

**THIRD WAVE MATERIALISM: NEW FEMINIST EPISTEMOLOGIES AND
THE GENERATION OF EUROPEAN WOMEN'S STUDIES**

Iris van der Tuin

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**DERDEGOLFMATERIALISME:
NIEUWE FEMINISTISCHE EPISTEMOLOGIEËN
EN
DE GENERATIE VAN EUROPESE VROUWENSTUDIES**

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>List of Charts</u>	ix
<u>Introduction</u>	1
<u>1. Feminist Epistemology after Feminist Postmodernisms</u>	
1.1 <u>Introduction</u>	15
1.2 <u>The End of (Feminist) Postmodernism(s)</u>	16
1.2.1 <u>Postmodernism: A ‘Critical Revisionary Moment’ for Feminism</u>	16
1.2.1.1 <u>After Postmodernism: Feminism Double Pulled</u>	18
1.2.1.2 <u>Return to Feminist Empiricism, or: Feminist Neo-Empiricism</u>	22
1.2.2 <u>From Classification to Cartography: Take 1</u>	27
1.2.2.1 <u>Bridging Feminist Standpoint Theory and Feminist Postmodernism</u>	29
1.2.2.2 <u>Bridging Feminist Empiricism and Feminist Postmodernism</u>	32
1.2.2.3 <u>New Feminist Materialism, or: <i>Third-Wave</i> Feminist Materialism</u>	35
1.3 <u>Third Wave Materialism</u>	39
1.3.1 <u>Standing on the Threshold of Matter and Materiality</u>	39
1.3.1.1 <u>‘‘material’ is always already material-discursive:’ Barad</u>	41
1.3.1.2 <u>‘the sticky relation between signs and bodies:’ Ahmed</u>	47
1.3.1.3 <u>‘one might see the body as the event of expression:’ Colebrook</u>	55
1.4. <u>Conclusion</u>	65
<u>2. How Third Wave Materialism Re-positions Second-Wave Feminist Materialist Epistemology</u>	
2.1 <u>Introduction</u>	71
2.2 <u>Feminist Standpoint Theory</u>	74
2.2.1 <u>Introduction</u>	74
2.2.2 <u>The Matter of Feminist Standpoint Theory</u>	75
2.2.2.1 <u>Postmodernized Feminist Standpoint Theory</u>	86
2.2.2.2 <u>Against Epistemological Individualism: Nelson</u>	92
2.3 <u>Does Feminist Standpoint Theory Have a Standpoint?</u>	95
2.3.1 <u>Introduction: Disciplinarity and Continentality</u>	95
2.3.1.1 <u>French Feminism is a Universalism</u>	96
2.3.1.2 <u>Bodily Materialism: The Case of Irigaray</u>	102
2.4 <u>The Features of Third Wave Materialism</u>	106
2.4.1 <u>Introduction: Generationality</u>	106
2.4.2 <u>Undutiful and Dutiful Daughters</u>	108
2.4.3 <u>A New Wave of Materialism</u>	113
2.4.3.1 <u>Neither Essentialist Nor Non-Foundationalist</u>	115
2.4.3.2 <u>Neither Identity Politics Nor ‘Fractured Identities’</u>	115
<u>3. The Construction of Third Wave Materialism as an Epistemic Category</u>	
3.1 <u>Introduction</u>	117
3.1.1 <u>From Classification to Cartography: Take 2</u>	119
3.2 <u>First Section of the Cartography of Knowledge Theories</u>	123

3.2.1 Anti-Epistemologies: Studying Practice	123
3.2.2 Community and Consensus: Kuhn	126
3.2.2.1 Internalism-Externalism-Internalism: Keller	129
3.2.2.2 Discussion: The Problems of Anthropocentrism and Humanism	133
3.2.3 ‘ <i>sensuous human activity, practice:</i> ’ Marx	135
3.2.3.1 Representation and Representationalism: Feminist Standpoint Theory	140
3.2.3.2 Discussion: The Problem of Universalism	143
3.2.4 The God Trick of the Agnostic: Latour	144
3.2.4.1 Concern and Care: Stengers, Haraway	151
3.2.4.2 Discussion: The Problem of Particularism	156
3.2.5 Top-down vs. Bottom-up: Another Non-Exhaustive Dichotomy	157
<u>3.3 Second Section of the Cartography of Knowledge Theories</u>	158
3.3.1 Multi-layered and Multi-directional Knowledge Theories	158
3.3.2 Foucault and Feminism, Feminism and Foucault	160
3.3.2.1 Up Against Representationalism	160
3.3.2.2 Up Against Orientalism	165
3.3.2.3 Whose Subjugated Knowledges?	167
3.3.3 Deleuze AND Braidotti AND Grosz AND...	171
3.3.3.1 ‘locating oneself within a body of thought in order to dis-organise that body’	171
3.3.3.2 The Becoming-Animal of Haraway	178
3.3.4 Challenges: Post-Humanism and Anti-Anthropocentrism	183
<u>3.4 Conclusion: Third Wave Materialism Constructed</u>	184

4. Towards Third-Wave Materialist Methodology

<u>4.1 Introduction</u>	187
4.1.1 Epistemology-Methodology-Method(s)	188
<u>4.2 Generation/Knowledge</u>	193
4.2.1 Affirming Material Arrangements: Dugdale	193
4.2.2 The Generated, the Generative, and Generationality	202
<u>4.3 Researching the Generation of European Women’s Studies</u>	204
4.3.1 Introduction	204
4.3.2 The European Scholarly Realm Generated?	205
4.3.3 The Generative European Scholarly Realm	209
4.3.4 European Women’s Studies Understudied	212
4.3.5 Previewing Epistemology-Methodology-Method(s)	214

5. The Generation of European Women’s Studies

<u>5.1 Introduction</u>	225
<u>5.2 Disciplinarity and Interdisciplinarity</u>	228
5.2.1 Introduction: The Interview as an Event	228
5.2.1.1 <u>Institute for Women’s Studies (Lancaster University, the UK)</u>	234
5.2.2 ‘[we] don’t work to boundaries’	238
5.2.3 Résumé	245
<u>5.3 Trans-Atlantic and Intra-European Dis-Connections</u>	246
5.3.1 Introduction: Case Studies on the Glocal Level	246
5.3.1.1 <u>Centre Louise Labé (Université Lumière Lyon II, France)</u>	257
5.3.2 ‘ <i>le terme genre est un anglicisme</i> ’	259
5.3.3 Résumé	265
<u>5.4 The Institutional and The Personal</u>	266
5.4.1 Introduction: Case Studies are Singular Studies	266
5.4.1.1 <u>Tema Genus (Linköpings Universitet, Sweden)</u>	270
5.4.2 ‘this identity of being, you know, Tema Genus identity,’ or: ‘I suppose you get a little <i>home blind</i> , do you say that?’	274

5.4.3 Résumé	281
<u>5.5 Conclusion: ‘we are really going to push ourselves today, because we’ve got hours [laughs], okay?’</u>	281
<u>Conclusion</u>	283
<u>Appendix 1: Outline of the Semi-Structured Interview</u>	286
<u>Appendix 2: List of Abbreviations (Interviewees)</u>	289
<u>Bibliography</u>	290
<u>Nederlandse samenvatting [Summary in Dutch]</u>	319

LIST OF CHARTS

Graph 1:	Cartography of Multi-layered Negotiations of Matter and Materiality in Feminist Epistemology	33
Table 1:	The Generation of What?	214
Table 2:	Where-When-What	215

“feminist philosophy has moved beyond the premises that mark its beginnings.”
Rosi Braidotti¹

INTRODUCTION

The scholarly field of women’s studies² dates back to the 1970s, when feminists active in the women’s movement in the United States and Europe transposed their activism to the academy. Origin stories such as these, Donna Haraway (1991c) has argued, are in many ways dangerous stories, due to the fact that they are exercises in isolating causes (*this* is where women’s studies originated *then*) and universalizing readings (the coming into being of the field entailed a move from *this* into *that*). My qualification ‘the United States and Europe’ does not necessarily point at the differences between the US and Europe when it comes to the development of the field and its epistemological underpinnings, let alone at the differences between the different US regions or European countries with regards to academic feminism. Clare Hemmings (2005) has identified the origin story of women’s studies as a Western story that is a dominant narrative with a specific form and function, and clearly delineable effects. When origin stories are represented as truth we effectively erase the heterogeneity of women’s studies and homogenize the narratives.

One of the ways in which the dominant origin story of the field of women’s studies can be qualified entails pointing to the fact that the feminist critique of scholarship and the academy did not start in the 1970s, but much earlier or much later instead. These kinds of qualifications diversify the dominant origin story and critique the dominant story *as a dominant story*. By replacing the isolation of a single cause, such stories allow for both historical continuity and for geo-political singularities. It is known that well before the set-up of the field of women’s studies, (individual) women have characterized the organization of the academy as gendered (Harding 2006b: 69-70). We need not refrain from making special mention of the momentousness of the feminist critique voiced in the 1960s and 1970s, a critique backed by an all-pervading social movement. Acknowledging this momentousness we can still secure a historical continuity between the exceptional instances of the (late) 19th Century critique of the gendered academy and the second-wave feminist critique. Our narrative simply becomes more complex. Even so, locating the origin of women’s studies in the revolutionary changes that took place in the academy does not need to be exchanged for

¹ Braidotti 2003b: 195-6.

² In this dissertation the term ‘(European) women’s studies’ is being used for what is generated in academia by ‘(European) women’s/ gender/ feminist studies,’ ‘(European) women’s/ gender studies,’ ‘(European) gender studies’ and ‘(European) women’s studies’ alike.

the more modest origin narrative made by equality feminists. This exchange suggests a causally linear continuity between the two gestures. Feminists have questioned causal linearity, and have been suspicious of progressive narratives. For example, Hemmings has illustrated that homogeneity is produced in teleology. Sequence equality – difference – deconstruction is the progressive narrative of a theoretically sophisticated feminism that is accompanied by the so-called loss of feminist activism.³ In this mode of thinking, equality feminism often signifies feminism in its most rudimentary form. Consequently, exceptional, feminist voices from the period between the first and the second feminist wave (e.g. Virginia Woolf, Simone de Beauvoir), and of a more distant past (e.g. Christine de Pisan, Mary Wollstonecraft) are often typecast as naïve, equality thinkers. These qualifications do not to make sense in regards to the work of these thinkers.

This doctoral dissertation engages with debates about the effects of the ways in which (the origins of) the scholarly field of women's studies are being told. More specifically, *this dissertation focuses upon the specific field of feminist epistemology and upon ways in which recent developments in feminist epistemology have been and can be understood as well as accounted for.*⁴ As such, this dissertation employs a forward-looking strategy. It engages with a problematic formulated by Rosi Braidotti who has argued that the terms of feminist philosophy are shifting, and that therefore it is time to review the ways in which academic feminists negotiate 'the new feminist philosophical canon.' In her words:

"It is important to emphasize that, because of the great variety and high quality of the work accomplished over the past thirty years, feminist philosophy has moved beyond the premises that mark its beginnings. [...] The rich variety offered by the field today shows that critique has been replaced by creative alternatives and the invention of new approaches and theoretical tools. As a result, the seduction of philosophical theory has been reduced accordingly and subjected to rigorous scrutiny. [...] Resisting the temptation of teleological closure, self-transparency and hegemony, I would like to stress the importance of continuing to work on the very systems of indexation, the categories by which we, as feminist philosophers, organize our work" (Braidotti 2003b: 211-2; cf. Braidotti 2005).

In this dissertation I discuss the ways that new developments in feminist epistemology reposition the epistemic categories that have organized the field while being attentive to the continuing impact of the categories. I would like to continue the argument that it is not coincidental that this dissertation and Braidotti's claim are produced *nowadays* and within the context of *European women's studies*.

³ Homogeneity here does not only refer to the unmarked Anglo-US nature of the narratives, but also to the ways in which the different feminist subjects (e.g. black and lesbian scholars, but also white/whitened postmodern/post-structuralist theorists) are positioned within the narrative.

⁴ I define feminist epistemology as a field of women's studies that consists of the set of feminist knowledge theories. Feminist epistemology entails feminist discussions about knowledge, truth, objectivity, the knowing subject at large. I do not define feminist epistemology as laying the foundation of the field of women's studies. Rather, I define women's studies in the broadest of possible senses, allowing for feminist philosophy, including feminist epistemology, to be part and parcel of the field next to approaches considered far removed from feminist philosophy such as feminist biology and feminist sociology.

More than twenty years ago the first evaluations of the scholarly field of women's studies were published in the US (see Stimpson with Cobb 1986). The first Europe-wide evaluations were published ten years later (see Braidotti *et al.* 1995a, 1995b), when a *retrospective* of the American field was issued (see Guy-Sheftall with Heath 1995). Additionally, a trans-Atlantic dialogue took off in the field of women's studies around 1995. Despite the fact that trans-Atlantic exchange on a smaller scale had existed as of the late 1970s (see *e.g.* Braidotti 2001c), the landmark conversation between US feminist philosopher Judith Butler and European feminist philosopher Braidotti was published only in the first half of the 1990s (see Braidotti with Butler 1994). In this conversation the trans-continental scholarly field of women's studies appeared as to be governed by an Anglo-US hegemony (*cf.* Braidotti 1997). As such it repeated Domna Stanton's (1980) account of the Franco-American dis-connection underpinning feminist philosophy in general, and Claire Duchen's (1986: 7, 68-9) careful reading of the similarities between feminisms in France, Britain and the US, and of the differences between feminisms in France and the Anglo-American world, and between the US and the UK. The conversation between Braidotti and Butler did not rectify the unmarked canonization that is symptomatic of the Anglo-US hegemony in women's studies *in the US*. Continental-European and British women's studies scholars often mark the women's studies they are talking from/ about (see *e.g.* Stanley ed. 1997). It is especially in the US that women's studies remains unmarked.⁵

Recent US debates about the field of women's studies are symptomatic of the erasure of the US dominance of the field. For example Wendy Brown's influential essay 'The Impossibility of Women's Studies' (1997). Here she focuses upon the primacy of gender and the resulting disciplining effects on women's studies. However she leaves aside the fact that sexual difference theory has always been addressing precisely the complexity women's studies should, in her evaluation, be looking for.⁶ This is to say that not mentioning French/ Continental-European sexual difference theory is indicative of the *specificity* of the seeming impossibility of women's studies in general and of her discussion in particular (*cf.* Butler 2004a). Recent European evaluations of the field of women's studies take geo-political specificity as their starting point. Nina Lykke (2004a) for instance positions her reflections on the Europeanness of European women's studies against the background of the tenth

⁵ 'Marked' and 'unmarked' are Richard Dyer's (1993: 38) terms for marginal and dominant, qualified and seemingly universal 'race'/ ethnicity. In this dissertation I freely employ this terminology when it comes to other categories such as gender and generation, and in the context of the (sub)field(s) of women's studies.

⁶ Brown (1997: 86) claims that tendencies such as intersectional theory do not solve the problem of the disciplining effects of gender, because of their pre-Foucauldian theory of power (subjects are differently located in a power-saturated field that is *not* assumed to have produce the subjects in question) thus allowing for "various forms of oppression to be spoken of in additive and interchangeable terms" (*ibidem*: 88).

anniversary of the many institutions of European women's studies (networks, journals, and conferences), and concludes that treating 'Europe' in a universalist manner and treating it in a particularist way are unbeneficial for evaluations of the field, since universalism and particularism are the two sides of one and the same coin (the coin being unsituatedness). Historically evaluations of European women's studies have combined a retrospective perspective with the theorization of the *strengths* of the field instead of its weaknesses or even impossibility. I want to position this dissertation in the tradition of European women's studies. As will become clear, however, I do not employ 'European women's studies' as the pre-existing context of the dissertation nor do I work according to a framework of identity politics which creates the 'European feminist academic' as an identity one can pick up or not. This dissertation has been brought forward by European women's studies, but it simultaneously *constitutes* European women's studies.

Analyzing as well as accounting for recent developments in feminist epistemology, I have chosen as my starting point Sandra Harding's *The Science Question in Feminism* (1986). In this text a three-fold classification of feminist epistemology is presented, a classification consisting of feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint theory, and feminist postmodernism. Harding's tripartition has been used and quoted widely since its publication, both in the US and in Europe. Pedagogically, its potentials have proved to be endless, and these potentials have been and continue to be utilized abundantly. Scholars embrace the classification system in textbooks, as well as in other publications. Besides the overall importance of this work as a tool, it has proven to be a *constitutive* schema as well; it is, so to say, a canonization device. In the words of Dorothy Smith ([1997] 2004: 263), who strongly emphasizes the constitutive influence of Harding's work on (her) feminist standpoint theory: "In a sense, Harding created us."⁷ I would like to claim that Harding in *Science Question* has constituted the origin story of feminist epistemology, and that *Science Question* is being constituted as the origin of feminist epistemology through the wide use that is made of the text. Together with the double move pertaining to European women's studies, this double move regarding Harding's classification of feminist epistemology makes out the starting point of this dissertation. Qualifying the origin story of feminist epistemology as universalizing its development course and at the same time as (Anglo-) American, I further qualify the recent developments in feminist epistemology as having a *generational* dimension. This is the third parameter of the dissertation. Let me explain why I have found it of importance to read developments in feminist epistemology as a generational phenomenon.

⁷ When studying Harding's work from 1986 onwards, a growing self-awareness of the constitutive effect of the work can be discerned (*cf.* Harding 1986, 1991, 1993, 2004). The same goes for Harding *situating* the respective branches in Anglo-US or European traditions as well as presenting it as a cartography of *strategies* instead of separable strands.

When academic feminism came into being in the 1970s, feminism, in the dominant Anglo-American discourse, started to be conceptualized as internally conflictual. Importantly, this self-affirmed conflictual dynamics is said to have proven the illusory nature of movement feminism's 'sisterhood' (Hirsch and Keller eds 1990). As a result, feminism's generational dynamics turned into a dialecticism. I will briefly reconstruct the argument here. Academic feminists in the 1980s started to *negate* the work of 1970s movement feminists. They did not take into account the fact that the membership of these two classes overlapped nor did they keep in mind that academic feminism, as a project ('the long march through the institutions'), came out of the feminist movement. The negation of activist feminism was accompanied by the (implicit) claim that diversified feminist analyses were *better than* the 'illusion' of 'sisterhood' (Stacey 1997: 59). In other words, as suggested above, feminism in a progressive narrative is accompanied by a *loss*. The dialecticist approach to feminism and (academic) feminism's loss of activism are related. More specifically, in feminist epistemology the conflict was between movement feminism and feminist theory, and between different branches of academic feminism. This conflict produced the three strands of feminist epistemic discussion as dialectically related. Feminist standpoint theory "avoids the problems that beset feminist empiricism," and feminist postmodernism "challenges the assumptions upon which feminist empiricism and the feminist standpoint are based, although strains of postmodernist skepticism appear in the thought of these theorists, too" (Harding 1986: 26-7). According to Harding, feminist postmodernism is the apotheosis of feminist epistemology. Additionally, she inscribes binarism by saying that the relationship between feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory are situated as dualistically oppositional to one another, and also in their relationship to feminist postmodernism (Hemmings 2005: 121-2). The problematic aspects of feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory, namely their respective universalising tendencies, are said to be solved by feminist postmodernism's focus on diversity *rather than* equality or difference. On top of this, Harding explains that feminists in the 1960s and 1970s started to become conscious of the fact that women had never been allowed to enter the field of knowledge theory and knowledge production (Harding 1991: 105). She goes on to explain that "[i]n attempting to account for and remedy this situation, several *competing* feminist epistemologies have been articulated" (*ibidem*: 106; emphasis added). Harding not only affirms the feminist epistemic categories as conflictual. She also sees the field of feminist epistemology as the diametrical opposite of 'epistemology' and 'philosophy.' Harding constitutes an epistemology and a philosophy 'proper' through the feminist challenge. She reaffirms the 'paternal discourses' of the distinct feminist epistemic categories and reconfirms Oedipal structures by endorsing the construction of competing

feminist epistemologies.⁸ As a consequence, the existence and importance of empiricism, Hegelian Master-Slave dialectics, and postmodern skepticism as well as post-structuralist tendencies receive confirmation *by negation*. Therefore, the resulting feminist epistemic categories share characteristics with their paternal discourses rather than with each other. Here a third double move does its work, the third parameter of the dissertation. Harding's classification of feminist epistemology rides the wave of generationality as conflictual and dialecticist. Consequently, the feminist epistemology she brings forth is generationally conflictual and dialecticist. I will illustrate in this dissertation that there is more to generationality than conflict and dialecticism. Generationality has a lot to offer women's studies.

Harding did not present her classificatory schema as an 'ideal type' and does not state that it is necessarily 'true' as in 'out there' (*cf.* Stanley and Wise 1993: 48-51, Wylie 2004: 340). Even so, it has had constitutive effects.⁹ Despite its constitutive effects, the classification has been reworked over and over again (Code 1998: 173). Reworkings include reworkings of separate branches (see *e.g.* Hartsock 1998, Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 22.2 1997), of the interconnections between branches (see *e.g.* Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa 2004), and of the schema as a whole (see *e.g.* Hawkesworth 1989). Harding (ed. 2004) herself published The Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies, which contains the leading (re-) positionings of feminist standpoint theory. Reworkings of feminist epistemology, in general, have been published in the wake of its inception in 1986. Here, Haraway's intervention needs special attention. In 'Situated Knowledges: *The Science Question in Feminism* and the Privilege of Partial Perspective,' based on a review of Harding's Science Question, the state of affairs in feminist epistemology is characterized as affirming both modernism and postmodernism. Haraway (1988b: 576-80) claims feminist epistemology is caught in a trap, because it is unable to formulate an *other* objectivity, an objectivity truly different from both a mainstream universalism (*cf.* Harding's classes feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory) *and* a mainstream relativism (*cf.* the class of feminist postmodernism). Building on recent work in feminist epistemology I will argue in this dissertation that feminist epistemologists have recently started to qualitatively shift the terms of Harding's tripartition and of the problems attached to it, *i.e.* I will argue that Harding's *entire classification* of feminist epistemology, however much-used, is being critically scrutinized until the point of being, in Braidotti's terms 'replaced by creative

⁸ In paragraph 2.4.2 I will explain that the reconfirmation of Oedipal structures hides in Hardings assumption of women's circulation through the hands of men/ male academics. That is, she reconfirms the Oedipalization of what is generated by women and how; in patriarchy/ the patriarchal academic setting this generation is administered by men.

⁹ Sarah Bracke and María Puig de la Bellacasa (2004: 313) do not just talk about a constitutive effect; they discuss the 'becoming-a-brand' of the classification itself and of the distinct feminist epistemic categories.

alternatives and [by] the invention of new approaches and theoretical tools' (*cf.* Potter 2007: 236). I argue that recent developments in the field, such as the constitution of a 'new materialism,' imply a non-dialecticist take on academic feminism, and as such I want to claim that they are being governed by *another* generationality. Geo-politically, I will argue, the developments are neither unmarked (thus silently Anglo-US dominated) nor specific according to a pre-determining frame of identity politics.

The remainder of this introduction reviews the key terms of this *systematic* dissertation (academic feminism, third wave feminism, and new feminist materialism). Allow me to stress that the argument I make about the connection between these terms runs through the entire dissertation. This introduction serves as a necessary preview only.

Academic Feminism – The realm of this dissertation is academic feminism. Academic feminism is an amalgamation of feminist activism and scholarship. In this dissertation, *both arenas matter* and are equally important in an analysis of women's studies.¹⁰ In other words, this dissertation engages with the feminist debate about the academy *as well as* with the feminist academic debate about feminism. It is being argued that the two debates are not and should not be held independent of one another as it is postulated that both feminism and the academic arena *gain* by an explicit co-constitution.

Amongst feminist academics as well as feminists in general it has become commonplace to either credit or blame 'academic feminism' for the inauguration of the post-feminist epoch (see *e.g.* Whelehan 1995). In both cases, however, a distinction is being drawn between academic feminism on the one hand and activism or movement feminism on the other. Both arguments are founded upon a dualistic split. The march to and through the institutions (most importantly institutionalized scholarship and education) has been evaluated as the ultimate prostration for the mainstream. Here the projection is that feminist academic production will lose its feminist activism and become mainstreamed. Crediting academic feminism for the inauguration of post-feminism would welcome the mainstreaming effect of supposed co-optation. What these two lines of argument share is the assumption that an academic feminism exists independently of feminist activism. The academic realm is not being conceptualized as a possible arena for feminist activism nor is the feminist academic realm seen as a feminist realm, *i.e.* in both cases entering the academy entails losing one's feminism.

¹⁰ In this dissertation 'academic feminism' is not considered an oxymoron, as Judith Stacey argues (2000). My definition would be materialist, and theorize the gendered, ethnicized, sexualized, and, as Tracey Potts and Janet Price (1995: 102) astutely show, (dis)abled body as part of "the materiality of [academic discourse]'s own production."

This dissertation involves a defense of ‘feminism’ in the so-called post-feminist epoch as well as a defense of ‘academic’ in feminism. Feminists wanting to regain activism often argue vehemently against post-feminism. They are critical of the academic work produced by feminists and claim that this work is non-feminist. This argument is binarist in two ways – ‘the’ feminist activist realm and ‘the’ academic realm are seen as opposites, and a schism is created between ‘real’ and ‘academic’ feminists. Those arguing in favor of post-feminism are binarist because of the schism created between feminism and post-feminism (after feminism). I argue in this dissertation that *both* arguments invoke the same representation of feminism. They depict feminism as a second-wave movement that is being transposed in the new millennium with the assumption that it is geo-politically unlocated. In addition, I argue that these two perspectives share a generational dimension. The representation of feminism is seen as policed by second-wave feminists, women of the generation of babyboomers. This policing is re-inforced by the seeming opposite party of pro-post-feminists, who claim that second wave feminism is no longer necessary (*cf.* Van der Tuin 2006). Due to the fact that both arguments hinge on a representationalism, it will be this representationalism that I address epistemologically in this dissertation.

Third wave feminism – One of the effects of this type of representationalism that illustrates feminism as second-wave movement feminism is that feminism is only allowed to exist in the past. In this dissertation the term ‘third wave feminism’ is employed to counter this paralyzing effect. The paralysis affects the present and future by disallowing feminism, and also the past (when and where the entire battle has to be fought). Third wave feminism, in other words, is a feminism unidentical both to second wave feminism and to post-feminism. As such, I define third wave feminism as countering the commonality of what is effected firstly by a second wave feminism owned by/ reverted back to the generation of babyboomers (whose heydays are assumed to be over, *i.e.* it is assumed that they are no longer active in all possible ways) and secondly by a current generation of post-feminists. The generationality of the third wave feminism employed in this dissertation is more complex, and, additionally, geo-politically situated in Lykke’s sense of the term (*i.e.* neither totalizing nor relativist, not unmarked but marked). I want to affirm Liane Henneron’s take on the third feminist wave. Henneron (2005: 98-100) reports of empirical proof for the transmission of second-wave feminist insights and approaches via academic feminism on the one hand and for the transmission being non-linear on the other (*ibidem*: 98, 109). Henneron’s example discusses the theoretical baggage of younger feminists/ students who *have absorbed, yet question* the terminologies employed by second-wave feminists/ teachers. Henneron’s material can be understood through the work of Astrid Henry (2004: 7), who, in Not my Mother’s Sister: Generational Conflict and Third Wave Feminism, re-introduces the term ‘disidentification.’

Disidentification signifies at once the identification *against* something or somebody and the intimate concentration on otherness or the other person. If you wish to identify *against* De Beauvoir, for instance, you will need to know her work intimately, you must know it by heart. Henry explains that disidentification does not involve refusal (I refuse to relate to De Beauvoir's work) but rather a resistance to an identification that has already been made (I don't *want* to identify with De Beauvoir, because she claims universal rather than specific validity for her statements about women). De Beauvoir's feminism is then acknowledged, but not accepted as the desired type of feminism for third wave feminism. The concept of disidentification offers the opportunity to understand Henneron's material, and to think through generationality/ third wave feminism as a notion that involves neither sheer rivalry between generations nor uncritical continuity between them. It accounts for both continuity between feminists and for specific cases of inequality and difference between feminists (based for instance on geo-political location, 'race'/ ethnicity, able-bodiedness, or sexuality). The notion also makes clear that a feminist 'wave' or generation is neither wholly new nor entirely the same and thus a simple copy or repetition. Because of disidentification, I can simultaneously think and talk about continuity *and* change in feminist thought. Disidentification allows for waves or generational positionings while making clear that the stale pattern of rivalry between women is not repeated. In other words, the terms of academic feminism that came into being in the 1970s (a conflictual dynamics, a dialecticism) are qualitatively shifted when disidentification is at work.

In this dissertation, a dialecticist logic is called 'second-wave feminist' (while keeping in mind that it also characterizes post-feminism) and a non-dialecticism is called 'third-wave feminist.' On the basis of the non-dialecticism it should be clear that the 'third' of third wave does not refer to what comes *after* second wave feminism in a causally linear, progressive manner.¹¹ I do not want to deny that this is a singular usage of the term third wave feminism. Systematic overviews have brought to the fore that many third-wave feminists employ post-feminist logic, as reviewed above (see Gillis 2005). Because this dissertation is being forward-looking, I employ a *partial* definition of third wave feminism. This definition allows me to write a text about the third wave that is assertive of the issue. More often than not academic texts have been produced on the issue of third wave feminism, yet dismissive of it (see Gillis *et al.* eds 2004). I inscribe this text explicitly in the European tradition of texts

¹¹ Mary Margaret Fonow and Judith A. Cook (1991) clearly state that the science question in feminism makes out the *second wave* of feminist epistemology and methodology, and the first wave is the feminist critique of the traditional disciplines. Here a causal linearity is suggested, a linearity that constructs the waves of feminism according to a series of 'posts.' Jacqui Alexander (2006: 93) has warned us for the seductive rhetorics of 'posts,' claiming:

"The persistence of continuities ought to give us a great deal of pause about announcing the premature end to things, as in the end of history; the 'post' of things, as in postcolonialism, for history proceeds in a way that makes ruptures neither clean nor final."

affirmative of third wave feminism, but critical of the Anglo-US (unmarked) canon of academic feminist texts on the issue (see *e.g.* Bessin and Dorlin 2005; Lamoureux 2006; Bonfiglioli 2007; Fantone 2007: 8, 12-4; Grzinić and Reitsamer eds 2008). I would like to argue that the texts are constitutive, and simultaneously dismissive, of third wave feminism's (academic) marketability. As such these texts are complicit with the neo-liberal, advanced-capitalist, post-secular (political) economy (*cf.* Puig de la Bellacasa 2001b). In other words, the way in which third wave feminism features in this dissertation is not simply descriptive (a third wave of feminists exists out there, a third wave of feminism has been constructed) nor simply prescriptive (a third wave of feminism is needed so as to...). The project of this dissertation consists also of the *materialization* of what I have come to call a 'third-wave feminist epistemology.' In this dissertation a contemporary feminist epistemology will materialize as an epistemology characterized by a move away from dialecticist classifications towards non-dialecticist *cartographical* approaches. Let me explain.

Raia Prokhovnik (2002: *xi*) has argued that feminist thought in the first decade of the 21st Century is characterized by "the move to a third wave of feminism based now on relational, non-dichotomous thinking and social practices." Prokhovnik can thus be said to agree with Braidotti's statement about a feminist philosophy that 'has moved beyond the premises that mark its beginnings.' In this dissertation I suggest that the move towards relational and non-dialecticist thinking entails an epistemic practice that goes beyond the classificatory approach as such and the field-defining classifications of Harding (1986) and Alison Jaggar (1983b) in particular.¹² I thus claim that another order is being produced, which I specify as a third-wave feminist epistemology. This order I theorize with the help of Lynn Hankinson Nelson's terms 'unreal dichotomies' and 'non-exhaustive oppositions.' These terms serve to account for feminist epistemic categories or phenomena that second-wave feminist epistemologists consider to be mutually exclusive. However, I argue that these terms are the opposite sides of the same coin in the new order. Nelson (1993: 127-8) asks "whether some alleged dichotomies [sustained by epistemology at large] are real" and "suggest[s] that [certain] oppositions are not exhaustive." This kind of questioning re-appraises the standard approaches of the field of (feminist) epistemology and introduces a non-dialecticist alternative based on an assessment of the paradoxes and complexities of our contemporary 'post-postmodern' times (Braidotti 2005). I locate the *qualitative* shift (Braidotti 2006b: 5), documented here, in the quest to bridge what was rendered dialectically opposite within the order of, what I call, second-wave feminist epistemology. I do not conceptualize the move

¹² Edrie Sobstyl (2004: 125) claims that Harding has "borrowed [...] and refined" Jaggar's tripartition. Harding, however, does not refer to Jaggar's epistemologies. She does quote Jaggar as an analyst of a related issue, namely the forms of feminist movements, *i.e.* liberal, Marxist, social, and radical (Harding 1986: 159 n. 34).

away from the classificatory approach as merely quantitative, because third-wave feminist subjects inhabit locations that are *more complex* than just plural realities. In other words, the complexity involved cannot be captured by thinking diversity or simply thinking hyphenated identities (*cf.* Harding's definition of feminist postmodernism). The new generation of feminist epistemologists *assesses* rather than construes (new) paradoxes. Third-wave feminist epistemologists do not work according to a framework of diversity thinking nor does their move beyond postmodernism entail a return to modernist identity politics or equality projects. The latter would involve a negation of feminist postmodernist epistemology (*i.e.* another dialecticism), and the former an affirmation thereof (*i.e.* a continuation/ quantification of one of the classes of second-wave feminist epistemology instead of a qualitative shift). Neither continuing feminist postmodernist epistemology nor the negation of it would legitimize the theorization of qualitative, generational change in the order of feminist epistemology. In this dissertation, that is, the generationality of the field of feminist epistemology is being discussed through an in-depth discussion of the (envisioned) relations between (1) feminist epistemology and epistemology 'proper,' (2) the separate categories of the order of second-wave feminist epistemology, and (3) second-wave and third-wave feminist epistemology. The claim is that feminist epistemology, ordered in a second-wave, classificatory manner, has gradually *lost* its feminism, and is structurally related to post-feminism in that sense. In this dissertation I hope to prevent the disappearance of feminism from being effected by creating a third-wave *feminist* epistemology. In sum, the starting point of this dissertation is that the binary oppositions between second-wave feminism and post-feminism as well as between feminism and non-feminism are generational. Its rationale is to change the dialecticism as such as well as generationality as dialecticist.

New Feminist Materialism – New materialism is the feminist epistemic tendency that can account for non-dialecticism while questioning representationalism. In this dissertation the claim is that new feminist materialism is an *instantiation* of third-wave feminist epistemology and simultaneously *constitutes* a third-wave feminist epistemology through the re-positioning or qualitative shifting of the terms of feminist epistemology as we know it. Above I argued that the analysis of second-wave feminist epistemology made by Haraway is finally re-positioned by third-wave feminist epistemology. Feminist epistemology according to Haraway is an epistemology simultaneously seduced by the totalizing tendencies of empiricism and Marxism, and by the relativizing tendency of postmodernism. Both tendencies effectuate what Haraway (1988b: 584) has called a 'God trick:' "promising vision from everywhere and nowhere equally." In this dissertation I argue that the new feminist materialist re-positioning consists of a breakthrough of the non-exhaustive opposition between the universalist feminist epistemological stance (feminist empiricism and feminist

standpoint theory) and the relativist one (feminist postmodernism), and that this breakthrough generates a *new* feminist materialist epistemology. New feminist materialism breaks through totalizing realism and a relativist social constructivism. I conceptualize the parameters of new materialism as qualitatively different from the parameters of second-wave feminist epistemology, because the qualitative shift has to be understood in a non-dialecticist manner. The move made by third-wave feminist epistemologists is disidentificatory, thus non-dialecticist. In this dissertation new materialism will be renamed *third wave* materialism precisely so as to stress the non-dialecticist aspect of it.

It is important to announce here that this dissertation deals with the ways in which (feminist) epistemic categories and (feminist) philosophical concepts have been and are being employed, and, more specifically, what this employment *does*. ‘What it does’ or what it effectuates/ materializes/ generates here signifies both what is done *to* the categories or concepts (*e.g.* is a certain concept narrowed down due to the employment of a (false) opposition?) and what is done *with* the (narrowed-down) concept or category. In other words, I do not set out to employ myself a (feminist)-postmodernism-reduced-to-a-(feminist/radical)-social-constructivism, but to show how reductionism *works*, what its consequences are (*cf.* Ahmed 1998). In other words, the new materialism that this dissertation wants to systematically construct is also constructing the dissertation, or: the dissertation not only constitutes new materialism, but is constituted by it as well.

Outline of the dissertation – Chapter 1 of the dissertation deals with the impact of ‘the end of (feminist) postmodernisms’ on feminist epistemology as a scholarly subject that has been constructed by postmodernism and has construed feminist postmodernism as its apotheosis. In chapter 1 I lay out two distinct effects of the end of (feminist) postmodernism(s), namely neo-materialism and post-positivist approaches, and I argue for the beneficiality of new feminist materialism. It is in chapter 1 that new materialism is *renamed* ‘third wave materialism.’ Note that the two terms are synonyms. With ‘third wave’ I want to make explicit ‘new’ materialism’s non-teleological, non-dialecticist outlook and to highlight my *generational* outlook. Chapter 2 deals with materialist feminisms, namely feminist standpoint theory and French feminism. It is argued that the features of new feminist materialism differ from both materialisms (*i.e.* that it is legitimate to speak of a new or third-wave tendency). It is argued that third wave materialism can be used to *understand* the presumptions of feminist standpoint theory and French feminism. Chapter 3 should be seen as the heart of the dissertation. Here I construct the epistemic category of ‘third wave materialism.’ In this chapter a cartography is presented of so-called anti-epistemological approaches that negate prescriptive ‘armchair’ epistemology. I argue that anti-epistemological, bottom-up approaches to philosophical questions of truth, objectivity, and the knowing subject in the work of

Kuhnians, Marxists, and Latourians, and second-wave feminist appropriations, thereof, do not necessarily shift the terms of the normative, epistemological tradition. The chapter wants to break through the unreal opposition between top-down and bottom-up approaches. I work with Foucauldian as well as Saidian and Deleuzian (feminist) takes on knowledge theory so as to construe the epistemic category of new (feminist) materialism. Chapter 4 sets out to discuss what is usually called the methodological and methodical implications or consequences of an epistemology. The breakthrough of top-down vs. bottom-up prevents me from taking up this discussion. Epistemology, methodology and method(s) should be conceptualized as co-constitutive of one another instead of as hierarchically ordered. In this chapter a variation on Michel Foucault's power/knowledge or body/knowledge is presented as generation/knowledge – so as to discuss what third-wave materialist research may look like. The second half of the fourth chapter introduces the case study this dissertation ends with. Part of the project of the doctoral dissertation has been the studying of the generation of European women's studies in a new materialist manner. This study is discussed in chapter 5.

“[Mattering] can be understood as a reaction to the inadequacies of social constructionism as a paradigm for feminist theory. [...] This critique of social constructivism can also be understood in the broader philosophical terms of the need to rethink the link between materiality and intelligibility, nature and its others and ultimately, the form/matter distinction itself.”
Pheng Cheah¹

CHAPTER ONE

Feminist Epistemology after Feminist Postmodernisms

1.1 Introduction

Feminist epistemology has a special relationship to postmodernism. There is the claim that postmodernism, or the crisis of Reason, has *made possible* the creation of feminist epistemology. Without the ‘crisis’ concerning the unmarked (foundational) knowing Subject, ‘feminist epistemology,’ if conceived at all, had been a coinage of the most oxymoronic kind. From a historical perspective, this relation is seen differently: *with* the conceptualization of the adjectified subject (the woman subject, the feminist subject, the black subject, etc.) Reason was found to be in crisis. Feminist and ‘Other’ epistemologies have *caused* the crisis of Reason, not the other way around. Alternatively, postmodernism has been severely criticized by feminist epistemologists for the inauguration and hailing of ‘the death of the Subject’ at the historical moment when women and other Others had obtained subject-hood. Parallel to debates on feminism’s relationship to postmodernism are the discussions that claim that *feminist* postmodernism has served as the apotheosis of feminist epistemology. In Harding’s classification of feminist epistemologies ‘feminist postmodernism’ was argued to have moved beyond feminist standpoint theory (ultimately an impossible undertaking due to an androcentric basis/ bias), which was said to be beyond feminist empiricism (fully humanist/ universalist rather than feminist in nature). This doctoral dissertation begins where the relationship between feminist epistemology and postmodernism, both individually and as a set, no longer dominates the discussion amongst feminist epistemologists. In other words, in the first decade of the third millennium, amidst growing claims on the part of third-wave

¹ Cheah 1996: 109-10. Cheah reads the work of Judith Butler through that of Elizabeth Grosz, and ends up *calling for* a new feminist materialist political theory. Our arguments are closely related yet differ in scope; Cheah’s work on ‘mattering’ exemplifies my work on new materialism.

feminists, the function and appeal of (feminist) postmodernisms has changed, and this change forms the starting point of this dissertation.

In this first chapter I will identify two ways in which (feminist) postmodernism(s) are assessed today. By doing so, I *specify* the change in the field of feminist epistemology. I will differentiate between ‘new feminist materialism’ and what I will call ‘feminist neo-empiricism’ in order to signify and determine the two dominant ways in which the change towards the end of (feminist) postmodernism(s) is being established in academic feminism. Re-assessing (feminist) postmodernism(s) and effectuating an ‘end’ of some kind entails the re-evaluation of postmodernism as defined by Jean-François Lyotard and the constitution of its ‘end’ (*cf.* Ahmed 1998: 9-12, Paulson 2001: 91). *Simultaneously*, this analysis re-evaluates the existing feminist academic canon (*e.g.* Harding’s classification) and the installation of a new one (*cf.* Braidotti’s problematic as reviewed in the Introduction). In this chapter I will show the relation new feminist materialists have with postmodernism and with the feminist canon and how these relations differs significantly from the relations constituted by feminist neo-empiricists. New feminist materialists such as Karen Barad, Sara Ahmed and Claire Colebrook do not postulate (a) relativist (feminist) postmodernism(s), which is what feminist neo-empiricists do (it is the *negation* of this reading of (feminist) postmodernism that secures the feminist neo-empiricist position). New feminist materialists do not negate the feminist academic canon (constituting a post-feminism) or argue for a return to feminist empiricism, which is supposed to be the photonegative of a relativist feminist postmodernism. Feminist neo-empiricists undo relativist (feminist) postmodernism(s) by uncritically affirming the new Master narratives built on the ruins that have created the theoretical landscape after the end of postmodernism. New feminist materialists critically affirm the feminist academic canon, including feminist postmodernism and feminist empiricism. The discussion of the latter, I will show, is geo-politically situated on a so-called ‘glocal’ scale, and is ‘transversal’ in nature when it comes to disciplinary and generational situatedness.

1.2 The End of (Feminist) Postmodernism(s)

1.2.1 Postmodernism: A ‘Critical Revisionary Moment’ for Feminism

‘Postmodernism making possible the coming into being of feminist epistemology’ clearly stands out amongst the different relations feminist epistemology holds with postmodernism, because it is feminist epistemology’s often-invoked ‘origin story.’ In the Introduction to this dissertation, I referred to Haraway, who has claimed that origin stories are necessarily dangerous stories. Here I would like to explicitly verify Haraway’s claim; feminist epistemology’s dominant origin story is a geo-politically (and disciplinary and generationally)

unsituated narrative. Despite Lorraine Code's (1998: 175) statement that "[f]eminist epistemological projects are located both within and in opposition to the received epistemologies of Anglo-American philosophy," it is unusual for feminist philosophers in general to specify their projects and approaches in geo-politically specific terms. Contributions are seldomly qualified as 'Anglo-American' or 'Western-European.' Consequently, the good or bad effects of either the emphasis on or the glancing over of national indexation for feminist philosophy in general and feminist epistemology in particular remain understudied (Braidotti 2003b: 195). Additionally, *if* feminist philosophy is nationally indexed, the Other of the Anglo-American and Western-European realm is singled out.

Feminist epistemology as a scholarly subject and its three categories (feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint theory, and feminist postmodernism) are usually introduced in the context of the crisis of philosophical foundationalism, resulting from the problematization of equalizing 'man' and 'human' in the context of the subject of knowledge (Braidotti 1991b: 211, Alcoff and Potter 1993: 3). As of this crisis, *i.e.* as of *postmodernism*, Elizabeth Grosz (1993b: 188; emphasis in original) has argued, feminist theorists could start working on an "*explicit sexualization of knowledges.*" The sexualization of knowledges analyses "the relationship that models and goals of knowledges have to sexually specific (male) bodies." The crisis of Reason thus had particularly productive rather than destructive effects for feminism: it opened the door to developing a 'feminist epistemology' other than an "oxymoron" (Code 1998: 173). Code contends that feminist epistemology *has emerged from* postmodernism, and that feminist epistemology *needs* postmodernism as a fragmented and contradictory theoretical movement:

"it is these very tensions, at this critical revisionary moment, that can generate the energies feminist epistemologists need if they are to negotiate the complexities of a situation in which it is as important to be objective in order to contest oppression with well-established facts as it is to be strategically skeptical in order not to allow closure that could erase experiences and differences under an assimilationist rubric. It is as important to affirm identities and allegiances as politically informed, active thinkers as to acknowledge the falsely essentializing, solidifying tendencies of identity politics and political categories to impose premature structures on events and circumstances that need to be open to transformative intervention" (*ibidem*: 183).

Following Code, 'postmodernism' allowed for feminism to theorize the subjectivity of women and to deconstruct it at the same time. Historically speaking, this double move is of great importance. Feminism 'lost' its 'unified' subject at the moment it moved into the academy. Linda Alcoff and Elizabeth Potter (1993: 3) stress the point of deconstruction by arguing that feminist epistemologists realized, from the start, that mainstream epistemology was gendered and simultaneously influenced by "race, class, sexuality, culture, and age." Acknowledging the fact that the work began "as work on gender issues in the theory of knowledge" (*ibidem*: 4), Alcoff and Potter go as far as arguing the following:

“Thus, because gender as an abstract universal is not a useful analytical category and because research has revealed a plethora of oppressions at work in productions of knowledge, feminist epistemology is emerging as a research program with multiple dimensions. And feminist epistemology should not be taken as involving a commitment to gender as the primary axis of oppression, in any sense of ‘primary,’ or positing that gender is a theoretical variable separable from other axes of oppression and susceptible to a unique analysis” (*ibid.*: 3-4).

This argumentation is enabled by feminist epistemology’s geo-politically unlocated origin story. Harding has said that the feminist epistemic category ‘feminist postmodernism’ has come about under influence of (feminist) postmodernist as well as (feminist) post-structuralist thinkers, some of which, however, have *caused* the trans-Atlantic dis-connection.² Alcoff and Potter implicitly incorporate the specificity of feminist post-structuralist *sexual difference theory*³ under the rubric of Anglo-American (post-) modern *gender theory* thus allowing for a celebration of an unmarked Anglo-American feminist epistemology to be canonized. A key element in this canonization is Harding’s classification of feminist epistemologies, including feminist postmodernism as its apotheosis. Feminist Epistemologies (Alcoff and Potter eds 1993) and A Companion to Feminist Philosophies (Jaggar and Young eds 1998) are two examples of Anglo-American feminist epistemology’s unmarked canon.

The dominant origin story of feminist epistemology and the coinciding celebration of feminist postmodernism is still prevalent in academic feminism today. Even so, there is a contention that we no longer live ‘at this critical revisionary moment.’ How is this contention being played out in the field of feminist epistemology?

1.2.1.1 After Postmodernism: Feminism Double Pulled

After postmodernism, feminist epistemology and academic feminism, in general, is being double pulled. This double pull (*cf.* Assiter 1996: 5) is not simply a schizophrenic force coming in from the outside. The double pull is in academia at large and in academic feminism today. There is a tendency towards a renewed celebration of empiricism accompanied by a realist outlook that can be found next to a rejection of postmodernism’s radicalism (*cf.* Braidotti 2001b). Both tendencies hold a relation to the end of (feminist) postmodernism(s). Scholars questioning the radicalism of postmodernism uncover its implicit humanist core (*cf.* *e.g.* Colebrook 2004b), whereas neo-empiricists (*cf.* Knapp 2001: 216) prefer, either critically or uncritically, theories such as Darwinism to postmodern social constructivism (*cf. e.g.* Grosz 2004, 2005; Vandermassen 2004). Risking narrative progress and accusations of teleology, the current situation has been characterized as ‘the decline of postmodernism,’ ‘beyond postmodernism,’ and even ‘post-postmodernism.’ These terms are being used to describe the

² Here I refer to the work of Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (eds [1980] 1981) (Harding 1986: 28 n. 16). For the role of the work of Marks and de Courtivron in constituting the Franco-American dis-connection see par. 2.3.

³ See for a definition of sexual difference and of the ways in which sexual difference theorizes both the primacy of sexual difference and the simultaneity of other differences Braidotti (1994b).

return to Master narratives *and* to criticize contemporary postmodern theories for being not radical enough. These are the moves that are being made both by feminists and by non-feminists in current-day academia.

Let me briefly review the two ‘pulls.’ I want to argue first that the return to and subsequent renewed reliance on Master narratives effectuate the reintroduction of what Haraway has called totalization in (feminist) epistemology. The dialecticist response to postmodernism is anti-postmodernism or post-postmodernism as an *after* postmodernism. I will show in the next paragraph that it is on the basis of a definition of (feminist) postmodernism as fundamentally relativist that Master narratives are reintroduced as the preferred, and, in fact, *only* solution available (to feminists) for overcoming a relativism that has become unhelpful. But is it altogether valid to equate (feminist) postmodernism with relativism? In the terms of Haraway (1988b: 578-9), both feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory are objectivist and totalizing epistemologies. Feminist empiricism involves realism, and feminist standpoint theory humanism. Oppositionally, constructivist epistemology argues for

“radical historical contingency for all knowledge claims and knowing subjects, a critical practice for recognizing our own ‘semiotic technologies’ for making meanings” (*ibidem*: 579).

Feminist postmodernism, that is, *has never been* a relativism as

“the strongest possible constructivist argument [...] left no cracks for reducing the issues to bias versus objectivity, use versus misuse, science versus pseudo-science” (*ibid.*: 578).

A reliance on (feminist) postmodernism as fundamentally relativist rests on a misreading or mistranslation caused by a reductive reliance on dialectics. In other words, it is founded on the basis of the dialecticist response to relativist postmodernism. This response instigated a *return* to relativist postmodernism’s supposed opposite.

The second pull, namely the questioning the radicality of (feminist) postmodernism, does not rely on a reading of (feminist) postmodernism as relativist, because it is based on a theory that analyses the *effects* of (feminist) postmodernism. The claim is that (feminist) postmodernism has functioned in a manner that is as totalizing as the ways in which (feminist) empiricism and/ or (feminist) Marxism have functioned. In other words, the effect of the ways in which (feminist) postmodernism has *functioned* is said to equal the effect of its supposed opposites. Intrinsic to this argument is a claim about the geo-politics of the constituency, *i.e.* an implicit response to the unmarked nature of what has been canonized under the rubric ‘feminist epistemology.’ Colebrook (2004b: 284) has argued:

“Sexual difference becomes ‘gender’ in postmodernism precisely because postmodernism remains a humanism, with the subject as the point of construction or representation through which the world is constituted.”

Colebrook questions Anglo-American gender theories’ distortion of sexual difference and postmodernism’s continued reliance on a Subject. Here the creation of post-postmodernism is

based on the questioning of postmodernism's radicalism. This analysis works via the presentation of a sharing relationship between the three feminist epistemic categories (*i.e.* foundationalism and/ or humanism). This non-dialecticist strategy corresponds to Haraway's 'original' plea to end the paralyzing feminist tendency of sticking to the three feminist epistemic categories simultaneously. Haraway and Colebrook provide a sustainable alternative for maintaining the two polar opposites of feminist epistemology. They do *not* focus on the dialecticism, but on what the two poles *share* (they are non-exhaustive opposites). Let me add here that the questioning of (feminist) postmodernism's radicality is accompanied by a questioning of (*feminist*) *empiricism's naïveté*. The second pull under the influence of which feminist epistemology is currently functioning deals with what is *effected* by the different categories of feminist epistemology. The feminist postmodernism effectuated or generated is a strand of feminist thought that is considered disruptive of philosophical foundationalism. I disagree; and in turn, I argue it is re-affirming the foundationalist grounds. The feminist empiricism generated is said to entail the constitution of a foundationalism that shows *cracks*. Scholars (such as Colebrook, Barad and Ahmed) use these cracks to show that the naïveté constituted is a misreading that equates the reading of feminist postmodernism as one that qualitatively shifts the terms of philosophical foundationalism.

I will argue in this dissertation that the arguments summarized under the second pull boil down to the constitution of a 'new materialism' or a 'neo-materialism' (*cf.* Braidotti 2000b, 2002a, 2003a, 2005; Fraser 2002; Herzig 2004; Hird 2004; Rahman and Witz 2003; Sheridan 2002; Squier and Littlefield 2004; Witz 2000) in feminist epistemology. This new feminist epistemic tendency expands the scope of feminist Marxism and/ or feminist standpoint theory on the basis of a trans-generational and trans-disciplinary outlook. My argument is that new feminist materialism is being developed on the basis of a relation to (feminist) postmodernism (and feminist empiricism) that is *differently staged* from the feminist neo-empiricist tendency yet equally involved in the generation of post-postmodernism. I will argue that the neo-empiricism remains dialectically defined, while new materialism generates a qualitative shift in the field of feminist epistemology. Therefore it is better equipped to comprehend and eventually embrace the epistemological implications of the complexities of our contemporary neo-liberalist, advanced-capitalist, post-secularist era. The goal of this dissertation is to show how new materialism allows for situated and singular studies of complex social, political and cultural phenomena as well as individual and communal subjectivities. It can address these complexities, because of its re-conceptualization of Harding's classification of feminist epistemic categories as non-exhaustively rather than dialectically related to one another.

I will show in the next paragraph that a (feminist) reliance on a constitution of new Master narratives is insufficient for understanding today's complexities. I will show that the

feminist neo-empiricist tendency *is predicated* on these complexities and is consequently unable to come to an understanding of what is going on. I am not the first to make this argument. Braidotti (2005: 169) has argued that new Master theories are inherently deterministic, because a structural link exists between neo-liberalist capitalism and the biological determinism of the genetic era (see also Shiva 1997):

“Their joint impact has caused both inflation and reification of the notion of difference.”

Differences are celebrated (‘diversity’ (*cf.* Franklin *et al.* 2000)), yet at the same time determinism holds on to an ideology of hierarchical differences (‘us and them’ (Braidotti 2005: 169)). I would like to argue that new materialism considers (feminist) neo-empiricism insufficient for accounting for and countering mentioned liberalizing and differentiating tendencies. New materialism also claims that *postmodernism* is insufficiently radical and unable to proffer a critical analysis of neo-empiricist deficiencies. Colebrook (2004b: 283) has claimed that feminist postmodernism’s reliance on gender as a social construction that is supposed to enable the overcoming of the binary opposition thinking equality/ feminist empiricism versus thinking difference/ feminist standpoint theory fails to answer the question about the *nature* of gender as a social category, and as such

“[g]ender difference is either one form of constructed cultural difference among others, just one more way in which man as a representational animal produces his differentiated world. Or gender difference is a privileged figure or phantasmic frame through which we construct the symbolic order” (*ibidem*; emphasis in original).

Taking on a social constructivist ‘gender perspective,’ Colebrook argues, involves buying into the inflation and reification of difference. Paola Marrati (2006: 318; *cf.* Hird 2000) concludes that we should not be thinking about sex or gender but rather about “the body in terms of what it can do:”

“Sex and gender are two sides of the same way of understanding nature simultaneously: as an empty frame and as an unavoidable destiny. Yet both fail to see all the ways in which human and non-human forms of life are intertwined along lines that the distinction between nature and culture certainly cannot map” (*ibidem*).

In other words, neither a feminist postmodernism that *confirms* a notion of deterministic (gendered) difference nor a universalistic and homogenizing feminist neo-empiricism is able to account for the present which is characterized by ‘scattered hegemonies,’ understood as “the effects of mobile capital as well as the multiple subjectivities that replace the European unitary subject” (Grewal and Kaplan 1994: 7; *cf.* Mahmood 2005). What we need, Braidotti (2005: 170) has claimed, is insight in the ways in which we as feminists can “disengage difference or otherness from the dialectics of Sameness.” In this dissertation new feminist materialism is considered as an option for this. Before I continue to explain how new feminist materialism can be used to counter-act binary dialectics I will discuss the pull of feminist neo-empiricism in greater detail.

1.2.1.2 Return to Feminist Empiricism, or: Feminist Neo-Empiricism

In this paragraph I discuss the structure of feminist neo-empiricist argumentation by examining two exemplifications. The work of Leslie McCall is used to show how the feminist neo-empiricist use of a relativist postmodernism leads to the reification of Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan's 'European unitary subject' and why this is problematic, whereas Chandra Talpade Mohanty's work is an example that legitimizes the return of feminist empiricism. This paragraph is meant to provide insight in one of the ways in which current-day academic feminists secure a post-postmodernism. I do not intend to claim that what is discussed below is the *only* function of feminist empiricism today (*cf. e.g.* Tuana 1992, Duran 1998: 161 *ff.*, Sobstyl 2004, Potter 2007) nor do I claim that the work of Mohanty and McCall is exhaustively dealt with by discussing it as an example of feminist neo-empiricism. What I systematically discuss here are the consequences of a reliance on (feminist) postmodernism as relativist.

Mohanty's "'Under Western Eyes" Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles' is an important contemporary contribution to feminist theory and scholarship responding to the state of affairs in philosophy. The contribution Mohanty makes consists of, among other things, designing new methodological and pedagogical approaches; she appropriates the so-called 'post-positivist realism' and feminist standpoint theory of contemporary anti-globalization scholarship and activism, and states:

"My view is [...] a materialist and 'realist' one and is antithetical to that of postmodernist relativism" (Mohanty 2003b: 511).

Two questions arise when the introduction of a new feminist epistemic stance (as the *antithesis* of a postmodernist relativism) is overlooked. Firstly, what is effectuated by using the word *antithetical* in the presentation of the new approach? In other words, does the usage of 'antithetical' instigate a *return* to the supposed opposite of postmodernist relativism, namely feminist empiricism and an accompanying realist naïveté?⁴ Secondly, what is effectuated by using postmodernist *relativism*? Phrased differently, where should we position non-relativist postmodern tendencies in the argument – or is this possibility altogether discarded? I want to suggest that Mohanty's (intrinsically connected) claims are unnecessary and should be avoided when the current philosophical climate is being evaluated from a feminist perspective.

⁴ I argue here that empiricism, classical and feminist alike, is often accompanied by a realist outlook (scientific facts mirroring reality outside the academy). In *Science Question*, however, Harding (1986: 25) explicitly claims that it is often overlooked that "the feminist empiricist solution in fact deeply subverts empiricism." Feminist empiricism, in Harding's early reading, argues for the fact that women/feminists as a group will produce more objective knowledge than men/ non-feminists as individuals or as a group, that social liberation movements increase objectivity, and that feminist empiricists acknowledge the role of the context of discovery (*ibidem*). In this paragraph I will show that these potentialities are not necessarily utilized by feminist neo-empiricists.

Part of “‘Under Western Eyes’ Revisited’ leans on the work of Sylvia Walby. In ‘Beyond the Politics of Location: The Power of Argument in a Global Era,’ Walby discards postmodernism *as relativist*. In the text Walby (2000: 199) applauds Mohanty for her “claim to a more universal truth” arrived at via “the power of argument.” Walby’s ‘power of argument’ refers to assessing evidence and theories (*ibidem*: 201-2), claiming:

“Feminist theory should embrace argumentation and the scientific method, rather than seeing knowledge as limited by social location. Feminist theory can be more ambitious in its claims than story-telling. A future-oriented transformatory politics requires argumentation and not confinement to historic locations” (*ibid.*: 203).

This feminist neo-empiricist claim is accompanied by a strong anti-postmodernism: Walby accuses Braidotti of bringing forth abstract philosophical arguments and Haraway of fruitless story-telling (*ibid.*: 193).⁵ By resorting to Walby, Mohanty has positioned herself to be one of contemporary feminist theory’s most explicit anti-postmodernists. What are the consequences?

In ‘Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses,’ Mohanty ([1986] 1988: 79) has argued that the feminist move of homogenizing third-world women should be interpreted as a colonial residue in feminist scholarship. She calls it both paternalistic and Eurocentric, arguing:

“This mode of feminist analysis, by homogenizing and systematizing the experiences of different groups of women, erases all marginal and resistant modes of experiences” (*ibidem*).

Mohanty argues this type of feminism is a humanism, and as a humanism, it is anthropocentric and ethnocentric (*ibid.*: 81). Therefore it is easily assimilated into the larger late-20th Century male public (*ibid.*: 82). In order to design an alternative, Mohanty lists (among others) Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Gilles Deleuze, and Edward Said as scholars critical towards humanism. The list suggests that her relationship to postmodernism is more complicated than explicit anti-postmodernism. In her revision, however, Mohanty (2003b: 523) says that she wants to counter Eurocentrism and colonial residues in western feminist theorizing as well as neo-liberalism and *a relativist postmodernism*:

“Both Eurocentric and cultural relativist (postmodernist) models of scholarship and teaching are easily assimilated within the logic of late capitalism because this is fundamentally a logic of seeming decentralization and accumulation of differences.”⁶

Envisioning a solution, Mohanty appropriates a Marxist epistemology grounded in Hegel’s Master-Slave dialectics. She pleads for a revival of standpoint epistemology (*ibidem*: 510-1) and adds a ‘post-positivist realism’ to it in order to design an answer that responds to her reading of the present. Here she relies on the work of Paula Moya; what does resorting to Moya do?

⁵ Cf. Prins 1997 for an affirmative reading of Haraway and the narrative turn.

⁶ ‘Cultural relativist postmodernism’ should be read in the context of the science wars, see Chap. 3 n. 6.

In ‘Chicana Feminism and Postmodernist Theory,’ Moya (2001: 444) defines post-positivist realism as

“an epistemological position and political vision being articulated by a growing number of scholars in the United States and abroad who are developing an alternative to the reductionism and inadequacy of [both] essentialist and postmodernist approaches to identity.”⁷

Post-positivist realism relies on the work of analytic philosophers (mainly Charles Peirce, W.V.O. Quine, Donald Davidson, and Hilary Putnam (*ibidem* n. 5)). Moya uses a US school of thought to discard (new) pragmatist feminist theory (such as Nancy Fraser’s) by stating that it presupposes “the same positivist conception of objectivity and knowledge that serves as a strawperson for postmodernist theory” (*ibid.*: 442-3). Her article is structurally linked to Walby’s ‘Against Epistemological Chasms: The Science Question in Feminism Revisited.’ Walby (2001: 489), like Moya, fights feminists who reject science and modernisms on the basis of oversimplifications thus creating a straw person out of science and modernism. Moya and Walby have written their accounts illustrating *postmodernism* as a straw person.⁸ Their straw person is the basis for their formulation of new empiricism. Consequently, they end up with conclusions showing strongly positivist and naïvely realist beliefs while claiming the opposite.⁹

When Mohanty affirms a ‘materialist and realist view’ *that is antithetical to relativist postmodernism* the same dynamic is at play. She creates a straw person out of a much more complex (feminist) postmodernist legacy. In “‘Under Western Eyes’ Revisited’ Mohanty’s theoretical framework is on par with scholars such as Walby and Moya who are, in my reading, arguing for an unhelpful and *colonizing* return to (feminist) empiricism.¹⁰ This move has some unwelcome consequences. Firstly, the positivist residues re-introduced invoke the re-introduction of androcentrism and Eurocentrism. Secondly, *this* tendency is easily assimilated and adapted by the academic mainstream, because both feminist neo-empiricism

⁷ Moya subsumes the work of Barad under post-positivist realism. Barad’s agential realism is indeed post-positivist, but I, focusing upon the *effects* of the different post-positivisms, would rather distinguish between Barad’s and Mohanty’s/ Moya’s version. What I allude to here is the new materialist radicalization of (feminist) empiricism (see below).

⁸ See *e.g.* Moya (2001: 463) discarding the work of Sandoval.

⁹ An example can be found in the following quote:

“What makes [truth claims] specifically *truth* claims is that I understand them to be true, and I cannot abandon them until I have an experience that causes me to rethink my position, or until someone, using argumentation and presenting evidence, persuades me that I have been partially or completely in error. At that point, I will acknowledge that the truth claims I have been making need to be abandoned or revised. I will then develop a new (and hopefully more accurate) conception of truth and continue to understand my (new) truth claims as being true” (Moya 2001: 477; emphasis in original).

Note Moya’s epistemological individualism, and the assumption of inherently progressive knowledge production. Also the assumed *immediacy* of experience is striking. Next, the work of both Walby and Moya contain strong Popperian (thus falsificationist) residues. This can count as a reliance on unfallible method.

¹⁰ See, again, Moya’s treatment of Sandoval – first discarding her as postmodernist then rescuing her as realist (*cf.* this Chap. n. 8).

and a large part of ‘the’ academic mainstream are involved in producing the same ‘return,’ namely a return to, using Haraway’s phrase, the God trick, the view ‘from everywhere and nowhere equally.’ I attempt to avoid such complicity. I start from a commitment to furthering *feminist* ways of knowing and argue that something else is needed. Feminist neo-empiricism’s re-affirmation of the God trick, also called ‘epistemological individualism’ (see par. 2.2.2.2), is one of the effects of neo-empiricism’s predication on a dialecticist response to a relativist (feminist) postmodernism. Before I discuss an alternative, I will detail this effect of feminist neo-empiricism. The idea is that one of the effects of an insufficiently radical postmodernism, which will be discussed further down, equals one of the effects of feminist neo-empiricism such as it is described above. The effect I am talking about is foundationalism. An insufficiently radical postmodernism has not been able to overcome foundationalism, therefore, feminist neo-empiricism re-affirms foundationalism as well. In the remainder of this paragraph I will prove that feminist neo-empiricism indeed has the effect of reifying the Subject who is the unmarked liberal humanist subject of mainstream philosophy and scholarship. This I do through an examination of McCall’s ‘The Complexity of Intersectionality.’ I do not intend to exhaustively discuss intersectionality,¹¹ yet I do connect explicitly to Garjan Sterk’s general criticism of the theory. Sterk (2004: 56) has claimed that intersectional theory lacks a theory of the subject.¹² Consequently, intersectional theory adds to rather than re-positions the common practice of looking from the so-called white tower of women’s studies¹³ down at ‘cross roads’ thus performing the God trick.¹⁴

In her article, McCall (2005: 1773), relying on post-positivist realism, discerns three intersectional approaches: anti-categorical complexity (*i.e.* the deconstruction of categories as fictions), intercategorical complexity (*i.e.* using the existing categories concomitantly), and intracategorical complexity (theorizing mixed-race and other hyphenated identities). According to McCall, intersectionality began with intracategorical complexity that argued for a simultaneous analysis of racism and sexism (*ibidem*: 1780). She claims that the accompanying methodology usually concerned single-group or individual case studies (*ibid.*: 1782), and that the categories were used to define identities were proven to be misleading

¹¹ See *e.g.* Zack 2007 for a relational approach to intersectionality, and Prins 2006 for a narrative take on the matter.

¹² As exceptional I want to note Gloria Wekker’s ‘No Tide, No Tamara/ Not Today, Not Tomorrow: Misi Juliette Cummings’ Life History’ (2006), a text working on precisely the *subject* of intersectional, feminist anthropological scholarship in a manner that is neither totalizing/ humanist nor relativist.

¹³ With ‘the white tower of women’s studies’ Sterk refers to Troetje Loewenthal’s (1984) characterization of the white bias structuring Dutch women’s studies.

¹⁴ *Cf.* Alison Assiter (1996: 15; see also Scott 1996) who argues that 1970s feminists who are considered to be universalists *deconstruct* the humanism of the humanist subject by inscribing themselves in it. ‘Intersectional’ theorists arguing *against* universalizing feminisms tend to overlook the deconstruction involved, and by situating themselves in a dialectical opposition to so-called universalizing feminisms, they end up undoing the deconstruction, *i.e.* uncritically affirming humanism. See also Introduction n. 5.

when they were asked to represent diversities and heterogeneities (*ibid.*: 1783). McCall herself opts for the intercategorical, also known as categorical, approach to intersectionality. She argues that, while all approaches mentioned *presuppose* (changing) unequal power relations, it is the inter/categorical approach that *studies* the relationality by ‘charting’ relations (*ibid.*: 1785).¹⁵ I argue that by requiring the (provisional) usage of categories for grids McCall ‘undoes’ the complexity of intersectionality. The requirement proposed exists of a comparative, multi-group approach (*ibid.*: 1786), according to which one first studies the changing relations between men and women, then between black and white, etc. (*ibid.*: 1789). McCall does pay attention to the fact the one might, at first glance, consider this approach naïve and reductive, yet she states:

“Whereas the intracategorical approach begins with a unified intersectional core – a single social group, event, or concept – and works its way outward to analytically unravel one by one the influences of gender, race, class, and so on, the categorical approach begins with an analysis of the elements first because each of these is a sizable project in its own right” (*ibid.*: 1787).

Having to ‘analyze the elements first,’ it seems as if McCall does not envisage categorization’s problems. This assumption leads us back to the question: who does the charting, and from where? McCall states:

“Is the method – quantitative and large scale – narrowly disciplinary? Perhaps yes. Hence, what is restricting feminist research on intersectionality comes down primarily to methods – not substance, theory, or philosophy” (*ibid.*: 1795).

Her conditional yes to a ‘disciplined’ methodology reveals her hesitation to answer above questions. It strikes me as odd, that an article that relies on a research project on wage inequalities in US regional economies does not discuss the disciplinizing effects of economics. In any case, it suggests that the charting is unfortunately done from the protected ivory tower, *i.e.* in a foundationalist manner. By introducing epistemological individualism, McCall bypasses Kimberlé Crenshaw who coined ‘intersectionality’ (Crenshaw 1989) as a theory of “shared experiences” (Crenshaw 1995: 333). This omission results from a feminist neo-empiricism that is based on a binarist argumentative structure (feminist neo-empiricism opposing relativist postmodernism). As such, feminist neo-empiricism is as universalizing and unsituated as its supposed counterpart (*relativist* postmodernism).

Now that the structure (dialecticist) and the effects (reification of the Subject) of the feminist neo-empiricist dismissal of relativist (feminist) postmodernism have been dealt with, I need to show how new feminist materialists prove that an insufficiently radical

¹⁵ The anticategorical approach is defined as the (feminist) post-structuralist appropriation of the work of women of color, and it is said that (feminist) post-structuralists have gone too far due to their abandonment of the pre-existence of categories. According to McCall feminist post-structuralists have become individualists allowing for every person to outline the intersection she or he is standing on. I would like to claim that this is an overstatement and misrecognition of the (feminist) post-structuralist theory of the subject: non-foundationalism. McCall (2005: 1779) leaves the anticategorical approach more or less behind. I would like to claim that this argument has links with Walby’s argument against Braidotti’s and Haraway’s work, which I reviewed above.

postmodernism has the same effect and that empiricism can be radicalized. New feminist materialists do not rely on a relativist postmodernism. Instead they show that postmodernism in its canonized form has never been able to fully constitute the crisis of Reason (*i.e.* has stayed foundationalist and humanist). In other words, my claim will be that new feminist materialism is able to account for the (expected) effects of (feminist) (neo-) empiricism as well as for its foundation (postmodernism as relativist or otherwise insufficient for *accounting for* current-day complexities). In the following paragraphs I will lay out the feminist new materialist epistemic stance. My argument progresses in two steps. First, I will show that new materialists bring into play a cartographical instead of classificatory approach to feminist epistemology after (feminist) postmodernism(s). Secondly, I will show *how* new materialism, via cartography, can be employed to come to an understanding of determinisms in both mainstream culture and feminist epistemology. New feminist materialist epistemologists do not create a relativist postmodernism from which they subsequently distance themselves. Critically engaging with (feminist) postmodernism, they do however acknowledge that ‘the postmodern condition’ is no longer theoretically and empirically valid.

1.2.2 From Classification to Cartography: Take 1¹⁶

Having discussed the way in which feminist neo-empiricism has been constructed I want to continue with explaining how new feminist materialism is being put into play. Differentiating their work from the work of a previous generation of feminist epistemologists, feminist neo-empiricists and moderate and conservative postmodern theorists, new feminist materialist academics employ a different strategy in comparison to feminist neo-empiricism and Harding’s feminist epistemic categories. New feminist materialists do not *negate* feminist epistemology’s most recent culmination point, therefore they further do not the existing progress narrative structure. In this paragraph I will explain and demonstrate the way in which new feminist materialist approach to feminist epistemology differs from feminist neo-empiricism as well as from feminist epistemology in Harding’s sense.

With the benefit of hindsight, it becomes clear that the field of feminist epistemology was secured with the publication of Harding’s Science Question (see Introduction). In this book, Harding defined three epistemic categories (feminist empiricism,¹⁷ feminist standpoint theory,¹⁸ and feminist postmodernism¹⁹) and positions them according to a classificatory

¹⁶ This paragraph is linked to paragraph 3.1.1. Both discuss the move from classification to cartography. The discussion in paragraph 3.1.1, however, is more systematic-philosophical in nature, whereas this paragraph lays more stress on the historical dimension of canonization of feminist epistemologies.

¹⁷ Feminist empiricism “argues that sexism and androcentrism are social biases correctable by stricter adherence to the existing methodological norms of scientific inquiry” (Harding 1986: 24).

¹⁸ As an appropriation of Hegel, and Marxist appropriations of thereof this strand “argues that men’s dominating position in social life results in partial and perverse understandings, whereas women’s

scheme, *i.e.* in a taxonomy of feminist epistemic stances. Each stance negates the previous one(s), and despite the fact that structurally the classification had a clear apotheosis, Harding herself opted for feminist standpoint theory (see, *e.g.*, Harding 1991, 1993). Harding (2004: 1) writes that this is because of the theory's *controversiality*, which, she says,

“is another valuable resource that standpoint theory contributes to feminism as well as to contemporary scientific, philosophic, and political discussions more generally.”

One controversial instance is feminist standpoint theory's *supposedly* essentializing and thus 'whitening' and 'heterosexualizing' tendency. In *Science Question* Haraway was staged as *the* forerunner of feminist postmodernism. Haraway (1997: 304-5 n. 32) self-defines as a feminist standpoint theorist, stating:

“That Hartsock, Harding, Collins, Star, Bhavnani, Tsing, Haraway, Sandoval, hooks, and Butler are not supposed to agree about postmodernism, standpoints, science studies, or feminist theory is neither my problem nor theirs. The problem is the needless yet common cost of taxonomizing everyone's positions without regard to the contexts of their development, or of refusing rereading and overlaying in order to make new patterns from previous disputes. [...] Theory and practice develop precisely through such recontextualization.”

Haraway thus pleads for leaving the classificatory strategy behind. As such, I would like to call her standpoint theory a forerunner of feminist new materialism. Harding's emphasis on the 'supposedly' wrong essentialization of feminist standpoint theory does not take into account how the theory has functioned (see Chap. 2).

Braidotti (1991b: 147) lists three disadvantages of securing classifications vis-à-vis a cartographical approach: making classifications, the *situatedness* of the account created gets to be glanced over, the personal gets left behind, and the link between theory and practice is broken. Braidotti thus emphasizes the fact that the *author* of a classification does not necessarily situate herself (the scheme is presented as the Truth instead of a possible reading) and she fixes boundaries (either/ or) instead of leaving open the possibilities of overlap and contestation. Furthermore, Braidotti stresses the fact that classification does not provide an answer as to *why* it has been built in the first place and why classifications do not take into account the practice of feminism/ women's studies. In sum, classifications are seemingly fixed and clear-cut. They do not invite readers to make revisions, rather, they seduce readers to transpose the construction to different times and other places from which the construction was made. As such, they are the opposite of cartographies, “theoretically-based and politically-informed reading[s] of the present” (Braidotti 2002a: 3). The 'politics of location' (Rich 1987) is crucial to a cartographical outlook. Even so, this notion of 'locatedness' should not be understood as having fixed spatiotemporal co-ordinates. Cartographers aim at setting

subjugated position provides the possibility of more complete and less perverse understandings” once it is made into a standpoint by feminism and the women's movement (*ibidem*: 26).

¹⁹ This is the epistemological *agenda* of challenging the assumptions of the two previous branches through “embracing as a fruitful grounding for inquiry the fractured identities modern life creates” (*ibid.*: 28).

up a philosophical dialogue (Braidotti 2002a: 6) that avoids the rigidity and fixity of classifications.

In the following paragraphs I will show that the cartographical mode is common to a new generation of academic feminists, a generation that has grown up with the poststructuralist critique of taxonomy, typology, and classification. I will also show that a cartographical approach is not new materialist by definition. Second-wave feminist materialists have also engaged in cartography making.

1.2.2.1 Bridging Feminist Standpoint Theory and Feminist Postmodernism²⁰

Feminist cartography can be found in close proximity to the classificatory work of Harding, in fact it is part of it. Despite the rigidity and fixity of the classification (a progressive narrative about feminist epistemology on the basis of dialectically relating feminist epistemic categories), the schema of ‘feminist empiricism,’ ‘feminist standpoint theory,’ and ‘feminist postmodernism’ shows cracks. In this paragraph I deal with the way in which the work of Harding, author of classification, and a feminist standpoint theorist herself, gradually started to make provision for overlap of feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism. Harding however did not distance herself from the categories nor from the classificatory approach.

Feminist postmodernism was introduced as an attempt to overcome the diametrically opposite assumptions of feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory. In other words, it was prophesied to have synthesizing qualities. This ‘synthesis’ is of course an oddity in the context of postmodernism. In *Science Question* feminist empiricism is presented as feminism’s pro-science branch holding on to existing scientific norms and methods (Harding 1986: 24). As such, feminist empiricism problematized ‘bad science’ instead of ‘science-as-usual’ (*ibidem*: 25). Feminist empiricism advocated a ‘strong method only’ approach (Harding 1993: 74),²¹ whereas feminist standpoint theory was introduced as the branch revolutionizing science with its “stronger standards for maximizing objectivity” (*ibidem*: 69):

²⁰ The bridging of feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory has also been discussed amongst feminist epistemologists, but this discussion is less relevant for the argument I am making in this chapter. An important exemplification of this debate is the work of Patricia Hill Collins (1991), who presents her black feminist standpoint theory via a negotiation of idealism and materialism. Collins’ standpoint allows for mediated experiences, namely via the black woman intellectual (see par. 2.2.2). Collins that is should not solely be read as bringing ‘race’ into the debate (*cf.* Hirschmann [1997] 2004: 321), because she also complicates the debate in other respects. Potter (2007) has worked out the bridging of feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory, claiming that Alison Wylie (who is said to be post-postmodern!) can serve as an exemplification.

²¹ This discussion is somewhat flawed, as Harding (1991: 116) predicted that “feminist empiricism has a radical future,” due to its challenge of the epistemic individualism of empiricism. “After a women’s movement, everyone can see things that could not be seen before (and some people can see them more clearly than others),” Harding states (*ibidem*), and indeed, the ‘moment of critical insight’ (Harding 2004: 9) (the ‘moment of truth’ of the Marxists (*ibidem*: 14 n. 13) and second-wave feminism’s

“Strong objectivity requires that the subject of knowledge be placed on the same critical, causal plane as the objects of knowledge. Thus, strong objectivity requires what we can think of as ‘strong reflexivity’” (*ibid.*).

Feminist standpoint theory was said to entail the problematization of science-as-usual. In Science Question feminist postmodernism is presented as the framework that asks for basing feminist knowledge claims in ‘fractured identities’ (Harding 1986: 28, 193). In Harding’s reading, Haraway in ‘A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century’ ([1985] 1991) departed from (appropriating) frameworks that base knowledge in unitary selves and argued for

“embracing our ‘fractured identities’ as, say, a Black-feminist, a socialist-feminist, a lesbian-feminist, and so forth. Why not seek a political and epistemological solidarity in our oppositions to the fiction of the naturalized, essentialized, uniquely ‘human’ and to the distortions, perversions, exploitations, and subjugations perpetrated on behalf of this fiction? Why not explore the new possibilities opened up by recognition of the permanent partiality of the feminist point of view?” (Harding 1986: 193).

Harding (*ibidem*: 194) claims that “Haraway develops her account explicitly in opposition to the feminist standpoint strategy” and compares the impact of Haraway’s postmodern feminism on feminist theory with the Copernican/ Galilean revolution. She makes the following statement about *what it is* that makes postmodernism work so differently from the standpoint: “the goal of telling ‘one true story’” is given up and “the permanent partiality of feminist inquiry” (*ibid.*) is embraced.

But *did* Haraway (intend to) *oppose* feminist standpoint theory? We saw above that she did not. Can Harding keep up the walls between the three categories? With ‘strong objectivity,’ Harding (1993: 66) claims to plead for ‘starting off thought’ from ‘a contradictory social position’ such as “the liberal feminist, socialist feminist, Sandinista feminist, Islamic feminist, or feminist scientist.” In ‘Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is ‘Strong Objectivity’?’ Harding *simultaneously* sticks to the fact that “lesbian, poor, and racially marginalized women are all women” (*ibidem*). Let me provide an even earlier example of a bridge between feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism. As early as in Science Question Harding (1986: 194) criticizes Haraway – *the* feminist postmodernist – for relying on mainstream *Marxist* epistemological assumptions thus re-introducing universalism into feminist theory:

“This can be seen in her not so hidden assumptions that we can, indeed, tell ‘one true story’ about the political economy; that in principle developmental psychologies can make no contributions to our understandings of the regularities and underlying causal tendencies of historical institutions; that we begin to exist as distinctive social persons only when we get our first paycheck or, if we are women, when we first begin adult forms of trading sexual favors for social benefits” (*ibidem*).

‘consciousness raising’) does count in the tradition of feminist empiricism as well, since it has never ignored the context of discovery. Thus, it cannot be the case that only according to feminist standpoint theories “communities [of people] and not primarily individuals produce knowledge” (Harding 1993: 65). This is, however, how the category *has* functioned!

Harding also states that Haraway borrows successfully from feminist standpoint epistemology, and that she “usefully incorporates two key elements of that strategy” (*ibidem*) in her *postmodernist* work. These elements are ‘oppositional consciousness,’²² and the intrinsic politicality of the feminist standpoint epistemic stance. These examples show *cracks* in the classificatory strategy: Harding’s ‘original’ formulation of classification seems unable to fully close off the categories. This allows possible overlap. This is not only an instance of undermining the classificatory project altogether but also a very early example of opening spaces for negotiation between feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism. Further proof for this can be found in The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader (Harding ed. 2004), a collection of recent appropriations of the three-fold classification in general and feminist standpoint theory in particular. In the book a preoccupation with the modern/postmodern divide in feminist epistemology is foregrounded. The contributions discuss the possibilities for overcoming the divide (narrowed down here to overcoming the divide between feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism) on the basis of feminist standpoint theory as having been postmodernized on the basis of intergenerational feminist struggle (Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa 2004), the influence ‘postmodernist’ science studies have had on epistemology in general and on feminist (standpoint) epistemology in particular (Wylie 2004) and the study of the interrelation between the discursive and the material (Hirschmann [1997] 2004).

I want to begin this paragraph by arguing that the above discussion does not address the nexus of the contemporary feminist academic debate. As described before, feminist theory is being double pulled after (feminist) postmodernism(s). It is (feminist) neo-empiricism, re-affirming neat (feminist) epistemic categories, and new (feminist) materialism, questioning the radicality of (feminist) postmodernism(s) accompanied by a radicalization of feminist empiricism, that pull (in the double pull). The discussions about postmodernizing feminist standpoint theory and working on the modern/postmodern divide (*cf.* Butler 2004a: 179) do not fully cover this schizophrenic situation. I want to claim that *if* feminist epistemology wants to be connected to recent feminist theorizing and scholarship, and *if* it wants to take note of its philosophical surroundings, it should start to address another problematic. Are feminist academics today indeed attempting to bridge women-asking-questions approaches and approaches according to which ‘women’ is considered not done? This problematic has been central to academic feminism since the outset. Several solutions have been brought to the fore (*e.g.* by the ‘strategic essentialism’ of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1987), the

²² Katie King (1994: 146), in Theory in its Feminist Travels: Conversations in U.S. Women’s Movements, shows that in Harding’s account of Haraway’s writings no credit is given to the scholars that are credited by Haraway (most notably Chela Sandoval, whose ‘oppositional consciousness’ becomes *Haraway’s* term in Harding’s reading in Science Question). This has been evaluated as an instance of agist and racialized/ ethnicized appropriation.

questioning of the category ‘women’ by Denise Riley (1988), the three levels of sexual difference of Braidotti (1994b), the risky essentialism of Diana Fuss (1989) and bell hooks’ (1991) yearning). When the modern/ postmodern nexus is *the* central objective of contemporary feminist epistemology we are paralyzed in a binary opposition that has to be bridged by postmodernizing the modern. This strategy implies buying into the dialecticism of what I have called second-wave feminist epistemology instead of struggling with the double pull discussed above. In the next paragraph I will discuss the way in which new feminist materialism allows for transversal connections in cartography. New feminist materialism does not argue for bridging theoretical perspectives that are presented as standing in a dialectical opposition to one another. In the work of new feminist materialists a practice of negotiating matter and materiality functions as a bridge. The practice of negotiation constitutes the connection between *feminist empiricism* and feminist postmodernism. The resulting feminist materialist epistemic stance is explicitly linked to feminist standpoint theory while being unidentical to it. I will claim that *new* feminist materialism does account for academic feminism as doubly pulled. Furthermore, I state that a new feminist epistemic stance is being created and it does *not* cut itself off from the feminist canon. In chapter 2 I will further the argument that the bridging of feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism, two subsequent categories according to Harding’s classification, does *not* constitute a qualitative shift in feminist epistemology.

1.2.2.2 Bridging Feminist Empiricism and Feminist Postmodernism

When I talk about academic feminist engagement in the construction of new materialism I refer to contemporary feminist epistemologists critically evaluating determinisms in mainstream culture and neo-empiricisms in feminist theory, and the insufficiently radical (feminist) postmodernism. These evaluations were brought to my attention by a set of feminist scholarly journal issues published in the first decade of the third millennium.²³ In this paragraph I want to summarize the debate by reading it as a series of multi-layered negotiations revolving around ‘matter’ and ‘materiality.’ By using the word ‘negotiations’ I want to connect to Mariam Fraser (2002: 606). In ‘What is the Matter of Feminist Criticism?’ Fraser claims:

“The title of this paper appears as a question, in part because this is an exploratory article, but also, principally, because the matter to which feminist criticism may (or may not) address itself is neither something that could, nor perhaps even should, be definitely settled upon.

²³ Here I refer to the following special issues: *Hypatia* 19.1 (Winter 2004 on ‘Feminist Science Studies’), and *Signs* 28.3 (Spring 2003 on ‘Gender and Science: New Issues’) in the US, and *Feminist Theory* 5.2 (August 2004 on ‘Feminist Theory and/of Science’) in the UK. *Australian Feminist Studies* 14.29 was published much earlier, yet with a very similar thematic outlook (April 1999 on ‘Feminist Science Studies’).

Indeed, it is precisely the unsettling and unsettled nature of matter that has proved so productive for much of feminist thinking.”

In this paragraph I want to make a start with systematically constructing a new feminist epistemic category on the basis of the *productivity* of the ‘unsettling and unsettled nature of matter’ that is negotiated. This negotiation provides an understanding as well as an answer to the double pull feminist academics find themselves confronted with. Throughout the entire dissertation I hope to show the strengths of new feminist materialism, while illustrating that new feminist materialism does *not* entail a re-introduction of the identification of materiality and corporeality with femininity (*cf.* Marrati 2006: 323 n. 8).

Let me start by determining the set of negotiations of matter and materiality that make out ‘new feminist materialism’ in my reading. These negotiations form my cartography (my reading of the *present*) of the field of feminist epistemology (see Graph 1). The first layer of the cartography consists of a negotiation of the previously discussed feminist neo-empiricism by new feminist materialists. This negotiation *produces* the new feminist materialist epistemic stance. In other words, new feminist materialism is secured through the scrutinization of feminist neo-empiricist claims. The second layer of the cartography consists of bridging feminist empiricism (traditional realism) and insufficiently radical feminist postmodernism,²⁴ namely a social constructivism.²⁵ I argue that new feminist materialism is being constituted through the bridging of feminist (neo-) empiricism and social constructivism.

Graph 1: Cartography of Multi-layered Negotiations of Matter and Materiality in Feminist Epistemology

Layer 1	neo-empiricisms/ neo-realisms ↔ new materialism
	↓ ↓ ↑ ↑
Layer 2	traditional realism social constructivism

²⁴ Here I connect to the summary Alison Wylie has provided of the debate amongst feminist epistemologists engendered by Susan Hekman’s ‘Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited’ ([1997] 2004). Wylie (2004: 340) claimed:

“Some ask whether there is any such thing as ‘standpoint theory’: perhaps it is a reification of Harding’s field-defining epistemic categories, an unstable (hypothetical) position that mediates between feminist empiricism and oppositional postmodernism.”

Although none of the debaters (next to Hekman, Nancy C.M. Hartsock, Collins, Harding, and Smith) makes the final part of Wylie’s claim explicit (*i.e.* using and connecting the labels), one can find for instance Collins ([1997] 2004: 253) arguing: “Oppression is not a game, nor is it solely about language – for many of us, it still remains profoundly real” thus negotiating postmodern and realist tendencies (*cf.* Harding [1997] 2004: 256, 260; Smith [1997] 2004: 264).

²⁵ Note that this relates to the observation of Haraway (1988b: 580) that feminist scholars, “[i]n their efforts to climb the greased pole leading to a usable doctrine of objectivity,” tend to

“alternatively, or even simultaneously, [hold] on to both ends to the dichotomy, which Harding describes in terms of successor science projects versus postmodernist accounts of difference and I have sketched [...] as radical constructivism versus feminist critical empiricism.”

Earlier in this chapter I have referred to Haraway as a forerunner of new feminist materialism.

I am not the first to claim that new feminist materialism is *the* or *a* emerging or emergent feminist epistemology. What is new, however, is my attempt to *systematically build up* new feminist materialism to make an epistemic category out of the negotiations described above. I will describe these negotiations in a more thorough manner and will illustrate their reductive conceptualization of matter as biologically essentialist and, consequently, bad for women. The second-wave feminist assessment of matter as something to be mistrusted leaves no room for an interrogation of the commonalities of canonical second-wave feminism that is predicated on the social-constructivist negation of matter (which can be called the heritage of De Beauvoir and the second-wave feminist empiricist objectification of matter).²⁶ New feminist materialism shows how *both* the social-constructivist *and* the empiricist approach of matter actually *avoid* matter and involve transcendence or foundationalism. The new materialist epistemology itself is a *renewed* version of feminist standpoint theory as it involves *non-foundationalist* materialism. This non-foundationalist materialism involves a re-assessment of binary oppositions and dialecticist relations. It specifically involves another way of looking at the mind-matter distinction. No longer are mind and matter seen as dialectically and vertically related. The *dynamic* nature of matter proposed is paradigmatic for non-relativist non-foundationalism in general. New feminist materialist scholars zoom in on matter and involve the realization of matter as a non-fixed entity. Consequently, the terms of the binarism reviewed above are shifted. In other words, historical materialism is the *science* of Marxism in a discourse that implies that science is rational, secular, *and* based on the ‘God trick,’ whereas new feminist materialism implies radical immanence. I have already argued that a reliance on postmodernism as fundamentally relativist and the subsequent re-introduction of a totalizing empiricist epistemology is common in contemporary feminist epistemology. In the next paragraphs I will show that it is equally common to find contemporary feminist epistemologists working in accordance with a non-dialecticist model. These epistemologists are working on matter. In my reading, new materialist scholars negotiate a traditional realist ‘vs.’ a social constructivist approach to matter and materiality. Here it is the ‘vs.’ that is actually being criticized by focusing upon similarities thus allowing for the approaches to be bridged. This is to say that it is the materiality of discourse *and* the discursivity of matter that they focus on, *i.e.* the bi-implication between matter and text/representation/ interpretation.

In the following section I will situate the debate geo-politically and generationally, reviewing its parameters along the way. Later on in this chapter I use the work of Barad,

²⁶ To this list we could add the ecofeminism and early feminist theology relying on essentialist and isolated women’s spirituality (*cf.* Braidotti 2006b: 112-5).

Ahmed and Colebrook to deal with the intricacies of academic feminist work that I label third-wave materialist.

1.2.2.3 New Feminist Materialism, or: *Third-Wave Feminist Materialism*

In this paragraph I provide a global overview of the parameters of the new feminist materialist category and I show that new materialism itself is a global or trans-continental positioning. To do so, I discuss the geo-political and generational locatedness (always non-fixed) of new feminist materialism. New materialism transgresses the borders of geo-political locations, of generations in academic feminism, and of disciplines. The latter will be proved in the upcoming part of this chapter by reading exemplifications of new materialism from feminist science and technology studies (Barad), feminist postcolonial theory (Ahmed), and Deleuzian feminist philosophy (Colebrook).

To see new materialism as global in the geo-political sense of the term does not mean that the scholars working on or from a new materialist point of view do not *situate* themselves. For example by acknowledging the Anglo-US dominance in (indexing) women's studies and feminist theory Susan Magarey and Susan Sheridan in 'Women's Studies in Australia: The Body and the Body Politic' are able to discuss Australian feminism's special relation to French (feminist) poststructuralist philosophy as decisive when it comes to its singularity. From the 1980s onwards, Australian feminist academics have shown an enormous interest in Lacan, Derrida, and Foucault, and in *écriture féminine*. The authors state:

“we would argue that Australia has made two major, and specifically Australian, contributions to international Anglophone feminisms. One concerns feminism's relationship to the state [the body politic]; another is feminism's pioneering role in relation to the philosophy of the body and the closely-related new feminist science studies” (Magarey and Sheridan 2000: without page number).

Magarey and Sheridan make this geo-politically situated claim reviewing Australian Feminist Studies' special issue on 'Feminist science studies,' and materialist trends in feminist theory. The Australian contribution to feminisms of the body and theories of embodiment through Genevieve Lloyd relies mainly on the work of Grosz and Moira Gatens (*ibidem*; cf. Colebrook in Braidotti 2003b: 195-6).²⁷ Magarey and Sheridan (*ibid.*) state:

“The new Australian feminist science studies derive from this philosophy of embodiment, or 'corporeal feminism' with its project of understanding difference (and not only sexual difference) positively [...].”

thus alluding to the non-dialecticist materialism I referred to in the previous paragraphs. Reviewing the previously listed special journal issues on feminist knowledge theory and feminist science studies,²⁸ this claim made by Australian feminists comes to the fore as systematically linked to recent feminist scholarship published in Feminist Theory's issue on

²⁷ N.B.: Colebrook (2004a) labels these authors and debates as 'third-wave feminist.'

²⁸ See this Chap. n. 23.

‘Feminist Theory and/of Science.’ Australian feminists use Grosz’s corporeal feminism as their entry point to counter a “repudiation of biology,” due to the fact that feminist theory often cites “the conventional notion of biology as reduced, sinister materiality remains intact” (Wilson 1999: 2). Feminist Theory’s special issue addresses the traffic between feminist theory and feminist science studies as well as the marginalization of science, and consequently of feminist science studies, in feminist theory (Squier and Littlefield 2004). Feminist Theory argues that new materialism can potentially function as the bridge between feminist theory that presupposes the marginalization of science and feminist science studies. The category of new materialism is defined by leaning on a significant amount of work produced by Australian scholars, such as Elizabeth Wilson, Grosz, and Vicky Kirby (they do this by referring to those authors most prominent in Australian Feminist Studies’ special issue). As a consequence, the new materialism of Feminist Theory also refers to a certain *comeback* of *biological* matter. However, in her review essay, Myra J. Hird (2004: 227) needs a ‘mainstream’ new materialism and its feminist ‘applications’ to understand this trajectory. She states:

“New materialism, whether refracted through non-linear biology or the philosophical writings of De Landa or Deleuze and Guattari, has prompted a number of feminist theorists to think about materiality without the usual accompaniment of essentialism, where matter is understood as an inert container for outside forms.”

Hird’s cartography being *generationally* unsituated is *geographically* complex, through its implicit links with the cartography of Magarey and Sheridan. Special journal issues on recent feminist knowledge theory and feminist science studies that come from the US show no traces of a politics of geographical location. In these journals the debate is explicitly situated in generational terms. Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society, in its short editorial, speaks of a growing ‘analytical sophistication’ in gender and science scholarship thus hinting at a new phase.²⁹ In Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy guest editors Nelson and Alison Wylie introduce feminist science studies as a corollary of *feminist* scholarship on science, thus, contrary to Hird, they do not need a ‘mainstream’ debate and situate their discussion *inside* feminist theory.³⁰ In this dissertation new materialism is called ‘*third wave*

²⁹ This claim is not wholly unproblematic though, see the Introduction.

