he calls territorialization. Therefore, places are constituted and transformed with the movements of bodies and technologies, and are always reassembled.

Besides, this chapter also provides the key elements to understand a methodological approach that engages with Deleuzian theory. the creation of places serves to scale bodies because they are affected (in the Spinozian sense) by nature. The ability of a body to act continually changes in the encounter with other bodies and with certain circumstances. So, the important thing about an encounter is what the body is allowed to do. If bodies must be understood within their environment, in our days this means within capitalism. Therefore, Deleuze wonders about what bodies can do to combat capitalism. It is through the space-time functioning of affection, through chains of bodily interconnections, that societies are constituted. Basing himself on this premise, Saldanha shows us how a fundamental ontology of space helps us rethink the city since "to understand the difficulty of urban life is to understand human nature" (p.153).

That is why Saldanha finishes the chapter defining the concept of cities, which is particularly important for postcolonial theory, feminist theories, and urban studies in general. To begin with, he relates the concept of the city with the plane (so well-known in Deleuzian studies), pointing at how immanence is "a bottom-line of any manner of thinking" (p. 144). Neverthless, what seems more important from a new materialist theorization of space itself is the concept of "ghetto" since it implies two complementary things fro identity politics and for onto-epistemologies themselves. On the one hand, is how Deleuze and Guattari "talk about the *self*-segregation of political identities" (p. 156). This is directly related to the economic-cultural-wasteful surplus that capitalism creates within cities. These "ghettos" are "anyspaces-whatever" (p. 161) and they are continuously becoming together with the bodies concluding in an entanglement of the city and the body that re-defines both concepts and pursues the monist univocity so present in new materialisms. In Shaldanha's words, "The city is not a static background of life but actively implicated or enfolded into the capacities of bodies."

This explanation demonstrates how pertinent and relevant is Deleuzian theory to understand migratory flows, environmental diseases, fascist regimes, etc. since all partaking bodies in a specific phenomenon are always going to be subjected to the

spatiality of the city, which at the same time, is a permanent movement between what bodies can do and a permanent space-time affection that moves and deterritorializes established landscapes in our cultural and political horizons since the city is an active part of the development of any identity.

In the last chapter, *Maps*, Saldanha explores how Deleuze develops the affective dimensions of the map or diagram, and explains the Deleuzian ontological turn created during the mapping procedure. The hegemonic mapping is based on a representationalist epistemology from resemblance and reproducibility. On the contrary, the Deleuzian map participates in the reality that needs to be mapped. Besides, it is in this chapter where Shaldanha explores the concept of cartography, which was part of the title of one of the foundational new materialist texts: *New Materialism: Interviews and Cartographies* (Dolphijn & van der Tuin, 2012). Cartography is defined as "non-representational, a corporeal and critical *practice*. Instead of a representation with a fixed scale, catalogue number and predetermined use. (p. 194), providing the key to understanding methodologies in a materialist sense.

The chapter ends with the philosopher's thought about time, that is in the essence of cartography. Space is dynamic in an inevitably way, and hence inextricable from time. Time is continually assembled out of syntheses, that is, it only exists within the processes of events taking place (p. 206). From this book we can see Deleuze as a materialist thinker. With him, we can think space "as material differences distributed unevenly, interpenetrating at various scales and determined by changing virtual dimensions" (p.184). This provides a differing entry point to understand Deleuze in what I would consider a new materialist methodological approach. As Saldanha (p. 185) points out, "Deleuzian Ideas are *problems* that demand solutions by the material system they inhabit but are never fully answered." In his book, Shaldanha provides multiple definitions for differing concepts of Deleuze, covering almost the totality that any Deleuzian dictionary would cover but following a single entry point, that is space. He finishes the book without conclusions only to follow this type of methodology. "Problems are changed a little every time they are solved. […] Problems are not

simply constraints but 'spaces of possibility'" (ibid.) Precisely this is what the book offers us a space of possibility to think feminist materialist politics otherwise, to look for processes and for those differing patters that provide acts of resistance.

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