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DIALOGUE WITH MAGDALENA GÓRSKA

Introduction to *Breathing matters*

The doctoral dissertation *Breathing matters* introduces breathing into feminist studies as a forceful potentiality for feminist intersectional theories, politics and social and environmental justice.

The first part analyzes dusty lungs syndrome and prosodies of phone-sex breathing in order to articulate how the quotidian material agency of bodies is not only a political issue but also enacts politics. By introducing the concept of matter-work as an articulation of the everyday work that bodies do in metabolizing natural-cultural worlds, the book develops a non-universalizing and politicized understanding of embodiment in which human bodies are conceptualized as agential actors of intersectional politics. Building on such an approach to corporeal material agency, the second part looks at how breath is enacted in anxiety and panic attacks. It proposes a concept of corpo-affectivity in order to articulate how embodiment and affect are mutually constitutive in everyday life and in developing anti-discriminatory politics that work with issues of bodily and affective vulnerability. By approaching breathing in both its empowering and constraining enactments, the book proposes an understanding of a feminist intersectional politics of vulnerability through ambivalence. Matter-work and corpo-affective dynamics are understood here not merely as reactions to systems of oppression but also as enactments of and challenges to social power relations. This political forcefulness of breathing is, however, understood as ambivalent because it needs to attend not only to its transformative potential but also to the painfulness, immobilization and impasse that are often part of living through, challenging and proposing alternatives to dominant social norms and power relations. The politics of ambivalence proposed in *Breathing matters* hence aims to hold space for both the immobility and potentiality, the painfulness and empowerment that

take place during everyday ways of living, thinking and developing political strategies for change.

Breathing matters is situated within the agential realist theory of Karen Barad and inspired by contemporary discussions in feminist new materialist, posthumanist, poststructuralist and affect theories. Such an analytical framework allows the book to develop an anthropo-situated while anti-anthropocentric understanding of the intersectional relations of embodiment, subjectivity and power, showing how they operate in a structural, individual and quotidian manner.

Introduction to the dialogue with Magdalena Górska

In this conversation with Magdalena Górska, we discuss the development of her PhD dissertation: *Breathing matters: Feminist intersectional politics of vulnerability* (Górska, 2016). Thus, it is also a conversation that focuses on becoming a researcher through the ways in which the phenomenon of breathing intra-acts with the researcher. In Górska's case, this becoming was also linked to the processes of geopolitics as she moved from Eastern Europe to Sweden, Berlin and the United States. She is currently employed as an assistant professor with the Graduate Gender Program at Utrecht University.

Within the contexts of cultural studies and feminist philosophy and politics, Górska follows the intimacy of her life as a basis for generating the empirical material that she analyzes. This basis, combined with her movements across national borders and the geopolitical relations related to them, also characterizes the analyses in her dissertation. Górska explores breathing as a phenomenon by analyzing both the material-discursive and the natural and cultural enactments of breathing through interviews with Marek (a retired coal miner from the Ostravsko region of the Czech Republic), Anna (who used to work as a phone-sex worker in 1990s Berlin) and Matt from California (who lives with anxiety and panic attacks resulting from military-service-induced PTSD). Matt metabolizes these attacks with his companion dog, Tarik, who also participated in the interviews. Finally, Górska engages with Lina from Sweden, who is a psychotherapist and physiotherapist helping clients who struggle with diverse bodily and affective challenges, including anxiety and panic attacks.

In *Breathing matters*, the exploration of breathing takes its inspiration from feminist poststructuralist and new materialist theories and also draws upon theories of intersectionality. Human bodies are conceptualized as agential actors of intersectional politics. As it says on the cover of her printed dissertation, Górska “argues that struggles for breath and for breathable lives are matters of differential forms of political practices in which vulnerable and quotidian corpomaterial and corpo-affective actions are constitutive of politics.”

In this conversation with Górska, she generously tells us about the difficult but also joyful and creative processes involved in composing a posthumanist –

agential-realist-inspired – understanding of breathing and the opportunities it provides for feminist politics.

Why breathing?

One of the facets of Breathing matters that we're eager to hear more about concerns how breathing arose as a field of inquiry. Please tell us about this process.