³⁰ Nelson and Wylie (2004: *vii*), discussing maturation and diversification of ‘feminism and science’ scholarship in recent years, appear to have a theory of what is going on in the field yet they do not label what they see. First they refer to a naturalizing turn (“a growing body of work that offers complex, case-specific analyses of the ways in which sex/gender systems intersect with other dimensions of difference, shaping not only the institutions and metaphoric representations of the sciences but also their goals and standards, their distinctive choice of methods, their descriptive conventions and their explanatory content” (*ibidem*: *ix*)), and second to a contextualizing turn (“grounding [...] analyses of science in empirical studies of science that take account of the play of historical and social contingencies in the formation of key features of scientific practice” while at the same time “back[ing] away from the uncompromising relativism with which many were identified in earlier debates, recognizing and in some cases foregrounding the role of material constraints and evidential

materialism’ so as to make the generational dimension explicit. In chapter 2 I will provide more arguments for this terminology. Here it suffices to say that systematically I connect to the claim of Deleuze and Claire Parnet ([1977] 1987: 131), who, in *Dialogues II*, explain that any ‘third’ should be seen as cutting across, and, consequently, carrying away a binary opposition, *not* as adding to it.

In the articles that constitute the special issues an engagement with feminist neo-empiricist tendencies is foregrounded or a new materialism is constructed. The authors of the latter set of articles, however, do not necessarily label themselves ‘materialist’ or ‘new materialist.’ The work of Barad (2003) appearing in the special issue of *Signs* is a case in point. Barad names her positioning agential realist, whereas the discussion of her work by Joseph Rouse (2004) in *Hypatia*’s special issue names her work naturalist. In this dissertation I ascribe ‘third wave materialism’ to feminist academics that do not necessarily label themselves (feminist) materialist. This is because the dissertation project entails a *systematic construction* of the category. My work is grounded in the epistemic stance generated in the recent work of a new generation of feminist epistemologists. Whereas scholars such as Barad, Ahmed and Colebrook are a part of a new generation interested in creating transversal, cross-generational connections their work shows a clear interest in bodies and body politics *without* traces of essentialism. Their work is non-foundational and they do not adhere to an essential Body or to abstract philosophical concepts (*i.e.* Reason). Neither is their work predicated on a dialecticist response. For them, existing feminist epistemic categories can be *selected*; Harding’s schema does *not* provide third-wave feminist epistemologists with a classification of distinct, dialectically related options. In their discussions of matter seemingly opposing categories are being bridged. As such it is precisely a postmodernist *relativism* that these authors are immune to. The authors I have mentioned have grown up with postmodernism, and, although their work is decisively *non*-postmodernist, they do not situate themselves in a dialecticist opposition to it. By taking (feminist) postmodernism as well as (feminist) empiricism seriously they constitute a practice that is thoroughly materialist yet non-foundationalist thereby avoiding any epistemologically individualist residue of either a naïvely realist or relativist postmodernist stance is avoided. Barad (see par. 1.3.1.1), Ahmed (see par. 1.3.1.2), and Colebrook (see par. 1.3.1.3) propose ‘matter’ as their central concept that transversally connects or bridges (feminist) (neo-) empiricist and (feminist) postmodern approaches, generations of feminist academics, geo-political locations, and scholarly disciplines.

considerations in the constellation of factors that shape science” (*ibid.*: x)). The authors conclude by saying:

“While few embrace conventional positivism or radical constructivism, there is a great deal of interest in various forms of sophisticated neo-empiricism, pragmatism, and standpoint theory” (*ibid.*).

In the next section I will illustrate the parameters of third wave materialism in a more precise manner by analyzing the ways in which Barad, Ahmed and Colebrook exemplify the bridging of feminist (neo-) empiricism and feminist postmodernism proposed in this chapter. I will affirm that their work is characterized by a negotiation of matter and materiality. This negotiation I will conceptualize by claiming that new materialist work is to be found *on the threshold of matter and materiality*.³¹

1.3 Third Wave Materialism

1.3.1 Standing on the Threshold of Matter and Materiality

Although Harding's classification system continues to be used in academic feminism, at large, I have listed above several examples of the recent questioning of the applicability of Harding's schema in the present day (an update is being called for) and of the accuracy of taxonomies altogether. In this paragraph I will analyze new materialism in fuller detail. You may wonder why I want to subsume feminist negotiations of matter and materiality and the previous feminist epistemic categories under a (new) universal category. It has become clear that universalisms are (potentially) dangerous due to the fact that they often overlook their own situatedness. In this dissertation I suggest that *via* the invented category 'third wave materialism' the present can be read *cartographically* instead of in a classificatory manner. Cartographical readings avoid pitfalls such as teleological (generational) reasonings. In this dissertation new materialism is read as geo-politically, disciplinary, and generationally 'glocal.' The geo-politics and transversal disciplinarity of feminist theorizing are important but addressed in a manner less rigorous than the *generationality* involved. This is simply because, in a dissertation, choices have to be made. I will expand upon Braidotti's notion of the threshold by introducing the ways in which Barad, Ahmed and Colebrook negotiate matter and materiality. Braidotti's seemingly spatial notion of threshold deals with the *time* of feminist theorizing. I discuss this notion in a detailed manner here so as to preview the way in which generationality will be reconceptualized in this dissertation and to introduce the three exemplifications that shed light on new, or *third-wave*, feminist materialist theorizing.

Braidotti introduces her 'threshold' in a critique of the influential essay 'Women's Time' by Julia Kristeva in which women's/ feminist generations are dealt with. These generations are not age cohorts. Kristeva ([1977] 1997: 366; emphasis in original) states that she supports (or *imagines*) a third generation of women/ feminists that is "a *signifying* space, a mental space that is at once corporeal and desirous" instead of a chronological successor.

³¹ The term 'threshold' previews my generational understanding of new feminist materialism, which will be made explicit in the paragraph 2.4. I intend to further these thoughts in this dissertation.

Kristeva recognizes *another* space in the (Eastern-) European seventies and in (other) post-socialist countries and/ or regions vis-à-vis the suffragette movement of equality and appropriated egalitarianism, and the feminism of May 1968 that focused on “the specificity of feminine psychology and its symbolic manifestations” and sexual difference (*ibidem*: 355). In the new space, a new generation asks a symbolic question (*ibid.*: 356), and “will combine the sexual with the symbolic in order to discover first the specificity of the feminine (*le féminin*) and then the specificity of each woman” (*ibid.*: 357). Kristeva theorizes her ‘third’ space as a space in which women/ feminists simultaneously recognize linear and non-linear time, a space in which women/ feminists literally live in both timeframes. I find this analysis useful (*cf.* Purvis 2004) for thinking about third wave materialism as both new and disruptive of feminist epistemic categories (most notably feminist standpoint theory/ second-wave feminist materialism). Kristeva is ambivalent in her usage of ‘women’ and ‘feminists.’ She uses both ‘women’s time’ and “the time that the *feminist* movement has not only inherited but altered” (*ibid.*: 351; emphasis added). Braidotti (1994a: 162) explicitly addresses this issue in Kristeva’s article by naming non-linear time the time of consciousness raising, thus explicitly linking it to feminism. However, Braidotti, in opposition to Kristeva, does not reinstate a schism between women and feminists by reading a linear women’s time as opposed to a feminist *non-linear* time. Braidotti theorizes a “double feminist structure of time” (*ibidem*: 208). *Feminists* experience two times simultaneously: the linear, teleological time of patriarchy in which emancipation projects function (*cf.* feminist empiricism) and the discontinuous, *genealogical* time of consciousness raising (*ibid.*: 162-3). “In this framework,” Braidotti states, “different generations of women mark not only chronological steps but also thresholds out of which we can build cross-generational dialogues” (*ibid.*: 208). I find Braidotti’s ‘threshold’ even more useful for theorizing third wave materialism.

Third wave materialism should not be read as the successive schematic step that moves from materialism to feminist epistemological appropriations of ‘traditional’ (Marxist) materialism and from feminist standpoint theory to a third ‘post-feminist’ option. Nor should it be added to Harding’s classificatory schema as a fourth category.³² It is a *singular, situated* materialism in which ‘matter’ or ‘materiality,’ and the uses thereof, function as a ‘threshold’ in Braidotti’s sense: a threshold from which it is possible to build transversal dialogues. These dialogues/ negotiations constitute new feminist materialism, and challenge Harding’s taxonomic schema that illustrates a feminist epistemological ‘tree’ with separable branches (either/ or) that each solve each other’s problems (linearity, progressiveness). Third wave materialism brings together situated, transversal conversations amongst (feminist) thinkers that take place through time and space. The category I have invented does not ‘transcend’ the

³² Feminist neo-empiricism *has been* conceptualized as a fourth category (see Walby 2001: 492).

epistemological challenge of the 1970s according to which feminism went academic ('the science question in feminism' (Harding 1986: 29)), but continues in its legacy and borrows from its theorizations. Nor does it coincide with (or challenge) the self-reflexive twist in 1980s and 1990s academic feminism according to which products of the newly established field of women's studies³³ were put under post-structural and anti-racist/ lesbian scrutiny. Third wave materialism is 'third-wave' in that it tries to capture where feminist theory is at from the threshold of 'matter' and 'materiality,' and *as such* it allows for similarities to be drawn and bridgings to take place. These bridges connect through time, across generations of academic feminists, in space, across Anglo-American, European, and Australian academic feminisms, and across disciplines.

In the remainder of this section, three exemplifications of third wave materialism are presented and analyzed to ground the cartography that has been introduced in this chapter. To begin, I will use feminist science studies scholar Barad who argues that traditionally realist approaches to science (assuming the 'mirror of nature' in which scientific claims reflect nature out there (see for the term Rorty 1980)) and social constructivist ones (according to a charged social constructivist reading, postmodernism assumes the 'mirror of culture' in which scientific claims reflect academic culture) pursue a correspondence theory of truth. The representationalism shared, then, construes the opposition between realism and constructivism as a non-exhaustive one. Barad designs her 'agential realism' by bridging feminist empiricist *naïvely realist* approaches and *non-radical feminist postmodernist* approaches. I would like to argue that Barad's 'agential realism' is systematically related to new materialism. Post-colonial feminist theorist Ahmed provides her readers with a criticism of both realist readings of the biological body and social-constructivist readings of the cultural body. She claims that *both* biologisms and 'culturalisms' assume a certain *inherent* or *pre-determined* body. For instance, in both cases a certain body is or has a 'race.' Accordingly, Ahmed argues that a biologicistic take on the body is as representationalist as a culturalistic take. Ahmed bridges mentioned non-exhaustive dichotomy by claiming that bodies materialize or come to matter. Deleuzian feminist philosopher Colebrook bridges the opposition between the primacy of the body (feminist empiricist realism, and feminist standpoint theory as an identity politics) and the primacy of representation (feminist postmodernism) in an attempt to break through the primacy of the representation/ matter dichotomy, *i.e.* by focusing on immanent philosophies. In the following three subparagraphs I will discuss these three examples as illustrations of negotiations of 'matter' and 'materiality' that make transversal connections possible in the geo-political, disciplinary and generational sense.

³³ In this dissertation the term '(European) women's studies' is being used for what is generated in academia by '(European) women's/ gender/ feminist studies,' '(European) women's/ gender studies,' '(European) gender studies' and '(European) women's studies' alike.

1.3.1.1 “material’ is always already material-discursive:’ Barad³⁴

Barad is theoretical physicist by training and works in the field of (feminist) science studies. The attention for her work in the field of feminist epistemology/ women’s studies is growing. Rouse (2004), for instance, was the first to publish a reading of Barad’s work (inscribing it into the tradition of philosophical naturalism), and methodological ‘translations’ of the work are also coming out (see Linda Birke, Lykke, and Mette Bryld (2004) on Barad’s reconceptualization of (Butlerian) performativity (see Butler [1990] 1999), and Björn Pernrud (2007) on diffractive methodology). I read Barad who has developed an ‘onto-epistem-ology’ (Barad 2003: 829) or an ‘ethico-onto-epistem-ology’ (see below) as a third-wave feminist materialist standing on the threshold of ‘matter’ and ‘materiality.’ Standing on this threshold enables Barad to cross disciplines and to connect (to) divergent theoretical outlooks (e.g. physics, queer theory, and feminist science studies). The opening of ‘Meeting the Universe Halfway: Realism and Social Constructivism without Contradiction’ can serve as an example:

“The morning after giving an invited lecture on the socially constructed nature of scientific knowledge, I had the privilege of watching as a STM (scanning tunneling microscope) operator zoomed in on a sample of graphite, and as we approached a scale of thousands of nanometers... tens of nanometers... down to fractions of a nanometer, individual carbon items were imagined before our very eyes” (Barad 1996: 161).

In one complex sentence Barad crosses the supposed dividing lines between theoretical and experimental physics and the empirical study of science (‘naturalism,’ or what the Dutch call ‘empirical philosophy’ (Mol 2000)). What does the centrality of ‘matter’ and ‘materiality’ do for Barad? This question will be answered by reviewing the transversal connections Barad makes through ‘matter’ and ‘materiality.’ Why is it, for instance, that an early 20th Century theoretical physicist becomes a critic of feminist postmodernism? In other words, why is Niels Bohr made to answer Butler?

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Haraway (1997: 116) sticks very closely to Barad’s own (invented) terminology when characterizing the work:

“Growing out of human and nonhuman ‘intra-action’ (Barad’s word), ‘agency’ is not about ‘subjectivity’ that can be in any sense separate from ‘objectivity.’ Agency is about knowledge and accountability for boundaries and objects; that is, about ‘agential realism.’”

Haraway places Barad’s work in the context of ongoing (feminist) science studies debates on ‘what things do’ (and how to characterize their doings) and the accountability of constructed

³⁴ In March 2005 I had to opportunity to participate in the 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). Prof. Barad was invited as one of the teachers. My reading of Barad’s work has benefited from discussions I had during the course. See also Van der Tuin 2005.

knowledge claims. Rouse (2004: 156-7) lists several reasons for considering Barad a naturalist (acknowledging that she has never asserted to be one herself):³⁵

“the continuity between philosophy and science; the insistence that philosophical explication of science be accountable to ongoing scientific practice; a thoroughgoing materialism (albeit in the sense of agential materiality, not a more traditional physicalism); and the rejection of any appeal to the magical or supernatural.”

Rouse emphasizes Barad’s centralizing *ontological* issues in connection with epistemology (*ibidem*: 145).³⁶ The latter connection is key to the work of Barad, who, both in reviewing the science wars and in designing onto-epistem-ology, carefully (re)constructs positionings and their (inter)relations. Barad (1996: 162) contends that working within a frame of “privileging [...] epistemological issues over ontological ones” is rather unfortunate *and* a caricature of a postmodernism. She explicitly intervenes in the field of constructivist science studies and feminist theory by stating that she wants to understand “the nature of the interplay of the material and the cultural” (*ibidem*: 164). Barad asks: “Won’t this still sound too much like metaphysics to those trained during the various states of decay of positivist culture?” (*ibid.*) thus enfolding her evaluation of what is and what is not accepted in the late 20th Century US academy. Critically reviewing *both* what scientists and realist philosophers do, and what social constructivists do, Barad adds:

“While I acknowledge that realism has been invoked to support both oppressive and liberatory positions and projects, my hope is that at this historical juncture, the weight of realism – the serious business and related responsibility involved in truth hunting – can offer a possible ballast against the persistent positivist scientific culture that too easily confuses theory with play” (*ibid.*).³⁷

Barad invented ‘agential realism’ to address the interplay of the material and the cultural or semiotic thus overcoming the assumption that once ontological issues are addressed positivism is the only option. Whereas for epistemological issues only social constructivists are on track. This is the argument:

“there is a tension set up between realism and social constructivism that is an acknowledgment of the dichotomous portrayal of these positionings – a polarization that itself relies upon the ambiguity of both terms. The dichotomized positions of realism and social constructivism – which presume a subject/ object dichotomy – *can acknowledge the situated/constructed character of only one of the poles of the dualism at a time*. Realists do not deny that subjects are materially situated; constructivists insist upon the socially or discursively constructed character of objects. *Neither recognizes their mutually constitutive ‘intra-action’*” (Barad 1999: 2; emphasis added).

³⁵ However she mentions it in the following sentence:

“I offer an elaboration of performativity – a materialist, naturalist, and posthumanist elaboration – that allows matter its due as a active participant in the world’s becoming, in its ongoing ‘intra-activity’” (Barad 2003: 803).

³⁶ I agree with Rouse on this: Barad does not initiate nor constitute a strictly ‘ontological turn’ in feminist theory. Cf. Mol 2002, Law 2004.

³⁷ One may consider this in the light of the science wars (see Chap. 3 n. 6). The science wars being a US phenomenon, recall that also British Walby discards the narrative turn for its being ‘just story telling.’ In fact, the whole discussion about a relativist postmodernism has its genealogical roots in this fierce debate.

The fact that two seemingly opposite traditions can understand only one pole at a time and not the ways in which they are actually predicated on (the exclusion of) the other pole is a result of dialecticism. Barad counter-acts this tradition by explaining the representationalisms that are shared by the two poles. Barad argues that traditionally realist approaches to science (assuming the mirror of nature in which scientific claims reflect nature out there) and social constructivist ones (according to a charged reading, social constructivism assumes the mirror of culture in which scientific claims reflect academic culture) pursue a correspondence theory of truth. She states that the representationalism that is shared construes the opposition between realism and constructivism as a non-exhaustive one (Barad 2003: 802). Barad came to this understanding by putting her faith in matter (Barad 2007: 381). In other words, Barad designs her ‘agential realism’ by bridging feminist empiricism’s *realist* approaches and feminist postmodernism’s *constructivist* approaches. In ‘Meeting the Universe Halfway’ the framework of ‘agential realism’ enfolds in four statements:³⁸

“(1) agential realism grounds and situates knowledge claims in local experiences: objectivity is literally embodied; (2) agential realism privileges neither the material nor the cultural: the apparatus of bodily production is material-cultural, and so is agential reality; (3) agential realism entails the interrogation of boundaries and critical reflexivity; and (4) agential realism underlines the necessity of an ethics of knowing” (Barad 1996: 179).

‘Agential realism’ is rooted in Barad’s study of the history of physics. Such an undertaking was popularized through The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (Kuhn [1962, 1969] 1996). The history of physics, as well as Barad’s take on ‘matter’ and ‘materiality’ is narrated through a close reading of Bohr’s reflections on physics experimentation. Working in the field of theoretical physics Barad thoroughly studied the work of Bohr and discerned a revolutionary observation in his work. This observation looks at laboratory instruments as part and parcel of both the process of experimentation and its outcomes. Bohr rescued lab instruments from physicists’ and philosophers’ ignorance and he theorized them as influencing what Barad calls, following Haraway, ‘world-making practices.’ Instrumentation does things, it *produces* the ontology that we are working with. In other words,

“These practices are recognized as being productive rather than merely descriptive. However, what is produced is constrained by particular material-discursive factors and not arbitrarily construed” (Barad 1999: 2)

Barad (1996: 165) contends that Bohr worked within an interdisciplinary space that is neither pure philosophy nor pure physics. She claims that an interdisciplinary space enabled him to construct the formula ‘measurement = matter + meaning’ (*ibidem*: 166). It is in the act of measurement that theory and practice meet. In other words, matter gets meaning in measurement just as meaning its embodiment/ materialization. Making this contention, *i.e.* standing on the threshold of ‘matter’ and ‘materiality,’ Barad refers to feminist theory stating

³⁸ Note the irony of providing this list in the context of Barad’s ‘entanglement of matter and meaning’ in the context of which “[I]ists simply cannot do justice to entanglements” (Barad 2007: xi).

that mixing quantum theory and feminist theory may possibly be explosive (*ibid.*). What does Barad do to prevent deconstructiveness from happening?

Bohr uses the concept ‘phenomenon’ for instances of measurement. According to Barad (*ibid.*: 170; emphasis in original), his view consists of the following:

“since observations involve an indeterminable discontinuous interaction, *as a matter of principle, there is no unambiguous way to differentiate between the ‘object’ and the ‘agencies of observation’ – no inherent/ naturally occurring/ fixed/ universal/ Cartesian cut exists. Hence, observations do not refer to objects of an independent reality.*”³⁹

Observed objects and the ‘agencies’ of observation can only be distinguished artificially in specific contexts of lab experimentation through a constructed ‘cut.’ There is no inherent distinction; the relation is a bi-implication (*ibid.*: 171). Barad adapts Bohr’s language of agencies of observation to prevent slippage into a naïve usage of ‘observer’ (an independent and powerful agent in the process of knowledge production) thus she connects the materiality and the discursivity of ‘apparatuses’ (*ibid.*: 172). Just as the observer is both the scientist and her instrumentation, the thing measured is both the object and the instrumentation with which the particular measurement has been produced, *i.e.* the phenomenon (*ibid.*).⁴⁰ Hence ontology and epistemology are inseparable. The object and the subject of knowledge, thing and word, nature and culture (*ibid.*: 173, 175; *cf.* Barad 1999: 2) are material-discursive.⁴¹ Barad criticizes science studies’ utopian dream of symmetry between object and subject and emphasizes the inherent power play (Barad 1996: 188).⁴² A similar critique can be voiced of feminist standpoint theory: it involves a symmetrical treatment of object and subject of knowledge that theorizes power, but it does not take into account measurement devices. Barad’s use of ‘agency’ is an assimilation of Bohr’s agency of observation (Barad 1996: 172) with a concept of agency that is intrinsically connected to feminist standpoint theory and contested in the larger field of feminist theory (*cf.* Bracke 2004):

“A Bohrian ontology does not entail some fixed notion of being that is prior to signification (as the classical realist assumes), but neither is being completely inaccessible to language (as in transcendental idealism) nor completely of language (as in linguistic monism) – what is being described is our participation *within* nature, what I term ‘agential realism’” (Barad 1996: 176; emphasis in original).

Within this frame we will not find a world ‘out there’ that exists prior to language and that is wholly unmediated. Nor can we rely on ‘pure Reason’ or the ‘linguistic turn’ (*ibidem*: 172,

³⁹ *Cf.* Deleuze and Parnet ([1977] 1987: 137) on rigid segmentarity or “the cutting line.”

⁴⁰ Note the explicit departure from the God trick/ epistemological individualism.

⁴¹ To speak with Wilson (1999: 5): “Communication is a semio-material writing that ruptures the more localised Boolean structures of ‘materiality or signification,’ ‘materiality and signification,’ ‘materiality not signification’ (structures which link already delimitable entities into conjunctive interactions).”

⁴² Although Barad affirms Foucault’s complexities, she does state that

“a crucial feature of observing practices that seems not to have been appreciated by Foucault is the dynamics of intra-action and the inseparability of observing apparatus and observed. That is, although Foucault insists that the objects (subjects) of knowledge do not preexist but only emerge within discursive practices, he does not explicitly analyse the inseparability of apparatuses and the objects (subjects)” (Barad 1998: 99).

176). Agential realism relies on Barad's neologism 'intra-action' (*ibid.*: 179). Pairs such as subject/object and thing/word do not exist independent of each other before they are brought into interaction; since subject/object and thing/word intra-act from the start we cannot think one original and one copy, or two originals, or a simple cause and effect. What we theorize here is *productivity* (Barad 1999: 2) and "what is produced is constrained by particular material-discursive factors and not arbitrarily construed" (*ibidem*). In more precise terms:

"According to agential realism, causality is neither a matter of strict determinism nor one of free will. Intra-actions always entail particular exclusions, and exclusions foreclose the possibility of determinism, providing the condition of an open future. But neither are anything and everything possible at any given moment. Indeed, intra-actions iteratively reconfigure what is possible and what is impossible – possibilities do not sit still. One way to mark this might be to say that intra-actions are constraining but not determining. But this way of putting it doesn't do justice to the nature of 'constraints' or the dynamics of possibility. Possibilities aren't narrowed in their realization; new possibilities open up as others that might have been possible are now excluded: possibilities are reconfigured and reconfiguring" (Barad 2007: 234; cf. Barad 1999: 7).⁴³

Barad's definition of 'objectivity' summarizes all of the above:

"material apparatuses produce material phenomena through specific causal intra-actions, where 'material' is always already material-discursive – *that is what it means to matter*. [...] what is important about causal intra-actions is the fact that marks are left on bodies. Objectivity means being accountable to marks on bodies" (Barad 2003: 824; emphasis in original).

I argue that this definition gives insight into the *ethics* of Barad's work on 'ethico-onto-epistemology' (Barad 2007: 409 n. 10). 'Marks on bodies' consist of graphs on paper, but also include concrete bodies of persons that are literally affected by (sexist, racist, homophobic, orientalist, etc.) theories and other doings. Agency is found in scientists in intra-action with the world that can act on the marking (Barad 2003: 827). Agential realism is an example of this agency; it allows for the possibilities of change. Scientists are constantly engaged in world-making practices by enacting cuts however they are always unstable (*ibidem*: 817). Barad locates openings for change in the enactment of worlds through the incision of certain cuts and not others (*ibid.*: 827). Barad thus affirms that it is not that we, as scientists, as subjects of knowledge, *have* agency, where others (objects, instruments) are inert. Barad theorizes doing-as-enactment and being-as-essence is left behind (*ibid.*). Agency means quite simply performing a 'cut,' or a boundary enactment:⁴⁴

"agency is a matter of changes in the apparatuses of bodily production, and such changes take place through various intra-actions, some of which remake the boundaries that delineate the differential constitution of the 'human.' [...] On an agential realist account, agency is cut loose from its traditional humanist orbit" (*ibid.*: 826).

⁴³ Constraint and indeterminacy will be extensively dealt with in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

⁴⁴ In chapter 2 I will show how postmodernized versions of feminist standpoint theory assume certain boundaries rather than study how they come about. Joey Sprague for instance in *Feminist Methodologies for Critical Researchers: Bridging Differences* (2005: 74) summarizes feminist standpoint theory and its benefits along these lines. She claims that boundary crossing is what makes the work of Collins so very valuable. This is a materialist claim, but not a *third-wave* or *new* materialist one – Sprague and the theorists she summarizes *postulate* boundaries, whereas Barad studies the enactment of boundaries. Cf. my critique of McCall above.

In other words, Barad accounts for ‘posthumanist performativity’ (human and nonhuman agentialities) and for the fact that often the line is drawn (*i.e.* the cut is enacted) at the human (*i.e.* closing off agency for nonhumans). The latter she calls a ‘Cartesian’ rather than ‘agential’ cut (*ibid.*: 815):

“There are two common ways to attempt to deny responsibility for boundaries: (1) claim that they are natural, or (2) claim that they are arbitrary partitionings of a holistic oneness, existing outside of human space and time. In contrast, agential realism explicitly shows that boundaries are interested instances of power, specific constructions, with real material consequences. There are not only different stakes in drawing distinctions, *there are different ontological implications*” (Barad 1996: 182; emphasis in original).

Barad counters the naturalization of certain cuts (essentialism) as well as (transcendental) idealism, whereas her proposed constructivism is undone of every bit of relativism (*cf.* Barad 1996: 186) due to its strong materialist stance.

In ‘Getting Real: Technoscientific Practices and the Materialization of Reality’ Barad’s making transversal theoretical and disciplinary connections come to the foreground. Here, she reads Butler’s performativity through her own agential realist frame that is narrated through Bohr and Foucault. Barad wants to show that Butler’s ‘matter’ is not essentializing and thus fixed. Butler however only theorizes one relation, namely “how *discourse* comes to matter” (Barad 1998: 90; emphasis in original). She does not analyze “how *matter* comes to matter” (*ibidem.*: 91; emphasis in original). Barad is afraid that Butler will fall back into the dichotomy of a passive, inert matter, and an active, changeable discourse that makes a difference (*ibid.*: 107). Reading Bohr and Foucault through one another means that Barad can show exactly where Foucault’s ‘materiality’ goes astray by appropriating Bohr and that she can further Bohr’s framework by appropriating Foucault’s ‘discursivity’ so as to show the limits of Foucault (his materiality treats nonhuman entities in an essentializing way) and to enlighten Bohr’s material-discursive (Barad 1998: 103). Practicing what she preaches, Barad treats theories not as preexisting but works intra-actively with them. This she calls a ‘diffractive’ reading strategy (Barad 2003: 803). Barad introduces her performative framework as the opposite of atomist metaphysics. However, she calls a lot of work ‘atomist,’ even science studies scholarship discussing ‘mediation.’ It has been discussed that mediation assumes knower, known, and knowledge as originally preexisting entities (as representations). Conversely Barad shows the strengths of thinking intra-activity. Her own thinking with and through other scholars’ work can count as such. Barad often refers to scholars such as Haraway and bodily materialist Kirby in relation to her diffractive reading practices. With them she thinks beyond the atomist frame and in terms of posthuman mutuality. She thus leaves all traces of epistemological individualism behind.

I suggest here to label Barad’s work ‘third-wave materialist.’ I have several reasons for this, although this list is not exhaustive: Barad creates transversal cross-generational and cross-disciplinary connections between scholars; her work is wholly unessentialistic, yet

shows an interest in bodies (whether paper, metal, or flesh) and body politics/ ethics; the work is non-foundational. In my reading Barad does not inscribe herself in one of Harding's epistemic categories, but she does employ (feminist) empiricism (connected to feminist science studies) to criticize a (not necessarily relativist) constructivism, while at the same time criticizing empiricist naïveté. 'Matter' and 'materiality' are key, and are ways of directing us toward the similarities between feminist empiricism and feminist postmodernism. In other words, the ways in which matter is employed account for a qualitative shift in feminist epistemology towards a non-foundational materialism and a critique of the mind-matter dichotomy.

1.3.1.2 'the sticky relation between signs and bodies:' Ahmed

Matter and materiality are also central to the work of Ahmed. In this subparagraph I discuss Ahmed's criticism of realist readings of the biological body, or subject, and of social constructivist readings of the cultural body, or subject. Ahmed argues that it is not beneficial to inscribe oneself in either the realist or the constructivist paradigm. Rather, she puts her faith, like Barad, in matter, and by doing so, she designs a new materialism from within the field of feminist post-colonial theory (*cf.* Bleeker forthcoming). In this paragraph I explain what Ahmed's materialist intervention looks like and in what way it is related to the work of Barad (and Colebrook).

Ahmed has an interest in local-global, personal-political, and individual-social relations. With this combination of interests Ahmed situates herself in the field of (feminist) post-colonial theory (this is also the field most affected by Ahmed's intervention). In *Strange Encounters* Ahmed (2000b: 11) clarifies the links between a correspondence theory regarding post-colonialism and a conservative outlook:

“If post-colonialism is assumed to be referential – we are in a post-colonial time and place – then it does become deeply conservative: it assumes that ‘we’ have overcome the legacies of colonialism, and that this overcoming is what binds ‘us’ together.”

Reading post-colonialism as referring to an *actual* situation ‘out there’ *after* colonialism or a situation of *having overcome* colonialism, is conservative in two respects: the correspondence theory part is conservative in that the situation ‘out there’ is considered to no longer be governed by asymmetrical power relations that need to be scrutinized, and the after colonialism part is conservative, or rather neo-liberal, in that ‘histories of determination’ seem to no longer affect the present. Ahmed understands post-colonialism as a ‘failed historicity:’ “a historicity that admits of its own failure in grasping that which has been, as the impossibility of grasping the present” (*ibidem*: 10). With this Ahmed criticizes a realist correspondence theory as well as postmodern social constructivism. Firstly, Ahmed states that postmodernism, in terms of correspondence (we live in postmodern times) and a thesis of

indeterminacy (she talks about determinacy but not about full determination), has become a form of symbolic violence (*ibid.*: 6). Symbolic violence entails violence at the level of signification, thus assuming a relation between the material and the symbolic or discursive:

“The material and discursive violence is inseparable and irreducible. I hence use the term, ‘violence,’ in relation to postmodernism, to make clear the enormity of what is at stake – how postmodernism appropriates others through naming is both a relation of force and of harm: it has harmful effects, and it is a taking-over through the force of the name” (Ahmed 1998: 198 n. 2).

Secondly, postmodernist *theory* is understood as only taking into account the discursive: studying the performative speech act involved in the acquisition of land and people. This example illustrates how postmodern theory overlooks the forcefulness of the situation and the painful material effects of the speech act. Ahmed critiques postmodernism and postmodern theory and argues that ‘naming,’ whether in the so-called real, in theory or as theory, is always material. She reports the commonality between two supposedly opposite theoretical trends: like realism, postmodernism is a correspondence theory.

As the concept of ‘symbolic violence’ shows very clearly, Ahmed herself goes into the (asymmetrical) material effects of theory, asking, in Differences that Matter, what postmodernism is *doing* (*ibidem*: 7). By questioning the material effects (the ‘doing’) of theory Ahmed’s work is as materialist as Barad’s.⁴⁵ She too *bridges* the realist and the postmodern by arguing that they are the opposite sides of the same coin (correspondence theory) and by studying the material-semiotic.⁴⁶ An example of the latter is her usage of the concept ‘sticky signs,’ which is introduced in The Cultural Politics of Emotion. With ‘sticky signs’ Ahmed refers both to signs that stick to certain bodies and to histories that stick to signifiers.⁴⁷

“The sign is a ‘sticky sign’ as an effect of a history of articulation, which allows the sign to accumulate value. This stickiness of the sign is also about the relation or contact between signs. The association between words that generates meanings is concealed: *it is this*

⁴⁵ See also Ahmed’s recent research about the diversity/ diversity management’s doing. This is what Ahmed (2007: 607; emphasis in original) concludes here:

“documents create fantasy images of the organisations they apparently describe. The document says ‘we are diverse,’ as if saying it makes it so. In a way, our task must be to refuse to read such document as doing what they say [...] *by exposing the gap between words and deeds.*”

⁴⁶ In a recent interview with Nicholas Gane, Haraway states that feminists using the material-semiotic – the result of the breaking of the mind-body dualism in ‘A Manifesto for Cyborgs’ – need “to name it analytically better” (Gane 2006: 147). This dissertation tries to do some of this work, and Haraway is one of my ‘sources’ of inspiration along the way.

⁴⁷ It has to be noted that the concept ‘sticky signs’ is one of the sites of Ahmed critiquing Butler. Butler criticizes work in which the contention is put forth that certain signs ‘contain’ hate, Ahmed says. Objecting to essentialist readings of subjects/objects/words, Ahmed (2004b: 59) reminds us, Butler seems to forget that certain histories ‘stick’ onto words and that as a consequence *certain* words are repeated (e.g. hate speech) and *not* others. These words

“cannot simply be liberated from the history of this use as violence or insult, even if they cannot be reduced to that history. [...] some words stick because they become attached *through* particular affects” (*ibidem*: 60; emphasis in original).

Here we find Ahmed arguing against postmodernist ‘indeterminacy.’

concealment of such associations that allows such signs to accumulate value. I am describing this accumulation of affective value as a form of stickiness, or as ‘sticky signs’” (Ahmed 2004b: 92; emphasis in original).

Another example of Ahmed’s materialism is her frequent use of the verb ‘to mark out’ (*cf.* Barad’s ‘marks on bodies’) which she uses to refer to the material effect(s) of signifiers as opposed to a representationalism of ‘figures (of speech)’ that she (see *e.g.* Ahmed 2000b: 15) calls a form of (textual) fetishism. Ahmed challenges the common separation of ontology and epistemology that in this chapter has already been shown to be bridged by Haraway and more importantly Barad.

It has to be noted that Ahmed (*e.g.* 2000a, 2004b) adds the psychic to the material-semiotic. Emphasizing emotionality and the psychic does not mean that Ahmed’s epistemic take is *not* (new) materialist; it is, on the contrary, precisely her ‘performative’ take on emotions⁴⁸ that makes out the threshold of matter and materiality in her work. Her performativity involves a reworking of the term. In other words, by employing it Ahmed does not stay within the realm of postmodernism. In Cultural Politics Ahmed (2004b: 191) concludes:

“The ‘doing’ of emotions, I have suggested, is bound up with the sticky relation between signs and bodies: emotions work by working through signs and on bodies to materialise the surfaces and boundaries that are lived as worlds.”

Her take on emotions thus involves a materialism that is a *bodily* materialism. Ahmed seems to argue that we neither are nor have a certain body or a certain skin; bodies and surfaces materialize through ‘sticky signs.’ In Ahmed’s work bodies are not simply given (I am nor have a body that is such and such); bodies come to matter (Ahmed 2000b: 40). This particular materialism I read as Ahmed’s project – with her work, she wants to fill in a certain gap:

“despite many appeals to the differentiated body within feminist philosophy, I think there has been less substantive analysis of how ‘bodies’ come to be lived through being differentiated from other bodies, whereby differences in ‘other bodies’ already mark ‘the body’ as such” (*ibidem*: 41).

The body or the skin are not figures or signifiers that are already given, but they are effects or materializations that involve social differentiation (*ibid.*: 42).

With her bodily materialism Ahmed thus criticizes the move from an essentially biological body to a socially constructed body that is always already cultural. Both in fact assume a certain *inherent* since *pre-determined* body (in both cases a certain body is or has a ‘race,’ for instance⁴⁹), which discloses a ‘God trick.’ Ahmed argues that a biologicistic take on

⁴⁸ But also on *e.g.* diversity and diversity management (see this Chap. n. 45).

⁴⁹ Ahmed (2004b: 41) uses the example of Grosz who, in Volatile Bodies, is considered to having “appeal[ed] to the differentiated body as a rhetorical ploy that does not operate beyond that level [which] has structural implications for the bodies that are discussed and reinscribed in feminist discourse.”

I evaluate this example as not completely fair, since it actually repeats what is considered to be ‘wrong’ in Grosz’s work. Grosz is accused of taking into account race as a figure or metaphor for difference (*ibidem*: 42), which results, argues Ahmed, in her *inability* to engage with the specificity of the

the body is as representationalist as a culturalistic take. In the context of both the realist take on the biological body and the constructivist take on the cultural body, therefore, the body can be named *a priori* according to some system of signification.⁵⁰ Ahmed criticizes such representationalism by claiming that bodies materialise or come to matter (sticky signs). Two views on the body that are often considered oppositional are linked by Ahmed (she, again, argues that two assumed opposites are, in fact, the two opposites of one and the same coin). She designs her materialism to criticize the representationalist paradigm that underlies both realist biology and constructivist culturalism.

Focusing on the materialization of bodies, Ahmed does not work with a text-only version of the body (primary) that comes to matter (secondary). Her materialist take on the body is exemplified by theorization of ‘strangers.’ Talking about strangers in Strange Encounters, Ahmed claims that the stranger is not a figure nor should be treated as such. We neither are nor meet strangers *qua* strangers:

“It is this very granting of figurability that functions to conceal the histories of determination [...]. We need to consider, then, what are the social relationships (involving both fantasy [Sigmund Freud] and materiality [Karl Marx]) that are concealed in stranger fetishism, even if we no longer use the version of determination that is exercised in Marxist theory. [...] The effects of stranger fetishism are clear: the figure of the stranger assumes a life of its own only insofar as it is cut off from the histories of its determination, and hence only insofar *as it erases the very forms of difference that render impossible the formation of an inclusive community*” (Ahmed 2000b: 4-6; emphasis in original).

Ahmed calls talking about the stranger as a figure reductive (*ibidem*: 79). She also says, “[it] creates a form of universality premised on the refusal of place itself, that is, the contingent and worldly relations that mark out habitable terrains” (*ibid.*). ‘Histories of determination’ are specific histories that should not be overlooked (relativism) or generalized (universalism). Being a stranger for instance involves a *specific* lived reality of having left home (*ibid.*). Ahmed tries not to overlook the fact that having had to leave home might create possibilities for identification (and as such for the creation of communities), but she also claims that the histories are not and should not be treated as similar, or, worse, identical.⁵¹

‘Histories of determination’ and ‘fetishism’ have historical materialist connotations that uncover Marxist resonances in Ahmed’s work. I have already argued that in my reading it is a *certain* materialism that enables Ahmed to break free from realism and postmodernism simultaneously. Opposite to a more traditional *generalizable* historical materialism, Ahmed continually emphasizes the *specificity* of *certain* histories. Ahmed also explicitly argues that

difference race makes. Ahmed, in fact, can be accused of taking into account Grosz’s work as a figure only, which results in an inability to engage more fully with the work. Grosz’s work is, so to say, disqualified on the basis of one text fragment that is, using one of Ahmed’s terms, fetishized.

⁵⁰ See also Hall 2000 who argues that ethnicity as cultural does not necessarily differ from ‘race’ as biological due to the fact that ethnicity and culture can be as totalizing as ‘race’ and biology.

⁵¹ As such, Ahmed is critical of treating migration or nomadism as a metaphor (see *ibid.* 187n. 2 for a discussion of the work of Braidotti). She prefers a *literal* talk about migration instead of a metaphoric one (*ibid.*: 81; cf. Ponzanesi 2002: esp. 207).

community thinking involves gross generalizations. Due to this generalizing tendency, she calls the latter humanist (see Ahmed 2000b: 29). Claims about generalizations and humanisms have serious repercussions for feminism and feminist epistemology (especially feminist standpoint theory) and for the kind of materialism that remains within reach. By discarding something as an unwelcome generalization or as ‘humanist’ our attention is drawn to seeming opposites (such as personal-public, individual-group, universal-particular, local-global). Discussing these pairs Ahmed does not work along the lines of an additive model (‘both... and...’). Instead, she reads the personal through the public and vice versa. This is what Ahmed calls reading and writing through the skin:

“As a ‘contact writing,’ or a writing about contact, I do not simply interweave the personal and the public, the individual and the social, but show the ways in which they take shape through each other, or even how they shape each other” (Ahmed 2004b: 14).⁵²

As a consequence, Ahmed claims:

“subjects as well as objects are shaped by contact. [...] [I do] not posit the subject’s consciousness as that which makes the world. The subject materialises as an effect of contact with others and has already materialised given such histories of contact” (*ibidem*: 40 n. 8).

Ahmed’s materialism thus takes into account the fact that it is not any-body, but some-body (the hyphens are Ahmed’s) that is affected in an encounter due to sticky signs and histories of determination. Her materialism, in other words, is not universalist nor humanist – it is highly specific.⁵³

Ahmed’s materialist frame includes a notion of ‘performativity,’ like Barad’s agential realism. As mentioned Ahmed uses ‘performativity,’ among other things, to explain the workings of emotions. Emotions do things, emotional encounters (my contraction) have certain effects. She states:

“[w]hen emotions are seen as only personal, or about the person and how they feel, then the systematic nature of their effects is concealed” (Ahmed 2004b: 198).

Considering emotion as a private thing, thus, in my terms, taking an epistemologically individualist instead of a relational outlook, would be being reductive (*ibidem*: 200). Emotions “are effects rather than origins” and “hence cannot be taken as ‘the ground’ of judgment (to be a ‘form’ is not a ‘ground’)” (*ibid.*: 196). Ahmed’s take on emotionality as performative shows that she is not working with an outward model in which emotions move

⁵² For ‘contact’ one can also read ‘affect.’

⁵³ Note that Ahmed’s materialism is non-Wittigean. In contrast with Monique Wittig ([1981] 1992) in ‘One is not born a Woman,’ Ahmed (2004b: 163; emphasis added) claims that:

“[t]he production of surplus value relies, as Marx argued, on the exploitation of the labour of others. [As such t]he commodification of queer involves histories of exploitation: the leisure industries that support queer leisure styles, as with other industries, depend upon class and racial hierarchies. So it is important *not* to identify queer as outside the global economy, which transforms ‘pleasures’ into ‘profit’ by exploiting the labour of others.”

Wittig’s materialism, in which the lesbian is theorized as the third sex, is a materialism that is too universalist according to Ahmed’s liking; in other words, Wittig’s materialism is not specific enough. For Ahmed’s new materialist reading of queer, see Ahmed 2006 (*cf.* Van der Tuin 2007c).

inside out. In Ahmed, we cannot find an origin or a pre-existing surface on which emotions work. This take on performativity is an appropriation as well as a critique of Butler (see *e.g. ibid.*: 151, 186-7). Comparing Barad and Ahmed via their respective takes on Butler (taking into account Ahmed's remark that "[w]hat we hear when we hear words such as 'queer' depends on complex psycho-biographical as well as institutional histories" (*ibid.*: 166)), another concept, namely 'the surface,' comes to the fore as a nodal point. Barad argues that Butler's Bodies that Matter (1993) is a strict social constructivism, thus working within the previously mentioned culturalist paradigm. Here Butler is considered to be working on the body's outside only – her 'matter' is "a passive blank site" (Barad 2003: 821 n. 26). Ahmed however often quotes Butler's "return to the notion of matter, not as a site or surface, but as *a process of materialization that stabilizes over time to produce the effect of boundary, fixity, and surface we call matter*" (Butler 1993: 9; emphasis in original) to make clear that bodies and skin are *not* pre-determined by either biology or culture, but come to matter or materialize (*e.g.* Ahmed 2004b: 24). Ahmed thus seems to read Butler in a tradition that is not culturalist/social constructivist, while Barad argues that Butler is exemplary for social constructivists' overlooking actual matter when concentrating on 'discourse.' Ahmed is mostly critical about 'undoing gender' (Butler 2004b), which she reads as complicit with (neo-) liberalism (Ahmed 2004b: 186). According to Ahmed we should not withdraw from gender, but get closer to it instead (*ibidem*: 187). In other words, we should *scrutinize* the *specificity* of gender and gendering. This argument reminds us of her materialist emphasis on the need to study the specificities of different differences such as race vs. gender, but also postmodernism vs. (Black) feminism (see Ahmed 1998). This, then, shows that Barad and Ahmed both criticize Butler for not taking into account (the) actual matter (of gender).⁵⁴

A final example through which I will clarify Ahmed's materialism involves the fact that she conducts her analysis at the level of the 'encounter.' Ahmed (2000b: 15; emphasis in original) says:

"I examine the way strange bodies are produced through tactile encounters with other bodies: differences are not marked *on* the stranger's body, but come to materialise in the relationship of touch between bodies."

Her analysis of 'skin,' then, takes place at the level of the encounter. Thus, when she talks about skin, skin is not fetishized (*i.e.* treating it as a figure that pre-exists; *cf.* Cheah 1996: 110). On the contrary Ahmed wants "to think of how the skin, as the border that feels, functions as a mechanism for social differentiation" (Ahmed 2000b: 45). In other words, she says:

⁵⁴ Another commonality with Barad is Ahmed's ethical outlook. Ahmed (2000b: 138) introduces her ethics through an exposé on the relation between ethics (the other as other (than being)) and ontology (being). Ahmed does not *oppose* ethics and ontology: her emphasis on the 'encounter' shows that her analysis takes shape where ethics and ontology meet (*ibidem*: 152).

“we need an understanding of embodiment as lived experience which moves beyond the privatised realm of ‘my body.’ Such an understanding of embodiment can be theorised in terms of *inter-embodiment*, whereby the lived experience of embodiment is always already *the social experience of dwelling with other bodies*” (*ibidem*: 47; emphasis in original).⁵⁵

Here Ahmed emphasizes the fact that, however relational (*inter-embodiment*), differentiation and asymmetry are involved. We cannot generalize about bodies on the basis of biological or cultural assumption, nor are bodies completely free-floating. In Ahmed’s terms: “*bodies are touched by some bodies differently from other bodies*” (*ibid.*: 48; emphasis in original). In sum, skin is not something that is or that we have; “*the skin becomes the locus for social differentiation*” (*ibid.*: 50; emphasis in original). Skin is the *effect* of an encounter in which past encounters are re-opened, *i.e.* in which histories of determination play a role. Having said this, in the introduction to Thinking Through the Skin Ahmed and Jackie Stacey (2001: 1) formulate a

“call for a skin-tight politics, a politics that takes as its orientation not the body as such, but the fleshy interface between bodies and worlds. ‘Thinking through the skin’ is a thinking that reflects, not on the body as the lost object of thought, but in inter-embodiment, on the mode of being-with and being-for, where one touches and is touched by others.”

This shows that epistemology and politics are entwined and reminds us of Ahmed’s contact writing as a relational and ethical mode of (academic) writing. Part of this is the renegotiation of past, present, and future (*cf.* Ahmed 2003: 236), and of constraint and indeterminacy:

“When are relationships and encounters, exchanges, dialogues, forms of co-presence and coexistence, about ‘community’ and when are they about family, the re-enactment of ‘tradition,’ remembrances, dreams, sites of momentary connections or disconnections, political mobilization, intimations of past lives and imagined futures?” (Ahmed and Fortier 2003: 257).

Ahmed’s take on community, as a consequence, acknowledges that fact that

“[c]ollectivities are formed through the *very work that we need to do* in order to get closer to others, without simply repeating the appropriation of ‘them’ as labour, or as a sign of difference. Collectivity then is intimately tied to the secrecy of the encounter: it is not about proximity or distance, but a getting closer which accepts the distance, and puts it to work” (*ibid.*: 180; emphasis in original. *Cf.* Ahmed 2004a).

Ahmed’s notion of ‘community’ is materialist in that she discusses the amount of *work* that is required in community building.

In her analysis at the level of the encounter the so-called intra-activity of Ahmed’s work comes to the fore: “the encounter itself is ontologically prior to the question of ontology (the question of the being who encounters)” (Ahmed 2000b: 7). One encounter does not consist of two originals meeting, *e.g.* text and reader, or two cultures in a (post-) colonial context. Similarly, she argues for “the priority of encounters over identity” (*ibidem*: 8). An encounter is in no way dialecticist. Ahmed calls such dialectics insufficient and focuses on

⁵⁵ Although this passage is central to Ahmed’s Strange Encounters, it is potentially dangerous. Ahmed suggests a ‘going beyond’ Adrienne Rich who is cited and thus made into a thinker of ‘my body’ *only*. Here we can find one of the dangers of the mother-daughter plot in feminist writings: daughter Ahmed is striving to be better than mother Rich, and exits from her, instead of reading her affirmatively.

“the very acts and gestures whereby subjects differentiate *between* others (for example, between familiar and strange others) that constitute the permeability of both social and bodily space” (*ibid.*: 15; emphasis in original) instead. An encounter is dialogical that is material-semiotic: “A concern with strange encounters involves a concern with the dialogical production of different bodies and texts” (Ahmed 2000b: 40). Ahmed thus works with a notion of the encounter that resembles Barad’s notion of the ‘phenomenon.’ These theoretical constructs do not work with two or more originals or with something pre-existing. In the encounter and in the phenomenon what is often thought of as ‘original’ *comes to matter* instead – for instance subject and object, but also gender and race.

Having discussed Ahmed’s project as a materialist project that (a) includes reflection on the material, discursive *and* psychic, (b) opposes every figurative speech or representationalism (to be found in among others in correspondence theories that underlie both a biologicistic and a culturalistic paradigm), (c) stresses the particular over the universal, and (d) is intra-active; I want to conclude by saying that it is not possible to read Ahmed’s work in one of Harding’s three feminist epistemic categories. I want to argue that Ahmed’s materialism is, in my terms, third-wave materialist. As of Differences that Matter her theoretical framework has not been representationalist:

“Speaking of the difference of feminism, as a difference that matters, undoes the critical trajectory whereby feminism either mirrors or distorts the face of postmodernism itself. [...] speaking to postmodernism as a feminist works to destabilise both terms, pointing to the differences that matter which are located within (and not just between) the terms” (Ahmed 1998: 15).

Discussing ‘differences that matter’ Ahmed, coming from post-colonial theory and self-identifying as a Black feminist, criticizes theoretical models that consider gender to be *the* difference. Gender is not *the* difference that matters, since internal to feminism itself, differences matter. This is congruent with her specificity that is neither universalist nor relativist in its take on ‘community.’ With ‘differences that matter’ Ahmed succeeds in bridging ‘modern’ or ‘realist’ activist feminism and ‘postmodern’ or ‘deconstructive’ (feminist) theory (*ibidem*: 23-25; *cf.* Ahmed 1996), while being clear about the opposition and hierarchy that is often read as existing between modernism and postmodernism (Ahmed 1998: 146). Ahmed’s epistemology is neither postmodern nor modern in the sense of naïvely realist. I want to label Ahmed’s work third-wave materialist because she bridges realist and postmodern philosophies. This non-opposition is bridged by a materialism that is non-foundationalist. Ahmed’s theoretical concepts are intra-active, which makes her ontology and epistemology *relational*. Her emphasis on the encounter discloses her relational that is not individualist epistemology. In her work subject, object, and the boundary or boundaries between them come to matter through contact or encounters in which histories of determination play an important role. The subject does not pre-existent nor is it a blank slate.

Histories of determination always play a role through signs that have been stuck to bodies. Ahmed's emphasis on specific *dynamic* materializations that *appear* as rigid relates to Barad's theorization of the naturalization of boundaries and can be read as non-foundationalist materialist epistemology. As such, her work exemplifies the third-wave materialist argument that there is no longer a need to distance oneself from the biological body because the biological body and the cultural body are considered to be foundationalist. Transcendence by the avoidance of matter is no longer at stake.

1.3.1.3 'one might see the body as the event of expression:' Colebrook

I will discuss the work of Colebrook as my third exemplification of third wave materialism. Deleuzian feminist theory has been under construction since the late 1980s. In 2000 Colebrook intervenes with the publication of Deleuze and Feminist Theory (Buchanan and Colebrook eds 2000). Here, Colebrook argues 'against' a representationalism that is said to reconfirm the (gendered) Cartesian split. In her argument she introduces a Deleuzian way of thinking through the body. Colebrook thinks through the body as a materialist and claims the body is 'immanent.' Colebrook wants feminism to move from the (masculinist) negation and (second-wave) celebration of matter to the negotiation of matter.⁵⁶

Since the late 1990s Colebrook has been publishing cartographies of (feminist) philosophy. After reviewing these cartographies, it became clear that Australian corporeal feminism is key in the work of Colebrook. She often reflects upon the work of Lloyd, Grosz, and Gatens. Her book titled Gender (Colebrook 2004a) provides an overview of 'gender theory' for students. This book is extraordinary. It incorporates theories and theorists that are only now in the process of becoming canonized in academic feminism (*e.g.* an Australian branch of feminist theory). Gender provides a cartography of gender theory and proposes a way of 'reading gender' that is neither traditionalist (in which case a (literary) text is read from the point of view of the historically 'correct' definition of gender) nor is it new historicist (in which case a contemporary definition of gender, *e.g.* gender as performance, is used for interpretation). Colebrook's 'gendered readings' focus on a text's *negotiation* of gender, and are, in that sense, *schematic* (*ibidem*: 31; *cf.* the Deleuzian approach in which "[t]exts are read in terms of how they work, rather than what they mean" (Colebrook 2000c: 2)). When Colebrook reads literary classics she does not assume a contemporary nor a traditional definition of gender. Rather, she concentrates on the way in which the specific 'gendered' narrative unfolds. Colebrook opposes 'normal' feminist textual readings that either are traditionally realist or resemble new historicism by presenting a gendered reading that is ultimate or 'original' (see below). Colebrook argues that feminist readings should provide a

⁵⁶ In my review I will leave aside Colebrook's not explicitly feminist work on, for instance, irony (see *e.g.* Colebrook 2000e) or everyday life (see *e.g.* Colebrook 2002b, 2003).

way to read a text. For instance, by using a liberal-feminist or postmodern tradition the reader is able to put a consequential definition of gender to work. Here a correspondence theory is assumed because the text is made to *mirror* a theory. In other words, it is assumed that texts perform a *determined* definition of gender, whereas gendered readings provide insight in the way in which “the very meaning of gender as a category could be challenged” (Colebrook 2004a: 243). It can be argued that ‘reading gender’ dismisses both a feminist realism and a feminist deconstructivism. For example, in the case of Colebrook’s reading of Shakespeare’s A Midsummer Night’s Dream both the traditionalist reading of gender as ‘natural hierarchies’ and the new historicist emphasis on gender as ‘performed power’ are rejected in favor of an analysis of Shakespeare’s *negotiations* of sexuality and gender through which the narrative unfolds (*ibidem*: 31-9). Key to Colebrook’s reading of Shakespeare is the concept of ‘verisimilitude,’ a well-known concept in the thinking about science and knowledge as a reference to a text’s estimation of truth. Colebrook contends, by including a play within the play itself, Shakespeare negotiates the relation between ‘appearance’ and ‘nature.’ In A Midsummer Night’s Dream Shakespeare “subverts the simple matter/ appearance or bodies/ culture opposition that underpins our modern understanding of gender” (*ibid.*: 36), and as such, his play unfolds by negotiating oppositional pairs and their connotations, and in the end focuses on verisimilitude again to be able to close down the narrative:

“Bodies themselves are natural with the capacity to be at odds with their form or gender. Gender is social and political, not because it is an imposed overlay, but because it is the fulfilled and proper form, the correct art, of the body whose potential it realises” (*ibid.*: 37).

Does Colebrook’s take on gender consist of knowing that it is neither realist nor deconstructivist? Gender is a textbook and it is not the best source for understanding Colebrook’s *immanent* take on gender. Due to the lack of self-positioning, a characteristic common in textbook writers, the book does not necessarily provide its readers with a ‘mapping’ of gender (a situated reading in which certain choices are made (and made explicit)). The structure of Colebrook’s narrative is linear and her readers are told that ‘empiricists’ (like Gatens and Grosz) (*ibid.*: 243) provide the best gender theory at hand.⁵⁷ What *does* Colebrook’s cartography of feminist philosophy look like? And why does she opt for a philosophy of immanence?

In ‘Feminist Philosophy and the Philosophy of Feminism: Irigaray and the History of Western Metaphysics’ Colebrook researches whether a truly *feminist* philosophy is possible in contradistinction from a feminist *critique* of philosophy. Critique begins with ‘the’ philosophical parameters and exists in the midst of several other critiques of feminist

⁵⁷ Another instance of Colebrook’s working towards an apotheosis can be mentioned. In the chapter on ‘Sexuality and Queer Theory’ the binary between ‘essentialism’ and ‘constructivism’ that was constructed/ presented as overstretched for pedagogical purposes (Colebrook 2004a: 12) seems all of a sudden to be taken as True (*ibidem*: 236).

philosophy. Colebrook argues that we can read the work of Luce Irigaray in a Heideggerian sense,

“her position is not exhausted by a demonstration of philosophy’s closure from within. There is [however] also an attempt to move from feminist *critique* to *feminist* philosophy. This would, presumably, begin to think beyond the terms of identity and representation. Whatever the feminine is, it could not be thought as that which thought sets before itself in a moment of self-determination and ideality” (Colebrook 1997: 90; emphasis in original).

Such a self-grounding Cartesianism is representationalist in that “[a] particular being is determined, set before thought, and then taken to determine *being in general*” (*ibidem*: 85; emphasis in original). Colebrook argues that Irigaray writes (herself) into (a) certain philosophical tradition(s), while she proposes a *feminist* philosophy, thus taking the risk of being essentialist:

“A *certain form of essentialism* would [...] be anathema to Irigaray’s position. The feminine could not be an ‘essence’ in the sense of a general and knowable identity that can be adequately represented. But feminist philosophy would be essentialist insofar as it posited an empirical feminine that nonfeminist philosophy *necessarily* excluded in its constitution as thought” (*ibid.*: 90; emphasis in original).

In the case of a feminist philosophy, representationalism has been left behind. Sexual difference as the condition of nonfeminist thought allows for representationalism. Whereas feminist philosophy could be defined as “the very possibility of, finally, doing philosophy otherwise” (*ibid.*: 91). In her 1997 publication, Colebrook holds that feminist philosophy has not been able to contain this possibility of *another* philosophy. So far feminists have only been able to critique ‘masculinist’ philosophy as being based on a feminine Other for they have been working within the representationalist paradigm (*ibid.*: 95). Colebrook even talks about ‘representational feminisms,’ and refers to Teresa de Lauretis’ ‘The Technology of Gender’ (1987) while claiming that these feminisms “privilege those forms of thought so effectively criticized by Irigaray in Speculum of the Other Woman” (*ibid.*: 97 n. 6). ‘Third-wave materialist’ structure is not constituted by an argument ‘*against* (feminist) representationalism.’ How does Colebrook set up her argument (post 1997), and how does she arrive at her immanent take?

Readers of ‘The Haunted Flesh: Corporeal Feminism and the Politics of (Dis)Embodiment’ do find themselves in a feminist (philosophical) context. In this article Bray and Colebrook’s issue with representation is set up in a non-dualist, non-dialecticist way. Even so, the article is still problematic due to the cartography it presents. Let me explain why this is so. Bray and Colebrook (1998: 35) begin their article by stating that there is an “ambivalence surrounding representation” in feminism. They explain this ‘ambivalence’ by analyzing how feminists discuss eating disorders/ anorexia:

“the anorexic is the victim of representation, trapped in embodiment through stereotypical and alienating images – but at the same time [it is argued that] only representation can cure this malaise; only a realistic, nonrepressive and less regulative form of representation will allow women to see themselves as autonomous subjects” (*ibidem*).

Bray and Colebrook argue that “this tension surrounding representation actually sustains the Cartesian mind/ body dualism that it ostensibly criticizes” (*ibid.*). They propose a Deleuzian take on eating disorders:

“If the body is not a prediscursive matter that is then organized by representation, one might see the body as the event of expression. This would mean that ethics could not appeal to a ‘normal’ body that might be authentically represented. [...] Deleuze provides a way of thinking beyond the highly Cartesian problem of the relation between a body and some imposed order of representation; and Deleuze also provides feminist ethics with a position that need not be located at some limit point beyond patriarchal or phallogocentric thought” (*ibid.*: 36).

Deleuze is employed to escape a situation that asserts that the biological body or its representation is primary. In this framework matter and discourse are assumed to be each other’s opposites. The perspective designed in ‘The Haunted Flesh’ does not counter patriarchal representations nor does it plead for feminist ones, since these two options are both representationalist and gendered according to the Cartesian split.

Bray and Colebrook’s argument is enfolded in four steps. Firstly, Bray and Colebrook argue that both patriarchal logic and anti-patriarchal appeals to ‘the Body’ are Cartesian. Both options begin from opposing angles (mind or matter respectively) and hold the Cartesian split firmly in place. Secondly, they argue that “to locate the feminine (body) as some limit point beyond representation precludes an examination of the *specific, practical, and historical* techniques that regulate bodies” (*ibid.*: 37; emphasis added). This argument resembles Ahmed’s ‘histories of determination;’ as such, the feminist stress on the body. The exclusion of the mind could have been countered by stressing Ahmed’s ‘sticky signs’ instead. Bray and Colebrook however solve the problem of the dialecticism by arguing that, thirdly, “there is no mind/body relation in general that need characterize Western thought, but there is a series of practices and regimes in which bodies become” (*ibid.*). Fourthly, Bray and Colebrook claim that

“an ethics that examines thought, discourse, and reason as themselves bodily events allows an understanding of eating disorders in terms of bodily activity rather than in terms of a repressed or negated ‘normal’ body” (*ibid.*).

Bray and Colebrook’s argument seeks to overcome the situation in which feminists, in their accounts of eating disorders, actually *repeat* what sexual difference theorists accuse Western phallogocentrism of. What they propose is neither affirming Western phallogocentrism nor negating the feminine under the heading of feminism.

‘Corporeal feminism’ is discarded by Bray and Colebrook when they unfold their specific take on eating disorders. Corporeal feminism is said to have been developed following Irigaray’s Speculum and to consist of a cartography “including Butler, Grosz, Braidotti, and Gatens” (*ibid.*: 38) and is argued to be anti-Cartesian (*ibid.*). Consequently the authors argue that

“[a]s long as corporeality, materiality, and authentic sexual difference are understood as radically anterior to thought, or negated by representation, feminist critique will only be a reaction against dualism. [...] we suggest that feminism rethink its antirepresentationalism” (*ibid.*).

In other words, according to Bray and Colebrook the aforementioned feminists have fallen into a dialecticist trap from the *anti*-Cartesian side. This is a mistake that, in fact, *equals* the mistake of the ‘representational feminisms’ of the second wave. Bray and Colebrook also argue against feminists who have taken the discursive road to counter Cartesian dualism: Butler’s performativity,⁵⁸ and de Lauretis’s gender as always already a representation (*ibid.*: 42). It is argued that due to the dualist or dialecticist argumentative structure, all tendencies mentioned so far are reactive (*ibid.*: 55): “as long as representation is seen as a negation of corporeality, dualism can only ever be complicated and never overcome” (*ibid.*: 45). Bray and Colebrook seek to counter both tendencies: a pre-discursive body leading to biological determinism (*ibid.*: 42) and the body as a representational effect involving an idealism (*ibid.*: 42-3). They want to overcome what they consider to be an ‘impasse’ in feminism (*ibid.*: 43) by stressing that “existence itself is a field of singularities: differing relations and effects” (*ibid.*: 40). What Bray and Colebrook propose, then, is “to think the body beyond the problem of representation” (*ibid.*), because *there is no* original body:

“On the contrary, images, representations, and significations (as well as bodies) are aspects of ongoing practices of negotiation, reformation, and encounter. Neither the body nor the feminine can be located as the innocent other of (patriarchal) representation” (*ibid.*: 38-9).

The materialism Bray and Colebrook allude to does not consist of a ‘return’ to ‘pure’ matter, which is said to be the sexual difference take. They suggest powerfully:

“a theory of sexual difference that relies on constitutive negation may be best overcome not by turning to the body or attacking representation but *by questioning the primacy of the representation/ materiality dichotomy*. For it is this dichotomy that organizes many theories of sexual difference and leads to the uncritical celebration of the body as an inherently liberatory site” (*ibid.*: 56; emphasis added).

In other words, originalities and causalities do not exist, therefore, we should not start from either the material or the discursive end of the stick; but we should consider the stick itself. This closely resembles Barad’s argument against both the mirror of nature and the mirror of culture by researching the mirror. It also resembles Ahmed’s argument against both realism and postmodernism in favor of materialism. What Bray and Colebrook bring to the fore, then, is a *univocal* (Deleuze’s term; *cf.* Chap. 3) theory (*ibid.*): a staging of the study at the level of the *encounter* in which “there are no anorexics, only activities of dietetics, measuring, regulation, and calculation” (*ibid.*: 62) This theoretical and methodological standpoint is

⁵⁸ Bray and Colebrook (1998: 42) contend to value Butler, but argue at the same time that she too “sustains an opposition between discourse and some ‘outside.’” In other words,

“[t]his opposition between representation and exteriority is enabled by seeing discourse as language and signification (or representation) that always refers to some nondiscursive exterior” (*ibidem*).

In yet again other words, there is a correspondence theory of truth underlying Butler’s work.

developed in ‘Postmodernism is a Humanism: Deleuze and Equivocity,’ and privileges a level of analysis that resembles Ahmed’s encounter and Barad’s phenomenon.

In ‘Postmodernism is a Humanism’ Colebrook discusses the use of Deleuze’s univocity in the light of overcoming the representation/ matter dichotomy. This is done by discussing feminism’s relation to postmodernism and ‘biology’ as well as (the popularity of) gender theory. Colebrook (2004b: 283; emphasis in original) argues that since gender is ingrained as a part of common sense the assumption that “genders are social kinds or categories” is being made “*without* asking about the nature of those kinds.” Colebrook claims that it is possible to step out of the representationalist framework of social constructivism by thinking in terms of the emergence of relations:

“rather than seeing signifiers as imposed on life [like gender theorists do], we should ask *what life is* such that it yields signification. [...] One can only have signifiers – a system of ordered relations – if there is already a potential *in life* for the perceived to refer beyond itself” (*ibidem*: 286; emphasis in original).

As a social constructivism, postmodernism stays within an equivocal ontology. The idea is that there is “a system of signification that is radically detached from the real or that produces and constitutes the real” (*ibid.*: 288); in other words, the assumption is made that “two radically incommensurable levels” (*ibid.*) exist. Postmodern gender theory does the same. So far, gender theory has not overcome the matter/ representation dichotomy, and Colebrook is clear about the consequences:

“Univocity is [...] responsible and responsive thinking: not accepting the world as signified, as mediated through signs, but interrogating the emergence of signs. Equivocity, by contrast, is banality, not thinking through the events within which we are immersed; equivocity reads art as representation, selves as constructs and genders as mediated kinds. Equivocity accepts two levels – signifier and signified, sign and world, representation and the real – without asking the genesis of this difference” (*ibid.*: 291).

Equivocal ontology is a Cartesianism. Univocity analyses art at the level of the encounter/ the phenomenon, in “the expression of relations” (*ibid.*).

It is in the context of univocity/ equivocity that Colebrook (re)formulates her extensive critique of Butler. She argues that postmodernism’s logic is equivocal and she asserts that the work of Butler “represents *the epitome of equivocal logics*” (*ibid.*: 293; emphasis added). Colebrook argues that although Butler rejects “the idea of a system of signs imposed on an otherwise neutral and inaccessible sex” (*ibid.*) she posits two substances (the (heterosexual) norm and that which is ordered). Therefore her ontology is equivocal. Colebrook shows that “Butler’s Bodies that Matter (1993) recognizes that matter is only thinkable *as matter*, and hence as already discursive, [it is] effected as discourse’s other” (*ibid.*; emphasis in original). For Butler everything is always already signifier – the body is always already corporeal and matter is always already material (Colebrook 2000b: 80). Difference in univocal logic is *difference*. Whereas, in the context of an equivocal logic: difference is a representationalist difference *of* and there is an origin (the signifier) and a

causal relation (see also Colebrook 2002a: 94-7, Colebrook 2000c: 8). Colebrook furthers this argument by claiming that an equivocal logic, epitomized in the work of Butler, is a humanism (*cf.* Colebrook 2004b: 284). It differentiates between mind and matter and it sees the mind as a grounding instance that makes it a subjectivism (*ibidem*: 295) and a reactive humanism (*ibidem*: 298-9).

A similar argument is made in ‘From Radical Representation to Corporeal Becomings: The Feminist Philosophy of Lloyd, Grosz and Gatens’ (Colebrook 2000b) and ‘Questioning Representation’ (Colebrook 2000d). Here Colebrook reviews the classical feminist positionings arguing that thinking equality and thinking difference are only *seeming* opposites:

“In the third wave, both these arguments are attacked for having an unproblematic appeal to the pre-representational body. Women are neither the same nor essentially different; to decide such an argument one would have to appeal to a body from which social representation derives or upon which representation is imposed. But if we were to argue that the very notion of the pre-representational body is effected through representation, we would have to move beyond discussions of women’s essential sameness or difference” (Colebrook 2000b: 76-7).

Gender theory or linguistic, Butlerian approaches question the possibility of an immediately given, pre-representational ground (*ibidem*) in a way that is unfavorable. Colebrook says that when Butler critiques the sex/gender distinction she enforces the matter/ representation dichotomy (*ibid.*: 78). An approach that is considered more favorable questions the split between matter/ the body/ the real and representation/ discourse/ signification itself (*ibid.*: 76-7, 83-4)⁵⁹ and turns to immanence:

“Here, it is not that there is a ground, identity, being, or substance which *then* becomes determined and differentiated through the ascription of certain attributes. On the contrary, being itself is a modality and dynamism of attribution. [...] sexual difference is *neither* an arbitrary overlay *nor* a self-identical essence. There is not a biological sex that takes on the attributes of cultural gender; sexed embodiment is nothing other than its becoming. We might then put forward different modes of becoming” (*ibid.*: 87; emphasis in original).

This is where the representation/ materialism dichotomy itself is scrutinized, and, eventually, overcome.

In ‘How Can we tell the Dancer from the Dance?: The Subject of Dance and the Subject of Philosophy’ Colebrook uses Deleuze’s criticism of ‘praxis’ to formulate a univocal *methodology*. It is put forward that human dancing does not resemble the dancing bee, whose dance has a (nutritive) end (Colebrook 2005a: 7). Nor can human dancing serve as some unique metaphor/ exemplification of that which is an end in itself since “that which is effected or created in dance is nothing other than the effecting body expressed in its effecting power” (*ibidem*: 11; emphasis in original). Dance would be, then, instead of an expression of..., a potentiality that is outlived during the dance, and, as such, dancing *redefines* (*ibid.*: 12) life.

⁵⁹ The split is also labeled ‘the presence/representational paradigm’ (Colebrook 2000d: 54) and ‘the in-itself/representation divide’ (*ibidem*: 57-8).

Colebrook asserts that dance could be deployed to fully move beyond Cartesianism in such a way that

“it would be act itself, fully realizing itself, no longer haunted by a potential that may or may not come into being. There would be no ground of life that subtended the dance; life itself would be dance – an acting or doing that creates itself through style and variation: not the variation *of* a body, but body as nothing more than variation” (*ibid.*: 9; emphasis in original).

In this sense, dance is a “praxis that is not on its way to realisation but is fully real in all of its moments” (*ibid.*). Colebrook argues that such a reformulated ‘praxis’ is never reactive but entirely liberating since there is acting, instead of the priority of one action. This kind of prioritizing, ‘man’/ subjectivism is “produced through action but who then appears as a ground that ought to govern action” (*ibid.*). What is such a praxis like, in the end?

“The art of dance, then, is inhuman: not because it overcomes a ‘man’ mired in normativity and physical ends, but because there is *movement as such* that is released in always singular bodies though never reducible to those bodies [...]” (*ibid.*: 13).⁶⁰

A redefined ‘praxis’ is part of what could be called a philosophy of immanence, a radical empiricism, or a transcendental empiricism (*cf.* Colebrook 2002a: 69-89): “it asserts that there is nothing beyond the given – no law or real that pre-exists and governs becoming” (Colebrook 2000c: 9). Philosophy is neither “a question of fidelity to some pre-philosophical truth” nor “located within the point of view of an interested subject” (*ibidem*; *cf.* Colebrook 2005b), because both rely on “an intending subject” (*ibid.*), and are, as such, foundationalist/epistemologically individualist. For the formulation of a feminist philosophy this would mean “thinking feminism’s relation to philosophy positively: not just as the exposure of male bias or interests within an otherwise good reason, but as the attempt to assess the force of concepts and to create new concepts” (*ibid.*). Does this suggest that “feminism finally finds itself when it becomes Deleuzian”? (*ibid.*: 10). In other words, is Colebrook’s narrative a progressive, and even Oedipal one? When we look at ‘The Haunted Flesh’ the answer to this question would be positive because this article is an Oedipal staging of the relation between different generations of feminists. The authors add up/ conflate sexual difference and popular post-feminisms (*e.g.* Naomi Wolf’s *Beauty Myth* ([1990] 1991)), and stage their own Deleuzian feminist reading as standing *in a dialecticist relation* with the surprising joint of sexual difference theory and popular 1990s post- or power-feminism. This dialecticist suggestion on one hand leads to a teleological narrative that prevents the authors from practicing what they preach, and on the other hand presents Bray and Colebrook as the dutiful daughters of, mainly, Deleuze (and Guattari). ‘The Haunted Flesh’ stands alone in its severe attack on feminist philosophers such as Braidotti and Grosz. Ironically, the philosophy of immanence that Colebrook suggests throughout her subsequent work *criticizes* narratives of dutiful daughterhood (*cf.* Colebrook 2000c: 10-1). Throughout her subsequent writings Colebrook

⁶⁰ Note that this resembles the move beyond what I have called ‘epistemological individualism.’

gives voice to the necessity of researching whether a Deleuzian philosophy of immanence can be made to work for/ in feminism (*ibidem*: 12). In other words, as a feminist, Colebrook is interested in an *encounter* with Deleuze (*cf. ibid.*: 10). In chapter 2 I will label such approaches ‘an-Oedipal’ and will introduce ‘an-Oedipality’ as an attempt to counter both patriarchal structures and (unintended) feminist affirmations thereof. I previewed this debate in the Introduction to the dissertation when I claimed that Harding’s three, dialectically relating epistemic categories affirm women’s circulation through the hands of academic men. What would an encounter of feminists with academic men (marginal figures like Deleuze) look like?

Colebrook argues that traditionally feminist strategies such as identity politics are as representationalist as masculinist Cartesianism. This kind of representationalism is not overcome by the feminist demand of ‘more authentic’ representations (*cf. Bray and Colebrook 1998*):

“On the one hand, for both identity politics and communitarians, representation is deemed to be the fulfilment of identity. [On the other hand], identity politics demands that one’s identity not be an external or reified representation, but that one represent oneself” (Colebrook 2005b: 12-3).

In Philosophy and Post-Structuralist Theory: From Kant to Deleuze Colebrook refers to Mohanty who, in ‘Under Western Eyes,’ is said to have come up with the solution:

“[Mohanty] does not grant women an essential identity, but does insist that women cannot be reduced to some imposed representation of ‘Woman’. Rather than appeal to women’s identity these forms of contemporary feminism demand that the process of representation be intensified and that the singularity of a stereotype be resisted by the proliferation of representations” (*ibidem*: 13).

Colebrook’s affirmative reading of Mohanty alludes to Mohanty’s supposed take on representations that is *immanent*: it is neither an essentialism (relying on Woman) which could have as a result (a) authentic representation(s) nor a postmodernism in the sense of a non-foundationalism that is a relativism. The latter can also result in a proliferation of representations, but this is not necessarily a process that is *intense*. In this reading Mohanty’s take on representations is in accordance with Colebrook’s own immanent philosophy. Mohanty does not subscribe to a celebration of matter from a (biologically) determinist perspective, thus granting women an essential identity, nor does she work from a strictly discursive angle from which there is a (correct) representation of Woman. Both strategies are argued to be forms of identity politics that rely on a material *or* discursive essence. Colebrook reads a bridge between the material and the discursive in Mohanty’s *early* work. She says Mohanty’s take on representation is intense, and engenders a proliferation of singular representations. This is a processual take concerned with the split between matter and representation, the real and discourse.

In Philosophy and Post-Structuralist Theory Colebrook (2005b: 229; emphasis in original) makes clear that a philosophy of immanence can (be made to) solve the many

problems of representation, identity politics, modernity. Immanence is “where the event of the given is nothing other than itself, and not the givenness *of* some presence.” An immanent take on representation would then mean the following:

“To take what is as a representation is to recognise thought’s contribution to the world: the world is never given in itself, but *as given* is always given in a certain way or according to a logic. To place this logic within the subject is the error of anthropologism: taking a particular being or a part of the world as the ground for the world in general. To place this logic beyond subjectivity is the error of anthropomorphism: forgetting the ways in which our world is determined as ‘our’ world” (*ibidem*: 248).

For a philosophy to be a philosophy of immanence it should

“be freed from point of view, freed from an image of thought, freed from recognition, logic and the question of ‘Who speaks?’. Thought would be the affirmation of an event or movement, not a represented or representing being but an effective force” (*ibid.*: 228).

For thinking to be immanent it should be “grounded on neither a subject (idealism) nor an object (realism). Empiricism carries the difference of the given beyond any ground” (*ibid.*: 241). Ultimately, Colebrook’s philosophy of immanence is a univocity: a focusing on the event and taking into consideration the fact that events are both material and discursive.

In conclusion I want to reflect upon the question that arises in the case of Colebrook’s ‘feminism finally finds itself when it becomes Deleuzean.’ In the preceding paragraph I answered this question by saying that Colebrook is interested in an encounter of feminism/ (a) feminist(s) with Deleuze. Colebrook’s reading of Mohanty’s ‘Under Western Eyes’ has made clear that confronting studies that seem to be situated at one definite side of the matter/ representation divide can be *made to work* in such a way that the study *scrutinizes* that divide. This encounter between Mohanty – who seems to be discussing *discourses* of academic feminism – and Deleuze – taking texts to be schematic – has been one of Colebrook’s important contributions to contemporary feminism. Colebrook’s work is third-wave materialist, in that it discusses the matter/ representation divide and reconsiders identity politics. Her immanence is not a particularism that is the dialecticist opposite of universalism, but a singularity. Radically immanent philosophies and/ or transcendental empiricism do not subscribe to a celebration of matter from a (biologically) determinist perspective thus granting women an essential identity nor do they work from a strictly discursive angle from which there is another equally ‘correct’ representation. *Both* strategies are argued to be forms of identity politics relying on a discursive essence which is overcome in immanent philosophies. Colebrook’s contribution to the debate consists of a zooming in on the negotiation rather than empiricist or postmodern representation of matter. Her immanent strategy precisely allows for the non-exhaustive dichotomy between (feminist) empiricism and (feminist) postmodernism to be overcome, *i.e.* for a third wave materialism.

1.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I have introduced new materialism as a transversal connector that connects Harding's feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint theory, and feminist postmodernism. I have shown that these categories have never existed as clear-cut realms (either/ or). Even so, that has been, and continues to be, their effect and function in feminist epistemology and in the field of women's studies at large. New materialism has been presented in a discussion of epistemological debates in feminist academic journals and the recent work of Barad, Ahmed and Colebrook. Their work has been differentiated from other trends in contemporary feminist theory that return to feminist empiricism by reinstating purified feminist epistemic categories. New feminist materialism *negotiates* these categories and introduces a transformative 'third-wave' feminist epistemology in which materialism is re-positioned. I have argued that on the basis of the re-appraisal of realism (Barad), the Body (Ahmed), and representation (Colebrook), a new materialism is created that challenges standard taxonomical readings of Harding's second-wave feminist epistemic categories. It also challenges the construction of a new feminist epistemic category on the basis of an amalgamation of two successive 'original' categories. In this chapter I have discussed the 'update' of Harding's classification of feminist epistemology and the form of the cartography in which 'epistemic chasms' are bridged. I have argued that new materialism is neither a feminist neo-empiricism nor an uncritical continuation of either feminist standpoint theory or feminist postmodernism. It *negotiates* these epistemic categories on the basis of its emphasis on matter and materiality. I have presented the cartography as *continuous* with Harding's updated work. The trans-generational continuity produces a non-dialecticist *an-Oedipal* reading of developments in feminist philosophy. 'An-Oedipal' here signifies the fact that the scholars whose work I have labeled 'third-wave materialist' focus on a *feminist* archive or on *marginal* male scholars for the construction of their new feminist epistemic stance. They do not reaffirm a certain mainstream materialist paternal discourse or reconfirm patriarchy by Oedipalized relations with Masters or fellow feminists. An-Oedipality (this is Deleuze and Guattari's term; see Chap. 2) and non-dialecticism mutually reinforce one another since dialecticist relations between women (resulting in competing feminist epistemic categories for instance) are an effect of Oedipality. Breaking through the dialecticism allows for qualitatively shifting Oedipality (and vice versa). In the work of the scholars that I have labeled 'third-wave materialist,' *negotiating* the feminist epistemic heritage existing of competing schools of thought, the relation between the schools and between generations of feminists *and* the common reliance of feminists on (new) male Masters is repositioned.

By renaming new materialism *third wave materialism* I want to stress that new materialism is a positioning that is neither second-wave feminist nor post-feminist. Third-

wave feminists do not (fully) identify with second-wave feminism, nor do they reconfirm a post-feminist rhetoric. Authors such as Barad, Ahmed, and Colebrook are part of a new generation of feminist theorists who are interested in creating transversal cross-generational, cross-disciplinary, and geo-politically complex connections. Their work shows a clear interest in bodies and body politics *without* traces of either essentialism or relativism. Their work is informed by non-foundationalist non-relativism on the basis of a non-reductive conceptualization of matter. They adhere to neither an essential Body nor to something as idealist as Reason, but stand on the threshold of matter and materiality. Likewise, the totalizing tendencies of an insufficiently radical feminist postmodernism are overcome. Third-wave materialist positioning is neither historical-materialist nor does it critique historical materialism for being gender blind and/ or inserting gender into a largely unchanged historical-materialist, rationalist, secularist frame. In my reading, new feminist materialist scholars negotiate a traditionally realist 'vs.' a social-constructivist approach to matter. They criticize the 'vs.' by showing similarities and allowing for the approaches to be bridged. This bridging is done on the threshold.

Third wave materialism bridges chasms in the field of feminist theory that exist between generations of academic feminists, between disciplines, and between geo-political locations. As such, third wave materialism argues against a feminist neo-empiricism and new (feminist) theoretical trends that are *antithetical* to (feminist) postmodernism. I have considered in this chapter these feminist tendencies as unwelcome elaborations of the decline of postmodernism. Third wave materialism is presented as a transversal connector that makes possible alliances across time and generations of academic feminists, through space and across disciplines. In sum, two commitments underlie third wave materialism: a commitment to show that fields, as different as, Deleuzian feminism, post-colonial feminist theory, and feminist science studies subscribe to a materialism that is a *new* materialism. Third wave materialism is committed to transversal dialogues and to continuity. A commitment to theorizing generational continuity (new materialism is a renewed feminist standpoint theory) underlies third wave materialism. Starting from these commitments new materialists secure *another* epistemological positioning. Because of this qualitative shift in feminist epistemology I read new feminist materialism as committed to the critical and creative re-assessment of feminism's dominant reliance on social constructivist gender theories and methodologies. The repositioning of postmodernism as non-relativistic does not instigate a return to a totalizing stance. By implication this means that contemporary feminist theory involves neither a nostalgic return to the past nor a politically regressive move, but rather a creative step forward in the feminist struggle to account for complexity while empowering alternative subject positions. With the qualitative shifting of terms described in this chapter, feminist

epistemology finds itself able to account for the complexities and paradoxes of the current times.

I have discussed the following characteristics of third wave materialism:

(1) In its opposition to foundationalist Reason, third wave materialism is neither essentialist (relying on a female Body) nor non-foundationalist. The common opposition between a feminist essentialism and a feminist non-foundationalism is considered to be false. The use of ‘matter’ and ‘materiality,’ especially ‘body’ or ‘bodies,’ by third-wave materialists allows for a bridge between essentialism (generally regarded *another* foundationalism) and non-foundationalism (generally regarded a relativism, see feminist neo-empiricist arguments);

(2) Researching ‘matter’ and ‘materiality,’ third wave materialism does not propose a community-approach to epistemology (*cf.* Code 1993); in spite of the fact that the knowing subject is plural (knowing subjects) an empiricist stance is taken on. Neither does it ensure a plurality *within* the knowing subject (singular) by theorizing the knowing subject as fractured (feminist postmodernism in the formulation of Harding and beyond). In its adherence to neither (feminist) empiricism nor a (feminist) postmodernism, the knowing subject in third wave materialism advances an intra-active epistemology. The relationality involved allows for thoroughly theorizing and developing feminist standpoint theory’s claim that subject(s) and object(s) of feminist research are oscillatory in nature (this term comes from Anni Dugdale (1999) and will be explained in chapter 4). The *humanism* of the subject of (feminist) empiricism, (feminist) standpoint theory, and (feminist) postmodernism is countered by a post-humanist intra-active take on ‘subject’ and ‘object’ (and ‘instrument’) of research;

(3) Third wave materialism advances a definition of ‘practice.’ An example is scholarly practice that opts out both a separatist feminist view and ‘merely’ feminist appropriations of Master theories (*i.e.* subsumption as the dialectical opposite of separatism). Negotiating matter and materiality is a practice of (sexual) difference that is neither historical-materialist nor post-materialist (it is third-wave materialist). Third wave materialism addressed *both* textuality and corporeality, *both* discursivity and materiality. To borrow from A Thousand Plateaus: third-wave materialist practice is “[...] neither a correspondence nor a cause-effect relation nor a signified-signifier relation” (Deleuze and Guattari [1980] 1987b: 502). The material-discursive or the material-semiotic is prioritized;

(4) The generationality of third wave materialism is equally transversal. The practice of sexual difference brought forth is neither second-wave standpoint feminist nor post-feminist (it is third-wave feminist). The post-feminist gesture of arguing against feminisms of the

second wave makes out, as I will argue in chapter 2, only a first stage in the construction of a feminism that qualitatively shifts or *re-positions* the terms of second-wave feminism (it is the first stage of the process of dis-identification).⁶¹

In the next chapter I will situate third wave materialism in the context of the following feminist materialisms: feminist standpoint theory and its postmodernization, 'French feminism,' and (Australian) bodily materialism. Later, chapter 3 takes the features of third wave materialism and its 'problems' to design third-wave feminist materialism as a full-fledged feminist epistemic category. Here I will position the first three chapters of this dissertation in greater detail. In the current chapter I have shown how a new generation of feminist epistemologists evaluates and *bridges* the categories of feminist empiricism/ realism and feminist postmodernism/ social constructivism (what these categories have become in the feminist academic canon). This 'bridging' is done by laying bare the fact that the two mentioned positions should not be conceptualized as opposites, but as the opposite sides *of one and the same coin*. I have identified this bridging as the construction of a third-wave feminist materialism. The *materialism*, then, was argued to qualitatively change the materialism of feminist standpoint theory. The next chapter is the first of two sequential chapters that make an attempt to build a full-fledged epistemic category out of third wave materialism. In these chapters new materialist epistemology is no longer an epistemic *tendency*; instead, new materialism will be *furthered*. As of the chapter 2, I no longer provide a cartography on the level of (what is happening in) feminist theory/ scholarship today. From now on I will be working on cartographies of the *features* or *problems* new materialist theorists meditate on. Consequently, the cartography contains (1) 'mainstream' philosophers, who have sometimes been taken up and sometimes argued against by (2) the first generation of academic feminists (second-wave feminists, in particular feminist standpoint theorists) whose work is taken into consideration by (3) third wavers. The cartographies of chapter 2 and 3 take into account the relations between mentioned theorists – mainstream, second-wave feminist, and third-wave feminist theorists – without constituting a narrative of beginning and end that confirms a causal linearity. Its agenda is to free feminism from the teleological, Oedipal structures of theorizing second wavers as the dutiful daughters of mainstream theorists and third wavers as the undutiful, post-feminist daughters of their feminist foremothers. It has to be noted that the an-Oedipalism proposed is meant to be *productive* or *generative*: it does not stop at being dismissive of Oedipal structures. What is produced resembles the lesbian continuum of Adrienne Rich ([1981] 1993): it produces continuity between women of different generations working within different disciplines and on different

⁶¹ For dis-identification, see Introduction.

continents. I thus argue against chasms patriarchally dividing up women (*cf.* de Lauretis 1993), whether generationally, nationally or through a fetishization of scholarly disciplines and disciplinarity in general. As such, the next chapter features a discussion of generationality, disciplinarity and nationality/ continentality.

“[T]he situation is not something that is fixed. It is itself in flux and therefore situated knowledges are knowledges which are not built from some fixed standpoint but are integrated into the processes which are structuring and restructuring the world.”
David Harvey¹

CHAPTER TWO

How Third Wave Materialism Re-positions Second-Wave Feminist Materialist Epistemology

2.1 Introduction

In ‘The Decentering of Second Wave Feminism and the Rise of the Third Wave’ Susan Archer Mann and Douglas J. Huffman discuss several forms of US third wave feminism in the context of a special journal issue on ‘Marxist-Feminist Thought Today’ (see Gimenez and Vogel 2005). Mann and Huffman (2005: 78) argue that the third feminist wave has made an epistemological difference “by exposing the integral relations between discourses, knowledge and power.” Their argument employs ‘mainstream’ Marxism as a yardstick for evaluating theoretical tendencies in feminist theory. In this context, the options for thinking through the relationship between discourse, knowledge, and power, and third wave feminism are limited. What can be thought entails either non-materialism (thus idealism) or traditional materialism (the staging of a relationship between discourses and knowledge on the one hand and power on the other as a causal relationship in which base defines superstructure, or, in other words, epistemology/ theory *mirrors* practice) due to the *a priori* selection of a (malestream) yardstick. Idealist versions of what Mann and Huffman label third wave feminism are characterized by playing down the importance of empirical analyses (*ibidem*: 78). The authors counterpoise these non-materialisms by a *materialist* third wave feminism characterized by a mode of analysis in which a bottom-up structure (both the empirical as *causing* the theoretical and the theoretical as *mirroring* the empirical) is employed (*ibid.*: 79).

Although Mann and Huffman’s evaluation resembles mine, in that they locate the strongest version of *idealist* third wave feminism in what they call ‘postmodern and poststructuralist feminisms’ such as Butler’s (*ibid.*: 63), and the strongest materialist tendency

¹ In: Prins 1997: 106.

in feminist postcolonial theory, their *analysis* does not resemble mine. In my analysis, postcolonial feminist theory is *but one instance* of a new materialism. Furthermore, I do not perpetuate a bottom-up model. These differences are, I want to argue, caused by Mann and Huffman's yardstick: Mann and Huffman conduct their analysis using a 'mainstream' Marxist lens (namely Marxism as Critical Theory (*ibid.*: 75)). This strategy uses a *second-wave* model of Traditional Marxism, and it does not allow for the theorization of the bi-implication between theory and practice. Bi-implication is a theoretical mode that I have discerned in the work of new materialists and that I have started to work on in chapter 1 of this dissertation. Mann and Huffman are scholars who remain loyal/ dutiful to traditional Marxism. They identify third-wave feminist materialism in the analyses of younger feminists who *resemble/mirror* traditional Marxism.² Consequently, *their* third-wave materialist feminism does not entail a qualitative shift in feminist epistemology. With their yardstick, they foreclose a distinct third-wave feminist epistemic space. Their definition of 'third wave' can also be found amongst second-wave feminist theorists (*i.e.* feminist standpoint epistemologists). In sum, although the article opens up a space for a *continuous* reading of feminist theoretical/ epistemological developments (which is in accordance with my proposal for the theorization of transversal and cross-generational continuities) the theoretical trajectory that is suggested by Mann and Huffman is a patriarchal or Oedipal one with Marx as the Master.

In chapter 1 I have proposed an an-Oedipal continuity in which (generations of) women do not need the approval of mainstream Marxist materialism for their theories. In this chapter I will further the argument and analyze the feminist materialist *archive*. I claim that third wave materialism is continuous with this archive. This continuity should be read as part of third-wave feminist *disidentification* (see Introduction) with second-wave feminist theory. This is to say, on top of continuity *change* should be located. Continuity structures the first phase of disidentification and change the second. Allow me to cite another example of existing scholarship on feminist epistemology and the third feminist wave. With this example, I intend to shed light on the essentialism inherent to a sociological take on generations as age groups. This conceptualization suggests that one is born a babyboomer (*'i.e.'* a member of the second wave) or Generation X (*'i.e.'* third wave). My take on generationality circumvents such essentialisms from being effected.

'The Decentering of Second Wave Feminism' makes clear that debunking second-wave approaches, on the basis of a naïveté, in order for a third-wave strategy to be created does not necessarily lead to a qualitative shift or to an innovative non-patriarchal and an-Oedipal reading of third-wave feminist theory (and practice). Likewise, Kimberly Springer's 'Third Wave Black Feminism?' employs the opposite approach (celebrating rather than

² See the actual usage of the term 'mirroring' throughout the article, and Harding's work on feminist epistemologies and their 'paternal discourses' (Harding 1991).

debunking the second wave). In ‘Third Wave Black Feminism?’ Springer illustrates wave theory’s inherent racism. Her solution to theoretical racism involves a sensitivity towards third-wave strategies enabled by a *redefined* ‘third wave’ or *reconceptualized* ‘wave theory’ (cf. Radford-Hill 2002: 1083). Springer (2002: 1059, 1061-4) analyzes the exclusion of US Black women in feminist activism. According to Springer, the terms ‘first,’ ‘second,’ and ‘third’ have effectively erased black women. Springer differentiates between the way in which young white feminists and young Black feminists from the US respond to their feminist ‘foremothers:’

“As young white feminists are seeking to step outside of what they consider rigid lifestyle instructions of their feminist foremothers (*e.g.* stylistic and political), young Black women are attempting to stretch beyond the awe-inspiring legendary work of women like Fannie Lou Hamer, Coretta Scott King, Ruby Doris Smith Robinson, Barbara Smith, bell hooks, and Angela Davis” (*ibidem*: 1068).

It is argued that young white feminists in the US propose a feminism that is designed to be the antithesis of their foremother’s feminism (*i.e.* second-wave feminism is essentialized), whereas young Black feminists are argued to “[recognize] the significance of history in giving current struggles meaning” (*ibid.*). This is not to say that young Black feminists fully embrace the utopia of the lesbian continuum of Rich – because they simultaneously seek to “disrupt the notion [of] a unified Black sisterhood” (*ibid.*: 1073) by explaining how racism and sexism have been internalized by Black women, and consequently divide the movement (*ibid.*: 1072-3). Springer exemplifies the stress third-wave Black feminists lay on realism (see Henry 2004: 148-80), while at the same time deconstructing sisterhood. By doing so, Springer’s third-wave Black feminists exemplify my third wave materialism (they are not affirming the chasm between realist and postmodern approaches), but do not exemplify my take on generationality. Springer reads generationality as difference/ rupture that can be suppressed.³ She does allow for a reading of continuity between women and this makes her analysis different from Mann and Huffman’s. However, allowing for ruptures to be *inherent* to generationality instead of, for instance, *generated by and generative of* the phenomenon, Springer *essentializes* generational differences and locates (the possibility of) continuity in the historical consciousness of US (third-wave) Black feminists *only*. It is my aim to redefine rather than essentialize ‘generationality’ in such a manner.

The examples that I have given show that adapting the term ‘third wave’ in a materialist context does not necessarily produce a feminist reading of third-wave tendencies (Mann and Huffman), and that a feminist reading of contemporary US Black feminist thought can produce a materialism which is not explicitly thematized, and is not necessarily the result

³ See:

“The recuperation of the self in a racist and sexist society is a political enterprise and a Black feminist *one that deprioritizes generational differences in the interest of historical, activist continuity*” (Springer 2002: 1060-1; emphasis added).

of an innovative conceptualization of generationality (Springer). This chapter explores the feminist materialist epistemologies of the second wave in order for those connections to be made and to make explicit what third-wave feminist materialists dis-identify with. The starting point of this chapter is Harding's renowned classification of feminist epistemologies and its critiques that are complemented with writings on other-than-Marxist feminist theories (namely French feminism, bodily materialism, Australian feminism, and corporeal feminism). I will assess the extent to which the dominant Anglo-American canon of feminist materialism (feminist standpoint theory and beyond) has provided a "radical rereading of materialism" thus moving "away from its strictly Marxist definition" (Braidotti 1991b: 264) like the French bodily materialist feminists of Braidotti's *Patterns of Dissonance* did. In addition, I will assess the state of affairs in the feminist (postmodernist) debate about feminist standpoint theory as well as the (national and disciplinary) 'standpoint' of standpoint theorists.

