



Socially Just Pedagogies

**Posthumanist, Feminist
and Materialist Perspectives
in Higher Education**

**Edited by Vivienne Bozalek,
Rosi Braidotti, Tamara Shefer
and Michalinos Zembylas**

'Continuing the most exciting and challenging histories of engaged feminist thought, the chapters in *Socially Just Pedagogies* grapple with the lived histories of inequality—structured by race, gender, sexuality, coloniality, and age—and use specific sites of educational struggle as occasions to test and transform the ways we understand materiality, subjectivity, and most importantly the social. Without ever losing touch with the intra-human violences that structure global relations, the authors forcefully re-imagine pedagogy as always more-than-human. This incredible book makes the case that feminist education is constitutively materialist and nonhumanist, and that new materialist politics are inescapably pedagogical.'

Nathan Snaza, Director, Bridge to Success Program, Department of English, University of Richmond, USA

'A strong case for the theoretical input of posthuman and affect theory, this is new to the field of educational studies and is much needed. The authors have produced a fine piece of work. This will be a big player in the critical educational literature.'

Dan Goodley, Professor of Disability Studies and Education, University of Sheffield, UK

'It's about time we had a book like this, that tackles education's unswerving adherence to outdated 20th century humanist premises. The most apparent strength is the editors' (and contributors') strong grasp on the posthumanist, affective and new materialist theoretical perspectives that frame this collection. The emphasis on southern perspectives is very refreshing and will make a unique contribution to the broader posthumanist educational field, which is dominated by global north theorists and research. Particularly interesting because it also documents the recent student activism in South African universities, these challenges to the humanist norms of educational practice are overdue. This book is one of the first ones to make these challenges – others will follow.'

Affrica Taylor, Associate Professor of Geographies of Education and Childhood, University of Canberra, Australia

Vivienne Bozalek

is Professor of Social Work and the Director of Teaching and Learning at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa.

Rosi Braidotti

is Distinguished University Professor and founding Director of the Centre for the Humanities at Utrecht University, The Netherlands.

Tamara Shefer

is Professor of Women's and Gender Studies in the Faculty of Arts, at the University of the Western Cape, South Africa.

Michalinos Zembylas

is Professor of Educational Theory and Curriculum Studies at the Open University of Cyprus.

PHILOSOPHY

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Foreword

Rosi Braidotti

'Liberating education consists in acts of cognition, not in transfers of information'

Paulo Freire: *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970)

Interest in pedagogy, both from the methodological and the conceptual angles, has been increasing in contemporary posthuman scholarship, as this volume brilliantly shows. My working definition of the posthuman is a convergence phenomenon unfolding at the intersection between post-humanism on the one hand and post-anthropocentrism on the other. The former criticises the idea of 'Man' as the allegedly universal standard-bearer for the human, whereas the latter objects to species hierarchy. Although they are often discussed together, they refer to distinct philosophical genealogies and produce divergent political stances as well as different world-historical events. It has also become quite feasible, following Edward Said (2003), to criticise Humanism in the name of Humanism, while leaving anthropocentrism firmly in place. Theoretical and philosophical critiques of Humanism have been carried out in European philosophy ever since Nietzsche. More recently, the critique has been advanced by movements of thought such as post-structuralism (Foucault 1970; Deleuze and Guattari 1987), neo-materialism, the radical strands of punk and cyber-feminism, the science-fiction movement and a range of trans-humanist and extropian schools. The critique of anthropocentrism, on the other hand, is strong in Science and Technology Studies, vegetarian and vegan movements, animal rights, deep ecology and green politics. The convergence of these two lines of critique in what I call the posthuman predicament is producing a chain of theoretical, social and political effects that is more than the sum of its parts. It points to a qualitative leap in new conceptual directions (Braidotti 2013): posthuman scholarship.