It's difficult to pin down an exact moment. I think I started focusing on breathing in my first or second year as a PhD fellow. I was always interested in material agentiality. As a student, I completed my BA thesis on the notion of materiality used in Judith Butler's *Bodies that Matter*. In my MA thesis, I continued my interest in material agentiality in relation to scientific knowledge production practices. I was given an opportunity to be a researcher on an EU-funded project called KNOWING – which was coordinated by Marcela Linková from the National Contact Center for Gender and Science at the Czech Academy of Sciences – and some of us focused on how natural scientists produce knowledge. Because of this project, I was able to join a team of biochemistry researchers who were studying the pheromones of bumblebees, and I started to follow the material and discursive transformations of bumblebees in the research lab and their agency in the production of knowledge. I carried this interest into my PhD as well. However, my original dissertation project was purely theoretically oriented. I wanted to discuss material agentiality through an analysis of poststructuralist and new materialist theories. Combining these approaches was crucial to me because I saw these fields as very much entangled and in conversation with one another.

At some point, in one of the new project proposals that I was required to write at the beginning of my PhD, I used breathing as an example of material agentiality. At that particular moment, breathing just served as an example for me. However, one of my two supervisors, Nina Lykke (the other was Cecilia Åsberg, who is a great teacher of posthumanism), asked me: “What’s going on with breathing here? It sounds like there’s something more happening there for you. You should think more about it.” Her question made me aware that there was, indeed, something important about breathing for me. However, at this early stage I was convinced that I didn’t want to conduct empirical research. I wanted the project to be purely theoretical. On top of this, I had a reaction similar to that of many people when I tell them that my work in feminist studies focuses on breathing. I thought: “Breathing? Feminism? What? How is breathing a feminist political issue?” However, after my hesitation, Nina said: “Why don’t you just try a creative writing exercise where you write about why you think breathing could be interesting for you – or not?” One day I did this, and I convinced myself.

So, this is how it started. I had no predesigned focus on breathing. It was a process of working through, engaging and figuring things out. At the same time, the more I worked with breathing, the more I got lost. All of a sudden, I

thought: “Oh my God, I need to understand the physiology of breathing! I need to understand all of the differences between beings that breathe and how they breathe! What about trees, what about soil, what about underwater beings, what about coral reefs, what about seas, and what about the circulation of air around us? What about technology?” So I went through a time of total chaos where everything was just so exciting but also extremely frustrating and confusing. This frustration was mostly related to my need to control the project and to contain it somehow. This is a problem I still struggle with, while at the same time I know how unnecessary and futile it is.

After a long period of messy emergence of the different ways in which breathing is enacted, I slowly started to realize that I wanted to direct my attention towards human breathing, but from a posthumanist perspective. This became an overarching red thread throughout my dissertation. Later on, as I kept researching and writing, I realized that things were starting to come together. I started to conduct empirical research, and all of my interests (which were part of my first project proposal) were still there, and I could even articulate them more clearly at this point. I realized that I didn’t need to write only about the theories of others to ask the questions I was concerned with and that I could actually start to work through my own engagement while being in conversation with the amazing theorists, theories and concepts that I wanted to focus on initially. However, at this point, I was engaged from a place I felt I could stand behind. This isn’t to say that purely theoretical work isn’t grounded or that it needs an empirical focus. This was my personal issue, so it’s kind of funny that working with air and breath made me more grounded.

However, even so, I still needed to do a lot of work to find out how breathing and I resonate. When I spoke with people about my work, most of the time I was asked: “So what about your own breathing?” In regard to healthy breathing practices, I was asked: “Do you focus on yoga?” and “What about breath and meditation?” However, I felt uncomfortable with developing an understanding of breath based on notions of health and purity.

So people confronted you with specific expectations because your research focused on breathing?

Exactly. There was resistance in me. When I spoke about breathing, all of a sudden many people alluded to this notion of purity: breath as purity, breath as health. I didn’t want to carry out my research from that perspective. I didn’t want to assume that breathing is something clear and pure and then engage with the moral issues that are sometimes related to such an understanding of breath.