2.2 Feminist Standpoint Theory

2.2.1 Introduction

Under the heading 'feminist standpoint theory' I discuss two related epistemic tendencies with which third wave materialism stands in a relation. I am referring to the category of feminist standpoint theory (as it has been introduced in the 1980s and 1990s by feminist epistemologists, philosophers, and theorists such as Jaggar, Harding, Nancy Hartsock and Patricia Hill Collins), and to the attempt to bridge feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism. Despite the fact that eminent feminist philosophers such as Harding have made use of the latter tendency, I argue that *postmodernizing* feminist standpoint theory does not *qualitatively* shift the terms of feminist epistemology. It cannot be used to explain new materialism. I discuss postmodernized feminist standpoint theory, because I do *not intend to priorily rule out or overlook* the possibility of a standpoint theory that allows for postmodern reflection on 'women' in a manner that is *an-Oedipal*. Harding in her 1993 'Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology' (but also the European third wavers Sarah Bracke and Maria Puig de la Bellacasa in 'Building Standpoints' (2004)) conceptualizes the epistemic space secured by the bridging of feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism as an important continuum between theories of women. The opposite, *Oedipal* option consists of the postmodernization of feminist standpoint theory through the appropriation of a mainstream or non-feminist postmodernist or post-structuralist theorist, in other words, preferring (t)his author to certain *feminist* alternatives to an (essentializing) feminist standpoint theory. The latter tendency can be found in the work of Rosemary Hennessy, and Donna Landry with Gerald MacLean. It is important to note the differences and similarities between mentioned

Oedipal and an-Oedipal versions of postmodernized feminist standpoint theory. I want to stress here that I do not wish to construct a causally linear/ teleological narrative according to which postmodernized feminist standpoint theory⁴ succeeds ‘modern’ or Enlightenment feminist standpoint theory and third-wave feminist materialism succeeds the postmodernized feminist standpoint. Such a teleological narrative consists of a step-by-step dismissal of the writings of feminist foremothers and seduces its readers into a false and damaging heroic plot directed from the centre of patriarchy. The project of this dissertation entails securing a new materialism as well as a new conceptualization of generationality diverting from such plots.⁵

I will illustrate the complication of ‘postmodernized feminist standpoint theory’ by showing that it can be conceptualized in less beneficial (*i.e.* Oedipal) as well as beneficial (an-Oedipal). I also find it important to stress that I do *not* read third wave feminism’s materialism in the tradition of *Marxist* materialism *only* (*cf.* Mann and Huffman 2005). Throughout my discussion of third wave materialism I have stressed generational continuity and other transversal dialogues. I have not conceptualized third wave materialism as a Marxist materialist phenomenon that wipes out the influence other anti-idealist tendencies have had on in feminism (and vice versa) such as theories of the body (hoogland forthcoming) and anti-anthropomorphism/ cyborg studies (Lykke 1996, 2002, forthcoming). It is important to note, however, that the theorists of postmodernized feminist standpoint theory often lean on Marxism only. Before I proceed to discussing this aspect, I will provide a detailed overview of 1980s and 1990s canonical writings on feminist standpoint theory.

2.2.2 The Matter of Feminist Standpoint Theory

Taking into consideration Marxist materialism and psychoanalysis should highlight the intimate relationship between early US and Anglo-US feminist standpoint theories and mainstream Marxist materialism (see *e.g.* Kuhn and Wolpe eds 1978, Hennessy and Ingraham eds 1995), and second-wave feminism and socialism in general (see *e.g.* Whelehan 1995: 44-66). Hartsock’s ‘The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for a Specifically Feminist

⁴ Hennessy (1993: *xiv*) calls this ‘postmodern marxist feminism,’ whereas Landry and MacLean (1993: *xiii*) speak of ‘a deconstructive materialist feminist perspective.’ Robin May Schott (1993: 179) uses the term ‘perspectivist materialism.’ She pleads for “explor[ing] the intersections and tensions that emerge between Marxism and postmodernism, both of which are forms of ‘oppositional thinking’” (*ibidem*: 177).

⁵ Recent epistemological work of Susan Hekman also features a materialist feminism that remains Oedipal, *i.e.* predicated on antithetical relations between women/ a competition administered by patriarchy. This work introduces a third option in the context of postmodernized feminist standpoint theory. Hekman appropriates the work of Max Weber (Hekman [1997] 2004), Foucault (Hekman 2000: 305), and Bruno Latour (Hekman 2006) respectively for overcoming the problems of feminist standpoint theory. Unfortunately the ‘break’ that Hekman constitutes between feminist standpoint theory and her theoretical answer to it undoes the possibility of a new materialism predicated on an-Oedipal, non-competitive generationality due to her plea for a return to a Master. Hekman’s analysis of the *problems* of feminist standpoint theory, however, resembles my analysis. I will deal with these problems below.

Historical Materialism' heavily relies on Marx (and Friedrich Engels) and the work on the feminist standpoint in Science Question (Harding 1986: 26-7, 136-62) and 'What is Feminist Epistemology?' (Harding 1991) relies mostly on Hegel's Master-Slave dialectics. Harding's early work, however, also provides a first synthesis of the work of fellow feminists such as Hartsock, Hillary Rose (see [1983] 2004), and Dorothy Smith ([1974] 2004). The tendency to synthesize, *i.e.* to make use of a feminist archive, is to be found in an even stronger manner in the work of Collins (1991) who builds a black feminist standpoint in Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment, and in Harding's later work on 'strong objectivity.' In this section I introduce feminist standpoint theory through a discussion of the foundational work of Hartsock. I will raise questions about the extent to which early feminist standpoint theorists are the so-called dutiful daughters of Marx/ism. I will claim that early feminist standpoint texts, however syncretical of a feminist archive, are predicated on what Harding (1991: 115) calls a 'paternal discourse.'

Hartsock's 'Feminist Standpoint' is one of the first attempts to *construct* a feminist standpoint epistemology. To build her case, Hartsock refers to Iris Marion Young (1980: 180 in Hartsock [1983] 2004: 50), who had already begun to argue for the need of a specifically feminist historical materialism against the background of a dual systems approach in which class and 'sex'/ gender went hand in hand without distinctively affecting a gender-blind historical materialism. At first glance, Hartsock ([1983] 2004: 35) truly was the dutiful daughter of Marx/ism; she carefully appropriated Marxist categories and tools for understanding not capitalism but 'phallogocratic domination.' Hartsock argues that "there are several reasons to take over much of Marx's approach" (*ibidem*), and this is exactly what she tries to prove in her article. She wants to epistemologically underpin Young's intuition and proceeds through mirroring Marx:

"What *guidance* can feminists take from this discussion? I hold that the powerful vision of both the perverseness and reality of class domination made possible by Marx's adoption of the standpoint of the proletariat suggests that a specifically feminist standpoint could allow for a much more profound critique of phallogocratic ideologies and institutions than has yet been achieved" (*ibid.*: 40; emphasis added).⁶

Half of the bibliography of the article consists of writings of women and she claims that she has been discussing the issue with several feminists (*ibid.*: 50). How dutiful can Hartsock be said to have been (*cf.* Bat On 1993)?

Hartsock ([1983] 2004: 38), after illustrating the nature of a standpoint,⁷ argues that "each division of labor, whether by gender or by class, can be expected to have consequences for knowledge." Hartsock thus designs a "'feminist' rather than 'female'" standpoint on the

⁶ *Cf.* her reliance on Georges Bataille (Hartsock [1983] 2004: 46-8).

⁷ Hartsock ([1983] 2004: 36-7) provides the following definition:

"A standpoint [...] carries with it the contention that there are some perspectives on society from which [...] the real relations of humans with each other and with the natural world are not visible."

basis of a “‘sexual division of labor’ rather than [a] ‘gender division of labor’” (*ibidem*: 40). The *feminist* standpoint has to be achieved, and “by definition carries a liberatory potential” (*ibid.*). Its basis is formed by a division of labor that is both social and biological. By calling the division ‘sexual,’ Hartsock hopes to engage with the bodily dimensions of human existence and activity (*ibid.*: 40-1). The feminist standpoint, which Hartsock, albeit reluctantly, designed on the basis of discarding differences between women (*ibid.*: 41), is argued to be “related to the proletarian standpoint, but deeper going” (*ibid.*). Since one is a woman 24/7 and laborers go home after work, women are, on top of their involvement in production, being prepared for involvement in/ involved in reproduction (*ibid.*: 41, 43). Going beyond Marx, Hartsock has laid out the features of a feminist standpoint in an account that has become very influential in the canon of the field of feminist epistemology. The way in which she stresses the biological and bodily has been largely ignored in the field.

The influence of Hartsock’s account on feminist theorizing is visible in Jaggar’s Feminist Politics. The final chapter of the book, published in the same year as Hartsock’s ‘Feminist Standpoint,’ goes into feminist epistemology. In ‘Feminist Politics and Epistemology: Justifying Feminist Theory’ Jaggar (1983a: 353) reviews the four canonical feminist positionings (liberal feminism, traditional (feminist) Marxism, radical feminism, and socialist feminism) and shows a clear preference for socialist feminism when it comes to (epistemological) viability. Reflecting the interests of women, this perspective is considered to be the most objective (*ibidem*: 384), most revealing, and most useful one in “contribut[ing] to a practical reconstruction of the world in which women’s interests are not subordinated to those of men” (*ibid.*: 385). Additionally, it is this perspective, conceptualized by Smith, Hartsock, Harding, and Jane Flax, that Jaggar says that can explain its own grounds (*ibid.*). Two things should be noted as striking here. First, Jaggar (*ibid.*: 377) claims:

“My criterion for identifying all these theorists as socialist feminist, however, is that all of them adhere in principle to a historical materialist approach for understanding social reality.”

Second, her bibliography (contrary to Hartsock) of the standpoint of *women* (*ibid.*: 369) consists of *women* scholars. Jaggar, whose account is constrained by a classificatory approach, for which she has been criticized (see *e.g.* Sandoval [1991] 2004: 199), should thus be celebrated because of the an-Oedipal reading she provides (what we find here is a feminist genealogy). Hartsock relies heavily on Marx, even though there are times that she refers to feminist materialists such as psychoanalytic feminists like Nancy Chodorow and to feminist materialist work that is nowadays labeled feminist science studies (Haraway). It cannot be argued, however, that my comparison is anachronistic: Jaggar’s reference to Hartsock’s manuscript teaches us that a cross-fertilization of the two projects could have been possible!

My analysis does not lead to the abandonment of Hartsock’s early feminist materialist epistemology. Doing so, would entail a re-affirmation of the Oedipal plot in which daughters

want to get rid of their mother's writings. It is important to stick to Hartsock because her argument is not a universalizing one. Even though Hartsock ([1983] 2004: 45) claims that the effects of the feminist standpoint are the *dialectical opposite* of the effects of abstract masculinity, Braidotti (1991b: 265; emphasis added) has noticed that "Hartsock does *not* aim to reverse the balance of power and offer a counter-notion of 'abstract femininity' in replacement of the previous one." In other words, abstract masculinity and the feminist standpoint are *qualitatively* different, thus *not* the opposite sides of the same coin:

"the female experience not only inverts that of the male, but forms a basis on which to expose abstract masculinity as both partial and fundamentally perverse, as not only occupying only one side of the dualities it has constructed, but reversing the proper valuation of human activity" (Hartsock [1983] 2004: 46).

As such Hartsock allows for the specificities of the situation of women and her account, in the end, is not dualist (Braidotti 1991b: 265) nor dialecticist.

What should be noticed here is the counterintuitive nature of the emphasis on Hartsock's/ feminist standpoint theory's allowance for *specificities*. Textbook accounts of unmarked feminist theory and practice such as Imelda Whelehan's Modern Feminist Thought and Vrouwenstudies in de Cultuurwetenschappen (Buikema and Smelik eds 1993)⁸ usually present accounts of equality-difference-deconstructive feminism or liberal-material-postmodern feminism in such a way that the third, postmodern strategy is to solve the universalizing tendency and the problems of the second, modern strand (see Introduction). Whereas Hartsock *strategically* focuses on the commonalities between women (*cf.* Spivak 1993), and *temporarily* discards differences regarding 'race'/ethnicity and sexuality, her account allows for being specific about specific (groups of) women, Braidotti has argued. Not reading this into her work is a perfect example of the *effects* of classifications. In other words, evaluations of the categories of a classification as well as those of the individual authors have been lumped under a certain rubric are stereotyped and not (necessarily) evaluated on the basis of close and affirmative readings of actual textual material.

My claim for building third wave materialism with Hartsock and other second-wave feminist materialists is not meant to suggest that the account of third-wave feminist materialists is in no way providing new insights and/ or qualitatively different theoretical outlooks. Second-wave feminist materialist work is not necessarily simply universalizing and important (stereotypical) criticisms of second-wave material feminism are sometimes flawed. But we should not automatically refrain from generating new feminist epistemic categories with those that have been generated in the past. In 'Feminist Standpoint' we read that

⁸ The revised and expanded English translation of the book, Women's studies and Culture (Buikema and Smelik eds 1995), provides its readers with a narrative that is less teleological, and in the new version of the book, Gender in media, kunst en cultuur (Buikema and Van der Tuin eds 2007), Rosemarie Buikema and I have tried to avoid teleologies altogether (see Buikema and Van der Tuin 2007: 9-12).

Hartsock ([1983] 2004: 35) has set out to “explore and expand the Marxian argument that socially mediated interaction with nature in the process of production shapes both human beings and theories of knowledge.” Whereas I have already noted that Hartsock argues that the feminist standpoint is deeper than the proletarian one, she does use standpoint as a mediating device (see *e.g. ibidem*: 39):

“The Marxian category of labor, including as it does both interaction with other humans and with the natural world, can help to cut through the dichotomy of nature and culture, and, for feminists, can help to avoid the false choice of characterizing the situation of women as either ‘purely natural’ or ‘purely social.’ As embodied humans we are of course inextricably both natural and social, though feminist theory to date has, for important strategic reasons, concentrated attention on the social aspect” (*ibid.*: 35-6).

Hartsock claims that women and laborers are always already natural *and* social. From the perspective of third wave materialism, this suggests that the two realms exist beforehand and are only mediated instead of intra-acting. Such a mediation of two ‘originals,’ as Barad would say, does not provide for an intra-active epistemology highlighting relationality and materialization. The *additive* model that Hartsock provided us with (women are both natural and social) does not change the nature of its parts. It does differ from the argument that claims women are social *instead of* natural, but it does not lead to an intra-active or relational analysis. Rather it provides something other than a critical, social constructivist would be able to give when arguing against an account which (un)consciously naturalizes women.

My argument here relates to the analyses made by Hennessy⁹ in Materialist Feminism and the Politics of Discourse, and Landry and MacLean in Materialist Feminisms.¹⁰ These scholars argue that second-wave feminist materialists did not manage to solve what has been introduced in this chapter, following Hartsock, as Young’s problem (*cf.* Hartsock 1998: 229). Landry and MacLean (1993: 12) write about the danger of constructing a feminist standpoint theory that likens a dual systems theory. Such a feminist standpoint theory only allows for class and gender to follow parallel tracks, which eventually forces an impossible choice between class and gender. Landry and MacLean conceptualize the relation between Marxism and feminism for (socialist) feminists as a double-bind that has to be overcome:

“we are proposing [...] the articulation of discontinuous movements, materialism and feminism, an articulation that takes the political claims of deconstruction seriously, without abandoning either class struggle or resistance to gender ideology where these obtain in specific historico-political sites, and opening itself as well to other possible categories of identity and resistance” (*ibidem*: 12-3).

⁹ *Cf.* the debate between Harding and Hennessy in Who Can Speak? Authority and Critical Identity (Roof and Wiegman eds 1995).

¹⁰ Ann Ferguson (1998: 526) adds the work of Michèle Barrett to this list, due to the fact that all three “posit an ideological or discursive realm, thought to have its own ‘material’ effectivity, and seek a rapprochement between Althusser and Foucault on the connection between discourses and other disciplinary practices”.

Ferguson also claims that there are two types of dual systems theory: one that is static and one that is dynamic, *i.e.* historically dynamic (*ibidem*: 527). For the historical dimension of dual systems theory see also Harding ([1983] 2003).

Thus, on top of the claim that overcoming a dual systems theory would allow feminist theorists to take into consideration not only gender and class, but also race, ethnicity, sexuality, etc. (*ibid.*), Landry and MacLean design a particular version of postmodernized feminist standpoint theory. Hennessy (1993: 36) makes a similar argument; she claims that

“[u]nable to satisfactorily generalize about the complex interrelations of support and opposition that constitute the interdetermination of capitalism and patriarchy, many of [the marxist feminists during the seventies] finally declared that systemic theorizing has reached an impasse. I think this rejection of systemic analysis needs to be re-evaluated now, particularly in light of the growing appeal of ludic postmodernism’s regional analysis. [...] We need to advance a problematic in which the articulations of race, class, gender, and sexuality can be understood in their historical specificity without abandoning analyses that situate them in terms of the social totalities that continue to regulate our lives.”

Both Landry and MacLean, and Hennessy, then, build their ‘postmodernized feminist standpoint theory’ on the basis of a general dismissal of a feminist standpoint theory that is said to have priorly secured the non-overlapping tracks of gender and class. Does the postmodernized feminist standpoint theory qualitatively shift the terms of feminist materialist epistemology?

Before attempting to answer this question in the next section, I will briefly discuss the Black and lesbian (feminist) standpoint so as to continue the above discussion on the second-wave feminist materialist tendency to compartmentalize.¹¹ In the feminist epistemology canon, a place is secured for the Black feminist standpoint. This seeming inclusion of Black feminist perspective in, for instance, *Standpoint Theory Reader*, which features Collins, hooks ([1990] 2004), Sandoval, and Uma Narayan ([1989] 2004), is to be celebrated, but there is a downside to this too. First of all, adding Black feminist theory to ‘feminist theory’ never opens up for ‘the’ theorists to reflect upon their unmarked racialized/ ethnicized position (Wekker 1996, 2002, 2004). Whereas an important feature of standpoint theories in general is the ability to explain its own grounds and its inability to reflect upon ‘race’/ ethnicity is quickly being brushed under the carpet. Here, I am not talking about the question *from whose* standpoint better knowledge arises (Harding [1997] 2004: 258), but about the unmarked whiteness of feminist standpoint theory. In relation to this, the Anglo-American domination of the feminist standpoint theory canon and debate has to be noted. In ‘Whiteness and European Situatedness,’ their landmark essay on European critical whiteness, Gabriele Griffin and Braidotti argue that the foci of the whiteness debate in the 1990s (the focus on the writings of African-American (woman) writers and the focus on the binary black-white) “enabled Europeans to participate in it without in some respects needing to engage with the whiteness issues that were pertinent to their own actual race-political situation” (Griffin with Braidotti

¹¹ Here the often *simultaneous* theorization of ‘race’/ethnicity and sexuality by (early) Black 1970s writers has to be noted. See *e.g.* the Combahee River Collective ([1978] 1982) and Lorde ([1979] 1983). For a collection of Black women’s writing, including mentioned simultaneity see Guy-Sheftall ed. 1995. Intersectional theory says to build on this body of scholarship. The problems with intersectional theory have been discussed in chapter 1.

2002: 225) and “left unacknowledged those racialized positions which could not be drawn in such stark terms, where the issues were not ‘black’ and ‘white’ as seemingly suggested by the debate” (*ibidem*). This is to say that Black feminist standpoint needs to be *translated* to be potentially useful in a European context (*cf.* Wekker 1995). Such a translation, however, suggests the existence of an ‘original’ US race- and ethnicity-conscious feminist standpoint theory with which European feminist standpoint theorists should start to *interact*.¹²

With regards to feminist standpoint theory and sexuality, a first thing to note would be the emphasis on maternity and the maternal body (mainly in the work of Sara Ruddick), and the general glancing over lesbian/ straight sexuality in the canon of feminist standpoint theory/ feminist epistemology as a whole. ‘The lesbian standpoint’ sounds strange and I read it as a consequence of the absence of positionings that concentrate on sexuality in the canon of feminist standpoint theory. It cannot be argued, however, that ‘feminist standpoint theory’ has been completely unappealing to lesbian theorists. In the entry ‘Materialist Feminisms’ of The Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism Landry and MacLean (2005: without page number) argue that in US materialist feminism (as opposed to its UK incarnation) the issue of lesbian sexuality has been addressed. They argue that “lesbian feminists have fundamentally challenged the heterosexist biases and presuppositions of both capitalist ideology and socialist critique.” I will provide two examples of what could be called *lesbian standpoint theory*.¹³

Landry and MacLean name scholars like Biddy Martin and Katie King. In ‘Feminist Politics: What’s Home Got to Do with It?’ Martin and Mohanty show an interest in materialist perspectives, without labelling them versions of (feminist) standpoint theory. They argue against a ‘culturalist’ perspective on race/ racism and sexuality/ lesbianism¹⁴ by showing the ways in which this is a perspective from which one is largely unable

“to point out the political limitations of an insistence on ‘indeterminacy’ which implicitly, when not explicitly, denies the critic’s own situatedness in the social, and in effect refuses to acknowledge the critic’s own institutional home” (Martin and Mohanty 1986: 194).

They propose a reading of a text by Minnie Bruce Pratt, which is said to be written from a race- (white), class- (middle-class), and sexuality-conscious (lesbian) positioning (*ibidem*: 195):

“Pratt’s self-reflection, brought on by a consciousness of difference, is nourished and expanded by thinking contextually of other histories and of her own responsibility and implication in them” (*ibid.*: 198).

¹² In her work on French materialist feminism, Braidotti (1991b: 273) ends her account of the radical philosophies of sexual difference by posing a question: “The question now is, have they been heard.” The answer that should be given 15 years later is that the field of feminist epistemology/feminist materialism is/has become Anglo-American dominated. So far, important volumes such as Standpoint Theory Reader have not taken up the issues of sexual difference, Europe, and critical whiteness. In other words, they have not been heard. *Cf.* Blaagaard forthcoming.

¹³ Hennessy subsumes lesbian and Black feminists under the rubric ‘postmodern feminist materialism.’

¹⁴ The work of Rich is given as an example here (Martin and Mohanty 1986: 212 n. 6, 7).

As such, “the assignment of fixed positions – the educator/critic (woman of color) and the guilty and silent listener (white woman)” is avoided:

“[Such a] dynamics [...] would seem to exempt both parties from the responsibilities of working through the complex historical relations between and among structures of domination and oppression” (*ibid.*: 199).

The result is “an elaboration, indeed an enactment, of careful and constant differentiations which refuses the all-to-easy polemic that opposes victims to perpetrators” (*ibid.*: 209). Such an elaboration is considered “to avoid two traps, the purely experiential and the theoretical oversight of personal and collective histories” accomplished through bringing in ‘materiality’ (by Pratt) (*ibid.*: 210) and a standpoint approach (by Martin and Mohanty).¹⁵

In ‘Sexualities without Genders and Other Queer Utopias’ Martin (see *e.g.* [1992] 1998: 13) argues in an equally strong manner against (relativist) anti-foundationalism and indeterminacy in relation to lesbian theory. She says to welcome criticisms of universalizing tendencies in sexuality studies as well as queer theory¹⁶ and she claims:

“But I am worried about the occasions when antifoundationalist celebrations of queerness rely on their own projections of fixity, constraint, or subjection onto a fixed ground, often onto feminism of the female body, in relation to which queer studies become figural, performative, playful, and fun. In the process, the female body appears to become its own trap, and the operations of misogyny disappear from view” (*ibidem*: 11).

Martin’s materialist argument is problematic in the sense that she claims that the often neglected femme has the largest transgressive potential (*ibid.*: 22, 25-6, 30),¹⁷ which suggests a *reversal* of the power dynamic and as such enacts a (re)constitution of the dynamic (this makes her into a (naïve) second-wave materialist). Martin, however, does try to complicate the sexualized stories we tell and the sexualized theories we produce. She does this by connecting feminism and queer studies and by bringing in race, gender, and sexuality as connected categories that are otherwise seen as fixed (*ibid.*: 33).¹⁸ Secondly, Martin ([1992]

¹⁵ I mentioned before that Martin and Mohanty do not explicitly use these terms for their own writing. They write:

“Wary of the illuminations of an antihumanism which refuses to rejoin the political, we purposely chose a text that speaks from within ‘Western feminist discourse’ and attempts to expose the bases and supports of privilege even as it renegotiates political and personal alliances” (Martin and Mohanty 1986: 195).

¹⁶ Queer theory was introduced by De Lauretis (1991: *iv*) as an attempt “to recast or reinvent, the terms of our sexualities, to construct another discursive horizon, another way of thinking the sexual” in the context of “the self-representations of North American lesbians and gay men, of color and white, up to now.” De Lauretis was especially critical of the *uses* of lesbian and gay:

“our ‘differences,’ such as they may be, are less represented by the discursive coupling of those two terms in the politically correct phrase ‘lesbian and gay,’ than they are elided by most of the context in which the phrase is used; that is to say, differences are implied in it but then simply taken for granted or even covered over by the word ‘and’” (*ibidem*: v-vi).

¹⁷ “The very fact that the femme may pass implies the possibility of denaturalizing heterosexuality by emphasizing the permeability of gay/straight boundaries” (Martin [1992] 1998: 22).

¹⁸ *Cf.* Deleuzian as opposed to queer studies of (lesbian) sexuality (Grosz 1994a, Nigianni and Storr eds forthcoming).

1998: 31) continues the work she did with Mohanty by stressing the importance of *the personal* (cf. Calhoun [1995] 1996), in her terms “materiality and interiority.”

Except for the short paragraph written by Landry and MacLean, the US lesbian standpoint has not been canonized as a version of feminist standpoint theory/ materialist feminism. The Black standpoint, however, has been canonized as such. Above, I mentioned the case of Collins. In her writings we find a strong reliance on the writings of other black women and the building of a standpoint out of these writings. The fact that Collins with her ‘outsider within’¹⁹ has been canonized as a feminist standpoint theorist is quite special.²⁰ On the one hand, Black (feminist) scholarship is very often staged as *dividing up* a universal category instead of being embraced and included. On the other hand, the problem with Collins is that she has made it to the canon of feminist standpoint theory while making a move that can be argued to introduce an *idealism* to the materialist discourse. I want to argue that the idealism results from her work being class-biased.

Collins’ ambivalent relationship with materialism makes out one of the parameters of Black Feminist Thought:

“A definition of Black feminist thought is needed that avoids the materialist position that being black and/ or female generates certain experiences that automatically determine variants of a Black and/ or feminist consciousness. [...] But a definition of Black feminist thought must also avoid the idealist position that ideas can be evaluated in isolation from the groups that create them” (Collins 1991: 21).

Collins sets out to avoid both materialism and idealism in her definition of the black women’s standpoint by envisioning a key role of a leadership (*ibidem*: 34) for ‘Black women intellectuals:’

“The existence of a Black women’s standpoint does not mean that African-American women appreciate its content, see its significance, or recognize the potential that a fully articulated Afrocentric feminist standpoint has as a catalyst for social change. One key role for Black women intellectuals is to ask the right questions and investigate all dimensions of a Black women’s standpoint with and for African-American women. Black women intellectuals thus

¹⁹ Note that Alcoff and Potter (1993: 6) in their introduction to Feminist Epistemologies ascribe the insight to Bat-Ami Bar On that Marx has claimed that proletarians are both central and marginal to bourgeois society – an insight that feminist standpoint theorists simplified by claiming only a marginal position for women. I read Diemut Bubeck’s (2000) discussion of feminist standpoint theory’s problems (e.g. the tendency of the theory to digress to a standpoint for every individual, even for ‘subindividuals’) as an overview of (possible) problems caused by mentioned simplification.

²⁰ Another black feminist scholar that is canonized as a Black standpoint theorist is Sandoval with her seminal text ‘US Third World Feminism: The Theory and Method of Differential Oppositional Consciousness.’ She adds ‘differential consciousness’ to ‘equal rights,’ ‘revolutionary,’ ‘supremacist,’ and ‘separatist’ strategies (Sandoval [1991] 2004: 201-2):

“Differential consciousness represents the strategy of another form of oppositional ideology that functions on an altogether different register. Its power can be thought of as mobile – not nomadic but rather cinematographic: a kinetic motion that manoeuvres, poetically transfigures, and orchestrates while demanding alienation, perversion, and reformation in both spectators and practitioners” (*ibidem*: 197).

stand in a special relationship to the community of African-American women of which we are part, and this special relationship frames the contours of Black feminist thought” (*ibid.*: 30).²¹

It is apparent that Collins recognizes the special position she puts Black women intellectuals in and denies the fact that this brings back modernism’s classism.²² The latter evaluation is something that Collins herself would vehemently disagree with, as she argues explicitly against the Enlightenment connotations of standpoint perspectives. According to Collins Black feminist thought is not about “*raising* consciousness” but about a “rearticulated consciousness [which] empowers African-American women and stimulates resistance” (*ibid.*: 31-2; emphasis added). Bat-Ami Bar On (1993: 95; *cf.* Lennon and Whitford 1994: 1) takes *Collins* as exemplary for framing the feminist epistemological project by the parameters of Enlightenment philosophy. She argues that

“Western second-wave feminist claims for epistemic privilege entangle feminists in the Enlightenment socio-political liberatory project of legitimizing the voices of many, as narrowly as this might have been understood in specific historical times an places.”²³

Secondly, the last quote of Collins shows how *another* Enlightenment notion is being brought back in and secures classism: the fact that it is about the affirmation and rearticulation of a consciousness *that already exists*. The Black woman intellectual is to affirm and rearticulate something that exists ‘out there.’

“[C]oncrete experience as a criterion for credibility” (Collins 1991: 209) is important in the context of Black feminist thought. In ‘Comment on Hekman’s ‘Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited:’ Where’s the Power?’ Collins ([1997] 2004: 248) emphasizes experience and subsequently refutes Hekman’s take on the feminist standpoint theory debate in which there is no room for “group-based realities grounded in an equally central notion of group-based oppression.” Collins’ definition of a standpoint is formulated in line with this:

“Standpoint theory argues that groups who share common placement in hierarchical power relations also share common experiences in such power relations” (*ibidem*: 249).

Besides the difficulties with stressing *analogies*,²⁴ Collins’ definition holds experience as *always already there* firmly in place, while, indeed, making the modernist relation between individual and group more complex:

“In the model in which an individual conducts inner dialogues among various parts of his or her ‘self,’ the process of mediating conflicting identities occurs within each individual. The individual always holds complete power or agency over the consciousness that he or she constructs in his or her own mind and the voice that she or he uses to express that consciousness” (*ibid.*: 251).

²¹ *Cf.* Bracke’s (2004: 31-56) overview of the feminist debate about ‘false consciousness’ in ‘Women Resisting Secularisation in an Age of Globalisation: Four Case-studies within a European Context.’

²² For the concept see Shapin and Schaffer 1985.

²³ Bar On (1993: 96) further argues that feminist epistemology finds itself entangled by postmodern philosophy. This is exactly my point in this part of the current chapter, and I will be referring to this as second-wave feminism being caught in an Oedipal trap.

²⁴ See Roof (1991) who claims that ‘all analogies are faulty.’

The question is whether Collins succeeds in repositioning idealism. An account of managing differences within an individual woman (*cf.* Braidotti 1994a: 159 *ff.*) or small groups (Collins [1997] 2004: 251) in which separate ‘identities’ priorly exist and are in a second instance translated (*cf.* Martin and Mohanty 1986: 210) is idealistic. In this dissertation I favor accounts allowing for differences or identities to *materialize*. In conclusion, it has to be noted that even though Collins set out to try to overcome a naïve materialism and a naïve idealism, *idealism* re-enters her theorization of experience as ‘out there’ and ‘to be theorized by Black women intellectuals.’ Besides this classism, however, Collins’ work is to be celebrated in the light of generational continuity between women. I have argued that most canonized (white) feminist standpoint theorists refer back to a Master and constitute a certain male theorist as ‘origin’ in a teleological narrative. I have argued that unmarked feminist standpoint theory is Oedipalized, and my argument about Black feminist standpoint has been that it is classist, and as such idealist.

One conclusion that the above overview has provided is insight that highlights the lack of explicit reflection by early feminist standpoint theory on ‘matter’ – biological or bodily matter. I am not the first one to have reviewed these issues (see King 1994, Hartsock 1998). Hartsock (1998: 233) explains “the argument that [the] case is based on biology and reinscribes the split between nature and culture” as one of the main criticisms her feminist standpoint approach has received. Although she isolates the overlooking of the Marxist (!) dimension of her work as the criticism’s main cause (*ibidem*) she also states that she is argued to have pursued a biological determinism using of ‘sex’ instead of ‘gender’ (*ibid.*: 234). Hartsock refers *back to Marx* who insists “that we are part of nature and social at the same time. [...] humans [are] at once social and natural” (*ibid.*).²⁵ In ‘The Feminist Standpoint Revisited’ she further claims that she wanted “to denaturalize nature (Haraway’s phrase) and to refuse the split,” but her argument would not have been appreciated as it was intended because ‘gender’ had just been launched “to distinguish the social, and by implication changeable, from the natural, and by implication unchangeable” (*ibid.*: 235). I have argued that Hartsock has not succeeded in producing a conceptualization of ‘nature’ that qualitatively differs from, in Ahmed’s terms, being natural *before the law*. Adding up nature/ the natural and the social implies that both categories are originals that come to interact. How do the postmodernized feminist standpoint theorists (a tendency I started discussing in paragraph 1.2.2.1) deal with biology or the bodily, with matter and materiality?

²⁵ Note, in addition, the quantification. Another quantitative strategy is Judith Grant’s comparative standpoint analysis. Reviewing this strategy, Mary Hawkesworth (2006: 201-6) claims that such an analysis involves neither a determinism nor the multiplication of axes within each standpoint. What *does* remain, however, if standpoints are compared with one another, is the fact that there exist distinct standpoints that are only in a later stage compared.

2.2.2.1 Postmodernized Feminist Standpoint Theory

In ‘The Standpoint in Question: Situated Knowledges and the Dutch Minorities Discourse’ Baukje Prins makes clear why feminist standpoint theory has undergone postmodernization in the first place. In the 1980s and early 1990s constructivists such as Richard Rorty, Foucault and Latour attacked epistemology as a discipline “because its questions concerning the universal conditions of possibility for true knowledge, as well as its sham fights with skepticism, would be superseded” (Prins 1997: 83). This, Prins shows, has led to a relativization of existing bodies of knowledge by the constructivists in question (see Chap. 3 for ‘anti-epistemologies’). Prins further argues that feminist standpoint epistemologists working in the 1980s and 1990s *avoided* such relativization and their attempt to hold on to the epistemological project of producing ‘better’ knowledges caused other problems (such as claiming an innocent positioning and the related reliance on ‘natural’ instead of ‘constructed’ accounts (*ibidem*: 76-83)), which were, in turn, assessed in the spirit of postmodernization. In this section I discuss postmodernized feminist standpoint theory and ‘matter,’ providing further support for my claim that the cartographical bridging of feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism does not result in a qualitatively different feminist epistemic category. Taking as a starting point Haraway’s self-situation amongst (Black) feminist standpoint theorists such as Hartsock, Harding, and Collins, but also ‘Star, Bhavnani, Tsing, Haraway, Sandoval, hooks, and Butler’ I will discuss the effects of *adding* feminist postmodernism to feminist standpoint theory, and the (dis)advantages of postmodern feminist standpoint theorist’s reliance on feminists or on non-feminist postmodernists.

Feminist Epistemologies and Knowing the Difference: Feminist Perspectives in Epistemology (Lennon and Whitford eds 1994) are two early 1990s collections of scholarly essays in feminist epistemology. In the introduction to Feminist Epistemologies Alcoff and Potter (1993: 1) write: “Yesterday, ‘feminist epistemology’ was an oxymoron; today, it has name recognition, but its referent is not yet clear.” In the previous chapter I mentioned the common idea that feminist epistemology originated in the postmodern era. The feminist epistemology collections under review here were published in this era, consolidating the field through the academic publishing market.²⁶ The close relationship between the ‘birth’ of feminist epistemology and postmodernism in philosophy and the broader academy leads Alcoff and Potter to the following claim:

“Still, those working in feminist epistemology are engaged in dialogue with one or more traditions in the history of epistemology. And the feminist orientation toward these mainstream views is varied [...]. We view this dialogue as healthy and disagree with those who argue that any use of or engagement with the traditional problematics of epistemology

²⁶ Cf. Alcoff and Potter (1993: 4) on the label feminist epistemology vis-à-vis the taking into account not only gender but also other categories:

“We decided to retain *Feminist Epistemologies* as the title of this collection because it serves to identify work about which there is considerable curiosity.”

leads to co-optation. On the other hand, the essays in this volume demonstrate that a conservative approach that preserves traditional assumptions and strategies is not a virtue in feminist work” (*ibid.*: 2).

What this suggests is the importance of debating ‘feminisms intersecting with epistemology.’²⁷ Alcoff and Potter argue that the field of feminist epistemology has come about through the deliberation of the assumption of ‘proper epistemology,’ preferring the context of justification at the expense of the context of discovery. Their position shows the difficulties that arose when ‘the science question in feminism’ became, so to speak, ‘the *epistemology* question in feminism,’ and “attention [was paid] to epistemological concerns arising out of feminist projects, which prompt reflection on the nature of knowledge and our methods for attaining it” (Lennon and Whitford 1994: 13). Could the preference for the context of justification be sustained by paying attention to ‘epistemological concerns arising out of *feminist* projects’?

In the introduction to Knowing the Difference – a volume less US dominated than Feminist Epistemologies – Kathleen Lennon and Margaret Whitford introduce feminist epistemology as a field contradictory, even “inevitably conflictual and contradictory” (*ibidem*: 4), from the start. They mention that ‘feminist epistemology’ is fundamentally interdisciplinary as “[n]ot only philosophers, but also social scientists, political theorists, historians and literary theorists are now urgently addressing epistemological questions” (*ibid.*: 1). This is due to the fact, they say, that feminists have laid bare the structural connection between knowledge and power. Additionally, they mention that the field has a contradictory relationship with the Enlightenment tradition: whereas feminists have brought in the context of discovery, they were for a long time ‘glued’ to the supposed referential nature of knowledge claims (*ibid.*: 3). The narrative produced here is careful and complex. Even so, this has not prevented the authors from suggesting a linearity according to which feminists *firstly* addressed the differences between men and women, *secondly* between women, and *lastly* the differences within individual women. As such, the narrative leads ‘inevitably’ to Lennon and Whitford acknowledging the attraction feminists felt when confronted with the “strands of thought associated with postmodernism” (*ibid.*: 4). This acknowledgement secures a linear narrative leading feminist epistemology into the hands of another category of male philosophers.²⁸ They go on to claim that postmodernism has led feminists to the *abandonment* of referentiality/ representationalism and this underscores their belief in the magic of postmodernism. Not only has history proven otherwise (see Chap. 1, esp. par. 1.3.2.1 of this

²⁷ This is how Alcoff and Potter have entitled their introduction to their collection.

²⁸ What was so attractive about postmodernism for feminists with an interest in epistemological questions, Lennon and Whitford argue, is

“the recognition that all our interactions with reality are mediated by conceptual frameworks or discourses, which themselves are historically and socially situated” (*ibid.*: 4).

Cf. the questioning of the radical nature of ‘mediation’ by feminist science studies scholars such as Barad.

dissertation, but also Alcoff and Potter's trust in finding a referent for feminist epistemology) but such a statement keeps feminists controlled by mainstream discourse – first by modernism/ 'Enlightenment' and later by postmodernism/ the 'Crisis of Reason.' How has this totalizing relationality been negotiated by the different versions of postmodernized feminist standpoint theory? In other words, what have been the overall *effects* of feminist standpoint theory's postmodernization?

In 'Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology' Harding first affirms and later reconfirms the diagnosis Haraway (1988b: 579) made of the field of feminist epistemology, namely that feminists tried to keep on board foundationalism when postmodernism/ social constructivism had already introduced contingency. Harding (1993: 51; emphasis in original) claims that feminist standpoint theory should not be read as engaging with 'good-old' versions of realism (as a foundationalism) nor with relativism (producing contingencies). She says that feminist standpoint theory (after postmodernism) has been arguing against traditional notions such as objectivity that has been evaluated as "*not rigorous or objectifying enough.*" Harding designs her 'strong objectivity' as an answer to those readings of feminist standpoint theory overlooking the fact that

"the socially situated grounds and subjects of standpoint epistemologies require and generate stronger standards for objectivity than do those that turn away from providing systematic methods for locating knowledge in history" (*ibidem*: 50).

Commenting on Harding's strong objectivity in 'Towards a Defence of Objectivity' Ismay Barwell (1994: 89) claims:

"Sandra Harding has been consistently advocating the need in the construction of knowledge for decision procedures which both valorize the social context of enquiry and avoid relativism."

Barwell suggests that Harding respects postmodernism while trying to avoid its ultimate consequences. It is indeed feminist standpoint theory *against* the God trick (Harding 1993: 57-8), ethnocentrism (*ibidem*: 58-60), relativism, perspectivalism, and pluralism (*ibid.*: 61-2), and the unique abilities of the oppressed to produce knowledge (*ibid.*: 62-3) that we find in 'Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology.' Simultaneously however feminist standpoint theory is said to include "our many different lives and different experiences!" (*ibid.*: 55). In other words, what we find here is a mix of elements coming from *both* earlier formulations of feminist standpoint theory *and* feminist postmodernism. Confirming Haraway's diagnosis of feminist epistemologists who hold on to two ends of one stick without accounting for it, the postmodernization process (quantificatory) does not lead to a qualitatively different notion of 'standpoint.' Can this analysis of Harding's an-Oedipal account (she has been building on work of fellow feminists) be extended to the work of other scholars who are postmodernizing the feminist standpoint?

In contemporary feminist theory postmodernism has been narrowed down to a (relativist) social constructivism. This mode of functioning seems to have prevented the social constructivism of *modern* philosophies such as existentialism (see De Beauvoir [1949] 1988)²⁹ and Marxist materialism from being recognized in feminist theory. Both postmodernism and modernist social constructivisms are more complex than their function in contemporary critical/ feminist theory suggests. Rosalind Coward and John Ellis in their seminal Language and Materialism: Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject seem to complexify materialism. According to Coward and Ellis is the postmodern era constituted by the linguistic turn and has it enabled scholars to formulate a materialism that is other than a mechanical materialism. They argue that idealism has been literally counterbalanced by its inversion: mechanical materialism. The relationship between idealism and materialism was staged as a dialecticist relation, and as such, the structuralist materialist project was destined to fail:

“Structural linguistics and semiology were not able to carry through this criticism of idealist thought, even though they provided the basis for doing so. This was because structuralism failed to produce a genuinely materialist theory of language, and ultimately rested on idealist presuppositions” (Coward and Ellis 1977: 2).

Mechanical materialism is complicit with bourgeois ideology because idealism is (*ibidem*: 2-3). And mechanical materialism’s knowing subject, although originated in practice, remains defined by idealist ideas about a pre-existent ‘human essence’ (*ibid.*: 1-2). This is not the case for what Coward and Ellis call *dialectical* materialism (*ibid.*: 83-5). The curious adjective notwithstanding, Coward and Ellis define dialectical materialism as focusing on practice and implying a subject in process. Most importantly, dialectical materialism is said to involve the co-constitutiveness of subject and object. *This* is what makes dialectical materialism differ from both idealism and “its inverse, mechanical materialism” (*ibid.*: 89). Coward and Ellis consider the qualitative shift engendered by dialectical materialism and they argue for a more complex linguistic turn as its foundation:

“The sign is the ‘kernel of our culture’ and it is the primacy which it is given in theories of meaning and language which has enabled the repression of materialism. Yet, because of its ambiguity, the sign also opened up the possibility of the assertion of materialism. For as soon as the notion of ‘signified’ is questioned, the sign itself becomes problematic, suggesting that language is the movement of signifiers. But the movement from this problematicity to a materialist theory of signification is a difficult one” (*ibid.*: 125-6).

Coward and Ellis claim that the qualitative change (*ibid.*: 127) instigated by the linguistic turn in all its complexity is best worked out in the work of Kristeva. Her ‘subject in process’ allows for “a genuinely materialist understanding of history and practice which no longer falls back into the traps of idealism” (*ibid.*: 147), because

²⁹ Dorothy Kaufmann (1986: 122) has claimed that in the work of De Beauvoir *instead of e.g. Irigaray* words and things are more clearly perceived to be co-constitutive. *Cf.* par. 2.3.1.1.

“[t]he theory suggests that the process of signification is the process of the subject itself. [...] In developing the Freudian process of the subject, it has become possible to see the sign, the cornerstone of idealist thought, as simply a stage in the process of signification. It has been accepted that this stage is vital as the frontier of social communication. This frontier is theologised by idealist thought, and given a ‘negative theological’ status by crude materialists who refuse to consider it. Thus the historicity of ideological formations is only to be understood in relation to the process of the production of fixed relations between the subject and meaning, i.e. meanings for a subject included as the place of their intention. [...] Thus the work of Kristeva on the process of signification as the process of the subject itself can be said to offer a real challenge to the ‘metaphysical appurtenance of the sign’, and to be the real beginning of a materialist theory of language, signification and ideology” (*ibid.*: 151-2).

The move from a mechanical materialism to a materialism that does *not* stand in a dialecticist relation to idealism and consequently allows for a knowing subject to be *materializing* instead of pre-existent is a subject different from Harding’s plural subject in ‘Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology’ and involves a qualitative shifting of terms. Generationally, however, their work is not necessarily innovative. Coward and Ellis seem to annul the an-Oedipal structure of Harding’s postmodernized feminist standpoint theory: bringing in Kristeva who has created a schism between women and feminists (see par. 1.3.1) prevents the women’s continuity that I found in Harding’s work from being effected.

In Materialist Feminism Hennessy (see 1993: 74) seems to criticize precisely those (materialist) tendencies in which there is only room for the level of the individual (exemplified above by the subject in process) or the individual text (Hennessy argues against a linguisticism). Hennessy presents a materialist feminism in the postmodern era that is *nostalgic*: she provides “an argument for and within a materialist feminist problematic that takes as its particular focus the problem of the subject – more specifically the discursively constructed subject” (*ibidem*: *xiii*) but she sticks to the *early* materialist feminist critique of social totalities such as patriarchy and racism (*ibid.*: *xi*). Hennessy claims that feminism and postmodernized Marxism (or post-Althusserian Marxism) have co-constituted each other and the issue of a paternal discourse is, according to Hennessy, irrelevant (*ibid.*: 26). The account that she offers, however, isolates an early feminist materialism that has reached an impasse due to its inability “to satisfactorily generalize about the complex interrelations of support and opposition that constitute the interdetermination of capitalism and patriarchy” (*ibid.*: 36) and a postmodernism that has become a regionalism (*ibid.*). She isolates a mainstream discourse for solving the problems of feminist materialism:

“My argument that feminism’s aims can best be served by embracing a global social analytic implies that we need a way of thinking about the relationship between language and subjectivity that can explain their connection to other aspects of material life. Post-Althusserian theories of ideology offer this sort of conceptual framework” (*ibid.*: 37).

This post-Marxism serves as an origin that is damaging for ‘new’ feminist standpoint theory: in the end, it *does* have a paternal discourse. Hennessy ends up *preferring* a mainstream theory, and arguing *against* early feminist materialism (*cf. ibid.*: 75) and her postmodernized feminist standpoint theory is *not* continuous with second-wave materialist feminism.

Landry and MacLean (see 1993: 68-9), in Materialist Feminisms, have constructed the same Oedipal, linear narrative. They ask:

“Why should materialism be any more compatible than Marxism with feminism? And why should we in the 1990s now be interested in vaguely nineteenth century-sounding materialist solutions to problems of this postmodern moment?” (*ibidem*: 61).

On the basis, that is, of a complication of ‘materialism’ as a category (*ibid.*: 3-6), they assert:

“These are some of the questions and emphases that a deconstructive materialist feminism might raise in return to Marxism via textual reading. Perhaps surprisingly, these are not the questions and emphases of most Marxist or materialist analyses, even the most recent ones written in the wake of poststructuralism. We think that a deconstructive take can provide a real breakthrough in working simultaneously towards a feminist and a materialist analysis, by recognizing and working away at the discontinuities and contradictions that occur in the process of articulating these forms of critique” (*ibid.*: 63).

What they then plead for is an encounter between mainstream postmodernized materialism (e.g. the cultural materialism of Raymond Williams or the work of Derrida) and feminism in the postmodern era and they find their exemplary implementation in the work of Spivak. Spivak, they argue, returns to Marx, yet in a manner different from the return constituted in the 1970s. Her reading is not “orthodox or fundamentalist” but rather “a deconstructive reading of them” (*ibid.*), thus considering the texts *qua texts*. She does not see Marx’s texts as reductive, but as texts producing “potentially productive contradictions” (*ibid.*: 64). Their reliance on Spivak and Spivak’s methodology seems to suggest continuity between women, but it is built on her work that exemplifies Derrida.

The final example of the bridging of feminist standpoint theories and postmodern feminism I discuss here is written from a “*generational* situatedness in political and disciplinary terms” (Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa 2004: 309; emphasis in original). From a positioning that resembles what I take to be ‘third wave,’ Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa attempt to build rather than ‘rescue’ (*cf.* Hirschmann [1997] 2004, Wylie 2004) feminist standpoint theory from its postmodern critiques. They rely on the *debate* surrounding feminist standpoint theory (Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa 2004: 309) to claim that the subject of feminist standpoint theory is collective (*ibidem*: 312). This allows them to theorize an intimate relationship between feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism. This is not to say that they (intend to) produce a progress narrative according to which feminist postmodernism solves feminist modernism’s problems:

“When translating feminist struggles and their achievements into theories, we would rather be *better with/ because of* – than *better than* those who came before us” (*ibidem*: 314; emphasis in original).

The continuum they allow for provides an an-Oedipal genealogy. In addition, they hint at a knowing subject that is more complex than simply plural or multiple. In this dissertation the plural or multiple knowing subject – an individual subject defined by gender *and* race/ethnicity or the internally contradicted individual subject – has been argued *not* to be necessarily qualitatively different from the subject that is marked by gender alone. In the next

section I will discuss Nelson's knowing subject as a theorization of Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa's re-defined feminist knowing subject. I will show that this is a subject that makes a difference and that that the subject in question *exceeds* postmodernized feminist standpoint theory in systematicity.

2.2.2.2 Against Epistemological Individualism: Nelson

In 'The Radical Future of Feminist Empiricism' Nancy Tuana introduces Nelson's communal knowing subject as a connector for the field of feminist epistemology. Studying Nelson's work, Tuana (1992: 100-1) "discovered that despite a few protests to the contrary Nelson actually creates bridges between [the] three alternatives [of feminist epistemology], bridges that undermine the either/ or divisions that separate them." Tuana reads Nelson as a neo-Quinian scholar who produces another Oedipal narrative. She is not always clear about her evaluation of Nelson (is she an empiricist, feminist empiricist, feminist neo-empiricist or the creator of a wholly new feminist epistemology?). Here I want to stress Tuana's reading of Nelson's *bridging* feminist epistemic categories that produces a story about feminist epistemology that does *not* suffer from Oedipality. This is what Tuana argues:

"It is important to stress that I am not here claiming that Nelson's fundamentally altered feminist empiricism is superior to feminist standpoint epistemologies or feminist postmodern epistemologies. Rather I believe that Nelson's radically revised feminist empiricism dissolves the apparent inconsistencies between the three epistemologies. Nelson's insights provide a lens for understanding the ways in which these three feminist perspectives augment or complement one another, thereby removing the necessity of an either/or choice" (*ibidem*: 105).

Two things strike me in this quotation. On the one hand Tuana argues for moving beyond Harding's classification, but she does not relate this to other such attempts, namely attempts at postmodernizing feminist standpoint theory. On the other hand Tuana uses a postmodern formulation – an insight being a lens, a device *mediating* the three feminist epistemologies – when explaining the usefulness of Nelson's theory. Despite this contradiction, the actual bridges Tuana deals with concern the bridging of feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism, and of feminist empiricism and feminist postmodernism. Nelson's knowing subject (a community instead of an individual) is said to be bridging the feminist standpoint theoretical insight that women's experiences are meaningful in the women's movement and the feminist postmodernist subject as a subject in process (*ibid.*: 108). And the non-foundationalist non-relativism Nelson proposes is said to bridge feminist empiricism and feminist postmodernism (*ibid.*: 112). I consider it to be important to reflect upon Tuana's work on Nelson in the context of the construction of third wave materialism as it seems to offer an alternative both to the postmodernization of feminist standpoint theory and to the classificatory epistemic strategy. What does Nelson's approach look like? Can we read her work as being (a forerunner of) third-wave materialist work?

In ‘Epistemological Communities’ Nelson addresses some of the issues that I have been trying to put on the agenda while reviewing (postmodernized) feminist standpoint theory. On the one hand her account seems to follow the postmodernization of feminist standpoint theory by focusing on the issue of the multiple/ plural feminist knowing subject. On the other hand, however, her notion of the ‘communal’ goes further than a simple quantification. Nelson writes about feminist empiricism in the 1990s, thus it can be assumed that her work has been influenced both by feminist standpoint approaches and by its postmodern critiques. What conceptualization of the knowing subject is to be found in the work of Nelson? This is what she argues:

“The notion of ‘situation’ or ‘location’ is increasingly complex and fertile in feminist theory (and certainly more complex than prefeminist empiricist and Marxist epistemologies were capable of conceptualizing), and I view it as *bridging* recent feminist empiricist epistemologies, standpoint epistemologies, and some postmodern arguments” (Nelson 1993: 152 n. 1; emphasis added).

Taking over Tuana’s vocabulary, Nelson argues that ‘situation’ or ‘location’ as theoretical constructs have become transversal connectors connecting Harding’s *three* feminist epistemological strands. Her discussion of epistemological communities begins with a discussion of three assumptions about ‘agents of epistemology’ that are equally transversal and that lean on feminist epistemologies. First of all, she argues that ‘agents of epistemology’ are “persons, embodied and situated in specific social and historical contexts, who know, with both their embodiment and ‘situations’ relevant to their knowing” (*ibidem*: 121). Nelson opposes her notion of agents of epistemology to the Cartesian knowing subject. The latter subject is an “abstract (context-independent and disembodied) ‘individual[...].’ of foundationalist epistemologies [...] passive, a recipient or collector of knowledge” (*ibid.*). The former agents are “situated (as well as contested)” and “they shape, as well as undergo and absorb, experience” (*ibid.*). The second assumption “is that views of the agents of epistemology are not isolated or isolatable, [...] but deeply related to other features of an epistemology, particularly assumptions about the nature and role of evidence” (*ibid.*: 121-2). Here, Nelson argues that, whereas foundationalist epistemologies assumed that “evidence is definitive and ‘self-announcing,’” “current frameworks” recognize “that standards of evidence are historically relative and dynamic, emerging concomitantly with the processes through which knowledge is generated, rather than having been laid down prior to these processes” (*ibid.*: 122). The third assumption Nelson formulates “is that epistemology is radically interdependent with other knowledge and undertakings” (*ibid.*: 123). This means that, opposed to Cartesian foundationalism, “the deep implausibility of ‘epistemological individualism’” (*ibid.*: 122; for the term see Addelson and Potter 1991: 12) is considered. This implausibility came to the fore thinking through “the implications of feminist scholarship and activism” (*cf.* Bracke and Puig de la Bellacasa above) as well as the fact that “human biology

dictates an interdependency that undermines the self-sufficiency implicit in the modernist view of ‘selves’” (Nelson 1993: 123). Nelson thus suggests, continuously relying on feminist epistemological work, “a deeper change in our view of the agents of epistemology than that reflected in the use of plural terms” (*ibidem*; emphasis added). Consequently, Nelson isolates ‘epistemological communities’ as the agents of epistemology, but after doing so, she immediately argues that *postmodernism* has argued *against* this anti-Cartesian standpoint (*ibid.*). Whereas Nelson argues that ‘epistemological communities’ involves a qualitative shift away from epistemological individualism (*ibid.*: 124), the postmodernists who argue *against* such a positioning have stayed confined within Cartesian epistemology.³⁰ Systematically speaking, Nelson’s intervention in feminist epistemology follows the same cartographical line of argumentation and is related to my argument about new materialism. As such, in this dissertation I will sometimes refer to what is/ can be effected by the work of Nelson.³¹

Nelson’s discussion of the three transversal assumptions regarding agents of epistemology leads her to theorizing non-exhaustive dichotomies (see Introduction). In other words, whereas she has set up her case to counter Cartesianism (and she will continue to do so throughout the article) and she has *indirectly* opposed postmodernist non-foundationalism (*ibid.*: 129) and the fact that postmodernist accounts stage their relation to Cartesianism according to a dialecticist opposition. What are the dichotomies Nelson claims are non-exhaustive? Nelson, for starters, asks whether feminist epistemologies should opt for either the Cartesian subject or the postmodern subject in process of Kristeva. Nelson explains:

“The arguments I offer for the epistemological priority of communities are intended, in one sense, to suggest that these options are not exhaustive – in part by revealing how this particular dichotomy presumes individualism” (*ibid.*: 128).

In other words, Nelson claims that the two positionings share epistemological individualism that is to be countered in order for an epistemology to be qualitatively different. The second dichotomy Nelson wants to discard concerns the idea that epistemologists work (in the context of justification) with absolute standards vs. the postmodern evaluation of such ideas as lacking intellectual rigour. This, she claims, is related to opposing Truth with truths (or relativism) (*ibid.*). Nelson has constructed her account opposing both totalization and relativism (*ibid.*; cf. Haraway 1988b) thus showing that

“in arguing for communal accounts of agents and evidence, I am suggesting that we abandon the individualism and demands for Archimedean points that underlie both objectivism and some contemporary versions of judgmental relativism” (Nelson 1993: 129).

³⁰ Later Nelson (1993: 128) claims (referring to the next step in her argument):

“if we grant the three dichotomies [...], we should at least be clear that we are committing ourselves to the *terms* of Cartesian epistemology – terms the contemporary advocates of such dichotomies claim, correctly, are bankrupt.”

³¹ Nelson’s strong plea for researching “how knowledge is generated” (*ibidem*: 126) will be dealt with in chapter 4 of this dissertation.

Nelson tries to show that the Cartesian vs. postmodern subject *and* the foundationalist vs. relativist non-foundationalist position are not opposites, but the two sides of one and the same coin. This clearly resonates with new materialism. The non-exhaustive dichotomies structuring Nelson's discussion exemplify, albeit in different terms, the features of third wave materialism (see pars. 1.4, 2.4.2). What Nelson's account shows is to what extent a transversal connector – in her case 'situation'/ 'location'/ 'communality,' and in my case 'matter'/ 'materiality' – allows for a non-linear journey through feminist epistemology. Furthermore, her 'epistemological communities' discusses the three categories of feminist epistemology *simultaneously* (*i.e.* cartographically).

Reviewing the work of Nelson has explicated an account that qualitatively shifts the causally linear terms of second-wave feminist epistemology. This shift is systematically related to new materialism. Nelson's work stands on its own in feminist epistemology and provides further proof for the radicality of the qualitative shift engendered by new materialism. In the second part of this chapter I will deal with the disciplinarity, continentality, and generationality of the shifting alluded to here. The question I engage with is how to get around not the structure but rather the *unmarked nature* of the classification of feminist epistemic categories?

2.3 Does Feminist Standpoint Theory Have a Standpoint?³²

2.3.1 Introduction: Disciplinarity and Continentality

In 'Standpoint in Question' Prins argues that most incarnations of feminist standpoint theory (those of Evelyn Fox Keller, Code, Harding and Collins) suffer from a certain innocence. On the one hand they proclaim and theorize the radical positioning of the 'outsider within' who is in the position

“[to see] prejudice and interests where others think there is just neutrality and objectivity, [to point] at differences where others merely see the same (human beings)” (Prins 1997: 78).

The 'outsider within,' Prins argues, “notices these things because she is affected by them” (*ibidem*). On the other hand

“the (Black) feminist subject of knowledge appears as one who is emotionally balanced, flexible, open-minded, respectful to different approaches, and both willing and able to put herself in the place of 'others'. [...] This envisioned subject of knowledge appears to meet perfectly the modern, humanistic standards of normality, rationality and moral decency” (*ibid.*: 77).

Prins argues that ideas stemming from the European Enlightenment pervade feminist standpoint theories and that these ideas emanate an innocence contradictory to the outsider

³² Cf. Karin Widerberg's (1998: 135) 'the position of positioning' which points at the fact that terms such as positioning and location stem from US feminist theory, but are not marked as such.

within itself. In what follows, I will deal with the ‘standpoint’ of feminist standpoint theory to show that some issues have, indeed, been left unanswered by this influential theory. I discuss these issues in a detailed manner because new materialism should not fall into the traps these unanswered questions have set. I will claim that feminist standpoint theory *has no* standpoint due to the fact that it is unable to theorize its own discursive and material locatedness even though one of the defining qualities of standpoint is its ability to understand itself.

In the previous section I have briefly touched upon the fact that feminist epistemology, in its canonized materialist incarnation (‘feminist standpoint theory’), is an Anglo-American phenomenon. The scholars reviewed or mentioned are all North-American or British and Harding’s classification was written in the US and has been published and disseminated from there. In the debate about feminist standpoint theory, however, the (national) positioning of the theory and the accompanying disciplinarity goes largely unmentioned. I will argue that the Anglo-American locatedness of feminist standpoint theory, the theorists writing *about* feminist standpoint theory, and feminist epistemology can be said (after Richard Dyer (1993)) to go *unmarked*. In other words, I will try to illustrate that the standpoint of standpoint escapes from analysis even though it defines the theory and the statements made about the theory. It has been suggested that in cases of ‘unmarkedness’ the issue has to be approached indirectly in order to tackle it (Hermes *et al.* 1995) and that is what I have set out to do in this section. Below I will go into feminist materialisms that are *not* canonized as feminist standpoint theories or exemplary instantiations of second-wave feminist materialism. I will analyze the debate in the field of feminist theory and women’s studies³³ about ‘French feminism’ and the recent rise of ‘Australian feminism.’ These debates show clear national and disciplinary boundaries and by scrutinizing this ‘boundary-work’³⁴ I can shed light on the ways in which these boundaries have escaped from view in the context of feminist standpoint theory.

2.3.1.1 French Feminism is a Universalism

The debate about French feminism³⁵ took off in the 1980s. It was engendered by the publication of New French Feminisms: An Anthology by Elaine Marks and Isabelle de

³³ In this dissertation the term ‘(European) women’s studies’ is being used for what is generated in academia by ‘(European) women’s/ gender/ feminist studies,’ ‘(European) women’s/ gender studies,’ ‘(European) gender studies’ and ‘(European) women’s studies’ alike.

³⁴ Thomas Gieryn (1995) coined this term.

³⁵ Karen Offen (1995: 57-8) claims that feminism in France has some special features when compared to other European feminisms. These are:

“the open (or public) and constantly repeated attribution of an extraordinary ‘influence’ or ‘power’ to women even as they are deliberately excluded (from 1590 on) from wielding royal authority. [...] the enormous strategic and political importance of bio-medical thinking in France in the secular effort to dethrone theological thinking. [...] the insistence on maternity and the maternal element, including its socio-political possibilities, and the fact that this

Courtivron in the US in 1980.³⁶ The publication of this collection of feminist texts translated from the French generated a massive amount of criticism, especially from English-speaking graduate students working from France/ Paris (Braidotti and Weinstock 1980, Gibbs 1980a, 1980b, Huston 1980, Jardine 1981, Gallop 1992; see also Duchen 1986, Braidotti 2001c, Magarey and Sheridan 2000). The critics focused especially on the *locatedness* of Marks and de Courtivron; the choices they had made were revealed as being (Anglo-) American centered. In the 1990s the nature of the debate about French feminism shifted as scholars working from the US, Britain, and Australia began to involve themselves (*e.g.* Schor 1995, Leonard and Adkins eds 1996, Winter 1997, Moses 1998) with French scholars (*e.g.* Delphy 1995) other than those who are considered to form the Holy Trinity of French feminism – Hélène Cixous, Irigaray, and Kristeva. Subsequently, Beyond French Feminisms: Debate on Women, Politics, and Culture in France, 1981-2001 (Célestin *et al.* Eds 2003) was published. This text works from the assumption that contemporary feminist debates in France differ from what has become known as French feminism in the US in the 1970s, yet are continuous in a culturally specific way with “the French feminisms of three decades ago” (Célestin *et al.* 2003: 1; emphasis added). Compared to French feminism, ‘Australian feminism’ as a denominator for a specific feminist theoretical tradition is a more recent phenomenon, albeit that the term was coined in the 1988 edition of Michèle Barrett’s Women’s Oppression Today (see Battersby 2000: 2). The argument is made that Australian corporeal feminism – the feminism of Lloyd, Grosz, and Gatens – makes out a *distinctive* feminist theoretical perspective and is not an imitation (thus inferior) of either French post-structuralist feminism or US postmodern feminism (*ibidem*: 1; *cf.* Colebrook 2000b, MacCormack 2006, Goddard 2006). The following paragraph reviews the debate about French feminism as, essentially, a “‘French’ phenomenon” that is “actually not very ‘French’ at all” due to the following reasons:

“Not only because some of its main spokeswomen are not French-born: Irigaray being Belgian, Cixous Algerian and Kristeva Bulgarian. But also because ‘French feminism’ really built its fortune along the Trans-Atlantic axis and became essentially an American phenomenon” (Braidotti, Vonk and Van Wichelen 2000: 168).

In ‘French Feminism is a Universalism’ Naomi Schor³⁷ suggests that the second-wave feminist insight that all universalisms have been false universalisms implies the existence of a ‘true’ universalism. This true universalism, she suggests, remains largely untheorized in the

accompanied a falling birthrate, throughout the nineteenth century and up until 1950. [...] a peculiar, even bizarre character of French republican nationalism.” As a consequence of the latter issue, important for the discussion in this chapter, I would like to mention anti-Americanism as particularly strong in France (see Ezekiel 2002, 2005).

Cf. Picq 2002.

³⁶ In a recent article published in the European Journal of Women’s Studies Sylvia A. Gambaudo (2007: 96) claims that Alice Jardine has coined the term ‘French feminism’ in 1982. I take this to be a misreading.

³⁷ Also part of the English-speaking graduate students mentioned above (see Braidotti 2001c).

US, whereas feminists in France have made it into their focal point; in France “the universal remains, despite all its misappropriations, a valorized category to be rethought and refashioned” (Schor 1995: 21). Schor suggests US feminists are not aware of the universalism implied in ‘false universalism.’ She insinuates that they suffer from a certain theoretical inadequacy.³⁸ In their critical review of New French Feminisms Braidotti and Jane Weinstock (1980: 25) gave voice to the same argument: US feminist scholars have become fascinated by French feminism because it provided them with a theory.³⁹ They claimed, however, that

“[b]y failing to analyse specific occurrences and contextual ties, many American feminists participate jubilantly in this mirror game without recognising its dangers.

The result is an unproblematic reflection. Instead of making an effective meeting point between two distinct and yet interrelated phenomena – French and American feminism – this structure simply creates a relationship of reciprocal dependence. The U.S. has the material means; France has the ideas and theoretical sophistication – the perfect couple” (*ibidem*).

Braidotti and Weinstock provide a reading of the creation of French feminism in which Stanton’s Franco-American Dis-Connection is key (*cf.* Varikas 2006: 46-50 for a recent example). Similar to Schor, they create two ‘camps.’ It is the economically more powerful US ‘camp’ that is epistemologically disadvantaged as it “fail[s] to reflect back upon itself” (Braidotti and Weinstock 1980: 25).

The latter analysis gets to be reproduced in analyses of French feminism undertaken by English-speaking scholars in the 1990s. Australian Bronwyn Winter (1997: 216) in ‘(Mis)representations: What French feminism *isn’t*’ claims:

“Another argument has been advanced that Americans in particular, as heavily and thoroughly sheltered as they are from anything vaguely resembling marxism, have difficulty coming to grips with social sciences-based feminism, also known as materialist feminism.”

At first glance Winter’s evaluation sounds strange: sociology as an empirical discipline can be assumed to suit the Americans well (*cf.* Stanton 1980) and social science-based feminism can be assumed to be a good home for the ‘theoretically ineffective’ (*cf.* Foster 1999). What happens here, however, is effected by the wish to *rescue* those versions of French feminist theory that are not included by most American celebratory texts on French feminism’s Holy Trinity. Here Schor, and Braidotti and Weinstock seem to *construe* a universalism (another yet equally universalizing French feminism), and to (re)produce the Franco-American Dis-Connection from the other side of the dichotomy. Whether this is a valid argument or not (asymmetry!), scholars like Winter (see also Jenson 1990) work on the *diversification* of French feminist theory – a sociological branch of Marxist French feminist theory (Christine Delphy and others) that is opposed to a philosophical, linguistic branch of post-structural French feminist theory (the Holy Trinity). A universalized American feminism is left firmly

³⁸ An argument in line with the French one is to be found in Christine di Stefano’s contribution to Feminism/Postmodernism (Nicholson ed 1990). Di Stefano works in the US, which implies that we should never essentialize US, Anglo-US, or French theorists.

³⁹ Note that this happened in the US *women’s movement* as well, where the work of De Beauvoir was taken on *before* it had been taken on by French feminists (Van der Tuin 2007a).

in place here and the ‘origin’ of the texts that create the Holy Trinity are not being diversified. Marks and de Courtivron, as well as scholars such as Winter, work from a (national) location that is not made explicit or reflected upon. Even Schor’s argument that French feminists have been working on universalism and American feminists have not, overlooks the fact that she is involved in universalizing notions about feminism in/ from France and feminism in/ from the US, this makes the title of her essay even more ironic. In these texts on the debates over French feminism the *location* of the author ‘is not reflected back upon.’ It is left unchallenged, and in the context of feminist standpoint theory, *unexplained*. This results in the universalization of contemporary American or Anglo-American feminism: it is from a universalized Anglo-American location that the Holy Trinity of French feminism was created in the 1970s and it is from a universalized Anglo-American location (*Anglo-American*, as Diana Leonard and Lisa Adkins (see below) work in the UK, and Winter in Australia) that the debate was commented upon in the 1990s.

The texts coming out of the US, UK, and Australia in the second half of the 1990s strongly enact the *rescuing* of French feminists other than Cixous, Kristeva, and Irigaray. According to the dialectics of sex, this is a gesture that masculinizes the Anglo-American scholars – they are the scholars that come to the rescue, and French feminists, as a consequence, are feminized by being objectified (*cf.* Braidotti 1994a: 209). Paradoxically in the context of the project of diversifying French feminism, two universals are created. A clear exemplification of this can be found in Leonard and Adkins’ Sex in Question: French Materialist Feminism.⁴⁰ Here the *materialism* of Irigaray is ignored (see *e.g.* Adkins and Leonard 1996: 7). This is an example that illustrates that in order to save other French (materialist) feminists from oblivion, the *reading* of the Anglo-American scholars (universalizing French feminism) remains untouched. Irigaray’s work is not re-read nor do Adkins and Leonard seek recourse to those scholars that have provided alternative (materialist) readings of, among others, Irigaray. Here, another dichotomy is created: one along disciplinary lines (*cf.* Braidotti and Weinstock 1980: 27). Adkins and Leonard claim that the Marxist feminism that has remained popular in UK (but has never been popular in the US (*ibidem*: 8)) suffers from an economism. Whereas French radical feminism, which is the materialist feminism of Delphy, Monique Wittig, Collette Guillaumin, Nicole-Claude Mathieu, and Paola Tabet, theorizes economic, bodily, sexual, affective relations, and subjectivity without (re)inserting an hierarchical ordering. (British) materialist feminism is said to have treated these areas (by and large the material and the cultural (*ibid.*: 15)) in a disjunctive manner (*ibid.*: 14), whereas the French

“authors show the contribution that materialist analysis can make to a fuller understanding of the constitution of gender by their understanding of the significance of sex, sexuality and the

⁴⁰ I want to thank Brigitte Lhomond for suggesting this book to me.

body. They also show that feminist materialism is far from shackled to economic determinacy [*sic*], and certainly does not imply a naïve presumption of the determinacy of matter over consciousness or structure over agency” (*ibid.*: 19).

What is produced here are two things. Firstly, a diversification of feminist theories coming from France. Yet again, two schools are created – the French feminist post-structuralism and the French feminist materialism. Irigaray is not being positioned in either of these options. Secondly, Marxist materialism is diversified along an intra-European, trans-national axis (France versus the UK). The latter diversification does show an awareness of the fact that ‘materialism is not one,’ whereas the former does not show an awareness of the fact that the materialism that has been named a social sciences-approach in the debate about French feminism is not exhaustive of the materialism coming from France.

I argued above that attempts to diversify French feminism come from Anglo-American feminists as well as from feminists from France. This Franco-American *Connection* is created on the basis of a specific definition of materialism that distorts the consequences I have listed above. The French feminists participating in the debate are those that are not included in the canonized reading of French feminism. Cixous, Kristeva, and Irigaray do not participate. A case in point would be Delphy; a fragment of Delphy’s ‘For a Materialist Feminism’ (published under pseudonym ‘C.D.’ (Delphy [1975] 1981)) was included in New French Feminisms and her work *has* been available to American scholars from 1980 onwards⁴¹ but it was *not* included in the canon of second-wave materialist feminism. Delphy’s materialist feminism is a radical feminism that stems from the debate about difference in the 1970s French/ Parisian women’s movement. Feminists from the *Psych et po* group (Antoinette Fouque and others) argued for an analysis of feminine difference. Whereas the radical feminists of the journal Questions féministes (Delphy and others; now Nouvelles questions féministes) argued that ‘difference’ is an idealist notion and involves a biologism (Duchen 1986: 20-1). The latter group focused on the material dimension of the oppression of women, and continues to do so, whereas the former focused on the psychosexual dimension (*ibidem*: 32). Next to Delphy, Wittig stands out (*cf.* Adkins and Leonard 1996). Wittig’s work was made available in English in New French Feminisms and her ‘materialist lesbianist’ (Wittig 1992: *xiii*) work was key to another heated debate in the 1970s French/ Parisian women’s movement that revolved around political lesbianism. Wittig ([1980] 1992: 32), whose ‘The Straight Mind’ was published in Questions féministes alongside an article that (re)claimed heterosexuality for feminists. In this essay, she claimed that “‘woman’ has meaning only in heterosexual systems of thought and heterosexual economic systems.” In other words, “[l]esbians are not women” (*ibidem*; *cf.* Wittig [1981] 1992). Wittig’s lesbian separatist materialism sparked a heated debate and caused a major split in the French

⁴¹ The work of Wittig is also available in English. As such Delphy and Wittig stand out amongst the French radical feminists. See for availability of texts esp. Moses 1998.

movement (Duchen ed. 1987: 78-9). Eventually, the French radical feminists opted for the position that “heterosexual relations are a site of struggle and that lesbianism without feminism leaves patriarchy intact” (*ibidem*: 80). Wittig’s work, both the theoretical and the literary work, was taken on by North-American and Canadian feminists as of the late 1970s. Louise Turcotte (1992: vii), translator of Wittig’s *The Straight Mind and Other Essays*, typifies Wittig as *the* French feminist and even claims that Wittig’s argument about the lesbian as not a woman (made first at a 1978 US conference) has clear connections with political lesbianist work done before 1978 in the US (*ibidem*: ix). All in all, Turcotte’s most general typification of Wittig’s work – “Wittig’s lesbian thought does not aim to transgress but clearly to do away with the categories of gender and sex on which the very notion of universality rests” (*ibid.*: xii) – resonates clearly with Butler’s undoing gender, with the epitome of contemporary gender theory.

It is important to note that the French theorists trying to insert themselves in the Anglo-American dominated canon of French feminist theory write from a point of view that is as universalist as the point of view of Anglo-American scholars analyzing French feminism or rescuing French materialist scholars. Delphy and others do not seem to see through these issues because their texts are *not* written from a standpoint either. In other words, Prins was right: feminist materialists are not necessarily non-innocent. I wholeheartedly agree with the dissenting voice of Cynthia Kraus in ‘*Anglo-American Feminism Made in France: Crise et Critique de la Représentation.*’ She argues that the way in which binary oppositions such as sex versus gender, essentialism versus constructivism, and antifeminism versus feminism have been distributed in France⁴² has enabled French feminists to deconstruct what Anglo-American feminists have named French feminism and to define themselves *in opposition to* Anglo-American feminism (Kraus 2005: 165; cf. Jardine 1981: 225).⁴³ This dialecticism has led French feminists to overlook self-definition or self-positioning, which is what Kraus, as a consequence, argues for: French feminists should situate themselves in France/ as French. Similarly I argued above that Anglo-American feminists should do the same.

What I have reviewed so far are several dichotomous charts surrounding the issue of ‘French feminism.’ Firstly, French feminism has been created in the US and has been constructed in opposition to (unmarked) US feminism. Secondly, ‘French feminism’ has been

⁴² The first terms of mentioned conceptual pairs is said to be connected to *Psych et po*, and the second to *(Nouvelles) Questions féministes*.

⁴³ At the same time, Kraus (2005: 184) continues, this has enabled French feminist scholars to Anglo-Americanize issues of gender. This has led to crisis in representation, or to no room for gender studies in France. Ezekiel (2002: 354) claims that the “spectre” of autonomous women’s studies units in the US has caused the French to go for integration. Ezekiel lists a negative effect of this: now disciplinary trained scholars can claim to be specialists in (interdisciplinary) women’s studies. These arguments will be dealt with in chapter 5. Ezekiel (2002) has also claimed that Anglo-US feminism is used in France to be not only anti-American but also anti-feminist.

diversified by both Anglo-American feminist sensitivity to social sciences-based French feminism and by radical materialist feminists from France. Neither French scholars (such as Delphy) nor Anglo-American scholars have read a materialist dimension in the work of those French feminists that *have* been canonized in the dominant, Anglo-American ‘body’ of feminist theory. Therefore, an opposition is created between the so-called psychosexual and essentialist work of Cixous, Irigaray, and Kristeva, and the materialist work of French radical feminists or Anglo-US social sciences-based feminist theory. Hence, the feminist materialism involved ends up being universalized and the US or Anglo-US domination of the field of feminist theory in general remains undertheorized.

In the context of the current chapter’s positioning exercise it is important to note what goes unmentioned at this junction of national and disciplinary axes, namely the category ‘bodily materialism,’ a category used by Braidotti (see *e.g.* 2002a: 16 *ff.*) and others to discuss the materialism characteristic of the work of Irigaray. Jane Gallop (1992: 46) claims that “[we American scholars] associate *écriture féminine* with the body, but we do not often associate it with what Woolf calls ‘the body of the people,’ with ‘the body of women.’” This, she claims, is a misreading. Gallop claims to know that French feminists of *écriture féminine* have not wanted to be read as High Theorists (since this involves a masculinizing gesture) nor have they wanted to become token feminists:

“Rather than vying for token status, trying to be recognized as good as men (and thus ‘different from most other women’) ‘French feminism’ claimed that Everywoman already could produce the high culturally privileged writing” (*ibidem*).

In the next section I will discuss bodily materialism as a feminist materialism that the above discussants have failed to notice due to the construction of dichotomous chart(s) with the goal to diversify French feminism, yet ending up relocating and reinstalling the Franco-American Dis-Connection. I will read bodily materialism (and corporeal feminism) as *other than* a reterritorialization. Bodily materialism, that is, cuts across mentioned schools of thought (post-structuralism,⁴⁴ and materialism; the diverse feminisms discussed) and as a consequence it *questions* the traditional disciplinary nature of materialism (social sciences) and post-structuralism (humanities). It also both sheds light on and avoids the Franco-American Dis-Connection.

2.3.1.2 Bodily Materialism: The Case of Irigaray

It is my argument that the debate about ‘French feminism’ is imprisoned by the dichotomies between the English and French speaking world, and between the ways in which the relationships between (feminist) modernism/ (feminist) post-modernism and (feminist) post-

⁴⁴ Post-structuralism refers to a French tradition, and postmodernism to an Anglo-American one (Fredric Jameson and others). For the project of this dissertation it is imperative to be explicit about both the intricate relationships of the two terms and the very distinct genealogies. See Chap. 3.

modernism/ (feminist) post-structuralism are construed in the debate. The two sets of dichotomies intersect as well, which becomes clear when the disciplinary nature of the constituency is taken into consideration. 'French feminism' easily becomes a philosophical and linguistic phenomenon (feminist post-structuralism). French *materialism* then becomes its social scientific opposite (feminist modernism). Here, feminist post-modernism is referred to the UK and the US, since there is no place for a French materialism that is *not* a universalist, foundationalist modernism. In other words, bodily materialism cuts across these disciplinary homes and gets lost.⁴⁵ I have argued that attempts by English speaking scholars to rescue a French feminism that is other than post-structuralist and attempts by the French radical feminists to gain recognition have confirmed rather than re-located the intersecting dichotomous pairs, and are 'God tricks' rather than standpoints. Thus, the problem of the unmarked canon of feminist theory has not been solved from an Anglo-American social sciences-perspective nor from a French social sciences-point of view.

In this section I want to do two things. Firstly, I want to show that the reading of the work of Irigaray as *bodily materialist*, *i.e.* different from the canonized readings of 'French feminism' reviewed above, can overcome the drawbacks I have mentioned. Secondly, I want to reflect upon a third Continent in play: Australia. Recently the box created for Australian feminism in the late 1980s has taken flight. Australian feminists are said to forge a *corporeal feminism*. The corporeal feminism of the *Australian* Holy Trinity – Lloyd, Grosz, and Gatens – is intimately related to the bodily materialism of Irigaray. Irigaray's French feminism has been influential in Australia via volumes such as Grosz's Sexual Subversions: Three French Feminists (1989) and Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism (1994b). Colebrook (2004a: 145 *ff.*), a member of a new generation of Australian feminist theorists, working however in the UK, has read French Irigaray and Australian Grosz and Gatens as *materialist instead of essentialist* feminists. Colebrook claims that this group of feminist theorists works with a positive conceptualization of sexual difference. In this section, I argue that theorists in want of a conceptualization of Australian feminism that does not produce a 'French feminism' for the 21st Century should take into account the theoretical travelling of Australian feminist theory and the subverting effects of the genealogies/ cartographies created on its behalf to avoid the territorializing tendency of claiming another 'national' feminist theoretical tradition created from a God's eye view (*cf.* Braidotti 2003b: 195-6). The idea here is that feminism has to *become* trans-Atlantic or inter-continental and should not stop us from discussing French feminism or Australian feminism. Trans-Atlanticity or inter-continentiality,

⁴⁵ Johanna Foster (1999) has argued that US gender theory, especially the work of feminist sociologists, is misrepresented in French theories of sexual difference. I take issue with this project that does not consider the problematic in relation to the Franco-American Dis-Connection.

it will be argued, can only ‘overcome’ the drawbacks of national indexing tendencies if the tendency to national indexing and its consequences are kept in mind.⁴⁶

Let me start by making clear that it is exactly the *dichotomous* nature of the debate surrounding French feminism that can be, and has been, tackled by reading the work of Irigaray in a manner that is different from the above ways of doing so. The ‘new’ reading however has not diametrically opposed the stifled debate about French feminism in general nor the work of Irigaray in particular. Dorothea Olkowski (2000: 88) in ‘Body, Knowledge and Becoming-Woman: Morpho-logic in Deleuze and Irigaray’ claims that North-American feminists in particular have found it hard to read Irigaray as other than essentialist, *i.e.* to engage with Irigaray’s work instead of object to it. Olkowski, referring to the work of Tina Chanter, has focused on the *effects* of this “charge of essentialism” claiming:

“the attitudes of American feminists towards Irigaray, from caution to outright dismissal, serve to enforce or instantiate the very structure of dichotomies that Irigaray wishes to put into question” (*ibidem*: 89).

Doing this the American theorists have foreclosed engagement with Irigaray:

“I would argue that it is not merely some particular dichotomies (sex/ gender, nature/ culture, biology/ society), but the very existence of a philosophical framework that admits of dichotomies at all, which the philosophy of Irigaray challenges, and which, until the logical and philosophical limitations of a structure that tolerates dichotomy are clarified, her work may never find acceptance among contemporary feminist theorists, or even worse, will be accepted for the wrong reasons” (*ibid.*).

Olkowski claims that the theorists who object to Irigaray, according to some perverse twist (their work is predicated on dichotomization), prove Irigaray’s point. This is exactly what has been addressed by Irigaray in ‘The Question of the Other.’ What she claims in this text is that *neither* thinking equality in a Beauvoirian manner, *nor* the American version of thinking difference can serve to understand her own work on sexual difference and/ or on philosophy as predicted on sexual difference. Thinking equality and thinking difference in a manner that “valorizes difference” (Irigaray 1995: 10) produces “a feminist counter-theory” (Braidotti 1991b: 262; *cf. ibidem*: 250) and does not turn away from thinking difference as negativity, *i.e.* from conceptualizing difference in a dialecticist way:

“the operation of the negative, which typically, in order to move on to a higher level in the process of the becoming of self [*devenir soi-même*] must engage self and self in a dialectical operation, should instead engage two subjects, in order not to reduce the two to the one, the other to the same. Of course the negative is applied yet again to me, in my subjective becoming, but in this case it serves to mark the irreducibility of the other to me and not my

⁴⁶ Spivak (1993: 144) provides another take on this. She claims that “in the face of patriarchal reappropriation of decolonization, isolationist nationalisms, and internalized gendering, there can be exchange between metropolitan and decolonized feminisms” thus revisiting her earlier more or less dialectical response to French feminism. In ‘French feminism in an International Frame’ Spivak (1981: 164; emphasis in original) had been arguing against it, because of “a *deliberate* application of the doctrines of French High ‘Feminism’ to a different situation of political specificity [that] might misfire.” Importantly in the context of this chapter, this argument resulted in the claim that “the difference between ‘French’ and ‘Anglo-American’ feminism is superficial” (*ibidem*: 179) as they have in common the objectification of Third World women (*cf.* Mohanty [1986] 1988).

subsuming of that exteriority into myself. Through this gesture, the subject gives up being one and singular. It respects the other, the two, in an intersubjective relation” (Irigaray 1995: 18).

Irigaray reviews her own positioning as different from both tendencies – it is not a Beauvoirianism (*ibidem*: 8-9) nor a valorization of difference but rather the following:

“the model of the two, a two which is not a replication of the same, nor one large and the other small, but made up of two which are truly different. The paradigm of the two lies in sexual difference” (*ibid.*: 11-2).

Irigaray affirms the need to *map out* subjectivity according to this new constellation that affirms *positivity* (Braidotti 1991b: 248).

Irigaray cuts across two Continents by building up a theory of sexual difference by countering the commonality of two seemingly opposite positions in feminist theory (thinking equality and thinking hierarchical/ asymmetrical difference).⁴⁷ In ‘Learning to Think Intercontinentally: Finding Australian Routes’ Christine Battersby (2000: 1) makes the point of cutting across Continents, while keeping in mind (the) continentality (of feminist theory):

“the need to think intercontinentally: to use the local as a way of opening up models of the global or the universal, and to use the specific histories and geographies of exclusion as a means of moving beyond boundaries – including the boundaries of the sayable and the imaginable.”

In other words, Battersby does not offer ‘Australia’ as a third option, *i.e.* a synthesis, but theorizes the ways in which the work of Australian scholars is characterized differently from the positions in the dichotomized accounts that I have reviewed above. The difference could be called its ‘glocality’: “the Australian angle of vision is both distinctive (local) and yet also important to the perennial (universal) philosophical problems and concerns” (*ibidem*: 9). She claims that Australian feminist philosophy, dealing with philosophy’s past in a manner that is not thoroughly dutiful to it (*ibid.*: 14), is not a “school” but an “emergent tradition” that “starts with a re-examination, and a reconfiguration, of philosophy’s past” (*ibidem*: 4). In other words,

“such reconfigurations of ontology involve concurrent ethical, political, and methodological transitions [...] there is nothing ‘anti-rationalist’ or anti-philosophical about [it]. Nor are we dealing here with the kind of idealism or epistemological relativism that so often surfaces in North-American (and British) varieties of postmodernism. Instead, what we find are new modes of reason in which the universal is transformed through its relation with the singular. [...] Tracking these routes will take us on to a new *somewhere* in which past and present intertwine in a series of productive attempts to reconfigure the relationship between philosophy and praxis” (*ibid.*: 15; emphasis in original).

This illustrates that Australian feminism is not an anti-essentialist (*ibid.*: 5) (which could be read as a claim about its difference from a Beauvoirianism) and that the Australian intercontinentality or trans-Atlanticity theorized by Battersby exemplifies the move made by Irigaray both in theory and in practice. Let me end this exposé by going into work of Australian feminist Grosz. Grosz (1994b: *vii*) starts Volatile Bodies in an Irigarayan mode:

⁴⁷ Alice Jardine (1981: 227) argues that Kristeva does the same – “offer[ing] a space for dialogue between American and French feminism(s).”

“This book is a kind of experiment in inversion. It is based on a wager: that subjectivity can be thought, in its richness and diversity, in terms quite other than those implied by various dualisms. [...] The wager is that all the effects of subjectivity, all the significant facets and complexities of subjects, can be as adequately explained using the subject’s corporeality as a framework as it would be using consciousness or the unconscious.”⁴⁸

Grosz wants “the common assumptions regarding the body shared by both feminist theory and mainstream philosophy” to be “problematized or even bypassed” (*ibidem: ix*) in the constitution of corporeal feminism. The work of Grosz or the corporeal feminism connecting Lloyd, Grosz, and Gatens exemplifies the Australian, intercontinental or trans-Atlantic position. This position is beneficial because it is not predicated on age-old and ‘gendered’ dualisms and because it illustrates and *theorizes* malestream and second-wave feminist cartographies, and the Franco-American Dis-Connection. The latter is read here as an instance of the exchange of women (namely women theorists) through the hands of men (namely the Western philosophical canon as founded on dualistic splits), whereas intercontinentality/trans-Atlanticity is an instance of the circulation of *feminist* ideas.

2.4 Features of Third Wave Materialism

2.4.1 Introduction: Generationality

In the previous paragraphs I discussed the most important writings by feminist standpoint theorists (including the Black and lesbian standpoint) and the ways in which these theorizations have undergone ‘postmodernization.’ I have also discussed the debate over feminist materialism. When discussing the postmodernization of feminist standpoint theory, I showed that this gesture did not engender a qualitative shift in the field of feminist epistemology. I illustrated that the field remained steadily grounded in classificatory, thus dialecticist, terrain. As far as matter and materiality are concerned, I have tried to make clear that the accounts of early feminist standpoint theorists used these terms to refer, mostly, to a feminist appropriation of the Marxist ‘base,’ and sometimes to the sexualized ‘body.’ The terms were not systematically in use, although the tendency was to address non-idealism. Therefore, the differences between the explicit strands of feminist standpoint theory became evident: Black feminist standpoint theorists arguing against the theorization of truth and objectivity by the feminist standpoint theorists of the unmarked kind started to use ‘experience,’ *i.e.* re-inserting realism (cf. Collins [1997] 2004) and with that a certain idealism (who has/ documents black women’s experience?). In the second part of this chapter I considered the discussion about French and Australian feminist thought. Here feminist

⁴⁸ Grosz goes on here talking about corporeal as exteriority. See for a critique Cheah 1996 and this dissertation (when addressing the critique Butler – third-wave materialists take her to focus on the surface of bodies – has received for instance).

materialism was one of the discussion points. I showed that the materialism utilized in the debate about French feminism was defined in a very narrow manner, whereas materialism in the Australian context served as a connector shifting the terms of the stifled debate. I hope to have made clear that the way in which this discussion has been taken up in recent years has pointed at possibilities for change. Here we see the terms of feminism's dialecticism gradually shifting, due to the creation of a cartographical mode of theorizing.

In the next section I intend to do two things. First, I will clarify my claim that the relationship with 'foremothers,' constituted by the new feminist materialists, is *an-Oedipal* and as such qualitatively shifting the terms of academic feminism's generationality. This is to say, that I will now deal with the *generationality* on top of the disciplinarity and nationality/continentality discussed above in an analysis of the constitution of new materialism as a new feminist epistemic category. I will claim that the an-Oedipal narrative that has been constituted allows new materialists to break free from the teleological projections about nostalgia and/ or narcissism (*cf.* Puig de la Bellacasa 2001b). Secondly, I will elaborate on the *features* of third wave materialism, referring back to (postmodernized) feminist standpoint theory and the debate about feminist materialism trans-Atlantically and trans-disciplinary. Here I will show what Nelson's term 'non-exhaustive dichotomies' can do. All of this is intended to further substantiate my claim that what I am signalling/ determining in this dissertation involves a *qualitative shift* in the field of feminist epistemology that is worth working on – new materialism is not identical to feminist standpoint theory and the shift should *not* be conceptualized as a conventional *generational rupture* (or a rupture inducing limitedness in continental or disciplinary terms, but I will concentrate on the generationality involved). I will claim that feminist standpoint theory forms a constraint for the construction of a new materialism (feminist new materialists work with the legacy of feminist standpoint theory), but does not dictate younger feminist epistemologists according to what kind of framework they have to work. I intend to use the conceptual confusion (undecidability) surrounding both 'new materialism' and 'third wave feminism' (what is it?, who owns it?, to whom does it appeal?) to create a *viable* feminist perspective in the light of post-feminist tendencies and new realist perspectives that are rampant inside/ outside (academic) feminism.⁴⁹

⁴⁹ Despite the fact that the French are skeptical about 'third wave feminism' as a US term designating feminist action in the 1990s (Fougeyrollas-Schwebel and Varikas 2006: 9), and despite the fact that I am generally skeptical of the feminist academic flirt with 'activist' extra-university feminism (most of the times it reinforces the gap between activism and academia), I want to invite my readers to note the use of 'non-exhaustive dichotomies' by the French feminist movement *ni putes ni soumises*. See <http://www.niputesnisoumises.com/> (last accessed: September 19, 2006).

2.4.2 Undutiful and Dutiful Daughters

After showing you that a trans-disciplinary (yet discipline-conscious) and an intercontinental (yet continent-conscious) take on feminist theory leads to a sustainable new feminist outlook I would like to show how the generationality of feminist theory could be re-conceptualized so as to attain the same viability. Both Braidotti and Harding have typified feminist philosophers in general and feminist epistemologists in particular as the *undutiful* daughters of male theorists. This conceptualization of the relation between the philosophical Masters and feminists, and the relation among feminists illustrates the dialecticism that constitutes the order of what I have called second-wave feminist thought in the case of Harding (see Introduction) and the non-dialecticism of the order of third-wave feminist epistemology in the case of Braidotti who claims that, in my terms, second-wave feminist epistemologists are generally *dutiful* to the Masters. I will continue my discussion of Harding's typification of the feminist epistemologist as an undutiful daughter first. To do this I must go back to Science Question. In this book the existence and importance of empiricism, Hegelian Master-Slave dialectics, postmodern skepticism, and post-structuralist tendencies receive confirmation *by negation*. When the feminist epistemological categories are constructed on the basis of mainstream empiricism, materialism and postmodernism, they end up sharing characteristics with their paternal discourses rather than with each other. This is to say that the resulting feminist epistemologies are *as foundationalist as* their paternal discourses. Feminist empiricism claims Reason for women and feminist standpoint epistemology claims women's lives are an objective location. The fact that Harding discards the importance of the work of Chela Sandoval in the production of Haraway's designated postmodern feminist epistemology⁵⁰ is just one effect of this process. It is also an *exemplification* of the unnecessariness of the constitution of a paternal postmodern/ post-structuralist discourse on the one hand (a feminist genealogy could have been created),⁵¹ and the possibility of non-linear generationality on the other (in the 1980s Sandoval was Haraway's graduate student). Due to the competition staged amongst these categories, feminism that connects these categories (as well as the *complex* generationality involved) is being disregarded. In Harding's account, feminist epistemology is governed by what Deleuze and Guattari ([1972] 1983: 142; *cf.* Rubin 1975, Braidotti and Weinstock 1980: 26) have called an 'exchangist' framework where women do not circulate, but are allowed to circulate (or not) through the hands of men. In other words, Harding's work verifies Judith Roof's (1997: 71; *cf.* Adkins 2004) criticism of the generational dimension of academic feminism:

⁵⁰ See Chap. 1 n. 22.

⁵¹ Note that this argument also concerns 'race'/ ethnicity. Haraway in Harding's work gets assigned the role of postmodern/ post-structuralist feminist theorist who completes the black feminist disclosure of the racism of second wave movement feminism (see for the underlying pattern Hemmings 2005: 122).

“Importing the full force of Oedipal rivalry, recrimination, and debt, generation is neither an innocent empirical model nor an accurate assessment of a historical reality. Rather, generation reflects and exacerbates Oedipal relations and rivalries among women, relies on a patriarchal understanding of history and a linear, cause-effect narrative, and imports ideologies of property.”

In conclusion, Harding’s work is structured by Oedipality and the *undutifulness* of feminist epistemologists of the second-wave *reinstates* the power/knowledge of male ‘fathers.’