It is not surprising that the posthuman turn is producing some unexpected and, in my assessment, internally contradictory reactions. For instance, a very dominant stance in posthuman scholarship is the combination of analytic

posthumanism with normative neo-humanism. The most striking example of this approach is the Oxford Institute for the Future of Humanity, based on trans-humanist principles of human enhancement, implemented through a research program called 'super-intelligence.' Directed by Nick Bostrom (2014), it combines brain research with robotics and computational sciences, plus clinical psychology and analytic philosophy, to define the posthuman as a super-human meta-rationalist entity. It combines a twenty-first century diagnosis about technological mediation, with a reiteration of the eighteenth-century humanist ideal of the progress of 'Man'-kind through an unquestioned ideal of scientific rationality.

I find this internally contradictory stance unsatisfactory on several accounts: first because it glosses over the conceptual challenges of combining a transversal project of human/non-human neural techno-enhancement, with a belief in a definition of reason that owes more to Cartesian dualism than to the notion of matter at work in contemporary neural and Life sciences. Instead of foregrounding a self-organising, dynamic fabric transversally connecting all entities which, in the case of humans, produces distributed and technologically mediated consciousness, trans-humanism reduces human intelligence back to the very binaries contemporary science claims to have left behind. These convulsive contradictions can only cause a massive case of theoretical and moral jet-lag. But the challenge of the posthuman condition is that we have to account for the complexity of the present; we need to be worthy of our times.

Second, the combination of post-anthropocentric and neo-humanist elements is unsatisfactory because it silences the socio-political implications of this project, namely the issue of entitlement and access. One shudders at the thought of the selection criteria that might be deployed to allow certain individuals or classes to qualify for enhancement. To present this socio-biological intervention as an evolutionary step that will emancipate our species as a whole amounts to adding insult to injury.

In reaction to these contemporary contradictions, I want to argue that a socially just pedagogy in posthuman times needs to fulfil two basic requirements. First, it has to be consistently posthuman, at both the analytic and the normative levels. This raises, in turn, the need for a posthuman ontology and a new ethics. Second, it has to foreground the socio-political aspects of the posthuman predicament, including the specific forms of de-humanisation and discrimination, the inhumane and necro-political aspects that define our era. Let me expand briefly on each of these pre-conditions and in the conclusion explore their implications for pedagogical practice.

A posthuman ontology

In order to avoid the contradictions highlighted above, I have proposed philosophical neo-materialism and nomadic becoming (Braidotti, 2011a; 2011b), inspired by neo-Spinozist vital ontologies (Deleuze, 1988; 1990) and feminist theory, as the ontological grounding for the posthuman predicament. This materialist posthuman approach, does not restrict subjectivity to bound individuals, but rather repositions it as the effect of a cooperative trans-species effort (Marquis and Sagan, 1995). Subject-formation takes place transversally, in between nature/technology; male/female; black/white; local/global; present/past – in assemblages that flow across and displace binary oppositions.

Neo-materialism emphasises immanence and marks the rejection of transcendental universalism and mind-body dualism. All matter or substance being one and immanent to itself, it is intelligent and self-organising in both human and non-human organisms: we are all part of a common matter (Lloyd 1994, 1996; Protevi 2013). Vital matter is driven by the ontological desire for the expression of its innermost freedom (*conatus*) to persevere in its existence and endure. This understanding of matter animates the composition of posthuman subjects of knowledge, embodied and yet flowing in a web of mediated relations with human and non-human others. Vital neo-materialism also provides the ontological grounding for critical posthuman scholarship as a transversal field of knowledge.

By extension, critical thinkers situate themselves in, and as part of, the world, defending an idea of knowledge production as embedded, embodied, affective and relational. The specific focus of my philosophical work is on what kind of knowing subjects we are in the process of becoming and what discourses underscore this process. The subjects of this exchange compose a relational community, defined as a nomadic, transversal 'assemblage' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987; Braidotti 1994) that involves non-human actors and technology. Material, mediated posthuman subjects constitute a community, 'people', bonded by affirmative ethics. That goes for academics as for any other constituency.