However, even knowing this wasn’t my path, I was still left with the question: “What do I focus on?” For a long time, I didn’t have a thesis structure because I was just dealing with the complexities of breath that I was engaging with. For a while, I couldn’t find a way to organize my writing that made sense to me. I was scared of overlooking complexities and flattening relations. However, my decision to conduct interviews helped. I like to work with randomness in my

research, and, in a way, this is what helped me find my research participants. I think the first person I conducted an interview with was the coal miner, Marek.

Just to get rid of the purity?

Exactly.

[We laugh.]

The intimacy of life as a basis for the selection of empirical material

We find your approach to producing empirical material interesting and inspiring. Among other things, we've found that you analyze rather diverse empirical materials, ranging from interviews to posters and music videos. Can you offer insight into what your considerations were around the selection processes associated with the production of empirical materials? You mentioned that you like to work with randomness. Has that played a role?

I had an acquaintance who used to be a coal miner, and once we started talking about my work he asked: “What’s your PhD about?” His response was: “Breathing? What?” (as always). I then realized that he’d had several interesting experiences that he was willing to share. So, I conducted an interview with him, and it was an amazing interview. We talked for over two hours, and the next day I went to a coal mine in the region of the Czech Republic where he lives. The coal mine itself is now closed, but it’s been transformed into a museum where one can visit the tunnels that were once active. I saw the environment there, and I walked through the tunnels, listened to the guide, and took a lot of pictures. I was really excited about this, and after the interview – which we carried out in Czech – I just couldn’t wait to metabolize the experience. I started to listen to the interview, to review the pictures, and to learn more about coal mining in the Czech Republic and its social and environmental aspects. I then wrote about ten pages of thick description. It poured out of me. I was so excited about it. This was my first engagement with breathing that was interview situated.

So, is this how you ended up conducting empirical work despite your initial desire to conduct a theoretical project?

I had experience with empirical research from my master’s research, as I mentioned earlier. At that time, I did conduct empirical research, but I think I didn’t do it enough justice. However, this time, during my dissertation research, I think I managed to work with this personal difficulty differently. Breathing forced me to engage with theory and empirical material in a new way. It totally altered everything I knew, and it took me on a completely new path. I started to contemplate things I wouldn’t have thought of before, and it was exactly this “going with the flow” quality of the research process that I really fell for.

The second interview I completed focused on anxiety and panic attacks. Again, I didn’t want to engage with breath as something pure. I was curious about how to think about breath when it becomes hectic or constraining, and I

thought that panic attacks and anxiety would be a really interesting phenomenon to engage with. I knew a therapist in Sweden, Lina, who works with individuals who experience anxiety and panic attacks, and she was willing to speak with me. For me, research is also about engagement with the world I live in and about an openness to the different ways in which people breathe. In a way, everybody has a story to tell about breathing. So, in a way, I could conduct an interview with anyone, and it would always take me somewhere. Thus, I decided to follow how breathing enters my life and research.

The next two interviews I conducted emerged from the intimacy of my life. I decided to try to relinquish control and see what happened. For example, the phone-sex worker, Anna, who I conducted a third interview with, is a friend of a friend of mine. One day, I was at a bar with some friends in Berlin, and we started to discuss my work. At some point, we started to discuss sex work because that was where the topic of breathing took us and also because we have some friends in common who are active in the sex-work movement. One of my friends (Lale) said, “Hey, I actually think one of my friends did phone-sex work. Maybe you’d be interested in talking with her,” and I said yes. My friend set up a meeting, and we had this amazing dinner together where we were talking, laughing, drinking and eating. That was my interview with the phone-sex worker. Anna, the interviewee, said many things that I thought were amazing because again we weren’t focused on “pure” or moralized breathing. This was again my way of resisting such interpretations of what I “should” be doing, and it just happened in this interview on its own. And, simultaneously, it revealed yet another aspect of the political relevance of breathing.

The last interview I completed for the dissertation was the one with Matt and his companion dog Tarik. They’re the only ones who aren’t anonymized in my work, because Matt explicitly did not want to be anonymized as what he told me also forms part of his political engagements. I got to know Matt and Tarik in Santa Cruz when I was a visiting scholar at UCSC. We’d spoken on several occasions, and I’d always thought that he was a really generous and kind person. Matt told me about some breath work he’d been doing daily to manage his military-service-induced PTSD [Post Traumatic Stress Disorder]. At some point, I asked him, “Hey, would you like to speak with me?” I think the interview took place two days before I was leaving to return to Europe. We completed this interview sitting on the porch of his house in Santa Cruz, and Tarik was lying on the front lawn in front of us. It was such a powerful interview.