Reading Harding’s Oedipal conceptualization of ‘undutiful daughterhood’ through the work of Braidotti, it becomes clear that Braidotti appropriately labels such a conceptualization as an example of a *dutiful* daughterhood. In addition, Braidotti’s work dismantles Harding’s undutiful daughterhood as specifically Anglo-American. In Patterns of Dissonance Braidotti claims that feminists who want to change bad philosophy rather than philosophy *as such* (a strategy structurally equal to Harding’s feminist empiricism) and feminists who want to re-value the roles patriarchy assigns to women (equal to feminist standpoint theory) reinforce philosophy ‘proper’ and patriarchy (due to the fact that power and knowledge are intricately connected). Braidotti (1991b: 174 *ff.*), following Irigaray ([1974] 1985), calls this pattern ‘I think therefore he is.’ The solution Braidotti proposes to the sketched non-exhaustive dichotomy cannot be said to be equal to second-wave feminist epistemology’s feminist postmodernism. Braidotti’s (1991b: 209 *ff.*) *undutiful* daughters are those feminists who criticize, precisely, patriarchy and philosophy ‘proper,’ and enable the mode of ‘I think therefore *she* is.’ In addition, Braidotti (*ibidem*: 210) follows De Lauretis who has claimed that the tendency towards making classifications is to be found amongst *Anglo-American* feminist scholars. These scholars are said to engage themselves with the constitution of dialectically opposing categories and the construction of progress narratives (feminist epistemology getting more and more sophisticated), whereas European feminist scholars are said to deal with difference *as such*. The rationale here is that French feminists of sexual difference, as of the 1980s and contrary to their Anglo-American sisters who reinforce the negative effects of generationality as governed by Oedipal conflict, made the issue of (a reconceptualization of) *difference* into their main theoretical and political project. French feminist theorists did not move from a so-called universalistic difference feminism (a standpoint theory) towards a pluralistic or diversified feminism (a feminist ‘postmodernism’). Braidotti shows that this move is an Anglo-US move that has no direct bearing on the way in which feminist thought has developed in Continental Europe/ France (*cf.* Braidotti 2001c). In the broader field of second-wave feminist epistemology premised on the Franco-American Dis-Connection, radical feminists of sexual difference (*not* the radical feminists of the social sciences-kind) were either read as essentialists who confirmed the patriarchal norm by leaving it untouched (another language, another realm, etc.) or they were *not* read at all (*cf.* Braidotti 1991b: 273). The first option is generally considered a misreading, and a product of Anglo-

American dominance (*cf.* Gunew 2002). The second option no longer plays a role in the debate. I have shown that the ideas have been picked up by the Australians and I will shortly show that third-wave feminist epistemology does pick up the ideas of an avant-garde movement.

What does the equally specific, French undutiful daughterhood look like in terms of generationality? Theorizing difference as such entails the following:

“What characterizes them as a distinctive trend [...] is that they sexualize the issue, by positing differences between men and women as the prototype of all differences” (Braidotti 1991b: 210; *cf.* par. 2.3.1.2).

In the beginning of the second feminist wave claiming space was important. This space could be claimed within the patriarchal/ phallogocentric order or cut off from this order. Sexual difference feminists theorizing *positive* rather than asymmetrical, Beauvoirian difference (in Shulamith Firestone’s terms ‘the dialectic of sex’) rejected both these options since both were said to re-establish the Oedipal conflict. By doing so, sexual difference theorists constituted a relation to (dialecticist) Oedipality that differs from confirmation either by negation or by subsumption (for instance through the affirmation of the *pre*-Oedipal). Sexual difference theorists did not constitute a post-structuralism ‘proper’ through the negation of unmarked post-structuralist work. Post-structuralist conceptualizations of difference were *broken through* in a manner that Deleuze and Guattari called *an-Oedipal*. The result was the design of *something else*. Braidotti (*ibidem*: 176) explains that the countering of dutiful, Oedipalized daughterhood (as a result of which the different philosophical Masters receive confirmation by negation which divides up women/ feminists; see the work of Harding) by French radical feminists of sexual difference led to ‘the idea of a “double militancy”, a critical, “different” participation,’ *i.e.* different from both non-participation and participation on patriarchal terms as both these options eventually reinforce patriarchy. In Deleuze and Guattari’s *Anti-Oedipus* a similar doubleness is employed. Aiming at ‘circulation’ or ‘desiring-production’ freed from Oedipalization, one needs to work through Oedipal territoriality and to pass or deterritorialize to the an-Oedipal (Deleuze and Guattari [1972] 1983: 362, 276-7). ‘An-Oedipal’ deterritorialization⁵² designates non-anthropomorphic circulation rather than anthropomorphic representation according to which all situations (including generational conflict and science) (*ibidem*: 371-2) are always already Oedipalized (*ibid.*: 308). What this Oedipalization entails is the following:

“It is in fact essential that the limit of the decoded flows of desiring-production be doubly exorcised, doubly displaced, once by the position of immanent limits that capitalism does not cease to reproduce on an ever expanding scale, and again by the marking out of an interior limit that reduces this social reproduction to restricted familial reproduction” (*ibid.*: 304).

⁵² Note that ‘an-Oedipal deterritorialization’ is a tautology, because all deterritorializations are an-Oedipal. Nevertheless I use the tautology here so as to be clear about the way in which I conceptualize the qualitative shift towards third-wave feminist epistemology.

I read Braidotti's radical feminists of sexual difference as an avant-garde movement that illustrates Deleuze and Guattari's an-Oedipal deterritorialization. Furthermore I want to claim that the move Braidotti's undutiful daughters made in the 1980s can only now, *i.e.* amidst non-dialecticist, *non-foundational* claims of third-wave feminists, be fully understood. Deleuze and Guattari claim that predetermined, Oedipal representation involves an idealism, whereas they plea for non-foundational materialist approaches (*ibid.*: 52, 75). It is their argument that science as well as art are Oedipalized *but not necessarily so* (*ibid.*: 368-72). Therefore, uncanonized writers have the potential to explode or break through Oedipalization (*ibid.*: 134-6). Such writers work in a *materialist* rather than idealist manner. As I will show below, the full potential of third-wave feminist epistemology's generational non-dialecticism can be said to be fully realized in the work of new feminist materialists. One of the reasons why Deleuze and Guattari's Anti-Oedipus is important for conceptualizing the order of third-wave feminist epistemology involves its deviation from social constructivism or deconstruction, which, as I claimed in the beginning of this dissertation, forms the apotheosis of the second-wave feminist epistemological order. Deleuzian feminism as an instantiation of new materialist feminism (see par. 1.3.2.3) does not involve the installation of a new Master narrative. Rather it affirms a *transposition* (Braidotti 2006b: 5-8) between Deleuzian and feminist theory defined by Braidotti (2002a: 69) as a

“quest for overcoming dualism and reconnecting life and thought [...] it is a joint commitment to re-thinking subjectivity as an intensive, multiple and discontinuous process of interrelations.”

This non-dialecticist, non-foundational stance should be seen as advancing my take on the order of third-wave feminist epistemology, *i.e.* a breakthrough of dialecticist structures in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari.

For the purposes of the argument in this dissertation, I will not pursue the psychoanalytic dimension. Instead, I will focus on the breakthrough of generational dialecticism in a more general sense. Third-wave feminist epistemologists have picked up the ideas of what I have read as an avant-garde movement. I will argue that third-wave feminist epistemology explodes the binarist premises of the field, and is non-foundational in nature. How does it overcome the Oedipal plot? 'Third-wave feminist epistemology' is introduced in this dissertation to capture the new order consisting of non-dialecticist approaches in the field of feminist knowledge theory. With Braidotti I have read the undutiful vs. dutiful daughterhood distinction implied in the work of Harding as a non-exhaustive dichotomy. For an understanding of third-wave feminist epistemology we need to move a step ahead and go beyond dialecticism. A pattern that can account for the transgressive potential of the way in which radical feminists of sexual difference relate to the philosophical mainstream, and scholars such as Ahmed, Barad and Colebrook relate to the philosophical mainstream *and to*

second-wave feminist theory has been introduced to academic feminism with the publication of *affirmative* readings of third wave feminism. If third wave feminism is *not* being read in a dialecticist, second-wave manner (these readings make third wave feminism synonymous with post-feminism or read as buying into patriarchal, capitalist dynamics (*cf.* Whelehan 1995, Gillis *et al.* 2004)), but in a manner attentive to third-wave feminist *products* (*cf.* Heywood ed. 2005 and Introduction), its relation to second wave feminism can be characterized according to a pattern of disidentification (see also Introduction). It is my argument that disidentification allows for the critique of both the installation of a women's realm (a place secured by patriarchy – women and intuition/ spirituality, *not* women and knowledge) and the negation of the philosophical or epistemological malestream (which as we saw above results in a confirmation of/ subsumption to the philosophical Masters). Both (seemingly opposite) options do not allow for the 'double militancy' described by Braidotti. The so-called undutiful daughters of Harding and those feminists (supposedly) keen on setting up an alternative women's culture or canon have not been able to overcome the Oedipal plot. Disidentification, read with Deleuze and Guattari rather than with psychoanalysis and queer theory (see Fuss 1995),⁵³ can make clear how feminism can be *generative* rather than framed by the Oedipal plot (Braidotti 2002a: 66) and produce the qualitative shift towards post-postmodernism. Disidentification allows one to be attentive to Oedipalization ('Your feminism is seen as having given birth to mine/ ours...') as well as desire-production/ circulation *as such* ('... but studying it I/ we found out that it is not more rudimentary, but simply different from and equally complex as mine/ ours' (*cf.* Colebrook 2006)). This double movement can explain Deleuze and Guattari's claim about the generativity of the cracks in the *Oedipal* relation that can unblock an-Oedipal desiring-production and circulation. The next chapter focuses on a range of *undutiful* daughters of mainstream philosophers and theorists whose work has been taken on in a *dutiful* manner by a new generation of feminist materialists who have tried to further the theorizing of their radical foremothers. I thus switch terms in an account in which second-wave feminists become undutiful to their presumed Masters and third-wave feminists become dutiful to second-wave feminism. Through this counter-intuitive move, I hope to construct an account of new feminist materialism that is generationally continuous, yet situated and partial. To conclude the current chapter I will show what the double movement looks like for new materialism.

⁵³ Butler (1993: 100; emphasis in original) explains disidentification on an individualistic level:

"Or it may be that certain identifications and affiliations are made, certain sympathetic connections amplified, precisely in order to institute a *disidentification* with a position that seems too saturated with injury or aggression, one that might, as a consequence, be occupiable only through imagining the loss of viable identity altogether. Hence, the peculiar logic in a sympathetic gesture by which one objects to an injury done to oneself, a gesture that then becomes the vehicle of displacement by which one feels for oneself *through and as the other*."

2.4.3 A New Wave of Materialism

In the Johns Hopkins Guide, three waves of Marxist theory and criticism are discussed: classical Marxism (Habib 2005), structuralist Marxism (Holland and Wihl 2005), and Marxisms after 1989. In the latter entry, Peter Hitchcock (2005: without page number) begins by claiming that the events of 1989 did “not immediately [...] determined the consciousness of the theorist in any direct, unmediated way” and a new vitality did arise after 1989. This new vitality has not yet been given a name but he does state:

“The names for this new vitality are many, but the relationship between Marxist theory and literary criticism and the keywords ‘post-Marxism,’ ‘posthumanism,’ ‘postcolonialism,’ ‘postmodernism,’ ‘poststructuralism,’ ‘globalization,’ and ‘transnationalism’ is antagonistically symptomatic” (*ibidem*).

Although I do not want to frame my reading of new materialism and my conceptualization of third wave materialism according to a mainstream Marxist Master parameter, which would freeze the positioning, and force it to reterritorialize after a short (time) and nearby (space) deterritorialization, I do borrow from Hitchcock’s text in that I also talk about a *third wave* of materialist thinking in my work. The third wave Hitchcock describes encompasses “the invocation of deconstruction with Marxism” (*ibid.*), and as such, it is a postmodernization of (structuralist) Marxism that he discusses through an analysis of Fredric Jameson, Spivak, Derrida, and Slavoj Žižek. Hitchcock argues that it is Étienne Balibar’s postcolonial writings (see Chap. 5), and Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri’s Empire (2000) where we find the methodological consequences of this third wave. I do not fully agree nor disagree with Hitchcock’s cartography, even though I have argued against its starting point (a postmodernized Marxism entails a new phase) in this dissertation. The context of my argument was feminism and I have claimed that postmodernizing feminist standpoint theory did not result in the qualitative shifting of terms.

In a feminist (epistemological) context, new or *third wave* materialism is characterized by the *simultaneous* prioritization of textuality/ the discursive and corporeality/ the material. For feminist new materialists, phenomena are always material-discursive or material-semiotic. ‘Matter’ or materialism is embraced in response to the inherent representationalism that is regarded as the common denominator of pairs who seem to be opposites:

(1) ‘mirror of nature’ (realism/ feminist empiricism) and ‘mirror of culture’ (social constructivism/ feminist postmodernism) are both correspondence theories of truth (Barad);

(2) the Body as always already natural (realism/ feminist empiricism) and the Body as always already cultural (social constructivism/ feminist postmodernism) (Ahmed);

(3) the primacy of the Body (realism/ feminist empiricism, and feminist standpoint theory as an identity politics) and the primacy of representation (feminist postmodernism) (Colebrook).

I have argued that the new materialist position involves a *new* positioning breaking through these sets of seeming opposites. This positioning involves neither a feminist standpoint theory (this is what the canonized materialism of second-wave feminism generally refers to) nor a post-feminism (a common reading of the current times defines it as a post-feminism – been there, done that). Similarly, the new materialist positioning is neither a traditional Marxism (either classical or structuralist) nor a post-materialism (postmodernism's common view that materialist structuralism is passé). Besides the fact that all post's stage themselves in a dialecticist opposition to something and subsequently find themselves under the spell of that same thing in a paralyzing manner, new materialists try to find more beneficial frameworks for understanding the interrelated and intersecting realities of science (Barad), racism/ postcolonialism (Ahmed), and ways of philosophizing/ theorizing (Colebrook).

The work of new materialists, as reviewed in chapter 1, and the conviction that it is not exhaustively described by a postmodernization of feminist standpoint theory forms the starting point of the next chapter, which aims to design a definition of theories and practices of sexual difference that will not effectuate an essentialist feminist past nor a post-feminist present/ future. The definition is thoroughly materialist. Third-wave feminist materialism opts for a definition of scholarly and political 'practice' that is neither universalist (as in feminist (neo-) empiricism) nor particularist (as in feminist postmodernism). The definition of theory and practice I want to design in the next chapter, following new materialism, connects to Haraway's observation of universalist and particularist (in her terms realist and relativist) perspectives as the two sides of one and the same coin: they are both God tricks. One of the philosophical problems of the new materialist position consists of designing a multi-layered and multi-directional notion of theories and practices of sexual difference. Defining third wave materialism in chapter 1 I gave a 'graph' that consisted of two interconnected and interrelating negotiations: new materialists negotiating the neo-realisms/ neo-empiricisms flourishing in society and academy today and the negotiation of traditional realism and social constructivism forming the ground of new materialism itself. Such a multi-layered and multi-directional practice cannot be grasped from either a top down/ universalist or a bottom up/ particularist perspective. The goal of the next chapter is to *enable* the conceptualization of such a notion of practice and to work with it. The chapter consists of the introduction of a navigational tool through (feminist) epistemology with which (feminist) knowledge theories can be scored for their non/ mono/ multi-relationality. I will further *review* (feminist) knowledge theories by putting the navigational tool to work. I will score them according to the theories' allowance for mono/ multi-layeredness and mono/ multi-directionality in a

cartography of (feminist) knowledge theories. In the remainder of this chapter, however, I will review the *features* of third wave materialism to explain the way in which two much-used dichotomies are non-exhaustive. Since new materialists engage precisely with these common denominators to design their non-essentialist take on ‘matter’ and ‘materiality,’ the common denominators of the sets of (supposedly oppositional) pairs are used as the starting point for the building of my third-wave feminist materialist epistemic category. They are also intended to give a further exemplification of the argument that postmodernizing feminist materialist epistemology does *not* entail a qualitative shift/ a breakthrough.

2.4.3.1 Neither Essentialist Nor Non-Foundationalist

One of the features of third wave materialism *and* of Nelson’s approach to ‘epistemological communities’ entails breaking through the dichotomy essentialism/ foundationalism vs. non-foundationalism. New materialist positioning opposes simultaneously to foundationalist Reason and to non-foundationalist relativism. The positioning does not rely on a female Body, and as such it is not resembling or copying second-wave feminist approaches that are essentialist. The third-wave feminist materialist use of ‘matter’ and ‘materiality,’ especially ‘body’ and ‘bodies,’ allows for a bridging of a feminist appropriation of Reason *and* the feminist ‘idle’ use of relativist non-foundationalism. It is *not* the case that contemporary feminists can only seek recourse to an essentialism, which is a fixing gesture, introducing *another* foundationalism, or, alternatively, can only seek to postmodernize foundationalism. It is their use of ‘matter’ and ‘materiality,’ that allows new materialists to counter the totalitarianism of both realism and relativism. It is argued that neither a foundationalist realism, nor a relativist non-foundationalism, *nor* another *feminist* totalitarianism provides a sufficient alternative to foundationalist Reason. New materialists opt for a materialist approach that is neither realist nor antithetical to postmodern non-foundationalism. (The latter would mean discarding non-foundationalism on the basis of its relativism, which is an equation third-wave materialists consider false as they have grown up with postmodernism as not fundamentally relativist.)⁵⁴ Doing this, the new materialists are bridging feminist (neo-) empiricism and feminist postmodernism, securing a positioning that I have come to label third wave materialism. This negotiation involves the possibility to secure *another* epistemic category.

2.4.3.2 Neither Identity Politics Nor ‘Fractured Identities’

In ‘Feminist Futures’ Ahmed (2003: 252) writes:

⁵⁴ Spivak (1987: 68-9) in ‘In Other Worlds’ says that we should not confuse essentialism with empiricism. I agree with her. I do claim however, following scholars such as Ahmed, Barad and Colebrook, that this is very often how empiricism/ essentialism have been *used*.

“The ‘we’ of feminism is not its foundation; it is both an affect and an effect of the impressions of others.”

This statement can serve as the epigraph for the new materialist opposition to feminist epistemologies that center knowing subjects and to feminist epistemologies choosing ‘fractured identities’ (*i.e.* an approach opting for a plurality *within* the knowing subject). Nelson has shown both of these approaches are quantifications and do not (necessarily) result in a turning away from epistemological individualism. In ‘Beyond the Politics of Location: Feminism, Identity, and Identity Politics’ Hekman (2000: 302) makes a similar argument: feminist postmodernism, introducing an unstable identity, and feminist empiricism, using Woman, are both, but in opposite ways, constrained by the modernist subject. Since postmodernism stages its relation to Woman in dialecticist opposition to it, it remains fully constrained by it. I have shown that new materialists argue that the ways in which feminists have responded to the scholarly and political concentration on ‘I’ are humanist. This humanism is problematic because it does not leave any space for ‘matter’ – dead or alive. New materialists thus take a common opposition (feminist radical universalism (we, women; we, feminists) and (feminist) radical particularism) and consider it to be false. New materialists argue for specificity, both when it comes to universalism *and* when it comes to particularism. They have argued that neither a community-approach nor an emphasis on ‘fractured identities’ (with an emphasis on a plurality *within* the knowing subject (individual)) provides a sufficient alternative to epistemological individualism. The philosophical solution they come up with is to be found in post-humanist, intra-active approaches that are neither community- nor ‘hybridity’-based thus bridging feminist *empiricism* and feminist postmodernism, instead of feminist standpoint theory and feminist postmodernism. By doing so, new materialists have secured a new epistemological position through an emphasis on matter that refers back to feminist standpoint theory but is not identical to it.

“bodily matter functions in ways that does not depend upon a constant reference to it, in either derogatory or celebratory terms.”
Rachel Colls¹

CHAPTER THREE

The Construction of Third Wave Materialism as an Epistemic Category

3.1 Introduction

Colebrook argues that it is the ‘equivocity’ of the work of (feminist) postmodernists that make them congruous rather than incongruous with positivism or (feminist) (neo-) empiricism. Equivocity, Colebrook (2002a: 95) says, refers to the making of a distinction between two levels – representation and matter, signifier and signified – on the basis of which a mono-directional approach is adopted:

“Western thought has tended to set one type of being over and against the other, as the ground of the other. But in order to do so it must adopt a position in relation to these two types of being, both mind and matter.”

Colebrook, following Deleuze, is critical of the underlying equivocal assumption of the existence of a Real that is *to be* grasped or *to be* represented. She claims that because of this assumption there is a lot to be missed in (feminist) analyses. What we miss, for instance, is the way in which (knowledge) theorists *are involved* in the events of understanding or representing. ‘Univocity’ focuses on the encounter between word and world and produces an account of “*what life is* such that it yields signification” (Colebrook 2004b: 286; emphasis in original) rather than “accepting the world as signified, as mediated through signs” (*ibidem*: 291). An univocal outlook² allows for studying the way in which the connection between word and world is made by (feminist) postmodernists who equivocally assume the primacy of signification and by (feminist) empiricists for whom the world is prior to the word. From a univocal outlook scholars are able to see through their own assumptions, and in that respect they gain more knowledge.

Barad has coined the term ‘intra-action’ to do something similar, namely to move away from the assumption of one causal relation (an empiricist one) to another (a postmodernist one). Barad (1996: 176; emphasis in original) argues that we cannot assume the

¹ Colls 2007: 362.

² Below I label this outlook ‘multi-directional and multi-layered.’

primacy of either word or world because scientists ultimately describe “our participation *within* nature.” Focusing on intra-actions Barad’s new materialist work is univocal – avoiding cause and effect, original and copy. For example, her reformulation of objectivity does not assume a knowledge claim on the one hand and a body affected by that claim on the other. Objectivity for Barad – the marking of bodies – is fully univocal. It is *in intra-actions* that theory and practice come together. Univocity assumes intra-action rather than one equivocal level of research or another; epistemic claims are made that are descriptive (how are different bodies marked differently?), prescriptive (how fruitful or unwelcome are the effects of marks?), and utopian (what does the marking do? How can it be done differently?).³

Ahmed also exemplifies univocity, as well as the study of the different effects of different markings on different bodies. She has developed a practice (‘contact writing’) that works on the ways in which traditional epistemology, featuring binary pairs, *is shaped by* contact (attraction and repulsion). Ahmed does not assume subject vs. object, personal vs. communal, theory vs. practice. Rather, she studies the ways in which a certain subject materializes at the expense of a certain object, and how both subject and object develop by taking previous materializations with them. The utopian dimension of her work (studying ways in which both subject and object are differently affected in encounters and how this can possibly be changed) does not translate into postmodern pluralism. The ways in which unequal power relations come to matter and are perpetuously constituted anew is the focus of the work of Ahmed, Barad, and Colebrook. In other words, a structuralism of pre-existing power relations is not exchanged for a relativism of accidental power plays.

In this chapter I intend to construct a full-fledged epistemic category out of the examples of new materialist theorizing that I found in the work of Colebrook, Barad, and Ahmed. I will label this category ‘third wave materialism.’ I will show how new materialism qualitatively differs from earlier feminist epistemologies as well as from traditional epistemologies and contemporary anti-epistemological tendencies. Colebrook’s univocity, the intra-active approach introduced by Barad, and Ahmed’s contact writing ‘translate’ into two problematics that speak to (anti-) epistemology (either prescriptive or descriptive) and to the implied conceptualizations of the epistemologist (disembodied on the basis of either totalization or relativism). New materialism has its own epistemic niche because it qualitatively shifts the traditional epistemological, and anti-epistemological, *and* the second-wave feminist epistemological role and realm. This niche is systematically related to those contemporary philosophies (Foucault, Said, and Deleuze) that are neither traditionally epistemological nor anti-epistemological in the sense of Kuhn, Marx, and Latour. The two problematics I deal with in this chapter are the *directionality* and the *layering* of epistemic

³ I borrowed these levels from Prins (1997). See below.

tendencies. The first problematic (mono- vs. multi-directionality) consists of the relation, if any, that is allowed to exist between theory and practice. The second (layering) focuses on the construction of knowledge theories as descriptive, prescriptive, and/ or visionary. In the current chapter I provide proof for the *niche* of new materialism on the basis of a *cartography* of (feminist) anti-epistemologies. I will show in paragraphs 3.2 until 3.2.5 that a first group confirms the features of traditional epistemology, while a second group designs something else (pars. 3.3 until 3.3.4). The first section of the cartography is a reflection on the ways in which a selection of malestream anti-epistemologies relates to second-wave feminist epistemologies. It is also a discussion on how anti-epistemologies, as well as second-wave feminist epistemologies, relate to third-wave feminist epistemologies in light of the two problematics. In the upcoming section I will prove that this relationship is disjunctive and claim that new materialism is not an anti-epistemology or a second-wave feminist epistemology. The second section of the cartography entails a discussion of the work of Foucault, Said, and Deleuze. It illustrates the (third-wave) feminist interactions with Foucault, and Said, and their intra-actions with Deleuze. In order to accomplish my aims for this chapter, I must first illustrate why I chose a cartographical rather than classificatory approach.

3.1.1 From Classification to Cartography: Take 2

This chapter produces a cartography rather than a classification (*cf.* par. 1.2.2). The classificatory or ‘taxonomical’ approach has received famous criticism from Foucault who opted for cartographies. In his ‘Preface’ to The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences Foucault analyses a text fragment of Jorge Luis Borges about a classification found in a Chinese encyclopedia. Foucault’s reaction to the text (unstoppable laughter) combined with his subsequent analysis has become the classic example of a critique of the scholarly practice of classifying. The archaeology of knowledge enables Foucault to show the ways in which order is produced, and that language (word, classifier) and ‘things’ (world, classified) co-constitute one another. In sum, nothing in a classification is natural. According to Foucault ([1966] 1994: *xix*), archaeological questions are the following:

“When we establish a considered classification [...] what is the ground on which we are to establish the validity of this classification with complete certainty? On what ‘table’, according to what grid of identities, similitudes, analogies, have we become accustomed to sort out so many different and similar things? What is this coherence – which, as is immediately apparent, is neither determined by an *a priori* and necessary concatenation, nor imposed on us by immediately perceptible contents?”

Foucault’s answer to these questions is the most general claim that all classifications exist under the spell of an episteme. In my terms, classifications do not provide Truth, but they do express situated knowledge.

In chapter 1 I listed four approaches to feminist epistemology, one of which is the classificatory one. The other approaches are: the cartographical approach, the bridging of two

subsequent options in a classification, and the plea for a return to a ‘good old’ feminist epistemic category. Scholars such as Harding and Hennessy have employed the classificatory or post-classificatory approach to discuss feminist standpoint theory or a postmodernized version of feminist standpoint theory. The cartographical outlook is different from the classificatory approach and from the bridging of the subsequent options of an existing classification. The latter strategies share an (implicit) teleological structure: both the classificatory and the post-classificatory approach are based on a causally linear (progressive) theory of time and result in an unsituated celebration of the present. In both cases, the ‘current’ category is seen as the most advanced one. I concluded in chapter 1 that classifications are constructed from a God’s eye view, and that approaches that bridge *subsequent* options are not necessarily any different. In the latter case the option that is more complex (and of later date) influences the option that is more rudimentary (and earlier). Because of this naturalistic fallacy that assumes that classifications develop progressively from rudimentary to more complex, the modernization of feminist postmodernist tendencies is also assumed to be a logical inconsistency from a classificatory point of view. This *is* what is to be found in the work of Alison Assiter (1996: 143) who pleads for “a post-postmodern modernism in feminism” that does *not* entail a *return* to feminist empiricism. In other words, *both* the classificatory and the post-classificatory approach reconfirm the characteristics of the Foucauldian taxonomy and are unable to account for approaches such as Assiter’s or new materialism.

Therefore, classificatory approaches are founded on the assumption of the ability of listing categories that mutually exclude one another. A classification or taxonomy, also within a feminist context (Stacey *et al.* 1992: 6-9), is a *dialecticist* chart: x is not y, and y is not z. This also applies to post-classification and the sequence (y after x, and z after y) of possible overlapping. Everything is presumed to be fully fixed or pre-determined. The characteristics of classifications are *sequential negation* and *progress narrative*. What I want to suggest here is *not* that Harding and others have enumerated ‘feminist epistemic categories’ that are incongruous phenomena and incompatible theoretical reflections. Rather, I want to suggest that the way in which Harding and others define and divide the field of feminist epistemology constitutes the framework of ‘second-wave feminist epistemology.’ It is my argument that the dialecticist nature of classification prevents subsequent feminist epistemic categories from overcoming the characteristics of the previous categories of the classification and of mainstream epistemology. I argue that a subsequent feminist epistemic category in a classification continues to exist *under the spell of* the previous one(s) and that feminist

epistemology as a whole ends up *confirming* an epistemology ‘proper’ *by negation*.⁴ Furthermore, I argue that third-wave feminist epistemology constitutes its own niche vis-à-vis these qualities of second-wave feminist epistemology.

As I showed in chapter 1, new feminist materialist scholars argue that feminist postmodernist constructivism is as totalizing as feminist empiricism and feminist Marxism. In other words, questioning the radicality of feminist postmodernism does *not* involve a reading of feminist postmodernism as relativist by necessity. New materialists intend to show that feminist postmodernism remains *foundationalist*. In other words, the generation of post-postmodernism through the questioning of postmodernism’s radicalism works via the presentation of the cracks in the dialecticism of second-wave feminist epistemology. Here, the sequential negation and teleology are said to have *gone astray*. New materialists prove this by presenting the three feminist epistemic categories as *sharing characteristics*. In other words, the differentiations caused by sequential negation should be characterized as non-exhaustive rather exhaustive opposites, and teleology is not naturalized but the result of the classificatory approach itself. I claim here that the new materialist generation of feminist post-postmodernism cannot be contained by dialecticism, *i.e.* by a (post-) classificatory mode of theorizing. As I have indicated in chapter 1, new materialists *bridge* feminist empiricism and feminist social constructivism. One of the characteristics of new materialism is that it does *not* involve a postmodernization of feminist standpoint theory. New materialists do not build their case on the basis of sequential negation and a progressive narrative structure does not underly the account it provides. New materialists avoid spatiotemporal fixity (a classification is a dialecticist chart) and linearity (a classification is a progress narrative) (*cf.* Barad 2001).

Furthermore I claim that they utilize a *cartographical* mode that enacts non-dialecticist ‘bridging.’ According to Braidotti, a cartographical mode – in Foucauldian terms the mapping of disciplinary formations (*cf.* Mohanty 1991, Grewal and Kaplan 1994, Lykke 2002), in Deleuzian terms a topology rather than a typology (Deleuze [1986] 1996: 13) – allows for a theory-based and politically informed reading of the present that is intended to engender dialogues. The dialogues (or in my terms negotiations) created by new materialist, non-dialecticist generation of feminist post-postmodernism involve negotiations between feminist empiricism and feminist postmodernism, and between second- and third-wave feminist materialism. These negotiations and the distinguished features of third-wave feminist materialist writings (its an-Oedipal argumentative structure, its non-relativist non-

⁴ The back flap of *Feminist Epistemologies* (Alcoff and Potter eds 1993) introduces the field as follows:

“This book inaugurates a field of study at the intersection of feminist philosophy and epistemology ‘proper.’”

foundationalism, and non-essentialism,⁵ its relational epistemology, and materialism) will be furthered in this chapter in order to construct a new, full-fledged feminist epistemic category. I do this by discussing (in section 1 of the cartography) anti-epistemologies that focus on practice as the unreal opposite of traditional epistemologies that focus on theory (*cf.* Fricker and Hornsby 2000) and the feminist responses to them using a ‘navigational tool’ that connects questions of directionality to questions of layering. I have tried to develop a navigational tool to eventually invent and account for a way of re-constructing negotiations in a non-dialecticist manner. The navigational tool I introduce in this chapter is meant to enable the theorization of continuity and change with regards to the directionality and layering of epistemologies of the mainstream and of second- and third-wave feminism.

In the current chapter, feminist epistemology will *not* be dealt with through a reading of feminist empiricism as a critical response to mainstream empiricism, of feminist standpoint epistemologies as critical responses to Marxist epistemology, and of feminist postmodern epistemologies as critical evaluations of postmodernist epistemologies. It is impossible to deny that feminists *did* respond to their male philosophical predecessors and like-minded, androcentric contemporaries. A feminist philosophical canon has been secured and the Oedipal game is simply too simplistic because it does not do justice to the present which is more complex. Feminists no longer ‘merely’ question or appropriate the work that white men in academia produce (in fact, they never did solely so). The second section of the cartography is the part of the chapter in which I deal with the *an*-Oedipal relation of third-wave feminists with a selection of (marginal) non-feminist materialist (anti-) epistemologists and the second-wave (undutiful) appropriation thereof. These feminists do not rely on a paternal discourse but they closely relate to marginal theorists such as Foucault and Deleuze and their project is *an*-Oedipal (see Chap. 2). This is to say, that the notion of ‘undutiful daughterhood,’ in Braidotti’s sense of the term (see par. 2.4.2), has informed the choices I have made for the construction of the cartography. Section 2 of the cartography gives an overview of anti-epistemologies that are not meant to (non-exhaustively) oppose traditional epistemology. This section deals with epistemologies that are non-strict or improper, *i.e.* anti-epistemological by crosscutting epistemology, ontology, and ethics. It is *these* anti-epistemologies with which undutiful second wavers have a conversation and it is the third wavers that have a *dutiful* conversation with *these* second-wave scholars. To begin, I will clarify how I understand ‘anti-epistemology.’

⁵ For the relation between (non-)foundationalism and (non-)essentialism, and for an exposé about essentialism as beneficial for present-day feminist theory see Assiter’s [Enlightened Women: Modernism Feminism in a Postmodern Age](#) (1996).

3.2 First Section of the Cartography of Knowledge Theories

3.2.1 Anti-Epistemologies: Studying Practice

As part of the discipline of philosophy, epistemic claims and theories of knowledge are traditionally normative or prescriptive. These evaluations about knowledge, Objectivity, and Truth, however critical, are immediately criticized by feminists for being based on a God's eye view (see *e.g.* Wylie 2000). Recently, mainstream 'epistemology' has become *other than* normative and disembodied. Academic feminism has influenced the field, but there is more to say about the direction that the field of epistemology seems to be taking. Before the crisis of Reason, the epistemic realm was strictly prescriptive. Following a prescriptive approach, often not explicitly rendered as something distinct, an evaluation of knowledge production, Objectivity, and Truth was practiced *in isolation*. Evaluation in isolation consisted of setting the rules of the possibility of objectively approaching Truth (not on the basis of concrete practices but on the basis of a certain set of philosophical premises). The Kuhnian historical turn, the Marxist focus on praxis, and the empirical turn of Latour turned this practice upside-down. Rather than focusing on theorems, these philosophers began to focus on practices and the ways in which accounts *considered* truthful (or false) were created. This move involved diving into the messiness of life at universities, especially the laboratories of the natural sciences. *Textbooks* were also left behind as sources for epistemological study because they were considered to provide the model, not the *reality* of scholarly work.⁶ Because of their work, theories of knowledge are no longer purely prescriptive, but can also be descriptive and even visionary (Prins 1997: 104). A combination of these qualities is possible. In 'Whose Language?' Alessandra Tanesini (1994: 214) has argued that *multilayered* epistemologies are not only possible but even desirable. She wants *feminist* epistemology to be both descriptive and prescriptive:

"Epistemology is neither a matter of describing transcendental norms nor of describing current practices; rather, it consists in advancing and defending proposals for how to develop our epistemic practices. [...] Epistemology [...] is a practice; it is something we do. What we do, when we do epistemology, is create new norms. Feminists should not abandon this normative enterprise in favour of describing current practices; what we should do is engage in the production of new and progressive epistemic norms."

⁶ The late 1980s, early 1990s *rise* in anti-epistemological scholarly production should be understood in the light of the science wars (Sardar 2000). This development can be said to have scared traditional, now considered *conservative* tendencies at universities, mostly in the US. The term 'science wars' refers to a heated debate in the late 1980s, early 1990s in the US on the basis of the crossing of the boundaries of the Two Cultures (Snow [1959] 1965). On the basis of arguments given below philosophers and other humanities scholars started to deal with the natural sciences and to critique their claims to Truth and status of epitome of academic work. Natural scientists were uncovered as working according to *conventions* rather than something uncontestable. These conventions and the ways in which they affect the outcomes of scholarship were revealed to be changing over time, even malleable and sometimes looked at from a relativistic point of view. The war aspect consisted of the radical defence of science (neo-positivism) in the light of the post-positivist critiques.

Furthermore, feminist epistemologists have introduced *situated* knowledge as a theoretical evaluation (Haraway 1988b). This kind of evaluation criticizes epistemological reflections that are founded on the God trick. Situated knowledge theories are not relativisms but are the theorization of totalization and relativism as non-exhaustive opposites. In sum, several contemporary theoretical tendencies are discernable that move into an *anti-epistemological* direction (cf. Mol 2002: vii). The key here is to question the traditional foundation of the knowing subject. Inter- or trans-disciplinarity are considered the new requirements for making valuable claims about knowledge (its qualities and its development). Interdisciplinarity concerns both the combination of philosophical disciplines (most notably epistemology and ontology, but also e.g. epistemology and aesthetics), and philosophers borrowing from fields such as history, psychology, sociology, and anthropology. As the move towards the *anti-epistemological* often involves a dialecticism (anti-epistemology as an approach that is *not* an epistemology), it is clear that positivism (the foundation of traditional epistemology) is making a comeback (see Chap. 1).

In this chapter I situate new materialism in the midst of these developments. Nevertheless, I claim that new materialism cannot be reduced to, nor said to rely on, the directions epistemology ‘proper’ took after the crisis of Reason. In chapters 1 and 2 I have shown that third wave materialism cannot be grasped by either a feminist (neo-) empiricism or a feminist standpoint theory or a feminist postmodernism. In the current chapter I connect third wave materialism to anti-epistemology and I will show that ‘anti-epistemology’ (in its mainstream incarnation) is a category that does not quite fit into third wave materialism. What the constructivist tradition of anti-epistemology⁷ and new materialism have in common, is a strong emphasis on the *practices* of scientists and other knowing subjects. For one thing, new materialism does *not* approach epistemic questions in a top-down, God’s-eye-view manner. In section 2 of this cartography I connect new materialism to marginal (cf. Gutting 1994: 3-4) figures in order to prove its *an-Oedipal* relation to epistemology ‘proper’ as a discipline (i.e. a relation undutiful in Braidotti’s sense of breaking through the implicit feminist reliance on male philosophical Masters) and the *qualitative shift* (Braidotti 2006b: 5) that is engendered by new, third-wave, feminist materialism in the field of feminist epistemology.

Anti-epistemological, bottom-up approaches have impacted the ‘tasks’ of the epistemologist or philosopher of science: traditionally knowledge theorists were required to produce philosophically sound and historically adequate accounts (Leezenberg and De Vries

⁷ I purposely write *constructivist* rather than *social-constructivist*. In this dissertation I have used the latter for approaches faithful to a specific reliance on the linguistic turn. Latour ([1984] 1988: 184) – one of the anti-epistemologists I deal with in this chapter – in ‘Irreductions’ claims that it is no longer possible to distinguish between words and things. He also says it is wrong “to reduce all other forces to the signifier.” Despite the fact that anti-epistemology is often considered social-constructivist, Latour’s statement is an example of a more complex relation.

2001: 14). For traditional epistemologists, the philosophical soundness of their work is of the greatest importance. Anti-epistemologists have stressed the norm of historical adequacy (the *descriptive* aspect of knowledge theory). For them, traditional knowledge theory involves *logical* or *analytical* accounts of knowledge and knowledge production.

The traditional knowledge theorist⁸ sends normative messages to practicing scientists so as to provide them with a recipe for the production of truthful and objective knowledge. Such theorists are so-called ‘armchair’ epistemologists because working scientists are not studied and it is not considered a necessity to *feature* actual scholarly work or work-in-progress in epistemological texts. From the perspective of an armchair philosopher what actual scientists do is wholly uninteresting. Even so, there is one way in which bottom-up approaches did *not* affect traditional, top-down approaches. Whereas traditional epistemology focuses on philosophical soundness that construes their work top-down, anti-epistemological approaches focus on historical adequacy and approaches knowledges, objectivities, and truths from the bottom upwards. Both theories are mono-directional and focus on either theory/ words/ epistemology or practice/ things/ ontology. Focusing on the strictly anti-epistemological direction taken by contemporary epistemologists in the first part of this chapter, I will conclude that their mono-directionality is *not* taken over by new materialists. Due to the confirmation of (features of) traditional epistemology on the basis of a dialecticist response to it (*cf.* Grosz 1990: 59-60, Deleuze [1968] 1994: 148-50), anti-epistemology is characterized by a residue of aspects considered problematic by feminists from the first (!) wave. On the basis of these problematic aspects (for instance, humanism) as well as the *unreal* opposition between traditional epistemology and anti-epistemology, I will prove in this chapter that new materialism does not rely on either of these tendencies.

In addition to conceptualizing the tasks of the knowledge theorist as *layers* (thus claiming that there is a descriptive and prescriptive layer to knowledge theories) rather than mutually exclusive options, Prins’s *innovation* to epistemology with ‘Standpoint in Question’ has been the introduction of the task of the accountability of the knowledge theorist. Next to traditional and second-wave feminist prescription and description, there is a visionary or utopian layer to (feminist) knowledge theory that involves the necessity of the production of reflections *fruitful* to extra-university women’s organizations, women, and Others in general (*cf.* Kramarae and Spender 1993). This innovation involves the feminist (re)introduction of the importance of the context of discovery to the realm of epistemology, which is traditionally

⁸ Using this label is not to say that this kind of work is no longer being produced – in the popular *Fear of Knowledge: Against Relativism and Constructivism* Paul Boghossian (2006: 6) addresses an issue central to my dissertation (the bankruptcy of social constructivism) yet from a top-down point of view. The book features feminist epistemology, esp. situated knowledges, as exemplary for mentioned bankruptcy. The reading it provides of situated knowledges however does not include Haraway’s criticism of both relativism and totalization, and as such I consider Boghossian’s reading flawed.

dominated by a focus on the context of justification (the latter was stressed by traditional epistemologists for meeting the standards of philosophical soundness). By stressing the often-ignored context of discovery, feminists did not plead for isolating the ‘origin’ of knowledge, objectivity, and truth. Rather, they voiced ideas about ‘better knowledge’ and ‘truer’ accounts, and asked for the production of knowledges that can help make the world a better place⁹ (implementing ‘better’ in a non-teleological, non-positivist way).¹⁰ Additionally, stressing accountability and *sustainability* (Braidotti 2006b) entails working in the domains of not only epistemology and ontology but also (knowledge) ethics. The visionary or utopian layer of this category hints at a definition of ‘practice’/ ‘praxis’ that leads to something that cannot be captured by a bottom-up approach, and is, as we have seen above, not necessarily transformative. What I will argue in this chapter is that new materialism is multilayered and multi- rather than monodirectional in focus and takes into account the co-constitutive relation between theory and practice (*cf. e.g.* Barad’s onto-epistem-ology or ethico-onto-epistemology). I begin this assessment by discussing the anti-epistemological move that is to be found in the work of Kuhn, Marx and Latour, and its relation to traditional epistemology and second-wave feminist epistemology.

3.2.2 Community and Consensus: Kuhn

A first step towards anti-epistemology was provided in the work of Kuhn, the “physicist turned historian for philosophical purposes” (Baltas *et al.* 2000: 320-1). Kuhn’s work – here I focus on *Structure* ([1962/ 1969] 1996)¹¹ – has been groundbreaking in that it moved epistemologists and philosophers of science away from a strictly normative (*i.e.* prescriptive and mono-layered) knowledge theory towards the history/ historiography of science. This move has been canonized as ‘the historical turn’ (see *e.g.* Duran 1998: 6, 53; Fricker and Hornsby 2000: 8). Kuhn’s approach boils down to evaluating the development of science as a non-linear process (Kuhn focused upon breaks (scientific revolutions, paradigm shifts,

⁹ See Haraway’s ‘Never Modern, Never Been, Never Ever: Some Thoughts About Never-Never Land in Science Studies’ (1994b) in which reference is made to Susan Leigh Star’s ‘Power, Technology, and the Phenomenology of Conventions: On Being Allergic to Onions’ (1991) for this discussion: her onion allergy allowed Star to see through the black box of fast-food chain McDonald’s in one visit to a McDonald’s restaurant, and it allowed her to quickly formulate possibilities for change so as to make the place into a *better* place.

¹⁰ For teleology and positivism see the textbooks such as the ones by Rudolf Carnap ([1966] 1995) and John Losee (1993).

¹¹ There is a turn towards the philosophy of language and logic discernable in Kuhn’s later work:

“Kuhn’s [...] shift from the description of scientific revolutions in *Structure* predominantly in terms of visual metaphors, to a description by means of a linguistic of conceptual framework” (Hoyningen-Huene 1988: 7).

Such a framework falls beyond the scope of this dissertation. The question *how* this turn relates to anti-epistemology and whether it is a return to traditional Anglo-American analytical philosophy of science is a research question of its own. His dutiful daughters turned, to borrow a phrase from Keller (1992b: 31), ‘from gender and science to language and science’ as well.

incommensurability) and temporary sedimentations (normal science, exemplars)) in which eminent men, young men, and other newcomers play an important role ignoring or solving anomalies. On top of the invention of non-linearity, Kuhn defines science as a *communal* and *consensual* practice – paradigms and exemplars are agreed upon by the scholars in a discipline. The rationale here is that “[c]onsensus is commonly achieved, but it is rarely compelled by the forces of logic and evidence alone” (Keller 1992b: 26).

The *turn* set in motion by Kuhn attracted and repelled feminists in the 1980s (*cf.* Addelson [1983] 2003: 166). Most early feminist knowledge theorists applauded Kuhn for moving beyond realist epistemology and rationalist philosophy of science, as well as, beyond anecdotal history of science towards a more thorough framework that analyses what scientists do. No longer mind alone plays a role. There is space for the influences of matter and for the extra-scientific. They nevertheless questioned Kuhn for remaining as gender-blind as his predecessors. In Science Question Harding (1986: 199) went so far as to question the entire idea of a Kuhnian turn:

“most post-Kuhnian social studies of natural science, like their pre-Kuhnian philosophical and historical ancestors, have systematically avoided examining the relationship between gender and science in either its historical or sociological dimensions.”

In a very early text published in Discovering Reality: Feminist Perspectives on Epistemology, Metaphysics, Methodology, and Philosophy of Science, Kathryn Pyne Addelson ([1983] 2003: 166) argued that Kuhn “makes only the most limited inquiry into social arrangements in the practice of science.” In Philosophies of Science/ Feminist Theories Jane Duran (1998: 59; emphasis added) argues that “*any* neologicistic discourse” suffers from male-bias. Sarah Lucia Hoagland (2001: 127) ironically formulates this point in Kuhnian terms:

“The patriarchal paradigm of misogyny was not affected by the scientific revolution. This suggests that change by shift in paradigm that Thomas Kuhn suggests is not a total change. [...] no significant change in the dominant, patriarchal naming of women, either evolutionary or revolutionary, leaps to mind.”

Using the terms of this dissertation, we could say that second-wave feminist epistemologists discussed pre- and post-Kuhnian studies of science as non-exhaustively dichotomous.

In the above discussion, feminist theorists are simultaneously attracted and repelled by Kuhn. This confirms the two versions of Kuhn that play a role in the larger field of epistemology, history, and philosophy of science. Using an unreal opposition à la Haraway, one could say that the first Kuhn is a totalizing Kuhn and the second a relativist one. Steve Fuller is the main proponent of the conservative Kuhn. In Thomas Kuhn: A Philosophical History for Our Times Fuller (2000: xv), in an Oedipal way, states that “Kuhn’s ‘acritical’ perspective has colonized the academy,” a process that has been named ‘Kuhnification’ (Baber 2003: 97). This Kuhn is read as a conservative, even dogmatic scholar, who undertakes the archival studies of science without reflecting upon the aims and goals of (past and present) science in the light of the larger societal and political context. It is thus claimed

that Kuhn's account remains strictly internalist and is built on the assumption of an autonomous realm for science and knowledge production (*cf.* Bird 2003). Here, the Kuhnian invention is the study of history of science, but 'history' and its androcentric parameters are left untouched. Furthermore, the parameters of the study of science are not radically changed in Kuhn's analysis.¹² Keller (1992c: 1) explains that for the first Kuhn "[science's] internal dynamics, even if neither autonomous nor impervious, [are] still conceptually distinguishable from social ('extrascientific') factors." The opposite (relativist Kuhn) can be illustrated by Paul Hoyningen-Huene's (1998: 4) claim that Kuhn decisively changed the realist view of scientific progress – for Kuhn "theories describe the world in terms of concepts that are historically contingent and that may change in the future."¹³ Note that this does not expel internalism – the changing concepts might as well be intra-scientific!

The evaluation of the work of Kuhn as relativist has been argued against by feminist standpoint theorists, who also suffer, says Harding, from being considered relativist. Feminist (standpoint) theorists blamed Kuhn and Kuhnians for being conservative and male-biased, but they rescued Kuhn from being considered relativist. In other words, what is often named relativist was picked up by feminist standpoint theorists who provided an affirmative reading of Kuhn's anti-realism. Harding (2004: 10; see Chap. 2) explains that feminist standpoint theory and the work of Kuhn share (apart from being considered to be dangerously epistemically relativist) an interest in the ways in which knowledges are local, *i.e.* situated in time and space.¹⁴ An example of this is Kuhn's argument against using textbooks for the philosophy or history of science. He said textbooks provided Whig history and his historiographical outlook favored a focus on 'scientific activity itself' that refers to both specific local scholarly situations and eras and to the ways in which scholarly activities change over time (Kuhn [1962/ 1969] 1996: 1). Feminists, like Keller, consequently celebrated Kuhn for paving the way for situated *feminist* critiques of science. At the same time, however, Keller (1998: 15) acknowledged that Kuhn "never wrote about gender and science, nor did he have a direct influence on either the emergence or the growth of the

¹² It can be said that this argument, in the end, proves untenable. Hanne Andersen (2000: 91) for instance argues that science education from a Kuhnian point of view leads to convergent thought, and that the development of convergent thought through rigorous training is necessary for the development of science. Andersen names textbooks and exemplars as the basis of learning to think in a convergent way, and connotes them as 'dogmatic.' In the end, it is textbooks and exemplars that provide the basis for normal science, while they are simultaneously the germ of divergent thinking, *i.e.* scientific revolutions (*ibidem*: 93-4). This adding-up seems paradoxical to me.

¹³ The latter Kuhn is sometimes said to mirror the work of Paul Feyerabend, whose slogan reads 'against method.'

¹⁴ Note that whereas Harding claims that feminist standpoint theory has, similarly to the work of Kuhn, been considered to be relativist, it has equally been considered totalizing (see Chap. 2).

subject.”¹⁵ Feminist standpoint theorists should be seen as having definitively changed the Kuhnian frame by introducing *externalism*.

3.2.2.1 Internalism-Externalism-Internalism: Keller¹⁶

In ‘Feminism and Science’ Keller (1982: 601-2) invites feminists to take on the Kuhnian, historiographical approach because this approach could help “bring [to the light] a whole new range of sensitivities, leading to an equally new consciousness of the potentialities lying latent in the scientific project.” Keller did not think of the Kuhnian approach as either conservative/totalizing or progressive/relativist. By positioning herself as ‘Kuhnian’ Keller risks becoming his dutiful daughter. I want to argue that she is not following her own claim because what she sets out to do is “to go beyond assumptions either of a natural commonality or of an entrenched opposition between women scientists and feminist analysts of science” (Keller 1997: 16 in Bosch 2002: 512). Keller identifies with a *marginal* Kuhn, whose specific *take* on epistemological relativism is said to have the potential of refuting rather than confirming, by negation, totalizing epistemologies (*cf.* feminist standpoint theory).

For starters, Keller (1998: 18) gives an *externalist* reading of Kuhn:

“If scientific knowledge was dependent on social and political forces to give it direction, and even meaning, then it was surely reasonable to suppose that ‘gender,’ which exerts so powerful a force in shaping other parts of our lives and worlds, would exert its force here as well.”

Keller (1985: 5) emphasizes those parts of *Structure* where Kuhn, *by implication*, allows for extra-academic ‘forces’ to influence consensus-seeking practices and the course of scientific development. Indeed, when Kuhn ([1962, 1969] 1996: 37; emphasis added) claims that “[a] paradigm can [...] even *insulate* the community from those socially important problems that are not reducible to the puzzle form, because they cannot be stated in terms of the conceptual and instrumental tools the paradigm supplies,” he explicitly claims that this is *not* to say that “normal science is a single monolithic and unified enterprise that must stand or fall with any one of its paradigms as well as with all of them together” (*ibidem*: 49). Following *externalist* Kuhn, Keller (1992c: 2; *cf.* Wright ed. 1992, Brennan 1998: 276) became interested in “the psychosocial (historically ‘masculinist’) dimensions of our dominant scientific traditions.” She started to aim at transformation, taming the hegemony, and to work towards a *human* rather than masculine science.

In *Reflections on Gender and Science* Keller (1985: 5), firstly, addresses the topic of scientific development as *productive* rather than progressive, thus affirming Kuhnian non-

¹⁵ In this context, Keller (1998: 18) even commemorates Kuhn as not always liking the ways in which his work was used (by feminists). This has been summarized with the following quote fictively ascribed to Kuhn: “*Je ne suis pas Kuhnien*” (Nickles 2003: 12).

¹⁶ I focus here on Keller’s early contributions to feminist epistemology. See this Chap. n. 20 on her linguistic turn for her later work.

linear scientific development.¹⁷ Keller also argues that a direct implication of the work of Kuhn is

“that not only different collections of facts, different focal points of scientific attention, but also different organizations of knowledge, different interpretations of the world, are both possible and consistent with what we call science” (*ibidem*).

These ideas about *difference* have to do with Keller’s specific take on the nature of science:

“Just as science is not the purely cognitive endeavor we once thought it, neither is it as impersonal as we thought: science is a deeply personal; as well as social activity” (*ibid.*: 7).

Here, Keller addresses the dialectics between public and private, personal and impersonal, and, consequently, masculine and feminine. She also addresses the ways in which the gendered nature of the relationship between the personal, the social, and the scientific inform the method for studying the development of science. Keller labels this constituency the ‘science-gender system’ (*ibid.*: 8): “the network of gender associations in the characteristic language of science [viewed] as neither natural nor self-evident, but as contingent, and dismaying” (*ibid.*: 12). Keller focuses on the individual as well as the social and conceptual level in the science-gender system,¹⁸ and difference comes to the fore on all levels. What she is looking for is *another*, less dialecticist and male-biased, science system. Keller tries to find a way of conceptualizing objectivity that does not stem from male-biased social relations nor from a personal dimension founded on an equally male-biased autonomy. In Reflections, the case of molecular biologist and Nobel laureate Barbara McClintock is discussed as an exemplary practice of doing science differently (*cf.* Tuana 1996, Braidotti 2006b). What she finds in the work and model provided by McClintock, another perfectly marginal figure (Keller 1985: 125, 173) in the sense of Deleuze and Guattari’s Anti-Oedipus, is a *dynamic* objectivity and a *dynamic* autonomy (*ibidem*: 99, 126). Here one can discern the beginnings of a visionary element in feminist knowledge theory. Keller discusses the work of McClintock as uncovering *alternative* ways of conceptualizing epistemic notions such as Objectivity, Truth, and the autonomous knower. The story of McClintock (written up in A Feeling for the Organism: The Life and Work of Barbara McClintock (Keller 1983)) is being told

“neither as ‘a tale of dedication rewarded after years of neglect – of prejudice or indifference eventually routed by courage and truth’ ([Keller 1983:] xii), nor as a heroic story of the scientist, years ‘ahead of her time,’ stumbling on something approximating what we now know as ‘the truth.’ Instead, [...] as a story about the languages of science – about the process by which worlds of common scientific discourse become established, effectively bounded, and yet at the same time remain sufficiently permeable to allow a given piece of work to pass from incomprehensibility in one era to acceptance (if not full comprehensibility) in another” (Keller 1985: 161).

¹⁷ Refiguring Life: Metaphors of Twentieth-Century Biology makes clear that Keller (1995: *xiii*) acknowledges the fact that “[l]anguage does not simply construct reality” as the material needs to cooperate, and technical supplies need to be available. This book can be seen as a critique of Cartesianism (*ibidem*: 77).

¹⁸ Keller (1992c: 9) uses tools from psychoanalysis precisely because, as she explains retrospectively in Secrets of Life, Secrets of Death: Essays on Language, Gender and Science, psychoanalysis is a method for understanding the way in which the individual and the social interlock.

Keller focuses upon the social or communal as much as the personal and the conceptual.¹⁹ Underlining the Kuhnian *non-linear* development of science, Keller also stresses an internalism – the history of science is a history of language.²⁰ Keller's (1992c: 4) equivocity gets underlined by studying “the force and efficacy of [scientific] representations” and by claiming:

“What counts as a usable, effective, and communable representation is constrained, on the one hand, by our social, cultural, and disciplinary location, and on the other hand, by the recalcitrance of what I am left, by default, to call ‘nature’” (*ibidem*: 6).

Since Keller calls the role of language constitutive, she repeats rather than moves away from Kuhn's constitutive role of paradigms. What comes with this is, indeed, a repetition of Kuhn's implicit progress narrative and Keller now claims that better science entails better representations (*ibid.*: 5). If we overlook Kuhn's and Keller's anti-epistemology, how does it relate to the traditional epistemology of the God's eye view?

When it comes to directionality the margins of a more complex relation between theory and practice are so small²¹ that Kuhn's work is prone to continuing totalization/internalism as well as designing relativism/ malleability *not* in the sense of loosening, but in the sense of re-stifling the hierarchical relation between theory and practice. Rather than providing a new complexity, Kuhn ([1962/ 1969] 1996: 109; emphasis added) argued that “[t]hrough the theories they embody, paradigms prove to be *constitutive of* the research activity.” Therefore, Kuhn more or less continues to emphasize the way in which science functions in a top-down, mono-directional manner. In the end, Keller proves to be a dutiful daughter since she reverts back to internalism. She seems to need the marginal, externalist Kuhn to open up gender as an influential category in the first place. When a place for gender

¹⁹ Cf. Code (1987: 196) in Epistemic Responsibility:

“To hold that knowledge is commonable requires neither that all knowledge be communally acquired nor that cognitive autonomy be impossible. Rather, the stance shows something of the limitations of autonomy, the scope of commonability, and the need to become clearer about the interaction between the two.”

²⁰ For Keller's linguistic turn see Prins (1997: 49), and Lennon (1998: 189). For the chapter most critical of representationalism see Keller (1992a, esp. page 171). In this chapter Keller stays equivocal, *i.e.* assuming causality, claiming that

“[i]nterpretations (or descriptions) are cashed out in experiments, with different interpretations *leading to* the design and execution of different kinds of experiments. When successful, they *point the way to* observations of different kinds of phenomena, which, in turn, are taken to lend credence to the interpretations that generated them in the first place” (*ibidem*: 177; emphasis added).

Consequently Keller when talking about the interdependence of language and science assumes and uses the term *interaction* (*ibid.*).

²¹ In ‘Kuhn and Scientific Practices’ Rouse (1998: 43) argues the opposite. He claims that due to Kuhn's understanding of ‘theory’ – “Theories for Kuhn are not already-developed semantic structures with a definite content, but ongoing practices of articulating concepts in relation to one another in specific contexts” – the margins *are* big enough (*ibidem*: 41). Rouse argues that Kuhn is neither a fundamentalist nor an instrumentalist (*ibid.*: 44) due to the fact that

“Kuhn himself often reminded us that as philosophers we can dispense with the rhetoric of correspondence to already-determinate facts without thereby doing away with the sciences' accountability to how the world is manifest within their ongoing practices” (*ibid.*: 50).

was secured she reverted back to an internalist stance and spoke only about gendered language. For Keller, gender ends up being a tool for studying the different layers of the *internal* gendered organization of science and for studying the way in which that particular gendered practice can be changed. ‘Practice’ here refers to the way in which paradigms and parameters change over time. Kuhn’s or Kuhnian evaluative descriptions do not necessarily overcome the internalism of idealist prescriptive knowledge theories as we have seen on the basis of the two Kuhns circulating in the field of mainstream epistemology and philosophy of science and on the basis of the development of Keller’s thinking.

There is one way in which Keller’s work is truly transformative though, even in the new materialist sense of the term. Keller’s ‘gender-free science’ should not be read as an attempt to *undo* the gendered nature of science and/ or the gendered socialization of (individual) scientists. Keller (1986: 170) argues that thinking about gender and science always introduces a “shift – from no difference, or universality, to absolute difference, or duality” while “the ease and the rapidity of the shift suggest[s] that universality and duality are, in some basic sense, two sides of the same coin.” Here, Keller’s theory does not refute Kuhn or male-biased knowledge theories in general, nor does it produce a gynocentric alternative – is a theory making a difference. Keller’s (1985: 174) practice of difference as exemplified by the story of McClintock should be seen as transformative, *i.e.* visionary:

“Because she is not a man, in a world of men, her commitment to a gender-free science has been binding; because concepts of gender have so deeply influenced the basic categories of science, that commitment has been transformative. In short, the relevance of McClintock’s gender in this story is to be found not in its role in her personal socialization but precisely in the roles of gender in the construction of science.”

What is transformative is the introduction of “a different meaning of mind, of nature [or the material], and of the relation between them” (*ibidem*: 175). In other words,

“My vision of a gender-free science is not a juxtaposition or complementarity of male and female perspectives, nor is it the substitution of one form of parochiality for another. Rather, it is premised on a transformation of the very categories of male and female, and correspondingly, of mind and nature” (*ibid.*: 178).

Here the scientific community is no longer a sum of its parts (which would entail a vision of the individual scientist as working in a scientific community fully governed by a paradigm but working autonomously). Gender cuts across and consequently connects these levels. McClintock, an extraordinary figure, was forced to confront the dominant, gendered construction of science on all of its levels (personal, communal, conceptual). She did so by engendering transformation. Simultaneously, her work was made possible by the community’s recognition of her being *a scientist* (*ibid.*: 173-4; *cf.* Tuana 1996: 32-3). Additionally, for Keller (1992b: 34), as explained in ‘Gender and Science: An Update,’ there always remains room for *nature* – “while surely not a woman, it is also not a ‘thing,’ nor is it even an ‘it’ that can be delineated unto itself, either separate or separable from a speaking and knowing ‘we.’” This is her most materialist moment in the new/ third-wave sense of the term.

Keller (1986: 174) claims that there is “a variety and range of practices, visions, and articulations of science far in excess of any ideological prescriptions. As in the case of gender stereotypes, ideological norms may be formative but they are never fully binding.”

3.2.2.2 Discussion: The Problems of Anthropocentrism and Humanism

Despite the beginnings of a utopian layer added to (feminist) knowledge theory due to Keller being a dutiful daughter of McClintock rather than of Kuhn, the problematics of humanism and anthropocentrism continue to run through the work of both Kuhn and Keller. These are the problematics I claim that new materialists avoid. Kuhn ([1962/ 1969] 1996: 10) argues that paradigms are constitutive of scientific activity. Paradigms consist of “law, theory, application, and instrumentation together.” According to Kuhn’s historiographical approach to the study of science development, the latter element of a paradigm should not be read *as agential*. His work thus remains anthropocentric. According to the 1969 ‘Postscript’ of Structure, descriptions consist of the ways in which the world changes under the influence of disciplinary matrices. That is to say that “[a]ny study of paradigm-directed or paradigm-shattering research must begin by locating the responsible group or groups” (*ibidem*: 180).²² In other words, the historical turn has allowed for historiographical evaluative descriptions as well as (knowledge-) *sociological* generalisations. Kuhn’s knowledge theory is next to anthropocentric *humanist* in nature. Humanism has been problematic for feminists since the first wave. Women have not always been considered to be fully human because they were seen as the Other of Man (Holmstrom 1998). Enlightenment thinkers needed an Other to dialectically erect themselves as the One. In general, the Other (*i.e.* women and blacks) has been connoted feminine, objectifiable, and even penetrable. Recently animals and so-called ‘earth-others’ have been added to the list thus problematizing next to humanism anthropocentrism.

Keller (1998: 19), Kuhnian in the sense of defending the possibility of different takes on one world, says “we have yet to produce an account of the production of scientific knowledge that fully integrates the social, the material, and the cognitive.” In her account of McClintock it becomes clear how nature (something ‘feminine’) and the material can actually speak – due to the excess of the material studied by McClintock. Keller is able to provide an opening for anti-anthropocentrism (see below). In the work of Keller, the speaking of matter is being done to/ through (marginal) scientists and is gleaned from what they write and say in interviews. It is *Braidotti* who explains that McClintock’s jumping genes *as such* involve the way in which, to use Barad’s terms, matter comes to matter. In Transpositions: On Nomadic

²² Cf. Halewood (2005: 74) who argues that for Deleuze (and for Whitehead)
“the world [is] neither flat nor given; hence, the subject does not exist prior to its orientation and instantiation in relation to its wider environment.”

Ethics Braidotti took the theory of transposition or ‘jumping genes’ from Keller/ McClintock, as well as musicology, to reflect upon the development of the qualitative shift in the field of feminist theory. In this epistemological dissertation, this shift is conceptualized as a shift towards a multi-directional and multi-layered knowledge theory. I read Braidotti’s theory of transpositions as both describing her relation to Keller/ McClintock/ feminist studies of an earlier generation and as explaining shifts in feminist thought. Braidotti (2006b: 6) claims:

“Resting on the assumption of a fundamental and necessary unity between subject and object, the theory of transpositions offers a contemplative and creative stance that respects the visible and hidden complexities of the very phenomena it attempts to study. This makes it a paradigmatic model for scientific knowledge as a whole, particularly feminist epistemologies, notably the critique of dualistic splits.”

To claim that the knowing is being done by a *group* (of women) does not produce a qualitative shift towards third-wave feminist epistemology. Above I have shown how Kuhn on the basis of his approach of evaluative descriptions and a practice *governed by* a paradigm produces a directive scientific community that is a sum of its parts.²³ This has repercussions for the extent to which he overcomes epistemological individualism as well. Keller has shown that a Kuhnian internalist approach is perfectly compatible with the case of McClintock who is said to work *individually* as a scientist due to the fact that the community allows her to.²⁴ Braidotti has disidentified with the way in which Keller attempts to overcome the traditional schism between the subject and the object (and instruments) of research while in fact she continues to focus on the authoritative role of the scientist. According to Keller it is the scholar having ‘a feeling for the organism,’ whereas for Braidotti both the scholar and the organism/ matter are transposing agents.

In conclusion, *within* humanist/ anthropocentric epistemologies, there is a tense relationship between the personal/ particular and the communal/ universal. There is no role for the strictly personal in Kuhnian theory; it is the paradigm and with the paradigm the community that directs research activities as well as the development of science. Keller has zoomed in on the personal, while prioritizing the communal, as she argues that the authoritative community enforced McClintock’s scientificity. In the work of Keller, the communal continues to exist prior to the personal and there is a one-way track running from the community to the individual. For feminists the personal is of utmost importance; it has been argued that personal experiences (*cf.* Babbitt 1993) and the sharing thereof makes (feminist) knowledge *objective*. The latter problematic has been explicitly addressed by Marxist and feminist standpoint epistemologies. These (anti-) epistemologies do *not* solve the entire problematic of the personal/ particular vs. the communal/ universal in a feminist

²³ In chapter 1 I already showed how the conceptualization of the individual knowing subject as the sum of the parts of its fractured identity is not qualitatively shifting the terms of second-wave feminist epistemology either.

²⁴ For this allowance see par. 3.3.2 on Foucault.

context (they even continue being fully humanist and anthropocentric), nevertheless an important move has been made. This move towards externalism and its shortcomings will be discussed in the next paragraphs.

3.2.3 ‘*sensuous human activity, practice:*’ Marx

Let me introduce Marxist theorizations of knowledge and knowledge development by continuing the reflection upon the work that has been done on the case of McClintock. Not only (feminist) Kuhnians, but also (feminist) Marxists have reflected upon her academic practice and this is a nice starting point for a critical comparison and evaluation. In her study on McClintock Kuhnian Keller assumes the consensus on awarding McClintock with a Nobel prize and postulates a scientific community that allows her to undertake ‘peculiar’ investigations. Keller’s study, in general conducted from an internalist perspective, has been revisited by Marxist Ruth Berman in ‘From Aristotle’s Dualism to Materialist Dialectics: Feminist Transformation of Science and Society.’ Berman (1989: 247-8) claims that “observations often break out of the limits of communally accepted theories and conflict not only with the paradigms of the scientific community, as described by Kuhn, but also with ideological prescription.” Berman further suggests, that observations and research results are either accepted (when mirroring the social order) or marginalized (when contradicting societal dogma’s) (*ibidem*: 248). Besides arguing that McClintock’s feeling for the organism resembles Marxist sensuousness (see below), Berman claims that because McClintock did not support “the dogma of the constancy of the genome” nor “the parallel dogma of the hegemony of the DNA molecule” she prevented her work from being accepted (*ibid.*: 249). McClintock’s work did not follow the paradigm of the day nor did it conform to the societal trend of enhancement through technological intervention. In sum, whereas Keller’s analysis reverted back to internalism, Berman’s remains fully externalist. For the theorization of externalism Berman appropriates Marx.

In her work, Berman does not talk about *paradigms* insulating the scientific community from focusing on socially important problems. She talks about *societal dogmas* preventing scientists from asking certain questions thus opting for accepted approaches only. How does Marxist epistemology relate to third-wave feminist epistemology and in what way can new materialism be said to be qualitatively different from this strand of (anti-) epistemological reasoning? To answer these questions, I will focus on the ways in which Berman and other feminist epistemologists who appropriate Marx theorize the influence of societal dogma’s – science is said to mirror them – so as to show that new materialism is unidentical to Berman’s representationalist materialism. I will also discuss the ways in which second-wave materialists theorize the role of the personal experiences of a woman scientist *as representative* for all women scientists (on what basis?). Next to representationalism, I will

discuss representation in the political sense of the term. I will conclude by claiming that third wave materialism manages the personal as well as identity politics differently. In chapter 2 I have dealt with two ways in which the relation between (feminist-) Marxist epistemology²⁵ and third-wave feminist epistemology is tensional. First, due to the primacy of either patriarchy or capitalism, and secondly because the quantitative rather than qualitative take of the two-systems approach. In this paragraph I discuss Marxist knowledge theory precisely because one of the issues left untouched by Kuhnian approaches of community and consensus – the relation between the personal and the communal/ identity politics – is central to Marxist epistemologies and feminist appropriations of the work of 19th Century thinkers Marx and Engels.

It is important to take note of the *historical moment* of the rise of feminist reflection on the work of Marx and Engels. Feminists in the beginning of the second wave who claimed that ‘the personal is political’ came to rely on Marxist epistemology for theorizing both the knowledge producing practices of the feminist movement (consciousness raising or CR; see Meulenbelt 1978) and the feminist critique of the academy. Their move to Marx has to be seen as part of a general intra- and extra-academic rise in the interest in Marx and Marxist thought by the babyboom generation, yet it is also a specifically feminist move. Feminists in the 1970s and 1980s had to invent and theorize their own knowledge production practices due to the fact that women had never been considered (ideal) knowing subjects. In ‘Women Resisting Secularisation in an Age of Globalisation: Four Case-studies within a European Context’ Bracke (2004: 54) explains that the idea of women as the natural Others of the Enlightened knowing subject was built on an idea of their knowledge being fundamentally distorted:

“If the sexual and/ or ethnic other is suspect on the basis of her restricted access to modern subjectivity and consciousness, ‘false consciousness’ [(‘they cannot speak for themselves’)] also assures that her knowledge can be interpreted as false, distorted, ridden by superstition and ultimately unreliable.”

Bracke interprets this move as a re-territorializing strategy: as soon as women do get to speak for themselves they are halted on the basis of a ‘false’ consciousness and re-directed to Otherness. In other words, the de-territorializing knowledge they produce is immediately being undone (*ibidem*: 31). False consciousness has two problematic assumptions: “(a) there is a true consciousness that is known and complete, and (b) the researcher-activist knows it, and the participant does not” (Gorelick 1991: 468). According to the ‘Glossary of Terms’

²⁵ Whereas Marxists and Marxist feminists alike focused on “class as the ultimate determinant of women’s current social/ economic status” (Whelehan 1995: 44) and socialist feminists “view[ed] gender and class as equally powerful oppressive mechanisms” (*ibidem*: 45), I inscribe myself in the tradition of Jaggar (1983b: 125) who argued that a clear-cut distinction between Marxist and socialist feminism is not to be made as Marxism was the Master narrative of both strands in second-wave feminism.

offered on www.marxists.org,²⁶ ‘false consciousness’ was first mentioned by Engels in 1893 while questioning the economic determinism of the work he had produced with Marx:

“Ideology is a process accomplished by the so-called thinker consciously, indeed, but with a false consciousness. The real motives impelling him remain unknown to him, otherwise it would not be an ideological process at all. Hence he imagines false or apparent motives.”

Feminists immediately had two problems with Marxist epistemology and false consciousness. First of all, the Marxist base and superstructure dichotomy was destabilized by the feminists “set[ting] up the relationship between ‘ideology’ and ‘reality’ in a different way” (Bracke 2004: 38). The ‘difference’ here refers to seeing ideology as *not* necessarily *distorting* an otherwise accessible reality (*cf.* Grosz 1990: 83). A second aspect of the feminist destabilization of the Marxist base-superstructure dualism concerns its economic determinism (Ferguson 1998). In an early text, Flax ([1983] 2003: 250) talked about Marxist constructivism as a strategy as vulgar as *biological* determinism.²⁷ In “‘Gender’ for a Marxist Dictionary’ Haraway (1991a: 129) pleads for *non*-determinism and gives voice to “a need for a theory of ‘difference’ whose geometries, paradigms, and logics break out of binaries, dialectics, and nature/ culture models of any kind.” Biological determinism and its supposed Marxist constructivist opposite share assumptions, and feminists also presented liberalism and Marxism as non-exhaustive opposites. These criticisms notwithstanding, Marxist epistemology remained interesting to second-wave feminists looking for a theory of the female/ feminist knowing subject. Tuana (1996: 31) has argued that it was due to the participation of feminist philosophers of science, and epistemologists in the women’s movement, and in women’s groups that feminists started “vociferously rejecting the Cartesian model of the isolated knowing subject and replacing it with models that emphasize the centrality of our relationships with others to the process of knowing.” Hilary Rose ([1983] 2004: 68) had formulated this practice very early in time when she claimed that “feminist analysis [...] calls for interpretation constantly tested not simply against the demands of theory, but always and incessantly against the experience of the specific oppression of women.”

Assuming the decisive influence of ideology as well as the possibility of overcoming or transcendence thereof, second-wave feminist epistemologists relied on the Marxist idea of ‘praxis’ resulting in a conceptualization of the knowing subject as social rather than individual.²⁸ Nevertheless, they started out by exposing the gender-blindness of the work of

²⁶ Last accessed: April 18, 2007.

²⁷ Berman (1989: 241) however claims that materialism and determinism are distinct. She does so on the basis of the materialist idea of a “viewpoint as mediated through mental constructs.” We know from the work of Barad however that mediation is *not* a distinctive characteristic shifting, for instance, the terms of a determinism on the basis of a materialism.

²⁸ In chapters 1 and 2 I have dealt with the fact that feminist standpoint epistemology is founded on Hegel’s Master-Slave dialectics and on the Marxian, Engelsian and Lukacsian reading thereof (Harding

Marx and Engels. It was concluded that this genderblindness was caused by the fact that the reflection on gender by Marx and Engels was foreclosed due to their presupposition of a natural sexual division of labour and the primacy of the heterosexual family unit (Haraway 1991a: 131, Holmstrom 1998: 283). This praxis received criticism in this light as well:²⁹

“The Marxian notion of *praxis* posits human activity as social activity – that there is a dialectical relationship between human biology and human society, which is constantly undergoing modifications through the process of history – yet this concept is not interrogated in relation to particular social roles of women. [...] In common with liberalism, women’s social role was by implication seen as rigorously bounded by her biological identity and nature; while males’ superior rationality or thirst to transform nature by the action of *praxis* was the key to civilization” (Whelehan 1995: 46-8; emphasis in original).

If we take into consideration these criticisms and the fact that the possibility of *transcendence* of ideology can be seen as an assumption which has consequences (as unwelcome as Keller’s reverting back to a totalizing internalist epistemology), why did feminists deal with Marxist epistemology in the first place? Lyotard, introducing ‘postmodernism,’ is said to be *most* critical of the Grand Narrative of emancipation (*cf.* Foucault 1980: 133), *i.e.* of

“the story in terms of which particular political tendencies can be assessed as ‘progressive’ or ‘reactionary’ (that is, as agreeing with or running counter to the course of history, viewed as a purposive and meaningful totality)” (Lovibond 1994: 67).

It has been noted before that this Master Theory runs through several strands of (feminist) modern thinking, including “liberal humanist sexual and cultural politics, Marxist theories of history and revolution, radical feminist theories of patriarchy, and black nationalist theories of race and culture” (Weedon 1998: 76). The shared narrative of emancipation can thus be said to provide proof for the fact that mainstream Marxism and second-wave feminism stand in an unreal opposition to one another. *Early* feminist standpoint thinkers indeed wanted to break away from or *transcend* the division between production and reproduction in a way similar to the Marxist goal of transcending the way in which relations of production confined consciousness. Feminist standpoint theorists wanted this, among other things, so as to come to a different science:

“Transcendence of this division of labor set up among hand, brain, and heart makes possible a new scientific knowledge and technology that will enable humanity to live in harmony rather than in antagonism with nature, including human nature” (Rose [1983] 2004: 67).

The humanism involved (see also Haraway [1985] 1991) has been criticized vis-à-vis the seemingly more complex relation between the individual/ the personal and the communal implied by Marx and Marxists. Let me explain this in the remainder of this paragraph on the basis of a discussion of the feminist appropriation of praxis.

Francis Wheen (2006: 71) has said about Marx’s approach in Capital that it is “[in the midst of the hidden foci of production that] we shall discover, not only how capital produces,

1993: 54). Therefore I will focus here on the theme of praxis, so as to add to the things discussed above and to be more specific.

²⁹ Marxism has also been said to be blind for the problem of racism due to the reduction of the problematic of *race* to the problematic of class (see *e.g.* Alcoff 1998: 479).

but also how it is itself produced.” In his ‘Theses on Feuerbach’ Marx reflects upon this complex nature of praxis.³⁰ He designs his materialist point of view in contradistinction to both idealism and earlier versions of materialism. In the latter “the thing, reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the *object or of contemplation*, but not as *sensuous human activity, practice*, not subjectively” ([1845] 2007, Thesis I; emphasis in original). Marx claims that

“[t]he question whether objective truth can be attributed to human thinking is not a question of theory but is a practical question. Man must prove the truth – i.e. the reality and power, the this-sidedness of his thinking in practice. The dispute over the reality or non-reality of thinking that is isolated from practice is a purely *scholastic* question” (*ibidem*, Thesis II; emphasis in original).

For Marx, ‘a reality distorted by ideology’ has something to do with the *level* of analysis or, in my terms, the *directionality* of epistemology. Here, rationality is reformulated as practical and Truth as gained in practice (*ibid.*, Thesis VIII) by agents *other than* individuals (*ibid.*, Thesis IX). It is not the individual subject characteristic of the Enlightenment doing the knowing as “the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations” (*ibid.*, Thesis VI). What these ‘Theses’ show is that Marx’s materialism entails a continuation of a humanist framework. It is directed towards transforming humanity *qua* humanity (*cf. ibid.*, Thesis X). According to When (2006: 13) in Marx’s Das Kapital: A Biography Marx followed Ludwig Feuerbach in turning upside down the Cartesian Cogito thus claiming that “thought arises from being, not being from thought” and simultaneously “extend[ing] its logic from abstract philosophy to the material world.” Marx concluded that “[t]he philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it” (Marx [1845] 2007, Thesis XI). Cartesianism, that is, was accused of being non-utopian. This point has been furthered in the early feminist appropriations of Marx by Rose and Steven Rose. Duran (1998: 120; *cf. Tuana* 1996: 17) explains summarizing the early Marxist writings of the Roses that it is not only philosophers falsely objectivifying the world, but also working *scientists* that have been trapped by capitalism:

“The rise of science is consonant with the rise of industrialization, and both of these realms of activity have in common the distancing from a more organic wholeness with human life that Marx finds characteristic of ‘alienation.’”

What we find here is the beginning of a move towards a more complex conceptualization of the knowing subject. A conceptualization that is, next to thoroughly externalist, proposing a conceptualization of the knowing subject that is not epistemologically individualist, but neither simply *exchanging* the individualist for its flipside, *i.e.* the communal (*ibid.*, Thesis III; emphasis in original). In the next paragraph I will focus on Marx’s externalist intervention

³⁰ Note that Haraway (1991a: 131-2) reads ‘Theses’ as particularly sexist due to the fact that it naturalizes the division of labour between men and women on the basis of the heterosexual coitus.

in tandem with the issue of the personal and the communal. Using the two axes of the cartography that I am construing in this chapter, Marx's work is, next to bottom-up, multi-layered. The work of Marx and scholars appropriating Marxism is multi-layered, because of the fact that it does not just describe praxis, but its consequences as well (the point is to transform humanity). What are the consequences of focusing on humanity *qua* humanity? In other words, to what extent is Marx's visionary layer gendered?

3.2.3.1 Representation and Representationalism: Feminist Standpoint Theory

Seeking their recourse to Marx and Engels, feminists immediately asked *who* – whether individuals or groups – in this new, bottom-up situation, was doing the knowing? And indeed, Harding (1993: 59; *cf.* Whelan 2006: 7) claimed that “Hegel was not a slave [...] Marx, Engels, and Lukacs were not engaged in the kind of labor that they argued provided the starting point for developing their theories about class society.” This opens up to the two interrelated problematics of representation and representationalism I mentioned above in relation to the shift in feminist epistemological thinking from Kuhn (the strictly communal; internalism) to Marx (ideology affecting the personal and the communal; externalism).

The problem of representation should be seen as divided into two parts (Buikema 2007).³¹ Firstly, there is the issue of re-presentation (*Darstellung*). In the context of the discussion in this chapter, I want to define re-presentation as the issue of *generalizing* on the basis of what is found in the material world. In other words, assuming that one's own experiences or the experiences of a small sample of women are representative for all women. Diemut Bubeck (2000: 189) typifies *Darstellung* or generalizing beyond one's or one's group's boundaries as “false inclusion in general claims.” In ‘Taking Subjectivity into Account’ Code (1993: 39; emphasis in original) recognizes that “knowers are always *somewhere*,” yet she argues that we should be “alert to the possibility of finding generalities and commonalities within particulars and hence of the explanatory potential that opens up when such commonalities can be delineated” and simultaneously we should be “wary of the reductivism that results when commonalities are presupposed or forced” (*ibidem*). In this dissertation it has been mentioned before that consensus on this topic in the field of women's and gender studies is the ‘politics of location’ or ‘situatedness.’ In the words of Code: to a positionality there is “no ultimate foundation, but neither does it float free, because it is grounded in experiences and practices, in the efficacy of the dialogic negotiation and of action” (*ibid.*).

³¹ Representation is generally considered a problem connected to equality feminism. The radical branch of equality feminism assuming that the *Darstellung* of women changed patriarchal structures from within gradually developed into feminisms of difference (Buikema 1993).

Secondly, there is the problematic of legal or political representation (*Vertretung*; speaking on behalf of, or, in Bubeck's terms 'false naming' (2000: 189)). Bat-On (1993: 92) argues that theories taking into account identity or practices of marginalized groups "always idealize [agency], abstracting from the actual lived practices and generalizing from normatively approved ones." This, she claims, "is problematic because rather than working from a conception of practices as heterogeneous, it includes some while excluding others" (*ibidem*). She goes on to argue that in general it is "practices that are generally associated with the group" as well as "practices of resistance" that are focused on (*ibid.*). Bat-On claims that this duality has distorting effects. In the first case, it might lead to the idealization of *certain* (women's) practices, namely "practices related to women's identity as defined within the system that oppresses them" (*ibid.*: 93). An example often mentioned in this context is the devaluation, and alleged idealization, of childbirth and women's sexuality – these are practices alienating women (Bartky 1998: 324).³² In the second case agency and oppression are defined as each other's opposites (Bat-On 1993: 93). This false opposition in which one is either confined by or free(d) from oppression is part of what Bat-On recognizes as buying into the binary opposition between passivity (connoted feminine) and agency (connoted masculine) (*ibidem*: 94).

The problematic aspects of *Darstellung* and *Vertretung* have particular repercussions for the kind of feminist political strategy adopted to engender change and for the kind of visionary feminist epistemology adhered to or designed. Sabina Lovibond (1994: 69; emphasis in original. Cf. Engels' "naïve fraternité" (Wheen 2006: 34)) has said that

"it is no longer acceptable for anyone to *represent* anyone else – the reason being that this would involve subordinating the individual experience of the one represented to some abstract idea which is supposed to generate a common identity embracing both him/ her and the representative (for example, 'trade unionist or 'communist')."

Marx dealt with this issue explicitly in The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte. Here Marx ([1852] 2004: 106-7; cf. Spivak in Ponzanesi 2007) claimed that small peasant proprietors in 19th Century France both formed a class (due to the fact that their economic conditions were specific) and did not form a class (what we are dealing with is "the simple addition of isomorphous magnitudes" "merely connected on a local basis, and the identity of their interests fail[ing] to produce a feeling of community, national links or a political organization"). He famously concluded: "They cannot represent themselves; they must be represented" (Marx [1852] 2004: 107). In other words, it is the oppressive society *itself* that expresses the influence of peasants (*ibidem*). Wholly in line with this, Bat-On (1993: 97) concludes with a reference to Audre Lorde, claiming that in the two cases mentioned above

³² "'Alienation' may be defined as *fragmentation* of the human person and a *prohibition* on the full exercise of capacities, the exercise of which is thought necessary to a fully human existence" (Bartky 1998: 323; emphasis in original).

It is here that we can position Sara Ruddick's materialism (maternal thinking).

feminists of the second-wave theorizing CR have been trying to dismantle the Master's house using the Master's tools:

“There are no tools that can replace [epistemic privilege], nor are any needed, because when the oppressed feel a need to authorize speech, they are acting on feelings that are a function of their oppression.”

This is a perfect example of the false consciousness of *feminists*. The solution is connected to Marxist and feminist-Marxist epistemology as representationalist.

Neither Bubeck's³³ nor Bat-On's critique of representation concerns an explicit critique of representationalism. It is not the mirroring *as such* that is questioned; it is considered possible to produce (knowledge) claims that mirror experiences. In this sense their work is a continuation of (feminist-) Marxist critiques of science more generally. We saw above that Marxist epistemology as such is fully representationalist – the sciences are considered to reflect the norms and needs of the bourgeoisie (Duran 1998: 171-2). For example, Berman (1989: 250) claims that the “communal practice [of science] reflects the needs of the dominant sector, and its way of thinking increasingly reflects the dominant ideology.” Her solution is equally representationalist and equivocal: “Neither science nor society need be elitist; the material world itself, and its processes, are not” (*ibidem*: 252). Berman suggests that science should finally start to mirror the material world. In sum, the utopian layer of (feminist-) Marxist approaches asks for the mirroring of the experiences of proletarians or women. Marxist (anti-) epistemology is multi-layered in comparison to third wave materialism, but not unproblematically so. The material world in the framework of Berman and others has to be seen as a new *foundation* (*ibid.*: 229), which leads to the directionality of (feminist-) Marxist epistemology as strictly *bottom-up* thus mono-directional and equivocal.³⁴ On the one hand, it can be said that feminists have used Marx to overcome some of the problems with Kuhn. For example, the personal *is* included in Marxist epistemology and this allows for a complex relation between theory and practice, the personal and the communal. On the other hand, taking into consideration the resulting problems of representation and representationalism, the feminist appropriation of Marxist epistemology did remain *universalist* and also in that sense equivocal (the unresolved issue is a schism between the personal and the communal).

³³ Bubeck (2000: 189) explains false naming as follows: “the naming by others of her experience in ways that do not reflect that experience.”

³⁴ I read Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's (e.g. 2000: 102, 125, 156, 435 n. 31) *Empire* as materialist in the sense of both claiming that what is considered natural is, in fact, produced or naturalized and of moving beyond representationalism – see, for instance, the Preface which introduces ‘Empire’ “not as a *metaphor*” (*ibidem*: xiv; emphasis in original).

3.2.3.2 Discussion: The Problem of Universalism

Feminists trying to solve the problem of the (non-) inclusion of the personal in knowledge theoretical reflections that exemplify other than epistemologically individualist positions find themselves utilizing Marxist epistemology and feminist standpoint epistemology, as an appropriation of Marxist epistemology, and this leads to the problem of universalism. This problem is one aspect of sociological generalizations (now focusing on the *generalization* part rather than on the sociology part/ community and consensus aspect). The issue I want to deal with in this paragraph can be explained by studying the work of Bubeck. In her chapter on political philosophy in The Cambridge Companion to Feminism in Philosophy (Fricker and Hornsby eds 2000) (a reference tool with a strong focus on second-wave feminist materialist epistemology and beyond) Bubeck (2000) explains that feminist standpoint theory has the tendency to become either universalistic (producing a universal standpoint for women) or particularistic (producing *individual* standpoints). Bubeck claims, feminist theorists have left behind universalism but are left with a particularism that needs to be overcome since it has *paralyzing* consequences for engendering change. The problems of representation discussed above are the direct results of this discussion; when everyone can potentially speak from a standpoint, and all women are individually thus distinctively/ antagonistically situated, feminists are forced to find ways to assemble more general conclusions. Therefore, once again, they begin to include or speak for other women. Bat-On has explained that this vicious circle is *not* a problem of Marxist epistemology *per se*, but a problem of the feminist translation or appropriation thereof. She explains that for Marx “social marginality is a function of economic centrality” (Bat-On 1993: 86). In other words, Marx has conceptualized proletarians as *outsiders within* (Collins’s term) whereas feminist standpoint theorists have conceptualized women as *outsiders*. This simplification has led to several problems. Firstly, feminists were obliged to find other (*i.e.* diametrically opposed) ways in which women could be called epistemologically privileged; and secondly, the problem arose as to *which* outsiders (there were many according to the many different (intersecting) categories of gender, ‘race’/ ethnicity, sexuality, etc.) were ‘best.’ Bat-On (*ibidem*: 89) rightly asks:

“is any of these groups more epistemologically privileged than the others, and if that is not so – if they are all equally epistemologically privileged – does epistemic privilege matter?”

Whereas Bat-On claimed that epistemic privilege conceptualized on the basis of women as outsiders was nothing more than a function of women’s oppression (see above), Bubeck (2000: 196) sets out to solve both the problem of universalism and the problem of particularism by claiming that we should try to transcend (*ibidem*: 195) our particular location and neither presume nor deny the possibility of a common condition (*ibid.*: 197). I want to question whether this truly makes a difference, *i.e.* is a change of focus involved? Again the outsider within position is not adopted. Instead, an additive model is opted for in which

everybody is both insider and outsider (Lugones and Spelman in Bubeck 2000: 193). Feminist theory seems to be caught in a trap here.

In this paragraph I have tried to show that the way in which feminists have appropriated Marxist work on praxis and the proletariat's standpoint has led to the unreal opposition of either a tendency to overgeneralize on the basis of a foundationalism or a tendency to claim an individual standpoint on the basis of postmodern pluralism. Leaving behind the mono-directionality of (feminist-) Marxist epistemology and its representation/alism which has repercussions for the layering of the epistemology, new materialism tries to overcome both universalism and the feminist diametrical opposite (particularism) by claiming that they are falsely opposed to one another. I want to claim that new materialism truly 'returns' to the outsider within (both terms matter) through the singular studies of the materialization of boundaries. Coming to a conclusion, I will give an example of the way in which this is being done. In 'Re(con)figuring Space, Time, and Matter' Barad (2001: 78) discusses the work of Leela Fernandes and explains that we should conceptualize the working class as *produced*. Here, she argues against, in the words of Fernandes, "class structure [a]s a uniform, objective 'purity.'" This statement provides insight in the ways in which class exists in relation to other so-called purities (such as gender) and it also shows that the working class is *not* something to be found out there so as to be represented. Fernandes takes into account the full complexity of praxis, and, with Fernandes, Barad explains that we should think of class, gender, and other categories as both productive (of individuals with certain categories) and themselves produced (they are the *effect* of a certain division of labour) (*ibidem*: 80). Here, univocity is introduced; and theory and practice are finally co-constitutive of one another, and the epistemology is multi-directional. This new materialist reading of class wants to focus on the ways in which boundaries are being drawn, thus leaving behind Marx's assumptions about the nature of categories and standpoint theory's assumption of standpoints as either universals or particulars.

3.2.4 The God Trick of the Agnostic: Latour

Reflecting upon the impact of Kuhn's historical turn, Rouse (1998: 33) argued:

"Even now, thirty-five years after the appearance of Structure, the significant shift of philosophical focus from scientific knowledge to scientific practices has not yet been fully assimilated."

According to Rouse, philosophical reflection on science and knowledge production is governed by the primacy of the theoretical/ textual. Transposing Rouse's statement to the feminist realm, the claim finds confirmation in the analysis presented in the previous paragraph on feminist-Marxist knowledge theory. The approach introduced by Latour in the late 1970s and early 1980s is another attempt to anti-epistemologically give primacy to the

practical/ material, and to introduce a specific and new way of studying the production of scientific statements or science *itself*. Latour's 'empirical turn' has engendered the development of the field of science and technology studies (often abbreviated as STS or science studies). Feminists have been involved in this field since the initial stages of development. Science studies is a European tradition with roots in France (*e.g.* Latour and Michel Callon) and Continental Europe at large (*e.g.* Karin Knorr Cetina (Germany), Annemarie Mol (the Netherlands)) as well as the UK (*e.g.* the Edinburgh School and the Bath School (Hess 1997), science studies in Birmingham, Lancaster, Manchester). In the present day, STS is recognized as a scholarly field and it is being practiced and taught all over the world. Some STS work is designated feminist while other branches are considered to be postcolonial. This paragraph highlights the work of Latour because his STS work has generated the most attention in the feminist academic community (Duran 1998: 84-6).³⁵ I will argue that the turn *away* from the textual and theoretical and the turn *towards* the material and practical involves a response to common practices in philosophy of science and epistemology that are so strongly dialecticist that the assumptions of the so-called Received View get re-confirmed rather than 'demystified' (*ibidem*: 85) or 'disenchanted' (Latour [1984] 1988, Latour [1991] 1993). Furthermore, I will argue that while Kuhn ([1962/ 1969] 1996: 1) started from "[h]istory, if viewed as a repository for more than anecdote or chronology," Latour and Latourians have ended up reconfirming anecdote and chronology. My conclusion will be that the descriptive take introduced by Latour proves, again, that new materialism should be seen as a methodology that is able to shift the parameters of thinking about science and knowledge, both in its anti-epistemic and in its second-wave feminist incarnations.

The empirical turn set in motion by Latour and Steve Woolgar's Laboratory Life: The Construction of Scientific Facts ([1979] 1986) brought forth an argument for another bottom-up approach to the study of science and knowledge production. Science studies scholars evaluate traditional epistemology as purely prescriptive, thus knowing (beforehand) what scientific knowledge should be and that it should differ from all other knowledge (Latour [1984] 1988: 215-6)). I argue in this paragraph that science studies *itself* is often restricted in the opposite direction: *not* knowing what science is, Latourians often end up proclaiming a relativist particularism (see below). In both cases the equivocal assumption is that the theoretical and practical side of scholarship can be distinguished prior to the theoretical/empirical study. 'Science students' (for the term see *e.g.* Latour 1999: 3) have become the 'neutral' archivists of knowledge practices, and often their bottom-up strategy is simply the flip side of an equally 'neutral' top-down, traditional account. Despite Latour's motto

³⁵ Latour states that Ludwik Fleck is the founder of science studies (*cf.* Oudshoorn 1994). I here deal with ways of approaching practice *feminists* have engaged with on a considerable scale. This is the partiality (in Haraway's sense of the term) of the cartography I offer.

“ABANDON ALL KNOWLEDGE ABOUT KNOWLEDGE ALL YE WHO ENTER HERE” (Latour 1987: 7; emphasis in original)³⁶ and his conceptualization of scientific instruments and texts as Pandora’s boxes (*ibidem*), I argue here that bottom-up approaches should reflect upon their assumptions about *how* to enter and *from where* to begin their reflections upon knowledge. What becomes clear is the *idealism* of *both* antithetical instances of mono-layered and mono-directional knowledge theory. In this sense, science studies (and other ‘post-Kuhnian’ approaches) and traditional philosophies of science/ epistemologies are non-exhaustively dichotomous. In fact, this is what Latour (1981: 206) claimed of the study of science by an Ivory Coast hunter as well as of the epistemological anarchism of Paul Feyerabend. In an interview with T. Hugh Crawford (1993: 254-5), Latour said:

“I think deep down, Feyerabend rendered a disservice to the history and philosophy of science. I don’t take very seriously political anarchism, and I don’t take very seriously anarchism in science because it is completely reactionary. Again, it is a debunking strategy, and all debunking makes people believe in the thing being debunked.”

I argue here that Latour’s (1987: 7; for the term see Latour 1981) explicit ‘agnosticism’ (“We will have as few ideas as possible on what constitutes science”) ends up confirming traditional armchair philosophy through a debunking of its implicit yet foundational ‘God trick.’ I continue this argument by stating that both agnosticism (in the sense of a refusal to belief in the content of a belief/ Science and in the sense of a refusal of believing as such (Latour 1999: 275)) and the God trick are ways that scholars cover up their ‘taking a stand’ or stance. Both approaches, explicitly or implicitly, analyze science from the undefined outside (Latour 1987: 13-7). Contrary to this, feminists talk extensively about knowledge, knowledge practices, and knowledge theories as decisively situated entities. In addition, not only do the two antithetical mono-layered and mono-directional approaches assume a non-innocent standpoint, but they also share assumptions about what counts as theory and what counts as practice. This shows us that an unfounded *schism* between theory and practice is being implemented.

Summarizing Latour, William Paulson (2001: 86) claims that

“historians and sociologists of science cannot use representations of nature to explain how and why scientific controversies are settled, since these representations are the outcome of the settlement. [...] Neither the object nor the group could be taken as the cause of what [a scientist] did.”