To operationalise this vital materialist position, I rely on the cartographic method. A cartography is a theoretically based and politically informed account of the present that aims at tracking the power relations operational in and immanent to the production and circulation of both knowledge and subjectivity (Braidotti 1994; 2011a; 2011b). The point is to expose these processes of power/knowledge as both entrapment (*potestas*) and as empowerment (*potentia*), while avoiding any polarisation of the two terms. Another crucial conceptual element

of my cartographic approach is the feminist politics of locations (Rich, 1987), also known as situated knowledges (Harding 1986; 1991; Haraway 1988), which I take as the original manifestation of embodied and embedded carnal empiricism. This method accounts for one's position in terms both of space (geo-political or ecological dimension) and time (historical memory or genealogical dimension), thereby grounding politically and epistemically the production of alternative knowledges.

The cartographic approach does justice to the complexity of posthuman subjectivity. These transversal re-compositions of subject assemblages not only defy the logic of excluded middle by including non-human entities and components, but they also establish ontological relationality as the key force in the process of subject formation. The ontological importance of the relation (Glissant 1997) foregrounds the generative, affirmative character of binding – that is to say joyful – passions, values and encounters (Braidotti 2011b). Negative passions, on the other hand, have an arresting effect on one's ability to open up to others.

Relationality means the capacity and desire to move nomadically in the world, with and across a multitude of others. In order to cultivate it as affirmative ethics, however, we need to shift our self-understanding. That is to say, we need to learn to think differently about what we are in the process of becoming. Spinoza taught us, a few centuries back, that ethics begins with the enduring effort to reach an adequate understanding of what a body (as embrained and embodied, material and relational entity) can do. My contemporary neo-Spinozist approach, inspired by Gilles Deleuze, asserts that devising an immanent account of what embrained bodies and embodied brains (Marks, 1998) are allowed to do and are capable of doing, is the core of vital, neo-materialist ethics. This approach assumes a post-Foucauldian understanding of power as both restrictive (*potestas*) and productive (*potentia*). Entrapment and empowerment work in tandem in producing subject positions that are necessarily trans-individual, collective and hybrid: nomadic subjects indeed (Braidotti 1994; 2011b).

I have developed this insight further, arguing that, as a result of the great technological advances, any lingering notion of human nature is replaced by a 'naturecultures' continuum (Haraway 1997, 2003). This also brings to an end the categorical distinction between life as *bios*, the prerogative of *Anthropos*, as distinct from the life of animals and non-humans, or *zoe* (Braidotti 2006). What comes to the fore instead is new human-non-human linkages, new 'zoontologies' and 'posthumanities' (De Fontaney 1998; Wolfe 2003), and also complex media-technological interfaces and media ecologies (Fuller 2005) in the context of the Anthropocene.

These great technological developments – which are often celebrated as the fourth industrial revolution – do not occur in a vacuum, but rather in the context of the specific political economy of knowledge production of advanced capitalism. This is a system that profits from the new scientific understanding of the codes – bio-genetic as well as algorithmic – of all that lives. The capital today is data, life-codes, vital information – this is the politics of Life itself (Rose 2001), or 'Life as surplus' (Cooper 2008), which under the spin of the global economy, often tips over into 'bio-piracy' (Shiva 1997), 'necro-politics' (Mbembe 2003) and 'systemic dispossession' (Sassen 2014).

The saturation of the transformative potential of the present by profit-driven motives, freezes and delays the actualisation of alternatives aimed at the common good. Where negativity dominates the social sphere, it brings about the violent erasure, or passive-aggressive blockage, of our collective desire for affirmative relational ethics. It instils a tyrannical sort of bleakness in our souls, blocking our ability to express and materialise virtual potentials. This reactive political economy also affects both subject-formation and knowledge practices. As a result, these negative setbacks also impact on the contemporary university, the scientific community and the art world.

In a system where knowledge-production is co-extensive with the entire social fabric, also known as cognitive capitalism (Moulier-Boutang, 2012), the fundamental question is how to tell the difference between affirmative and instrumental or opportunistic modes of knowing. Because power, in my scheme of thought, is a multi-layered and dynamic entity, and further because, as embedded and embodied, relational and affective subjects, we are immanent to the very conditions we are trying to change, we need to make careful ethical distinctions. The ethical principle of affirmation is the main criterion of selection: it allows us to make qualitative distinctions between different speeds of knowledge production – for instance between the non-profit practices as opposed to the margins of institutional capitalisation.