I think all of the interviews I conducted were at least two hours long, because I felt like I needed a lot of context. I can’t just say: “Tell me about how you breathe,” because how you breathe is embedded in the context of how you live. Thus, all of the interviews were really long, and it was always difficult to discuss breathing. In the interviews, I was trying to get to know the person. The interviews were open-ended. I always had a few (about five) questions to help us talk, but many more questions emerged from the interviews themselves. When I conducted the interviews, I often jumped in with additional questions or returned

to something that was said earlier, so it was a very organic process. But it was always difficult to find a way to discuss people's breathing experiences. Direct questions were often met with silence or a lack of clarity about what to say next. This confusion about how to discuss breath was fascinating. In the interview on phone-sex work, Anna told me a great deal about the specificities of the work, about the environment, and about why she'd chosen this work. However, at some point she said: "But I don't know how I was breathing." I replied, "Okay, then give me examples. How did you create an atmosphere of sex?" Then, all of a sudden, by talking around breathing, we got into breathing.

What role did agential realism play in relation to the production of the empirical material?

I don't know if I could have done it without Barad's work, because their theory transforms the way one does research and engages with the world. Through Barad's work, I understood that context and the core of my interests (breathing) were necessarily related. The work focuses on how phenomena come into being through intra-active and differencing enactments. Some of those enactments also involve phenomenal and research-specific processes of inclusion and exclusion where the researcher's response-ability also plays a key role. For example, I conducted one more interview with Matt (this time over Skype) because I realized that, in our first interview, we'd undermined the role of Tarik. In our first conversation, we focused on what Tarik does for Matt, but we didn't discuss what Matt does for Tarik. So I thought: "We have to discuss this because now I clearly see that it's missing and that these two ways of breathing are related."

Why was that important to discuss? Was it because the ethical and political effects of not getting the story right on the reciprocity of the relationship would be problematic?

Exactly. I don't think of research as a linear process. Inclusions and exclusions take place all the time, and it's always about situated accountability in a particular time and space through time. For example, I sent Matt final drafts of the chapters where I engaged with his interview to make sure he agreed with how I'd engaged with his story. If he had disagreed with something, I would have either considered leaving it out or I would have discussed the concern with him. For sure, I would have tried to find strategies to work with him on our disagreements. However, he liked the piece, and it resonated with his position. So, a process of affirmative collaboration was involved.

It's interesting how you decided to let the material be grounded in (as you said) the intimacy of your life, and this would certainly be difficult to follow through in some disciplinary contexts and with some supervisors. There must have been specific decisions made and dilemmas involved regarding not considering certain kinds of material?

Yes. I was very lucky that my dissertation work took place at Tema Genus at Linköping University and with Cecilia Åsberg and Nina Lykke as my supervisors, who were very supportive of my process. At the same time, the process of engaging with the materials that were coming to me and to which I was

responding was also a difficult one because I felt like I was conducting posthumanist research while writing only about human beings. Thus, I had to figure this out. However, I decided to follow my gut on it.

This was one of the facets involved in working through the intimate evolution of my material. Another facet concerned constitutive exclusions of the research process. I considered conducting an interview with an opera singer. I was actually in touch with someone, but then I realized that I would have had to write too many chapters, and so I didn't do that interview. I also wanted to conduct an interview with a dancer because I was interested in *matterwork*¹ – a term I developed to engage in the agential work of matter – in relation to the ways in which bodies (human and nonhuman) enact the complexities of movement and air metabolization for someone to dance. I felt that this concept of matterwork, which was slow to emerge from within me, would be very well addressed through the two interviews. However, in the end, I didn't have enough time or text space left, and I decided not to pursue those two interviews.

These were the cases that were excluded. I'm sure that there were more than I'm mentioning now. I remember conducting one short interview with a person who told me about how taking drugs changes her experience of breathing. However, I didn't end up engaging with this subject in my work either.

Why not?