Science students focus on *activities*.³⁷ Therefore, science studies are not traditional epistemologists nor are they strictly sociological (such as Kuhn or Marx). In a programmatic statement Latour (1999: 99; emphasis in original) claims:

“[There] are *five* types of activities that science studies needs to describe first if it seeks to begin to understand in any sort of realistic way what a given scientific discipline is up to: instruments, colleagues, allies, public, and finally, what I will call *links* or *knots* so as to avoid

³⁶ Cf. Dante Alighieri’s ‘Abandon hope, all ye who enter here.’

³⁷ For example, at the prestigious SALK-institute (Latour and Woolgar [1979] 1986), in the Amazon (Latour 1999), with apes (Haraway 1989, Strum and Fedigan eds 2000), in Japan (Traweek 1988, 1992), and in the past (Latour [1984] 1988).

the historical baggage that comes with the phrase ‘conceptual content.’ Each of these five activities is as important as the others, and each feeds back into itself and into the other four.”

Latour ascribes activities to humans (individuals and collectives) and non-humans alike.³⁸ His *ascription* aspect has to be taken literally: as scientists are involved in “defining a new object by the answers it inscribes on the window of an instrument” (Latour 1987: 90; *cf.* Barad 2003). Latour defines scientists as “representatives among other representatives” and the new object – an *actant* – as becoming a thing when we forget that their name is a performative, an indication of what it *does* (*ibidem*: 89, 91). The first activity concerns of the “load[ing] into discourse” of “nonhumans,” *i.e.* “a matter of moving toward the world, making it mobile, bringing it to the site of controversy, keeping in engaged, and making it available for arguments” (Latour 1999: 99). This activity is summarized by the verb ‘to load’ as in “*loading* an entity into another by making the second attentive to the first, and by making both of them diverge from their usual path, their usual interpretation” (Latour 2000: 372; emphasis in original). Loading involves the move of the performative becoming a thing (Latour 1987: 91):

“If you [the scholar, that is] wish to go out of *your* way and come back heavily equipped so as to force others to go out of *their* ways, the main problem to solve is that of *mobilization*. You have to go and to come back *with* the ‘things’ if your moves are not to be wasted. But the ‘things’ have to be able to withstand the return trip without withering away. Further requirements: the ‘things’ you gathered and displaced have to be presentable all at once to those you want to convince and who did not go there. In sum, you have to invent objects which have the properties of being *mobile* but also *immutable*, *presentable*, *readable* and *combinable* with one another” (Latour 1990: 26; emphasis in original).

In other words, one has to come up with ‘immutable mobiles’ (*ibidem*) to convince colleagues (activity number two). The above quote makes clear that science is a communal activity for Latour. Different from Kuhn, however, Latour includes non-humans in the community. Haraway (1989: 303), adding to Kuhn in particular, has made clear that science is communal in its stabilizing as well as its destabilizing/ revolutionary practices. (What is made clear also is the masculine power language and war metaphors Latour is relying on (*cf.* Prins 1997: 26, Haraway 1997: 34, Haraway and Goodeve 1999: 156). This aspect of Latourian ‘empirical philosophy’ (the term is Lolle Nauta’s; see also Latour 1999: 78, Mol 2000) has been criticized by many feminists (see below).) The third activity involves the engagement of things other than colleagues and ‘objects of research.’ Here one can think of paper, machines, editorial boards, industry, funds, teachers, and politicians (Latour and Woolgar [1979] 1986, Latour 1987). Latour wants science students to *describe* the building of all these alliances.

³⁸ I thus find Andrew Pickering’s (1992: 2) formulation of the empirical turn – “the move toward studying scientific practice, what scientists actually do” – somewhat delimiting due to its focus on humans. Defining ‘practice’ Latour (1999: 309) moved away from sociology:

“Science studies is not defined by the extension of social explanations to science, but by emphasis on the local, material, mundane sites where the sciences are practiced.”

Cf. Hess 1997: 103-5. See also below on the social explanation of the technical/ scientific.

Haraway, however, talks about coalition *politics* (Haraway [1985] 1991: 155, Haraway 1991: 245 n. 7).

Latour ([1984] 1988: 229), who has argued in ‘Irreductions’ that “[s]cience is [...] politics by other means,” describes the convincing and persuading practices of scholars. Haraway, however, broadens the definition of politics so as to show, on the one hand, that the coalitional/ political aspect of science involves a power play, and on the other, that the building of some coalitions and alliances rather than others results in a better science. In ‘The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others’ Haraway (1992: 332 n. 14) claims that Latour’s collective, despite its descriptive approach, is impoverished due to the fact that what can be part of his collective is being decided on beforehand. According to Haraway, Latourian scholars want to avoid repeating David Bloor’s social explanation of the technical (*cf.* Pickering 1992). By trying to avoid this binaristic model, Latourians end up reinforcing it because they focus on the technical *rather than* the social, and not on the intra-action of the social and the technical. Haraway claims that when Latourians do this, they shy away from certain practices and maintain the androcentric bias:

“What counts as ‘technical’ and what counts as ‘practice’ should remain far from self-evident in science in action. For all of their extraordinary creativity, so far the mappings from most SSS scholars have stopped dead at the fearful seas where the worldly practices of inequality lap at the shores, infiltrate the estuaries, and set the parameters of reproduction of scientific practice, artifacts, and knowledge” (*ibidem*: 332-3 n. 14).

Haraway re-introduces the normative, prescriptive layer of epistemological work into her feminist STS frame (see Lykke 2002 for a thorough characterization of her frame). Her prescriptive layer, informed by situated knowledges, is not a simple copy of the normativity of mainstream epistemology. Mol (2000: 12) explains that women’s studies, as such, makes a perfect example of empirical philosophy. Women’s studies has abandoned all that was considered ‘known’ about women and revised ‘sex’ (later gender) into its topic of inquiry. Women’s studies scholars asked questions like: if the definition of women in situation x is y, can a black woman be a woman? In ‘Food Matters: Arguments for an Ethnography of Daily Care’ Hans Harbers, Mol and Alice Stollmeyer (2002: 12) call this kind of work *involved* rather than agnostic description – “ethnographic work that looks for contrasts, sets up differences and seeks for what one practice might learn from another.”

The involvement of the scholar is not completely overlooked by Latour. In his analysis, the fourth activity of scholars is engagement with laypeople/ citizens or the Public (*cf.* Latour [1993] 1996). Since scientists *and* science students are also citizens there is no hierarchy within which scholars educate laypersons about science; but rather, a situation within which knowledge about science and the public opinion feed back into one another (Latour 1999: 106). Furthermore, a scientist’s skepticism or enthusiasm about the topic of research influences the research results. The idea of feedback loops is the focus of the fifth

type of activity of scientists. This activity connects the so-called esoteric conceptual core of scholarship with its supposedly exoteric periphery. The intimate connection between the two (a research result of Latourian studies diametrically opposed to what traditional epistemologists isolating the esoteric from the exoteric assume) is the core of Latourian science studies. This does not mean that science studies refutes the centrality of the production of hard facts and undefeatable knowledge. It is simply the case that

“[a] concept does not become scientific because it is farther removed from the rest of what it holds, but because it is more intensely connected to a much larger repertoire of resources” (*ibidem*: 108).

Susan Leigh Star immediately criticizes this seemingly revolutionary idea. According to Star, it would not stop science students from studying only what has been engaged this huge ‘heterogeneous association’ (Latour 2003, 2004). She bases her claims on the ability of networks to know marginal perspectives and:

“A stabilized network is only stable for some, and that is for those who are members of the community of practice who form/ use/ maintain it. And part of the public stability of a standardized network often involves the private suffering of those who are not standard – who must use the standard network, but who are also non-members of the community of practice” (Star 1991: 43; *cf.* Bijsterveld 1991, Wyatt 1998).

Star ascribes an authoritative gesture similar to traditional epistemologists to science students, despite the fact that the latter present themselves as humble agnostics.

In ‘Insiders & Outsiders in the Sociology of Science; or, How Can We Foster Agnosticism’ Latour (1981: 200) introduces agnosticism in the context of the assumed objectivity of the natural sciences and subjectivity of the social sciences. Agnosticism is the solution offered to science students who are said to be *unable* to mirror practicing scientists because they need to prove that the natural sciences are not completely objective. The latter is due to the fact that they are influenced by what is usually studied by social scientists: the meaning of social activities in the lab. The solution offered is illustrated by the study of boundaries in an agnostic – neither religious, nor relativist (Latour [1984] 1988: 186) – manner:

“It is the belief in purity [...]: on one side of the line pure objects, on the other pure minds, with no contact between them. One has the duty to explain and the other must be explained. If we are to be agnostic toward science we must give up even this last belief, this religious respect for purity” (Latour 1981: 210).

This approach should provide a solution for science research in which “they neither account independently for scientific activity nor follow this activity closely” (*ibidem*: 203). I argue however that this is precisely what they fail to do. While trying to overcome this schism Latour seems to have moved away from, even escaped, rather than moved closer to (*cf.* Barad and Ahmed) ‘boundary work.’

The agnostic and philosophically naïve practice of science students is often said to be built on the model of the anthropologist (*cf.* Latour and Woolgar [1979] 1986: 43-90, 277-9,

Latour 1999: 24, Latour [1991] 1993: 100-3). The ideal here is “retaining both the history of humans’ involvement in the making of scientific facts and the sciences’ involvement in the making of human history” (Latour 1999: 10; *cf.* Latour 1981: 200). This is a symmetrical anthropological strategy that treats us and them, nature and culture, scientific failure and scientific success equally (Latour [1991] 1993). The widely known anthropologist Clifford Geertz has claimed that anthropologists set out

“to produce an interpretation of the way a people lives which is *neither* imprisoned within their mental horizons, an ethnography of witchcraft as written by a witch, *nor* systematically deaf to the distinctive tonalities of their existence, an ethnography of witchcraft as written by a geometer” (in Williams 1995: 143; emphasis added).³⁹

For Latour, practicing scientists are characterized by the face of Janus, both knowing and not-knowing. However, science students are advised to start from a fundamental⁴⁰ uncertainty (Latour and Woolgar [1979] 1986: 279) about the practice studied. Despite their claims against mirroring scientists (Latour 1981), I would say that Latour and Latourians do mirror scientists rather than anthropologists. *Both* Latourians and scientists go native and lean towards relativism (another practice, another truth) while performing the totalizing the God trick (studying what has become True and stable – something that is priorly known by them – rather than failures and processes of marginalization).⁴¹ Covering up an unsituated perspective, thereby falsely opposing oneself from a Cartesian ‘mind-in-a-vat’ (Latour 1999: 4), is what I want to call the God Trick of the Agnostic.⁴²

Science studies took off as a field that wanted to ‘correct’ the Received View by bringing in and focusing on the empirical dimension of science and knowledge development. Latour (1987) in Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society fulminated against the scholars populating philosophy departments. Latour described these scholars as researchers who authoritatively *imposed* models of knowledge production on the academy and working scientists, while being unable to *explain* concrete knowledge practices (*cf.* Latour and Woolgar [1979] 1986: 273). They were said to *prescribe* rather than *describe*, not connecting ‘ought’ and ‘is’ in any way. Just as the turn to description was a turning point in the discourses about science and knowledge, the turn to practice (Bono 2005) should be

³⁹ I thank Baukje Prins for providing me with this quotation.

⁴⁰ As Latour (1999: 15; original emphasis) says in Pandora’s Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies:

“We do not *lack* certainty, because we never dreamed of *dominating* the people.”

⁴¹ Prins confirms this, claiming that according to Latour (1997: 31-2),

“the only adequate approach of the ambivalence of all our knowledge practices is the recognition that we cannot escape the ‘double talk’ of both claiming that we do not make up the objects of nature, and that these objects are our own socio-technological constructions.”

She makes this statement quoting Latour who claims that he is neither a constructivist nor a relativist (Latour 1995 in Prins 1997: 32).

⁴² I read Mol’s (2002: 32-50) complication of the subject-object divide that Latour wants to avoid – she says it is not simply a nature-culture divide, but also a divide of knowing subject and object known – as an argument in the same direction.

taken literally because it illustrates that mainstream science studies are mono-directional (focusing on practice *rather than* theory) and mono-layered (focusing on description). The great majority of today's science and technology studies consists of 'pure,' well written-up case studies.⁴³ Whereas Latour, in his Spinoza lectures,⁴⁴ argued against the strict separateness of matter/ nature and discourse/ the social, his methodological suggestion – 'go with the flow' of the river between matter (bank 1) and discourse (bank 2) – can be read as another plea for description in a non-situated, relativist manner that actually *postulates* both matter and discourse as distinct and *escapes* the bridge between them (*cf.* Latour 1999: 73).

3.2.4.1 Concern and Care: Stengers, Haraway⁴⁵

In 2003 and 2004, Latour published two papers in which he set out to renew constructivism and realism. These papers should be seen as 'companions' because they tackle two related problems (Latour 2004: 246 n. 33). I read these two papers as an introduction to a 'second' Latour. In 'Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern' Latour (2004: 232) pleads for the development of a second empiricism. He argues against the fact that industries and governments now seem to mirror the empirical turn (*i.e.* question scientific facts) and also states that science students should no longer question but *care for* facts (*ibidem*: 231). He introduces the terms 'matters of fact' and 'matters of concern' (*ibid.*) in order to differentiate between fact and fiction⁴⁶ and to highlight what fact and fiction share on the one hand and how that differs from matters of concern on the other. Fact and fiction are founded on a 'Critical Trick' (*ibid.*: 241) according to which "we carefully manage to apply them on *different* topics" thus ending up "always right!" (*ibid.*: 239). Approaches dealing with matters of concern, on the contrary, argue *against* (such) a-priorism. Therefore, matters of concern are what matter for the second empiricism.

The first empiricism "found itself totally disarmed" once matters of fact were debunked, for example by the Bush administration (*ibid.*: 232). In other words, the first empiricism got caught up in its own dialecticism. Here, Latour verifies the analysis of his work provided in the previous paragraph. In 'The Promises of Constructivism' Latour (2003: 27) argues that the term 'constructivism' has been misused by positivists and deconstructivists alike. Positivists conceptualize facts as totally independent from the work that has gone into constructing them and deconstructivists talk about the work at the complete expense of the

⁴³ For this claim I am taking the papers presented at the 4S & EASST Conference 'PUBLIC PROOFS Science, technology and democracy' (Paris, August 25-28, 2004) as my sample. See www.csi.enscm.fr/WebCSI/4S/index.php (last accessed: April 23, 2007).

⁴⁴ 'What is the Style of Matter of Concern?' (May 19, 2005, University of Amsterdam). See Latour 2005: 5. See also Latour 1999: 26.

⁴⁵ Paulson (2001) defends this same selection of authors by claiming that they are the key figures of the debate about nonhumans and science studies.

⁴⁶ Latour talks about 'fairy' instead. I will not go into this terminological issue here.

factual core (*ibidem*: 36). Latour consequently claims that this situation “render[s] practice opaque to enquiry” (*ibid.*: 37) and underlines the political nature of *both* positions (*ibid.*: 37-8). Accordingly, a second empiricism is introduced by asking the following question:

“Can we devise another powerful descriptive tool that deals this time with matters of concern and whose import then will no longer be to debunk but to protect and care, as Donna Haraway would put it?” (Latour 2004: 232).

For Latour, approaching matters of concern involves dealing with fact nor fiction. We should be neither positivists nor social constructivists. The latter are science students who work according to the regulations of first empiricism (*ibidem*: 245; *cf.* Paulson 2001: 90). Latour (2003: 42; emphasis in original) claims that “all the subtle mediations of practice should be *protected* and cherished instead of being debunked and slowly destroyed” by way of “an appeal for the extension of *care and caution*, a request to raise again the question: ‘How can it be built *better*?’” In these two articles, we see the development of a second Latour and an analysis of good-old, ‘first-phase’ empirical philosophy, which is similar to what I earlier referred to as ‘the God Trick of the Agnostic.’⁴⁷ Ultimately, Agnostics are so malleable and unsituated that conservative, totalizing forces like neo-liberal governments can relate to them.

In the ‘second Latour’ papers, an unexpected reliance on the work of Haraway can be found. Latour mentions Haraway as exemplary for protection of and care for matters of concern. However, when he talks about the *partiality* of matters of fact as well as fiction, he is not referring to Haraway. Even though partiality is central to the work of Haraway. In ‘Situated Knowledges,’ her argument uncovers the partiality of relativism and totalization alike, and cannot possibly be said to be useless for the argument Latour is trying to make. Furthermore, Latour does not make explicit that ‘the promises of constructivism’ forms an intertextual reference to Haraway’s ‘the promises of monsters’ and he does not say that the ‘Critical Trick’ is similarly molded on the ‘God Trick.’ I find the asymmetrical relation between Latour and Haraway (Gane 2006: 156-7) striking in comparison to Latour’s scaffolding of the work of Isabelle Stengers, who has been in the Latourian picture all along. In Latour’s recent work, he simultaneously moves closer to Haraway’s critique of the first empiricism while continuing to overlook it. I want to explain this through a reading of the *second* empiricism as the Whiteheadian turn in the work Latour. More specifically, I will follow James Bono (2005: 136 n. 3) who talks about “Latour’s turn to Whitehead via Isabelle Stengers.”

In ‘A Game of Cat’s Cradle: Science Studies, Feminist Studies, Cultural Studies’ Haraway (1994a: 62; emphasis in original) makes explicit her approach:

⁴⁷ Latour (2003: 38-40) provides his readers with a list of guarantees preventing us from falling into the traps listed. Further research will need to find out how these guarantees and the ways in which they are played out relate to the new materialism.

“The point is not just to read the webs of knowledge production; the point is to reconfigure what counts as knowledge in the interests of reconstituting the generative forces of embodiment. I am calling this practice *materialized reconfiguration*; both words matter.”

The strictly descriptive nature of first empiricism/ Latourian science studies and its bottom-up approach reinforcing the God trick are questioned here. On a seemingly contradictory note, Haraway states that Latour’s *messiness* is sometimes too clean. Firstly, the practices he studies are too strictly scientific and they overlook gender, race, class, and sexuality, whereas these phenomena are *also in the making* (Haraway 1997: 34, Prins 1997: 35). Secondly, his actants are all of a certain kind. Latour has the tendency to exclude animals and other non-humans (*cf.* Haraway 1997: 102; see also *ibidem*: 275 n. 26). Haraway criticizes Latour’s non-human actants because they appear insufficiently trickster-like (*ibid.*: 102).⁴⁸ Prins induces that Haraway is more suspicious of representation/alism than Latour, whereas Latour is satisfied with scientists as spokespersons of (by implication) docile near-objects. In order to create space for her suspicions, Haraway (1988b: 593; *cf.* Plumwood 1998: 217) introduced nature as a trickster figure or coyote as early as in ‘Situated Knowledges.’ Here, Haraway’s work highlights the fact that Latour does not pay any attention to gender, race, class, and sexuality ‘in the making.’ Prins (1997: 275 n. 27) illustrates that Latour ignores the work of feminist science studies scholars, because he never cites them. Haraway’s relationship to Latour is an-Oedipal, because she is not his dutiful daughter. Haraway must maintain her an-Oedipal stance (in relation to Latour) because he operates on an androcentric bias (for example, see his citation politics) (for the term see Braidotti in Van Rossum and Van der Tuin 2004: 270-2).⁴⁹

Even though Latour ignores Haraway he does pay a lot of attention to Stengers. Stengers is a dutiful daughter of Alfred North Whitehead and a critic of feminist studies of science and feminist epistemology. Michael Halewood (2005: 59-60) in ‘On Whitehead and Deleuze: The Process of Materiality’ states that Whitehead argued against the objectification of nature. In his analysis that connects the disciplinary division of labour, only scientists have direct access to nature. Whitehead on the contrary does not assume the primacy of the subject objectifying nature, but considers “becoming as primary” and argues that “each becoming occurs in a specific environment and in a specific fashion” (*ibidem*: 63). My suggestion here is that it is the Whiteheadian turn that helps overcome Latour’s postulation of matter and discourse, because in Whitehead, as in Deleuze, “neither the material nor the social retain their usual sense” (*ibid.*: 73). However, it is important to note that feminist science students, like Haraway, have been arguing for this all along.

⁴⁸ Deleuze, in turn, prefers the traitor to the trickster – the trickster plagiarizes rather than steals (Deleuze and Parnet [1977] 1987: 41). This longing for ‘like do,’ this practice of identification makes the trickster remain representationalist.

⁴⁹ The problems with anthropocentrism I have discussed in paragraph 3.2.2.2.

In ‘A Constructivist Reading of Process and Reality’ Stengers shows that Latour’s reference to Haraway, in the context of ‘matters of concern,’ is indeed paying lip service to feminist science studies. Stengers (2004: 1) explains that “Whitehead gave to philosophy not the task to go beyond abstractions of interpretations, but the task to take care of our abstraction” and cites his definition of an abstract proposition as “something that matters” (*ibidem*: 2), something “not to criticize [...] but to take care of” (*ibid.*: 3). Stengers thus introduces matters of concern as Whiteheadian rather than feminist. In ‘Another Look: Relearning to Laugh’ Stengers (2000: 42, 43) herself comes out as a clear anti-epistemologist (*cf.* Puig de la Bellacasa 2000a), who argues against the crimes conducted in the name of science and the degree of seriousness with which science is usually approached. Stengers argues against the a-priorism of epistemology as a discipline that assumes the necessity of *e.g.* rationality and objectivity. She also argues against a feminist, *other* science because of its alleged radical relativism. Arguing against the bifurcation of nature and in favor of the subversive power of laughter (it can complicate the power lurking behind all statements about objectivity and rationality in the name of an authoritative science (*ibidem*: 44)), she proposes “a public who would neither anticipate, fear, nor hope for the next scientific ‘revelation’” (*ibid.*: 51). Stengers’s public is conceptualized in a manner dutiful to Latour because she says it has to be engaged with scientists who desire to produce Truth (*ibid.*: 44). Arguing against a dialecticist answer to an authoritative science/ epistemology (*ibid.*: 53), her claim is the following:

“Sciences would not become more pure. They would have to take actively and speculatively into account what they so easily define today as opposing rationality, including the interests and demands of those who believe in ‘another kind of science’: feminine, or holistic, or caring, etc” (*ibid.*: 52; *cf.* Stengers [1989] 1997: 124).

Stengers (2000: 52) argues very strongly against the damaging consequences of mutilation in the name of science and she resembles Barad in that sense (her definition of objectivity being the ethical issue of which marks on which bodies).⁵⁰ Even so, in the end she conceptualizes care and concern as *feminine – not feminist* (*cf.* Stengers [1991] 1997: 142) – issues. This is precisely where we find a dialecticism in the work of Stengers because her plea for femininity is predicated on an argument *against* feminist philosophy of science (*cf.* Latour 1997: *viii*). Latour (*ibidem*: *xviii*) characterizes Stengers as follows:

“If [her work] subverts many disciplines from the inside, it subverts even more political stands from the outside, and especially so many of the ‘standpoint politics’ where the outcome of the analysis is entirely determined from the start from the position of the speaker.”⁵¹

Latour claims that a characteristic of Stengers’s work is her hyperinternalism (*ibid.*: *vii*). I would rather argue that it confirms the God Trick of the Agnostic: the covering up of an unsituated perspective by falsely opposing oneself to the God Trick. Stengers’s ([1991] 1997:

⁵⁰ *Cf.* Barad 2001: 92 for a critical remark about Stengers and the elimination of time.

⁵¹ Latour (1997: *ix*) defines Stengers as an anti-epistemologist, and a normative ontologist.

143; emphasis in original) ‘The Thousand and One Sexes of Science’ clearly uncovers her unsituated, totalizing stance:

“Learning to laugh, in the name of the singularity of the sciences, in the name of the thousand and one sexes of their fictions, at those who give an identity to science, who say that they know what the scientific method is, what the conditions of objectivity are, and what the criteria of scientificity are is a proposition that is in no way neutral. In relation to feminist movements it presupposed, notably, accepting the idea that the women’s struggle does not represent *another history*, to the skein of our history, in which the sciences are active ingredients.”

Stengers wants to complicate the history of the sciences and she wants to emphasize the involvement of the actual (man or woman) scientist (*ibidem*: 147). An example of such complication can be found in Stengers’s ([1989] 1997: 126) introduction of the ‘singular’ story of McClintock in ‘Is there a women’s science?’ Here the *doing* is prioritized: “Barbara McClintock did not practice a women’s science, she was a woman doing science.” In other words,

“Her choice was that of a science in the singular, and this choice is as difficult for women as for men.

Nevertheless, [...] she learned [what reason is capable of] in order to become a woman of science, to gain what would naturally have been given to her if she had been a man” (*ibidem*: 130).

What comes to the fore here is Stengers’s *gendered* God trick. I read her work as *concealing* an essentialist twist. Stengers’s Whiteheadian, unsituated, totalizing stance effectuates an essentialism. Contrary to this, Haraway (2003: 6-7) introduces her own recent reliance on Whitehead as *acknowledging* biology and the feminist heritage. I will discuss the effects of this *acknowledging* in the second part of this chapter.

In her assessment of Haraway’s cyborg on the occasion of its the 20th anniversary, Braidotti (2006a: 197) positions Haraway “[c]ontrary to Bruno Latour” because of her “perpetuation of a tradition of thought which emphasizes the importance of the subject in terms of both ethical and political accountability” rather than reconfirming the God trick. She says this is exemplified by the figuration of the modest witness (see Haraway 1997: 23-39):

“The modest witness is neither detached not [*sic*] uncaring, but a border-crossing figure who attempts to recontextualize his/her own practice within fast-changing social horizons” (Braidotti 2006a: 206).

Again, we find an account of ‘care,’ or ‘concern’ (Puig de la Bellacasa forthcoming). This time, contrary to Latour *generous* in its citation politics, and contrary to Stengers fully an-Oedipal and conceptualizing care *not* as an essential feminine trait:

“I would like to queer the elaborately constructed and defended confidence of this civic man of reason in order to enable a more corporeal, inflected, and optically dense, if less elegant, kind of modest witness to matters of fact to emerge in the worlds of technoscience” (Haraway 1997: 24).

Care involves what Haraway and Annette Kuhn refer to as a ‘passionate detachment’ (Haraway 1988b: 585). Haraway does not need the distinction between matters of fact and matters of concern, because, for women, matters of fact *are* matters of concern as they have

the possibility to harm (or in Stengers's terms mutilate) women. Haraway does not turn away from or negate the rationalistic subject of science that has been privileged by epistemologists, philosophers of science, and science studies. Where Stengers moves away from this subject, Haraway (1997: 35) stresses its significance:

“both the facts and the witnesses are constituted in the encounters that are technoscientific practice. Both the subjects and objects of technoscience are forged and branded in the crucible of specific, located practices, some of which are global in their location. [...] s/he is constituted in the furnace of technoscientific practice as a self-aware, accountable, anti-racist FemaleMan.”

Haraway deals with ‘facts’ in a manner similar to the way that she wants us to deal with gender – neither deify it nor think it has disappeared, because we have claimed it is constructed (Gane 2006: 137). Again, Haraway pleads for care in terms of passionate detachment: “[w]e need to live the consequences of non-stop curiosity inside mortal, situated, relentlessly relational worlding” (*ibidem*: 143). She is not afraid to call this a responsiveness to what is around us, and consequently involves a “relentlessly collaborationist” (*ibid.*: 155) effort.⁵²

3.2.4.2 Discussion: The Problem of Particularism

In this section I discuss the *particularism* of mainstream science studies as the unreal opposite of the Kuhnian anthropocentrism and humanism and the Marxist humanist universalism. I will claim that this particularism is unhelpful to the mainstream feminist theorization of knowledge and out of line with new materialism because of particularism's relativist twist. This reading of science studies goes against the grain of We Have Never Been Modern. In this text, Latour ([1991] 1993: 105) claims that science studies is not a particular universalism (according to which there is *a* perspective that has access to nature), nor a cultural relativism (in which all cultures can access nature in their own way), nor an absolute relativism (according to which there is just *Culture*). Latour claims that the symmetrical anthropology of science studies makes a difference due to its focus on the development of natures-cultures (*ibidem*: 106). I argued above, however, that the field of science studies has become an archive of brilliant case studies, and that the mode of reasoning is equivocal (namely bottom-up/ mono-directional). The cases are mainly descriptive, sometimes normative (in the case of Haraway normative with a twist) and scarcely utopian, *i.e.* mutli-layered only to a certain extent. The seed of this can be found in Latour's ‘Irreductions.’ In this philosophical essay, he ([1984] 1988: 153) fights against readings of science studies as reductionist. Latour wants to study practices or ‘circumstances’ as “[t]he length of Cleopatra's nose is neither significant

⁵² See for an exemplification the following text fragment of Keller (1988: 241):

“the recent increase in opportunities for women in science was initially triggered neither by the demands of feminists, nor by the hope that women would introduce more pacific values into science, but rather by the need for increased scientific ‘man-power’ that grew directly out of the cold war.”

nor insignificant. Circumstances determine, for a time, the relative importance of whatever it is that makes them up” (*ibidem*: 161). ‘Irreductions’ can nevertheless be read as a plea for particularism, because its materialism is founded on a particularism:

“It is because nothing is, by itself, reducible or irreducible to anything else that there are only trials (of strength, of weakness). What is neither reducible nor irreducible has to be tested, counted, and measured. There is no other way” (*ibid.*: 158; *cf. ibid.*: 187).

Whereas Latour argues this invokes *no* relativism, I have shown above that in the case of the first empiricism, *i.e.* in the case of trials of strength (and for him this is everything there is) he always sides with the winners. His ‘anything does not go’ (*ibid.*: 168) is a dialecticist response to relativism that is a totalization and as such, it does not differ from relativism. Latour reads the flourishing of circumstances and differences as “[n]either innocent nor guilty” (Latour [1984] 1988: 170). This is unbeneficial to feminism, because it entails another God trick. In Science Studies: An Advanced Introduction David Hess (1997: 40) reminds us that, according to Helen Longino, “the traditional distinction between [universalistic and particularistic] values cannot be maintained” despite the fact that science students are prone to making this distinction. I have argued that this distinction is unreal, because top-down and bottom-up approaches are both mono-directional, *i.e.* equivocal. Hess argues for “leav[ing] the relative role of universalistic and particularistic criteria open to empirical analysis that allows for considerable variation” (*ibidem*: 43). The result of this unsituatedness is exactly what we have seen in my discussion of Latour.

3.2.5 Top-down vs. Bottom-up: Another Non-Exhaustive Dichotomy

In the paragraphs above I have argued that the anti-epistemological approaches of Kuhn, Marx, and Latour reconfirm the top-down approach of traditional prescriptive epistemology, namely by negation. In other words, while ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ approaches may seem to be each other’s opposites – they have an important commonality: their *mono-directional that is equivocal outlook*. Top-down approaches use theory to define academic practice, and consequently epistemologists do not (need to) engage with ‘practice’ itself. On the contrary, bottom-up approaches consider knowledge practices to define theory. The work that has been produced as a result is called ‘grounded theory’ (the term is Anselm Strauss en Barney Glaser’s). This does not mean it always transcends the purely descriptive. Both approaches are by and large unsuccessful in showing an interest in *both* theory and practice. They do not understand theory and practice as co-constitutive of one another. While the bottom-up approach has been revolutionary in terms of its ability to formulate the ‘agency’ of objects (formerly considered mere instruments in the hands of omniscient scientists), it seems to have overlooked theory’s hold on academic knowledge production. My argument is not made by focusing on constructivism per se (*i.e.* on what it is that anti-epistemology shares with the

linguistic turn) but by highlighting the *effects* of studying *practice rather than theory* by three well-known anti-epistemologists. What is effectuated by a focus on practice/ by a bottom-up approach and on what grounds can we, by inference, say that it is built? What I have tried to argue is that approaching things as *the opposite of* words introduces an anti-epistemology that is the reverse of epistemology, and is an approach that is *dialectically opposed* to the traditional ‘armchair’ epistemology. This is why the category of anti-epistemology is untenable from the start: it ends up reconfirming epistemology by negation. Epistemology and anti-epistemology are unreal opposites. The resulting problems I have touched upon are the humanism/ anthropocentrism remaining in Kuhn *c.s.*, the universalism of Marx *c.s.*, and the dangerous digression into particularism of Latour *c.s.*, *i.e.* the same problems feminists had with traditional epistemology. Focusing, in a second instance, on *feminist appropriations* of the abovementioned scholars I have claimed that feminist-Kuhnian approaches of community and consensus (due to the prioritization of the communal), feminist-Marxist outsiders vs. insiders (rather than outsiders within), and feminist-Latourian particularist approaches of ‘doing’ scholarly work do not solve the problems feminists had with traditional epistemology. In other words, the dutiful turn to anti-epistemology did not engender a more viable second-wave feminist epistemology. Assuming that the new generation of feminist theorists of knowledge still wants to move away from problematic notions such as the God trick, what is to be done? My argument has been that the *undutiful* daughters of the anti-epistemologists discussed (namely Braidotti and Haraway) *have* been switched the terms of mainstream epistemology, of mainstream anti-epistemology, *and* of second-wave feminist epistemology. I will continue in this direction below. In the section below I will also extensively deal with the visionary layer of new materialism by tracing it back to the work of Foucault, Said, and Deleuze.

3.3 Second Section of the Cartography of Knowledge Theories

3.3.1 Multi-layered and Multi-directional Knowledge Theories

One of the layers Prins used to understand Haraway’s ‘situated knowledges’ concerns a visionary or utopian one. Working as a visionary theorist of knowledge one does not describe what others (humans, nonhumans) do, nor does one decide upon what should be of importance beforehand (prescription). In her definition of the visionary as distinct from both the descriptive and the prescriptive layer, Prins (1997: 104) characterizes the visionary as a post-modern phenomenon overcoming “the modern genre of critique” and focuses precisely on the commonalities of the latter layers:

“Here, better knowledge does not simply stand in opposition to dominant forms of knowing, but involves the active construction of new perspectives. [...] The dualistic oppositions and boundaries which [on the descriptive and prescriptive layers] are of great epistemological significance, on this level lose most of their explanatory meaning” (*ibidem*).

Contrary to Prins’s postmodernism, I will use insight in the layers of knowledge theories in the remainder of this chapter to explain the *qualitative shift* set in motion by new materialism. I thus read visionary knowledge theories, which are multi-layered, *i.e.* descriptive, prescriptive, and utopian in an an-Oedipal manner. An-Oedipality here means that feminist *utopian* knowledge theories link to certain *marginalized* mainstream knowledge theorists and to second-wave feminist knowledge theories alike according to a non-dialecticist relationality. I define visionary (feminist) scholars as disidentifying with and consequently *breaking through* good old, equivocal (feminist) (anti-) epistemologies that are modern and postmodern alike.

According to my navigational tool, the visionary effectuates *multi-layered* knowledge theories that consider a focus on practice/ the recording of empirical data to be intrinsically and necessarily connected to a critical, prescriptive, *and* embedded and embodied, change-oriented, and visionary outlook. One can formulate an empirically infused research question and answer it critically, by connecting description and prescription, or by being evaluative. Alternatively, one may formulate a theory-inspired question and answer it empirically. In the following, I will try to show that multi-layered knowledge theoretical claims and analyses should be considered as more informative than mono-layered ones, due to the fact that the former contain a theory of power and (sexual) difference. In addition, correlating theory and practice in one’s analysis means that one works from a *multi-directional* outlook in which theory and practice are not a priori distinguished. In other words, one allows for theory and practice to be co-constitutive of one another. Multi-directional approaches are possibly univocal/ intra-active and do not assume equivocity (*i.e.* refraining from conceptualizing the relation between theory and practice according to a one-way track). Here, theories define practices, practices define theories, and ‘feedback mechanisms’ (Hayles 1999) between theory and practice are conceptualized. In other words, a more ‘rhizomatic’ pattern⁵³ can be imagined in which theories and practices relate in complex and dynamic ways. The epistemic realm is designed in a relational or non-relational way. A certain definition of the knowing subject is effectuated when the epistemic realm is designed like this. The knowing subject as disembodied and disembedded (the God trick) is the result of a conceptualization of non- and certain mono-relational knowledge theories. Below I will discuss the knowing subject implied in relational epistemologies.

The rest of this chapter deals with the work of Foucault, Said, and Deleuze. These theorists are anti-epistemologists, but their work is less antithetically related to the discipline

⁵³ For the term ‘rhizome’ see Deleuze and Guattari [1980] 1987b.

of epistemology than the work of Kuhn, Latour, and Marx. Both Foucault and Deleuze have brought to the fore a notion of ‘theory’ as a ‘toolbox’ or ‘toolkit.’ In their understanding theory is something we *do* something with (Foucault [1977] 1980a: 145), and consequently the question about Truth can be left behind (Massumi 1987: xv). Said practices this approach in his impressive postcolonial oeuvre. Doing *theory* is a univocal approach to knowledge and science/ scholarship. The second part of the chapter thus continues the partial overview or ‘cartography’ of (feminist) (materialist) knowledge theories. In the following sections, I will deal with multi-layered and multi-directional knowledge theories as theories that *differ from* traditional epistemologies *as well as* the dialecticist response to traditional epistemology. The next paragraph deals with the ways in which feminists have been using the ‘epistemological’ work of Continental Foucault for their project that moves away from feminist (neo-) empiricism, (postmodernized) feminist standpoint theory, and feminist postmodernism. Later, Said will be discussed as a scholar working in a Foucauldian manner but his work will not be reduced to Foucault’s work.

3.3.2 Foucault and Feminism, Feminism and Foucault

3.3.2.1 Up Against Representationalism

Introducing Foucault, by Chris Horrocks and Zoran Jevtic (1999: 3-4), opens with the claim that many different Foucaults exist. The authors not only refer to the Foucauldian ‘death of the author’ (Foucault [1969] 1998), but they also signify the many phases of his work (archaeology, genealogy, power/knowledge, body/knowledge, technologies of the self, ... (cf. Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, Gutting 1989)) and the many ways in which his work has been applied and appropriated (in queer studies and feminist theory, just to name two scholarly fields). In the Introduction to The Archaeology of Knowledge, Foucault ([1969] 1972: 17) indeed claims that his text as such “rejects its identity, without previously stating: I am neither this nor that” and that we should not ask him who he is nor should we ask him to remain the same. In this dissertation, I limit myself to Foucault and his rethinking of epistemology – his claim about our epistemological orphanhood (Braidotti 1991b: 2) notwithstanding. This limitation needs to be clarified in two ways. Firstly, I focus here on Foucault as other than ‘anathema’ to epistemology (cf. Alcoff 1996a: 115-7, 132-3; Alcoff 1996b; Hekman 1996: 3-4).⁵⁴ In the first part of this chapter I have tried to show how the opposition between traditional ‘armchair’ epistemology and the anti-epistemology of Kuhn, Marx, and Latour is a

⁵⁴ Alcoff (1996a, 1996b) reads Foucault as neither Continental nor analytical, and interprets his work as in line with epistemological coherentism. I will leave these features of Alcoff’s argument untouched in this dissertation. Alcoff’s chapters are important for my work, though, because she tries to counter the idea that Foucault could not possibly be an *epistemologist*, due to the fact that his work is, for instance, anti-foundationalist or immanent. She thus argues against the binarism epistemology vs. something else. The latter move she ascribes to among others Rorty.

non-exhaustive one. Anti-epistemology *reconfirms* a traditional epistemology founded on the God trick. This second part engages with the work of Foucault, Said, and Deleuze as *different from* traditional epistemology *as well as* from Kuhnian, Marxist, and Latourian approaches of knowledge and knowing practices (*cf.* Braidotti 1991b: 36). I read the work of Foucault, Said, and Deleuze as solutions to the non-exhaustive dichotomy discussed above. I do not assume nor postulate a return to a ‘pure’ epistemological domain after an anti-epistemological ‘phase.’ The systematic discussion I will enact in this chapter changes focus by turning itself to the practice of bridging traditional epistemology and the dialecticist response to traditional epistemology. This is a move that enables a solution to the problem of/ with the God trick.

I limit myself in other ways too. For starters, the Foucault I deal with here is not the Queer Foucault. I follow Braidotti (1991b: 39) and read Foucault as influenced by existentialism, and phenomenology, by Georges Canguilhem, and Gaston Bachelard (see Privitera [1990] 1995), and Louis Althusser. As such, his work involves “a radical reformulation of the term ‘materialism,’ in terms of materiality, corporeality, and historicity of the subject and his/ her discourses” (Braidotti 1991b: 39). The American ‘Queer Foucault’ should be seen as one of the necessary steps towards (feminist) postmodern pluralism (*cf.* Cusset [2003] 2005). In chapters 1 and 2 of this dissertation I have voiced strong critiques of (feminist) postmodern pluralism and I have expressed equally strong critiques of its so-called dialecticist opposite – (feminist) (neo-) empiricism. Bypassing the Queer Foucault is a legitimate move in my work because the effects on feminism of the work of this incarnation of Foucault have elsewhere been discussed in considerable detail. It is the materialist (non-Marxist) Foucault that does not reconfirm the non-exhaustive dichotomy of (feminist) postmodernism and (feminist) empiricism that is important for the construction of the category ‘third wave materialism.’ Another one of my limitations entails the way in which the work of Said is discussed in this chapter, namely under the heading of Foucault. This move is legitimate because Said works in a Foucauldian tradition (it has even been claimed that it has been Said who has introduced Foucault to US academics (Racevskis 2005)) and because of what Said’s work effectuates in terms of multi-directionality (and to a certain extent in terms of multi-layeredness) is equal to what is effectuated by the work of Foucault. The cartography presented in this chapter is systematic and I focus upon effectuations, and on a certain canon of anti-epistemologists. Suki Ali (2007: 199) has argued that Said’s work is part of “a US-recognized collectivity” called postcolonial theory. Ali says postcolonial theory is a field of study also recognized in the UK and I want to add that postcolonial theory is also studied in other European countries and is an important sparring partner for feminist theory (*cf.* Ponzanesi 2007). Postcolonial theory, and the women theorists working within that field, do not necessarily contribute to creating feminist genealogies. Ali (2007: 204) says that whereas Said is generally gender-blind, feminists have conducted strong gender analyses. Said’s work

is of interest to the partial cartography presented here because his work has intervened in theories and studies of knowledge “insist[ing] upon the *mutually constitutive* nature of the categories such as the Occident and the Orient, colonized and colonizer, and privileges the Occident” (*ibidem*: 199; emphasis added) thus adding to the theorization of multi-layeredness and multi-directionality in a manner structurally related to Continental Foucault. I do *not* intend to *reduce* Said to his Foucauldianism; rather, I intend to position his work according to its directionality and layeredness. In other words: I do *not* mean to *subsume* the work of postcolonial theorists to the work of Continental Philosophy. What I intend to do here is to present a *partial, systematic* cartography of knowledge theories on the basis of their effects.

Could the Foucault I focus on be seen as a ‘new’ materialist in the sense of providing a theory of knowledge that is neither (neo-) positivist nor postmodern pluralist? In other words, does Foucault engender a multi-layered and multi-directional approach to knowledge and knowledge development that differs from armchair epistemology as well as the dialecticist reply to it? Is this Foucault anti-representationalist? In Foucault, Deleuze ([1986] 1999: 12)⁵⁵ summarizes Archaeology as follows:

“A statement is in itself a repetition, even if what it repeats is ‘something else’ that none the less ‘is strangely familiar and almost identical to it’. So the greatest problem for Foucault would be to uncover the nature of these peculiar features presupposed by the statement. But *The Archaeology of Knowledge* stops at this point and does not attempt to deal with a problem that surpasses the limits of ‘knowledge.’”

Deleuze explains that stopping the analysis at this point makes Archaeology an equivocal undertaking. Even in Archaeology Foucault *interlinks* theory and practice but at the same time *a distinction is being effectuated*. Deleuze can be said to be critical of the level of analysis of the Foucauldian archaeological project. It may be claimed that Archaeology does not yet work on the level of the ‘event’ (see below). In Archaeology discursive formations (historically situated groups of statements) and non-discursive formations (what surrounds groups of statements, or what makes out the *limit* of these groups) are conceptualized as distinct or heterogeneous. By claiming that “discourse [...] forms objects” (Foucault [1969] 1972: 44) as well as subject positions, concepts, and strategic choices (*ibidem*: 116) Foucault illustrates reductionism and Foucault as archaeologist does not convincingly cut across the dichotomy between traditional epistemology and anti-epistemology. Alcoff (1996a: 128-9) infers that Archaeology’s theory of justification is externalist *rather than* internalist. I read this dichotomous statement as confirming the equivocality of early Continental Foucault.

His later work – *e.g.* Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison (Foucault [1975] 1991a) – however *is* univocal and provides as such a truly new approach, new vis-à-vis

⁵⁵ Braidotti (1991b: 66-7) reads the relation between Foucault and Deleuze – who continuously *engaged themselves with each other’s work* – as an-Oedipal.

Foucault's earlier writings,⁵⁶ as well as traditional (anti-) epistemology. Discipline and Punish reconceptualizes Marxist praxis⁵⁷ in such a way that it moves away from it. Here, Foucault conceptualizes "a different theory, a different praxis of struggle, a different set of strategies" (Deleuze [1986] 1999: 27; *cf.* Grosz 1990: 83). Having said that, the book does *not* propose a dialecticist alternative to Marxist praxis, nor does it plead for a return to the primacy of Theory instead of practice.⁵⁸ Deleuze claims that

"Foucault shows that the law is now no more a state of peace than the result of a successful war: it is war itself, and the strategy of this war in action, just as power is not the property of the dominant class but the strategy of that class in action" (*ibidem*).

According to Deleuze, the fact that Foucault ([1975] 1991a: 19) goes into war,⁵⁹ class, and "acts" here is what marks a qualitative shift. In 'Truth and Power,' Foucault ([1977] 1980c: 114-5) makes explicit that his view of history, as war, involves a shift away from both dialecticism and semiology (the study of language and signs). In Discipline and Punish "[a]nalysis and illustration go hand in hand, offering us a microphysics of power and a political investment of the body" Deleuze ([1986] 1999: 22) says. In a formulation of Foucault ([1984] 1988: 257):

"Problematization doesn't mean representation of a pre-existing object, nor the creation by discourse of an object that does not exist. It is the totality of discursive or non-discursive practices that introduces something into the play of true and false and constitutes it as an object of thought (whether in the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis, etc.)."

Here the practical and the theoretical are transversally (see below) linked, and particularism and universalism are both left behind (*cf.* Foucault [1975] 1991a: 190). This relates to the turn to the 'event,' which is defined in materialist terms:

"Naturally the event is neither substance nor accident, neither quality nor process; the event is not of the order of bodies. And yet it is not something immaterial either; it is always at the level of materiality that it takes effect, that it is effect; it has its locus and it consists in the relation, the coexistence, the dispersion, the overlapping, the accumulation, and the selection of material elements. It is not the act or the property of a body; it is produced as an effect of, and within a dispersion of matter. Let us say that the philosophy of the event should move in the at first sight paradoxical direction of a material of the incorporeal" (Foucault [1970] 1981: 69).

Indeed, *new* materialism makes it "no longer possible to establish links of mechanical causality or of ideal necessity between the elements which constitute [discontinuous systematicities]" (*ibidem*) as this is "not a matter of the succession of instants in time, nor of

⁵⁶ Deleuze ([1986] 1999: 12) claims that Foucault's very early The Order of Things: An Archaeology of Human Sciences ([1966] 1994) "deals neither with things nor with words" so the narrative is *not* linear.

⁵⁷ See par. 3.2.3.

⁵⁸ *Cf.* Braidotti (1991b: 46) who claims that Foucault "follows less an axiomatical than a problematic model."

⁵⁹ Foucault ([1976] 1980: 90) claimed that "power is war, a war continued by other means." Latour claimed that science is politics by other means. Both Foucault and Latour work with the military historian and theorist Carl von Clausewitz's assertion that war is politics continued by other means" (*ibidem*). See also Rouse 1994: 107-10, 113 and above for feminist critique of war rhetoric as androcentric/masculinist.

the plurality of different thinking subjects” (*ibid.*; *cf.* Johnston 1990). In ‘Afterword: The Subject and Power,’ Foucault (1982: 221) moves away from the representationalism of the image of war and claims that we should conceptualize power “in the area of the singular mode of action, neither warlike nor juridical.” From now on power is “always a way of acting upon an acting subject or acting subjects by virtue of their acting or being capable of action” (*ibidem*: 220). Power is fully co-constitutive with knowledge; the one does not (pre-) exist without the other (Foucault [1975] 1991a: 27; *cf.* Foucault [1975] 1991b).

The question raised by Alcoff (2005: 212), “How are we to take his occasional generalizations when he so often counsels us to analyze only locally and particularly?,” should be answered as follows: what we find here, finally, is a multi-directional approach according to which, using my terms, theory informs practice *and vice versa*. For Foucault ([1976] 1978a: 92-4) power relations are immanent in economic, sexual, and knowledge relations. Power is not exercised from the top down but “from top to bottom, but also to a certain extent from bottom to top and laterally” (Foucault [1975] 1991a: 176; *cf.* Foucault [1976] 1978b, Rouse 1994: 97-8), *i.e.* “it functions like a piece of machinery” (Foucault [1975] 1991a: 177). Deleuze ([1986] 1999: 27; emphasis in original) reminds us that the ultimate question that raises from the claim that praxis is “local tactics and overall strategies which advance not by totalizing but by relaying, connecting, converging and prolonging” is: “*What is to be done?*” Here, Deleuze alludes to a utopian dimension in the work of Foucault. If, in the work of Foucault, theory (*e.g.* the State) and practice (*e.g.* political parties) are mutually enforcing each other, how can we generate change? Deleuze solves this problem by referring to The History of Sexuality (Foucault [1976] 1978b, [1984] 1985, [1985] 1986) and claims:

“The inside as an operation of the outside: in all his work Foucault seems haunted by this theme of an inside which is merely the fold of the outside, as if the ship were a folding of the sea. [...] Or, rather, the theme which has always haunted Foucault is that of the double. But the double is never a projection of the interior; on the contrary, it is an interiorization of the outside. It is not a doubling of the One, but a redoubling of the Other. It is not a reproduction of the Same, but a repetition of the Different. It is not the emanation of an ‘I’, but something that places in immanence an always other or a Non-self. It is never the other who is a double in the doubling process, it is a self that lives me as the double of the other: I do not encounter myself on the outside, I find the other in me” (Deleuze [1986] 1999: 81).

In ‘The Confession of the Flesh’ Foucault ([1977] 1980b: 220) explains this through the notion of ‘displacement.’ He refers to second-wave feminism as particularly good at “depart[ing] from the discourse conducted within the apparatuses of sexuality.” What second-wave feminism, a topic Foucault hardly ever mentioned in his work, has done according to Foucault is “formulating the demand for forms of culture, discourse, language and so on” (*ibidem*). How did they come for these formulations in a situation of mutual enforcement? Through “a veritable movement of de-sexualisation, a *displacement* effected in relation to the sexual centering of the problem” (*ibid.*; emphasis added). I mention this, so as to be able to

move from the multi-directionality of Foucault's work to its multi-layeredness. But first, I will discuss the work of Said.

3.3.2.2 Up Against Orientalism

Said is most famous for his seminal text Orientalism, which was first published in 1978. In this text he explicitly uses Foucault's 'epistemological' Archeology and Discipline and Punish to theorize the Orientalist scholarly practice that characterizes and constitutes both the Orient and the Occident (Said [1978] 1994: 3). Ali (2007: 199) has claimed that Said has been criticized by feminists for rendering gender as a secondary category of importance and has also been criticized by other for *strengthening* instead of deconstructing the ties between the Occident and the Orient, the colonizer and the colonized. Within the context of this dissertation the debunked 'strengthening' is of great interest because it alludes to a post-postmodernism.

Said's definition of the Orientalist scholarly practice clarifies that his take on epistemic practice is multi-directional:

"the Orient is thus *Orientalized*, a process that not only marks the Orient as the province of the Orientalist but also forces the uninitiated Western reader to accept Orientalist codifications [...] as the *true* Orient. Truth, in short, becomes a function of learned judgment, not of the material itself, which in time seems to owe even its existence to the Orientalist" (Said [1978] 1994: 67).

Immediately following up on this fragment Said states that it is not the fact that "all cultures impose corrections upon raw reality changing it from free-floating objects into units of knowledge" (*ibidem*) that he is criticizing here. He is critical of the *disciplined* nature of the conversion, not of conversion as such (*ibid.*). The Orientalist conversion is a conversion that emanates from, taps into, and *constitutes* Western discourse (*cf.* Said 2003: *xvii*). There is not any correspondence to be found between the 'Orientalist codifications' and the 'free-floating objects:'

"Imaginative geography [...] legitimates a vocabulary, a universe of representative discourse peculiar to the discussion and understanding of Islam and of the Orient. What this discourse considers to be a fact [...] is a component of the discourse [...] Underlying all the different units of Orientalist discourse [...] is a set of representative figures, or tropes. These figures are to the actual Orient [...] as stylized costumes are to characters in a play [...] we need not look for correspondence between the language used to depict the Orient and the Orient itself, not so much because the language is inaccurate but because it is not even trying to be accurate" (Said [1978] 1994: 71).

Said summarizes this by calling the Orientalist practice a 'radical realism:'

"anyone employing Orientalism, which is the habit for dealing with questions, objects, qualities, and regions deemed Oriental, will designate, name, point to, fix what he is talking or thinking about with a word or phrase, which then is considered either to have acquired, or more simply to be, reality" (*ibidem*: 72).

It is the theorization of the 'radical realism,' then, that I read as multi-directional. Let me explain this in slightly different terms.

Theorizing radical realism, theory and practice, and the objects and the codifications are presented as co-constitutive of one another. Said (1994: 331) explicitly theorizes “an odd combination of the empirical and imaginative.” Furthermore, he is explicit about the interrelation between texts and power (Said 2003: *xxix*). This is to say that although Said is the theorist of the *all-pervading effect* of the Orientalist discourse (constituting the Occident and the Orient as mutually dependent) his work does not theorize the *traveling of theory* according to a “limitless intertextuality as an Archimedian point outside the two situations” (Said [1982] 2000: 205; *cf.* Said [1991] 2003: 383). This would be a theorization of the dialecticist opposite of a correspondence theory whereas the work of Said ([1991] 2003: 375) is about “intellectual work” as “wordly, that is [...] situated in the world, and about that world.”⁶⁰ Said ([1994] 2003: 451) says that it is “[t]he point of theory [...] to travel” yet that the traveling words or phrases are “both [...] traveling theory and [...] intransigent practice” (*ibidem*: 452). As such he conceptualizes his work as having “to map” (Said [1982] 2000: 217) what is going on. This mapping, then, has also to be seen as an instance of both traveling theory and rigid practice, and as a reconsideration of “the ties between the text and the world in a serious and uncoercive way” (Said [1991] 2003: 383). This seriousness and uncoerciveness is *not* reducible to a second-wave feminist/ anti-racist materialist identity politics. In ‘The Politics of Knowledge,’ an essay explicitly critical of black feminist identity politics, Said states that identity politics (granting only x with the right to speak) is the unreal opposite of (implicitly) granting only white males with the right to speak. Affirming both the death of the author *and* the co-constitutiveness of text and unequal power relations, Said states: “it does not finally matter *who* wrote what, but rather *how* a work is written and *how* it is read” (*ibidem*: 385, emphasis in original). In other words, his radicalized realism hints at univocity, which is a move systematically linked to new materialism.

⁶⁰ Ali suggests that Fanon’s position within the field of postcolonial studies is more interesting than the position of Said. She has two reasons for this. The first is the fact that according to her “the positioning of the work of Frantz Fanon who seems to be to the postcolonial theory what Simone de Beauvoir is to (Euro-American) feminist theory” (Ali 2007: 199) namely

“[j]ust as de Beauvoir inevitably gets positioned as a precursor to ‘second wave feminism’, someone whose work has inspired a new generation of feminist poststructuralists who claim her as a postmodern innovator, so too Fanon pre-empted the current interest in understandings of racialized embodiment and racialization and identity, in ways similar to those that de Beauvoir used in relation to gender” (*ibidem*: 200).

Ali thus claims that Fanon’s work has effected a postmodernist twist. The second reason she gives of the importance of Fanon is the fact that on top of or simultaneously with the postmodern twist, it inaugurates the *criticization* of postmodernization (“a turn to ‘the postmodern’ has all but erased the radical political potential of anti-colonialist movements and writings” (*ibid.*)), and this is precisely how his work is being received nowadays, because it is being read in reverse order (Moore-Gilbert 1997 in *ibid.*). I am fascinated by the analogy drawn by Ali, but claim to have demonstrated that the work of Said is neither postmodern nor realist/ second-wave materialist too.

3.3.2.3 Whose Subjugated Knowledges?

Now, I will go back to (the feminist treatment of) the work of Foucault. The *who* question has been of great importance in this context. In the following section, I will show that Foucault has been seen as a feminist and as an androcentric. Alcoff in ‘Foucault’s Philosophy of Science: Structures of Truth/ Structures of Power’ is *ambivalent* about the possibilities of what I call here a utopian layer in the work of Foucault.⁶¹ Alcoff’s (1996a: 127) starting point is a statement about Archaeology: “The result is not only a system of exclusion but a productive economy regulating both generation and distribution.” First of all, the multi-directionality in the (later) work of Foucault is confirmed. Alcoff situates Foucault in the Kuhnian tradition, and reads him, like Rouse (see below), as a theorist of science’s “co-constitutive relationship to power” that is multi- rather than mono-directionality (Alcoff 2005: 213). For Kuhn, theory is primary, but

“for Foucault perception has no causal primacy of ontological pre-existence, but neither does an imagined abstracted process of conceptualization. Foucault does not separate perception from conceptualization: produced simultaneously are the object, the mode of perception, and the concept, after which come competing explanatory theories” (*ibidem*).⁶²

From a different angle:

“A referential is a principle of differentiation by which the object world comes to be constituted; a materiality is a set of rules of transcription that affect possibilities of use for specific statements. Thus, there are no elements posited here that would qualify as constituent of a world-in-itself” (Alcoff 1996a: 125; *cf.* Alcoff 2005: 216).

Alcoff affirms Foucault’s multi-directionality and power/knowledge because of the possibility of *diverting* the direction of power, *i.e.* his search for “a new politics of truth” (Foucault [1977] 1980c: 133; *cf.* Alcoff 1996b: 150). What Foucault does when it comes to science and knowledge is “[n]ot to divest it from power, but to reorient its functionality and organizational relations” (Alcoff 2005: 222). Alcoff (1996b: 148-9) even claims that Foucault *sides with* the subjugated and that this creates new horizons:

“Foucault sides openly with the ‘subjugated knowledges’ which have been delegitimized by dominant forms of knowledge that have aspired for hegemony over the entire discursive field. He clearly hopes that his explanatory accounts will contribute, not to the destruction of power

⁶¹ Note that the layers description, prescription, and utopian and the way in which they are used in this dissertation come from Prins (1997) and are *not* used by Alcoff. Alcoff sticks to the common layers description (an(ti)-epistemological) and prescription (epistemological), yet she claims that in the post-1970 work of Foucault prescription/ epistemology and politics are combined (Alcoff 1996a: 133; *cf.* Alcoff 1996b).

⁶² Alcoff (2005: 213) interestingly shows that a multi-directional approach does not automatically translate to a univocal outlook:

“In the initial work he did on [madness], Foucault contrasted ‘Madness,’ as a socially contextualized positive category, with a prediscursive, stable “madness,” intending to show that there is no easy causal or other correlation between the two: that the unofficial ‘madness’ does not explain officially recognized ‘Madness.’ However, by at least 1960 he abandoned the idea that such a contrast could be made. Instead, he began to theorize all of what is called madness as a social construction, since the ‘norm’ of human behavior and functioning that is used to demarcate the sane from the insane is so implicated in other aspects of its contemporary cultural discourses that it is impossible to find even the outlines of an untouched ‘madness.’”

or the end of its relationship to knowledge (since such goals are hopeless), but to the intervention and negotiation of new limits on the dominating effects of power/knowledge.”

On the other hand, when referring to Foucault’s The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception ([1963] 1994), Alcoff (2005: 217; *cf.* Alcoff 1996a: 126 on women as knowers) claims:

“In the story of medicine’s contingent historical development, Foucault offers, not a causal account, but an expanded explanatory account that refers to nothing outside the practices of medicine as exerting efficacious, independent causality, but he never questions that those practices are engaging with life and death, pain and suffering, or that they altered the elaboration of disease sometimes successfully in ways they had precisely intended.”

Similar to the critiques Said received for Orientalism, Alcoff localizes *complicity* in the (earlier) work of Foucault (*cf. e.g.* Bartky 1988: 76-9, Grosz 1990: 84, Hartsock 1990, McNay 1991 in Deveaux 1996: 224, Alcoff 1996b: 151).⁶³ In the end, Alcoff’s evaluation is that Foucault’s later work is characterized by a certain perspectivism (Alcoff 1996b: 151). She claims that this perspectivism remains somewhat rudimentary in Foucault and leads to many questions (whose subjugated knowledges? Does power take over?) (*ibidem*: 151-2). As we have seen, this renders his work gender-ambivalent in the eyes of feminists.⁶⁴ Alcoff is not alone in her judgment. Volumes such as Feminism and Foucault: Reflections on Resistance (Diamond and Quinby eds 1988), Foucault and Feminism: Power, Gender and the Self (McNay 1992), Up against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions between Foucault and Feminism (Ramazanoglu ed. 1993) and Feminist Interpretations of Michel Foucault (Hekman ed. 1996) all pose different varieties of the question:

“Where is the account of the disciplinary practices that engender the ‘docile bodies’ of women, bodies more docile than the bodies of men?” (Bartky 1988: 63-4; *cf. e.g.* Bordo 1989).

Faithful to his multi-directionality, Foucault ([1976] 1980: 100) argues against these questions. He argues against ‘descending’ analyses, in which a certain form of domination (Foucault refers to the domination of the bourgeoisie, but we could easily exchange this for patriarchal domination) is a priorily distinguished as important:

“It is only if we grasp these techniques of power and demonstrate the economic advantages or political utility that derives from them in a given context for specific reasons, that we can understand how these mechanisms come to be effectively incorporated into the social whole” (*ibidem*: 101).

In sum, the question about the utopian layer of Foucault’s work remains unanswered. Grosz (1990: 89; emphasis in original. *Cf.* Lorraine 2007: 268-9) has explained that whereas power

⁶³ Mariana Valverde (2004: 77) claims that

“Foucault harbored a deep suspicion of all attempts to be original and to cleanse one’s mind or one’s book of corrupting influences.”

She creates an opposition between Foucault and the feminist critique of using the Master’s tools here.

⁶⁴ In the end Alcoff (1996b: 160) argues that his ‘rudimentary’ perspectivism leads to a *pluralist* account of truth. This suggests that subjugated knowledges are postmodern *rather than* traditional epistemological (*cf.* Privitera [1990] 1995), which is inconsistent with her overarching argument (see below), yet in line with her worries about the criteria as to *which/ whose* subjugated knowledges are preferable.

according to Foucault should be seen “as a grid that necessarily *generates* points of resistance,” these resistances should not be organized in a representationalist, goal-oriented, totalizing manner. For example, Foucault is said to plead for “guerilla warfare” (*ibidem*: 90). The feminist-Marxist problem regarding representation/alism does not return and guerilla groups do not represent others, but only themselves and their issues (*ibid.*: 92).

Now I want to move from the issue of feminism and Foucault to Foucault as epistemologist. What is his solution to the God trick? Hartsock (1996: 46), unconvinced by guerilla warfare, argues that Foucault has introduced an impotent critic instead of an omnipotent God, as she describes the postmodern and modern position. Hartsock explains:

“insisting on metaphors of web and net, rather than structures of domination, we are led to conclude merely that each of us both dominates and is dominated. We are all responsible, and so in a sense no one is responsible. Thus, the question of how to analyze structures of domination is obscured” (*ibidem*).⁶⁵

In ‘Power/ Knowledge,’ Rouse (1994: 99; *cf.* Wahl in Alcoff 1996a: 117) makes clear that Foucault rejects a-priorisms, such as a standpoint outside of power relations, from which better and resisting knowledge can be produced. Nevertheless he also claims that Foucault is against ‘epistemic sovereignty’ (*ibidem*: 103) which is a characterization of the work of Foucault that overlooks the fact that power for him is *potestas and potentia* (see Braidotti 1991b: 48).⁶⁶ With the claim that there *are* “micropractices through which particular candidates for knowledge and their objects are produced” (Rouse 1994: 103), Rouse wants to overcome attributing to Foucault a postmodern “epistemological relativism and/ or a reduction of truth to domination and legitimacy to forced acceptance” (*ibidem*: 105). Rouse talks about the co-constitutive nature of supporting and resisting power (*ibid.*: 109) and refers to History of Sexuality in which Foucault ([1976] 1978b: 95; emphasis added) affirms “the strictly *relational* character of power relations” whose “existence depends on a multiplicity of points of resistance [...] everywhere in the power network.” Rouse (1994: 110) ascribes the same character – *potestas and potentia* – to knowledge. Where resistance begins, according to this reading, is historically situated and involves beginning anew every time (*ibidem*: 113). There is *no* totalizing claim about resistance nor a relativist one, because situatedness in the Harawayian definition (I read Rouse as sympathetic to Haraway (see Rouse 1993)) is a solution to *both*. In other words, we return to Said who claims that ‘it does not matter *who* wrote what, but rather *how* a work is written and read.’

⁶⁵ Hekman (1996: 5) explains that Hartsock’s own position here prefers ‘seeing some things from somewhere’ which involves postmodernizing modernist feminist standpoint theory. See also chapter 2 of this dissertation.

⁶⁶ Braidotti (1991b: 48) claims:

“The French term ‘*assujettissement*’, subjectification, captures most effectively the twofold nature of the process of becoming-subject as a move which is both active (subject of) and passive (subjected to). Insofar as this process connects subjectivity to knowledge and normativity, it is an epistemological; kind of activity.”

Key to the issue of the utopian layer of the work of Foucault then are the previously mentioned concepts ‘subjugated knowledges’ and ‘power/knowledge’ (Foucault 1980). According to Foucault ([1977] 1980c: 133), power/knowledge or the ‘régime of truth’ “is not merely ideological or superstructural” as “[t]ruth is a thing of this world” (*ibidem*: 131). Alcoff (1996a: 139, 1996b: 153; *cf.* Grosz 1990), who characterizes power/knowledge as anti-reductionist,⁶⁷ reads Foucault’s account of the relatedness of the terms knowledge and power (both as such and with each other) as new materialist *in my sense of the term* despite the fact that she starts out by asking whether power/knowledge is either epistemological or knowledge sociological (what I have called anti-epistemological) (Alcoff 1996b: 147):

“If truth is underdetermined by a ‘brute reality,’ and if the realm of discourse is itself highly diffuse and indeterminate, it becomes easy to argue that power structures and power relations contribute significantly to the final determination of what gets to count as true” (*ibidem*: 134). “Subjugated knowledges are valorized not because they present a more accurate representation of the Real as it exists in itself, or because they have a less important connection to power, but because they do not require the amount of violence, distortion, and omission the global [totalizing] knowledges require” (*ibid*: 155).⁶⁸ “[Foucault’s] concern is not to discover the legitimating foundation of our knowledge, nor to combat skepticism, which he takes to be based on transcendental arguments about the ‘original act of giving,’ such as Descartes’ view that God gave us a sensory apparatus which would ensure our generally correct beliefs about the world” (*ibid.*: 159).

Both traditional epistemologies and anti-epistemologies are founded on (what Alcoff calls) ‘transcendental metajustifications’ (*ibid.*). Foucault, she says, does not make use of such justifications, and because of that, we cannot read his work as traditionally epistemological (confirming traditional epistemology by negation (my terminology)).

Should we infer that Foucault is a new (feminist) materialist because his work has been characterized as multi-directional and multi-layered? Mariana Valverde, working with the ‘final Foucault’ (Taylor and Vintges eds 2004) to construct an argument similar to the one I have proposed in this dissertation, shows that the implications of the work of Foucault point into this direction. Valverde (2004: 71) argues for overcoming both (feminist) humanism and (feminist) social constructivism on the basis of the claim that these tendencies share “the assumption that engaging in the dialogic exercise of personal truth telling is always and everywhere linked to a specific form of subjectivity – the humanist ‘inner self.’” She uses the ‘final Foucault’ to show that truth telling “also takes place in situations that promote a less ‘deep’ and serious sense of self, a more pragmatist, flexible, de-centered, less territorialized ethical self” (*ibidem*: 71; *cf.* McWorther 2004: 157). This ethical heterogeneity (not

⁶⁷ Monique Deveaux (1996: 213) reminds us that the early Foucault’s ‘docile bodies’ could be seen as reductionist, ‘bio-power’ much less so, and ‘technologies of the self’ absolutely not. This (teleological) development she also ascribes to what she calls first-wave, second-wave and third-wave Foucauldian feminists. I do not copy Deveaux as her account is linear and teleological.

⁶⁸ In this quote as well as in work of Foucault (*e.g.* [1976] 1980) when he explains subjugated knowledges seems to differentiate between global/ totalizing and subjugated/ ‘minor’ knowledges. This is not a dichotomy as under global knowledges we find many different “hegemony-seeking” (Alcoff 1996b: 156) knowledges!

conceptualized as a political pluralism) takes place on different levels, even on different levels *within* the subject (Valverde 2004: 73; *cf.* Braidotti 1994b). Furthermore she claims that what this phase in the work of Foucault has generated is not a theory but “a different way of doing thinking” (*ibidem*: 78). The Deleuzian Foucault introduced here (*ibid.*: 71) implies non-foundationalism and anti-anthropocentrism (Pritsch 2004: 119; *cf.* Deleuze and Parnet 1987: 11).⁶⁹ I have used the latter characteristics to underline the qualitative shift that is engendered by new feminist materialism. Contrary to Valverde, Braidotti (1991b: 95) argues that the ‘final Foucault’ introduces an equivocity that makes his *materialism* flawed. She claims that his work is androcentric due to the fact that he systematically uses the general (‘man’) for the masculine. In his case this is not just a blatant sexism, but a serious flaw:

“The fact that the notion of power which Foucault develops rests on a masculine view of the body (and its power-effects), constitutes not so much a temporary amnesia as a flaw in his articulation of politics with the materiality of the body.”

Taking into account the uncertainty of Foucault’s univocity, let us move to the next paragraph in which the work of Deleuze is discussed.

3.3.3 Deleuze AND Braidotti AND Grosz AND...

3.3.3.1 ‘locating oneself within a body of thought in order to dis-organise that body’

In Dialogues Deleuze and Claire Parnet ([1977] 1987: 66) ask “what scientists do,” and they answer:

“Science is becoming increasingly event-centered [*évènementielle*] instead of structural. It follows lines and circuits, it takes leaps, rather than constructing axiomatics. [...] Scientists are more and more concerned with singular events, of an incorporeal nature, which are effected in bodies, in states of bodies, in completely heterogeneous assemblages (whence the call for interdisciplinarity). This is very different from a structure with any elements whatever, it is an event of heterogeneous bodies, an event as such which crosses varied structures and specified sets. No longer is it a structure which frames isomorphic sets; it is an event which passes across irreducible domains” (*ibidem*: 67).

Despite the fact that they are wary of a reterritorializing move *away* from science as event-centered (*ibid.*: 68), the above quotation is exemplary for the way in which Deleuze/ Deleuze and Parnet/ Deleuze and Guattari approach the issue of science. This approach echoes the anti-epistemological emphasis on practice: what do scientists do, how is science being done? Even so, the concrete take on the issue is not ‘bottom-up.’ The anti-representational approach introduced here is completely univocal. This approach cannot even be named ‘anti-epistemological’ (*cf.* Lovibond 1994: 67) because there is a *clear interest* in epistemological issues as long as events and encounters are on the menu. Furthermore, these are not approached in a deterministic/ a-prioristic or goal-oriented manner. In What is Philosophy? Deleuze and Guattari ([1991] 1994: 5; emphasis in original) make clear that a philosophy that

⁶⁹ See for a definition of non-foundationalism chapter 2. Anti-anthropocentrism entails “an *oscillation* between [the] corporeality [of thought] and the network of social representations which occupies it” (Braidotti 1991b: 44; emphasis added).

is *not* “creating concepts”, *not* a *thinking* that involves “constantly confront[ing] chaos” (*ibidem*: 208) is a philosophy that is “marked by national characteristics or rather nationalitarianisms [*nationalitaires*]” (*ibidem*: 104). In the case of France, they state, the tendency is to “[support] concepts through a simple order of reflexive knowledge, an order of reasons, an ‘epistemology’” (*ibidem*). Such an a-priorism prevents ‘epistemologists’ from studying science as event-centered, and prevents us from being able to go into the transversal encounter/ oscillation of philosophy, science, and art (*ibidem*: 216-8).

The formula Deleuze and Parnet ([1977] 1987: 66) use for their approach, as well as for the event-centeredness of science reads: “ENTITY = EVENT.” In the philosophy of Deleuze *c.s.*, a focus on concepts on the one hand and something substantially different (*e.g.* a state of affairs) on the other is not to be found:

“Utterances are not content to describe corresponding states of things [...] one is only assembling signs and bodies as heterogeneous components of the same machine” (*ibidem*: 71).

The work of Deleuze (and Deleuze and Guattari) does not entail a correspondence theory of truth, practice and theory are completely intertwined. This is also the case *in* his/ their writing on theory and practice which makes the work multi-directional from the start. In the words of Tamsin Lorraine (2007: 270), the work of Deleuze (and Deleuze and Guattari) entails “a theory of experimental praxis.” The focus on assemblage (“both machine assemblage of effectuation and collective assemblage of enunciation” (*ibidem*; *cf.* Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 23, 64)) inaugurates a univocal stance. Here we find what the new materialism of Deleuze entails:

“Language is not about representation, naming or propositions, but rather about creating worlds of sense that interact with *other material worlds*, such as those of bodies, laws and cultures” (Colebrook 2002a: 111; emphasis added).

Assemblages are created through the following of desire (the breaking point being destruction or death (see Deleuze and Parnet [1977] 1987: 140)). Following desire, in other words intensifying life (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 74) in a deterritorializing way, involves a liberation of “pure matter” (Deleuze and Parnet [1977] 1987: 72). It is possible though that neither destruction nor liberation occurs (*cf.* Gatens 1991: 197). In that case, an utterance gets a subject (‘I’), a certain state of affairs gets signified (‘that’), and the development is limited (*e.g.* the installation of the binary opposition human vs. animal rather than the becoming-animal (see below)). This is called a reterritorialization and re-introduces an equivocity, *i.e.* epistemology in the abovementioned sense of the term. The ‘event’ as the entity or smallest unit, also called the encounter (*cf.* the work of Ahmed), is what I will go into in a more detailed manner in the remainder of this paragraph in order to demonstrate the multi-directional and multi-layered nature of the work of Deleuze and Deleuzian feminism.

By looking at what scientists, artists, and philosophers (never Authors) do, our event-centered, univocal work should be, for starters, generative, which is “a matter of showing how

an actual assemblage brings into play several regimes of pure signs or several abstract machines, putting them into play in one another's mechanisms" (Deleuze and Parnet [1977] 1987: 114). Secondly, the work should "show[...] how one pure regime of signs can be translated into another, with what transformations, what unassimilable residues, what variations and innovations" (*ibidem*). Thirdly, it should be diagrammatic or pragmatic (*cf.* Haraway 1997), which is to say that:

"We must discover in every regime and every assemblage the specific value of the existing lines of flight [...] a map of what is blocked, overcoded, or, on the contrary, mutating, on the route to liberation, in the process of outlining a particular fragment for a plane of consistence. Diagrammatism consists in pushing a language to the plane where 'immanent' variation no longer depends on a structure or development, but on the combination of mutating fluxes, on their productions of speed, on their combinations of particles (to the point where food particles, sexual particles, etc., reach their zone of proximity or indiscernibility: abstract machine)" (Deleuze and Parnet [1977] 1987: 118-9).

Diagrammatics or pragmatics (also called schizoanalysis/ rhizomatics/ cartography/ etc.) study segmentation or cutting⁷⁰ (molar lines), becomings rather than beings (molecular lines), and lines of flight or escape lines, which have a tendency to destruction (*ibidem*: 124-5). Diagrammatics confront chaos rather than 'neat' states of affairs from a 'neat' subject's point of view. In 'Theatrum Philosophicum' Foucault ([1970] 1998: 355) says that for Deleuze "the world is our classroom." Deleuze and Parnet ([1977] 1987: 132) explain:

"You only escape dualisms effectively by shifting them like a load, and when you find between the terms, whether they are two or more, a narrow gorge like a border or a frontier which will turn the set into a multiplicity, independently of the number of parts. What we call an assemblage is, precisely, a multiplicity. [...] The devices of power do not seem to us to be exactly constitutive of assemblages, but to form part of them in one dimension of which the whole assemblage can topple over or turn back on itself."

Using the terms of this dissertation, this geographical approach entails a *mapping* of lines; "schizoanalysis or pragmatics, micro-politics itself" is not an interpretation exercise, but an exercise "merely in asking what are your lines, individual or group, and what are the dangers on each" (*ibidem*: 143). It involves description, as well as utopia, in the Deleuzian sense of the latter term. Description alone is not enough, says Marrati (2006: 316), because the suggestion is that it is exhaustive. In Deleuze's work utopia "designates *that conjunction of philosophy, or of the concept, with the present milieu*" (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 100; emphasis in original). Utopia in the geographical sense uses 'milieu' to avoid having to think within a framework of creation or becoming – in terms of either beginnings or ends (*ibidem*: 110). If there is a clear beginning or a clear end, there is no creation. If we lack creation, Deleuze and Guattari claim, "[w]e lack resistance to the present" (*ibid.*: 108; emphasis in original). This has repercussions for traditional (anti-) epistemology's focus on prescription as well. Here, prescription should not be seen in the traditional normative a-priorist sense because "[t]here is no general prescription" (Deleuze and Parnet [1977] 1987:

⁷⁰ *Cf.* Barad's Cartesian cuts and her definition of objectivity.

144) except for the move away from segmentation and so-called micro-fascisms, *i.e.* the *copying* (representationalist!) of segmentation or cutting on a molecular level (*ibidem*: 145).

Colebrook (2002a: 71) explains:

“philosophy had to be more than critical. It was not enough to expose the illusions of transcendence, not enough to show that all our invented foundations – such as God, Being or Truth – were inventions rather than givens. We also need to see the positive side of this inventive process. What is thinking such that it can enslave itself to images of some great outside? Does this tell us that there is something productive, positive and liberating about the very power of thought?”

Marrati (2006: 317) explains that Deleuze has introduced *immanent* criteria for something that ‘has to be more than’ that which I have called prescription:

“‘good’ and ‘bad’ are always a matter of what increases or diminishes the power of a given body, and the ethical question is whether a being can live up to the limits of which it is capable. In this sense, even the notion of a hierarchy becomes purely immanent: it does not compare beings with one another in order to rank them. On the contrary, hierarchy evaluates the power of each singular being in relation to itself.”⁷¹

Deleuze’s project has not engendered questions such as: is power really both potestas (repression) and potentia (resistance)? How can we resist patriarchy? The Deleuzian project focuses on the beginning, especially the *thinking*, anew. It does not focus on thinking anew in every respective instance, but on thinking anew *itself*. Foucault’s answer to the form and possibilities of resistance involved a general gesture towards beginning anew in all respective instances. He offered no template for resistance as such a template would have made his work immediately equivocal. The general nature of his claim combined with the homosociality and masculinism of the final Foucault (equivocal at last!), resulted in questioning the work of Foucault in terms of its multi-directionality and multi-layeredness. In Patterns of Dissonance, Braidotti (1991b: 73) summarizes the way in which the Deleuzian project *escapes* equivocity on all grounds just mentioned:

“If on the one hand ‘pure’ and definitive thought no longer exists, on the other, all thought is considered to be the expression of the vital power of being. Consequently, any attempt to alienate thought from the creative force which dwells in it constitutes a mutilation of the human spirit.”

Thus it is the *event of thinking* Deleuze focuses on:

“In contrast to the Cartesian universe, the plenitude of which testifies to a veritable horror of the void, Deleuze’s universe does not recognize the distinction between internal and external space, or inside or outside reason; in this universe the self loses its privileged perspective on creation. Deleuze makes this loss the founding argument of his questioning of subjectivity” (*ibidem*: 72).

Whereas Braidotti questioned Foucault for talking about the characteristics of the self, she celebrates Deleuze’s self-without-qualities. Rather than reading this as an anti-epistemological move, Deleuze’s univocal focus on positive forces should be seen as a move away from *both* a “dialectical relation between words and things” (*ibid.*: 74) *and* from general

⁷¹ Note that for Deleuze “[e]verything is a compound of bodies” (Deleuze and Parnet [1977] 1987: 62).

thought in favour of thinking (*ibid.*: 73).⁷² Focusing on *thinking* rather than thought as something both predetermined and ‘antithetical to opinion’ involves, according to Deleuze and Guattari ([1991] 1994: 6, 207), escaping the unreal opposition that exists between philosophy as either rationalist/ universalist or analogues to opinion/ relativist. Here, only the encounter of creation and concept is truly univocal (*ibidem*: 11-2).

Colebrook (2000c: 2-3) says that it is the *style* (where the event of thinking is key rather than thought and the self/ I) of Deleuze and Guattari that *prevents* feminists from asking two questions. Firstly, are they acknowledging feminism’s ‘thinking differently’ or subordinating feminism once more, and secondly, whether becoming-woman (see below) is another cannibalism of women or the women’s movement by a male, non-feminist theorist or not (*cf.* Grosz 1993a, Grosz 1994b: 162). Colebrook (2000c: 3; *cf.* Massumi 1987) says the work of Deleuze and Guattari is “an inhabitation rather than an interpretation” in which “[t]exts are read in terms of how they work, rather than what they mean.” In other words, they study what texts *do*, which is a strategy “of locating oneself within a body of thought in order to dis-organise that body” (Colebrook 2000c: 4). Claiming credit as feminists on the basis of the conviction that Deleuze mirrors what feminists have been doing all along is, first of all, a representationalism, and secondly, *not* diagrammatic/ pragmatic:

“Feminism has never been the pure and innocent other of a guilty and evil patriarchy. [...] to *not* address the male canon would reduce women to an impossible outside, silence or ghetto; but to establish itself as an *women’s* movement there does not need to be a delimitation of the tradition in order to speak otherwise. [...] feminism has always been marked by an *odd* relation to its other” (*ibidem*: 3; emphasis added).⁷³

In a Deleuzian vein: it is the thinking *itself*, rather than ‘thinking differently’ *as such* that should be center stage. What is not to be found in the work of Deleuze is a “becoming of some being [...] or some grounding intent” as it is always “the presentation of becoming itself, a becoming that *then* effects certain modes of being” (*ibid.*). Colebrook thus wants feminists to expel all foundationalisms and a-priorisms. We should rather acknowledge the nature of the work of both Deleuze and feminists as *active* (*ibid.*: 7-8). Philosophy should not be seen as genderless or strictly masculine but as active or (re)activating concepts (*ibid.*: 9):

“Concepts are returned to a ‘good’ subject in general or located within an intending subject. But this would assume that there are subjects – male or female – who *then* speak or think, whereas Deleuze will insist that thinking and speaking are trans-individual possibilities of becoming. All speaking is already a collective utterance, and all thinking is an assemblage” (*ibid.*).

A corollary of the above, is the notion that feminists should not try to *follow* Deleuze, but that they should enact the philosophy of becoming (*ibid.*: 12) like they do with modes of thought that they encounter. They should not become *Deleuzians* nor work *as* Deleuze in that sense.

⁷² *Cf.* the move away from being in favour of becoming.

⁷³ Lorraine (2007: 274, 277-8) argues that Deleuze also has an odd relation to feminism.

Since I am writing this dissertation in the first decennium of the third millennium it cannot be overlooked that enacting the Deleuzian philosophy of becoming has a specific problem for feminists. The encounter between Deleuze's philosophy and feminism had to take place in a generative, transformational, and diagrammatic way. For early feminists, who staged this encounter, it proved difficult to move away from representationalism – both in the sense of becoming Deleuzian (constituting oneself as Deleuze's dutiful daughter) and in the sense of not repeating/ mirroring the (materialist) feminist critique of Foucault. In chapter 2, when discussing an-Oedipality, I proved the first issue is a contradiction precisely because Deleuze's *marginality* prevents feminists from becoming the dutiful daughter of yet another Master. The second issue is more serious. To some (*e.g.* Grosz 1993a: 178), A Thousand Plateaus suggested that Deleuze and Guattari (*cf. e.g.* [1980] 1987b: 250, 279) wanted us to move all the way through a becoming-woman, becoming-animal, becoming-child, becoming-molecular to becoming-imperceptible. Apart from the fact that many feminists *critiqued* the teleology considered implicit in this list, there has been a lot of materialist-feminist discussion about Deleuze and Guattari's privileging of becoming-woman *as such*. In 'A Thousand Tiny Sexes' (an article that reviews the feminist criticism of Deleuze and stages one of the very early feminist encounters with Deleuze) Grosz (1993a: 168) claims that the

“metaphors of becoming woman [...] prevent women from exploring and interrogating their own specific, and non-generalizable, forms of becoming, desiring-production and being.”

I am not going to discuss Grosz's use of the term 'metaphor' because this usage, as such, is an implicit critique of the work of Deleuze and is nowadays no longer common sense. What I want to discuss here, is a claim expressed in Alice Jardine's (1985: 223) Gynesis: “There is no room for new becomings of women's bodies and their other desires in these creatively limited, mono-sexual, brotherly machines” in the book series Capitalism and Schizophrenia. In Patterns of Dissonance Braidotti furthers this argument by reading becoming-woman, initially, as a *flaw* in Deleuze's materialism. Braidotti (1991b: 122) claims that women/feminists were already busy exploring and interrogating. Due to the fact that Deleuze did not *engage* with these practices, “Deleuze becomes normative by omission.” This is the argument:

“when this 'becoming-woman' is disembodied to the extent that it bears no connection to the struggles, the experience, the discursivity of real-life women, what good is it for feminist practice?” (*ibidem*: 120-1).

Not situating his work in the domain of metaphors and discourse (*cf.* Grosz 1993a: 176), Braidotti in her early work *does* argue that the primacy of becoming-woman invited *equivocity* to enter Deleuze's work. Grosz adds to this, by claiming that becoming-woman involves a foundationalism, which should also be read as a flaw in a new, non-economically determinist materialism. Grosz (1993a: 168; *cf.* Grosz 1990: 84) says that Deleuze's becoming-woman and the primacy given to it involves nothing but “using women to obscure

an examination of his own investments in women's subjugation" and results in women becoming "the object or the prop of man's speculations, self-reflections and intellectual commitments." However, it is *these* arguments that mirror the feminist criticism of Foucault (whose subjugated knowledges?) and as such, these arguments *prevent feminists* from asking what Deleuze can *do* for feminists and the feminist project (in other words, it is a flaw in *their* materialism) which is what Braidotti (1994a, 2002a, 2006b), Grosz (1993a: 169, 179; 1994a; 2004; 2005), and others began to do after voicing their initial criticisms (*cf.* Colebrook 2002a: 149). Moving away from representationalism, feminists no longer read becoming-woman as problematic. What is it that the work of Deleuze can do for feminists? (*cf.* Olkowski 2000: 89-90). Leaving the question of political representation behind, this is what it can do according to Patricia MacCormack (forthcoming):

"Far from needing to be represented in society, the unrepresentability of the sound of lesbian desire is its power. I am not suggesting lesbians need not be recognised and acknowledged but not recognised within male/female dualistic speech machines. [...] Like feminists, queers and political activists these demonic assemblages think, speak and live according to different logics or negotiative practices. They are being, doing and relating differently, an abstract machine. Explicitly this is not metaphoric but thought as material and materiality as thought."

It is this Deleuzian feminist work that I have read as new materialist in chapter 1 of this dissertation.

Also in Patterns of Dissonance, Braidotti claims that the philosophy of becoming and becoming-woman (in particular) should be seen as an-Hegelian, and thus an-dialecticist. Braidotti (1991b: 108-9) locates the univocity and the *new* materialism of the work of Deleuze in his move away from the binary opposition between majority and minority as quantitative indicators through becoming-woman or becoming-minoritarian. The latter becomings are seen as *qualitatively different* from minority as the reverse of Man/ majority (see Deleuze and Guattari [1980] 1987b: 291-2). In the words of Colebrook (2000c: 12):

"Woman offers herself as a privileged becoming in so far as she short-circuits the self-evident identity of man. Thus Deleuze's celebration of 'becoming-woman' begins by turning the concept of man around (or activating a reactivism). If man is the concept of being then his other is the beginning of becoming."

What Colebrook proposes here is not a dialecticism. Jardine (1985: 216) has explained that the emphasis is on *woman* to move away from dialectics. Women need to become woman as well (Deleuze and Guattari [1980] 1987b: 275), because only *then* can they escape the dualism of men-women and positioning themselves as the One, as Man. In the words of Deleuze and Parnet ([1977] 1987: 2):

"There is a woman-becoming which is not the same as women, their past and their future, and it is essential that women enter this becoming to get out of their past and their future, their history. [...] There is a philosophy-becoming which has nothing to do with the history of philosophy and which happens through those whom the history of philosophy does not manage to classify."

Now we know that Deleuze's materialism is not flawed (like Foucault's); rather, *thinking* Deleuze's materialism *as* flawed is an an-Deleuzian representationalism and it is

important to focus on the becoming-philosophy of philosophy in order to understand how we can actually *do* univocal, event-centered work that is generative, transformational, and diagrammatic. How, in other words, does one ‘locate oneself within a body of thought in order to dis-organise that body’? In ‘The Image of Thought’ Deleuze ([1968] 1994: 130) writes that the one who philosophizes should be

“[s]omeone who neither allows himself to be represented nor wishes to represent anything. [...] For this individual the subjective presuppositions [of a natural capacity for thought] are no less prejudices than the objective presuppositions [of a culture of the times]: *Eudoxus* and *Epistemon* are one and the same misleading figure who should be mistrusted. [...] Such a one is the Untimely, neither temporal nor eternal.”

Representationalist philosophy, whether empiricist or rationalist, has always been equivocal in that it assumes a subject on the one side and an object/ state of affairs on the other, and certain ontological presumptions (*ibidem*: 131; *cf.* Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 85). In other words, “the world of representation is characterised by its inability to conceive of difference in itself” (Deleuze [1968] 1994: 138). On the contrary, anti-representationalist philosophy is “an unrecognised and unrecognisable *terra incognita*” (*ibidem*: 136). It is “[s]omething in the world that forces us to think. This something is an object not of recognition but of a fundamental *encounter*” (*ibid.*: 139; emphasis in original). Such an univocal undertaking – a transcendental empiricism (*ibid.*: 144) – involves “the thought without an image” (*ibid.*: 167). Thought without a dogmatic, pre-determined image is capable of “expand[ing] thought to its infinite potential” (Colebrook 2002a: 15) that is:

“This is not a power of *generalisation* or looking at some common feature that all beings share. Thinking universally demands that we go beyond all the beings that we perceive and think how any being might be possible” (*ibidem*; see also *ibid.*: 99).

Thinking universally thus meets the criteria as described by Marrati.

In the next paragraph, I will expand my discussion of Deleuze and feminism. I will focus on the work of Haraway, who has claimed that her Deleuze is “Rosi Braidotti’s feminist trans-mutant” (Gane 2006: 156), and I will show how ‘Deleuze and feminism’ involves a “creative AND” (Deleuze and Parnet [1977] 1987: 59). The encounter between Deleuze and feminism, in other words, entails “neither a union, nor a juxtaposition, but the birth of a stammering, the outline of a broken line which always sets off at right angles, a sort of active and creative line of flight? AND... AND... AND...” (*ibidem*: 9-10). I will thus outline an encounter between feminism and Deleuze and vice versa, through a discussion of the latest work of Haraway in a century that perhaps *is* known as Deleuzian (*cf.* Foucault [1970] 1998: 343).

3.3.3.2 The Becoming-Animal of Haraway

Haraway, in response to Latour’s Never Modern, gives a shortcut ‘point of view:’ ‘pov.’ Haraway argues that when reading Never Modern from the pov of feminist science studies

(precisely because of the field's critical engagement with for instance genres such as science fiction) the book loses its radicality. Latour theorizes modernism as something that has never taken place due to all the hybrids we have always found ourselves surrounded with (in things as daily as the newspaper). Yet, according to Haraway (1994b: 1) in 'Never Modern, Never Been, Never Ever: Some Thoughts about Never-Never Land in Science Studies,'⁷⁴ the pov with which Latour approaches this hybrid world is "too clean, even pure; it seems to hover over the ethereal regions of his charts, even while saying everything interesting happens in the nether worlds." Haraway makes explicit that women have never been allowed to participate in one of the secured realms of the seemingly dichotomous modernism, such as nature vs. culture, because women have always already (had) a hybrid pov, which is what feminists theorize. She says the most fruitful approach to *any* world is an approach in which "the pov of those who don't fit the new standards [*sic*] but must live in relation to them is analytically privileged" (*ibidem*: 9; cf. Woolf [1938] 2001). In sum, thinking 'pov' does not conceptualize the endresult, namely another objectivity. Thinking 'pov' involves the theorization of the perspective *itself*, i.e. of the *act* of looking/ knowing/ writing/ reading/ etc., and, as such, it *underlies* 'situated knowledges.' The two articles 'Situated Knowledges' and 'Never Modern' both describe cases of situated knowledge (e.g. Latour's knowledge as situated knowledge) and theorize *how* to see most fruitfully, but in 'Never Modern' also the seeing *itself* is theorized. In 'Situated Knowledges' Haraway (1988b: 583) stated that she has learned to think situated knowledges in part while "walking with [her] dogs and wondering how the world looks without a fovea and very few retinal cells for colour vision, but with a huge neural processing and sensory area for smells." Here the question remains unanswered whether this involves theorizing observing *as* a dog, *as* a non-human other (cf. MacCormack forthcoming), or whether it involves thinking a pov. In 'Never Modern' Haraway (1994b: 1) simply states that "[a] pov does not necessarily pertain to a human subject," "[a] pov is achieved" (*ibidem*: 2),⁷⁵ and "[p]ovs re-do temporality, re-do historical genres, re-do time-spaces as well as nature-cultures. Things and times get 'thick' instead of linear" (*ibid.*: 4). In sum, the theorization of 'pov' occurs on another level and can be best explained as a *becoming*:⁷⁶

⁷⁴ I thank Baukje Prins for providing me with copies of this unpublished conference paper.

⁷⁵ See for achieving a pov/ standpoint in a strictly Deleuzian sense, see Wiese forthcoming.

⁷⁶ "Becoming-animal is a feel for the animal's movement, perceptions and becomings: imagine seeing the world as if one were a dog, a beetle or a mole" (Colebrook 2002a: 136).

In other words,

"by *approaching* or imaging the inhuman point of view of animals, machines and molecules we no longer take ourselves as unchanging perceivers set over and against life" (*ibidem*: 128; emphasis in original).

Cf. Colebrook 2004a: 3.

“We are not in the world, we become with the world; we become by contemplating it. Everything is vision, becoming. We become universes. Becoming animal, plant, molecular, becoming zero” (Deleuze and Guattari [1991] 1994: 169).

Firstly Haraway (1988b: 584; emphasis in original) stated that “*how* to see from below is a problem requiring at least as much skill with bodies and language, with the mediations of vision, as the ‘highest’ techno-scientific visualisations,” and secondly she makes the vision itself explicit. Using the words of Deleuze and Guattari ([1991] 1994: 130-1) in What is Philosophy? Haraway’s ‘experiment’ entails the following:

“Perspectivism, or scientific relativism, is never relative to a subject [...] the role of a partial observer is *to perceive* and *to experience*, although these perceptions and affections are not those of a man, in the currently accepted sense, but belong to the things studied. [...] the nonsubjective observer is precisely the sensory that qualifies (sometimes in a thousand ways) a scientifically determined state of affairs, thing, or body.”

Instructive for understanding the distinction made above between theorization of something pre-determined as... and becoming is Haraway’s text ‘Reading Buchi Emecheta: Contests for “Women’s Experience” in Women’s Studies’, first a presentation for the HistCon community in 1987 (Gordon 1988: 1), then reworked into a journal article (Haraway 1988a), and later published as a chapter of Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature (Haraway 1991c). In this text Haraway analyses instances of situated knowledge production in women’s studies classrooms through a reading of *what happens* when – in a women’s studies classroom – black⁷⁷ women’s literature is read. When, in a USCS feminist classroom, Emecheta is read by mostly white students in a white campus environment, specific experiences and subjects are constructed. Haraway (1991b: 110; cf. Andermahr *et al.* 2000: 86) shows that “teaching arrangements are themselves theoretical practice,” and she claims that women’s studies teachers should be both aware of this fact and accountable for the resulting situated constructions (Haraway 1991b: 109, 111):

“what counts as ‘experience’ is never prior to the particular social occasions, the discourses, and other practices through which experience becomes *articulated* in itself and *able to the articulated* with other accounts, enabling the construction of an account of *collective* experience, a potent and often mystified operation. [...] Experience may also be *re-constructed*, *re-remembered*, *re-articulated*. One powerful means to do so is the reading and re-reading of fiction [...]” (*ibidem*: 113; emphasis in original).