To return to the fast-moving proliferation of posthuman scholarship, what prevents it from being integrated into cognitive capitalism, as just another form of epistemic accelerationism? The answer is affirmative ethics, with the corollary of a political praxis of collective counter-actualisation of virtual alternatives. That is to say, to make this distinction we need an increased dose of collectively driven creativity. The barrier against the negative, entropic frenzy of capitalist axiomatic is provided by the politics that ensue from the ethic of affirmation. This, in turn, starts with the composition of transversal subject assemblages that actualise the unrealised or virtual potential of what Deleuze calls 'a missing

people'. In the old language: de-accelerate and contribute to the collective construction of social horizons of hope.

This neo-materialist vital position is consistently posthuman, at both the normative and analytic levels. It offers a robust rebuttal of the nihilist accelerationism and profit-minded knowledge practices of bio-mediated, cognitive capitalism. It takes 'Living matter' as *zoe*-geo/techno-centred process that interacts in complex ways with the techno-social, psychic and natural environments and resists the over-coding by the capitalist profit principle – and the structural inequalities it entails. We thus end up on an affirmative plane of composition of transversal subjectivities, which can then be re-defined as expanded selves, or distributed consciousness (i.e. non-Cartesian). Their relational capacity is not confined within the human species, but includes non-anthropomorphic elements. *Zoe*, the non-human, vital force of Life is the transversal entity that allows us to think across previously segregated species, categories and domains. *Zoe*-centred egalitarianism is, for me, the core of a posthuman thought that might inspire, work with or subtend informational and scientific practices and resist the trans-species commodification of Life by advanced capitalism (Braidotti 2006).

This affirmative vision calls for a re-tuning of the scholar, as the prototype of the scientific subject of knowledge. Far from being a sovereign transcendental consciousness, it must be relocated as a complex singularity, an affective assemblage, and a relational vital entity. The *zoe*-driven, eco-sophical, geo-centered and techno-mediated turn that sustains critical posthuman scholarship, therefore, not only takes the form of a quantitative proliferation of non-human objects of study, but it also calls for qualitative and methodological shifts. In a world haunted by brutal regressions of all kinds, critical posthuman scholarship actualises an immanent politics that avoids the jet-lag of normative neo-humanism on the one hand, and the rhetorical generalisations about a pan-humanity bonded by the fear of extinction on the other. It offers a differential materialist approach to address the situated and complex singularity of heterogeneous contemporary subjects of knowledge.

This ontological frame affects also the epistemological concepts and their pedagogical applications. More specifically, the combination of supra-disciplinary energy, with the force of vital *zoe*/geo/techno-perspectives, renews an established tool of radical pedagogy, namely the task of de-familiarising our habits of thought. We are encouraged to expand from the postcolonial injunction of 'unlearning our privilege as our loss' (Spivak, 1990: 9) to a qualitative assessment of our relational deficits and injuries, notably towards non-human

others. The frame of reference for the thinking subject becomes the world, in all its open-ended, inter-relational, transnational, multi-sexed, and trans-species flows of becoming; a binding vital force (Braidotti 2006; 2013). These are the building blocks of qualitative shifts towards critical posthuman knowledge.

The socio-political dimension

The second pre-condition for a socially just posthuman pedagogy is social justice. It would be inappropriate to take the posthuman as an intrinsically subversive category, narrowing our options down to the binary: extinction (i.e. liberation *from* the human) as opposed to enhanced evolution (liberation *of* the human). We need to check both reactions and resist with equal firmness this double fallacy. I want to insist that the 'posthuman' is normatively neutral and it does not automatically point to the end of the species, let alone to the end of gender/sexuality/class/race/age, etc. power relations between members of the species. The posthuman rather offers a spectrum through which we can capture the complexity of ongoing processes of subject-formation. As such, it enables subtler and more complex analyses of powers and discourses, which start by questioning who might 'we be, whose anxiety takes centre-stage in debates about the posthuman condition. My point is that the posthuman – a figuration carried by a specific cartographic reading of present material and discursive conditions – can define our relational ethics and give us a political praxis. It can be put to the collective task of constructing new subjects of knowledge, through inmanent assemblages or transversal alliances between multiple actors. It is up to us to make it possible, i.e. to actualise it.