At some point, I realized that my attention had moved in another direction, and the interview didn't grab me. I need to be passionate about an interview (but not necessarily always in a positive way). I don't want to over-idealize passion. However, I have to respond. I have to feel interpolated somehow, and in this particular case, I wasn't. However, the interviews that I didn't feel passionate about would still, of course, have provided me with very interesting stories.

What about the materials that aren't interview transcripts? You analyze a poster, you include lyrics, you consider the Black Lives Matter movement and so forth. What motivated you to use these diverse materials in the dissertation?

I think it was just coming in, and I was response-able. Some things grab you. Some things you simply must engage with. There are so many political issues that it's crucial for me to engage with, and breathing always finds its way into them. However, even though I care about many issues and even when I came across many great breathing phenomena, I had to limit myself in my discussions.

For example, I wrote a piece on Sia's video "Big Girls Cry."² In my opinion, it's a fantastic video about living with anxiety. However, in the end, I had to exclude the piece from the dissertation because I wanted to engage with the work of Malin Arnell, a feminist artist and performer who works with agential realism and embodiment in an incredibly evocative and engaging manner.³ This exclusion had to occur because my discussion of Sia's video addressed similar issues but, of course, through a different means from my discussion of Malin's work. I decided to stay with Malin's work because she's a fabulous feminist

performer. She's also a friend, and I wanted to work from our affinity. For me, the material I engage with also focuses on the politics of quotation. I like to be in conversation with people I admire, and I find Malin's way of working extremely engaging, bold and provocative. I now use Sia's video for teaching and, at some point, I hope to find the time to write an article about it.

Thus, when I excluded something, I was using the politics of my environment as part of the exclusion process. Therefore, in terms of other inclusions and exclusions, things were coming my way, and I was just engaging with them. Of course, I also conducted research and searched for material, and I worked on furthering my knowledge of breathing. However, when I searched for empirical material to engage with, I didn't approach it by stating: "Today's a research day, and what I find is what I'll use." It was rather a way of living through my research. For example, this was the case when I came across the work of the Beehive Design Collective. I was visiting Santa Cruz and attending a Practical Activism Conference that had been organized on campus when, all of a sudden, I found out that there was a whole panel on coal mining and fracking. At that time, I'd already conducted the interview with Marek and had worked on the chapter related to it. Thus, I thought "Oh my God, I have to go there." It was a fantastic coincidence. I went to the event, learned about the True Cost of Coal poster and became really inspired. The next day, I just went to the library and started to write about the poster. However, at some point, I started to struggle with finding a way to include it in the dissertation. I knew it was an important story, but I wasn't sure where it fit into the broader scheme of the thesis. Then, at some point, maybe even a year later, I realized: "Ahh, it connects here."

But, to return to your question, the empirical material was coming my way, and this depended on my response-ability in engaging with it or not. I think this is also part of the intra-activity and differencing of the research process that I mentioned earlier: what comes into research isn't just anything or everything. I am situated. I am affective. I am situated in power relations. I am responsive and have limits, and I think all of this shapes part of the research process and its inclusions and exclusions.

Agential realism

How did agential realism become relevant to you and your research?

I think agential realism became a philosophical space for me through which I could engage with how concepts and reality are intra-actively constitutive, while also different. I also understand agential realism as very much in conversation with poststructuralism, feminist corporeal philosophy, science and technology studies, posthumanities, anti-racism studies, decolonization studies, queer studies, disability studies and affect studies. While *agential realism* is a term developed by Barad, it's often used as part of a broader concept of new materialism or material feminism. I understand these themes more as a form of conversation than as

a clear delimitation of a field. For me, it's interesting to see how concepts and approaches transform when they're at work.

I think that, when I work with agential realism together with feminist scholarship in articulating the multiplicity of embodiment, situated knowledges, decolonialism and affect – or at least this is the conclusion I've come to – I can't live my life the way I used to before in terms of, for example, the ways in which I understand science, knowledge, power relations, justice or my position as a researcher. For me, understanding ethics, epistemology and ontology as mutually constitutive while also differencing means, for example, that I can't see an individual as completely detached from the political, or the theoretical from the personal. It also means that I must understand my research as accountable to the ways that I'm situated in the world, or, to say it using Barad's articulation, how I'm *of* the world. This involves paying attention not only to the ways that I am as an individual but also to how my views of individuality, collectivity and knowledge are enacted through intra-active constitution and differencing with the environment, social and cultural norms, discriminatory regimes, and local and global power relations. Moreover, conceptually speaking, the notion of intra-activity has been one of the most crucial contributions of agential realism for me. I'd come from a poststructuralist background from which I examined how materiality is enacted and how I can think about embodiment. Thus, before I started reading Barad's work – due to my readings of Butler – I already understood materiality and discursivity as mutually constitutive, but I was specifically thinking through questions of epistemology. Thus, the *neologism of intra-activity* became a term that allowed me to understand the onto-epistemological dynamism of co-constitution that doesn't assume pre-existing entities.