In other words, Emecheta’s fiction actively constructs a black woman’s pov in which her mainly white students in turn are expected to *actively engage*. Active engagement constructs the most fruitful perspective and the better knowledge that we find in ‘Reading Buchi Emecheta’ as well as Modest Witness. The latter text is Haraway’s seminal work on feminism and technoscience and Prins’ third layer of ‘situated knowledges’ is forefronted. It is not simply the case that fiction (*e.g.* Emecheta’s), classroom practices (*e.g.* a collective reading of Emecheta), experiences (voiced in ‘Reading Buchi Emecheta’), or science textbooks (see Modest Witness itself) have to be considered *as* situated. Similarly, it is not

⁷⁷ Note that ‘black’ is used here in the US sense of the term (see Griffin with Braidotti 2002).

just that some classroom practices, textbooks, etc. are better ‘done,’ written or read from an epistemologically advantageous location (prescriptive layer). In ‘Reading Buchi Emecheta’ and Modest Witness, Haraway constantly creates new povs, *i.e.* she actively constructs what are in her view the most promising perspectives of black literature, reading fiction, technoscience, and fact making. I want to make explicit that Haraway does not simply draw an analogy; she shows that science fact and science fiction, as Cecilia Åsberg (2007) names it, are co-constitutive of one another. OncoMouse™ can count as an example here: Haraway wants us to take a look at biology textbooks that actively construct the pov of this mutated laboratory mouse, because this pov might allow us to see *another* biology. This is a thought provoking gesture. Evaluating her resulting analysis in terms of new and radical data, valuable procedure, how should it be read in terms that differ from radical and playful methodologies that ultimately re-territorialize? What is the underlying epistemological assumption in terms of a theory of the knowing subject? Is it an instance of ‘whose subjugated knowledges,’ reversing the dogmatic image of thought, thus confirming that image? Or is it a becoming? In the previous sections, we read about Haraway’s account on experiences as constructed and a similarly constructed experiencing/ knowing subject. Next to raising awareness about this, Haraway wants us to try to *overcome* our constructedness by *transposing* our pov. The question is: does this ‘escape’ involve simply exchanging a subject with certain qualities for another subject that has other equally pre-determined qualities (*cf.* Virginia Woolf’s ([1929] 2001, [1938] 2001) double perspective)?

In what follows, I want to claim that Haraway’s encounters with dogs and with OncoMouse™ instantiate a becoming-animal of Haraway. This is not a becoming-animal *according to thus mirroring* Deleuze. Here, we will follow Braidotti (2006b: 203; see also Braidotti 2002a: 147) in her move away from Haraway’s dismissive claim that Deleuze and Guattari have been *abusing* animals/ dogs/ dog owners (see Gane 2006: 143) for the construction of their theories. The latter argument resembles the early feminist claim that Deleuze and Guattari have been abusing *women* which is an argument that is presently considered flawed (see above) on the basis of the representationalism that underlies its claim. What can becoming-animal do for us feminists? I use Braidotti, who in Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming (Braidotti 2002a: 137-8) as well as ‘Posthuman, All Too Human: Towards a New Process Ontology’ (Braidotti 2006b: 201), has read Haraway’s work, especially her non-human figurations, as instances of the ‘becoming-animal’ of humans. With this I argue against MacCormack (forthcoming) who affirms becoming-animal, but claims that Haraway is not an instance of that:

“The Oedipal puppy baby no longer knows its own dogginess and is forced into a becoming-human. Similarly Donna Haraway warns against the Oedipalisation of dogs as surrogate children. However in The Companion Species Manifesto she simultaneously claims the dog-

human relation is a hybrid one, but nonetheless the dog term is a trained one, thus the dog is becoming-human.”

The *dissonance* between Haraway and Deleuze can serve to make explicit how ‘pov’ is the underlying epistemological claim of situated knowledges, thus complementing situated knowledges. Situated knowledges theorizes the act of knowing-through-engagement but focuses on the end result, *i.e.* on the fact that stories that originate from an active engagement with ‘strange creatures’ (overdetermined ones) are the most fruitful or promising, and the most valuable for feminists. ‘Pov’ on the other hand focuses on the constructing, the engaging, the relating (contrary to MacCormack I would emphasize *not being* because “[b]eings do not preexist their relatings” (Haraway 2003: 6)) *itself*.

Modest Witness is partly written from the non-human pov of OncoMouse™. In the book Haraway (1997: 103) affirms: “With the eyes of OncoMouse™ [...], let us go back to school to learn a little biology.” We can use Deleuze and Guattari’s text ‘1730: Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal, Becoming-Imperceptible...’ to explain this move – a move towards non-foundationalism and relationality – of which Braidotti (2006b: 200) has said that it characterizes both Deleuze and Haraway. Deleuze and Guattari ([1980] 1987a: 233; *cf. ibidem*: 305) start by claiming:

“there is a becoming-animal not content to proceed by resemblance [...] there is an irresistible deterritorialization that forestalls attempts at professional, conjugal, or Oedipal reterritorialization.”

Becoming-animal should not be understood as a representationalism (as in ‘I become *like* an animal’ or ‘I play animal’), even though it *is* possible to return to such representationalisms at all times (*cf. ibid.*: 250). Becoming-animal is a deterritorializing move away from foundationalisms such as the knowing ‘I.’ In other words, becoming-animal is “ceas[ing] to be subjects to become events” (*ibid.*: 262). Foundationalisms assume that beings pre-exist their relatings. Following Haraway’s (however Whiteheadian) formulation, the theory of becomings states that only the becomings itself are real (*ibid.*: 238). The latter states that the theory is wary of all possible reductionisms (*ibid.*: 239) and I want to claim that as soon as we start looking at biology through the eyes of OncoMouse™, we do precisely *that*. When we look through the eyes of OncoMouse™ we forget the biology we were taught at school and we forget the qualities of both humans and oncomice (nothing pre-exists). In this process, we do not forget in the Latourian sense of the term because we do not refrain from biology but come closer than we have ever been (we become-laboratory animal).⁷⁸ In the case of Companion Species (doing agility) the human stops being the human that pets and Oedipalizes the dog and the dog stops being the furry child (Haraway 2003: 11, 36-7, 51). It is where humans and animals enter a certain *assemblage* that the becoming-animal occurs

⁷⁸ *Cf.* the modest witness as neither detached nor uncaring but reconfiguring the practice of science (Braidotti 2006a: 203).

(Deleuze and Guattari [1980] 1987a: 242). The assemblage has no name nor is it a pre-determined being before its becoming:

“Schizoanalysis, or pragmatics, has no other meaning: Make a rhizome. But you don’t know what to make a rhizome with, you don’t know which subterranean stem is effectively going to make a rhizome, or enter a becoming, people your desert. So experiment” (*ibidem*: 251).

I read both Companion Species and Modest Witness as experiments with the one criterium of Deleuze and Guattari – univocity (*ibid.*: 251-6). I read these two books as attempts to find lines of flight in the regimes of pet culture or academia. These books are diagrammatic overviews of what blocks and overcodes human-animal interactions (*e.g.* the Oedipalization of dogs and cats in contemporary pet culture) or science (*e.g.* the objectification of lab rats in contemporary biology), and of what liberates them (*e.g.* agility and cyborg studies). Furthermore, I want to argue that Haraway, in Companion Species, centralizes (*not* an active construction – OncoMouse™’s pov) a day-to-day, yet equally constructed relationship, between humans and pets and has illustrated a relationship that is explicitly located in the post-postmodern tradition that Deleuze and Deleuzians such as Braidotti and Grosz have constituted through the criticism of postmodernism and subsequent theorization of what new materialist, immanent types of philosophy *for our times* consist of (*cf.* Haraway [1985] 1991, 2003). This involves in the words of Colebrook (2002a: 133):

“becoming-animal is the power, not to conquer what is other than the self, but to transform oneself in perceiving difference [...] For Deleuze, transversal becomings are the key to the openness of life.”

Trying *not* to become Deleuzian, Haraway’s pov *is* becoming-animal, and this involves a qualitative shift in feminist epistemology.

3.3.4 Challenges: Post-Humanism and Anti-Anthropocentrism

Foucault, but more importantly Deleuze, as well as Foucauldian feminists and feminist doing Deleuze conceptualize the epistemic realm as multi-directional and multi-layered. This is a move away from traditional epistemology, traditional anti-epistemology, and second-wave feminist epistemology towards a new materialism, and an anti-representationalism in the political sense of the terms as well as in the sense of false verbal generalization. All three tendencies are characterized in one way or another by pre-determining the epistemic realm according to some norms. This is done by prioritizing theory, or a knowing subject with certain qualities (*e.g.* Woman or women), or by prioritizing practice/ praxis in a manner that is diametrically opposed to (thus re-confirming) the dogmatic image of thought. Multi-directional approaches conceptualize theory and practice as co-constitutive of one another, and focus on, in Deleuzian terms, *events* as implosions of what is usually called theory and what is usually called practice. Multi-layered accounts are accounts that do not work with epistemology-as-normative or anti-epistemology-as-descriptive. Pre-determining layers and

epistemological tasks are two a-priorisms characteristic of the dogmatic image of thought that constitutes Epistemology is re-constituted by anti-epistemology. Multi-layered accounts are utopian in Prins's sense of the term, thinking povs or simply becoming-other-than-dogmatic. Consequently, a dogmatic image of (academic) feminism or the feminist subject has dissolved as well. In other words, the question *whose* subjugated knowledge (engendered by Foucault) is no longer the main concern of feminist epistemologists.

The challenges to traditional epistemology and anti-epistemological trends such as Kuhnianism, Marxism, and Latourianism, and second-wave feminist epistemology (discussed in the previous paragraphs) can be summarized as post-humanism and anti-anthropocentrism. Post-humanism, according to Braidotti (2006b: 197), involves the destabilization of the category of the human as well as the reactivation of it, leading to 'the human' in a way that Haraway would call an 'imploded knot.' The crisis of Reason enabled the reconceptualization of the knowing subject as other than Man/ human. Sometimes it simply implied the Other of Man (women, blacks, black women, etc). Ultimately this has led to a relativism that opposes the totalization of traditional rationalist and humanist epistemology, and it has continued to be representationalist both in the political sense of the term and in terms of *representationalism*. Post-humanism's human-as-an-imploded-knot moves beyond both totalization and relativism, by acknowledging that the latter tendency celebrates a *multiple* human (black + woman), and leaves intact the boundaries both between the One and the Other (humanism) and between human and non-human (anthropocentrism). Olkowski (2000: 101) formulates the human subject as an imploded knot as follows:

"A thousand tiny subjects, we might say, constitute every global, logical subject."

Post-humanism and anti-anthropocentrism are intimately linked. Anti-anthropocentrism questions the One as (a) Man as the center of a whole range of practices – the universe, thought, thinking, etc – and its ontology is relational (*cf.* Braidotti 2006b: 199). Here epistemological individualism has been left behind both in the sense of the One and in the sense of the subject as hyphenated; 'the subject' is not only an imploded knot, but imploded knots. I want to conclude by saying that post-humanism and anti-anthropocentrism are the challenges of feminist, new materialist post-postmodernism.

3.4 Conclusion: Third Wave Materialism Constructed

In this chapter I have argued in a detailed manner on the basis of a cartography of knowledge theories that new materialism as a non-relativist, non-foundationalist epistemological stance does involve a radical shifting of the terms of second-wave feminist epistemology. I have argued that new materialism, a *third wave* materialism indeed, is post-humanist, as well as

anti-anthropocentrist. It is *not* founded on the Subject of feminist (neo-) empiricism, or on the subject-as-Other in feminist standpoint theory, or on the hyphenated subjects of feminist postmodernism. Third wave materialism also questions the anthropocentrism of those approaches to subjectivity. It is not the case that a knowledge claim or a political statement is made by one (multiplicitous) *human* subject. Third wave materialism starts from the ‘unsettling and unsettled nature of matter.’ This starting point does not conceptualize matter *as gendered female*. This is a second-wave feminist materialist move that re-confirms mind as masculine. Feminist theorists such as Ahmed, Barad, and Colebrook did not lean on traditional epistemology or anti-epistemology or second-wave feminist appropriations to grasp *matter* and to move away from matter as... In this chapter I have illustrated a multi-directional and multi-layered epistemic realm that can capture intra-action, contact writing, and univocity.

Now that new or third wave materialism has been secured to form an epistemic category of its own, which is importantly not necessarily a reterritorializing move, I want to discuss ways of doing third-wave materialist research. In other words, what does a post-humanist and anti-anthropocentrist *methodology* look like? In the next chapter entitled ‘Towards Third-Wave Materialist Methodology’ I will review several methodological ‘implications’ of third wave materialism and discuss in what ways these so-called implications differ from traditional feminist methodologies.

“I think what you learn from any project you love is a way of paying attention. Call it methodology if you want. A *way* of paying attention. A quality of attention you didn’t know how to do before.”
Donna Haraway¹

CHAPTER FOUR

Towards Third-Wave Materialist Methodology

4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I have demonstrated the distinct nature of new materialism thus constituting the epistemic category that I have called *third wave materialism*. This chapter examines methodologies, the academic feminist debate about methodologies, and possible ways of doing new feminist materialist work. Affirmations of new materialism are recent, and at this time there is not any volume, let alone *manual*, that has been published specifically on *how to do* new materialist research.² As of now, we only have *exemplifications* of new feminist materialist scholarship (in this dissertation the work of Ahmed, Barad, and Colebrook). In this chapter, I discuss what I have called ‘generation/knowledge.’ Generation/knowledge is a possible answer to the question of how to conduct a research project in a new or third-wave feminist materialist way. While doing this, I assume that ‘there will never be one correct feminist epistemology generating one correct feminist methodology for the interdisciplinary field of women’s studies.’³ There are two aspects to this claim that I want to highlight here. First, just as third wave materialism is a multi-directional and multi-layered epistemic category, the relation between epistemology and methodology/ method(s) will not be conceptualized according to a one-way track progressive narrative (point of origin – esoteric epistemic end). Third-wave feminist materialist epistemology does not stand in a

¹ In: Schneider 2005: 132-3; emphasis in original.

² Manuals of doing research according to (postmodernized) feminist standpoint theory are abundant. Recent examples are Naples 2003 and Sprague 2005. In addition to this, the literature on feminist methodologies and methods is strongly dominated by the social sciences. This is what I concluded in 2006 together with my colleagues Prof. Gloria Wekker and dr. Cecilia Åsberg, when we had to review the international feminist academic publishing market searching for a methodologies textbook for our MA course ‘Feminist Toolbox: Feminist Theories and Methodologies.’

³ Here, I paraphrase Mary Margaret Fonow and Judith A. Cook. This is what Fonow and Cook (2005: 2213) have said:

“There has never been one correct feminist epistemology generating one correct feminist methodology for the interdisciplinary field of women’s studies.”

hierarchical relationship with (*i.e.* does not determine) methodology and method(s). Second, I have never intended to claim that third wave materialism, as a feminist epistemology, should take over the field of women's studies.⁴ Third wave materialism is *a* feminist epistemology after feminist postmodernisms. It is an epistemology however that is particularly valuable due to its non-dialecticist stance vis-à-vis postmodernism and its an-Oedipal thus dutiful and non-competitive stance vis-à-vis the feminist academic past. In the next paragraph, I will discuss the ways in which epistemology, methodology, and method(s) have been correlated by some key academic feminist methodologists. I will also display how I envision third wave materialists to conceptualize the relation.

4.1.1 Epistemology-Methodology-Method(s)

This chapter deals with the 'methodological implications' or 'operationalization' of third-wave feminist materialist epistemology. Nonetheless, it would not be in line with third wave materialism to accept the assumption that "a methodology works out the implications of a specific epistemology for how to implement a method" (Sprague 2005: 5; *cf.* Harding 1987: 2, Fonow and Cook 1991: 1, Ramazanoglu and Holland 2002: 11, Naples 2003: 1, Lykke 2005: 243, Hawkesworth 2006: 4). As mentioned above, I do not postulate a hierarchical relationship between epistemology and methodology, and methodology and method(s). By assuming such a hierarchical relation, epistemology or the epistemic realm is conceptualized as the most 'theoretical' and method as the most 'practical.' In that case, epistemology-methodology-method(s) is designed according to a tripartition endowing 'methodology' with the special quality of coupling theory with practice. All of this, however, remains premised on the assumption of a transitive relation between epistemology, methodology, and method(s). In this relationship, epistemology does not only translate into, but also determines methodology, and methodology method(s). In such a situation, methodology is considered to reflect or be the 'natural' translation or application of an epistemological framework, and method(s) of a methodology; in both cases a certain congruency and transparency is assumed.⁵ By assuming transitivity, one bypasses the underdetermination of theory by evidence. This is a well-known theme in philosophy of science.⁶ Feminists are particularly vulnerable to naïve realism or so-called totalitarianism when they bypass underdetermination while constituting the relation between theory, practice, and evidence (it becomes a close circuit rather than a leaky pipeline). To assume an *interrelationship* between methodology and method (see K. E. King

⁴ In this dissertation the term '(European) women's studies' is being used for what is generated in academia by '(European) women's/ gender/ feminist studies,' '(European) women's/ gender studies,' '(European) gender studies' and '(European) women's studies' alike.

⁵ Contrary to the common acceptance of this relation, feminists and feminist methodologists have explicitly tried to cut across the dichotomies fundamental/ basis vs. applied research (*cf.* Sprague 2005:7), discipline vs. field of studies, and disciplinarity vs. multi- and interdisciplinarity (see Chap. 5).

⁶ See Willard Van Orman Quine in *e.g.* Losee 1993 and Leezenberg and De Vries 2001.

1994) does not qualitatively shift the aforementioned terms because in *both* cases (epistemology and) methodology and method(s) are assumed to be priorily distinguishable, that is to say inherently differentiated. In sum, I agree with Fonow and Cook (2005: 2213-4) who claim that the feminist discussion of epistemology-methodology-method(s) is in need of complexification (*cf.* Liinason 2007).

Harding (1987: 2), while acknowledging the interrelatedness of epistemology, methodology, and method(s) in Feminism and Methodology, gives three separate definitions that I use to summarize the discussion that Fonow and Cook want to complexify. According to Harding (*ibidem*), method consists of “techniques for gathering evidence,” methodology is “a theory and analysis of how research should proceed,” and epistemological issues are “issues about an adequate theory of knowledge or justificatory strategy.” Acknowledging a new kind of materialism,⁷ Fonow and Cook begin by saying that disciplines affect the way in which a method is practiced, and that there is an “interplay between theory as defining one’s research and theory being defined by one’s research” (*ibidem*: 2214; *cf.* Pryse 2000). The latter observation is wholly in line with third wave materialism’s multi-directionality and the idea that researching and (epistemic) theorizing are co-constitutive of one another. N. Katherine Hayles has introduced the term ‘feedback loop’ for the intra-action I am highlighting here. Hayles’ feedback loop should not be confused with the traditional, *positivist* feedback loop (where answers lead to new questions leading to better answers etc). The positivist feedback loop is a progress narrative that has been questioned by philosophers of science/ epistemologists since Kuhn’s historical turn. Hayles (1999: 15; *cf.* Nelson 1993: 144) defines her feedback loop and its place in scholarship as follows:

“Conceptual fields evolve similarly to material culture, in part because concept and artifact engage each other in continuous feedback loops. An artifact materially expresses the concept it embodies, but the process of its construction is far from passive.”

According to Hayles, feedback loops exist between concept/ theory and artifact, but also between matter/ materiality and discourse (*ibidem*: 195), and between research and researcher (*ibid.*: 91). Her analysis is useful for thinking through the relation between epistemology, methodology, and method(s) in the context of third-wave feminist materialism. Having said that, I do want to acknowledge that second-wave feminist scholars and epistemologists were also attentive to the ‘unexamined stages of the research process,’ thus allowing for an analysis of the influence of (envisioned) *reception* on the research *design* and vice versa (see Fonow and Cook 1991: 5). Also important in this respect, is the context of discovery which academic feminists of the second wave have placed firmly on the scholarly agenda. Majorie Pryse (2000: 111) reminds us that

⁷ Like Barad (see par. 3.2.1.1), Fonow and Cook (2005: 2222) refer to, among others, the work of Fernandes.

“feminist standpoint theorists have argued [that] social science research tends to ignore or minimize the way research questions are generated, or what is called the ‘context of discovery’ (Harding 1991, 143-4).”

Third-wave feminist materialist epistemology, as a multi-directional and multi-layered epistemology, suggests that the varied and diversely valued stages of research (idealtypes in textbooks and research protocols) interrelate and interconnect.⁸ Feminists have both used and changed (the order of) this list. I have shown in chapter 3 that third-wave feminist materialist epistemology involves neither a top-down nor a bottom-up approach. After taking into account Ahmed’s contact writing, Barad’s onto-epistemology, and Colebrook’s univocity, I believe third-wave feminist materialism deals with the *event* of research and emphasizes the messy *production/ generation* of knowledge, and does not continue to rely upon the classical differentiation between the origin of knowledge (a (dis)embodied and (dis)embedded knowing subject vs. passive object matter) and a distinguishable piece of scholarship/ knowledge claim that is the result of a linear process of a subject objectifying matter (*cf.* Nelson 1993: 135, 145). *Traces* of a focus on the event of research can be found throughout the history of feminist scholarship. It has been claimed, for instance, that “large-scale research projects generate two subject populations: the people being studied and the people doing the routine labor involved in studying them” (Gorelick 1991: 461), and that feminist researchers should be “‘interested in generating concepts *in vivo*, in the field itself’ rather than using ‘predefined concepts’” (Shulamith Reinharz in *ibidem*: 462). (Female/ feminist) subjects, objects of research, and scholarly concepts have not been seen as fully pre-determined by the different branches of academic feminism. The generative aspect of these claims contrasts with instances of reinforcing or simply overlooking the opposition between researcher and researched (*cf.* Ikonen and Ojala 2007). Reinforcing the opposition, elitism, or simply a-priorism re-enters academic feminism and results in Truth producing feminist scholarship. This type of scholarship has been criticized by Maria Mies in her early feminist methodological musings (in Gorelick 1991: 461-2; *cf.* Mies 1991). Overlooking the opposition enforces the equalization of researcher and researched with the equally distorting effect of affirming relativism (*i.e.* making the contention that the production of Truth is time and again frustrated, and that we only have access to multiple truths). Third wave materialism allows for overcoming the binary opposition between totalization and relativism as it acknowledges the *generation* of knowledge, truth, researcher and researched, instruments, and evidence (keeping in mind, in Ahmed’s terms, histories of determination). Third wave materialism, in Barad’s terms, focuses upon possible knowledges, truths, subjects and objects of research, instruments, and

⁸ These are: question/ hypothesis formulation, operationalization, review of theories and literature, selection of methodology/ method(s), representation as significance (positivism) or as cut off from the real (postmodernism), etc.

evidence as both reconfigured and reconfiguring. It entails a focus upon negotiation à la Colebrook. How does this work?

A deterministic and foundationalist stance, or its traces, is (neo-) empiricist rather than new materialist, and third wave materialism does not resemble neo-empiricism's unreal opposite (free floating object, plural or fractured subject, contingent knowledge claim). Third wave materialism analyzes knowledge *in the making*, stressing however that some knowledges (and knowing subjects, objects of research, instruments, and pieces of evidence) are more prone to being constituted *as knowledges* (subjects, objects, instruments, pieces of evidence) than others. It is important to stress this point, due to the fact that some subjects are more prone to be researched than researchers because of elitism, classism, and ethnocentrism (*cf.* the common phenomenon of 'studying down' (Sprague 2005: 11)), an in a context where women's studies scholarship is, to a certain extent, 'unmarked.' Stressing histories of determination differs both from the Received View according to which science is fully Objective (fully determined and as such fully unmarked) and from second-wave feminist reflections according to which women's/ feminist reflexivity (Harding 1987: 9) *identifies* the researcher's biases prior to the point of affecting the research (another form of full determination, but the assumption here is that the scholarship is fully marked already before the research takes place). The bottom-up approach of 'studying up' (*cf.* Harding and Norberg 2005: 2011), *i.e.* of talking *with* or *from the point of view of* women, has been identified as contradictory and circular ("while, on the one hand, the feminist standpoint is presented as a *criterion* for better knowledge, on the other hand, standpoints have to be developed *with the help of* better knowledge" (Prins 1997: 81; emphasis in original)). In reflections on feminist methodology of the late 1980s, a non-hierarchical relationship between subject and object of research was constituted, and feminist research was assumed to "make a difference in women's lives (those of both researchers and researched)" (Morgen 1994: 525). At the same time however, feminists differentiated between the different 'research participants' (all women) beforehand. This is neatly summarized in the following quote:

"researchers following a feminist methodology should strive to use an interactive approach through which the researcher and the researched are placed on the same plane (Harding 1987). Hence, the research conducted becomes non-hierarchical and all those involved are considered participants in that study (Campbell & Bunting 1991). Feminist research that is interactive and non-hierarchical truly allows the participant's voice to be heard (Keddy 1992). It is in this manner that research using a feminist methodology is transformed from research on women to research for women (Duelli Klein 1983)" (K. E. King 1994: 20).

Acknowledging the *event* of scholarly knowledge production, the researcher is firmly situated *within* the research setting and her (productive/ generative⁹) impact as well as the (productive/

⁹ Hayles (1999: 139) writes:

"One implication of letting go of causality is that systems always behave as they should, which is to say, they always operate in accord with their structures, whatever those may be.

generative) impact of the so-called object of research, the research setting, instruments, etc. are taken into account. I claim that the researcher should not be put on center stage (*cf.* Miller 2002) nor should we ‘purify’ the research setting in such a way that the effect of the researcher on the researched (and vice versa), and the effect of the (laboratory) instruments on researcher and researched (and vice versa) is left unstudied and undertheorized. Academic feminism has always been about the *transformative* potential of feminist research (transforming subject(s), object(s), and androcentric disciplinarity through research). By making an insightful analysis of the co-constitutive effects of researcher, researched, instruments, setting, and evidence, one’s approach becomes univocal and enables the study of the research *itself* as transformative. In this chapter, I use the shorthand generation/knowledge to describe this process, and to indicate the double move of zooming in on *generating* knowledge as well as on the generative and ‘degenerative’ effects of the knowledge generated. This is what I got from Barad studying *e.g.* the piezoelectric crystal, from Ahmed studying *e.g.* Neighborhood Watch, and from Colebrook studying *e.g.* dance. Let me stress here, that I argue that it is in line with third wave materialism *not* to naively assume a horizontal plane or priorly *different* roles for subject, object, and instrument. We should begin to take into account scholarship as generative of the unexpected (keeping in mind however that certain agents are more prone to become researcher, researched, etc. than others). This combination of the generated and the generative allows third wave materialism to bridge postmodern pluralism according to which everything is equal and (neo-) empiricism according to which everything is a priorly boxed and only the researcher has the agency. Affirming histories of determination (the generated) does not allow for elitism, classism, ethnocentrism *to go unmentioned*. Focusing on the generative, however, third wave materialism does not get stuck into equally naïve approaches of ‘studying up.’ In what follows I will further elaborate on the contours of generation/knowledge, *i.e.* on subject, object, and instruments as well as ‘evidence’ as, in Barad’s terms, agential.¹⁰

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part discusses generation/knowledge in general terms. I will discuss its ‘workings’ via the work of Dugdale, and read through the work of Grosz and Barad. I will claim that we should approach constituencies when they are

[...] my car always works, whether it starts or not, because it operates only and always in accord with its structure at the moment.”

Hayles’s view is not a postmodern relativism or an eco-feminist holism. Hayles affirms the move away from origin and goal, from determinism, yet she equally shies away from indeterminacy. A researcher can have a disruptive effect, but that effect should not be understood as disrupting a natural flow or a sacred unity. Nor is the disruption everything there is.

¹⁰ I want to thank Karen Barad for underlining the importance of the issue of *evidence* for my work. Key here is *to evidence* or *evidencing*. In the terms of Nelson (1993: 129) this is

“a communal account of evidence, an account compatible with the view that knowledge is socially constructed *and* constrained by evidence.”

The quote given seems to suggest that this is an additive process. In the underlying chapter I will defeat this suggestion.

materializing instead of *made* since every end result is always already a new beginning.¹¹ In addition, I will argue that the ‘generation’ part of generation/knowledge covers generativity (or materialization) as well as generationality. The second part of the chapter introduces the research project on the making or *generation* of European women’s studies, discussed in chapter 5, in so-called methodological terms.

4.2 Studying Generation/Knowledge

4.2.1 Affirming Material Arrangements: Dugdale

The focus of the discussion in this paragraph is on the question of *how* to grasp instances of generation/knowledge (in the case of the research project I undertook ‘European women’s studies’) and how to ‘do’ generation/knowledge in feminist research. For this, I read Dugdale’s work through the work of Grosz that looks at time and duration, as well as, through Barad’s work on matter coming to matter. In this paragraph, I employ the same strategy I used in paragraph 2.2.2.2 where I detailed the work of Nelson to make clear *in what way* new feminist materialism is not feminist standpoint theory nor a postmodernized version of feminist standpoint theory. Here, I use the work of Dugdale to give a detailed account of the generation of generative knowledge in a context saturated with generated knowledges. Due to the fact that I am also critical of Dugdale (she is at times lured back towards assuming a *fixed and stable* material arrangement), I use the work of Grosz and Barad to get as close as possible to studying events and designing one’s own study as an event. How can we affirm materiality and discourse as *feeding back onto and into* one another? How do we avoid equivocity in new materialist feminist scholarship?

Deleuzian feminists have conceptualized (feminist) research as an ‘event.’ Data, evidence, texts, and knowledge claims *materialize* in the process. Deleuzian feminists take into account the fact that some bodies/ objects/ phrases/ visuals/ sound samples/ etc. will be more prone to be considered data or evidence than others, and that some knowledge claims are more prone to be recognized as knowledge than others. The ‘data/ evidence/ knowledge claims’ in the previous sentence suggests that it is already known what data/ evidence/ knowledge *is*, *i.e.* that we welcome something into a particular system of signification or not and that what new materialism is about does not concern the coming to matter of data/ evidence/ knowledge claims. These considerations copy the critique that Butler received from new materialists – thinking matter *as matter* makes matter into something that is secondary to

¹¹ Note that the links between the new materialism/ third wave materialism and approaches of emergent ontologies or process ontologies (*cf.* recent work of Roof, King and Anna Tsing) still need to be scrutinized.

discourse. I claim that we need a theoretical tool that allows for materialization *as well as* for the fact that some bodies come to matter as object/ evidence much easier than other bodies, and that the former bodies are less prone to materializing as subjects-generating-evidence. This is to say that generation/knowledge is an ongoing process of instances of materialization, but this is not a materialization free(d) from materializations of the past or from stereotypical materializations. It is the researcher that materializes in keeping with certain histories of determination that have become stuck to the body/ certain types of bodies, likewise, for objects of research, data/ evidence, instruments and knowledge claims. This also applies to the infrastructure of research; what gets to be counted as a knowledge-producing machine and what not is subject to the same double dynamics. When I place a voice recorder on the table, *I* usually become the one that asks the questions, and not the other person present. This is not to suggest that generation/knowledge revolves around performativity (I can still be questioned by the professor I intend to interview; we are not talking about either something absolute or absolute contingency here) or that materialization is an issue that is solved immediately and once and for all (object, subject, instrument, and infrastructure are oscillatory in nature). How, then, does the double move of *generating* knowledge as well as *zooming in* on generated knowledge as itself become (de)generative work?

By studying and constituting generation/knowledge, I work with a definition of matter that, in line with third wave materialism, does not imply passive object matter that is either to be dis-covered as the object of research or to be overlooked or covered because it is text that we focus on. Defining matter I follow Grosz (2005: 111) who has claimed:

“Duration differs from itself, while matter retains self-identity. It is the insertion of duration into matter that produces movement.”

I claim that third wave materialism conceptualizes matter as generated (this is why we are easily lured back into objectifying matter) and itself generative. I enact and perceive knowledge production as working *with* this kind of matter rather than on matter as fixed and ‘original.’ Working *on* matter, the dialecticist opposite of working on text, is as deterministic and reductive as a social-constructivist analysis that overlooks the matter of, for instance, books as physical objects and bodies as resistant to being molded according to some pre-determined signification. In the case of the book, one would only look at what ‘it’ represents without looking at the effects of ‘it’ as a material thing, *e.g.* incorporating the study of the specificities of the medium (*cf.* Hayles 2002; Buikema 2006, 2007) in one’s study of messages. In this example, matter does not come to matter, in Barad’s terms, but is either assumed to be ‘just matter’ or not to matter. Positivist and neo-positivist scholars assume matter to be fully mastered and fully masterable. Social constructivism in its mainstream postmodernist incarnation has initiated the study of signs and has cut off the material.

Let me explain the above in slightly different terms. The ‘duration’ Grosz talks about

should not be seen as linear/ re-invoking linearity. Grosz (2005: 162; emphasis added) argues that “limited [or linear] temporality characterizes all feminist projects of equalization and inclusion *as well as* a number of projects within postmodern feminism.”¹² As a consequence, under the conditions of mentioned projects, “[t]he future of feminism [...] is limited to the foreseeable and to contesting the recognized and the known” (*ibidem*). In other words, Grosz shows that *both* empiricist and some postmodern feminisms are informed by a causal theory of time (see Grosz 1998: 55 n. 2); whereas we tend to think of feminist empiricism and feminist postmodernism as opposites, or *exhaustive* dichotomies (*cf.* this dissertation). A causal theory of time involves decidability and constraint in the case of empiricism (everything – subject, object, instrument, data, infrastructure – is completely predetermined), and undecidability and limitlessness in the case of postmodernism (everything is fully undetermined or contingent). This is what Grosz (2000: 1018) argues is needed as to overcome the unreal opposition:

“What is needed is the idea of a history of singularity and particularity, a history that defies repeatability or generalization and that welcomes the surprise of the future as it makes clear the specificities and particularities, the events, of history.”¹³

In other words, Grosz (1998: 40) argues for a take on time and duration as non-linear and comprised of undecidability *and* constraint. Positivist approaches subscribe to a strictly linear, totalizing conceptualization of time, whereas the questioning of postmodernism’s radicalism theorizes time’s non-linearity as a non-relativist phenomenon. For feminist empiricism, object matter has always been naturally *such* at a certain point in time. For feminist postmodernism, matter can be anything at any time and at any time anything can matter in the strictly non-literal sense of the term. The recent plea of neo-empiricists *for* feminist Darwinism (see Chap. 1) and for social psychology (see Alcoff 2006, 2007), and *against* social constructivist approaches of science, knowledge development and feminism can both serve as examples of a subscription to the linearity of time: a feminist Darwinism is adhered to because of its ability to make structural predictions, and social psychology confirms and makes *reasonable* the status quo as a particular end result. In such a context postmodernism’s assumed undecidability (matter does not matter; undecidability and playfulness matter metaphorically)

¹² *Cf.* Cahill and Van der Tuin 2006, and Van der Tuin 2006.

¹³ Grosz (2005: 46-7) stresses that binarisms should not be undone:

“the common impulse many of us have regarding binary terms – that is, to attempt to occupy a position somewhere in the middle, between two binarized terms, a position that implies both terms.”

I read this as a critique of solutions such as Haraway’s ‘naturecultures’ (Haraway 2003); she wants us to become Deleuzians (instead of Derridians, she says (Grosz 2005: 7)) and to research “the greater complication of the subordinated term” (*ibidem*: 47), in this case *nature*, and this she wants us to do *not* by using a constructivist frame, but by “[a]n orientation to questions of materiality and of life, the objects of physics, chemistry, and biology” (*ibid.*: 47-8). This, I want to argue, is precisely what Barad tries to do in her onto-epistem-ological mode (apart from the seductive subtraction). Grosz names this studying “what is *outside* the cultural” (*ibid.*: 48, emphasis in original) that is “nature, time, events” (*ibid.*: 49).

is argued against. Scholars that question postmodernism's radicalism do *not* argue against (feminist) social constructivism *nor* do they argue against (feminist) (neo-) empiricism. Their work has been generated by and is generative of new materialism. New materialist work talks about the unforeseeable (surprise, in Grosz's terminology) when keeping with the recognized and known (*i.e.* keeping clearly in view histories of determination). *Bridging* such non-exhaustive dichotomies can lead to thinking through generation/knowledge, *i.e.* not only thinking through generating knowledge/ evidence in one's methodological musings, but also conceptualizing knowledge/ matter/ evidence as generative. This is what the study on the level of the event is all about.

Dugdale's 'Materiality: Juggling Sameness and Difference'¹⁴ focuses on the event of a research project she undertook on the making of a leaflet for Australian women. The leaflet dealt with a particular anti-conceptive. The text is 'methodological' in focus, but it does not give certain postulates or rules for doing research. Neither does it plead for a bottom-up approach, according to which researchers are methodologically/ methodically driven by the materials studied. Dugdale focuses on the *oscillations* occurring in the context of the production of the leaflet. In Grosz's terms, it is *movement* – duration inserted in matter – that Dugdale focuses on. Using Barad's terminology, we can say that Dugdale focuses on the way in which matter *comes to matter*. She introduces the term 'oscillation' as a theoretical term and circumvents goal-orientation/ just constraint and randomness/ only indeterminacy. Oscillation is introduced through a criticism of what Dugdale calls models of closure. These are, in my terms, *causal* models that try to capture the logical end result of a certain process. When thinking about knowledge generation, one can take a certain knowledge claim to be the logical conclusion of a research process. When thinking about the development of a policy statement, one can take advice to be the logical result of a fully determined process. In both cases, the parameters of the process and the end result are fixed. Dugdale (1999: 114) claims that by working with models of closure, "[t]ruths [...] are hammered out in (more or less concealed) controversy, and the consequence is closure." She explains that social-constructivist models, that is to say models focusing on undecidability only, are no less closure-oriented than strictly positivist, linear models. In both cases, an agreement of either the natural or unnatural/ contingent kind comes about, and certain questions *cannot* be asked. Positivism assumes naturalness, which is to say that power is assumed not to be involved. Social constructivism *assumes power*, which is to say that "it uses as explanatory something that should be explained" (*ibidem*: 115). Dugdale claims that positivism and social constructivism ask the wrong questions. I will explain this by referring to Grosz. In Grosz's terms, models of closure rely on theories of *existence*. Theories of existence are the

¹⁴ I want to thank Vicky Singleton for suggesting the importance of this article for my dissertation project.

underpinnings of social constructivist and positivist models. Since these are the two sides of one coin they should be differentiated from theories of difference and becoming. The latter do away with the opposition of being (stable existence) vs. becoming as entirely fluctuating and contingent:

“The supposed real world that would lie behind the flux of becoming is not, Deleuze insists, a stable world of being; there ‘is’ nothing other than the flow of becoming. All ‘beings’ are just relatively stable moments in a flow of becoming-life” (Colebrook 2002a: 125).

In the Deleuzian sense, theories of becoming do away with closure altogether. Models of closure that are based on theories of existence theorize the (concrete) realization of a certain possibility. This realization encompasses a logical unfolding, a teleologically determined end result, or its diametrical opposite. For Deleuze, Grosz (2005: 106) claims, “there is a closure in the process of realization which the process of actualization overcomes.” And this is because

“[v]irtual difference has the power to become in unforeseen ways, always *more* that [*sic*] this actual world, and not limited by its already present forms. Virtual potentiality is more than this actual world, unlike possibility which we think of as less than fully real or as what might have taken place but did not” (Colebrook 2002a: 96).

For Deleuze, “the real is always actual-virtual” (*ibidem*: 98). I will claim below that this is how I read Dugdale’s proposal, namely as focusing on the real as actual-virtual.

Since Deleuze states that processes of realization contain their own closure, whereas processes of actualization do not (they can even ‘overcome’ realization’s closure), we can say that positivist and social-constructivist approaches are both explicitly or implicitly on the hunt for closure and work with realization. When working with realization, one works not with the virtual (or the actual-virtual) but with the possible and the real. The possible, then, equals ‘the real minus existence,’ as Grosz’s formula (2005: 107) reads, and “is ideally preexistent, an existence that precedes materialization” (*ibidem*). ‘Realization’ is an idealism, governed by resemblance (“the real is an exact image of the possible, with the addition of the category of existence or reality” (*ibid.*: 106)) and limitation (since some possibilities are rejected and others selected for existence, *i.e.* “the possible is both more than but also less than the real” (*ibid.*: 107)). Working with realization/ closure can be summarized as follows:

“Realization is a process in which creativity, production is no longer conceivable and thus cannot provide an appropriate model for understanding the innovation and invention that marks evolutionary change” (*ibid.*).

We should formulate materialization in terms of processes of *actualization* if we want to research instances of ‘innovation and invention’ without re-confirming the duality being vs. becoming, and without buying into constraint and undecidability as diametrical opposites. Additionally, we should try to overcome idealist determinism since determinisms are necessarily reductionisms governed by teleological linearity:

“To reduce the possible to a preexistent phantomlike real is to curtail the possibility of thinking the new, of thinking an open future, a future not bound to the present, just as the present is itself a production of the past” (*ibid.*: 108).

Time and duration (*cf.* Coleman 2008), in a frame of actualization, do not involve “mechanical repetition” or causality (agent on agent on agent...). It is “the indeterminate, the unfolding and the emergence of the new” (*ibid.*: 110), *i.e.* a force. Framing one’s study by actualization processes, however, does not mean that one prefers *indeterminacy to determinacy*:

“Although there is a fundamental continuity between the past and the present – the present being the culmination of the past, its latest layer – there is a discontinuity between the present and the future, for the future is not contained in (and thus preempted by) the present but erupts unexpectedly from it” (*ibid.*).

Studying materialization in terms of processes of actualization means that one circumvents both realism (constraint, determinism) and relativism (undecidability, indeterminacy).

How should we study the new? For Dugdale, models of closure are questionable. First of all, models of closure ignore or assume power (see above), whereas, in fact, power is the thing to be explained. Power in a framework of becoming is the power of becoming, the flux or flow of life. Secondly, in models of closure, the (assumed) subject is centered and rational. Dugdale, in agreement with theories of becoming, believes that this is a false assumption since the subject is constituted in the process and de-centered. Thirdly, the object in models of closure is assumed to be singular (the stabile outcome, that is, to use Grosz’s terminology, the possibility having become real). However, “if the subject is ‘decentred,’ then it may be [...] that the object is also *and always* decentred” (Dugdale 1999: 116; emphasis in original). Translating this into Grosz’s terminology, models of closure try to understand processes of innovation and invention in terms of the realization of the possible, and as such, they fall into the trap of teleological, deterministic reasoning. Assuming neither determinacy nor indeterminacy, it is the processes of *actualization* that are studied by Dugdale, *i.e.* how matter comes to matter. Also, models of closure are humanistic (*cf.* Colebrook 2004b); since a central and single subject is presupposed. I argue that Dugdale’s ‘oscillation’ makes ‘actualization’ researchable, and that it enables us to work in a post-human and anti-anthropocentric, third-wave feminist materialist manner. Dugdale (1999: 116) argues that she is researching “how power is mobilized and subjects and objects constituted” in policymaking practices. Doing that she states that she

“want[s] to explore a further feature of negotiation which is most often conspicuous by its absence: *practical materiality*. For [policy planning] committees of all sorts sit in rooms, drink coffee, and shuffle through paperwork. And it is in and through such material arrangements that decisions are made” (*ibidem*; emphasis in original).¹⁵

¹⁵ *Cf.* the work of Star (1991), and Jeff Bowker and Star (1999) on infrastructure. *Cf.* also the work of Ahmed (2006) on *foregrounding* what is generally overlooked and considered to be fixed.

Next to the rooms, coffee, paper, and materials that Dugdale lists in her article are tickets, letterheads, door arrangements, etc. She states:

“We are prone to treat such materials as background [...]. But here, in conformity with much work in actor-network theory, and also with feminist work analysing the materiality of the body [...] I want to suggest that such materials are crucial in producing the bodies that are assembled together *as subjects*. It is the mixing together of such materials with bodies that constitutes subjects of a particular kind. For the subjectivities of the participants are already being produced in these material arrangements, even before any verbal performances have occurred” (*ibid.*: 118; emphasis in original).

Dugdale argues that a web of people and things ‘catapults’ people and things into certain subjectivities, (*ibid.*: 119).¹⁶ Language does not have some kind of performative effect, which is an equivocal assumption. Putting the equivocal relationship up side down (the material arrangement would then have determining qualities; we would rely upon a theory of existence) would not solve this problem. I claim that Dugdale does not assume an original material arrangement that produces subjects, objects, instruments, and outcomes; whereas at some points in the article Dugdale does suggest that the material arrangement is originary (see *e.g. ibid.*: 118). This is what Dugdale claims: agencies are limited once they are inserted into a bureaucratic, commercial, scientific, or political material arrangement. However “[t]hese agencies neither precede their ‘doing’ in such arrangements (a mind inside a body), nor do the materials provide a substrate which determines them” (*ibid.*: 120). Dugdale can be said to envision a ‘rhizomatic’ process of doing research, or, in her case, policymaking.

In Dugdale’s article, we do not find logical unfoldings, nor essences of any kind. Neither do we find full indeterminacy. What we do come across is the study of processes of actualization; the duration inserted into matter is not governed by theories of existence (*i.e.* does not work with the definition of the new as realized thus generated without being generative). In the work of Dugdale, there are no possibilities that are being realized; she wants to prevent us from being seduced into teleologies, or what Grosz (2005: 110) has called, ‘the following of a plan.’ In a ‘practical materiality’ the outcome is already enclosed, as if it is something *inherent*. By stating that subjectivities are *already* produced in material arrangements, *even before* verbal utterings occur with no-one/ nothing preceding their doing, Dugdale affirms that virtual rather than possible subjectivities are both contained in and erupting from material arrangements. It is, as Grosz ponders,

“perhaps the open-endedness of the concept of the virtual [that] may prove central in reinvigorating the concept of an open future by refusing to tie it to the realization of possibilities [...] and linking it to the unpredictable, uncertain actualization of virtualities” (*ibidem*).

Elaborating on this: despite the fact that different ‘arrangements’ are laid out, in practice these do not *determine* which possibilities will be realized for whom. As we have seen however,

¹⁶ Dugdale (1999: 118-9) discerns bureaucratic subjectivities and commercial subjectivities (*ibidem*: 120). She also lists expert/ scientific subjectivities (*ibid.*: 120) and political subjectivities (*ibid.*:121).

indeterminacy is not what is at stake. This is what Dugdale (1999: 122; emphasis in original) claims:

“all the members of the committee are being constituted in all of [the] logics. [...] Which means that we have much more in common than might otherwise appear to be the case. [...] as a result of this [...] the struggles between the different positions *reproduce themselves in our individual, and multiple, subjectivities*. [...] there is movement for all of us between different subject-positions and this is performed through local and very specific arrangements. [...] despite the movement and the multiple subject-positions, we are also, both as individuals and as a committee, being *constituted as a single body*.”

The conclusion being that

“the material arrangements of the process of bargaining co-produce both multiplicity and singularity. [...] there is something like an oscillation between centred and decentred subjects [...]. It turns out to be necessary to hold both difference (multiplicity) and sameness (singularity) together if a compromise is to be reached” (*ibidem*).

Oscillation, then, enables us to simultaneously think the one (centered and single subject that is contained due to histories of determination) and the multiple (decentered subject/ the erupting). Using the terms of Barad (2003: 817): “[b]oundaries do not sit still.” We no longer need to assume pluralities and fractured identities nor a (neo-) realist opposite (One-ness). It can be argued that oscillation equates the actual-virtual of Deleuze. It is the virtual that produces the actual (as if it were contained), and the actual has the power to become (to erupt unexpectedly, *i.e.* it is a virtuality) (Colebrook 2002a: 98).

Dugdale further states that *the object* (of research) oscillates between the singular and the multiple as well. In the terms of Haraway (1988: 595):

“‘objects’ do not preexist as such. Objects are boundary projects. But boundaries shift from within; boundaries are very tricky. What boundaries provisionally contain remains generative, productive of meanings and bodies. Siting (sighting) boundaries is a risky practice.”

Oscillation of subject and object means that subject and object are “*always* both singular and multiple, rather than converging from multiplicity to singularity” (Dugdale 1999: 125; emphasis in original). In other words,

“[t]he subject is both centred and decentred. And the possibility of a centered [...] subject *depends* upon this slippage. It is constituted and made possible by virtue of the fact that decisions have been or will be taken elsewhere, and that these are inserted within, or produce different logics” (*ibidem*: 130-1; emphasis in original).

When it comes to ‘the making of the thing,’ Grosz (2005: 133) says: “The thing is what we make of the world rather than simply what we find in the world.” We are, says Grosz in concurrence with Barad (2003: 821), enmeshed in a world of multiplicity and by making things we do not dominate the world, but stabilize, cut things out of ‘the world in its open-ended becoming.’ “We make objects in order to live in the world,” says Grosz (2005: 136), and these objects are oscillatory in character, even though we *assume* that they are either multiple or singular.¹⁷ Dugdale’s findings can be laid out on a Groszian grid: objects and

¹⁷ This is exactly what Jane Roland Martin (1994: 638) says when claiming the following:

subjects are simultaneously here and in many other places. As virtualities, they are real both in the present and transposed to the past, and they may be actualized in present and future. Lastly, they are both produced and producer; all ends (always oscillatory in nature) are beginnings as well. Importantly, Dugdale (1999: 131) shows that a settlement is *not* an instance of convergence (“a progressive shift from instability to stability, or from movement to immobility”).

I have used the work of Grosz to elaborate on the work of Dugdale, rescuing it from a strict Latourianism (see Chap. 3). Grosz (2005: 46) sets out to criticize social constructivism. For her, social constructivism has become an anti-naturalism; this is a destructive analysis because it re-establishes ‘Hegelian or dialectical models of knowledge and history,’ and results into “ignorance of, indeed contempt for, the natural, which today remains identified with either passivity or inertia.” Grosz argues against binary logic and argues for nature as the matter of culture (*ibidem*: 47; *cf.* Fausto-Sterling 2003). Grosz criticizes social constructivism’s dialecticism and the way it constitutes itself as a successor project. In a similar vein, Barad, Colebrook, and Ahmed question the radicalism of social constructivism. They state that it does not matter whether nature or (academic) culture is considered to be preexisting, since the two share a frame (representationalism/ correspondence theory/ the Law). To this, Grosz (2005: 46) adds the fact that in both cases nature’s passivity is assumed and continues to be associated with an assumed passivity of women/ femininity. Ahmed, Barad, Colebrook, and Grosz stress, on the one hand, the importance of overcoming thinking nature and culture as opposites, and on the other, the shared presumption of a representationalism. In the words of Grosz:

“to represent culture through one of culture’s own products, whether language, images, representations, or any other term, is to reduce its complexity, to flatten its multiplicity to one of its elements and to ensure that this element is itself incapable of cultural explanation, insofar as it is the resource that provides explanation for all others” (*ibidem*: 48).

Grosz wants us to step outside of a Cartesian frame, which consists of thinking the object or thing as “the mirror of what we are not” (*ibid.*: 131). She states:

“I am seeking an altogether different lineage, in which the thing, the object, or materiality is not conceived as the other, the binary double, of the subject, the self, embodiment, or consciousness, but is the resource for the subject’s being and enduring” (*ibid.*).

Barad adds to this. She consistently talks about Cartesian cuts as opposed to agential cutting. The former effectuate a separation between subject and object while the latter are “a *local* resolution *within* the phenomenon of the inherent ontological indeterminacy” (Barad 2003: 815; emphasis in original). I read these statements as oscillatory processes, where boundaries (the object oscillating between singular and multiple, oscillations between object and subject,

“The a priori assumption that things that go by the same name share all or even some properties is mistaken. Yet it is equally mistaken to ban categories a priori [...] This represents a faulty view of language.”

the role of the instrument in this constituency, etc.) are blurred *and* enacted at the same time.

This is what Barad (1996: 170; emphasis in original) claims:

“since observations involve an indeterminable discontinuous interaction, *as a matter of principle, there is no unambiguous way to differentiate between the ‘object’ and the ‘agencies of observation’ – no inherent/ naturally occurring/ fixed/ universal/ Cartesian cut exists. Hence, observations do not refer to objects of an independent reality.*”

In Grosz’s terminology (2005: 132; emphasis in original), an object or thing is both active and passive/ generated and generative:

“We find the thing in the world as our resource for making things, and in the process we leave our trace on things, we fabricate things out of what we find. The thing is the resource, in other words, for both subjects and technology. [...] the thing is our provocation to action, and is itself the result of our action. But more significantly, [...] it also functions as a *promise*, as that which, in the future, in retrospect, yields a destination or effect, another thing.”

Barad’s objectivity simply states that we, scholars, should be accountable for such complex thing-making practices. ‘Evidence’ is not something that is found, nor something that is ‘socially’ constructed. I suggest that we talk about *evidencing*. This is the case I want to claim: because of the precise location of the perceiving subject in oscillation it is not simply the difference between object and subject but it is my body, intra-acting with lab instruments/ writing technologies, tools such as figurations, etc. which has “a particularly privileged relation to action” (Grosz 2005: 97). In conclusion,

“[t]he world *is* intra-activity in its differential mattering. It is through specific intra-actions that a differential sense of being is enacted in the ongoing ebb and flow of agency. [...] This ongoing flow of agency through which ‘part’ of the world makes itself differentially intelligible to another ‘part’ of the world and through which local causal structures, boundaries, and properties are stabilized and destabilized does not take place in space and time but in the making of spacetime itself” (Barad 2003: 817; emphasis in original).

What Dugdale (1999: 131; emphasis in original) has set out to do is “to explore the *specificities and materialities* of decision making, and *how* it is that settlements are reached.”

In chapter 5 of this dissertation, I will research the *specificities and materialities* of the generation of European women’s studies (interdisciplinarity and local as well as trans-Atlantic and intra-European community building), and *how* a field of studies materializes, *i.e.* how its objects and its subjects come to matter, how something is evidenced/ evidencing. Before I move on, however, I want to make clear that in the context of this dissertation generation/knowledge refers to both the processes of materialization/ actualization/ generativity and to the *generationality* of all things having to do with knowledge and knowledge production. Generation/knowledge is not only intended as a tool for studying the double move of the generative and the generated, but also for studying generationality as intrinsically connected to knowledge production and as being characterized by a similar double move.

4.2.2 The Generated, the Generative, and Generationality

Instances of knowledge production and knowledge transfer are usually thought through as generational in mainstream (as of Plato's *Phaedrus* ([360 B.C.] 1973)), and in feminist conceptualizations (see *e.g.* Culley and Portuges eds 1985, Puig de la Bellacasa 2001b, Hoogland with De Vries and Van der Tuin 2004). The conceptualization of generationality that is employed however, does not always equal the one that is employed in this dissertation. In most cases reflection on scholarly work through the lens of generationality employs a definition of generations as linear age cohorts (generation X after the babyboomers) that are dialecticist (generation X against the babyboomers), and essentialist (I was born generation X; generation X is part of my identity). Such sociological definitions have been criticized in this dissertation. The term 'third wave' has been introduced in order to think about the generational in a relational, non-dialecticist, and an-Oedipal manner. This is not to say that with the introduction of the generativity of generationality (breaking through the Oedipal as I said in paragraph 2.4.1.1) the generated Oedipal structure is forgotten or left behind. The latter would be an Oedipal and dialecticist gesture. What I want to make clear here, is that the generationality employed in this dissertation deals with the generative as well as with the generated in a manner discussed in the previous paragraph. In other words, the non-sociological definition of generationality that I use here deals with the Oedipal structures as Cartesian cuts/ the constraints/ what is generated, and with the indeterminacy/ the surprise/ the generativity of an-Oedipal agential cutting. The 'dis-identification' discussed in chapter 1 illustrates this double move: identifying against the generation that owns the theories and practices of 'feminism' (the generated, the constraint,...) has generative effects (not affirming a dialecticism, the 'new' generation does not end up re-confirming the parameters of 'good old' feminism). In this dissertation, I continue with the common strategy of theorizing the generational dimension of knowledge production. I do this in the same gesture as theorizing knowledge production as being governed by the double move of the generated and the generative. In other words, the 'generation' in generation/knowledge is intended to be a pun: it signifies the generated and the generative as well as generationality as governed by the same double dynamics.

In the next paragraph I will introduce the case study of the making or *generation* of European women's studies.¹⁸ I have approached 'Europe' and 'women's studies' while they were *in the making*. In my analysis I have refrained from adopting a model of closure because such a model (researching European women's studies as something that will be/ has been realized) would foreclose the study of the complexities that can be examined by other approaches, such as the ones from Dugdale and the third-wave materialists. In my research I have conceptualized both European women's studies and *the study of* European women's

¹⁸ For European *feminism* see *e.g.* Kaplan 1992 and Offen 1995.

studies as instantiating generation/knowledge. In other words, European women's studies is treated as an *instance* of generation/knowledge, while simultaneously generation/knowledge is my *analytical tool*. With this, I have tried to implement and to *add to* the multi-directionality and the multi-layeredness of third-wave feminist materialist epistemology. Therefore, the research project should be seen as part and parcel of the larger dissertation project.

4.3 Researching the Generation of European Women's Studies

4.3.1 Introduction

The project 'The Generation of European Women's Studies' consists of three case studies dealing with interdisciplinarity, trans-Atlantic and intercontinental dis-connections, and institutionalization in the context of European women's studies. The case studies carried out should be seen as singular, yet inter-relating qualitative studies. 'Case' should thus be read in the anti-representationalist and new materialist sense of the term. The project was intended to provide an equally singular view on the generation of European women's studies. The emphasis of the project is laid on *generation*, in its double meaning (*cf.* Purvis 2004: 115). The research project deals with the ways in which European women's studies *is* and has been *generated* through activities of researchers, teachers, students, and other agents (from funding agents to journals and policy papers), and how European women's studies *is* and has been simultaneously *generative* of activities of researchers, teachers, students, and other agents. With the project, I desired to gain insight in *how* the trans-Atlantic dis-connection as well as intra-European dis-connections, institutionalization, and interdisciplinarity *are done/generated* in the context of European women's studies, and *how* these workings and (the idea of) 'European women's studies' (note that these two are co-constitutive of one another) are generative of new materializations and new knowledges. In my research, I wanted to come to an understanding of generation/knowledge in general as well as in relation to the more specific issues of *interdisciplinary women's studies scholarship, institutionalization of women's studies, and the trans-Atlantic dis-connection in the context of European women's studies*. In more concrete terms, I studied ***how, affirming different kinds of academic material arrangements (i.e. educational, supervision/ mentoring, and publishing arrangements), academic feminism (especially European women's studies) is generated (constraint), and how European women's studies generates (undecidability) teaching, academic profiles/ careers, and research.*** The remainder of this section serves to introduce the research project, to provide background information, and to give a preview of the

‘methodological’ decisions made. I will begin by introducing the European scholarly realm and the new materialist take on this realm.

4.3.2 The European Scholarly Realm Generated?

In her recent book Science and Social Inequality: Feminist and Postcolonial Issues Harding (2006c: 52) argues that the North is, however differentiated along gendered and ethnicized lines, still hegemonic in academic arenas. She wants to dissolve this hegemony (especially the Northern unity of science that is fully engrossed in the equally hegemonic (neo-) realist and positivist paradigm), and places her bets on both bottom-up (scientists from the global South should inscribe themselves in the paradigm and change it from within) and top-down strategies (scholars from the North should start collaborating with scholars from the global South) to engender change. Following this line of thought (working upwards or downwards), I want to argue that the North is kept firmly in place, despite the fact that Harding is critical of strategies such as the *integration* of ‘other’ sciences into Western science (which would keep the unity of science in place) (*ibidem*: 55). Materialization of borders and boundaries is not being researched here, rather it is the *imagining* of the possibilities (*ibid.*: 51) of becoming an international *Southern* science (which gets consequently isolated). One needs to be critical about this, because *adding* “other cultures’ knowledge systems” to the hegemonic ones, which are said to be *international already*, does not necessarily *change* the power relations between the global North and South. In other words, Harding’s text consists of a thought experiment (*ibid.*: 61) that leads to a deterministic schema that can be brought back to postcolonial empiricism (bottom-up: adding Southern perspectives to a largely unchanged Northern frame), postcolonial standpoint theory (negation: abandoning Northern science as usual), and a postcolonial postmodernized standpoint theory (additive model: adding up South and North). All of these strategies have been systematically discussed earlier in this dissertation. I want to argue that Harding, however critical of what she calls ‘Add diversity and stir’ (*ibid.*), ends up reifying the global North and the global South and reinscribing the dominant and the dominated in the global academic arena. Throughout her work Harding claims that the sciences and scientists of the South (“the periphery of the Enlightenment” (Harding 2006a: 98)) could only relate themselves to/ negotiate the hegemonic Northern Science (“the Center” (*ibidem*)), and that “[w]e are not used to keeping a clear focus on both Northern sciences and those of other cultures” (Harding 2006c: 62). I read this series of additive claims as proof of Harding-going-global in a postmodern, *relativistic* way. It cannot be denied that we are accustomed to keeping an eye on the sciences of other cultures due to the fact that we have objectified and scrutinized them like traditional anthropologists! What we have not been doing, is keeping an eye on *Northern* science *qua* *Northern* science; and this is precisely the project of European women’s studies.

The *European* production of academic literature on this topic can be characterized as an attempt to diversify the North, while avoiding both reification and relativism (cf. Hemmings 2006: 322). Both the term ‘women’s studies’¹⁹ and women’s studies as a model for academic feminism are North-American inventions. In the European context, with thriving linguistic and cultural differences, term and model have been historically taken up by Northern European feminists in particular, while “Latin, Catholic, Southern and especially [...] Eastern” Europeans were hesitating (Braidotti 2000a: 12; cf. Braidotti 1990: 31, Braidotti 2002b: 285, Varikas 2006: 38, 40). As a result, Braidotti (2000a: 12) claims:

“The dialogue with the English-speaking cultures [on the education of women and women’s access to the making of science, scholarship, the production of culture and artistic capital] has been intense but at times uneven.”

This unevenness, both in the relation of European feminist scholars with US feminist scholars and within the European feminist academic realm, has been effectuated by several things. One thing is the publication politics that are constitutive of the field, which for a long time has been characterized by the dominance of New York- and London-based publisher Routledge as the leading women’s studies publisher (Braidotti with Butler 1994: 30; cf. Braidotti *et al.* 1995a: 12, Varikas 2006: 41 n. 5). The following statement of Karin Widerberg (1998: 134-5) neatly summarizes the situation: “we all sing the same song, the American tune, so familiar to us all.” Eleni Varikas (2006: 45; emphasis in original) in ‘Exception française?’ seems to agree with Widerberg, but diversifies the strong statement of the latter, claiming that

“ce n’est pas en comparaison avec ces autres pays: la Belgique, le Portugal, la Grèce, l’Espagne, l’Italie, que la France se voit une ‘exception,’ mais par opposition aux pays dits ‘anglo-saxons’ qui, pour raisons géopolitiques et linguistiques, lui disputent avec succès le privilège d’établir la norme depuis quelques décennies – les décennies précisément qui ont vu le développement des études du genre. Dans ce contexte, l’exception ou la singularité française n’a pas un sens purement descriptif; qu’elle soit invoquée pour revendiquer, expliquer ou même déplorer un statu quo, elle contient quelque chose du sens juridique de l’exception, invoquée pour ‘faire écarter une demande ou pour critiquer une procédure, sans discuter le principe du droit.”

Varikas (*ibidem*: 48-9, 49 n. 1) goes on to argue that instead of studying a French exception, isolated from the rest of Europe, it seems more important to look at the specific US situation since there is an enormous asymmetry between the spread of US culture (of knowledge), and the knowledge we have of other, e.g. European, cultures (of knowledge). The project ‘The Generation of European Women’s Studies’ should be seen as an attempt in this direction, an attempt to be explicit about the asymmetry and the fact that ‘cultures of knowledge’ and

¹⁹ Even in the 1970s in the US the term ‘women’s studies’ was not accepted without discussion:

“It is one of the great ironies that in the days of its founding, we named our discipline Women’s Studies and not Feminist Studies because the word ‘women’ seemed less threatening than the word ‘feminist.’ At the same time, ‘feminist’ studies seemed redundant because it was widely assumed, by pro- and anti- feminists alike, that anyone who would risk teaching or pursuing research on women was by definition a feminist. But in recent years, the study of women has become less dangerous and more respectable; as a result, virtually anything about women ... is now considered to be ‘women’s studies’” (Evelyn Torton Beck in Ezekiel 1992: 82-3 n. 1).

‘Europe’ have, even under the US/ Anglo-US academic dominance, been glued together for Centuries. In other words, the scholarly realm that has been generated and is now US dominated, has for Centuries been European, yet in both cases the realm is/ was not marked as such.

In this dissertation, ‘European women’s studies’ denotes insight and acting on the effects of ‘science and scholarship’ being defined as ‘European’ and the Anglo-American domination of women’s studies and feminist theory. This should not be read as European anti-Americanism,²⁰ but as expressing European, feminist academics’s dis-identification with American scholarly production (*cf.* Passerini 2002: 202), which seems have produced European women’s studies.²¹ Lykke (2004a: 78) has claimed that the dis-identification of European feminists with Anglo-American feminist work and its universalizing tendencies can potentially lead to equally dangerous particularisms in European academic feminist production. As a consequence, the term ‘European women’s studies,’ in this dissertation, can be specified as denoting insight in these effects as diversified, *but not until the point of evaporation* (*cf.* Braidotti 1990: 35, Braidotti *et al.* 1995a: 14).²² Evaporation would be the ultimate consequence of relativizing the effect of what is, in fact, a constraining totalization (*cf.* Braidotti 2001a: 7-8, Balibar 2004: 5). In other words,

“An exclusive absorption in European differences and diversity may lead to a fragmented particularism, which, in spite of intentions to the contrary, may end up in Eurocentrism” (Lykke 2004a: 81).

Fragmentation or relativization would be no solution to Bo Stråth’s (2000: 13) observation that today “Europe is so diluted that it means anything and nothing.” Referring to Daniel Cohn-Bendit, Braidotti (2001a: 24; *cf.* Therborn 1997 in Passerini 2000: 65, Said 2003 in Balibar 2004: 12), who is one of the prominent figures in the design of European women’s studies (Waldijk *et al.* 2006), claims:

“we really must start form [*sic*] the assumption that Europe is the specific periphery where we live and that we must take responsibility for it.”

Thinking about the European scholarly realm as a periphery²³ that is regulated by Anglo-American hegemonic production of ideas and texts can result in the reconceptualizing of

²⁰ It has to be noted that after 9/11 these kinds of statements have become imbued with difficulty. Did the Euro-Americans become ‘us’ in opposition to the Arab ‘them’? What other issues apart from the issue of academic freedom were raised and to what extent were they raised in a manner that did *not* buy into the ‘us vs. them’ dichotomy just mentioned? I transfer these questions to further research.

²¹ The issue of Australia as part of the Anglophone world yet working mainly within Continental philosophy and French feminism has been addresses in chapter 2 of this dissertation.

²² *Cf.* the ‘Sorbonne Joint Declaration,’ signed May 25, 1998, which claims in a worrisome tone that a diversification of the age-old European academy has been instigated.

²³ Note that the idea of Europe as a periphery should not be translated into Europe as the margin, the Other, and consequently into a second-wave feminist materialist *standpoint*. In Balibar’s ([2001] 2003: 10) terms:

Europeanness (otherwise in the history of science a sign of and permit for dominance (see *e.g.* Pagden 2002: 10, Str ath 2000: 30, White 2000: 79-80)). This is what scholars, such as  tienne Balibar ([2001] 2003: 1, 2004: 1, 10-2) who uses the term ‘borderland’ rather than periphery and Luisa Passerini (2000: 65, 2002: 206), claim when they conceptualize Europe as a rich and unexplored archive and as a place for re-elaboration of its own memory and historical legacy (*cf.* Braidotti 2002b: 295). With this, they act on the idea that the North is differentiated, but not to the point of evaporation. They are cautious *not* to overlook Western-European science and scholarship as hegemonic. *This* is the singularity (Carlo Galli in Balibar 2004: 3) of contemporary Europe, the ‘territorialization-deterritorialization’ in question (*ibidem*: 4). In Balibar’s terms:

“we are clearly not living on the *edge* of a simple borderline [...]. Rather, we are situated increasingly in the midst of an ubiquitous and multiple border, which establishes unmediated contacts with virtually all ‘parts’ of the World, a ‘World-border’ so to speak, but which has specific ‘European’ properties, deriving from history, geography, and politics. It is my project in general to make this disturbing situation not an object of amazement and fear, but an instrument of analysis and a starting point for the invention of new social practices and ideas” (*ibid.*: 1-2; emphasis in original).

These kinds of European perspectives avoid the universalism of the good-old *unmarked* European point of view, the particularism of single-country studies, and the relativism that comes with those studies (*cf.* Lykke 2004a: 80). ‘Post-Europe Europeans,’ as Braidotti (2001a: 23; *cf.* Passerini 2002: 208) calls them, neither universalize Europe nor ignore its universalizing tendencies of the past (colonialism, fascism) and the present (Fortress Europe, expansion of the EU (*cf.* Braidotti 1990: 35-7, Zmroczek and Duchon 1991: 25, K ster-Lossack and Levin 1992: 3-5)).²⁴ Post-Europe Europeanness is *not* based on European unification as “an ideal horizon” that enables “avoiding local realities,” *i.e.* the problems of/in nation-states (Braidotti 2000a: 14-5). The latter standpoint would be both Eurocentric and would avoid intra-European asymmetrical power relations (*ibidem*: 15). In other words, the latter would be *another* God trick. So, whereas one of the starting points of European women’s studies has been the “contribution to the process of European integration” (Braidotti *et al.* 1995b: 14), it has been claimed at the same time that “this field can only be genuinely ‘European’ if it addresses rigorously the issues of ethnic identity, multi-culturalism, and anti-racism” (*ibidem*: 21). In other words, whereas this dissertation *does* study European women’s studies as generated through dis-identification with Anglo-American scholarly production and

“The difficulty for democratic politics is to avoid becoming enclosed in representations that have historically been associated with emancipatory projects and struggles for citizenship and have now become obstacles to their revival, to their permanent reinvention.”

An alternative formulation would be the becoming woman/ minoritarian of Europe (*cf.* Braidotti 2002b, 2007). This would be a way of circumventing the move back to standpoint theory, and a playful way of reconnecting past, present and future through the figuration ‘Europa.’

²⁴ See also ‘Introduction: The Idea of Europe’ in which a reference is made to the work of Dubravka Ugrešić who has argued that Europe is in need of “people who express loyalty neither to nation nor to money but who possess humility and mental freedom” (Einhorn and Gregory 1998: 294).

engagement with the European continent, the former is not a strict anti-Americanism and the latter does not entail a celebration of Europe as the antithetical response to Anglo-American domination. The European continent is being conceptualized as a geography with a contested history that is inclined to dominance in the political and the academic realm. The generativity of European women's studies, in keeping both with the unmarked history of European (political and academic) dominance and with the unmarked presence of (political and academic) Anglo-US dominance is my research question and it entails the 'boundary work' that I intend to study.²⁵

4.3.3 The Generative European Scholarly Realm

Systematically speaking, the starting point of European women's studies is Stanton's (1980: 78) formulation of the problematic of the 'Franco-American Dis-Connection:' "the troubling dis-connection between the French and the American theory and practice of feminist criticism," *i.e.* the dis-connection between *écriture féminine* and empiricism based on intranslatability and a resulting incommensurability of the schools of thought. It was Catharine Stimpson who connected the trans-Atlantic dis-connection more explicitly to the field of women's studies:²⁶

"Kate Stimpson souligne un autre aspect très important concernant les racines culturelles du terme 'women's studies:' cette expression typiquement américaine renvoie, selon elle, au pragmatisme d'une pratique fondée sur la croyance en l'unité de la pensée et de l'action. Les études féministes s'originent sand un éclectisme empirique, orienté vers l'action et empreint d'une dose considérable d'irrespect envers le pouvoir des disciplines scientifiques. [...] N'y-a-t-il pas [...] une tradition européenne de réflexion critique sur les disciplines qui diffère considérablement du pragmatisme éclectique des Américaines? La valeur épistémologique et symbolique que nous, les Européennes, accordons aux disciplines n'est-elle pas différente du 'meltingpot' épistémologique américain?" (Braidotti 1990: 39-40).

With the theorization of the Franco-American dis-connection, Stanton seems to have wanted feminists to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the respective traditions and to diversify them in order to make each of them stronger and richer. Simultaneously, however, Stanton (1980: 81) plead for a (re)connection:

"Through [...] interdisciplinary and intercultural exchanges, we may ultimately forge a vital feminist critical power that subverts cultural boundaries and the Logos which promotes dis-connections among women. Transcending our undeniable and important differences, our desire to give voice to woman binds us together in one radical and global project."

Stressing the importance of a reconnection, Stanton's feminism was strongly an-Oedipal. In spite of this, her emphasis on globalization and unification shows that Stanton's an-

²⁵ Lykke's (2004a: 75, 81) solution, inspired by Nira Yuval-Davis and Pryse, involves rooting so as to counteract universalism, and shifting so as to counteract particularism, *i.e.* a dialogical model and intersectionality. These issues have been critically discussed in this dissertation.

²⁶ Stimpson is a pioneer in American women's studies and the institutionalization thereof. *Cf.* Stimpson with Cobb 1986 (followed by Guy-Sheftall with Heath 1995).

Oedipalism remained an universalism. Looking back at three decades of women's studies Sneja Gunew (2002: 48) asks:

“Was it possible to conceive of trying to translate the cultural differences permeating global feminisms or to find a kind of common cultural literacy for a Women's Studies prepared to engage with international feminisms and its own incommensurabilities?”

Her answer is that globalization – working from the Center outwards, erasing differences – is unhelpful, whereas internationalization – indicating “the ways in which global issues are interpreted at a local level” (*ibidem*: 56; *cf.* Braidotti 2000a: 14, Braidotti, Vonk and Van Wichelen 2000: 169) – is beneficial for women's studies. Making women's studies practitioners and feminist theorists aware of the dynamics of internationalization, Gunew (2002: 64) proposes “reversals and shock tactics.” Such as, turning up side down asymmetrical gendered, racialized, and (post-) colonial power relations in order to

“stop the implosion within forms of Women's Studies in which members of the community turn on and silence one another, in ever-narrowing circles, about whose authority should be counted and whose voice should be heard and in designating victims and systems of oppression” (*ibidem*).

Despite the fact that Gunew seems to keep Stanton's eventual dialectics in place (*reversing* the power relation), her conceptualization of the local and the universal as co-constitutive entities, thus reconceptualizing context, is a move towards constituting a sustainable women's studies structurally related to what has happened in the field of European women's studies so far.

In the wake of the problematic of the Franco-American dis-connection, some leading European feminist theorists congregated to work on ‘European women's studies.’ When they came together, they did not re-establish a dialectics between Anglo-American women's studies and its European ‘counterpart.’ In the 1980s these European feminists did not overlook the homogenizing effect of European science and scholarship in the past nor did they rule out the possibility of European Union science and scholarship policy homogenizing (European) scientific and scholarly practices in the present. In the words of Rosenbeck (1998: 355), for instance:

“Hitherto, Nordic women's studies have had a closer affiliation to Anglo-American women's studies than to research in these areas from other European countries. But currently, as European integration grows stronger, this too is changing.”

Taking on the constraining present and historical legacy of European science and scholarship and reflecting upon its often-detrimental effects, European women's studies scholars, units, and networks did not (and do not) allow for Europe to be relativized or fragmented. Braidotti (with Butler 1994: 29; *cf.* Braidotti 1990) asked:

“would you really be surprised if I told you that it is impossible to speak of ‘European’ women's studies in any systematic or coherent manner? Each region has its own political and cultural traditions of feminism, which need to be compared carefully.”

By claiming that one should not homogenize Europe/ European women's studies nor diversify it until the point of its evaporation, Braidotti brings to the fore that a careful comparison is a way out. In this study, the method of *comparing* women's studies units in Europe or states of the art of women's studies in respective European countries will be looked at very critically. It is not new materialist to *assume, postulate, or isolate* units or situations. New materialism suggests *diffractive* studies in which both Europe/ European women's studies and its smallest units materialize simultaneously.²⁷ Braidotti's attentiveness vis-à-vis the European (feminist) scholarly realm will be repeated here.

Historically speaking, 'European women's studies' has been the effect of a network of women's studies scholars from different European countries since the 1980s (Braidotti and Vonk 2000, Hanmer 2000),²⁸ of the production of policy documents that assess these collective women's studies activities (Braidotti *et al.* 1995a) in different European countries and regions (Braidotti *et al.* 1995b), and of the funding of projects in the realm of 'European women's studies.' 'European women's studies' came to matter through the gatherings, reports, and projects (bringing together scholars from all over Europe), and by working *on* the European borders via the welcoming European scholars from non-EU countries (see *e.g. ibidem*: 10). I claim here that European women's studies has always been less "representative" (Braidotti and Vonk 2000: 1) than it often presents itself. Working within the European border, it has never confined itself to a certain predetermined spatial realm, and as such, it has never re-presented something that pre-existed the representation. Introducing Athena (the Advanced Thematic Network of Women's Studies in Europe),²⁹ Braidotti and Esther Vonk (*ibidem*: 2; *cf.* Braidotti *et al.* 1995b: 16) claim:

"the support of the European Union has contributed greatly to the quality of Women's Studies teaching and research and [...] it has helped to focus its international orientation towards more local and situated perspectives."

The spatiality of European women's studies can thus be said to be 'jumping scale' (Smith 1992) when the local and situated becomes the focus of an international orientation. (The role of the Netherlands (Braidotti 1991a: 6) in the set up and continuation of ENWS (the European Network for Women's Studies) and WISE (Women's Studies International Europe) (Levin 1992) and the role of the autonomous French and Belgian feminist organization Les Cahiers du Grif in the set up of GRACE (a databank; *cf.* Degraef 1992) are less disruptive of

²⁷ An example can be said to be the way in which the US category and theories of post-colonialism have been read through post-communist feminist theory (*cf.* Regulska 1988, Andrijsevic 2004). This shows that whereas we should not reify 'Europe,' nor should we relativize it.

²⁸ Lykke (2004a: 72) claims that inter-European networking in women's studies started in the 1990s. I would rather claim that the networking *augmented* in the 1990s.

²⁹ See www.athena3.org (last accessed: September 26, 2007). See also Braidotti and Vonk eds 2000, Braidotti, Vonk and Van Wichelen eds 2000, Braidotti, Lazaroms and Vonk eds 2001, Braidotti, Nieboer and Hirs eds 2002, Braidotti, Just and Mensink eds 2004, Braidotti and Van Baren eds 2005, Braidotti and Waaldijk eds 2006.

successive scale, but not less important to the constitution of European women's studies (see also Van der Sanden 2003a.) When it comes to the related issue of (non-linear) time and temporality it should be noted that the policy documents mentioned above were instrumental in *getting* EU-funding, but this should not be taken too literally: EU-funding for the European women's studies network Athena (from September 1998 until this day) for instance could only be requested by an already existing association of European women's studies scholars (Aoife, the Association of Institutions for Feminist Education and Research in Europe,³⁰ was set up in 1996) that was in turn set up with the idea of Athena already in mind (Braidotti and Vonk 2000: 1-2). As such, both the spatiality and the lifeline of European women's studies are non-linear and multi-layered.

4.3.4 European Women's Studies Understudied

'European women's studies' has not very often been a *topic* of research yet. Christine Michel (2001: 14) has claimed that "[w]ithout the networks sponsored by the European Union in the 1990s, we would not have today the necessary information about the situation of Women's Studies in the different countries" suggesting that the EU, as a funding agency, has been *instrumental* in the *constitution* of European women's studies through the production of country reports. (The first comparative study of European women's studies was the state of the art survey conducted by Les Cahiers du Griff (Braidotti, Vonk and Van Wichelen 2000: 167).) Lykke (2004a: 72-3) places funding and networking alongside each other; she claims that they are both co-constitutive of and relatively independent, political economies. Michel (2001: 14) continues, that without the funding "we wouldn't be able to reflect on [shared] criteria of comparison" of women's studies in the different European countries. I want to add that, next to joining the EU in working *with* the borders (in terms of both the border of the EU and the borders within the EU), funding has also allowed European women's studies scholars to work *on* the boundary-work that is essential to the EU. The points mentioned so far, suggest that 'European women's studies' has come to refer to the *sum* as well as its constitutive *parts*. Whereas, the emphasis on the *constitution* rather than pre-existence of European women's studies in Michel's account is to be celebrated (from a third-wave materialist point of view) it is questionable whether 'European women's studies' is what is automatically being practiced in the different women's studies departments and by the different women's studies scholars throughout Europe. In this dissertation, additive claims such as 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts,' *i.e.* synergies, have been critically

³⁰ See www.let.uu.nl/aoife/ (last accessed: September 26, 2007).

scrutinized.³¹ The same goes for the implicit reliance on identity politics/ standpoint theory (I am European, so my work is European). Here, the following question posed by Lykke (2004a: 73) has to be taken into account:

“linking ‘feminist research and education’ to the name ‘Europe’ and using the adjective ‘European’ to specify it. In doing so, a kind of contiguity is constructed between two imagined communities: Europe on the one hand, and feminist research and education on the other. [...] Moreover, we may ask: what kind of relationships to non-European feminist research are implied, when we speak of European feminist research?”

I want to treat the above assumption (the study and comparison of the state of the art of women’s studies in different European countries *generates* European women’s studies) as a research question. This chapter leads to asking *how* European women’s studies is generated through, for instance, applications for funding *that already mentioned* ‘European women’s studies,’ and *how* European women’s studies is generative.³²

I would like to continue to argue that studying the *tradition* of *European* (academic) feminism, *i.e.* working with the *legacy* of European (academic) feminists, is rarely done (Griffin and Braidotti 2002; *cf.* Leonard 1984: 1009-10, Hemmings 2006: 323 n. 6, Varikas 2006: 48). Again, in Lykke’s (2004a: 74) words:

“It is true that notions such as French feminism, Nordic feminism, European feminism, Anglo-American feminism, Western feminism, etc. have often been used. But they have too rarely been accompanied by in-depth reflections on their epistemological and analytical implications.”

Lykke claims that, apart from work produced in postcolonial feminist theory and European women’s studies networks, “often, the question of national/ regional situatedness is treated as an *a priori* given, whose effects on research need no further reflection” (*ibidem*). I, on the other hand, do not start from a self-reflexivity that is engendered by a second-wave feminist materialism. This dissertation *does* take up the issue of the ‘Europeanness’ of the women’s studies as it is practiced in Europe, and works on the lacuna brought to the fore by scholars such as Braidotti, Griffin, and Lykke. I have already made clear that the research project ‘The Generation of European Women’s Studies’ deals with the ways in which we are to study how a European branch of women’s studies has materialized in keeping with both the Anglo-

³¹ In ‘Privatized Citizenship, Corporate Academies and Feminist Projects’ Mohanty (2003a: 188; emphasis added) claims that these questions and issues about European women’s studies play a role in a US context as well:

“one of the major challenges in constructing a European women’s studies curriculum that is radically international rather than merely the sum of its national parts (British/ French/ Dutch, etc.) is the very challenge that faces women’s studies programs *in the United States*.”

I have not researched the North-American reception of European women’s studies. I *do* deal with the US hegemony in women’s studies internationally (see below).

³² On top of this there is the issue of the European feminist collaborationism (see par. 3.3.2.3) with the EU as a managerial-capitalist institution (Puig de la Bellacasa 2001b: 104). In this dissertation, apart from my reflection upon the production of academic work on the third feminist wave and its relation to a capitalist publishing market, I leave untouched the issue of the way in which the academy intertwines with and is complicit with capitalism and neo-liberalism. Most (feminist) theories about this issue come from the US (*cf.* Alexander 2006, Mohanty 2003b) and a study on the transposability of these theories to the European academic arena is needed. In this dissertation, this is transferred to further research.

American dominance in the field and the identity-political, Europe-centeredness that is engendered by Europe's anti-Americanism. I will also discuss the fact that the international scholarly realm has for a long time been dominated by European perspectives, however unmarked as such. Again, there has always been some kind of Europeanness present. Even so, another kind has been/ is to be generated for European scholarship/ women's studies to be generative.

On top of this, the *generationality* of European women's studies is understudied. Thinking the so-called 'next generation' has been an integral part of one of the big networks for European women's studies all along – Athena (see *e.g.* Vonk and Anders 2000). European women's studies projects or associations have always at least explicitly *directed* their work *at* students/ junior scholars (see *e.g.* Krops ed. 1997). Looking at Europe and, more specifically, EU, 'youth' has always been one of its focus points, and the *dis-identification* with Europe, both as a Continent with a contested history and as a post-nationalist project, has been said to be intrinsically connected with the 1968 generation, *i.e.* the babyboomers (Passerini 2000: 50, 2002: 200, Braidotti 1994a: 9-10). A consequence of the latter point is that it has been argued that new generations need to work on identifications with Europe *in keeping with* older ones (Passerini 2000: 51; *cf.* par. 2.4.1.1). The latter argument has become more important after the 2005 vote against the European constitution in France and the Netherlands (Braidotti 2007). All the instances mentioned so far, however important, conceptualize generations as age cohorts, and do not necessarily address generationality as having the double meaning of both zooming in on relational, non-dialecticist, an-Oedipal age groups and on *generating* knowledge as well as knowledge itself as generative. This is why generation/knowledge, in the context of the scholarly, is overdetermined and understudied.

4.3.5 Previewing Epistemology-Methodology-Method(s)

In the project 'The Generation of European Women's Studies' I have tried to address the lacunas in scholarship mentioned above. To do this, I have conducted three case studies. Table one summarizes the project:

Table 1: The Generation of What?

	Lancaster	Lyon	Linköping
The generation of...	Interdisciplinarity	The trans-Atlantic dis-connection	Institutionalization
Material arrangement studied	Educational	Publishing	Supervision/ mentoring
Object(s)	Curriculum	Canon, 'Genre,' <i>Études de genre</i>	Student profile
Subject(s)	Teacher, student, student body, ...	Author, reader, ...	Supervisor(s), PhD(s), ...
What actualizes	Courses	Booklets (<i>cahiers</i>)	Dissertations Careers

In chapter 5, I will not illustrate full ethnographies of three women's studies institutes from Europe. This is impossible since I have asked partial questions and focused on the generation of something singular in all three cases. I have studied the three instances of generation through interviews and participant observation. The interviews were undertaken in different languages: the interviewees' native language in the UK, English as the academic world language in Sweden, and French in Lyon. In all three instances I spoke English. Table 2 gives the details of the case studies:

Table 2: Where-When-What³³

	Lancaster	Lyon	Linköping
Where	<u>Institute for Women's Studies (IWS), Lancaster University, UK</u>	<u>Centre Louise Labé (CLL), Université Lumière Lyon II, France</u>	<u>Tema Genus (Tema-G), Linköpings universitet, Sweden</u>
When	Three short visits ranging from a few days to one week in November 2004, May 2005, July 2006	One two-week visit in January 2006	Three short visits to Linköping and Stockholm ranging from a few days to two weeks in March, June and November 2005
Amount of interviews	10	10	10
Interviews with whom	Teachers: -Rosemary Betterton, MA [RB] -Cathy Clay, PhD [CCI] -Anick Druelle, PhD [AD] -Gail Lewis, PhD [GL] -Prof. Maureen McNeil [MMN] -Celia Roberts, PhD ³⁴ [CR] -Vicky Singleton, PhD [VS] -Prof. Christine Sylvester [CS] -Prof. Jackie Stacey [JS] -Claire Waterton, MA [CW]	Members of the CLL: -Christine Charretton, PhD [CCh] -Marie-Carmen Garcia, PhD [MCG] -Prof. Annik Houel [AH] -Brigitte Lhomond, MA [BL] -Rommel Mendes-Leite, PhD [RML] -Patricia Mercader, PhD [PaM] -Prof. Christine Planté [CP] -Ingeborg Rabenstein-Michel, PhD [IRM] -Merete Stistrup- Jensen, PhD [MSJ] -Laurence Tain, PhD [LT]	PhD candidates: ³⁵ -Svea Abrahamsson [SA] -Freja Berg [FB] -Linda Djupsund [LD] -Karolina Ekdahl [KE] ³⁶ -Moa Enqvist [ME] -Lisa Hansson [LH] -Ingrid Karlstrand [IK] -Silva Lager [SL] -Ann-Charlotte Lundmark [ACL] -Markus Nordman [MN]
Participant observation	-class observation MMN -class observation GL	-class observation AH -visit to CLL library	-course Nordic Research School
Materials brought home	-course outlines -general information <u>IWS/Lancaster University</u>	-booklet series -general information <u>CLL/ Université Lumière Lyon II</u>	-general information <u>Tema-G/ Linköpings universitet</u>

In conducting the research project 'The Generation of European Women's Studies' I have studied the ways in which 'European women's studies' *materializes* in publications, research,

³³ Appendix 2 gives an overview of the abbreviations of the names of the interviewees used.

³⁴ I interviewed Celia Roberts twice. We were trying to figure out whether this would generate more data. I found out that one interview per interviewee was enough on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis. The main cost I took into account was time.

³⁵ On their request I use pseudonyms for the Swedish interviewees. Thank you Anna Moring for creating the pseudonyms.

³⁶ On their request I undertook a group interview with Karolina Ekdahl and Ingrid Karlstrand.

and teaching, and not how it is reflected in publications, research, and teaching. The latter representationalism suggests that (a) European women's studies *pre-exists* EU-funded projects, whereas, I have wanted to follow the new materialist suggestion that research is generative (of European women's studies, for instance) and deals with the generated constraints such as: Anglo-American dominance of the field, a particular reflection of a particular European women's studies, country-specific instantiations of women's studies, the political climate in Europe and European countries, the (un)translatability of terms to and from EU-bureaucracy (*cf.* Puig de la Bellacasa 2000b: 96), the (un)transposability of 'gender' to European languages (Widerberg 1998), and the (un)transposability of '*différence sexuelle*' to the English (Braidotti 1990: 41), etc. In addition, I have not worked with 'European women's studies' as the largest unit and instances of 'women's studies in Europe' as the smallest units that together constitute 'European women's studies.' This is to say that women's studies at university x is not necessarily the smallest unit contained by women's studies in a nation, region, Europe, and the world at large. Whereas new materialist epistemology is relational, I do not want to assume that the relationality hinted at necessarily materializes as *transitive*. Third wave materialism tries to work with a reconceptualization of time (and space) by *studying* materialization *without* these assumptions. This does not incite a relativist twist though. When studying the *generation* of European women's studies, I worked with the following cluster of co-constitutive concepts: Cartesian cuts/ constraint/ the generated and agential cutting/ undecidability/ the generative.

Having said this, what further disclaimers need to be made before I will report (of) the generation of European women's studies?

(1) The three case studies presented in the next chapter are only separable in an artificial way. First of all, the women's studies departments I visited exchange staff and students, and share literature and insights. Even so, it is mostly the Institute for Women's Studies (Lancaster University) and Tema Genus (Linköpings Universitet) that exchange insights, literature, staff and students. The Centre Louise Labé (Université Lumière Lyon II) has a somewhat special position in the intra- and inter-continental exchange, this is one of the effects of the trans-Atlantic dis-connection. Additionally, the themes at hand are intrinsically connected. Institutionalization and interdisciplinarity are interlinked, not only in real academic life but also in scholarly discussions and literature (*cf. e.g.* Lykke 2004b, Liinason and Holm 2006), and so are trans-Atlantic dis-connections, interdisciplinarity (Wekker 2007: 69) and (the possibilities of) women's studies careers in the different European countries (Griffin ed. 2002; Griffin ed. 2005). For example, Gunew (2002: 49) demonstrates that interdisciplinarity and institutionalization are co-constitutive when she shows how marginal position of women's

studies at the university (institutionalization) can be seen as the field's permit to experiment with interdisciplinarity;

(2) For reasons that have been discussed extensively in this dissertation, I do not work with a representationalist framework according to which the three cases, as a whole, are to represent 'European women's studies' nor do the separate cases represent the United Kingdom, Sweden, or France. Representation, the 'significance' of research projects included, builds on an idea that science/ scholarship mirror nature or (academic) culture. This is not congruent with third wave materialism. These terms been borrowed from the natural sciences and inserted into the social sciences and humanities on the basis of the 'natural' authority of representational methods (such as statistics). Furthermore, this dissertation works with the *relationality* (how do the case studies relate to each other and what is the relation between for instance Tema Genus and other departments of women's studies in Sweden and the Nordic countries in general?) and with the *singularity* of the cases (it in *France* where I have researched the ins and outs of exchange and academic borrowing). I tried to do justice to the complexity of Europe/ European women's studies by choosing case studies that were located in the Southern/ Mediterranean region of Europe (France), the Northern region/ Nordic countries³⁷ (Sweden), and the Anglophone world (the UK). Eastern Europe and countries at the crossroads, such as the Netherlands or Germany, were not used because of time constraints and the general limits of a scholarly dissertation.

It needs to be added here that *regional* 'representation,' based on nation states, is only *one* form of representation. For example, I could have represented the regions based on religious rather than national borders. Bente Rosenbeck (1998: 348) has noted that "European women living in Protestant countries – more specifically, in northern European countries – won the right to vote a generation ahead of women in southern, Catholic Europe." This suggests that these kinds of regions are of great importance in a European feminist context. This type of regionalism would be a radical gesture due to the fact that modern science with its European genealogy is taken to be *secular* (cf. Third World Network 1988 in Harding 2006a: 56). Religious borders do not shift the representation of pre-existing regions. Additionally, regions based on religious overlap with the European regions that are defined in EU-policy, and these regions mutually strengthen each other (as we can see in the quotation from Rosenbeck). Another reason that I will not go into this further is that the PhD did not set

³⁷ I use 'Nordic countries' rather than Scandinavia, as Scandinavia refers to Denmark, Norway and Sweden only, whereas the Nordic countries include Denmark, Norway and Sweden as well as Finland and Iceland. Furthermore the term Nordic allows for inclusion of the Saami people as well as the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland. Apart from that, it is the Nordic countries (including some neighbouring countries) that collaborate in women's studies, e.g. in the Nordic Research School in Interdisciplinary Gender Studies (cf. Lykke ed. 2004: 13-4), and not only the Scandinavian ones.

out to study the intersection of generation and religion, this discussion should be picked up in further research. Other regional possibilities would have been linguistic (partly covered in the French case study), ‘cultural’ grounds, or shared features of academic culture (in spite of the Bologna process). However, all of these options continue with representationalism;

(3) Thirdly, there is the conceptual issue of using ‘women’s studies’ rather than ‘gender studies’ or ‘feminist studies.’ Once again, I encountered several possibilities. They ranged from the more archaic ‘equal opportunities research’ to combinations such as ‘women’s and gender studies’ or ‘women’s/ gender/ feminist studies.’ In this dissertation I opted for ‘women’s studies’ partly because this term does *not reflect* a certain phenomenon, and because it enables the study of certain materializations. In other words, I have not been looking for a *correct* term but for a diffraction device. ‘Women’s studies’ has functioned as an umbrella term enabling feminist scholars from different European countries to come together and constitute an ever-expanding field that continues to be in flux. The term ‘women’s studies’ originated in the United States in the 1960s and was adopted by European feminists in the 1970s. The latter term was translated into the different national languages (e.g. ‘vrouwenstudies’ (Dutch) and ‘naistutkimus’ (Finnish)). In some countries women’s studies has a popular denotation of the field of studies I am talking about here. This goes for Sweden, for instance – in ‘Paradoxical Conditions for Women’s Studies Centres in Sweden’ Ulla Holm (2001: 180) cites a Swedish women’s studies pioneer who has asked in 1980:

“In Sweden we’ve got gender equality research, while in Norway you do women’s studies – does that make any difference?”

This says something about women’s studies as a field and about the different European regions this dissertation ‘covers.’ Generally speaking, I have chosen the term women’s studies in a period of transition from ‘women’s studies’ to ‘gender studies.’ Since the year 2000, roughly speaking, many women’s studies departments, centers, and institutes in Europe have been renamed ‘gender studies.’ This even goes for France (Hurtig *et al.* 2002: 3, 8-9; Andriocci 2005: 73).³⁸ ‘Gender studies’ is often left untranslated or is slightly adjusted to the national language (think of the Netherlands where gender studies is one word – genderstudies – and of the Nordic *genusvetenskap*³⁹ (see below)). The general conclusion here should be that terminological differences occur both between and within the differentiated European regions (see also Braidotti 2002b), the productivity of which is studied here;

³⁸ The trend to move to gender was signaled in the UK context around 1989 (Zmroczek and Duchon 1991: 18). Solveig Bergman (1992: 64) writes that in the Nordic countries in the 1990s women’s studies *or* gender studies were preferred to ‘feminist research.’

³⁹ Note the ‘vetenskap’ in this Nordic version of gender studies. Opting for ‘sciences’ rather ‘studies’ should be read as explicit criticism of the academic pecking order according to which *studies* refers to what is hierarchically lowest (Leezenberg and De Vries 2001).

(4) Of the three topics on the menu in the next chapter, interdisciplinarity is the one that is conceptually the least clear. In ‘PhDs, Women’s/Gender Studies and Interdisciplinarity’ Mia Liinason and Holm (2006: 115) even call it an (essentially) contested concept. There is a wide circulation of terms available –interdisciplinarity, multidisciplinary, postdisciplinarity,⁴⁰ transdisciplinarity, anti-disciplinarity, and neo-disciplinarity are in use⁴¹ – for a phenomenon that in the most general sense refers to the questioning of disciplinarity as the ‘natural’ division of tasks in the academy. In the next chapter, I will study *how* interdisciplinarity (agential cutting) is being actualized in a context governed by disciplinarity (based on Cartesian cuts). I do not rehearse studies such as Liinason and Holm’s (or for instance Lykke 2004b) since these studies do not necessarily analyze the actualization of interdisciplinary scholarship, but talk about the outlooks *of* interdisciplinarity (vs. the barriers that are being thrown up *by* disciplinarity). In other words, my starting point is not a definition of interdisciplinarity that is assumed to reflect certain academic practices. I ask *how* interdisciplinary scholarship works and this allows me to get to the ‘core’ of interdisciplinarity. I argue that *disciplinarity* is based on Cartesian cuts (*cf.* Liinason and Holm 2006: 117) and that interdisciplinarity is based on agential cutting. As a corollary, I do not define interdisciplinarity beforehand, but I have used *diffraction/ a diffractive methodology* in the sense of Haraway/ Barad to have it “emerge through intra-actions” (Barad 2007: 89; *cf.* Pernrud 2007) *i.e.* materialize. In other words, the conceptual confusion surrounding interdisciplinarity did not prevent the case study from being successful.