To accomplish this, we need to move beyond the tendency to either mourn (apocalyptic variant) or celebrate (euphoric variant) the cause of a new pan-humanity, united in and by the Anthropocene, as both a vulnerable and insurgent category: 'we are in this together!' The reinvention of a pan-human is explicit in the conservative discourse of the Catholic Church, in corporate pan-humanism, military interventionism and UN humanitarianism. It is more oblique but equally strong in the progressive Left, where the legacy of Socialist humanism provides the tools to re-work anxiety into political rage. In all cases, we see the emergence of a category – the endangered human – both as evanescent and foundational. Politically, it is difficult not to read this appeal to a vulnerable pan-humanity as a knee-jerk reaction by the centre – the dominant subject – which Deleuze and Guattari define (1987) as sharply as any feminist as male/white/heterosexual/owning wives and children/urbanised/speaking a standard language, i.e. 'Man,

or rather by now – ‘ex-Man’. Insofar as the Anthropocenic risks of climate change threaten the entire planet, however, one should avoid any cynicism. It is quite obvious that radical epistemologies like feminism and postcolonial theory are just as affected by the demise of Man/Anthropos (Chakrabarty, 2009), as the disciplinary and the universalist discourses.

A posthuman pedagogy of the oppressed, however, needs to foreground the missing people. Because of its highly specialised character, critical posthuman scholarship is currently framing multiple planes of re-organisation of knowledge. This raises the inevitable risk of re-segregating the critical discourses emerging within the posthuman landscape. It is significant to note for instance that, while the Environmental and the Digital Humanities – both of them eminently posthuman in premises, objects of study and methods – have become prominent in most highly ranked research universities, so few institutions have volunteered to launch new ‘Feminist/Queer/Migrant/Poor/De-colonial/Diasporic/Diseased’ Humanities. Clearly, the speed and intensity of the de-territorialisations of knowledge induced by cognitive capitalism differ dramatically and some people are, quite simply, missing (Braidotti 2016).

In what way can they be said to be ‘missing’ to begin with? First, at the empirical level, of course. Whether we look at indigenous knowledge systems, at feminists, queers, otherwise enabled, non-humans or technologically mediated existences, these are real-life subjects whose knowledge never made it into any of the official cartographies. They get constituted as political subjects of knowledge through transversal alliances. But the other missing people are the virtual ones. I argued before that, within a neo-materialist frame, the political is driven by the actualisation of the virtual and the ethics of affirmation. This entails the overthrowing of negativity through the formation of a collective assemblage (‘we’). This transversal alliance today involves non-human agents, technologically mediated elements, Earth-others (land, waters, plants, animals) and non-human inorganic agents (plastic, wires, information highways, algorithms, etc.). A posthuman ethical praxis involves the formation of a new alliance, a new people, as a complex singularity. In this respect, the missing people is an emerging category, always in the process of becoming, as are their knowledges. It is the actualisation of a virtuality, travelling at different speed from capitalist acceleration.

The emerging categories are already at work in posthuman scholarship and the rhizomatic energy of the field is already acting productively. The strength of these minoritarian subjects (Feminist/Queer/Migrant/Poor/Decolonial/Diasporic/Diseased etc.) consists in their capacity to carry out alternative modes

of knowing and becoming. Their ability to set up transversal relations breaks up segregational patterns and establishes border crossings that aim to actualise their knowledge and visions.

For instance, following on from Rob Nixon's (2011) seminal work on slow violence and the environmentalism of the poor, new connections are currently being made between postcolonial theories, the by now classical Environmental Humanities and indigenous epistemologies, resulting in more resonances and interaction between them. This results in more attention being paid to transnational environmental justice, Land Rights and the assessment of the environmental damage caused by warfare. It also produces new areas of studies, such as the Postcolonial Environmental Humanities, Transnational Environmental Literary Studies and the cross-over between Native American Studies and other Indigenous Studies areas and Environmental studies (Povinelli 2016; Bignall, Hemming and Rigney 2016).