As I read Barad's work, I also realized that the dynamism of intra-activity operates in concert with another constitutive process: *differencing*. Barad doesn't use this exact term, although working with Derrida's notion of *différance* and speaking of differentiation. However, I decided to introduce it into my work. I think the term *differencing* (as a constant process of enacting difference and differentiation) is consequential in regard to the ways that I understand and mobilize Barad's work. Without it, I couldn't articulate the processes of breathing that I was engaging with. I understand the dynamic (and non-binary) relationality of these two processes – of intra-activity and differencing – as an ongoing dynamism of worlding. Together with processes of agential cuts, they enact the materialization and articulation of phenomena through their specific and differential situatedness and dispersal. In this intra-actively constitutive and differencing dynamism, I understand an agential cut as a moment of phenomenon boundary formation. This dynamism of intra-activity and differencing always entails accountability and response-ability. Thus, intra-activity for me enacts a dynamism of spatio-temporal, ethical, natural and cultural co-constitution (without pre-existing entities). Differencing involves a dynamism of spatio-temporal, ethical, natural and cultural processes of differentiation and difference.

Intra-active and differencing relationality constitutes phenomena, while enacting its specific differentiating boundaries.

I think that analyzing natural-cultural worlds through intra-active and differencing dynamics (which always entail enactments of boundaries and their ethico-onto-epistemological consequences) enables me to engage with phenomena and political matters of concern in nonreductive and constantly dynamic, but simultaneously spatio-temporally situated, ways that come with dispersed relationalities and consequences. I've tried to put such dynamics to work in relation to several issues that I struggle with in *Breathing matters*. In Chapter 1, for example, intra-activity and differencing help me address the non-reductiveness of breath. In Chapter 2, I work with these concepts further in the development of the concept of situated dispersal. Finally, in Chapter 8, these concepts are very helpful in my struggle with practices of boundary-making in relation to the delimitation and uncontainability of anxiety and panic attacks.

Thus, while the notion of intra-action is one of the concepts that's most often cited from Barad's work, I think the notion of difference – and differencing as a form of dynamism – is just as crucial for agential realism. Furthermore, these dynamics together (intra-action, differencing and boundary formation processes that enact phenomena – such as breathing – in their spatio-temporal, ethical, material and cultural situatedness and dispersion) are central, in my opinion, to a (non-flattening) analysis of power. This is what makes Barad's work very useful and inspiring for my own feminist political engagements, through which I'm interested in a posthumanist analysis of the power dynamics of the breathability and unbreathability of lives. I think this is one of the aspects of agential realism that I'm most passionate about because it really feels like it's revolutionizing my thinking. However, I'm always very skeptical about origin narratives of particular lines of thought. Thus, I'm also very hesitant about my own delimitations of theoretical approaches and of pinpointing where my own conceptual shifts began (e.g., I remember how reading the works of Ahmed, Butler, Braidotti, Cvetkovich, Haraway, Lykke, Shildrick and Latour for the first time was also very transformative for me). This is why I think of Barad's work as crucial to my research, while also being part of feminist conversations, as they take place throughout time and space with different accents and particular political investments. However, my specific revolutionary moment with agential realism involved the passion that it inspired within me; this was a moment at which something shifted and moved in an unexpected direction.