These so-called methodological disclaimers notwithstanding, the more substantial ‘methodological’ discussion will be part of chapter 5. In this dissertation epistemology, methodology, and method(s), theory, and practice, are not pre-distinguished. Making those distinctions is not a third-wave materialist move. Before I move to chapter 5 I would like to preview the upcoming methodological comments. Additionally, I would like to make explicit the *role* of the research project on the generation of European women’s studies within the context of the dissertation at large. This preview is important because the comments on methodology/ method(s) will *not* be discussed prior to the discussion of all case study materials. I have consciously woven methodological/ methodical comments throughout the introductions to the respective cases. Paragraphs 5.2.1, 5.3.1, and 5.4.1 *all* feature methodological/ methodical commentary (namely *the interview as an event, the case as a*

⁴⁰ Post-disciplinarity should not be understood teleologically, because, as Liinason and Holm (2006: 119) claim, it

“may also be inspired by pre-disciplinary research approaches, without sharp demarcations between areas of research now split between social sciences and humanities (Jessop and Sum 2003: 89).”

⁴¹ *Cf.* Liinason and Holm 2005: 5, 2006: 118 for the difference between instrumental (applied) and cognitive interdisciplinarity.

'glocality,' and *case studies as singular studies*), and the commentaries in question interrelate with each other and with the case studies within the larger epistemic frame that has been developed in this dissertation (third wave materialism). *Previewing* the comments is necessary, because they need to be known in advance for so that you can understand the cases and the ways in which they are presented. The cases have informed the methodological/methodical issues highlighted (and not only vice versa), and the methodological/methodical issues themselves fed back into on another. For example, the methodological/methodical issue 'the interview as an event' is introducing and being introduced by the British case, but the issue, as such, has been played out in the Swedish and French case as well. The linearity and one-dimensionality of a dissertation requires a preview. Even so, this should not be read as suggesting the *a priori* nature of methodology/method(s), but should be read as an attempt to repair what is effected by the materiality (*i.e.* linearity and one-dimensionality) of books.

Paragraph 5.2.1 discusses the issue of the interview as an event. The issue introduces and has been introduced by the case study conducted in Britain/ Lancaster. As suggested above, European women's studies is predicated on the Anglo-US dominance of the larger field of women's studies. As such, the Lancasterian case differs, as will be discussed below, from the French and Swedish one. The Lancaster case is singular because the women's studies literature that has come out of Lancaster (and the UK at large) is spread and known in a much wider circle than the literature coming out of Sweden/ Linköping and France/ Lyon. Due to this spread of information, it was relatively easy to prepare myself for this case study. Beforehand, I was able to get to know quite a lot about the interviewees as well as the 'glocal' positioning and institutionalization of the Institute for Women's Studies. In comparison to the two other cases, these material circumstances enabled a more thorough preparation, and, consequently, a more playful and less restricted interview. In case of Sweden, I was not able to read the work of my future interviewees due to the fact that I do not read Swedish, and in case of France, I was not able to find the reading materials because French materials are minimally disclosed in Dutch libraries and in international digital women's studies literature repositories. Conducting the interview as an event entails the practice of interviewing, not only for the purpose of getting data but also with the goal of *materializing*, on the spot, the problematic issue. In other words, I did not only interview the teachers at the IWS in order to get to know their opinions about or experiences with the workings of interdisciplinarity but I also utilized these *workings* themselves as part of the interview. This is how I proceeded: I asked the interviewees in Lancaster to bring course outlines to the interview setting. These outlines would be used to en flesh or make material a concrete *instance* of interdisciplinarity. Their statements about disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity would *not* involve a *referring* to something *outside* the confines of the interview setting, but would involve an *instantiation* of the dynamic between disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity *through* the course outline. I made

sure the same procedure was followed in Sweden (discussing institutionalization through the theoretical framework of the PhD) and in France (discussing the Franco-American and intra-European dis-connections through the Centre Louise Labé cahier series).

The second supposed methodological/ methodical issue is the *glocality* of the case, which will be discussed within the context of the French case study (par. 5.3.1). Glocality is a neologism that refers to the interplay of the local and the global (Braidotti 2006b: 30 *ff.*), to what Neil Smith has called ‘jumping scale.’ The issue of the Franco-American and intra-European dis-connections, in the French/ *Lyonnais* case study was suggested by the available theory that explores the ways that the Franco-American and the intra-European are disconnected and by the striking *unavailability* of concrete sources from France/ Lyon in the Netherlands/ the Europe scholarly realm at large. In other words, the canonization of the theory on the dis-connections stands in striking contrast with French/ *Lyonnais* women’s studies being uncanonized and relatively unknown (see also Chap. 2). The suggested theme of the case – the ins and outs of the workings of the two dis-connections – as well as the methodological/ methodical issue involved – if a case is not situated on one level but ‘jumps’ scale, how should one proceed studying it? Here, I want to emphasize that the British and Swedish cases should also be read as glocally situated. In case of Britain, the *Anglo-American* nature of women’s studies and the interplay between the British and the North-American as well as the Anglo-American and the Continental European, provided the background. In Sweden, it was mainly the Swedish in relation to the Nordic, the European, and the Anglo-American that was of importance. All of this notwithstanding, it was during the interviews in *France*, stirred by the extent to which I was able to prepare them, that I explicitly discussed *instantiations* of glocality through the use of gender/ *genre* in the mentioned publication series.

Last but not least, the issue of case studies as *singular* studies will be discussed in this chapter (par. 5.4.1). I already mentioned that I do not speak or read Swedish. As such, preparing myself for the interviews in Linköping was hardly possible. Tema Genus has an English-language website, of course, and scholars from the Nordic countries are generally quite keen on employing the English language for the communication of research results (see *e.g.* the English-language Nordic women’s studies journal Nora). Still the interviews were sites of knowledge production because they did recollect knowledge that was gained previously about Swedish women’s studies or knowledge available to me outside of the interview setting. The statements of the interviewees did not *refer* to something existing outside of or prior to the interview – the statements were generated by my interviewees participation in Swedish women’s studies and generative of it. Further proof for this is the following: the course outlines discussed in Lancaster and the booklet series discussed in Lyon were sources available as such and available to me as someone with the ability to read in

English and French. The theoretical frameworks of the dissertations that were in the process of being written were *not* available to me both because I do not read Swedish and because they were being actualized during the fieldwork period. It should be clear that in both senses the statements uttered *about* the PhD can in no way be seen as *representations of* something that existed outside of the confines of the interview setting. On the basis of this complexity of material reasons, it was the Swedish research that stirred and was stirred by the *singularity* of the case. Both the British case and the French case, in connection with the event-like character of the interview as well as with the non-fixity of the glocal, are singular, *i.e.* non-representative cases as well. The ‘staging’ of the interplay between the disciplinary and the interdisciplinary, the French and Anglo-US, and the French and the European should be seen as a *materialization* and not as a performance in the Butlerian, representationalist sense of the term. Here, I would like to add that the oral sources (interview excerpts⁴²) are more prominently in the Swedish case than in the French and British cases. In the latter cases, the oral sources have been supplemented by the published scholarly materials and PR materials collected on site. In the Swedish case the interviews helped *create*, or, in more conventional terms, helped me to access the information that I had no access to previously because of a language gap.

Let me conclude by saying a few words more about the role of the research project on the generation of European women’s studies within the dissertation at large. In this dissertation epistemology, methodology/ method(s), and subject matter have been conceptualized as interrelating and co-constitutive. Such an undertaking cannot instantaneously be captured within a dissertation, a scholarly artifact constrained by linearity and one-dimensionality. The linearity of a dissertation, for instance, suggests that its fifth chapter, usually being read after chapters 1, 2, 3, and 4, has also been written after the completion of the first four chapters. The cross-referencing materialized in a dissertation, and in scholarly sources in general, usually refers readers towards later chapters and back to prior chapters and discusses concepts and theories early in the dissertation thus enfoldng a progress narrative. This dissertation (and other scholarly work especially work informed by a multi-directional and multi-layered epistemology) is presented according to a linear format but has been constructed in a less linear way. This is to say, that chapter 5 which discusses the research project on the generation of European women’s studies does not entail a report on empirical research conducted either from a bottom-up or from a top-down perspective (see par. 3.2.5). The project was generated alongside the generation of third wave materialism, and was, simultaneously, generative of it. The same goes for the epistemic framework of third

⁴² In my transcriptions, I used ‘[---]’ for something that due to technical reasons had become untranscribable, and ‘ehhm’ where an interviewee hesitated or changed the course of the sentence. ‘[...]’ indicates a fragment that I have left out. Original emphases I have marked using *italics*.

wave materialism presented in this dissertation: third wave materialism was generated alongside the generation of the research project, and was, simultaneously, generative of it. The project on the generation of European women's studies, and even more so the textual fragments presented and discussed in the chapter at hand, then, might come across as confirming, verifying, and clarifying the thesis at large and its hypothesis in particular. Indeed, this is what I actively *sought* to do. In other words, third wave materialism is materializing *in* the dissertation and is also materializing the dissertation.

In addition, the issues mentioned here allude to the material circumstances of a researcher, the author of this dissertation is situated in the Netherlands in general and in women's studies at Utrecht University in particular. It should be clear by now that these circumstances should be seen as both generated in and generative of the dissertation at large and the research project on European women's studies in particular. I am not intending to say something about my *standpoint* in the second-wave feminist materialist sense of the term (see Chap. 2). Dutch feminism and Dutch/ Utrecht women's studies have been defined as existing at the crossroads, borderlands, or periphery of Anglo-US and European women's studies (Braidotti 1991a); and it has been claimed that women's studies in the Netherlands/ Utrecht has always been strongly intergenerational (see *e.g.* Braidotti 1993 and Women's Studies International Forum 16.4 (July-August 1993 on 'Women's Studies at the University of Utrecht'). The former characteristic, however unfixed, meant that *especially* in the Netherlands/ Utrecht the *hyphens* in the trans-Atlantic and intra-European dis-connections *matter*, not due to some additive procedure (the Netherlands/ Utrecht as a place where the American and the European is being added up), but as a place where a qualitative shift is being effected (the Netherlands/ Utrecht as the place where the dis-connection is being played out in a rigorous manner (*cf. e.g.* the much referred to article Braidotti with Butler 1994)). The latter characteristic, evenly unfixed, suggests that the intergenerationality of feminism and women's studies, as well as the interplay between the second-wave, third-wave, *and infra-generation* (this is Braidotti's term for the generation that engaged in the so-called long march through the institutions)⁴³ is constantly being instantiated in the Netherlands/ Utrecht, thus effectuating a qualitative shift also in this area. These characteristics should be taken into account when I discuss the dis-connections in Lancaster between the disciplinary and the interdisciplinary, in Lyon between the Anglo-US and European, and the French and European, and in Linköping between the personal and the institutional. On top of this, it suggests why this dissertation does not feature a Dutch/ Utrecht case study: this dissertation and the dissertations of my colleagues have been generated by *and are generative of* Dutch/ Utrecht women's studies.

⁴³ Braidotti proposed this term in response to Patricia MacCormack during the conference Generation: On Feminist Time-Lines (Goldsmiths College, London, October 11, 2006).

“The objective is ‘therefore neither a dogmatic Eurocentrism nor an unrelated cultural relativism’ but ‘a critical European centrism’ aimed at founding a new solidarity in human relations on our planet. [...] the loss of the role that Europe held as ‘center’ must be fully admitted to the benefit of the search for its cultural specificities and without any pretensions of superiority. [...] The break with the expectation of the superiority of one’s own tradition is accompanied by the assertion of one’s heritage and the possibility of correcting this assertion through the reciprocity of intercultural exchanges.”

Luisa Passerini¹

CHAPTER FIVE

The Generation of European Women’s Studies

5.1 Introduction

The main focus of this chapter is to clarify what a third-wave materialist take on European women’s studies looks like and what a study propelled or driven by new materialism can engender. In other words, this chapter reports on the results of a research project on European women’s studies and illustrates the materialization of third wave materialism. Not only does third wave materialism materialize here, but new materialist ‘methodology’ is enfolded and the results of the research project are analyzed by taking into account previous research on the same topic, *i.e.* keeping focused on the claims we are accustomed to make about European women’s studies. In the previous chapters, new materialism has been conceptualized as a multi-directional and multi-layered epistemology that is generationally complex. In new materialism, theory and practice are conceptualized as co-constituting one another and epistemic projects result in claims that are characterized by descriptive, prescriptive, *and* visionary elements. A third-wave materialist scholar who makes embedded and embodied claims to knowledge is not exempt from a certain utopianism. In ‘The Generation of European Women’s Studies,’ this utopianism can be found in the way that common conceptualizations about the history, the development, or the state of the art of European women’s studies are responded to. A third-wave materialist analysis of European women’s

¹ Passerini 2002: 203. In this fragment Passerini discusses the work of Ernesto de Martino. Cf. Passerini 2000: 57.

studies does not entail a dialecticist response to common conceptualizations though. These conceptualizations are not argued *against*. New materialist analyses of European women's studies uncovers these conceptualizations as the diametrical opposites of mainstream narrations about the same theme, and shows that it is beneficial to stay focused on the characteristics of mainstream narratives, since (European feminist) knowledge production is not generative, but a result of the intra-action of Cartesian cuts and agential cutting (the generated and the generative, constraint and undecidability).

Let me provide a preview of what a new materialist perspective on European women's studies looks like. European women's studies is *saturated with* stories that assume a causally, linear development of the field. These stories continue to be generated with a reference to the material circumstances of European academia. In this chapter I want to show that a third-wave materialist perspective can make a difference in this context. The stories that are generated on the basis of material circumstances and the practices they generate have begun to *constrain* the field in a manner that mirrors the way in which the 'best' practices of the mainstream, European academy are seen as constraining women's studies. The common conceptualizations of European women's studies and its characteristics appear to be particularly 'postmodern relativist,' *i.e.* one should not think of self-definitions conforming to stringent empiricist dogma's such as the cumulativeness of knowledge, but about other, yet equally linearist shared ideas such as a desire for *limitless* interdisciplinarity. These ideas have begun to constrain the field. The feminist prescription of limitless interdisciplinarity as the antithesis of the mainstream, European academic norm of disciplinarity confirms, by negation, the fixity of disciplinary arrangements and does not provide a way out (a sustainable vision). Looking at the field from a third-wave materialist angle, both the mainstream constraint and the feminist constraint come to the fore as very influential but not necessarily beneficial for European women's studies. These constraints materialize (in) policy papers and are oftentimes the parameters of (EU-funded) research projects on European women's studies. A third-wave materialist take on European women's studies shows that (the desire for) limitless interdisciplinarity (undecidability) is only beneficial when it is explicitly conceptualized as a response to the disciplinarity of the European scholarly realm (constraint). Women's studies² practitioners have formulated their interdisciplinarity in such a forceful manner, vis-à-vis the traditionally disciplinary structured European university, that it is made structurally difficult to materialize the field (a US invention) in Europe. The interdisciplinarity of European women's studies appears as beneficial, *i.e.* as generative, *if and only if* the disciplinary structure of the European academy is kept in focus. By not taking into account this structure

² In this dissertation the term '(European) women's studies' is being used for what is generated in academia by '(European) women's/ gender/ feminist studies,' '(European) women's/ gender studies,' '(European) gender studies' and '(European) women's studies' alike.

interdisciplinarity becomes *as constraining as* disciplinarity. In a third-wave materialist account, interdisciplinarity should (prescriptive layer) not be conceptualized as 'beyond' or 'anti-' disciplinarity. In these conceptualizations, interdisciplinarity becomes one's Master narrative. In order for interdisciplinarity to be generative of a field, in a disciplinary context (descriptive layer), the disciplinary context should be constantly kept in focus (visionary layer). In other words, interdisciplinarity involves the constant indication of its intra-action with disciplinarity. The topic of this chapter is to illustrate how this works. The chapter will re-position shared ideas about European women's studies, such as it being 'beyond' disciplinarity, 'beyond' autonomy vs. integration (this results in the dual-track policy, an additive approach not able to re-position either autonomy or integration), and 'beyond' Anglo-American dominance. I am not the first to argue this; Ailbhe Smyth (1989: 616; *cf.* Lykke 2004b: 95) has previously claimed:

“‘Moving beyond’ [disciplines] is actually not a very satisfactory phrase because it constitutes Women's Studies as deriving from, marked by, and, therefore, still existing in relation to ‘the disciplines’ [...].”

The rather sterile, developmental narrative of the 'beyond' indicated by Smyth will be exchanged in this chapter for a more complex one that is characterized by non-linear generation. The 'generationality' aspect runs through all the shared ideas that will be addressed in this chapter. One example pertaining to the issue of interdisciplinarity is developing one's identity as a researcher in the field of interdisciplinary (European) women's studies. In order to do this, one needs to reclaim one's disciplinary background in order to re-position both the disciplinarity of the academy and the interdisciplinarity ensured by the generation of women's studies practitioners who 'police' the field.

Before I move on to discuss the above issues, I want to re-emphasize that the motor of this dissertation was a double interest in new feminist epistemologies on the one hand and in the generation of European women's studies on the other. Third wave materialism materialized while I was conducting the case studies, and in the course of the dissertation project, my interests in new feminist epistemologies and in the generation of European women's studies fed back into one another. This is to say that both projects mutually influenced one another. Important in this respect, was a PhD course on new materialism that I took while studying the institutionalization process of women's studies in Linköping.³ Also of great importance were the accounts of theoretical non-linearity given by the PhD students from *Tema Genus* in Linköping in the interviews I did with them, and the set-up of the

³ Course I.05 'From Social Constructivism to New Materialism: Feminist Perspectives on Epistemology and Knowledge Production' coordinated by Prof. Nina Lykke ([Linköpings universitet](#)), and taught by Lykke, Prof. Karen Barad ([UCSC, USA](#)), and Anne-Jorunn Berg, PhD ([Høgskolen i Bodø, Norway](#)), March 15-17, 2005. In this case and in the case of Ahmed having been an employee of the *IWS* in Lancaster before I came there for the case study the two interconnected parts of the dissertation almost literally met.

interviews (see Appendix 1) which I first tried out at the IWS in Lancaster. Let me briefly repeat the research questions that guide me in this chapter:

- (1) How does interdisciplinary European women's studies actualize as a practice that intra-acts with disciplinarity? Here, disciplinarity is conceptualized as coming about through Cartesian cuts. The actualization of interdisciplinarity (always oscillatory) is dealt with in the Lancaster (UK) case study;
- (2) How do European women's studies publications in the French language actualize in intra-action with English as the dominant academic language (as the constraint) that has brought forth the dominant term 'gender'? This has been studied in the Lyon (France) case study;
- (3) How do European women's studies institutions actualize intra-action with a larger university/faculty/institute, with other (g)local European women's studies institutions? Institutionalization is being researched in the Linköping (Sweden) case study.

5.2 Disciplinarity and Interdisciplinarity

5.2.1 Introduction: The Interview as Event

The first case study of this research project that I will report is the one about (inter)disciplinarity conducted in the UK. The starting point of this case study was the following:

“[There is no] consensus about the nature of Women's Studies. [...] This difference of approach seems to encapsulate the frequently-noted difference between a French orientation towards theory and an Anglo-Saxon problem-solving pragmatism. But this difference of approach reflects in part national differences and in part disciplinary differences: the failure of different academic disciplines to inform each other is a Europe-wide problem, despite the commitment of Women's Studies to interdisciplinarity” (Zmroczek and Duchon 1991: 23).

In the fragment above the double perspective on both disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity comes to the fore, as well as the fact that the problematic of (inter)disciplinarity is intrinsically connected to the Franco-American dis-connection and institutionalization. In this paragraph, I will introduce both the theme of the case study and one of the so-called methodological issues, namely the interview as an event.

A UK case study might come as a surprise since European women's studies is usually legitimized by the assumption of an Anglo-American dominance in the international field of women's studies (see pars. 4.3.1, 4.3.2, 4.3.3). North-American, British, and sometimes Australian women's studies are accused of dominating the field, and a *European* women's studies is founded on the basis of the Anglo-US norm. However, the UK is part of the EU⁴ and British scholars, such as Jalna Hanmer, Griffin, and recently Hemmings, have been very active in the constitution of European women's studies projects and networks. Apart from

⁴ The UK entered the EU on January 1, 1973 (Griffin and Hanmer 2002: 1).

national co-operation in the field through the Feminist and Women's Studies Association (FWSA) (UK and Ireland) the UK shows an interest in European work (Hemmings 2006: 321, 323 n. 6).⁵ In addition, the UK has been included in the Bologna process, *i.e.* in the most recent thorough reform of the European academic realm. It is not wrong to include the UK in a European research project, but one has to be aware of the special position of the UK in a European (women's studies) context. For example, the UK scholarly community profits from the English language as the academic world language. Many of the esteemed publishers in the academic market (both in the context of women's studies and in general) have offices in London. Many UK women's studies scholars do not speak a second language, Adkins and Leonard (1992: 34-5; *cf.* Leonard 1984: 1009) claim, and this being the case, even in a context of increasing intra-European exchange, the Anglo-US dominance in the field is being reinforced in the UK. (Hemmings (2006: 319) argues that this also goes for women's studies students.) In addition, it has been noted that in the UK "the North-American model for Women's Studies seems to predominate" (Zmroczek and Duchon 1991: 25); this makes it difficult to find UK-specific information on women's studies content and policy. UK-specific information on interdisciplinarity, for instance, is generally part of the so-called unmarked information on interdisciplinarity available for women's studies scholars, namely *Anglo-US* information. I have included a UK case study in the project 'The Generation of European Women's Studies,' because Europe is a scholarly periphery with certain specific characteristics; one of which is the special relation between the UK and the US. In the UK I dealt with the way in which the *interdisciplinarity* of women's studies works.

In 'PhDs, Women's/ Gender Studies and Interdisciplinarity' Liinason and Holm (2006: 115) claim that "[d]ifferent forms of interdisciplinarity intersect with different ways of institutionalizing and/ or disciplining women's/ gender studies in respective higher education systems." They argue that when studying the ways in which interdisciplinary women's studies works, one has to take into account the kinds of higher education systems and the kinds of institutionalization processes involved (*cf.* Widerberg 2006). In their own study on interdisciplinarity they focus on the *barriers* (Liinason and Holm 2006: 116) created to prevent a 'truly' interdisciplinary women's studies practice to occur. From a new materialist point of view, this starting point is questionable. Liinason and Holm are unable to work *on* the barriers because they assume to know what an interdisciplinary practice looks like and how it is distinguishable from a disciplinary one. They assume/ isolate the barriers and essentialize what can be found on either side of the schism between interdisciplinarity and disciplinarity in different countries (*cf.* Liinason and Holm 2005). In the paragraphs to come I will try an alternative approach that answers the question:

⁵ *Cf.* Renate Duelli Klein (1983) argues that a national women's studies association should be founded so as to fight isolation and fragmentation of the field.

How does interdisciplinary European women's studies actualize as a practice that intra-acts with disciplinarity?

Here, disciplinarity is conceptualized as having come about through a Cartesian cut (Barad's term), a practice of *isolating* and *confining* disciplines. I conceptualize the actualization of interdisciplinarity as a result of *agential cutting* (idem), a practice not seemingly limitless but always constrained by disciplinarity. These starting points require a different approach to the study of interdisciplinarity in the context of (European) women's studies. In my study, I did not begin with definitions of disciplinarity, interdisciplinarity, post-disciplinarity, anti-disciplinarity, trans-disciplinarity (see Lykke 2004b), instrumental vs. cognitive interdisciplinarity,⁶ single honours degrees vs. joint honours degrees (see Griffin *et al.* 2005: 50), or disciplinary vs. double affiliation vs. inter- or transdisciplinary PhDs. I did not begin my research from the findings of previous research that claims "the greatest opportunities for inter- and/ or trasdisciplinarity in the UK occur at postgraduate level" (*ibidem*: 53). Nor did I begin from a discussion of interdisciplinarity as either superficial or particularly engaging (Liinason and Holm 2006: 123). I wanted to examine *the ways in which* disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity are being played out, to get information I used the interview as an event. I have not studied the way in which interdisciplinarity has been played out in research policy documents (*cf.* the project 'Research Integration') either.⁷ I have studied the ways in which interdisciplinarity is used in the BA and MA classroom (*i.e.* in an educational arrangement) by interviewing teachers who work at the Institute for Women's Studies (IWS) at Lancaster University. My approach relates to what Griffin, Pam Medhurst, and Trish Green (2005: 55-6) write in 'Disciplinary Barriers between the Social Sciences and the Humanities: National Report on the UK.' Although the term 'barrier' pops up here too, they claim that interdisciplinarity is the result of 'bridging figures.' Bridging figures are scholars, not necessarily working in an interdisciplinary manner, who are being read and used both in the humanities and in the social sciences. The examples they give are Butler and Foucault.⁸ Widerberg (2006: 133-4) ascribes the same role to French feminist theory, while acknowledging the French difficulty with interdisciplinary study (see below). I see commonalities between the approach chosen in this study and the study of what Liinason and Holm (2006) call the 'neo-disciplining' or 'interdisciplining' of women's studies, and what Widerberg (2006; *cf.* Interviews CR, CW) calls the 'disciplinization' of women's studies (an instance of situating the problematic on the border of disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity). The latter kinds of projects ask questions such as:

⁶ Instrumental interdisciplinarity refers to the applied sciences/ multidisciplinary, whereas cognitive interdisciplinarity refers to changes on an epistemological level (Liinason and Holm 2005: 5).

⁷ See www.york.ac.uk/res/researchintegration (last accessed: October 23, 2007).

⁸ Another example they give is the taking up of humanities methods by social scientists. This suggestion is does not relate to my approach as it seems as if 'humanities' and 'social sciences' have been predetermined here.

“Will we strive to *actualize* critical inter-, trans- or post-disciplinarity and paradigm-shifting potentials in sub-fields of gender studies, such as women's, feminist, queer, critical masculinity studies?” (Liinason and Holm 2006: 126; emphasis added).

When the study of disciplining becomes factual, claiming that for instance “the widespread institutionalization of Women's Studies in the UK from the late 1970s onwards has not led to a recognition of the subject as an independent discipline” (Griffin and Hanmer 2002: 1), it starts to differ from my study of the generation of European/ UK women's studies. I am not necessarily interested in *why* UK women's studies scholars “resisted having separate women's studies departments (since this would mean they had to choose between being in, say, English *or* women's studies)” (Adkins and Leonard 1992: 33; emphasis in original); I am interested in *how* interdisciplinary women's studies works. In my study, I have focused on the ways in which interdisciplinarity is being done in the classroom. I have not focused on the interplay between UK women's studies scholars debating the (inter)disciplinarity of women's studies (Gloria Bowles in Griffin and Hanmer 2001: 204 n. 261) and the fact that women's studies is still not recognized in UK research assessments⁹ with the goal of confirming or refuting the general assumption that “[t]his debate has contributed to Women's Studies' difficulties in achieving subject status” (Griffin and Hanmer 2001: 204, n. 261).

For my study on the way in which the interdisciplinarity of women's studies is being played out in the classrooms of the Institute for Women's Studies I have conducted interviews designed as *events* and I have sat in classes taught by some of the teachers I interviewed (events all along). I have tried to design all interviews, conducted in the context of ‘The Generation of European Women's Studies,’ as events. I asked the French scholars of the CLL to discuss the way that they dealt with ‘gender/ *genre*’ in concrete published texts. The Swedish PhD students were asked to discuss their theoretical framework and the IWS teachers were asked to discuss a course outline. I did this because I wanted to prevent the interviews from becoming an isolated site on which interviewer and interviewee, with the help of a voice recorder, reflect upon something equally treated as isolated. In other words, I wanted to prevent the interviews from becoming a site for the production of representations of something ‘out there.’ I chose to work according to the multi-directional and multi-layered approach of Foucault *c.s.*, Said *c.s.*, and Deleuze *c.s.* that I outlined in chapter 3 (*cf.* Roy 2003: 71). I am referring to the anti-representational approach (interviews never represent something ‘out there’) that Lorraine has called ‘theory as experimental praxis’ (see par. 3.3.3.1). By designing my interviews in such a way, I hoped to have found a way around the so-called ‘narrative’ or ‘linguistic turn’ in interview research (for the latter see DeVault and Gross 2006: 184). With this, I refer to the turn that treats interview transcripts/ excerpts as representations as such and not as representations of something ‘out there,’ thus providing

⁹⁹ See this Chap. n. 10.

truth. I wanted to move away from the representationalist paradigm by moving away from the notion that interviews are re-presentations of x and interview excerpts are representations in the context of which references to the real are irrelevant. I have focused on and excavated those parts of the class observations and interviews, both during the interviews/ observations and when I was analyzing them, in which intra-actions and oscillations, *i.e.* boundary-work, occurred. During the teaching sessions, the teacher (taking the lead in class) may, by explaining why she feels so rushed today, become a London citizen and a commuting subject (Class GL). She may also become a business type of woman by wearing a suit or, by bringing seventies material, a radical feminist rather than a university professor (Interview CR). The teacher may even become a student for a while, when she temporarily sits in the audience to listen to a student presentation (Class MMN). The same goes for the object that is being discussed here: through an initial Cartesian cut I made institutionalization/ community building central to women's studies in Linköping, and likewise for interdisciplinarity in Lancaster and publication and language issues in Lyon. This does not mean that my uttering a narrowed-down version of 'women's studies' during the interview overlaps with my interviewee's. As subjects, objects are oscillatory in nature. This is illustrated in all three case studies: when in Linköping the community of the professor did not overlap with the one of the students (Interviews KE, IK), when there was confusion about 'gender studies' between the interviewees and me in Lyon, and when the interviewees did not stick to the topic (either the trans-Atlantic and intra-European or institutionalization or interdisciplinarity) and showed me the links between the themes. Both the misunderstandings and the explicit explanation of the thematic links turned out to be the most fruitful instances of boundary-work.

Writing about interdisciplinarity in the UK, Griffin *et al.* (2005: 23) claim that within the European context the UK academy is extremely market-driven, which makes universities/ disciplines relatively independent of the government¹⁰ and dependent on the market. Disciplinary as well as interdisciplinary subjects are easily opened and closed; these are actions taken as soon as there is or is no longer a market for the subject in question. Griffin *et al.* (*ibidem*: 23-4) situate the appearance of women's studies in the UK academy and the gradual disappearance of women's studies, for instance at Lancaster University, in this context. They claim that the IWS has slowly moved into sociology because it appeared to be no longer profitable. In Lancaster, as well as in the UK in general, women's studies at the BA level did not recruit enough students (Interviews CR, CS, MMN). The *critique* of the necessity of being profitable was part of the initial set-up of women's studies in the UK

¹⁰ I write 'relatively' because the Teaching Quality Assessment can possibly result in government-driven closure of subjects (Griffin *et al.* 2005: 25). Women's studies is not independently evaluated in the TQA, but it is evaluated under sociology (*ibidem*: 26). There is also the Research Assessment Exercise, which evaluates research. Here women's studies is recognized as a sub-panel of sociology too (*ibid.*: 26 n. 28). See also Hemmings 2006: 320-1.

(Duelli Klein 1983: 259 n. 6). Yet the set-up of women's studies was *due to* its profitability (Skeggs 1995: 479) as well since the 'cheap' disciplines of the humanities and social sciences hosted women's studies and its enthusiastic students who were initially prepared to pay the fees (Adkins and Leonard 1992: 32-3). Beverly Skeggs (1995) explains that the emphasis on profitability positioned the enthusiastic student as a *consumer*, who, being positioned as such, started voicing consumer demands on (feminist) university teachers and (feminist) departments struggling with a lack of resources.¹¹ In 'From Academia to the Education Marketplace: United Kingdom Women's Studies in the 1990s' Adkins and Leonard (1992: 29-31) argue that the UK emphasis on profit, instigated by the right wing, has caused a situation in which

“[t]here are [...] no specifically black women's studies in higher education in the United Kingdom, and lesbian studies are to be found in only one place [...] under gay studies” (*ibidem*: 28; cf. Zmroczek and Duchon 1991: 16-7).

Therefore, women's studies has been accepted due to its profitability, but not *all kinds* of women's studies are accepted. Adkins and Leonard add to this discussion the move away from Marxism and towards postmodernism/ cultural studies in UK women's studies in the 1990s (*ibid.*). A side effect of this, Skeggs (1995: 481) mentions in 'Women's Studies in Britain in the 1990s: Entitlement Cultures and Institutional Constraint,' is the fact that women's studies is becoming more and more interdisciplinary, yet there is no time – too many students, too little resources and staff – to work on the *translation* of interdisciplinarity to students via textbooks, whereas it is again paradoxical, since *textbooks* are profitable academic publications that publishers are keen on. Skeggs (*ibidem*: 482; cf. Griffin and Hanmer 2001: 207, Aaron and Walby 1991: 1-2) claims that the UK academic system has created feminist staff and students along the lines of the liberal humanist subject, a paradoxical outcome in the context of women's studies.

Griffin *et al.* (2005: 30) claim that the openness towards women's studies (and the knowledge produced in the women's movement) in the humanities and the social sciences, especially in English and history (Leonard 1984: 1010, Griffin and Hanmer 2001: 205, Griffin and Hanmer 2002: 18), and at a later date, cultural studies (Zmroczek and Duchon 1991: 16), was based on the number of female staff members in these disciplines, but also that the reception of women's studies was a response to the right-wing government of the late 1970s that claimed that these disciplines should be questioned due to their non-profitability. Griffin *et al.* (2005: 37; cf. Zmroczek and Duchon 1991: 12-3, Adkins and Leonard 1992: 33, Suárez and Suárez 2006) claim that the seeming non-profitability of *women's studies* has resulted in the set-up of specialized MA-degrees in Women *and ...* (e.g. Health, Film, etc.) in the late 1990s, despite the fact that *initially* women's studies had been celebrated for being student-

¹¹ Skeggs (1995: 477-78) sees a connection with 'post-feminism' here, which I have argued against in this dissertation. Cf. Griffin and Hanmer 2001: 209.

centered, interactive (Stacey *et al.* 1992: 4, Griffin *et al.* 2005: 36),¹² and interdisciplinary, and working towards departments/ centres/ institutes of its own instead of towards networks of feminist academics working within the confines of their discipline (Griffin and Hanmer 2001: 207). A very early text on women's studies in the UK – Leonard's 'Etudes féministes/ femmes et recherche féministes en Angleterre' – makes clear however that women's studies was started as (optional) course work *within the disciplines* (Leonard 1984: 1003):

“Un cours complet sur les femmes et une approche interdisciplinaire ne sont possibles qu'en dehors de l'élite universitaire [...] A l'autre extrémité de l'échelle, on peut trouver des études féministes/ femmes au sommet de la hiérarchie universitaire où les frontières entre disciplines peuvent être franchies parce que les étudiantes sont déjà spécialisées dans l'une ou l'autre d'entre elles” (ibidem: 1004).

Hemmings (2006: 317) claimed that recently in the UK there has been a decline in women's studies at the BA level, yet considerable growth at the post-graduate (MA and PhD) level. She says that these postgraduate studies are to be found “particularly in the context of joint degrees with development, social policy or media [...]” What she pleads for, however, is, on the one hand, the maintenance of interdisciplinary women's and gender studies centres for academic independence and marketability, and, on the other hand, joint (women's studies and ...) degrees for the marketability of students and international competitiveness of staff (*ibidem*: 317-8). She claims that US and European students from countries other than the UK are drawn to the UK postgraduate programmes because interdisciplinary women's studies has, contrary to the US situation, become a discipline in the UK, and due to the fact that in the UK has an explicit focus on pedagogy (*ibid.*: 318). Despite the fact that it is key to the UK debate, I will leave the issue of the marketability of women's studies in the UK to other researchers/ further research, and focus on (inter)disciplinarity. Before I go into the ins and outs of the workings of disciplinarity-interdisciplinarity, I will introduce the IWS.

5.2.1.1 Institute for Women's Studies (Lancaster University, the UK)

Women's studies in the UK, in general, was institutionalized around 1980, when the first MA in women's studies was offered (Griffin and Hanmer 2002: 16). Women's studies BA and MA courses were offered before 1980, but it was not until the late 1980s that the first BA in women's studies was officialized (*ibidem*). Key to the institutionalization process was the marketability of women's studies and the fact that students wanted to 'consume' the programmes. In the beginning these students were mostly mature students – students of 21 years old and older. This is a situation peculiar to the UK (Griffin and Hanmer 2002: 17), yet the *definition* of 'mature students' in the UK is peculiar as well. In Germany, where students in general start studying late, mature students are much older than in the UK (*ibidem*: 17 n. 1).

¹² Griffin *et al.* (2005: 37) claim that in fact this situation was being complemented by a strong presence of research-driven teaching in women's studies.

The courses and programmes in women's studies were set up by leftist women active in the labour movement (*ibid.*: 16) who found their ideas were shared by women who had, due to a recession, just entered the (academic) job market, and by women in equal opportunities and in the women's movement (*ibid.*: 17; *cf.* Leonard 1984, Interview MMN).

At Lancaster University a Centre for Women's Studies was founded in 1984 after a period of "undergraduate teaching on gender and women's issues within the Sociology Department in the 1970s" (MA Handbook 2007/2008: 1). Courses were organized "between sociology and English" (Interview JS; *cf.* Cosslett *et al.* eds 1996), and the centre was to give out degrees by 1987 (Easton 1996: 2). In 1993 the first full-time appointment for women's studies was made (MA Handbook 2007/2008: 1). In 1998 the centre was changed into the Institute for Women's Studies – "one of three designated research centres established by the Research Committee of Lancaster University since 1996" (*ibidem*). Indeed, the institute was set up to further the research activities of the centre (Postgraduate Research Student Handbook 2004/2005: 6). In August 2007 the "fully autonomous" (Part I Handbook 2004/2005: 7) IWS became aligned to the Department of Sociology and was renamed Centre for Gender and Women's Studies (CGWS) (MA Handbook 2007/2008: 1).¹³ My fieldwork was conducted at the IWS.

Lancaster University was founded in 1964 as one of seven 'new' universities that was created due to population growth and the expansion of new technologies.¹⁴ Its 'Visitors' Guide 04/05' claims that this campus university situated in the North-West of the UK "is now regarded as being one of the top institutions in the country." Lancaster University's PR material of the academic year 2005-06, such as the 'Postgraduate Prospectus Entry 2005-06,' makes explicit mention of the IWS. The same goes for Lancaster's library information. On its webpages, during this time, the IWS took pride in mentioning the fact that they were "one of the strongest and largest centres for Women's Studies in the UK," and had received, in spite of the general difficulties women's studies as a field has with the RAE, "the highest 6* rating in the most recent British Research Assessment Exercise."¹⁵ The IWS in Lancaster hosted over 900 students in the under- and post-graduate courses in 1995. Twenty-three staff members were officially contributing to feminist courses and 100 scholars were affiliated with the centre (Skeggs 1995: 479). In 2002 6 staff members and 27 affiliated staff members were listed (Undergraduate Study in Women's Studies 2002: 17-9). In the 'Postgraduate Prospectus' published in 2005 it is stated that the IWS hosts 27 postgraduate students and has engaged more than fifty staff members from 19 departments. In 2007, with the creation of the

¹³ Additional sources: www.lancs.ac.uk/fss/wstudies/index.htm (last accessed November 2, 2007) and www.lancaster.ac.uk/fass/centres/gws/info.htm (last accessed November 2, 2007).

¹⁴ Information found in the booklet Celebrating 40 Years of Excellence: 1964-2004.

¹⁵ See www.lancs.ac.uk/fss/wstudies (last accessed: October 6, 2005).

CGWS “3 core academic staff posts in the Centre and over twenty-five other academic members” (MA Handbook 2007/2008: 1) are mentioned. It is furthermore affirmed that these members are “representing a wide range of disciplines at Lancaster University” (*ibidem*).

In 2002 the IWS was said to offer “undergraduate, masters, and PhD programmes in Women’s Studies, as well as having an active and interdisciplinary research culture” (Undergraduate Study 2002: 3). The institute offered women’s studies majors and also combined degrees. In 2005 it listed six programmes (Postgraduate Prospectus 2005). In the ‘MA Handbook 2004/2005’ a seventh is mentioned – the MRes. In the most recent information about the CGWS two women’s studies MA’s, and three combined MA’s are listed (MA Handbook 2007/2008: 3). This is how the climate at the Institute is being explained in the latter booklet:

“Women’s Studies has become such a dynamic and vibrant subject within Lancaster University because of the belief in the importance of collaboration. The culture of the Institute for Women’s Studies is interdisciplinary, innovative, and open” (*ibidem*: 3).

The interdisciplinary, innovative, and open orientation has been further specified as follows:

“The backgrounds of the student and teaching staff is diverse, which makes intellectual exchange challenging. There is a strong commitment to feminist research and teaching: which means an awareness of political legacies, of the need for vigilance about the position of women, and of the need for transformative strategies to reanimate this work” (MA Handbook 2004/2005: 1).

“The Institute for Women’s Studies is part of an exceptionally strong Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty, with various world-class departments, research centres, and institutes. The Institute for Women’s Studies is home to an outstanding and highly interdisciplinary research community that includes core staff and students as well as a wide range of affiliated members from across the University, who together generate a uniquely creative, critical and intellectually generous research culture. In addition to regular seminar series, workshops, and conferences, the Interdisciplinary Feminist Forum provides a focal point for this consortium of scholars at Lancaster” (Postgraduate Study in Women’s Studies 2003-04).

Another source makes clear that the mentioned collaboration comes to the fore in both the core course for the undergraduates (the Part I course) in which, next to scholars from the IWS, many affiliated scholars lecture, and in the undergraduate curriculum itself (Part I Handbook 2004/2005: 4). The collaborative nature, against the grain of UK academic policy in general (Interview VS), comes to the fore in the institute’s policy to accept students with a whole range of backgrounds, including “non-standard entry qualifications” (Undergraduate Study 2002: 5) and in the institute’s links with staff members from other departments and with professionals from outside the university. In the PR materials, a whole range of methodologies, topics (situated on both the bodily and the personal, institutional, and symbolic level), and skills is listed. In the ‘MA Handbooks’ (2004/2005: 5, 2007/2008: 4) it is even claimed that due to the interdisciplinary nature and collaborative atmosphere a designated women’s studies space (a kitchen) should be used well to create a sense of belonging. How is ‘interdisciplinarity’ further specified in the PR material gathered at the IWS?

According to a general information leaflet of the IWS, the autonomous institute is “An International centre for interdisciplinary feminist research” whose main areas of speciality include:

“feminist theory, epistemology, ontology and ethics; postcolonial studies (including globalization, race, nation and diaspora); science and technology studies; health studies; feminist cultural studies, especially visual culture; identity, subjectivity, sexuality and embodiment; testimony, memory, performance, autobiography.”¹⁶

In the 2005 ‘Postgraduate Prospectus’ it is stated that the IWS is a “cross-disciplinary” institute. This, however, is often being specified by mentioning the humanities and the social sciences. The following excerpt, I want to claim, is exemplary of this move:

“We will look at the connections between the situation of women in society and culture and the ways in which women are studied (and not studied!) in academic fields. We will also attempt to make connections between academic work and women’s movements more generally.

We draw upon the work of feminist scholars, including those in the Institute for Women’s Studies, across a range of disciplines in order to introduce you to a variety of perspectives within Women’s Studies [...] After undertaking the Part I [course], you should have a general idea of what the area of ‘Women’s Studies’ involves, and you should also have gained some understanding of issues in the Humanities and Social Sciences from various women’s perspectives.

Because the contributors to the course have been brought together by their personal interest in feminist scholarship and politics, the usual disciplinary boundaries (between, for example, ‘Humanities’ and ‘Social Sciences’) have to a great extent been dissolved. The Part I course is therefore interdisciplinary, with a range of connecting themes in the broad areas of ‘culture’ and ‘society’” (Part I handbook 2004/2005: 5).

In this example, overcoming of the boundaries between the academic and the non-academic, the disciplines, and the personal and the political are mentioned as constituting the field of women’s studies. What happens simultaneously however is the *re-invocation* of ‘the Humanities and the Social Sciences’ as the two domains where women’s studies at Lancaster is being situated. Agential cutting, then, is being undone, so to speak, and Cartesian *disciplinary* cuts are put on the agenda in return. This also happens in the context of the student backgrounds. Interdisciplinarity is also a rule here; it is said that the background of the MA student body consists of “diverse backgrounds, both in terms of cultural and educational backgrounds” (MA Handbook 2004/2005: 6). However, at the same time the student body is narrowed down to “students, who often have a background in either the humanities or the social sciences” (*ibidem*: 4).¹⁷

In the next paragraph, I will deal with the way that interdisciplinarity is being *done* at the IWS and in courses such as the Part I course. I have done this by talking about and observing *teaching*. The outline of the course ‘Doing Feminist Research’ implies that “feminist research” is “interdisciplinary research” (MA Handbook 2004/2005: 13). Despite

¹⁶ IWS flyer picked up at Lancaster University on November 8, 2004.

¹⁷ All the interviewees mentioned the international student body and the diverse levels within that student body as particularly constraining/ undecidable as well. Interviewee Maureen McNeil claimed that no predictions are to be made about the disciplinary and national backgrounds of the students at the IWS.

intentions to work in an interdisciplinary way, the outline of the Part I course, unraveling rather than raveling ‘gender and social institutions,’ ‘women’s movements,’ cultural representations of gender,’ ‘body politics,’ and ‘identities and differences’ seems, at first glance, to be multi-disciplinary (Part I Handbook 2004/2005: 5-6; *cf.* course outline Class MMN, Part I textbook Cosslett *et al.* eds 1996). In the course description of ‘Histories of Feminist Debates,’ however, it is made explicit that “the relationship between disciplines and inter-disciplinary spaces such as Women’s Studies” (MA Handbook 2004/2005: 12) are being scrutinized rather than fixated or assumed to be fixed. The ‘Postgraduate Research Student Handbook 2004/2005’ makes explicit how interdisciplinarity is implemented at the Institute:

“Women’s Studies’ interdisciplinarity necessitates the exploration of a wide variety of research methods, drawing on disciplines within the Social Sciences and Humanities. These diverse methodologies are analysed in detail in the MA modules ‘Doing Feminist Research’ and ‘Toolkit for Interdisciplinary Study.’ Students may also choose to attend other MA modules in Women’s Studies or in other departments [...]. In addition to the breath achieved through the interdisciplinary focus within Women’s Studies, our students are required to attend and be assessed upon key modules in the Faculty of Social Science Training Programme” (Postgraduate Research: 9).

Once again the disciplinary and the interdisciplinary, the generated and the generative, the Cartesian and the agential are mentioned back-to-back. How does this back-to-back praxis, which can be found in UK women’s studies texts as of the 1970s (*cf.* Fairbairns 1976: 1 in Duelli Klein 1983: 258) work?

5.2.2 ‘[we] don’t work to boundaries’,¹⁸

A number of interviewees from the IWS affirmed that Lancaster University is a very special place when it comes to interdisciplinary work (Interviews CR, JS, MMN, VS). First of all, Lancaster University is not being dominated by the natural sciences; the social sciences are particularly strong there (Interview MMN). Secondly, it has been claimed that the interdisciplinarity of the university and of women’s studies have been co-constituting one another (*ibidem*). At Lancaster, the disciplines are not very rigorously upheld (you can become appointed in sociology without having a background in sociology (Interviews CR, GL, JS)), and recently the faculties of sociology and the humanities have been merged, this has been said to be a sign of the possibilities for interdisciplinarity at Lancaster (Interview CR). It is *not* the case, however, that the teachers working at the IWS do not feel that they are being constrained by disciplinary outlooks and the boundaries between the disciplines. Interviewee Rosemary Betterton, as a feminist art historian interested in feminist art theory and practice, felt “deskilled” when entering the IWS due to insufficient knowledge of sociological theory and methods (the disciplinary) and feminist epistemology (the interdisciplinary). Interviewee Christine Sylvester felt that the IWS was under so much

¹⁸ Interview VS.

organizational pressure in the academic year 2005-06 that it lacked a common (interdisciplinary) identity (*cf.* Interview AD).¹⁹ Here, the seeming limitlessness of interdisciplinarity comes to the fore. Interviewee Claire Waterton, however, mentions the “sort of stability of the research community” of interdisciplinary science and environmental studies at Lancaster during similarly impactful institutional changes. How did the teachers at the IWS generate interdisciplinary teaching methods without causing limitlessness? A preview of the debate that I will set up below can be found in the following excerpt:

“both John [Law] and I, the way we work, I couldn't really speak for him but I think, having written with him, don't work to boundaries. In that way John's background is in sociology but ehhm, it is you know we get passionate about the same issues and topics. And we are very eclectic in where the tools come from to think about it. But last week for example I was teaching, John was away, but they read the 'Cyborg Manifesto' and 'Situated Knowledges,' and we were thinking around what issues that speaks to, what debates those are speaking to, what conversations she is engaging in. But also, I also in that session talked about that work in relation to things in previous sessions where we had spoken about the Interest School, the Edinburgh Interest School, Barry Barnes, David Lynch, and so on. And we had also spoken about Actor Network Theory and what that means in science studies. So trying to keep these things as different kinds of approaches, but also similar in various ways” (Interview VS).

'Not to work to boundaries,' then, can be explained as a dis-identification with disciplinary boundaries. It is not as if the disciplinary boundaries are invisible, as if they can be ignored or left behind. Disciplinary boundaries are exactly what have been generated at the university, in general, and what count as the background for interdisciplinary spaces. Not working towards boundaries means that from this background of 'different kinds of approaches,' from the generated, one moves towards the generative, towards 'different kinds of approaches [that are] also similar in various ways.' Interviewee Sylvester expressed this as follows: “Really finding the new connections and going with it.”

The Lancaster publication Women, Power and Resistance: An Introduction to Women's Studies (Cosslett *et al.* eds 1996), in use in the Part I course, introduces the subject of women's studies as, among other things, “not a self-contained body of knowledge which has been added onto existing subjects without altering them. Instead it radically revises whole academic fields” (Easton 1996: 3). It is said that “Women's Studies is interdisciplinary” (*ibidem*). And interdisciplinarity is being defined as follows:

“This means that feminist scholars do not stay inside a single traditional discipline (a department of knowledge, for example sociology), but instead have been particularly active in fighting against this compartmentalization of knowledge. With so many influences on women's lives and conditions, we must relate to knowledge from many different sources” (*ibid.*).

¹⁹ In the academic year 2005-06, the IWS was assumed to “become the women's studies programme within the department of sociology, which would mean its identity as women's studies would continue, but the core faculty team, and possibly the content of courses, would be affected by its new location within one disciplinary frame” (Interview CS).

Here we also find the compartmentalization (the generated), and the working *on*, and *not to* the academic compartments. The overall definition of women's studies the book works with goes as follows:

“Women's Studies as academic discipline has at least three dimensions. It involves the study of the way gender relations have operated in social life in the past and the present. It encompasses the study of representations of women's experiences in, for example, literature, language and religion. It includes the study of concepts used to differentiate women and men, such as femininity and masculinity. In addition it examines theoretical perspectives on all the above, particularly those drawn from feminist theory” (*ibid.*: 5).

Here another instantiation of interdisciplinarity comes to the fore. Alison Easton makes clear that social institutions and representation/ images are interrelating. Later, she claims that a discussion of gender (the social, the imaginary) does not prevent women's studies scholars from discussing sex (the biological) (*ibidem*: 6). She claims this, however, without seeking recourse to name specific disciplines; only women's studies is a discipline here.

In the Interviews I conducted, interdisciplinarity was said to be simultaneously the *cause and effect* of academic feminism. The feminist academic space is seen as one in which one can actually see “each one [audience] as an instance of the other” (Interview CS). In other words,

“[women's studies] *has to be* interdisciplinary because it already is in a way because the students themselves are so diverse and so different. And that is different to teaching in sociology when you can assume that they actually *have* background *in* sociology” (Interview CR).

In the following excerpt it becomes clear that women's studies is indeed a special space when it comes to interdisciplinary exchange (cause), but also that this is something that time and time again has to be effected:

“for me interdisciplinarity is kind of an effort. You have to be prepared to go outside of your, kind of, safety zones, and go to things that you aren't gonna understand. [...] I think a lot of people are not prepared or don't have the skills to do that. And I think because I have had that training in women's studies I kind of know how... [...] there is a shared project in [women's studies.] They want to get together because they feel that they need support. It is almost... There is a lot to do with the social side as well, that people actually want to be in the same room as each other, [with people] who aren't in the same department” (Interview CR; *cf.* Interviews AD, MMN, VS).

The effectuation of interdisciplinary exchange in academic feminist communities or the building of feminist communities through interdisciplinary exchange goes as follows: “the theories were pulled and pushed and contested” and because of that “[i]t was not about reading and receiving high feminist theory. It was actually theory in action” (Interview RB). The latter alludes to concrete examples of how interdisciplinarity has to be maintained: a study or course *becomes* interdisciplinary when “theory is talked about through examples” (Interview CR; *cf.* Interview VS), when they are “articulated together” (*ibidem*)²⁰ and this is

²⁰ The intrinsic links between theory and practice, between the theoretical and the empirical made interviewee Celia Roberts oscillate between women's studies as theoretical and empirical, and made interviewee Jackie Stacey claim that women's studies has moved beyond the empirical through its

said to be enacted by strong institutional and/ or non-institutional (Interview CW) links between the social sciences and the humanities, and between women's studies, science studies and cultural studies. Here, however, the disciplines or fields of study are not mentioned to fall back on and the scholars are not lured back by the disciplinary. This is similar to interviewee Singleton who teaches with a science studies colleague who finds the links between fields they do *not* work to them but are aware of. In this context the difference/ link with activism has been mentioned as well (Interviews CCl, CR, MMN, VS). All of this is said to be “reasonably unusual” (Interview CR) – unusual, but reasonable in Lancaster.

Interdisciplinarity, then, is being situated in a constraining/ enabling field of force consisting of, for instance, students and teachers with disciplinary or interdisciplinary backgrounds, academic institutions and non-academic ones, institutional links and non-institutional links between scholars and other agents, between theory and practice, etc. This verifies claims that have been made in this dissertation about the different kinds of agents, and about Cartesian cuts and agential cutting, constraints and undecidability, the generated and the generative. However, the remaining question is: *how* is the specific interplay between the disciplinary as the generated and the interdisciplinary as the generative being effected? On the basis of the above, I do not assume that disciplinarity is prior to interdisciplinarity; the IWS and Lancaster University are both strongly interdisciplinary, and the women's studies practiced at Lancaster is of an interdisciplinary kind that has to be maintained. What is it, however, that keeps Lancastrian interdisciplinarity on track, not to be phrased and practiced as a limitlessness? The dis-identification with disciplinarity seems to be key here:

“I mean I *could* teach a much more sociological version of it, I could look at institutions and do much more on the studio system and the star system and..., but I do actually do quite a lot of work on textual readings and try to introduce them [students] to some of the debates in feminist film theory that have drawn on semiotics and psychoanalysis and look at questions of the visual pleasure and spectatorship and one of the reasons that I do that is because I don't think that most of the students get very much of that in the rest of their degree. [...] They don't actually know how to make arguments using evidence that isn't empirical evidence in that way but is the textual empiricism if you like. There is a way in which you can teach those very close readings and ehmm or textual materiality maybe, anyway, in other words it is not just a question of you know any odd reading but actually you are trying to use the very detailed evidence of how visual images work to make broader arguments about ideologies or discourses or fantasies or whatever. So I *do* actually hold on to that course in sociology because I think this is a place where students can really go into detail about how visual images work” (Interview JS).

The selection above, shows how *disciplinary* structures (sociology and the way in which the sociological curriculum is built up) and not working to them *enable* interdisciplinarity. It is an *effect of* the sociological curriculum, informed by an empiricism that is disciplinary, that the oxymoronic, *interdisciplinary* ‘textual empiricism’ and ‘textual materiality’ are being introduced here. I want to make clear that the dynamic at play is *not* a dialectics. In the

alliance with cultural studies in the 1980s. Interviewee Waterton, a science studies scholar mostly, mentions the inverse need to “lapse into the theory.”

selection above, interviewee Jackie Stacey does not add up two antithetically related disciplines (sociology and feminist film theory) with the goal of synthesizing them. This became clear in the interviews, especially when the interviewees stressed the *difficulty* of their interdisciplinary practice:

“I kind of find it really hard to work with categories, so I do because it is hard to teach without invoking categories. I do find that a struggle. I don’t know how to do that well. But in my bones, I don’t work with categories, and I have been lucky, being at Lancaster I think I don’t have to. [...] I am interested in the work and not... in the categories that might be at place in the work. [...] for me the difficulty teaching is... is how to teach in a way that appreciates that kind of complexity and precariousness and indeterminacy of categories and dynamics and all those things I really like, and actually I really think that the world works in that way. How to balance that with things making sense for students, for them being about to ground what they are hearing and to make sense of it, so it is...” (Interview VS).

In a teaching session the constraints *invoke* the undecidable (disciplinary categories never quite fit) and vice versa (complexities call into being the disciplinary groundwork students have been provided with; it is the teaching setting that engenders the invocation of categories).

Looking at a concrete teaching setting, the same dynamics and the same difficulty are at play. Let me discuss interviewee Gail Lewis’s edition of the course ‘Debates in Contemporary Feminism.’ First of all, Lewis’s discussion of the course during the interview over the course outline shows that the disciplinary *has* constraining effects and that an interdisciplinary setting can ‘degenerate’ because of these effects:

“Well, I think it is interdisciplinary in so far as the... the kinds of readings that are called postcolonial... postcolonial theory... come from a range of disciplinary homes. And certainly that leads to sometimes all of us in the group, including myself, not being able to quite get inside of the text. I mean, the classic one was Spivak’s ‘Can the Subaltern Speak?’ where because she is a philosopher, she has translated Derrida, so there’s French philosophers, and Hegel and stuff, so some of the philosophical background, there was none of us in the room who could... who were really *inside of that* disciplinary home enough to be able to interpret some of what she talked about” (Interview GL).

Overlooking the course outline, interviewee Lewis clarifies how the disciplinarity of a certain author, whose work is on the syllabus can have *stifling* effects. No class participant has studied philosophy *proper*, and as a result, postcolonial theory (the undecidable) becomes unreachable. The barriers drawn (the Cartesian cut effected by Philosophy) simply prevent interdisciplinarity from being effectuated. Lewis goes on to argue that this is, however, only one side of the coin:

“On the other hand the strength of it is that who comes from *outside of* specific disciplines sometimes reposes questions that engage the same kinds of issues so... you know, how we might think about... How sociologists might think about questions of ehm dialectical relationships between dominant and oppressed, you know. Whereas the philosopher might want to hold that in terms of the Hegelian Master-Slave kind of dialectic, we might want to say what does that tell us about... in colonial discourse that way it constructs the relations between you know the colonial and the colonized, or the colonizer and the colonized from the point of view of the sociologist or from the point of view of the person who is engaged in... with a literary imagination. Ehm so I think... *I* think it can be very rich to try and engage questions that come from one disciplinary home through the terminologies of another disciplinary home but I think what that requires is an ability to say: ‘Actually I don’t know. I

don't know what x means' if they come from that disciplinary home. [...] One, it says: not being frightened to engage what you don't fully understand, to try and engage with it. Two, to be able to say 'I don't fully understand.' And three, and perhaps more importantly, the move that then comes is to say 'Actually, we are not all knowing subjects'" (*ibidem*).

Lewis concludes her discussion by saying that it is all about subjectivity. Yet her conclusion, formulated in the negative, 'we are *not* all knowing subjects,' seems to undo the undecidability of interdisciplinarity. Does this *falsify* the dynamics laid out in the chapter at hand and the dissertation at large or does it allude to interdisciplinarity as *not limitless*? Lewis goes on to argue that in the setting just reviewed there is something else that remains *unchanged*; there is something else that has constraining and stifling effects. I want to claim that we should see this 'something' as interfering in the process. What Lewis was talking about was the whiteness of Lancaster. This is what she claims:

"I find this whiteness not so rich. [...] The university is incredibly not-white compared to the town, but [...] What is coming up in my mind, I am giving you the images in my mind, because I don't know how to speak about this, the images in my mind are on the one hand this kind of full of color and vibrancy and interconnection and conversation and all that... very rich. And on the other hand this kind of blanking [---] white glare, which is a bit alienating. [...] I am unsure what the apparent ehm homogeneity... you know, homogeneousness will do for really engaging interdisciplinarity. It is something about how of course constructed, of course contingent, of course produced experience is, but how that as a place for engaging interdisciplinarity... So there is disciplinary homes and intellectual boundaries of disciplinary homes, but there is also something about inside there, what different kinds of bodies do with it and that feels like... a minoritizing place. Yeah, I suppose that's it. 'Cause that's not true in terms of sexuality. 'Cause it is so full of lesbians and queers and stuff that in terms of sexuality it is different. But in terms of ethnicity it feels very... so..." (*ibid.*; cf. Interview AD who also reflects upon the disconnection between town and gown).

Lewis thus claims that constraining disciplinary homes and undecidable interdisciplinary spaces are not one thing because this constituency is being complexified by other things, for instance the involvement of 'race'/ ethnicity and sexuality. At Lancaster, sexuality does not have stifling effects but 'race'/ ethnicity do. The whiteness of the university makes it impossible to 'enter' some disciplinary homes, like philosophy; and consequently, the dynamics of not working to boundaries is hampered. Lewis makes clear that the dynamics of (inter)disciplinarity are being played out on 'multiple tracks' that are interrelating and co-constitutive.²¹

The generationality of disciplinarity-interdisciplinarity came to the fore in the above excerpt where the importance of the student body in developing an interdisciplinary space was recognized. Students at Lancaster not only have different national backgrounds, but the courses at the IWS are also filled with students with different disciplinary backgrounds and a considerate difference in academic level is found. These matters intersect with the issue of disciplinarity-interdisciplinarity, interviewee Lewis makes clear:

"I am working across a number of kinds of intersections really. It's level of study... of the participants... I'm working across that divide. Ehm and that doesn't map on in any easy way but it kind of overlays the fact that there is of a kind of different disciplinary basis from which

²¹ Lewis used the concept 'multiple tracks' when commenting upon Cahill and Van der Tuin 2006.

students come and different focuses of interest really. [...] Although in many senses it is quite enriching, you know, to have that kind of mix of disciplinary training of everyone, I also think it is ehmm... I find it quite hard work, 'cause [...] I made a set of assumptions of what students would have already done that they haven't necessarily done. Ehmm and I think that does... that is absolutely the product... it is not just the product of interdisciplinarity, it is also the product of a mix of where they are in their careers. [...] I think that at this level of study... Well, actually, I think at every level of study but in a particular kind of way... at this level of study part of my job is to force, try to force, certainly to throw out ehmm open up the possibility of a conversation that moves between the abstract and the concrete. And that tries to get students to engage with the issues that we are talking about in terms of colonial discourses, effects, ehmm... But taking the chance of using a more abstract language in a sense" (Interview GL; cf. Interview CS).

This fragment makes clear that the different disciplinary backgrounds and the different levels, effectuating a specific emphasis on moving between 'the abstract and the concrete,' are simultaneously constraining and enabling for interdisciplinarity. It entails 'working *across* a divide,' another formulation of not working to boundaries. But what *happens* in such a context? This becomes clear in the following fragment:

"teaching and courses become collective, amorphous projects, and not anyone's individual position. So that is partly that. And also, students [...] come from a variety of backgrounds. So there isn't an easy... My background is just one of the elements. I think about it like a soup or a stew or something where you put all these things in and you stew it up [...] And I guess what I bring to that stew [...] I guess I highlight issues about issues to do with epistemology but in a broad social and political understanding of that. [...] how knowledge is constructed and the social and political and cultural shaping of those and understanding that in a broad way. [...] Ehmm and also I guess an interest in the kind of power of science in both... how science gets constituted as legitimating and how it also gets... the different moments at which deference to science, whether it is scientific methods or positivism or... it comes in at different moments in knowledge construction of different times. I think that would come across..." (Interview MMN; cf. Interview AD).

What we see here is the importance of the student body in relation to the teaching setting as an *amorphous* setting. The often-assumed generational dividing lines do not appear to have stifling effects. It is possible to voice one's position, content-wise and when it comes to the academic hierarchy, but this is not only a top-down affair. Interviewee Anick Druelle claimed that there *is* "a collective paradigm that is being shared" at the IWS, and that this goes for the teachers *and* the students. A "shared community of thought" is being constituted through the use of the same teaching material and through the collective marking of papers. An example of how this is being effected at the concrete level of a course can be found in the following excerpt:

"it is focused on the British empire, it is also case studies like what did science have to say about the construction of others, what the empires as civilizing mission and then we look at missionary movements, and women's travelers... This course is great because it is really an opportunity even for the teacher to learn more about how to present ehmm approaches, intersectional approaches and to help students think in that manner. [...] Ehmm and there is also maybe the definition of *what is* a case study. It is not an individual history, you know, narration that I am looking at, but it is more like specific themes, because we could deal with so many different themes when we want to talk about race, the intersection of race ehmm gender and sexuality. Ehmm so it is not so much in the traditional sense of case studies as looking at one thing. [...] Ehmm sometimes the students don't really see the coherence. There is one case one week and then you move on to something else and... ehmm so to... they still... maybe they still need to have a ehmm to be reassured they need more a theoretical line that you

would always hook on. [laughs] 'Students, okay, that is happening there and [---] big frame' and when you wanna insist on intersectionalities you have to show how much it is contextualized so therefore the big Grand Theories they don't work. So that is something... Maybe that is the line. Maybe that is the way of showing how case studies are useful" (Interview AD).

Druelle thus claims that the student and teacher learn from the teaching. She also claims that in the teaching environment epistemological issues – '*what is a case study*' – are being posed and sometimes solved. We could say that the 'case,' for Druelle, but also, for Maureen McNeil, works as a diffraction device. In McNeil's course ('Histories of Feminist Debates'), it is "issues to do with the body" that structure discussion on De Beauvoir, Irigaray, Firestone, Grosz, Rich, and Butler as well as the list of recurrent issues, citation politics, borrowings, models used and appropriated, ways of writing, abjection, etc. (Class MMN). In Lewis' class, the same happened with body/ embodiment/ bodiness and skin/ dermis, the veil, the *substance* of inequalities, space and place, home, compulsoriness (heterosexuality, Englishness, etc.). These bridging devices or connecting figures are tools with which the disciplinary and the interdisciplinary can be negotiated.

5.2.3 Résumé

By focusing upon the ways in which interdisciplinary European women's studies is being actualized at the IWS in Lancaster, I have been able to confirm, verify, and clarify the dynamics pertaining to generation/knowledge presented in the thesis at large. Interdisciplinarity materialized in the above, interviews and classes, without falling into the trap of limitlessness and the indeterminacy caused by a celebration of distancing oneself from disciplinarity. It was the 'not working to boundaries,' the 'working across divides' that characterized Lancaster's interdisciplinarity. Interdisciplinarity is not the result of shaking off the constraints of disciplinarity, *i.e.* a limitedlessness, but it is a working *on* the constraining disciplinary boundaries, of trying to enter *them* from the outside, of shaking *them* up. Working in an interdisciplinary manner does not involve a distancing act, but an act of getting closer to the disciplinary boundaries of oneself, of one's colleagues and students and of one's academic surrounding. These boundaries have an effect on the material arrangements, even when the environment is as interdisciplinary as Lancaster University. It is through the scrutinization of boundaries that interdisciplinarity actualizes and that working in an interdisciplinary praxis is made sustainable.

5.3 Trans-Atlantic and Intra-European Dis-Connections

5.3.1 Introduction: Case Studies on the Glocal Level

I will continue discussing European women's studies as a 'glocal' phenomenon, *i.e.* European women's studies as an academic practice that oscillates between the local and the global. 'Methodologically' speaking: situating 'case study' research on the glocal level I want to avoid assuming, and consequently postulating, either the local or the global as the one monolayer on which European women's studies is being played out. The research question I focus on reads as follows:

How do European women's studies publications in the French language actualize in interaction with English as the dominant language (the constraint) that has brought forth the dominant term 'gender'?

I want to provide data on *how* the trans-Atlantic and the intra-European dis-connection is being done. I do so by researching one specific aspect of generation/knowledge, namely French publication politics. I set out to update insights in inter-continental dis-connections in women's studies (the work of Stanton *c.s.* as reviewed in pars. 4.3.2 and 4.3.3) and to provide insights in intra-European dis-connections. The latter, in itself, is a way of 'updating' Stanton's fundamental work since it is a gesture that diversifies the trans-Atlantic cut; I do not assume to find two monolithic blocks on the two sides of the Atlantic. Women's studies in France²² exemplifies glocality, because, *as soon as* women's studies in France is brought up the issue of inter- and intra-continental dis-connectivity is relied upon, either explicitly or implicitly. I have undertaken this case study to find out how this relationality works. Oftentimes, it has been suggested that French women's studies has come about on the basis of a strong anti-americanism (the American is the constraint) accompanied by an equally strong celebration of the French (undecidability). What I intend to do here, however, is to situate the case of the 'French,' *not* on the national level but on the glocal level.²³ Here, the glocal level signifies the co-constitution of the local (the universities of for instance Lyon or Paris) and the global level (the way in which women's studies in France, which is not one thing, relates to women's studies in the Anglo-American world). The specific focus of this second case study is the appearance of gender/ *genre* in French academic feminist writings, because, following Christine Zmroczek and Duchén (1991: 23), "[t]here are many different ways to translate the word 'gender' into, for instance, French, where the most literal translation (*genre*) is the least appropriate." Or in the words of one of my interviewees:

"A l'époque cela, comme vous pouvez comprendre, on faisait pas de woman studies. Jusqu'à un moment relativement recent. [...] On faisait pas d'enseignements spécifiques regroupés

²² France is a founding member of the EU. See europa.eu/abc/european_countries/eu_members/france/index_en.htm (last accessed: October 24, 2007).

²³ I want to add here that in France the power-saturated relation between the capital – Paris – and the province – regional networks – has always been much-discussed (*cf. e.g.* Viennot [1989] 2000: 174).

sous l'étiquette, on faisait juste des recherches et des documentations. [...] We don't want genre. Avant c'était Centre lyonnais d'études féministes. On pourrait toujours garder ça. On est toujours centre féministes [...] mais avec l'Europe il y arrivait le terme genre. Maintenant on est obligé d'appeler les choses 'genre.' C'est justifié! C'est vrai qu'en France on s'est pas habituée. Sexe c'est genre alors" (Interview AH).

By focusing on gender/ *genre*, I do as Karen Offen (forthcoming) suggests: I use this nexus as “an extremely useful tool, or prism, for studying many aspects of history, including nation-building, war, and the politics of knowledge.”²⁴

Talking about women's studies in France includes talking about “*les enseignements et les recherches* (a) ‘*sur les femmes*’, (b) ‘*féministes*’, (c) ‘*sur les rapports sociaux de sexes*’, (d) ‘*sur le genre*’, et enfin (e) ‘*féminines*’” (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 16; *cf.* Braidotti 1990: 42-3, Ezekiel 1992: 82 n.1, Le Feuvre and Andriocci 2001, EFiGiES 2006). The Association Nationale des Etudes Feministes (ANEF) (see Women's Studies in France 1990, Bard 2003: 20) has claimed that most women's studies scholars in France prefer the term ‘*études féministes*,’ because it supposedly does not to limit the field to either the object or the subject of research (ANEF 1995: 690, Bard 2003: 18). As mentioned in chapter 4, however, Muriel Andriocci has claimed that ‘*études sur le genre*’ (gender studies) has recently started gaining terrain. Eliane Viennot ([1989] 2000: 170) has explained that even though ‘*études féministes*’ is a direct translation from English; the term also signifies textual production of first- and second-wave feminists *as well as* the recognition, especially by De Beauvoir, of the backlash between the two waves. Discussions important to women's studies in France are the way in which the field relates to the US, on the one hand, and to the extra-academic women's movement, on the other (Cixous 1982). The issue of the relationship between women's studies/ academic feminism and the women's movement – *e.g.* the question of which (kind of) feminist theory can represent the women's movement as well as the question whether *any* theory can represent/ add to the women's movement (Ezekiel 1992: 76, Le Feuvre and Andriocci 2001: 98; *cf.* Sobota 1984, Bard 2003: 16, Le Feuvre and Metso 2005: 36-41 in Widerberg 2006: 133) – has created huge schisms within both the women's movement and women's studies in France. Nicky Le Feuvre and Andriocci (2001: 98; *cf.* O'Grady 2006) claim that these debates about, in Haraway's terms, collaborationism, and the subsequent capsulation of the anger of women/ feminists (Delphy in Le Feuvre and Andriocci 2001: 99) have hindered the institutionalization of women's studies in France.²⁵ Elaine Viennot ([1989] 2000: 171) values the schism in positive terms: at least the discussions have constituted women's subjectivity. She also prophesies that eventually the anti-theoretical/ anti-institutional league will disappear and make room for discussion on theory and

²⁴ Par. 5.3.2 will make clear that I do not agree with Offen's endconclusion, which reads as follows:

“Nowhere does one ever encounter the possibility that the French might themselves have invented the concept of the social construction of sex and used the word ‘genre’ to connote it.”

²⁵ *Cf.* the issue concerning De Beauvoir, Delphy, and (Nouvelles) Questions Feministes (see par. 2.3.1.1).

institutionalization (*ibidem*: 174). Andriocci (2000: without page number) in ‘French Feminist Studies between Marginalization and Recognition’ has claimed that women’s studies in France in the late 1980s and early 1990s was characterized by the following paradox:

“the link between the Women’s Movement and Women’s Studies was deemed too strong. Yet before the field became organized and established, the driving force behind Women’s Studies, the Women’s Movement and its force in society, was on the wane.”

On top of this she says that women’s studies cannot possibly be recognized, as the French academia does not recognize multi-/ interdisciplinary studies (*ibidem*). I want to question this conclusion on the basis of the British case study presented earlier that illustrates the legitimacy of women’s studies is a different issue from the sustainability of the field. I have found that disciplines need not fully confine women’s studies scholars nor is it essential that an interdisciplinary women’s studies praxis defines itself as the antithesis of disciplinarity. In the remainder of the discussion about France I will leave the issue of the institutionalization of women’s studies, despite its centrality to the French debate, to other researchers/ further research. On the basis of the work just cited, it should be noted that the issue of inter- and intra-continental dis-connectedness interrelates with the issues of institutionalization and interdisciplinarity. ‘*Inter-genre*’ can even be used as a synonym of ‘*interdisciplinaire*’!²⁶ I will provide some popular and scholarly examples of glocalities published in the French language before I move on to a discussion of the case study site.

Sandrine Teixido (2005: without page number) opens her popular article ‘Les gender studies’ with the following claim:

“*Apparues dans les années 70 aux États-Unis, les gender studies ont profondément renouvelé l’étude des rapports homme/ femme en posant que la différence de sexe est une construction sociale. Si ce courant n’a guère d’équivalent en France, en revanche la notion de genre a fini par s’imposer dans les études féministes et de nombreux enjeux de société.*”

Teixido isolates the beginnings of the field in terms of both content – gender as a social construction – and spatial location – the US. She goes on to claim that, as a result, in France, ‘*genre*’ ended up being essential to feminist studies and organizations. It is claimed that *genre* thus became the translation of the US notion ‘gender.’ Proof for this can be found in Annick Durand-Delvigne’s (1995) ‘Pouvoir et Genre’ in which *genre* is defined in a most conventional (Anglo-American, sociological) way, namely as the asymmetrical power relation between men and women. Paradoxically, *gender* was conceived only after North-American feminists had read De Beauvoir’s The Second Sex (Vintges 1992, Widerberg 1998: 134, Van der Tuin 2007a). The origin story created in Teixido’s text is, in addition, strongly progressive – working towards ‘*les gender studies*.’ It is also claimed, however, that

“*[l]e concept de genre a eu des difficultés à s’implanter en France, principalement à cause d’une méfiance envers le féminisme américain jugé par trop communautariste et radical*” (*ibidem*).

²⁶ Classes RML, MSJ.

The following fragment, however, presents the conclusion drawn by Teixido and shows that the issue of *genre* also has a generational aspect:

“Le genre est aujourd'hui l'objet d'un intérêt grandissant au sein de l'université française alors qu'aux Etats-Unis, le concept utilisé à outrance semble avoir perdu sa force de provocation et sa valeur heuristique, c'est-à-dire qu'il ne permet plus de découvrir de nouvelles pistes de recherche ou de poser un regard neuf sur des thèmes classiques. Les jeunes chercheurs français qui s'intéressent à cette thématique sont d'autant plus enthousiastes qu'ils se trouvent dégagés du militantisme qui entravait la reconnaissance de leurs prédécesseurs. En ce sens, leur principal enjeu revient à donner au genre un statut théorique dénué d'idéologie au sein des sciences humaines” (ibid.; cf. Bard 2003: 25-7).

Another popular text is the French-language Wikipédia entry on gender studies.²⁷ The entry opens with the following claim:

“On appelle dans le monde anglo-saxon Gender studies un vaste domaine d'étude, de débat, de controverses portant sur la question du gender (c'est-à-dire du genre sexuel, différence sociale faite entre les sexes biologiques) qui s'est développé depuis les années 1970 dans les universités américaines où plusieurs universités prestigieuses financent des départements ou des chaires professorales consacrés à ce champ de recherche. Ce domaine d'étude veut montrer comment les inégalités dont sont victimes les femmes s'appuient d'une part sur une idéologie légitimant, de fait, l'oppression des femmes et d'autre part sur un ensemble de mécanismes sociaux qui tendent à présenter comme naturelle une division inégalitaire des rôles sociaux entre les homes et les femmes, y compris dans les sociétés qui se prétendent démocratiques et égalitaires.

Aucune traduction française ne s'est imposée pour l'instant pour le signifiant Gender Studies. On trouve parfois des traductions comme 'études des genres' ou 'études sur le genre' mais les personnes qui écrivent dans ce champ de recherche reprennent le terme Gender Studies, éventuellement avec des guillemets ou en italique. À l'Université de Genève, il existe une Unité interdisciplinaire d'études genre.

Le problème de la traduction de ce concept de Gender Studies apparaît comme un exemple significatif des difficultés que posent les différences d'appréhension philosophique du monde quand on passe d'une langue à l'autre : chaque langue appréhende le monde sous un angle différent et le passage de l'une à l'autre conduit à porter implicitement l'accent sur telle ou telle approche.”

I extensively quote the opening lines of the entry, so as to show, firstly, the similarities between the Teixido text and the Wikipédia entry, and, secondly, the broadened schism construed between France and the US in the latter text due to a quantification of the issue. Gender studies in the US is said to be more extensive than in France; the entry assumes there is only *one* gender studies unit in the French-speaking context in Europe (Genève in Switzerland), that can be said to be the product of the equation. During my fieldwork visit to Lyon I understood that many students from Lyon took their Master's education in gender studies in Genève.²⁸ It has to be noted, however, that the suggestion of *one* gender studies unit in the French-speaking context is *false* (see below). Women's studies activities can be found in Paris, Lyon, and Toulouse as well as elsewhere in France (and Switzerland). By situating gender studies in a French-speaking rather than national context the Wikipédia entry alludes

²⁷ See www.fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gender_Studies (last accessed: October 5, 2007). Emphasis in original.

²⁸ Personal communication Léo Thiers-Vidal, January-February 2006.

to intra-European discussions on, e.g., Mediterranean women's studies.²⁹ Furthermore, the entry situates the creation of gender studies in France in the context of French Theory: Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze & cie et les mutations de la vie intellectuelle aux États-Unis in which François Cusset ([2003] 2005: 11-2; emphasis in original) affirms a general pattern according to which

“ces penseurs français, souvent marginalisés dans l’Hexagone, y [aux États-Unis] tiendraient sûrement les premiers rôles. [...] ces auteurs ont atteint aux États-Unis, vers le tournant des années 1980, un seuil de notoriété officielle et d’influence souterraine auquel ils n’avaient jamais accédé chez eux. Sans être ceux d’idoles du grand écran, leurs noms ne s’y sont pas moins trouvés surcodés, graduellement américanisés, largement dé-francisés; noms devenus incontournables outre-Atlantique sans que le pays dont ils sont issus ait jamais pris la mesure du phénomène.”

It can be claimed that this positioning exercise does not do justice to the reality of gender studies, which should not be reduced to/ subsumed under French theory and its travels in general. It is, however, not uncommon to refer to French Theory when the issue of the Franco-American dis-connection within the field of women's studies is discussed (cf. Interview MSJ). On top of all this, the Wikipédia entry mentions the fact that the French ‘genre’ has strong grammatical connotations,³⁰ whereas the US feminists are more oriented towards the social sciences. This entry confirms Stanton's claims without making mention of her work.

In a manner similar to the popular ones, *scholarly* texts on women's/ gender studies in France start with “*l'écart – intellectuel, académique, politique – entre l'actualité française et l'actualité américaine des sciences sociales*” (Akrich *et al.* 2005: 5).³¹ In ‘Politiques de la représentation et de l'identité: Recherches en gender, cultural, queer studies’ it is claimed that gender, cultural, and queer studies are “*mal connus et mal aimés ici*” (in the French-speaking world), whereas the terms “*signalent une caractéristique commune là-bas*” (in the Anglo-American context) (*ibidem*; emphasis in original. Cf. Hurtig *et al.* [1991] 2002: 13, 2002: 9). The schism constructed between here and there, underlined by *stressing* the signifiers,³² is only operative in the second instance and is complexified by Madeleine Akrich, Danielle Chabaud-Rychter, and Delphine Gardey (2005: 7) who claim:

“À ce stade, nous savions, bien évidemment, que l'essentiel de notre nourriture empirique et théorique était produit en langue anglaise, soit par des chercheurs britanniques ou américains, soit par des chercheurs néerlandais et scandinaves, également très investis dans ces travaux.”

²⁹ For the latter see www.medinstgenderstudies.org (last accessed: October 9, 2007) and Braidotti, Vonk and Van Wichelen 2000.

³⁰ Cf. Recherches sur les femmes et recherches féministes 1989: 41-7.

³¹ An exception here is Françoise Picq's 2002 article ‘The History of the Feminist Movement in France.’

³² The ANEF (1995: 693, 702-6) makes a similar move – it leaves ‘women's studies’ untranslated. See for other examples throughout this paragraph.

When it comes to the theoretical foundations (US postmodernism and French post-structuralism) of the field(s), the authors suggest that the journey began in France, but did not become foundational until French theory was picked up by US scholars and rewritten. The theory US scholars created was unrecognizable and unrepresentative of the French according to the French (*ibidem*: 8). Here, again, the authors allude to French Theory. In the words of EFiGiES (2006: without page number):

“Sur les études et le concept de genre pèse encore le soupçon de non scientificité: parce que le concept est issu des études féministes et qu’il apparaît donc comme ‘politiquement situé’, et parce qu’il nous vient aussi d’outre-atlantique – l’idée la plus couramment répandue est qu’il vise à défendre des intérêts proprement communautaristes. Le terme a un ‘je ne sais quoi’ de ‘pas français’, qui (me) semble beaucoup plus mal accepté en histoire qu’en sociologie.”

They add that gender became more and more popular(ized) in France due to the flow of European money to the French academia (*cf.* Bard 2003: 24).³³

Andriocci (2000: without page number) and Christine Bard (2003: 17) have made clear that the 1982 conference ‘Femmes, Féminisme et Recherche’ (see AFFER ed. 1984) was key to the development of something similar to women’s studies as a field of study in France. This conference, funded by the Socialist government of the day³⁴ on the basis of a pre-conference attended by 200 participants (ANEF 1995: 693), took place in Toulouse and brought together women’s groups (both intra- and extra-academic) as well as women aspiring to work at the university (*cf.* Viennot [1989] 2000: 171). This is not to say that before 1982 local women’s studies units did not exist or (national) meetings were not organized. Judith Ezekiel (1992: 79) reminds us in ‘Radical in Theory: Organized Women’s Studies in France, the Women’s Movement, and the State’ that Michèle Kail in her opening speech in Toulouse claimed that “the gathering was both the result of mobilization and the springboard for organized women’s studies [in France].” As of 1972 recognized and unrecognized feminist/feminine study groups have existed in France (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 7; *cf.* AFFER 1984, Bard 2003: 16-7). One of the early groups was the Centre lyonnais d’études féministes (CLEF) set up in 1976 (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 7, Interviews AH, BL, PaM). Andriocci (2000: without page number; *cf.* Duchen 1986: 143) simply claims that ‘1982’ has come to signify “a transition from movement to research,” because the Centre national de la recherche scientifique (CNRS) decided to fund women’s studies research activities directly after 1982.³⁵

³³ It has also been argued that the EU has been important for women in science in France (Interview CCh; *cf.* Boisseau *et al.* 2002: 79).

³⁴ Duchen (1986) and Jenson (1990) also emphasize the influence of the Socialist government. Ezekiel (1992: 78) claims that French feminists were generally unprepared for this ‘good’ government. Le Feuvre (2000), surprisingly, claims that the backlash caused by the rise of the right wing in the late 1990s was only moderate.

³⁵ This earmarking was not sustained risking diversification of women’s studies scholarship, it is argued (ANEF 1995: 695-7). In the previous paragraph on interdisciplinarity I have argued that interdisciplinary research is sustainable not on the basis of a celebration of ‘pure’ interdisciplinarity. The money aspect does help, of course.

The 1982 conference hosted 800 participants and 144 presentations, and the proceedings count more than 1.000 pages (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 7; *cf.* ANEF 1995: 693, AFFER ed. 1984). The conference had a huge impact, as the CNRS recognized and financed many projects, including the French-language women's studies textbook Sexe et genre: De la hiérarchie entre les sexes (Hurtig *et al.* eds [1991] 2002) (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 7-8; *cf.* Recherches sur les femmes et recherches féministes 1989). The Toulouse conference also resulted in the development of regional women's studies study groups (Duchen 1986: 143-4) which eventually merged into the national ANEF.³⁶ Duchen (*ibidem*: 144) follows Smyth in isolating two negative effects of the 1982 conference: firstly, fragmentation (a widening of the gap between Parisian vs. regional groups, and between academic feminists and feminists applying feminist (theoretical) insights outside the university and non-academic feminists), and secondly, collaborationism. It has been claimed that the ANEF came into existence due to EU policy making in the 1980s instead of the 1982 conference (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 8).³⁷ I found confirmation of this in Françoise Picq's (2005) article 'Les études féministes en France: une institutionnalisation problématique' who adds to EU policy making the impact of the 1995 Beijing world conference on women and the resulting equality-feminist measures taken in France as of the year 2000. This, Picq claims, had some positive effects when the results of the first *exhaustive* report on the state of the art of the field are considered (Andriocci *et al.* 2003; *cf.* Le Feuvre [1995] 2000, Le Feuvre 2000). The report 'Premier recensement national des enseignements et des recherches sur le genre en France' came about through quantitative research conducted by several French women's studies scholars from several French women's studies units and networks.³⁸ From the report it can be deduced that in the academy less than 1% of the professorships or *maître(sse)s de conférences* have been assigned to women's studies; whereas there are increasing numbers of lower rank positions assigned to women's studies (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 8-9). It has been argued that the dispersion of the latter posts is not necessarily beneficial for the field because of a lack of guaranteed sustainability (*ibidem*: 9). When it comes to teaching women's studies, mostly in the humanities and the social sciences (*ibid.*: 28), the top three of universities are (from the top downwards): Paris,³⁹

³⁶ These were Région Centre, Région Midi-Pyrénées, Région Ouest, Région Parisienne, Région Provence-Cote d'Azur, Région Rhône-Alpes (AFFER 1984: 1093). Ezekiel (1992: 76) claims that the first women's studies group, first informal, later a centre, was formed in Aix-en-Provence in 1972.

³⁷ According to Ezekiel (1992: 76) a national women's studies newsletter existed in France as of 1978.

³⁸ These are: ANEF, Université de Lyon II, Université Paris IX Dauphine, Université Toulouse II le Mirail, l'équipe Simone-Sagesse, l'unité 'Démographie, genre et sociétés', Université de Paris VII Denis Diderot, and CREDAL (unité mixte de recherche CNRS-Paris III). This list does not provide an exhaustive overview of the situation of women's studies in France. The group of authors of the report consists of professors and young scholars (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 7) and is thus to be named intergenerational.

³⁹ Paris VIII was the first university to offer a women's studies seminar (Le Feuvre [1995] 2000: 187, Le Feuvre and Andriocci 2001: 98). ANEF (1995: 691) points, next to Paris-VIII Vincennes, at Paris-VII Jussieu and Aix-en-Provence. The first study groups were CEFUP in the Provence, GEF in Paris

Toulouse, and Lyon (*ibid.*: 23). On the research front, the same situation has been noticed by Andriocci *c.s.*: a large amount of women's studies research in France is dispersed through *laboratoires/ équipes* but it has no *laboratoire/ équipe* of its own (*ibid.*: 10). In line with what I mentioned above, the degree of institutionalization of women's studies in France is lower than in Europe as a whole (*ibid.*: 11) due to the anti-institutional attitude of feminist scholars (*ibid.*: 54),⁴⁰ the disciplinary structure of the French academy (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 55; *cf.* Picq 1984, ANEF 1995: 702), the miscalculation of the potential of feminist research for extra-academic organizations (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 56), and the overall universalist spirit in the country, which translates into an anti-feminism (*ibidem*: 57). In spite of all this, the authors of 'Premier recensement national' conclude:

“Malgré ce manque de soutien des institutions d’enseignement et de recherche, les réseaux qui se sont constitués dès la fin des années 70 se maintiennent, se transforment, s’adaptent, se diversifient et s’internationalisent pour durer. D’autant plus qu’un vivier relativement important de jeunes chercheur-e-s existe à ce jour dans ce champ en France” (*ibid.*: 11).

This, I want to add, is proven by the existence, as of 2003, of EFiGiES, the Association de jeunes chercheuses et chercheurs en études féministes, genre et sexualités.⁴¹ They claim “[l]a perspective d’une réflexion collective et européenne, sur une notion polysémique, dans un contexte d’interdisciplinarité et d’échanges entre générations” (EFiGiES 2006: without page number), thus situating themselves as a collective in the European academic realm and in an interdisciplinary and intergenerational context. They isolate two characteristics of their generational positioning: first, knowledge of gender on epistemological, theoretical and methodological layers, and second, knowledge of gender *and* of the critique of gender (*ibidem*; *cf.* Puig de la Bellacasa 2000b: 95-6). They equally isolate an intermediary generation of feminist researchers that have been doing pioneering work on gender in the academy (EFiGiES 2006: without page number).⁴² In this respect, the EFiGiES standpoint equals the standpoint of ANEF in ‘Études féministes et études sur les femmes en France en 1995.’ The ANEF (1995: 689-91) positions French academic feminism as a result of the extra-academic, 1970s women's movement and as a continuation of the work of pioneers in the study of women and the relations between men and women such as the work of Evelyne Sullerot (*cf.* Bard 2003: 15). The ANEF further claims that the progression of women's studies might stagnate once professors (doing women's studies, but not assigned to do so)

and CLEF in Lyon (*ibidem*). And the first research centres were *études féminines* at Paris-VIII, GRIEF in Toulouse, and groups in Nantes, Tours and Parisian institutions other than Paris-VIII (*ibid.*: 691-2).

⁴⁰ Ezekiel (1992: 82) says that nowadays this attitude is fading.

⁴¹ See www.efigies.org (last accessed: October 12, 2007). Le Feuvre (2000: 211 n. 13) argues that the supervision of gender dissertations is still a problem in France due to a structural lack of qualified researchers and a structural lack of accredited research centres.

⁴² *Cf.* Braidotti's 'infra-generation' (see Chap. 4 n. 43). Note though that Braidotti has said that it seems to be a French trait not to position oneself as an infra-generation, but to just accept that positions go to non-feminists, gender-blind researchers (O'Grady 1996). Le Feuvre and Andriocci (2001: 103) underline the first part of Braidotti's claim.

retire, leaving younger scholars (trained to do women's studies, but not welcomed to do so by the French academy in general) empty-handed (ANEF 1995: 701; *cf.* Interview AH).

In France, there are more male than female gatekeepers in the academy; but in the lower ranks a large amount of women can be found. Previous research has proved that working in a marginal field, especially women's studies, has had a negative effect on the position of women academics (Boukhobza *et al.* 2000: 12, Le Feuvre and Andriocci 2001: 102). This is what Noria Boukhobza, Huguette Delavault, and Claudine Hermann (2000: 12) claim:

“Le thème de la recherche est plus particulièrement un frein pour les femmes en sciences humaines. En particulier, le fait de travailler sur la question des femmes peut gêner pour l'obtention d'un poste dans certaines disciplines comme l'histoire. Le mot 'femme' dans des titres d'articles, de publications, provoque un réflexe de machisme et de crainte du féminisme, c'est de l'ordre de l'irrationnel. Un autre aspect, un peu plus élaboré, est que l'on pense que c'est une histoire militante, pas assez sérieuse, trop récente et qui n'a pas la même rigueur scientifique que dans une autre discipline d'histoire.”

We have seen in the preceding paragraphs that these doubts have been acted upon since the 1980s in France. This notwithstanding, France counted in the year 2001 only five senior lectureships for women's studies (Le Feuvre and Andriocci 2001: 102; *cf.* ANEF 1995: 697-700). Le Feuvre and Andriocci (2001: 102; *cf.* Andriocci 2005: 74, Interview MSJ) claim that “the creation of autonomous gender studies qualifications, departments or Faculties has, in the past, been almost unanimously rejected by feminist academics in France.” Feminist academics have, they say, opted for integration on the basis of a rational assessment of their own and their students' careers (women's studies will not give you a good career) and the disciplinary nature of the French academy (women's studies is not and will never become a discipline). In France, women's studies is almost only incarnated in the form of optional, scattered, BA courses offered by individual feminist academics (Le Feuvre and Andriocci 2001: 102). PhD trajectories in women's studies have not been accredited (*ibidem*: 104) except for the one of Toulouse II Le Mirail (Bard 2003: 23). In 1999 the French Ministry of Education *did* support a national network of gender studies scholars and institutions – RING (Le Feuvre and Andriocci 2001: 104). Le Feuvre and Andriocci (*ibidem*: 108-9; *cf.* Le Feuvre 2000) contextualize these kinds of support by mentioning the renewed interest for *parité* in the first decade of third millennium France. They (*cf.* Interview IRM) claim that women's studies scholars might be able to benefit from this trend, but they are also aware of the anti-institutional line of French feminist academics and the inclination to debunk applied research by French academics in general. In general, the French situation regarding women's studies has been said to have become paralyzed due to the following vicious circle:

“the lack of institutional support for research on gender means that few lecturers (and even fewer professors) specialise in the field > not having any experience in gender research, few tenured academics are interested in or committed to introducing gender into their teaching programmes > few students are introduced to knowledge about gender and gender inequalities during their university career > as a result, few specialise in the field and go on to do doctoral

research on gender issues (not least because it is difficult for them to find a qualified (at best) or sympathetic supervisor and because the opportunities for doctoral grants in this field are severely limited) > even once an excellent doctoral thesis has been submitted, professional prospects for the graduates are limited because there are so few higher education courses in gender studies that recruitment boards do not consider a research or teaching profile in gender studies to be a top priority > because recruitment levels of gender specialists are low, the capacity within a given university to lobby for the creation of new gender studies courses or degree programmes is weak and generally fails because the decision-making bodies within departments argue that they don't have enough tenured staff to teach them, etc., etc., etc. (Le Feuvre, 1995, reprinted in Le Feuvre 2001a : 193)" (Le Feuvre and Andriocci 2001: 115).

In spite of this, Le Feuvre (2000: 210-1) claims that women's studies in France is hampered by the government's unwillingness to provide sufficient financial support to universities. She compares French women's studies, not with other fields of study in France, but with women's studies in other European countries and claims that due to the lack of resources, French women's studies scholars can participate less frequently in international and European networks (*cf.* Interview MSJ).

In the Toulouse conference proceedings Stimpson, Judith Friedlander, and Rayna Rapp have written on women's studies in the US. The US hardly ever appears in the other texts of the volume – the (epistemological, methodological) reflections are France-based or from French-speaking regions (Quebec) or French departments at universities outside of France. The term 'women's studies' appears only in Stimpson's text. The text explains there are alternative terms, which *do appear* in translation: '*études féministes*' on the one hand and '*études des rôles sexuels*'/ '*études de genre*' on the other (Stimpson *et al.* 1984: 1023). In the concluding remarks the editors claim that

"[o]n est frappé par le gouffre qui sépare le niveau de développement des études féministes en France et dans les pays anglo-saxons (plus de trois cents programmes de Woman [sic] Studies aux Etats-Unis, sans parler des innombrables cours en dehors de ceux-ci) et la comparaison est également très défavorable à la France avec l'Allemagne ou l'Italie" (AFFER 1984: 1049).

Here we are back where we started: while the conference was France-focused, surprise about the US situation turned the France-centeredness up-side-down.⁴³ This is to a certain extent what happens also in Duchén's *Feminism in France* (see Chap. 2). Duchén (1986: 147-9) ends her book with the question "‘Anglo-Saxon’ Feminism in France?" thus implying the influentialy of a more pragmatic, hands-on approach to feminism.