Similar developments are happening within the equally established Digital Humanities. The pioneering work of Lisa Nakamura (2002), followed up by Fonzaesi and Leurs (2014) is working towards the convergence field of Postcolonial Digital Humanities.² In my terms, these new trans-disciplinary assemblages propel 'classical' postcolonial studies into and across the re-territorialised Digital Humanities. Also in the context of Mignolo's decolonial theory (2011), new alliances are being forged between Environmentalists and Legal specialists, Indigenous and non-western epistemologies, First Nation peoples, new media activists, IT engineers and anti-globalisation forces, which constitute a significant example of new political assemblages.³ They have produced the Decolonial Digital Humanities, for example the Hasiac Scholars Forum.⁴

These new developments constitute another step forward into the complexity of posthuman discourses. In both cases, attention to the earth is combined with enduring care for the people who live closest to the earth – indigenous populations – thus raising the ethical and political stakes. The critique of Western imperialism and racism is therefore enhanced by an extra layer of dis-identification from anthropocentrism. This extra qualitative shift positions posthuman critical thinkers closer to the dispossessed and the disempowered, on the assumption that many of those are not necessarily human. These new transversal discourses – alternative collective assemblages – reconstitute not only the missing links – between post-humanism and post-anthropocentrism – in academic practices, but actualise also and especially the missing people. The point of this actualisation is to provide an *adequate* expression of what bodies – as both embodied and embraced – can do, think and enact. Adequate

to what? Adequate to what the missing peoples – those embodied, embrained, relational, affective transversal assemblages – can do. How much intensity they can sustain, how much negativity they can process in order to produce affirmation. The ethical task consists in turning the painful experience of inexistence into generative relational encounters and knowledge production. This is liberation through the understanding of our bondage, as Spinoza teaches us: it extracts knowledge from pain by re-working and transforming the negative affect, experience or relation. The politics of immanence compose planes of becoming for a missing people that was never fully part of 'Man' and barely qualified as 'Anthropos', let alone be preoccupied by its alleged crisis today.

This politics of radical immanence – to actualise the emergence of a missing people – also exposes the weakness of the reactive re-composition of pan-humanity, united as a threatened category. Instead of taking a flight into an abstract idea of a 'new' pan-human, bonded in negative passions like fear of extinction, in a world risk society (Beck, 1999), I want to plea for monistic affirmative politics grounded on immanent inter-connections and generative differences: a transversal composition of multiple assemblages of active minoritarian subjects, of many 'people' who are no longer missing.

Conclusion

Let me sum up some of the defining features of posthuman scholarship in order to assess its pedagogical implications. First, it is materially embodied and embedded in a radical and non-reductive form of vital empiricism. It is embedded in the world, environmentally, socially and affectively. It is a supra-disciplinary, rhizomic field of contemporary knowledge production that is contiguous with, but not identical to, the epistemic accelerationism of cognitive capitalism. It functions at different speeds, moves on different time-lines and is fuelled by radically different ethical affects.

Second, it builds on a post-Foucauldian vision of power as multi-layered (*potestas and potentia*) and of time as multi-directional (*Chronos & Aion*, the actual & the virtual). With cognitive capitalism being tuned into bio-genetics and informational codes, the task of critical thinkers is, more than ever, the praxis of speaking truth to power – in all its complexity – and working towards the composition of planes of immanence for missing peoples. Instead of new generalisations about an engendered pan-humanity, we need sharper focus on the complex singularities that constitute our respective locations.

Third, posthuman scholarship requires de-familiarisation, or the move toward anti-Oedipal pedagogy. The anti-Oedipal method argues productively against the anxiety of influence and for a culture of trust and inter-generational justice. A system of knowledge production that rests on affirmative ethics stresses the necessity of pursuing the actualisation of intensities and forces. The point, therefore, is to practice un-dutifulness, conceptual disobedience, or creative unfaithfulness as affirmative politics, in a sustainable and productive manner. De-familiarisation is a sobering process by which the knowing subject evolves from the normative vision of the self he or she had become accustomed to.

Since the 1970s many radical pedagogies have posited the method of dis-identifications from the dominant vision of the subject, along the axes of becoming-woman (sexualisation) and becoming-other (racialisation) and hence within the confines of anthropomorphism. A more radical shift is needed therefore today to develop post-anthropocentric forms of identification (ecologisation). Posthuman theory's vital geo/techno/centrism – the love of *zoe* – is an effort in the same direction. Becoming-world/earth or becoming-imperceptible introduce a radically immanent planetary dimension.

On the methodological front, de-Oedipalising the pedagogical relationship to the non-human other is a form of radical pacifism that sets strong ethical requirements upon the philosophical subject. It requires a form of dis-identification from a century-old habit of anthropocentric thought and humanist arrogance, which is likely to test the ability and willingness of the Humanities to question what exactly is 'human' about them. The frame of reference becomes the open-ended, inter-relational, multi-sexed, and trans-species flows of becoming by interaction with multiple others.

Last, but not least, comes the collaborative, not competitive character of posthuman knowledge production. One of the great innovations of vital materialist philosophy is the rigorous brand of methodological non-aggression that animates it. The monistic ontology that asserts we are all part of the same matter, which Deleuze adapts from Spinoza, plus a good dose of Bergsonian time-continuum, situates the researcher – be it the philosopher, the scientist, or the artist – in a situation of great intimacy with the world. There is no violent rupture or separation between the subjects and the objects of their inquiry, no predatory gaze of the cold clinician (Braidotti 2011a) intent upon unveiling the secrets of nature (Jordanova 1993). An elemental ontological unity structures the connections. This non-essentialist vitalist position calls for a collaborative re-definition of the scholar as subject of knowledge, as well as the process of scientific inquiry and its methodology.

The challenge today is how to transform, or deterritorialise, the human-non-human interaction in pedagogical practice, so as to intervene in, but not be over-coded or assimilated by, the fast-moving flows of data-mining by cognitive capitalism. How to bypass the dialectics of otherness, secularising the concept of human nature and the life that animates it, while embracing neo-naturalism in a *zoe/geo/techno*-perspective. I would speak of a generic becoming-minoritarian/animal/world/earth/cosmos as a figuration for the humanoid hybrid subjects of posthuman knowledge we are in the process of becoming. It is clear that our science – bio-genetics and informatics – can deal with this post-anthropocentric shift, but can philosophy and the Humanities rise to the occasion?

The answer can only be ethical. The displacement of anthropocentrism and the recognition of trans-species solidarity are based on the awareness of 'our' being in *this* together; that is to say: environmentally-based, embodied, and embedded and in symbiosis with each other. The *zoe*-centered embodied subject is shot through with relational linkages of the symbiotic, contaminating/viral kind that interconnect it to a variety of others, starting from the environmental or eco-others. This non-essentialist brand of vitalism reduces the hubris of rational consciousness, which far from being an act of vertical transcendence, is rather recast as radical immanence, a grounding force. It is an act of unfolding of the self onto the world and the enfolding within of the world.

'We' – the dwellers of this planet at this point in time are inter-connected, but also internally fractured. The field of posthuman scholarship is not aiming at anything like a consensus about a new 'Humanity', but it gives us a frame for the actualisation of the many different ways of becoming posthuman. It actualises multiple missing people, whose marginalised knowledge is the breeding ground for possible futures. Of course, such a praxis is demanding, in terms of rigour, labour and imagination, but the advantages are plentiful. For one thing, the neo-materialist ethics of affirmation that sustains the complex re-composition of subjectivity through posthuman knowledge, is giving us an adequate measure of what we are actually in the process of becoming. The rest is a life's work.

Notes

- 1 With thanks to Sarah Nuttall.
- 2 See also the Postcolonial Digital Humanities blog and website at #dhpoco.tumblr.com.

- 3 See for instance the land/media/indigenous project based in British Columbia: Black, Dods and Williams (2013).
- 4 Co-ordinated by Micha Cardenas, Noha F. Beydon and Alaina Kavaloiski; see the website: www.hastac.org/initiatives/hastac-scholars-forums/decolonising-digital.

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