I want to isolate the notion '*genre*' as one of the difficulties of/ for women's studies in France. This notion is used in France, but French women's studies scholars "*ne discute[nt] pas aisément de son usage conceptuel et des méthodes d'analyses que son emploi implique dans un travail de recherche*" (EFiGiES 2006: without page number). *Genre* is oftentimes introduced as the direct translation of 'gender.' It has been claimed that *genre* in the feminist,

⁴³ The editors also express amazement about the schism between women's studies research – thriving, the conference proved – and women's studies teaching – almost non-existent – in France (AFFER 1984: 1049). And are concerned about the schism Paris – province (*ibidem*: 1054).

rather than strictly grammatical, definition of the term is generally misrecognized in the French academy leading to its invisibility (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 16-7). This misrecognition is seen as a result of the “*caractère polysémique*” (*ibidem*: 54) of this term. EFiGiES (2006: without page number) also claims this in their article ‘Du *genre* en EFiGiES: Polyphonie sur une polysémie.’

“*EFiGiES est [...] composée d'étudiant.e.s ayant la volonté d'intégrer dans leurs recherches une perspective d'études sur les féminismes, le genre ou les sexualités, dans un pays où les 'études genres' existent de fait mais ne sont pas reconnues institutionnellement.*”

Consequently, the young gender scholars of EFiGiES claim to have difficulties situating themselves in the gender studies ‘camp’ due to conceptual confusion considered unscientific/unscholarly, the political connotation of gender, and the (strategic?) diffused/ diffusing nature of the term (*ibidem*). Most of them however *do work with ‘genre’* in their research, which causes difficulties vis-à-vis supervisors, future careers, and the usefulness of their methodological toolbox.⁴⁴

The topic I want to focus on in the remainder of this chapter – gender/ *genre* and Franco-American and intra-European dis-connections – has been discussed mainly in texts published by the Athena network. In ‘The Sex/Gender in European French-Speaking Contexts’ Puig de la Bellacasa (2000b: 94) simply claims that “[t]he problems of translation of the sex/ gender binary into French are mainly linked to the difficulties of translating the notion of ‘gender.’” By claiming that gender stems from Anglo-American women’s studies (*ibidem*) she isolates the ‘origin’ of gender *as a notion* (*cf.* women’s/ gender studies as a field/ model above) in an Anglo-American context. This strong origin story is strikingly different from Puig de la Bellacasa’s focus on a European French-speaking context (next to France, French-speaking Belgium). She *complexifies* the European context that has to deal with the common origin story. In addition, Puig de la Bellacasa shows how the French ‘*genre*’ can cut across gender and sex as binary opposites, thus claiming a French context that is theoretically more useful than the Anglo-American:

“Going deeper into grammar and *genre* it is possible [*sic*] to find a sub-distinction between ‘grammatical’ and ‘natural *genre* (as a function-derived [*sic*] analogically from grammatical gender). A word as father has a ‘natural’ masculine gender, because a father *is* a man. The constructed character [*sic*] of ‘natural’ *genre* that was pointed by the first anglo-american definitions of gender out of the cultural connotations of grammar could *also* therefore be explored through this linguistic subtleties” (*ibid.* n. 23; emphasis in original).

In what follows, I will focus upon the way that scholars who are connected to the Centre Louise Labé of the Université Lumière Lyon II deal with gender/ *genre* in their written publications. This second case study conducted, in the context of the project ‘The Generation

⁴⁴ This I base on the article just cited, but also on conversations with members of EFiGiES during the EFiGiES seminar about my PhD thesis at the Ecole normale supérieure, Lettres et sciences humaines in Lyon (February 2, 2006), and during the WeAVE weekend workshop at the University museum in Utrecht (March 3-5, 2006). In particular I want to mention conversations with Léo Thiers-Vidal, Cécile Sourd and Anna Jarry.

of European Women's Studies,' confirmed that the issue concerning 'gender/ *genre*' is being played out on the glocal, that is trans-Atlantic and intra-European, level. What I have found in my research is that to work in *French* women's studies, one needs to secure the American centeredness of the field not as a strong origin story of women's studies or gender (this is what we saw in the above), but as the constraint one subsequently *does not work to*. What I found in France was a sustainable generation/knowledge structured according to the same dynamics as the UK dynamics regarding interdisciplinarity. Neither the US gender nor the French *genre* were isolated, essentialized, debunked, or celebrated; the constraining effects of gender were scrutinized so as to (further) actualize French *genre*. Working on the glocal level, actively (dis)engaging oneself as French scholars from the US feminist academic canon, a sustainable scholarly production was brought forth. Before I move to this discussion I will introduce the CLL.

5.3.1.1 Centre Louise Labé (Université Lumière Lyon II, France)

Le Feuvre (2000: 211) lists women's studies at Lyon II amongst "the existing leading centres of feminist teaching" in France together with Paris VII, Paris VIII, Rennes II and Toulouse II. In 2003 Lyon II hosted almost 85.000 students, which made it the fourth biggest university in the country (Andriocci *et al.* 2003: 22). Women's studies at Lyon II equals the Centre Louise Labé, which, in its 2003 leaflet presents itself as follows:⁴⁵

"Le Centre Louise Labé est un centre pour l'égalité des hommes et des femmes et pour les recherches sur le genre, créé dans la tradition du Centre lyonnais d'études féministes et des enseignements Sexe et Genre – Masculin/ Féminin à l'université Lumière Lyon 2, avec le soutien du Fonds social européen. Il a pour fonction de coordonner les activités de recherche, de formation, et les actions concernant la vie universitaire portant sur ce champ; de développer la visibilité des recherches sur le Genre; de constituer une source de propositions pour l'égalité des sexes à l'Université."

The centre, employing the term '*études sur le genre*,' houses an '*observatoire*' which monitors gender (in)equality at Lyon II as well as the societal causes thereof. There is a documentation centre that coordinates the activities related to *études sur le genre* (teaching, research and publishing) at Lyon II and a confidential adviser for cases of sexual harassment. The courses that the centre offers are open to all students; and its seminars cater to the region (Rhône-Alpes), France, and Europe at large and are open to all students and researchers. It has an interdisciplinary publication series entitled 'Cahiers Masculin/Féminin.'⁴⁶ Besides course work and documentation for students, teachers and researchers, the CLL provides courses and

⁴⁵ See http://sites.univ-lyon2.fr/centre-louise-labe/IMG/pdf/DEPLIANT_louiselabe_2003.pdf (last accessed: October 12, 2007).

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*. See also the WebTV episode on the Centre Louise Labé with interviews with Annik Houel, Laurence Tain, and Annick Rivet. http://webtv.univ-lyon2.fr/article.php3?id_article=232 (last accessed: October 23, 2007).

sources for the university's co-workers who are not teachers and researchers.⁴⁷ The Centre Louise Labé also continues the activist work of the CLEF. For example, they work together with activist organizations in the field of family planning.⁴⁸ The documentation centre publishes course schedules for the entire CLL on its window and is also otherwise an address for inquiries; it is located at a visible spot at the Campus Porte des Alpes just outside Lyon. Some of the staff members have offices on the city campus. This division is the result of the multidisciplinary composition of the Centre Louise Labé team; its thirty teachers (Andriocci *c.s.* (2003: 23) counted 38) come from both the social sciences and the humanities.⁴⁹ The centre serves 500 students each year.⁵⁰ It offers an *UE Libre* (one or two *genre* courses) and an *Option* (three *genre* courses). Being part of these structures makes CLL visible on the university website and in other promotion material.⁵¹ It works especially on women's studies in the Arts, English, and Psychology (*ibidem*: 38-9).

The Centre Louise Labé was created with European funding in 2002 (Interview PaM). As mentioned it has historical roots in the CLEF. Interviewee Annik Houel said that the activities of the CLEF have finally been institutionalized as academic with the European Social Fund money given to the scholars of the CLEF for erecting the Centre Louise Labé.⁵² Students and university teachers have always been part of the women's movement in Lyon.⁵³ Feminists from Lyon have always published (mainly historically oriented) texts for a broader audience, but based on academically rigorous research (CLEF 1989: 172-3). The 1985 CNRS funding (see above) furthered this tradition. It made it possible, first of all, to treat the women's movement itself as an (historical) object of study, and secondly, to conduct research on the women's movement within an academic setting, among others within the CLEF (*ibid.*: 173 n. 12). In the Toulouse conference proceedings the CLEF wrote 'Histoire du M.L.F. a Lyon de 1968 a 1980: Elements pour une recherche feministe.' A collective consisting of the authors of Chronique d'une passion: Le mouvement de libération des femmes à Lyon (Catherine Guinchard, Annik Houel, Brigitte Lhomond, Patricia Mercader, Helga Sobota and Michèle Bridoux) and Claire Auzias claimed that writing the history of the women's movement required a feminist research methodology on the basis of a *specific* relation between feminist research object, feminist research subject, and the fact that the subjects have participated in the object (CLEF 1984b: 130; *cf.* CLEF 1984a). Most importantly, the group

⁴⁷ Personal conversation with Dumé Allaix, the secretary of the CLL, February 7, 2006.

⁴⁸ Interview AH.

⁴⁹ See this Chap. n. 45. The number thirty was mentioned in Interviews MCG, PaM.

⁵⁰ See this Chap. n. 47.

⁵¹ See www.univ-lyon2.fr (last accessed: October 5, 2007) and booklet 'Unités d'enseignement libres 2005-2006.'

⁵² See this Chap. n. 46.

⁵³ *E.g.* in an important October 1974 pamphlet '*militantes de divers mouvements ou n'appartenant à aucun, engagées dans des pratiques diverses, employées, ouvrières, enseignantes ou étudiantes*' were asked to join a meeting (CLEF 1989: 27)

claims, this requires feminists to work across “*le Privé et le Politique, le Je et le Nous, le Temps affectif et le Temps politique, la Mémoire féminine et la Mémoire instituée etc*” (CLEF 1984b: 132). *Chronique d'une passion* is the result of the two outcomes of the CNRS funding (cf. *Recherches* 1989: 107-13) and the epistemology laid out in ‘Histoire du M.L.F. a Lyon.’ *Chronique d'une passion* situates the downfall of the women's movement (cf. Whelehan 1995, criticized in this dissertation) in the activities of the CLEF. In 1979-80 the feminists in Lyon started to professionalize at the expense of the autonomous women's movement. At that time, the CLEF started to direct their activist activities towards the university (CLEF 1989: 215).

5.3.2 ‘*le terme genre est un anglicisme*’⁵⁴

A major volume on ‘*genre*’ published in French is *Sexe et genre* edited by Marie-Claude Hurtig, Michèle Kail and Hélène Rouch. At the Centre Louise Labé this volume, originally published in 1991 but re-issued in 2002, is used in classes as a foundational text⁵⁵ and the book itself is very visible in the campus bookstore. Additionally, four out of the thirty contributors to the book are from the CLEF/ CLL (Houel, Mercader, Lhomond, and Christine Planté). In the ‘Avant-Propos’ (2002: 3) the editors claim that *Sexe et genre* was the first volume to discuss the distinction between sex and gender in the French language, and as such, they say, it marks a turning point in the French field of women's studies. They also claim that, the usage of *genre* in France is not equal to the usage of gender in the Anglo-American realm, “[c]’est ainsi que les incitations européennes à plus d’égalité entre les sexes sont toujours formulées en terme de ‘gender’, traduit ‘genre’ en français” (*ibidem*: 9). Here, the authors conform to the traditional scale; it is a dominant (Anglo-US) or a larger (European) instance that has brought/ brings the use of gender to France. They also claim, however, that the fact that gender does not reconfirm determinisms and schisms between, for instance the bodily and the social (see below), can sanitize discussions predicated on the incommensurability between science/ scholarship and feminism. They conclude on a generational note:

“Le terme genre, lui, apparaît probablement plus policé que le terme sexe et, du coup, il devient plus acceptable de s’intéresser à ce qui a trait inégalités de sexe. Les institutions se sont engouffrées dans cette terminologie rafraîchie et en font, contrairement, à la plupart des chercheurs, un usage exclusif” (ibid.).

In the ‘original’ Introduction Hurtig *c.s.* ([1991] 2002: 11) claims that the move away from ‘the’ woman as an object of research to the study of the power relations between men and women happened both in Europe and in North-America. The distinction between sex and gender *as such* is being defined as follows:

⁵⁴ Lhomond 1997: without page number.

⁵⁵ Class outline RML.

“La distinction sexe/ genre visait donc à mettre en question la réalité de la puissance explicative du sexe biologique, du lien, jusque là considéré comme évident et inéluctable, entre les différences biologiques et les différences psychologiques et sociales” (*ibidem*: 13).

The authors thus engage in an immediate *questioning* of the use of the *distinction* between sex and gender; it might result in a stifling of the debate, *i.e.* in an overlooking of the effects of gendered culture and psychology on sex and an overlooking of the unfixed nature of sex on culture and psychology (*ibid.*: 14). The authors claim that whereas they believe in the interrelation between sex and gender, and do not focus (like Anglo-US scholars) on gender alone (*ibid.*: 16), the French should not forget that they have always had De Beauvoir’s notion ‘the second sex’ (*ibid.*: 14).⁵⁶

In her review of the re-issued textbook, Natacha Chetcuti (2002-2003: 61; *cf.* Interview MSJ) underlines the French ambivalence about (new) Anglo-American gender theory when she claims:

“Dans leur nouvel avant-propos, Hurtig, Kail et Rouch précisent qu’une réflexion sur les rapports entre sexe et genre est toujours pertinente à condition de réévaluer l’articulation entre sexe, genre et sexe social. En menant ce projet, elles critiquent les théories queer en reprochant principalement à ce courant de pensée, issu des années 1990, de ne pas considérer dans son analyse sur le genre la visée matérielle des rapports sociaux de sexe. Il apparaît que le rapport de domination et d’asymétrie entre les classes de sexe est le point d’accord de toutes les analyses présentées dans ces textes. Une perspective matérialiste des rapports sociaux de sexe semble aussi être un principe théorique commun aux auteurs.”⁵⁷

One of the Lyon scholars writing in *Sexe et genre*, literary scholar Planté ([1991] 2002: 51), claims that in the French context, *genre* cannot do the meta-discursive work gender has been doing in the Anglo-American world, and will eventually, due to conceptual confusion, re-naturalize conceptualizations of the relations between men and women (*ibidem*: 56). This is exactly what other Lyon contributors prove, working not in the domain of literature, but on current-day Law and 19th Century medical discourse. Mercader ([1991] 2002: 81), who comments in her article on the way in which the law treats transsexuals/ people requesting sex change, shows how gender/ *genre* has been used in opposition to sexuality (in the context of transsexuality, gender identity, as opposed to sexuality and sex, has been treated as linear and unproblematic) and biology (when we are no longer supposed to talk about sex). Especially the bipolar nature of gender/ gender identity is usually left undiscussed (see, however, Houel [1991] 2002). Lhomond ([1991] 2002: 112) works on medical discourses. She shows how claims in which homosexuals and intersexed people are directed to a third-sex position are predicated on a binarism (man vs. woman) and makes the persons in question “*mauvais genre*.” This, I would like to claim, is an instance of ‘doing *genre*.’ It is not only mainstream theories of biological sex they deal with ‘from a gender perspective,’ but also mainstream

⁵⁶ Other texts available were French materialist feminist texts, early work of Gayle Rubin (Interview LT, Class AH), and Joan Scott (Interview CP).

⁵⁷ In the ‘Avant-Propos’ queer theory is connected to theories of *identity*, which are being criticized throughout the book (Hurtig *et al.* 2002: 7; *ibidem*: 7 n. 7).

instances of cultural, in fact *Anglo-American* gender. They work, as I suggested above, *not to* any of the distinctions (national, disciplinary) that gender erects. This does not result in a celebration of *genre* though. It results in doing *genre*, but never at a national level (antithesis to the US tradition) or on a monolayer (antithesis to either biological sex or sociological gender). *Genre* is played out as *glocal*. Let me continue this discussion by referring to the interview excerpts.

After overlooking the interviews I undertook with the scholars of the Centre Louise Labé on their publication politics around the Cahiers Masculin/Féminin⁵⁸ it became clear that the material arrangement of publication is characterized by the interplay between the generated Anglo-American gender and the generative *genre*. Gender is being defined as (Anglo-) US; and CLL scholars read what comes out in the US dominated field of gender studies:

“It is quite difficult to resume it, but first of all one has the impression that ehm in the American studies, gender studies, like Judith Butler and so on, the French read them, very often finding interesting the initial idea or the hint they find in the book and so on and then very quickly you come to criticize like it is too radical or you have to put it in an historical frame and you have to... so there is really a gap between the two [...]” (Interview IRM).

In other words, the French scholars read the texts coming out in US gender studies, engage with it, but start to disengage relatively quickly. Asking about the canon shared by the researchers, interviewee Ingeborg Rabenstein-Michel says that a French canon is being actualized:

“Very often the references are French. Kristeva, Badinter, etc. they are very often French. Judith Butler [...]. Very often she is in the references, in *texts*. But very often it is French, Italian [---] eventually people like Lessing and so on. But in the 70s and 80s there were many publications in French. It was really a publication ehm the first books of Badinter for example [...] and it existed til the beginning of the 80s in Lyon. [...] But the references are yes Kristeva, Badinter, Perrot. I don't really see... very often they are references to books that are new. It is not references to the 70s or 80s, but very often you have to go back to the 80s” (*ibidem*).

In this fragment, we see the constraining elements of the French second-wave feminist movement as well as the constraints put on the French by the Anglo-US canon are mentioned *alongside* the generation of an (emerging) French canon. French writing is being defined as under the influence of the two constraints *and* as forming a canon of its own. This particular situation has to be positioned on a *glocal* level but firmly situated in a *singular* academic realm:

“*Je suis vraiment un produit du système français. C'est à dire que je suis plutôt favorable à l'intégration d'une dimension de genre dans les disciplines, dans toutes les disciplines [---] À un moment donné, mon université, Lyon II, a souhaité que les études genres soient visibles dans les schémas des formations offertes par l'université, il a donc fallu apparaître un diplôme spécifique. J'enseigne désormais une spécialité de master recherche 'Masculin/Féminin: études sur le genre.'* Mais je donne aussi des cours selon n problématique de genre en dehors de ce master. J'occupe vraiment une double position, aussi bien dans la recherche

⁵⁸ Edited volumes published so far: Houel and Zancarini-Fournel eds 2001, Stistrup Jensen ed 2001, Planté ed 2002, and Mercarder and Tain eds 2003.

que dans l'enseignement: d'une part, complètement littéraire (spécialiste du XIXe siècle), d'autre part, très engagée dans les gender studies (y compris interdisciplinaires)" (Interview CP).

The characteristics of such a *product* of the French academic system resemble that of a split subject. This split subject is a subject unwilling to work to gender and is unable to work to gender due to institutional constraints:

"Je suis professeure – académiquement parlant, mon poste est un poste de littérature française du XIXe siècle – et j'enseigne des cours de littérature, et des cours que j'appelle 'masculin/ féminin,' parce que 'gender' n'est pas maintenant académiquement reconnu et que genre pose des problème de compréhension en littérature (à cause des genres littéraires). [...] Il y a une quinzaine d'années, c'était une position difficile, d'une part parce que les études sur les femmes, les études féministes, les women's studies paraissaient en France très peu légitimes. Surtout dans les études littéraires où, quand quelque chose existait, c'était de façon totalement identifiée au point de vue de l'écriture féminine. Donc une pensée féministe critique sur la littérature, ou le point de vue du gender, apparaissait comme quelque chose d'étrange, et d'étranger par rapport à la tradition française" (Interview CP).

A first unwillingness pertains to gender as such:

"Gender in English and genre in French are not really the same thing, but they are used in a similar manner. Gender has sometimes the same use as ethnicity. Not to say 'race,' not to say 'ethnicity'" (Interview BL).

In the French-language interviews gender was used, whereas the English speaking interviewees used *genre*. As one of the interviewees explained:

"La polysémie du mot genre n'est pas la même en français qu'en anglais, c'est à la fois un problème de mots et un problème théorique. J'utilise le mot, en particulier quand je travaille, en littérature, sur le genre (gender) des genres (littéraires), ce qui a initié tout un champ d'études. Mais je préfère désigner l'ensemble du champ d'enseignement et de recherche que je développe par masculin/ féminin – tout en sachant que cette formule peut difficilement valoir pour toutes les disciplines" (Interview CP).

The same dynamics came to the fore in the context of lesbian and gay studies (equally put in English) (Interview LT). Apart from the doubts French *genre* scholars have, doubts come from outside the disciplines as well:

"Ajeurs en France il n'y a pas une stabilisation de concept. Alors actual chacun met son genre sans compter. [...] Ils l'utilisent à la plaît de texte, avec les questionnaires dans lesquelles on met le genre à la plaît de texte. C'est un peu la mode. C'est un peu la mode avec de forte résistance [---] sur l'idée de domination masculine. Les écoles Bourdieuiennes travaillent sur la culture populaire. Ils sont pour la plupart très résistants aux approches en termes de la domination masculine, mais [---] on parle d'un système d'hierarchie. [...] Beaucoup de travaux de sociologues veulent evacuer la dimension de la domination [---] Je pense qu'on peut pas evacuer ça" (Interview MCG).

"In France people don't like interdisciplinarity. You are a sociologist, an anthropologist, a social psychologist. But not more than that. Also terms like gender studies are problematic in France, because what is it? Sociology, anthropology or what?" (Interview RML).

By overlooking the way interviewees employed the terms gender/ *genre*, double and glocal dynamics comes to the fore. They were doing *genre* but they were always dis-connected from gender. The above fragments, show how the issues of institutionalization ('*tres peu légitimement*'), (inter)disciplinarity, and the trans-Atlantic (and intra-European) dis-connections are interlinking aspects in French academia.

I have studied the general preface and the specific introductions to the four volumes of the Cahiers Masculin/Féminin that were available and in which the cahiers, in general, and the subsequent issues are positioned. The general preface introduces the Cahiers as follows:

“L'évolution de la place des femmes dans la société, des rapports entre hommes et femmes, la redéfinition de leurs rôles, le renouvellement des représentations culturelles et symboliques de la différence des sexes constituent des préoccupations et des enjeux majeurs de notre époque, qui ne peuvent se saisir et s'analyser qu'à la lumière d'une approche interdisciplinaire. [...] Dans un domaine où existent en France très peu de publications universitaires de ce type, ils visent un public d'étudiants de troisième cycle et de chercheurs.”

In addition to the reference to interdisciplinarity and the ‘next generation’,⁵⁹ this introduction of the *cahiers* emphasizes the field of studies by *enumerating* feminist achievements (*‘l'évolution de la place des femmes dans la société, des rapports entre hommes et femmes, la redéfinition de leurs rôles, le renouvellement des représentations culturelles et symboliques de la différence des sexes’*) rather than opting for one specific denominator (e.g. *études de genre*). Only the term ‘*rapports entre hommes et femmes*’ reminds us of ‘*rapports sociaux de sexe*,’ i.e. one of the field's denominators available in France. In Houel's introduction to the issue on *la mixité*, France is always mentioned alongside either Europe or the US/ Anglo-saxon world. The topic of *mixité* or co-education itself is being introduced as a question to which “*autres pays occidentaux*” have responded differently (Houel 2001: 5). Subsequently, the French solution – integration – is being differentiated from “*une stratégie séparatiste qu'elle dit identitaire, plus présente dans les pays anglo-saxons en particulier*” (*ibidem*). The ‘other Western countries’ mentioned earlier are thus narrowed down to ‘Anglo-Saxon countries’ when the actual strategies are compared.⁶⁰ This happens more often in the text when ‘US scholars’ are staged immediately after ‘the French context’ is invoked or vice versa (*ibid.*: 7). It also happens in the other texts of the *cahiers*, often alongside a reference to Europe thus re-constituting the trans-Atlantic, Cartesian cut. This is an example:

“On s'en doute [...] dont témoigne bien l'âpre débat français actuel sur la féminisation des noms de métiers et de fonctions. Les défenseurs de la langue française [...] voient une atteinte à l'intégrité de la langue et de la nation dans cette féminisation, qui ne serait qu'une pâle copie d'une ‘certaine Amérique bruyante et éphémère’ – la question a pourtant déjà son histoire en Europe” (Stistrup Jensen 2001: 7).

When the organizing principle of the volume on co-education is being introduced – genre ‘*traduction du*’ gender – the same dynamic is at play:

⁵⁹ Both Houel (2001: 6) and Planté (2002: 5) start their introductions in an earlier century, jump to the women's movement of the 1970s and subsequently to the present. In ‘Être jeune féministe aujourd'hui: les rapports de génération dans le mouvement féministe contemporain’ Henneron (2005: 99) claims that the reading of feminist texts, especially inside the women's studies classroom, however limited women's studies in France is, is important for the building of a new generation of ‘activist’ feminists in France.

⁶⁰ In their chapter ‘The UK’ Griffin and Hanmer (2002: 16) write about co-education in the UK: “Women's Studies is an all-female domain within a coeducational education system in a cultural context in which sex segregation is practised in specific ways designed to preserve male domains.”

“Les prémisses de la remise en question de la mixité se font donc sur le terrain, dans la pratique, mais sont évidemment concomitantes, et en lien, avec tout un bouillonnement intellectuel qui va se théoriser les années suivantes dans le concept de genre, traduction du genre américain. [...] On voit [...] combien cette question du genre nécessite une interdisciplinarité particulièrement féconde et en tant que telle une ouverture européenne, dans la mesure où les disciplines sont souvent moins cloisonnées qu’en France ou du moins suivant d’autres lignes de partage” (Houel 2001: 6-7).

Here we see that gender is recognized and acknowledged, but that it is seen as a ‘genre’ in the sense of a ‘kind of’ study: Houel uses the phrase “genre *de constatations*” (*ibidem*: 7; emphasis added) for the type of statements made by scholars using gender in the field of education. This refers back to the double, glocal move theorized above. Interviewee Houel summarized the overall dynamics as follows:

“Je ne parle pas sur les grands textes américains. [...] C’est notre problème. I y avait des recherches [---], mais ils étaient en anglais” (Interview AH).

What I found in the Lyon case study is that French scholars do not talk to the American texts, *i.e.* do not work to them, but dis-connect from them. In sum: “genre *n’a en français ni exactement les mêmes sens, ni la même histoire que l’anglais gender*” (Planté [1991] 2002: 51). This dynamic however, is being played out on the glocal level. By not situating one’s research on the glocal level the dynamics change. An example is the celebration of the American frame in the ‘Avant-propos’ in the issue on masculinity. Here, the French context goes unmentioned and the study of masculinity is being differentiated from both equality and difference feminism, and has allegedly been inscribed in the *Butlerian*, *i.e.* Anglo-US tradition of materialist feminism (Mercader and Tain 2003: 5-6).

When looking at the generational aspect of gender/ *genre* I found that the productivity of glocality can be undone by a linear temporality. This is what interviewee Rabenstein-Michel claimed:

*“there is quite a *clivage* between the American conception of gender and the French. There was quite a different evolution. Ehhm perhaps there is one thing I find very interesting in France, I don’t know how it has happened in the United States... You have the impression that gender today is the concern of ehlm women from the sixties generation when you had to fight for abortion, for rights and so on. [...] I think perhaps what I would obtain at the end of [the course we have been talking about] [...] is perhaps to reproduce this interest for feminism, gender studies, and so on. It is not only theory and it can change very quickly” (Interview IRM)*

This is exactly what the younger generation of third-wave feminists pleads for. In ‘Être jeune féministe aujourd’hui: les rapports de génération dans le mouvement féministe contemporain’ Henneron (2005: 99) claims that the reading of feminist texts, especially in the women’s studies classroom (however limited women’s studies in France is), is important for the building of a new generation of ‘activist’ feminists in France. It is also important that this exchange is not premised on a conceptualization of generationality predicated on sociological age. This is how interviewee Rabenstein-Michel continued:

“Hélène Cixous, Badinter, Kristeva, Irigaray, Michele Perrot, [...] les grandes dames des questions des femmes, of gender studies. You see their age; they are great but perhaps today

you would need something more dynamic. [...] There is one generation where nothing happened, let's say. And now it jumped to Ni putes ni soumises and they are probably the most active, the most representative of gender questions and so on. They come from another background; they are not at all linked to the French fight for feminism and so on in the 60s and 70s. And for them it is all very theoretical and [---] it has become something very *académique*. [...] I think there is really a gap between which was theorized, intellectual, researched and so on, and now ehhm you know talking about what you live in the *cit *, what you dealt with and so on and there is something missing, in my eyes" (Interview IRM)

Rabenstein-Michel claims that a 'jump' has occurred but this is not the kind of generational 'jumping' this dissertation has theorized, *i.e.* the jump as a bridging of what has seemed non-exhaustive (see Conclusion). The account given is premised on a paradox: women's studies is and is not being positioned in the here and now. The *grandes dames* are still writing (a women's studies in the here and now) but the young feminists are not. The *grandes dames* continuing the project of women's studies do not seem to be exchanged with the activists of Ni putes ni soumises. The latter seem to need something that differs from highly theoretical scholarship (a women's studies in the past). The interviewee seems to blame the *grandes dames* for not engaging with issues such as class, ethnicity, and religion (the key issues of Ni putes ni soumises). The Cartesian cut between the academic generation (reverted to the past) and the activist generation of the present is underscored by a Cartesian cut between the overdetermined *cit * and the unmentioned location of academia and produces a 'lost generation,' a generation 'where nothing happened.' This is precisely the generation of the feminist scholars who are part of the construction of women's studies. They have *worked on* Cixous, Badinter, Kristeva, Irigaray, and Perrot, but have not bought into the French feminism produced in the US. The generative work of this infra-generation⁶¹ is being left out in the excerpts given above and this has stifling effects. The result being the evaporation of gender/*genre*, 'a gap between which was theorized, intellectual, researched and so on, and now!' This is the conclusion: generation/knowledge, based on the way in which it is being played out in France, has a spatial dimension (glocality) and a temporal dimension (past, present and future). The generativity of glocality (dis-connecting with the dominant gender theories) can be undone by a temporality that is linear (both gender and *genre* disappear).

5.3.3 R sum 

In the above paragraph, I have discussed how French scholars deal with gender/*genre* and have tried to answer the question of *how* European women's studies publications in the French language actualize in intra-action with English as the dominant language that has brought forth the dominant term 'gender.' I have attempted to show how the glocal level is constitutive of * tudes sur le genre*; *genre* actualizes on the basis of a dis-connection with the Anglo-US gender. The stifling of generation/knowledge that came to the fore in the last

⁶¹ See Chap. 4 n. 43.

section will be picked up in the following paragraph. I have shown that the stifling was based on a temporally linear generationality that can undo the generativity that occurs on the basis of the spatial non-linearity (*i.e.* glocality).

5.4 The Institutional and The Personal

5.4.1 Introduction: Case Studies are *Singular* Studies

The third case study deals with institutionalization. A vast body of knowledge is available on institutionalizing women's studies in the different European countries and regions. In the previous section I showed that localities (countries, regions, Europe as such) do not pre-exist, but should be viewed as materializing in research against the background of the materialized/the generated. I have proved that 'European women's studies' and instances of 'women's studies in Europe' are not necessarily the largest and smallest unit of a predetermined chain. A similar move is necessary within a framework of *time*. I argued: not only should the *location* of women's studies be seen as oscillatory, but also its *past, present, and future*. The studies on institutionalization of women's studies in Europe usually treat time as progressive; the process of institutionalization is said to have a certain predetermined goal summarized in the well-known dilemma of integration vs. autonomy or the dual-track policy (the additive solution to this dichotomy). In this section, I will review the existing body of knowledge on institutionalization. I will contrast this body of knowledge with third-wave materialist insights in and approaches to institutionalization through generation/knowledge. I will show how a third-wave materialist approach to case study research treats cases as *singularities*, refraining from predeterminations such as the case's spatiotemporal boundaries.

The study of the institutionalization of women's studies has been conducted on distinct levels – European, national, and local. These studies usually situate an 'agreeable' 'degree' of 'institutionalization' in the 1990s (*cf.* Lykke *et al.* 2001: 10). An important study of the institutionalization of women's studies from a *European* (comparative) perspective was part of the 2001-2003 project 'Employment and Women's Studies: The Impact of Women's Studies Training on Women's Employment in Europe' (EWSI) directed by Prof. Griffin from (then) the University of Hull in the UK. In a synthetical vein the project claimed that institutionalization of women's studies in Europe takes place in four to six phases: activism, establishment, professionalization (integration or disciplinization), and autonomy (Silius 2002: 41, 44; Griffin 2005: 89-90). Despite disclaimers, according to which, the "phases are neither necessarily sequential, nor do they occur in exactly the same order" (Griffin 2005: 89) and the institutionalization as such is a *process* (Silius 2002: 41), institutionalization is envisioned to be *completed or not* (*ibidem*: 42). The project worked with certain quantitative

and qualitative indicators (number of chairs, recognition of the field, etc.) where degrees of institutionalization were to be determined. The project thus conceptualized 'institutionalization' as measurable and institutionalization at distinct places as comparable. Such indicators, however, should not be taken for granted. This is how the indicators have been criticized: comparing national situations according to predetermined typologies (e.g. using the phases as one's yardstick) brings with it the erasure of important national differences, the comparison exercise has been dominated by the autonomy 'vs.' integration debate, it has been argued that institutionalization should be seen as inherently connected to the issue of careers (see below), and institutionalization has been said to be rupturous ('making progress' when the university is in crisis or flux)⁶² rather than smooth process (Barazetti and Leone 2003: 6-12). This enumeration shows that it is the *indicators* that have been criticized, not the comparison as such. The EWSI project claims that "contextual factors and country-specific histories play a key role in the institutionalization of Women's Studies" (Griffin 2005: 92) and that *the way in which* institutionalization manifests itself differs from country to country and from context to context (*ibidem*: 91). This, we can conclude, is only paid lip service to as a comparison *is* conducted and indicators *are* used for making concluding remarks about the state of institutionalization of European women's studies as a whole as well as of women's studies in separate European countries.⁶³ The conclusion of EWSI reads as follows:

"As our project showed, nowhere in Europe is this process complete, and although Women's Studies is very well established in many north-western European countries such as Germany, the Netherlands, Finland, Sweden and the UK, it still operates nowhere on a par with more traditional disciplines" (*ibid.*: 90).

I want to argue that European, comparative research projects, such as the EWSI project, re-confirm a progress narrative that follows the logic of the academic mainstream: an *autonomous* unit is postulated as the desirable outcome of an institutionalization process that started back in time with supposedly scattered women's studies courses strongly connected to feminisms outside the academy (the so-called activist phase) (*cf.* Silius 2002: 44, Interview IRM above). By postulating the *abandonment* of strong bonds with extra-university feminisms as inherently 'better' for students and for the production of high quality scholarship due to the isolation of such a phase in the past, *i.e.* as *rudimentary*. I read this narrative as one that is predicated on a dialecticism ('academy is not activism') which can only lead to nostalgic claims about academic feminism being in a state of crisis that should retrieve its bond with the extra-academic (see for instance Griffin 2005: 108). Studies that

⁶² In 'Beyond Nostalgia and Celebration: Contexts for Academic Women's Studies in Contemporary Universities' Puig de la Bellacasa (2001b) argues that these crises are the move from elite to mass university and the move towards a market driven university.

⁶³ The same goes for Michel 2001 and Delhez et al. 1998. It should be noted that in the three cases a comparison is *commissioned* by the EU or another governing body.

assume institutionalization according to a process with a clear-cut goal are simultaneously narcissistic about its post-activist present of women's studies. I want to claim that this is a paralyzing double bind (*cf.* Introduction, Chap. 2). Due to that fact that activism and the academy are defined as each other's diametrical opposites this debate is nothing more than a never-ending dialecticist game.

A further problem with comparative studies, such as the one just reviewed, concerns the postulation of 'units' such as 'women's studies in Finland,' 'women's studies in Estonia,' and so forth. In comparative studies the units as a group are supposed to provide a representative sample of, in this case, the institutionalization of women's studies in Europe. From a new materialist point of view these assumptions are problematic in several ways. First, comparative studies usually start from single (European) nation case studies that are *brought* into contact/ *interaction* with one another (*cf.* Zmroczek and Duchon 1989: 603). In the previous paragraph, I argued that research on women's studies usually essentializes national states of affairs; here these states of affair are assumed *not to come about* in co-constitution or glocally. Isolating units overlooks the possibly co-constitutive nature of institutionalization processes or other issues. Furthermore, *national* case studies on institutionalization usually employ the same assumptions as the comparative ones. Often the phase model is reproduced in national studies in which the situation of women's studies institutionalization at distinct universities (again: predetermined units rather than units that materialize in research) in one country are compared. In all instances mentioned so far what is not studied is the materialization of boundaries.

In the context of national studies on the institutionalization of women's studies in Europe an exemplary case is the study of the institutionalization of women's studies in the Netherlands. These studies are abundant (*cf. e.g.* Brouns 1988, Grotenhuis 1989, Braidotti 1993, Brouns and Harbers 1994, Bosch 2002)⁶⁴ and they usually draw conclusions by synthesizing the degree of institutionalization of women's studies at distinct Dutch universities, and by describing the national field of force surrounding the discipline. This field of force consists of academic and national policy making such as university reforms, the national political climate and its history, the effects of religion or pillarization/ consociational democracy, and the history and state of the art of the Dutch women's movement, etc. More importantly, the Dutch studies have created what is called the 'Dutch case,' the paradox of a so-called tolerant country that appears to be not so tolerant when it comes to women in science. This case includes the paradox of a relatively (!) high degree of institutionalization of women's studies (an instance of 'tolerance') in a context characterized by a dramatically low degree of emancipation of women (measured by participation in the (academic) labour force,

⁶⁴ See also www.genootschapvrouwenstudies.nl (last accessed: September 21, 2007).

etc.) in general. When reviewing this body of knowledge special attention should be paid to Braidotti's article 'Women's Studies at the University of Utrecht.' This article deals with women's studies at a Dutch university as well as the Dutch case in general. Braidotti *contrasts* rather than compares women's studies in the Netherlands with women's studies in other European countries. She focuses on qualitative rather than quantitative indicators without making clear statements about the degree of institutionalization of women's studies (at different universities in) in the Netherlands. The contrasting/ diffraction exercise is conducted in a relational manner and focuses on the way in which Dutch feminism, including Dutch women's studies, should be seen as situated at the crossroads of European and American feminism (Braidotti 1993: 314-5; see also above). Braidotti treats women's studies on the European, national, and local level as *intransitive*. The Utrecht case study is a *singular* case study which can provide insight in the ways in which the mentioned levels intra- rather than interact in specific themes such as what institutionalization *does* and does not do for women's studies, and how institutionalization *per se* works. In this article, theory and the practices of institutionalization end up mutually reinforcing one another: it is institutionalization and attempts at changing the academy that lead to theoretical questions, and theory that leads to practical issues concerning institutionalization (but also intra- and inter-continental issues and interdisciplinarity).⁶⁵ I want to label this move new materialist: in this *singular* undertaking levels become *leveling*, relations become *relationality*, etc.

In my study I researched institutionalization, as well as the other two topics intra- and intercontinental dis-connections and interdisciplinarity, via *singular* studies too. I looked at intra- and intercontinental dis-connections in Lyon, institutionalization in Linköping, and interdisciplinarity in Lancaster. *Local* studies of women's studies are usually herstories of departments, featuring the most important names, dates, and events, *i.e.*, as Jeannette van der Sanden calls it, 'institutional lifelines' (Van der Sanden 2003b; *cf.* Hanmer 2000). With this term Van der Sanden (2003b: 9-10) refers to "institutional twists and turns described [...] in a strict chronological order" while claiming that "'the management of insecurity' affects to a point the content matter of the field, its curriculum development and research agenda" (*ibidem*: 10). Experimenting with *singular* studies, I did not approach the local level nor did I study the three issues from the bottom upwards in an anti-epistemological vein (*cf.* Chap. 3). I also did not follow the local, national, or comparative studies in which researchers situate themselves and their topic in a predetermined context. Rather than writing a 'biography' of institutions such as the Institute for Women's Studies, the Centre Louise Labé or Tema Genus, and situating them according to certain parameters, or reviewing the successes and

⁶⁵ An additional example is Mineke Bosch's 'Women in Science: A Dutch Case?' which is an article inquiring, among other things, the *effects* of the famous publication on nepotism and sexism in peer review procedures in Nature (Wennerås and Wold 1997) on the Dutch case (Bosch 2002: 515 *ff.*).

failures of institutionalizing women's studies in Linköping, this study conceptualizes the institutionalization process in a new materialist way. This entails the study of institutionalization as actualization, not as a cause or predetermined effects. Dealing with the singular – not the exemplary nor the strictly individual – should not be read as the micro-level in the context of national and European studies on (institutionalization of) women's studies. What I intended to do was based on the following claim: I want to argue that the above studies in the end do not gather data about *how* institutionalization *works* but how it *is done*. We have seen predetermined yardsticks and assumptions about interacting units; but *can* these yardsticks be predetermined and *does* interaction occur between clearly delineable units? Generation/knowledge implies that infrastructural features (such as local, national or European policy making or funding) are not static nor the cause of predictable successes or failures of the institutionalization processes.

For this study I focused on the institutionalization of *postgraduate* women's studies, in more precise terms interdisciplinary gender studies, in Linköping, Sweden. The study provided insight in the way in which institutionalization is a non-linear process, *i.e.* a continuous negotiation of boundaries, between several institutional 'layers' or 'levels' and between the institutional and the personal. I also found a constant negotiation of *what it is* that needs institutionalization. For this study I interviewed PhD candidates who are standing on the brink of an academic career; they are neither students (as MA's they have qualified themselves for working in the academy...) nor full-fledged scholars (...yet working on their PhD they are being *trained* for research). A standpoint theorist would probably characterize PhD students as outsiders within. What I am interested in is the negotiations of boundaries when it comes to institutionalizing something 'new' (not only in the case of PhD research that one tries to get institutionalized as something new!), and in the way in which this 'new' is both cause and effect of institutionalization. The research question I focused on reads:

how do European women's studies institutions actualize in intra-action with a larger university/ faculty/ institute, with other (local) European women's studies institutions?

I shall begin by providing a brief characterization of the research setting: Tema Genus.

5.4.1.1 Tema Genus (Linköpings Universitet, Sweden)

Tema Genus⁶⁶ is located at Linköpings Universitet. This university was founded in 1975 and is famous for its innovative character and for its focus on engineering and the natural sciences. This image extends far beyond the Nordic countries and is sustained through the

⁶⁶ 'Genus' is not the direct translation of gender. As Kari Jegerstedt (2000: 24) claims:

"Whereas gender, and its Scandinavian translation 'socialt kjønn', highlights the split between biology and culture, 'genus' is to accentuate the manner in which the two are intertwined."

The widespread use of *genus* in Sweden suffered from a backlash in around the year 2000 (*ibidem*: 25). Note the fact that Puig de la Bellacasa (2000b; *cf.* Interviews AH and BL, Claude-Mathieu 1971 in Lhomond 1997, Varikas 2006: 39) also uses 'social sex' to explain *genre* in the context of gender.

university's wide network of partnership agreements with other universities. Linköpings Universitet consists of roughly 25 multidisciplinary departments and hosts more than 25.000 undergraduate students, 1.500 graduate students, and 3.500 employees.⁶⁷ The Swedish government has been striving towards 'universal higher education' since 1993 (Holm 2001: 173), and according to Holm (*ibidem*: 175-6), it additionally strives for gender equality in higher education *as well as* for the promotion of Sweden in the EU through the enforcement of this Law.⁶⁸ In 2002-03 63% of the students completing higher education in Sweden were female and 37% male (SCB 2004: 32). Contrary to this, of the *teachers* in higher education in Sweden, 41% are women and 59% men. The gender disparity is the largest amongst professors (14% female against 86% male), and junior, lecturer positions are the only situations where there are more women than men (*ibidem*: 33). At Linköpings Universitet 51% of the employees are women and 49% men. The women are relatively young – 57% is below 25, and only 12% above 34.⁶⁹ Striving towards the goal of gender equality in the academy is accompanied by the implicit and explicit promotion of gender research/ women's studies⁷⁰ by the Swedish government. Other important, nation-wide organizations that are concerned with research funding have also supported the development of women's studies from the late 1970s onwards (Lundberg 2004: 85). It is hard to ignore the irony of Holm's observations according to which, women's studies is being promoted not for its own sake but for the sake of the State. Despite the collaborationism that might be its cause, it should be noted that nowadays at *every* university or university college in Sweden women's studies activities are to be found (*ibidem*: 84), and there is a strong tendency towards national⁷¹ (as well as Nordic⁷² and international⁷³) co-ordination of these activities (Holm 2001, Lundberg 2004).

⁶⁷ Information from Linköpings University Facts and Figures 2003.

⁶⁸ Sweden has been an EU member since 1995. See http://europa.eu/abc/european_countries/eu_members/sweden/index_en.htm (last accessed: September 4, 2007).

⁶⁹ See this Chap. n. 56.

⁷⁰ See below for the way in which 'women's studies' is denominated in Sweden.

⁷¹ *E.g.* the National Graduate School of Gender Studies, which is state funded and located at Umeå University. See www.umu.se/genusforskning/index_eng.html (last accessed: August 22, 2007). See also the co-operation with Örebro and Söderströms högskola. See www.tema.liu.se/tema-g (last accessed: September 7, 2007). And there is the Gender Center of Excellence, which received national funding in 2006. See www.tema.liu.se/tema-g/gexcel-gendering-excellence (last accessed: August 20, 2007).

⁷² *E.g.* the Nordic Research School in Interdisciplinary Gender Studies, which is funded by NorFA/NordForsk and located at Tema Genus (Lykke ed. 2004). See also Widerberg (2006: 137) who summarizes the situation as follows: "What one country achieves, the others can also demand." See also Bergman 1992: 66 where it is explained that *Nordic* co-operation is sometimes preferred to European co-operation, because of the fact that Nordic feminists have always been critical of the, then, EC.

⁷³ *E.g.* the hosting of the AOIFE secretariat at Tema Genus from January 1, 2001 until the Summer of 2005. See www.tema.liu.se/tema-g/genus_en/aoife_en.htm (last accessed: March 3, 2005) and www.let.uu.nl/aoife/GAminutes2006.htm (last accessed: August 20, 2007). See also the participation of Tema Genus in Athena. See www.athena3.org (last accessed August 20, 2007).

Within this constituency, very different from France, Tema Genus focuses on interdisciplinary gender research and gender research training⁷⁴ and has been highly visible from the word go in the first half of the 1990s. ‘The word go’ here refers to Swedish government funding earmarked for gender research.⁷⁵ At the larger Tema institute, especially amongst gender studies oriented employees at the Department for technology and social change, a conversation about a Gender studies department began in 1997.⁷⁶ When Tema Genus materialized in 1999 there was the feeling that what had been institutionalized was truly something new and special:

“it was new for everybody, including the teachers, the professors as well, and the assistant professors as well. So for one thing I think we as PhD students have had the possibility to be a part of the building of the institution and ehm that’s kind of a special thing, that is a *new* thing I think, because where I came from there was an institute... an institution which had their history and their background and they have the structures and the hierarchies and the [---] but Tema Genus, we were all going to be part of it and ehm I think PhD students got really involved in building up the institution so that was really new a thing I think” (Interview MN).
 “I was of the first generation here in gender studies and it was the first research-based gender studies department in Sweden as well. Ehm so we had loads of mass media focus on us at the time. Ehm and also from the other departments and people who were in the field from the other department around universities in Sweden; watching us pretty closely really, everybody knows what we are doing” (Interview SA).

Tema Genus was for instance mentioned in the online edition of the National Encyclopedia.⁷⁷

It has been argued that the ‘imagined community’ of the Nordic countries has led to Nordic co-operation in almost all sectors, including the women’s movement (Rosenbeck 1998). Indeed, women’s studies scholars in the Nordic countries have been co-operating since the 1970s when women’s studies came into existence in the Nordic countries as well as in national contexts (Lykke ed. 2004: 18).⁷⁸ It is a history that has materialized in collective Nordic projects, co-authored books, and the set-up of Nordic women’s studies journals. Linguistically Swedish, Norwegian, and Danish (and Icelandic) are close relatives, even the Fins have no difficulty participating in collective projects because learning Swedish is compulsory in Finnish schools. In addition, Finland has a considerable Swedish-speaking

⁷⁴ See www.tema.liu.se/tema-g/genus_en/welcome.htm (last accessed: March 3, 2005) and www.tema.liu.se/tema-g/?l=en (last accessed: August 20, 2007).

⁷⁵ In the mid-1990s the Minister of Education Carl Tham okayed a plan initiated by women parliamentarians of all parties to earmark money not only for the promotion of women professors, but also for the promotion of women professors in gender studies. Tema Genus was included in the plan. This initiative is known also for having had several spin offs, i.e. more women professors were hired by Swedish universities and paid for out of their own budgets (Lundberg 2004: 85, 92; see also Holm 2001, Widerberg 2006).

⁷⁶ Interview ME.

⁷⁷ Interview SA. A print out of the page mentioning Tema Genus hung on the wall of the Tema Genus corridor during my visits.

⁷⁸ Rosenbeck (1998: 350) argues that gender role research based on a radicalization of structural functionalism pre-dates both the women’s movement and women’s studies in the Nordic countries. She argues that Berit Ås’ 1973 concept ‘women’s culture’ as well as a summer university project on women under capitalism in the same year did have a relationship to the women’s movement and can be called ‘women’s studies.’

minority.⁷⁹ The visibility of Tema Genus in the Nordic countries – a *local* institution with *national* funding – can be explained by the fact that there have always been “two principle lines of Nordic collaboration. One focuses on founding Nordic institutions; the other aims to make Nordic co-operation a standard activity within Nordic national organizations” (Rosenbeck 1998: 349). Rosenbeck (*ibidem*) defines these lines, as well as their grounds (Nordic sameness and national differences), as oscillating. She also argues that further internationalization has been high on the agenda of this constituency (*i.e.* Nora) (*ibid.*: 351). Furthermore, Tema Genus was special in the Nordic context in 1999 because it was “the first [...] institution to establish an inter- and transdisciplinary PhD degree-awarding Gender Studies programme” (Lykke ed. 2004: 22). In the Nordic countries *disciplinary* PhDs and PhDs with a gender studies affiliation *on top of* a disciplinary affiliation were prevalent until relatively recent (*ibidem*: 20-1; *cf.* the UK case).⁸⁰ In 1999 studying women's studies or taking courses on the BA and MA level, thus qualifying oneself for the PhD programme at Tema Genus, was possible at many different places in the Nordic countries, particularly in Sweden (Holm 2001).⁸¹ It has to be noted though that the visibility aspect of the history of Tema Genus is in fact part of a second ‘phase’ in Nordic women's studies. Rosenbeck (1998: 349) has argued that after gaining visibility for women/ women's studies these same ideas began to be deconstructed (*e.g.* deconstructing the idea of a (Nordic) Woman). It can be argued that this includes, as the history of Tema Genus shows, the ‘deconstruction’ of the idea of a Discipline. It will become clear below that this is accompanied by a deconstruction of the Nordic women's studies paradigm of conceptualizing materiality as work-related (*ibidem*: 353).

Besides Tema Genus [Department of gender studies] women's studies at the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Linköpings Universitet is to be found at Forum för genusvetenskap och jämställdhet [Centre for gender studies⁸²]. Gender is also institutionalized at the Faculty of Health Sciences, namely around the professorship in Gender and Medicine which was set up in 1998 (Lundberg 2004: 94). At the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Forum is responsible for undergraduate teaching and for community events such as the celebration of March 8. It also has an in-house library, whose collection is formally part of the university library collection. Whereas Forum and Tema Genus co-operate (*e.g.* by having PhD students teach or borrow

⁷⁹ I thank Anna Moring for insights in post-colonial Finland and its relation with Sweden.

⁸⁰ This situation has changed nowadays (*cf.* Lykke 2004 ed.: 22). On top of this, more Swedish universities nowadays offer PhD degrees in trans- or interdisciplinary gender studies (or gender and technoscience) (Lundberg 2004: 89).

⁸¹ In Sweden one can also opt for a 120-ECTS licentiate (a PhD is 240 ECTS). Most students opt for a PhD (Lundberg 2004: 87) so I will leave the licentiate, which I did not encounter during the fieldwork, aside.

⁸² *Jämställdhet* translates into gender equality (SCB 2004: 1), and is not included in the English language PR material of Forum I encountered during the fieldwork.

books at Forum), the two institutions are differentiated due to the fact that each has its own cash flow.⁸³

Tema Genus was set up as part of the larger Tema institute which specializes in interdisciplinary research (Lundberg 2004: 92). Prof. Lykke has been directing Tema Genus from its beginning until the present (January 2008).⁸⁴ Her team has always consisted of several other (assistant) Professors, several (more than five) PhD students, and an administrator. According to its sub programmes, Tema-G deals with ‘Gender and Culture,’ ‘Gender, Economic Change and Organization,’ ‘Masculinity, Culture and Society,’ and ‘Gender, Knowledge, Science.’⁸⁵ Initially Tema-G hired six PhD students, of which the first graduated during the fieldwork period, and another six PhD students were hired in 2001. Even though the PhD students of Tema Genus co-operate closely with PhD students from the other divisions of the Tema Institute (especially Tema Teknik och social förändring [Department for technology and social change])⁸⁶ and more PhD students were hired after the 2001 cohort; I interviewed the ten PhDs of the first two cohorts that were willing/ able to participate. The PhDs I interviewed were employed for four or five years full time. In the latter case, 20% of the workload was to be filled with work (*i.e.* teaching or research projects) for Tema Genus.⁸⁷ Apart from the possibility of teaching and research projects and the formulation and completion of a PhD project, the PhD students at Tema Genus were to complete course work. The amount of course work cohorts one and two received equaled to more than one year of work; and the students were asked to *collectively* follow courses in their first year. After the first year, individual course work or courses elsewhere in Sweden or abroad were possible.

5.4.2 ‘this identity of being, you know, Tema Genus identity,’⁸⁸ or: ‘I suppose you get a little home blind, do you say that?’⁸⁹

When it comes to the ways in which third wave materialism can add to the understandings of the *workings* of institutionalization, instead of all too common conceptualizations of institutionalization (autonomy, integration, dual-track policy), the Linköping case study was extremely helpful in dismantling the relativist twist of unbridled institutionalization that women’s studies scholars are apparently tempted by. I found that unconstrained autonomy,

⁸³ Conversation with Elisabeth Samuelsson, March 10, 2005. See also www.liu.se/genusforum/?l=en (last accessed: January 8, 2008).

⁸⁴ See the interviews I undertook in Linköping, and www.tema.liu.se/tema-g/?l=en (last accessed: August 20, 2007).

⁸⁵ See www.tema.liu.se/tema-g/genus_en/welcome.htm (last accessed: March 3, 2005). Checked on August 20, 2007 on www.tema.liu.se/tema-g/?l=en. The sub programme ‘Masculinity, Culture and Society’ has been renamed ‘Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities.’

⁸⁶ Interviews ME, KE.

⁸⁷ These numbers apply to Sweden in general (Lundberg 2004: 88).

⁸⁸ Interview SA.

⁸⁹ Interview SL.

unconstrained integration, *and* the seeming solution of the dual track are unconvincing strategies for the construction of a sustainable women's studies institution. This is not to say that I have come to reflect upon successes and failures of Linköping's Tema-G. If I had to say one thing about Tema Genus, it would be that it is an agenda-setting institution in the national, Nordic and European women's studies context. The interviews with the PhD students helped me reflect upon *how* institutionalization *works* and what it is that hinders a generative environment from being actualized. Again, I am not saying that Tema-G has ever been an environment that was not generative. I am saying that I have focused upon those instances presented to me by the interviewed PhD candidates that showed me how institutionalization can go 'too far' either by leaning too far towards integration or towards autonomy.

After overlooking the parameters of the discussions about institutionalization in Linköping, it is especially the double assumption of institutionalizing something *new* with the goal of being the *first* to deliver PhDs with a certain profile that framed the discussions. During the interviews with the PhD candidates at Tema Genus two recurrent themes arose. First, the newness of the institutionalization of *PhD training* in interdisciplinary gender studies in the Nordic countries, and secondly, the newness of *PhDs* in interdisciplinary gender studies in Sweden. The PhD candidates often stressed the fact that a new department, covering a new field, had hired them and that they were, after graduation, to be the first PhDs in the field (*e.g.* Interview SA, ME). I found that the emphasis on these issues was by the presence of textual material expressing the two related instances of novelty in the Tema-G corridor, namely the encyclopedia entry I mentioned above and an issue of Genus perspektiv⁹⁰ which featured the, soon to be first, PhD in interdisciplinary gender studies in Sweden (interviewee Moa Enqvist). In my research I found that this double assumption had a stifling effect. Despite the fact that the emphasis was on the new and the first, 'interdisciplinary gender studies' or an 'interdisciplinary gender studies profile' were assumed to be pre-existing, to be something that was gradually *to be picked up* by the students of the institute. Here the idea gets constructed that interdisciplinary gender studies is essentially a discipline that can be autonomous, integrated, or both because it is *already out there*. Adding a pre-existing women's studies (profile) to a pre-existing (malestream) institution with the goal of integration and/ or non-interference does not necessarily change the two entities involved. 'Interdisciplinary gender studies' was, as one of the interviewees said, *an identity* (see below). Previous research on women's/ gender studies students and graduates made clear that the *Finnish* students, as a sample of European women's studies students, were prone to referring to women's studies as an 'identity project' (Griffin 2005: 107). Important in the context of the

⁹⁰ Genus perspektiv is the newsletter of the national secretariat of gender research. The text on Åsberg was published in issue 2-04.

current Swedish case study is that this assumption resulted in claims about the newly built institution as an identity providing *source*, *i.e.* a Cartesian cut was effected securing training (including the generational distribution and characterization of roles) and the field as well as *the outcomes of* training and entering the field. It led to the students *not to not* work to boundaries but to work *in accordance with* them. This is my question: how to conceptualize the institutionalization of the new in such a way that the totalizing consequences of Cartesian cuts (according to which something *has* inherent characteristics and can be transferred (in)to an institution) *as well as* relativism are circumvented? This is not to say that I criticize the institution for erecting boundaries, or that I criticize the PhD students for responding to them in the way they did. What I am looking for are sustainable perspectives (visionary layer) on institutionalization of European women's studies.

The newness of the department was stressed by the interviewees by, firstly, becoming acquainted with (the set-up of) Tema Genus ("a colleague actually read in the *newspaper* that Tema Genus is going to become true [laughs]" (Interview LH)), and secondly, becoming part of it ("my stepping into this kind of new world" (Interview ME)). The following excerpt is exemplary for insight in the effects of inserting a novel department into an existing academic setting:

"Nina [...] wants to work as non-hierarchical as she can. Of course she cannot totally because of the academic system and all... but she tries to... and she makes the typical rounds and like that. She ehm... [...] Other professors they always conform to the rules of the academic game [...] Nina changed that. I think it is because of her feminist politics and... I don't know. That is how I see it" (Interview FB).

The PhD students interviewed were hired by the professors and assistant professors who were themselves employed by the university. The set-up of Tema-G thus involved inheriting Cartesian cuts, namely an academic hierarchy. In other words, the material arrangement of mentoring/ supervision at work at Tema-G was organized along certain *predetermined* lines resulting from *inherited* Cartesian cuts. These cuts can be negotiated ('Nina' as feminist) or confirmed ('other professors' as integrated in the standard academic setting). Even though the inherited elements that are mentioned in the quote *affect* Tema-G they do not provide an *exhaustive* description of the department's material arrangement of mentoring/ supervision because they can be negotiated. Such a negotiation is not exhaustively described by the institutionalization of an autonomous institution either. This is because autonomy has the same stifling effects as integration. I will show this below.

Let me start by claiming that the common aspects that were to be picked up *first* had to be created, *i.e.* institutionalizing the new or institutionalization per se has a *temporal linearity*:

"we are the first PhDs in interdisciplinary gender studies so they had to have like one common feminist theory course to like amp us out I think. Like see where we were and and I think also to I see it also as a social thing to do courses together and and and feel that you are a group, that you are doing things together. [...] But another thing, these common courses in the

beginning, it is because we are interdisciplinary. But it's a chance for us to before we go out to our own projects and to a lonelier life we have a chance to meet with other people from other fields, disciplines. Ehhm because otherwise it would be kind of pointless of having an interdisciplinary common ground, if you don't talk to each other, if you don't challenge your ideas. [laughs] So..." (Interview FB).

One of the interviewees from the 1999 cohort argued that the material arrangement of mentoring/ supervision at Tema-G can be characterized as 'family'-like, according to which the professors are the 'mothers' of the PhD candidates (Interview SA). This analogy is being kept in place when she accordingly introduces the 2001 cohort as 'fresh blood' that 'got integrated immediately' to become 'part of the family' (anonymous interviewee). Next to the institute as an autonomous, well-defined family that predicts who can be supervisor/ mentor and who gets to be supervised/ mentored (*cf.* the UK case study), a further characteristic that comes with this analogy is non-anonymity:

"I don't remember from the first year at university that anyone ever saw me or said 'Well, Ingrid, you are good, you ought to [...] work at university or write a thesis or work whatever.' I was feeling that I was completely anonymous in that environment, but *that changed* when I started studying at the Gender department so that was a completely... And also because the students were integrating or... much more things that we were doing together" (Interview IK).

The family analogy sets limits to agencies, due to the fact that the place and (future) work of professors (they are the ones that should supervise/ mentor) and students (being the supervisees/ mentees) is fully pre-determined. The relation between the professors ("Nina, [whom] I am dependent on" (Interview KE)) and the PhD students is organized along strict hierarchical lines:

"sometimes we said: 'We are not independent at all. We need our mothers.' You know, very ironic like that" (Interview SA).

In spite of the irony, the professor-mother is not only the *savior* of the PhD students but also the very *source* or *root* of their academic work ("I think that Nina is really ehhm the very very source of inspiration" (Interview SL)). As savior, the professor-mothers initiates interest in an academic career (Interview LD) or they provide students with the courage to pursue it (Interview ME) or the strength to continue pursuing it ("Oh my God, she saved my life there!" (Interview KE)). The following quotes show that as 'sources,' the professor and her work get to be fully fixed:

"we are incredibly rich that we have a professor who cares and also who cares after what is going to happen after we've finished. And actually I think she *does* care and thinks about and tries to make those contacts. [...] And she is also good to... do things strategically. Like how can I go around these issues and making contacts to other people. I think she is very good at and very conscious about doing... And how you can use her for talking about these issues. And that's how... that's what academia is. It is networking, also" (Interview KE).

"I think the project I am making now is based on very strong words of my first... how do you say it... tutor. First she said this and then she said that, and I have other ideas. This is a problem for me. She did not have the theoretical tools for the project so now I have a conflict" (Interview LD).

Whether the first and second quote express the opposite effects of the work of a professor – the first one helpful and the help of the second professor disastrous – they have in common

the conceptualization of the professor as *determining* the PhD candidate's work and academic career. In other words, except for the difference in outcome, it is in both cases *the professor* who is said to have caused the result.

The student role is equally predetermined. This becomes clear in the following fragment:

“Well, I'm very much ehmm I am... no I am... Haraway is definitely one of the... she has been the person who has been with me from the start. Let's say it that way. And I met her... [...] Yesterday I was telling... one of Haraway's students she... when... she was telling me that after she had been having dinner with Haraway and they had... and they were going to the loo together... well, you know next to... and then when she was peeing she was you know freaking all out because she was peeing next to Donna Haraway [laughing]” (Interview KE).

In this fragment one of the interviewees memorizes something that happened the day before the interview took place: she told Swedish PhD students – her colleagues and peers – a story she had heard from an American PhD student. The fragment is about passing on a story about a famous professor amongst peers. In the telling and re-telling of this story *again* the position of the professor-mother is fixed, and I want to claim that the fixation involved is the fixation of Haraway as the so-called ‘phallic mother,’ “a terrifying figure of omnipotence whom the daughter must flee to ensure some autonomy and identity for herself” because “[t]he food and protection which the mother offers bring not the longed-for nurturance, but a poisoned and imprisoning embrace” (Wright ed. 1992: 263; cf. Buikema 1995). It is the dialecticist gesture of subverting the position of the professor (‘peeing next to Donna Haraway’) that comes to the fore in the fragment provided. Playing this game the PhD students engaging in the conversation(s) freeze *their own* position as well, *i.e.* they become fixed *as student-daughters*. As such, the game paralyzes both mother and daughters. For example, it allows no room for the infra-generation that professors Lykke and Haraway can be said to belong.

The moment the dialecticist identity game, effected by the isolation of Tema Genus as an identity providing source⁹¹ and the professor as the source for careers and prospects, was questioned (thus negotiated) by the students the unbridled yet equally constraining envisionings of an ‘autonomous institution’ was brought to an end:

“you know, very ironic [...], but it came to a point were this identity of being, you know, Tema Genus identity [...] it still makes me feel really really special I must say, I didn't think that would happen but it helped us to form you know this like this ehmm a common identity, a common ground and it also helped us to loosen up a bit around ehmm you know the first like two three four months it was like well and we can still do it but but then it was more like defending our own [...] fields really and draw the lines between ourselves and now we are more generous and so actually I know fieldwork and cultural analysis and everything and ehmm we can be... we don't have to defend ourselves the same way” (Interview SA).⁹²

⁹¹ This should not be read as one's *entire* identity (“And also to have a life *outside...*” (Interview KE; original emphasis)). The emphasis here is on the dynamics of ‘identity’ per se.

⁹² Cf. the following excerpt:

“there is a big case between the people doing the ehmm Gender & Culture and the ones that do the Gender & Economics. I mean we have different tutors [...] so I think there might be a difference there, in those two parts of Tema Genus. But I think that ehmm I think that what

Here a 'dis-identification' comes to the fore that was confirmed when the students talked about the theoretical frameworks of their PhD dissertations. The 'Tema Genus identity' that in fact 'helped us to loosen up a bit' should be seen as instigating the PhD student as a subject oscillating between the constraining 'I' (e.g. 'I am an ethnologist') and the equally constraining 'we' (the student-daughters with a Tema-G identity). The common ground that allowed the students to dis-identify (with what in the above appeared as pre-determined and fully fixed) is to be found in relation to a thorough interest in theory (Interviews MN,⁹³ KE⁹⁴), the legacy of the discipline (Interview ME), and interdisciplinarity ("And we are sharing that we are very lost in this transdisciplinary..." (Interview IK)).⁹⁵ Let me expand on the theoretical framework of the dissertation; what is the institutionalized common ground here and what is the dis-identification?

Interviewee Lisa Hansson claimed that what students got from the initial shared course work created a common ground:

"it is like we have a big box or a chest of treasures, as I see it, and when I open this box you have all the world's feminist ideas in this box. And I can take anyone of these and I can look at it and try to put it in my research and if it doesn't fit I can put it back in the box and try another one. And it is like a... I think even a treasure box that is how I feel about it. [Interviewer: About Tema Genus?] Yeah."

This box is not always fully transparent, but can seem to be *black* box:

"when you read theses produced by another institution it also comes so clear to you: 'Oh, right, that thesis comes from that institution,' and it is so clear that you can see those features in the text and you can really see that they relate to the same authors and the same theories and it is not that simple when it comes to your own production. I suppose you get a little bit *home blind*, do you say that?" (Interview SL).

During the interview I asked the PhD candidates to open the black box and familiarize with 'home,' precisely so as to *erect* the boundaries of Tema-G. The theoretical itineraries that actualized in this exercise were strongly non-linear:

"You know I never got interested in Women's Studies on [the BA] level. I think I got interested in ehmm... I tried to read some feminist works and I mean, when you are 20 and somebody says 'Read this' and you get Irigaray in your hands and it is just that... you don't

Nina calls 'post-poststructuralist theory' – Haraway and you know Rosi Braidotti as well – that has influenced quite a few of us. But in a sense... when you really start working with your project you tend to turn in your own direction. In the beginning we were all... more similar I would say in our ways of thinking but then the empirical material tends to... to lead you in your own direction. You *have to* go your own way; you *have to* find your own theoretical angle. And so I think we have drawn apart more now than it was in the beginning. But I think that there are of course features that join us together. And I would say that Haraway is one of those. I would say that we all more or less relate to her" (Interview SL).

⁹³ "now when we are so deep into our own work I can see that there are of course differences but the new thing I think in our department is that I can see that everybody is open-minded. [...] the thing here at Tema Genus is that everybody has a deep interest in theory. And that's maybe special. I don't know, but I think it is very theoretically grounded. And open-minded as well."

⁹⁴ "Especially I think we have become more homogeneous with time somehow. Or we are all more into different understandings of ehmm theory. When we started we were very different."

⁹⁵ The issue of fragmentation was taken on with considerable irony:

"We are all unique... [ironically] Yeah... No... but that opens up for a lot of... that we don't have those competitions in that sense"(Interview KE).

start with that really. [laughs] [...] So it was first that I got in touch with queer and Judith Butler that I got interested in feminism for the first time. And ehm I thought that Butler said things in a way that attacked ehm attacked me really. And ehm she took it to another platform that I hadn't seen... *I hadn't seen before*" (Interview SA).

This interviewee had started her PhD with an interest in Butler and queer theory. The way in which the students talked about Butler can be conceptualized as *marking* a generation through a theorist (Interview FB, ME). The first year(s) of the PhD, *i.e.* the formation of a Tema-G identity, made this student move away from Butler/ queer studies towards *women's studies*. In the next fragment we clearly see that the theoretical treasure box, once dis-identified from, has generative qualities. The theoretical framework that actualized in the double move of dis-identifying with a singular women's studies identity is truly non-linear, since moving from queer theory, to sexual difference, and 'back to queer:'

"When I started I was interested in sexual difference [...] But I think I might go back a little bit to more queer because I can see that there are some possibilities that I haven't been really using. Ehm but now it's mostly sexual difference, especially Rosi Braidotti and Deleuze or some of Deleuze's concepts through Rosi Braidotti [...]" (Interview IK).

This move provides insight in generation/knowledge, not in the stifling identity politics we found above.

Let me summarize the argument. In mentoring/ supervision arrangements certain authors count as markers. A dis-identification with such a marker allows for the actualization of non-linear theoretical trajectories. Butler, then, is on the one hand a generational, *chronological* marker (the PhD students claim to have entered feminist thought through Butler, thus generating a chronological 'origin story,' however counterintuitive in itself) (*cf.* Hemmings 2005: 124-5), but on the other hand the work of Butler has generative effects (PhD students wholly uninterested in feminism, yet interested in queer come to read feminist theory. After a period of abandoning queer, they come back to it and find 'some possibilities' still unused). Here, there is room for one of those scholars who disappeared in the linear trajectory sketched above (and that disappeared from the French view), *i.e.* one of the members of the infra-generation – chronologically older than the Swedish PhDs (or, for that matter, the members of Ni Putes Ni Soumises), yet not having the stifling effects of the phallic mother. On the basis of this account, I want to propose a second look at the PhD students' accounts of Professor Lykke – first mother, stifling generation/knowledge, and later the one that has offered the treasure box which has been the generator of PhD theses. Lykke's positioning is generated by the academia, but her work negotiates the academia *through* the institutionalization of Tema-G. Thus 'not working to' the Cartesian cuts (according to which the academy is constructed) is generative of *women's studies*, but only after women's studies practitioners (here PhD students) come to dis-identify with what is offered *as* women's studies. For PhD students, scholars on the brink of academia, this seems by definition impossible. What we have seen is that the theoretical trajectories of the PhDs in question *do*

show a dis-identification with Tema-G in a manner similar to the move that is ascribed to their professor. Prof. Lykke who dis-identifies with the larger Tema-institute.

5.4.3 Résumé

When trying to answer the question *how* European women's studies institutions actualize in intra-action within a larger university/ faculty/ institute, and with other (local) European women's studies institutions, I found that an institutionalized center gets to be actual-virtual only when one theory/ theoretical trajectory or one role does not get stuck to one generation. Theories, trajectories and roles get stuck when an institution and its 'place' (autonomy, integration, and adding up these two) is predetermined ('Tema Genus identity'). However, this should not be read as leading to or pleading for fragmentation and the smattering of an identity. It is, instead, the negotiation of what is offered by the academy and by the institution (the generated) that allows for generativity.

5.5 Conclusion: 'we are really going to push ourselves today, because we've got hours [laughs], okay?'⁹⁶

In this chapter I reviewed a research project that had the overall goal of gaining insight in *the ways in which* the 'trans-Atlantic dis-connection' as well as 'intra-European dis-connections,' 'institutionalization,' and 'interdisciplinarity' *are done/ generated* in the context of European women's studies as well as in *how* these workings as well as (the idea of) 'European women's studies' are generative of new materializations, and new knowledges. I have undertaken the project in a third-wave materialist vein, thus, working on European women's studies in a manner that is neither essentialist (pre-determining the topic) nor relativist non-foundationalist (having it evaporate). I have tried to focus on the ways in which European women's studies research/ teaching/ publishing, never an essence yet delineable, *materializes* in keeping with the Anglo-US dominance of the field, the disciplinary structure of many universities in Europe/ the mainstream academic realm in general, and the push towards institutionalizing the field of women's studies as a discipline. Generation/knowledge has been the objective (European women's studies as an instantiation of generation/knowledge) as well as my lens throughout the chapter (how are knowledges generated, what is generative knowledge, and what are the generational dimensions of knowledge production, etc.).

Wrapping up the generation and outcomes of the project on European women's studies, I would like to connect to the quote in the paragraph heading: 'we are really going to push ourselves today, because we've got hours [laughs], okay?' This new materialist claim –

⁹⁶ Class GL.

it is the amount of hours that does the pushing (*i.e.* the researching/ teaching/ publishing) – shows how European women’s studies, and I dare say knowledge production in general, is generative when the generated is dis-identified with (dis-connected from) and not worked to. The latter does not involve a distancing act; intimate engagement is part of what is going on. It is the intimate yet critical engagement with, not the distancing from, a limited amount of hours, a limited amount of money, a limited knowledge of a language, a constraining institutional embeddedness in a disciplinary environment, and the two pre-existing models of institutionalization, etc. that produces European women’s studies work. It is interdisciplinarity *in close yet critical connection with* disciplinarity, the French canon *critically engaging with* the Anglo-American canon, and the *critical engagement with* the disciplinizing tendency of/ surrounding women’s studies that makes a field, just like a clock, tick. In this chapter, I have proposed a way of studying knowledge production and have tried to provide insights in a concrete case: European women’s studies. Let me conclude by repeating the following: it could not have been any case; it was European women’s studies that got me going.

“You’re getting old, that’s what they’ll say, but
Don’t give a damn I’m listening anyway
Stop, don’t you stop
I can’t live if you stop
Don’t you stop”
Le Tigre¹

CONCLUSION

In this doctoral dissertation the epistemic category ‘third wave materialism’ is constructed against the background of the end of (feminist) postmodernisms and discussions about generationality in academic feminism. The dissertation further introduced ‘generation/knowledge’ to describe the generationality of feminist epistemological discussions in more ‘methodological’ terms. The amalgamation generation/knowledge can be employed, furthermore, as an analytical tool for studying knowledge practices. This is to say that in this dissertation the epistemological, the methodological/ methodical, and the material are not conceptualized as existing in relative isolation or in a one-way relation. ‘Matter’ as *materializing*, in keeping with *the materialized*, signifies an intricate relation between matter and discourse/ theory, *i.e.* the *co-constitutiveness* of words and things. The materialization of ‘European women’s studies’ in chapter 5 of the dissertation illustrates a careful balancing act when it comes to the scholarly realm that is dominated by Europeanness, and the feminist academic realm that is dominated by the Anglo-American. This is but one instantiation of a third-wave materialist study, albeit not *any* one. It was with the legacy of European women’s studies that the third wave materialism was secured, *i.e.* affirming the positivity that characterizes the feminist epistemological evaluations coming out in Europe.

With this dissertation I have wanted to systematically constitute third-wave feminist epistemology as well as (the new materialist study of) European women’s studies. The structure of many epistemological dissertations suggests definiteness, but I want to use this conclusion to discuss the *indefinite but constrained* nature of this dissertation. Third wave materialism, or third-wave feminist epistemology in general, is brought to the fore here to break through the renowned epistemic categories of feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint theory, and feminist postmodernism in order to stand in a relation to feminist (neo-) empiricism. It is not the case, however, that the break through suggested in this dissertation is once and for all and that it involves a definite break with the feminist academic past. Third wave materialism is *not* new in the latter sense of the term. This dissertation is engaged in construing the good-old feminist epistemic categories as constraints of third wave

¹ Lyrics ‘Hot Topic’ (1999).

Conclusion

materialism; after all, second-wave feminist epistemology continues to be an exiting and groundbreaking subject. To see second-wave feminist epistemology as a constraint, allows for the qualitative shift engendered by third wave materialism to be not totalizing nor relativist. Third wave materialism is constrained by feminist standpoint theory, because both are materialisms. Third wave materialism is also constrained by feminist (neo-) empiricism and feminist postmodernisms because the non-exhaustive dichotomy between the two it addresses is made up of these influential feminist epistemic stances. Constrained indeterminacy should be sought in the non-dialecticism of the generationality of the epistemic 'wave' brought to the fore in this dissertation. I have argued that second-wave feminist epistemology's approach was a classificatory one, *i.e.* an approach consisting of the presentation of a certain number of epistemic categories relating to one another and to the epistemic mainstream according to sequential negation and teleology. Academic feminism's problematic aspects consisted of, firstly, the confirmation of the epistemic mainstream through negation (feminism evaporates), and, secondly, the construal of rudimentary vs. complex feminist epistemic categories (resulting in a geo-politically, disciplinary and generationally unmarked feminism). The non-dialecticist, cartographical, third-wave feminist approach to feminist epistemology has been introduced in this dissertation to prevent both the evaporation and the totalization from being effected.

Discussing the non-dialecticist generationality and non-dialecticist feminist epistemology outside the confines of this scholarly dissertation, I have designed 'jumping generations' as an analytical tool and as an apt description of the above (Van der Tuin 2006, 2007b). I introduced my term 'jumping' to bridge 'categories' previously considered incommensurable, that were, in fact, part of a non-exhaustive dichotomy. 'Jumping generations' allows for conversations that *cannot* be pinpointed beforehand, but they are not limitedless either. They are limited by what Grosz has called 'the specificities and particularities, the events, of history.' In the case of feminist epistemology, the classificatory approach and its categories are not negated nor naïvely celebrated but intimately, yet critically, engaged with or simply negotiated. The order of third-wave feminist epistemology can be conceptualized as a series of transpositions (Braidotti's term) or jumps resulting in a cartography of new feminist materialism. In line with the above, I want to argue that a sustainable and transformative (academic) feminist perspective is a perspective that is an-Oedipal, *i.e.* non-competitive, and that carefully pursues and implements those parts of second-wave feminism – whether feminist empiricism, feminist standpoint theory, or feminist postmodernism – that are useful for current-day feminist generation/knowledge. Two questions arise here, how to develop an-Oedipal structures and how to avoid being lured back by causally linear spatiotemporalities? My alternative consists of theorizing shared conversations through jumping generations. There is a the possibility of intra-actively dis-

closing feminist positionings that make a difference. It is not beneficial to presuppose the existence of a generation of members of a certain feminist ‘wave’ or theoretical ‘strand’ with which a new generation should start to *interact* so as to constitute a new feminist categorization. Instances of jumping generations produces positionings that are not essentialist *because* they stem from the 1970s. Nor are they post-feminist *because* they are articulated today as this would fix feminism in the past, and post-feminism, as its dialecticist opposite, in the present and future. Next, it is not the case that feminism flows from our M/mothers towards us because this ‘flow’ cannot be characterized as a one-way track originating in a feminist center. Jumping generations enables the abandonment of such a center, theorizes bi-directional running on a single or on multiple tracks, and stimulates focusing one’s thoughts on current-day problems, and on the most useful solutions to them (in keeping with past, present, and future). Jumping generations is a methodology that avoids causally linear conceptualizations of spatiotemporality and the trap of non-exhaustive dichotomies. It enables thinking the new as *generative*, yet always negotiating the generated, and it avoids *discontentment* with feminist epistemological categorizing.

The epigraph of this conclusion consists of the lyrics of the US riot grrrl band Le Tigre. These lyrics exemplify the thought that third-wave feminist (epistemologist)s cannot ‘live’ without the continuing work of the members of the second feminist wave. Becoming third-wave does not entail the end of the second wave. Third-wave feminists need to jump generations for their work to be generative or indefinite without it being limitedless or relativist. Let me end this scholarly dissertation on third-wave feminist epistemology with a plea for second-wave feminist generation. The qualitative shift set in motion by third-wave feminist epistemology does not entail a shift *away from* but one towards *dis-identification with* the long march through the institutions, (black) (lesbian) separatism, women-asking-questions, consciousness raising, feminist anthologies, body politics, essentialism, the women’s health movement, technofilia and technophobia, herstory, women’s studies and women’s centres, the shame is over, the sex wars, and feminist standpoint theory.²

Amsterdam-Utrecht-Heerenveen, January 2008.

² Examples of not forgetting include: feminist classics courses at universities and in other educational settings, websites such as www.vrouwenuvoorlater.nl (last accessed: January 12, 2008), pop songs providing cartographies of second-wave feminists such as Le Tigre’s ‘Hot Topics’ and the Profesora project of Swedish performance artist Catti Brandelius (<http://www.missuniversum.nu/profesora.asp>; last accessed: January 12, 2008). Note that such projects are often co-productions of second- and third-wave feminists.

APPENDIX 1: Outline of Semi-Structured Interview

Lancaster

Semi-structured

Keep asking: show me by listing hands-on examples

This will be my first visit to Lancaster as well as my first round of interviews. The character of the interview will as such be inventorial. I would like to restrict the interview to 1,5 hours.

Please introduce yourself in terms of disciplinary background, academic career, job and current projects (research and teaching)

In the interview I will concentrate on your view on women's studies that is on the field's fundamental, knowledge theoretical parameters. I would like to discuss what your personal preferences are, and how these preferences are translated into your teaching and research practices. What texts on this topic do you use? Do you consider yourself, for instance, a standpoint feminist? How does this translate into your reading/ researching/ writing/ presenting/ teaching practices? In class, how do you go about negotiating these kinds of issues with your students?

Also, I would like to know how, in your opinion, the fields of women's studies, cultural studies, and science studies combine, coalesce, or conflict. How is a cross-disciplinary dialogue between the mentioned fields designed in Lancaster? What are Lancaster's good/bad practices here?

Last but not least, I would like to discuss the way your view on the above issues has developed through the years: before you came to Lancaster, in your first classes in Lancaster, and nowadays. Are you willing to exchange (old and new) course outlines with me that might show me (hands-on) your view on the mentioned issues?

Would you like to add something?

Recommendations for further interview questions.

In my thesis I will make a list of interviewees. Quotations from interviews.

Thank you!

Lyon

N.B.: Semi-structured; keep asking: how, and give me examples – publishing!

This is my first visit to a French university except for a conference in Paris that I attended in 2004 (École National Supérieure). I am very interested in learning more about Women's studies in France. The character of the interview is inventorial. I would like to restrict the interview to 1 hour maximum.

1 On the basis of this visit and literature study I am writing an update of the Franco-American

Dis-connection (Anglo-American empiricism vs. French poststructuralism; an American 'SdeB' travelled back to Continental Europe). I am interested in how Women's studies as a field works inter- or intracontinentally from a French/ European perspective. Please **introduce yourself** in terms of nationality, generation, disciplinary background, academic career, job and current projects (research/teaching/publishing). Have you been travelling for your studies/research/teaching? (Conferences, study leaves, etc.). When? Do you consider yourself part of French/European/international Women's studies? Why? What teaching/research/publishing activities do you undertake on a national/European/international level?

2 Secondly, I am interested in how fundamental knowledge theoretical parameters of the field of women's studies actually change. Do you place yourself in a certain theoretical (feminist) tradition? How do you implement that in your teaching/research/writing? How? In your research, is there a certain tradition that you inscribe yourself in? What texts on this topic do you use? Do you consider yourself, for instance, a post-structural/'French' feminist? During your scholarly activities (teaching/research/writing), how do you go about negotiating these kinds of issues? Through using which authors? And what about in your teaching? Where do you publish? Where in particular? Which journals for instance?

Also, I would like to dive into the **location of the tradition** that you consider yourself part of. Have you thought of this issue before in terms of your academic activities? (I am talking about French/European/International/Transnational/... academic feminism.) In the Centre, is this topic discussed? How and where? Do you sometimes invite speakers from other French universities/ from somewhere else in Europe/ from the US or elsewhere? How does your intra/intercontinental perspective combine, coalesce, or conflict with others? How is an intra/intercontinental dialogue designed in Lyon? What are Lyon's good/bad practices hereabout? What is the role of the Centre LL in this?

Last but not least, I would like to discuss the way your view on the above issue has developed through the years: before you came to Lyon, during the very first stages of your research/teaching/publishing, and nowadays. Have you become more or less (inter)national or European? How?

Would you like to add something?

3 In my dissertation I will add a list of interviewees. Authorization: I transcribe the interview and then I'll ask you to correct it and authorize that I can use it for my chapter. Before anything is published I will send you the quote in context for authorization.

Thank you!

Linköping

Semi-structured

Keep asking: show me by listing hands-on examples

This will be my first visit to Linköping as well as my first round of interviews. The character of the interview will as such be inventorial. I would like to restrict the interview to 1,5 hours.

Please introduce yourself in terms of generation, disciplinary background, academic career, job, and current projects (research and teaching). Do you consider yourself part of a generation of academic feminists?

In the interview I will concentrate on your view on women's studies that is on the field's fundamental, knowledge theoretical parameters. I would like to know what your personal preferences are, and how these preferences are translated into your research practices. What texts on this topic do you use? Do you consider yourself, for instance, a standpoint feminist? During your research, how do you go about negotiating these kinds of issues? This topic will be addressed through your research project - I will be asking questions about your research and the authors that you are using. Do you teach? Can you answer the same questions with regard to the teaching?

Also, I would like to dive into the generation that you consider yourself part of. Have you thought of this issue before in terms of your academic activities? (I am talking about generations in academic feminism.) How does your generational perspective combine, coalesce, or conflict with others? How is a cross-generational dialogue designed in Linköping? What are Linköping's good/bad practices hereabout? What is the role of your research school or your own eventual teaching practices in this?

Last but not least, I would like to discuss the way your view on the above issue has developed through the years: before you came to Linköping, during the very first stages of your research, and nowadays.

Are you willing to hand me over a shortlist of the texts that you engage with, so that you might show me 'hands-on' your view on the mentioned issues?

Would you like to add something?

Recommendations for further interview questions.

In my thesis I will make a list of interviewees. Quotations from interviews.

Thank you!

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (INTERVIEWEES)

[ACL]	Ann-Charlotte Lundmark [ACL]	Linköping
[AD]	Anick Druelle, PhD	Lancaster
[AH]	Prof. Annik Houel	Lyon
[BL]	Brigitte Lhomond, MA	Lyon
[CCh]	Christine Charretton, PhD	Lyon
[CCI]	Cathy Clay, PhD	Lancaster
[CP]	Prof. Christine Planté	Lyon
[CR]	Celia Roberts, PhD	Lancaster
[CS]	Prof. Christine Sylvester	Lancaster
[CW]	Claire Waterton, MA	Lancaster
[FB]	Freja Berg [FB]	Linköping
[GL]	Gail Lewis, PhD	Lancaster
[IK]	Ingrid Karlstrand [IK]	Linköping
[IRM]	Ingeborg Rabenstein-Michel, PhD	Lyon
[JS]	Prof. Jackie Stacey	Lancaster
[KE]	Karolina Ekdahl [KE]	Linköping
[LD]	Linda Djupsund [LD]	Linköping
[LH]	Lisa Hansson [LH]	Linköping
[LT]	Laurence Tain, PhD	Lyon
[MCG]	Marie-Carmen Garcia, PhD	Lyon
[ME]	Moa Enqvist [ME]	Linköping
[MMN]	Prof. Maureen McNeil	Lancaster
[MN]	Markus Nordman [MN]	Linköping
[MSJ]	Merete Stistrup-Jensen, PhD	Lyon
[PaM]	Patricia Mercader, PhD	Lyon
[RB]	Rosemary Betterton, MA	Lancaster
[RML]	Rommel Mendes-Leite, PhD	Lyon
[SA]	Svea Abrahamsson [SA]	Linköping
[SL]	Silva Lager	Linköping
[VS]	Vicky Singleton, PhD	Lancaster

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NEDERLANDSE SAMENVATTING [Summary in Dutch]

Dit proefschrift gaat over recente ontwikkelingen in de feministische epistemologie. Deze ontwikkelingen worden in zowel epistemologische als generationele termen getheoretiseerd. Het proefschrift situeert zich daarmee niet alleen ten opzichte van het vermeende einde van het (feministische) postmodernisme, maar ook ten opzichte van de zogenaamde derde feministische golf. Hedendaagse vrouwenstudies en feministische epistemologie kenmerken zich door de evaluatie van (feministisch) postmodernisme op twee verschillende manieren. Ten eerste zijn er recente teksten te vinden, waarin feministisch empiricisme, in combinatie met een realistisch perspectief, op (on)kritische wijze opnieuw gevierd wordt. Een tweede groep feministisch epistemologen trekt de radicaliteit van (feministisch) postmodernisme in twijfel. Hedendaagse vrouwenstudies en feministische epistemologie kenmerken zich dus aan de ene kant door een terugkeer tot grote verhalen (nieuw empiricisme en realisme roepen het zogenaamde postmoderne relativisme een halt toe) en aan de andere kant door het bekritisieren van een onvoldoende radicaal postmodernisme en een onvoldoende radicaal empiricisme. In dit proefschrift wordt de stelling verdedigd dat één van deze twee reacties op postmodernisme voor het (academische) feminisme onwelkome gevolgen heeft. De academische (Eurocentrische en androcentrische) *mainstream* zou het academische feminisme in die vorm namelijk wel eens kunnen opslokken, terwijl het feminisme zich juist kritisch tot de *mainstream* wil verhouden. Van de andere theoretische tendens – nieuw of neo-materialisme – wordt gesteld dat het voordelig is voor academisch feminisme.

In dit proefschrift, kortom, wordt nieuw feministisch materialisme uitgewerkt als veelbelovende feministisch epistemologische ontwikkeling. Hiervoor wordt werk besproken dat als ‘post-postmodern’ te boek staat, maar waarin geen terugkeer tot grote verhalen te vinden is. Nieuw materialisme wordt gezien als veelbelovend, omdat het antwoord kan geven op een problematiek die in 2003 geformuleerd werd door Rosi Braidotti. Zij heeft gesteld dat de feministische kennisproductie aan het begin van de 21^{ste} eeuw niet meer samengevat kan worden volgens Sandra Hardings veelgebruikte classificatie bestaand uit drie feministisch-epistemische categorieën (feministische empiricisme, feministisch standpuntdenken en feministisch postmodernisme) en dat het aankaarten van deze situatie óók het aankaarten van het feministische gebruik van classificaties zou moeten betreffen. In dit proefschrift wordt de stelling naar voren gebracht dat het de beperking is die de classificatie-strategie van de tweede feministische golf nog steeds opwerpt, waardoor het nieuwe materialisme – als een post-postmoderne beweging onderdeel van het derdegolf-feminisme – naast de werking van

classificaties ook het vermeende relativisme van het (feministische) postmodernisme kan aanpakken. Kortom, de derde golf kan zogenaamd ‘generatief’ zijn vanwege de tweede golf.

Nieuwe feministisch materialisten zoals Sara Ahmed, Karen Barad en Claire Colebrook evalueren de stand van zaken in de post-postmoderne filosofie nadrukkelijk op feministische wijze. Zij proberen de academische *mainstream* kritisch te bezien, waarbij ze erkennen dat feministische academici aan die *mainstream* verbonden zijn. Hedendaagse feministen zijn echter tegenwoordig niet alleen gelieerd aan de academische of filosofische *mainstream*. Zij dienen zich ook te verhouden tot de academisch feministische canon, een canon die is gevormd vanaf de beginjaren van vrouwenstudies. Het is hierom dat het nieuwe materialisme in dit proefschrift niet alleen afgezet wordt tegen het post-postmodernisme of de herintrede van grote verhalen, maar dat ook een generationele sensitiviteit wordt ingezet; hedendaagse feministische epistemologen moeten zich verhouden tot de academisch feministische canon (de epistemologie van het tweedegolf-feminisme), maar ook tot gedachtevorming over de intrede van het post-feminisme (het zogenaamde einde van het eigenlijke, activistische feminisme) met de gang van feministen naar de academie. Om aan te geven dat nieuw materialisme zowel post-postmodern als feministisch volgens de derde golf is (dat wil zeggen noch een tweedegolf-feminisme noch een post-feminisme), noem ik het ‘derdegolfmaterialisme.’ In dit proefschrift wordt derdegolfmaterialisme uitgewerkt tot een volwaardige epistemische categorie die naast de bestaande feministisch-epistemische categorieën bestaat en zich daartoe kritisch verhoudt. De epistemische categorie van het nieuwe materialisme wordt uitgewerkt aan de hand van werk van feministische academici afkomstig uit de feministische wetenschapsstudies, het Deleuziaanse feminisme en de postkoloniale feministische theorie. De auteurs van dit werk gebruiken zelf niet noodzakelijkerwijs het etiket ‘(nieuw) materialisme’ voor hun werk. Derdegolfmaterialisme, kortom, begrijp ik op cartografische wijze; ontwikkelingen in de feministische epistemologie worden er als zodanig nadrukkelijk mee gesitueerd. Met de cartografie maak ik een theoretische tendens expliciet volgens welke realistische en constructivistische conceptualisering van belichaamdheid als de twee zijden van één en dezelfde medaille kunnen worden opgevat. Op basis van dat inzicht ontwerp ik een materialistische conceptualisering van belichaamdheid die tegen de gemene deler ingaat (namelijk representationalisme als iets dat realisten en constructivisten delen). Dit materialisme is niet identiek aan feministisch standpuntdenken dat een basis had in ‘wij vrouwen,’ maar constitueert ook geen onoverkomelijke breuk.

Er ligt een dubbele betrokkenheid ten grondslag aan derdegolfmaterialisme. Ten eerste toon ik aan dat disciplines die zo verschillend zijn als Deleuziaans feminisme, postkoloniale feministische theorie en feministisch wetenschapsonderzoek allemaal een materialisme onderschrijven dat ‘nieuw’ is. Ten tweede bewijs ik dat nieuw materialisten de

epistemische categorieën uit Hardings invloedrijke The Science Question in Feminism (1986) overbruggen oftewel op niet-taxonomische wijze inzetten. Wat nieuw materialisten suggereren, is dat een classificatie geen recht doet aan het complexe post-postmoderne heden, maar dat de taxonomie die zo invloedrijk is geweest voor de ontwikkeling van vrouwenstudies en de feministische epistemologie ook niet op dialectische wijze aan de kant geschoven kan worden. Hedendaagse feministische epistemologen, kortom, nemen zowel het totalitaristische van ongesitueerde kennisproductie (waaronder classificaties) als het relativistische van een post-Kuhnianse kijk op wetenschap in ogenschouw. Ook deze tweedeling zien zij, net zoals Donna Haraway in 1988 deed, als twee zijden van een en dezelfde medaille en zij nemen ook hier de medaille oftewel de gemene deler van twee (schijnbare) opposities in ogenschouw. Nieuwe materialisten committeren zich dus aan twee vormen van continuïteit: een generationele continuïteit en een continuïteit bestaand uit discipline-overstijgende dialogen.

In dit proefschrift wordt het nieuwe materialisme niet alleen uitgewerkt, maar ook ingezet. In het laatste hoofdstuk van het proefschrift bied ik een analyse van wat ik ‘de generatie van Europese vrouwenstudies’ heb genoemd. In dit hoofdstuk wordt de totstandkoming en generationele dimensie van de wijze(n) waarop vrouwenstudies wordt beoefend in Europa geanalyseerd aan de hand van het begrip ‘generatie/kennis,’ een zogenaamd methodologische ‘vertaling’ van het derdegolfmaterialisme. Generatie/kennis zet ik in om drie grote verhalen binnen de Europese vrouwenstudies te transformeren tot verhalen die veelbelovender zijn, want in sterkere mate geo-politiek, disciplinair en vooral generationeel gesitueerd. Het gaat om de verhalen die verteld worden over interdisciplinariteit, institutionalisering en de transatlantische en intra-Europese breuklijnen die door het vakgebied lopen. Aan de hand van het onderzoek naar de dagelijkse onderwijspraktijk aan het Institute for Women’s Studies in Lancaster wordt getoond dat vrouwenstudies geen vooruitgang boekt door steeds interdisciplinairder te worden. Juist interdisciplinair onderwijs dient disciplinaire achtergronden in ogenschouw te houden om vernieuwend te kunnen zijn. Aan de hand van de analyse van veldwerkresultaten verkregen aan het Centre Louise Labé te Lyon wordt getoond dat juist de erkenning van de Anglo-Amerikaanse achtergrond van *gender* het Franse begrip *genre* zo veelbelovend maakt. En ten slotte wordt aan de hand van het onderzoek naar de institutionalisering van vrouwenstudies in Linköping (Tema Genus) getoond dat het vakgebied niet alleen door integratie in een bestaande institutie of volledige autonomie hiervan verder wordt gebracht. Ook bij institutionalisering moet met wat er al is onderhandeld worden. Het ging in de *case study* over Europese vrouwenstudies dus om de materialisering van Europese vrouwenstudies. Er bestaat echter een wisselwerking tussen de *case study* en de Europese vrouwenstudies: niet alleen

materialiseerde de Europese vrouwenstudies in dit proefschrift, maar ook kon dit proefschrift alleen bij gratie van de Europese vrouwenstudies tot stand komen.