How agential realist thinking enabled research on breathing

To me, agential realism, together with Donna Haraway's work, revolutionizes the conventional understanding of what reality is and of knowledge and positionality in relation to it. Thus, it's very helpful for re-conceptualizing the relations between object and subject, inside and outside, nature and culture, and so on. I also think that one of the most significant challenges for me emerged when I

started to work with agential realism based on intra-activity and differencing. It was challenging to find a way to do and think about research and to write through the two concepts. I could comprehend the terms and their relations theoretically. However, I didn't know how to conduct phenomenal work in such a way. Rather, it was challenging to work through a phenomenon as something that takes place through a particular *enactment*. To put it differently, it was challenging to work through a question of how breathing is *enacted* and what it *does* rather than what it *is*.

Now I realize that, at the beginning of my engagements with breathing – even though I was already working with agential realism – I was still searching for what breathing *is*. I find this personal tension between my ways of conceptualizing things and the challenging practice of living up to them (apologies for using this artificial and sometimes very painful theory-practice distinction) fascinating. I suppose that transformation takes place at different rates and in different dimensions, and for me it takes place faster conceptually than it does empirically. It's been my on-going struggle to learn how to work and live across my different temporalities, and so, at that time, I was trying to understand what breathing is by focusing on several forms of breathing and by attempting to make sense of them, individually and in relation to one another.

However, in doing so I was constantly frustrated. The frustration was less rooted in the new scientific ways of thinking I was learning than it was fueled by a constant feeling that something was missing. Thus, when, for example, I was reading about the physiology of human breathing, I was, on the one hand, learning a considerable amount about a universalized understanding of breathing processes, while at the same time I felt like this process is never enacted in a way that's universal. As breathing changes in relation to stress levels or has different effects on the whole body in relation to air pollution levels, I thought that the physiology of human breathing couldn't be discussed without also considering, for example, the role of society in the ways that we breathe or the role of the environment in the quality of air that's metabolized. It was this process of struggling with the messiness of determining how to think about breathing, and of moving from questions of what breathing *is* to how breathing is *enacted*, through which agential realism (and thinking through intra-activity and differencing) was especially helpful to me. This enabled me to not only conceptualize but also develop a practice of engaging with breathing as multiple phenomena. The phenomenon is shared across human and nonhuman lifeforms (e.g., as a force that enables and ends life), while at the same time it's not homogenous (e.g., not only in that humans and other animals have different physiologies of breathing but also in that the breathing patterns of human animals differ according to, for example, different lung and body sizes or age). Agential realism enabled me to think of breathing as a force that's common to all living and breathing beings but is yet differential in its enactments and to develop a respiratory politics of situated dispersal.

I also experienced a similar yet different struggle while writing a chapter on anxiety and panic attacks when I was starting to live with anxiety and panic

attacks myself. Thus, I lived through them and wrote through them as well. This was a major challenge. I remember that I couldn't grasp anxiety and panic attacks experientially, and I couldn't grasp them conceptually either. I was reading constantly about the topic, and the more I engaged, the more I couldn't determine what anxiety or panic attacks *are*. Even though this struggle took place a year or two later, it was similar to the one I experienced when I started to work with breathing.

Thus, some of my struggles re-emerged in different forms and at different times, and it was agential realist thinking that always helped me to realize – even though I knew this conceptually for years – that I was unintentionally asking the wrong questions. What I wanted to do was not about capturing. It was about following specific intra-activities and differencings and engaging with what they do in a particular situation or relating with me as a researcher who's part of the process rather than trying to sediment breathing into a specific universalized definition. While it sounds simple now, it was a major challenge to actually be able to follow through, especially as this involves letting go of one's own notions of scientific control.

Do you remember the moment or point at which you turned that question around?

I think it happened at different times in addressing different questions. However, I think the most significant moment was when I started to live with anxiety and panic attacks and when I had to start learning from my own experiences and from my theories as I was writing about them while experiencing them. Anxiety and panic attacks forced me to let go (but very slowly as I was very resistant). I needed to let go of trying to control my text and of trying to control what I know and what I don't know. Anxiety and panic attacks forced me (again very slowly) to go with the flow. It's actually quite funny. I've always been a very theoretically oriented person, but I (mis)understood this inclination as a tool for controlling the research process. I also remember that, almost from the first day onward, my supervisors Nina and Cecilia told me: "Magda, let go. Just enjoy." In response, I always thought: "What do you mean, let go? That's impossible." However, I think I did at some point, as I actually had no choice. At some point, I had to let go due to the complexities and intensity of the PhD process. For me, the "How to do it" or how to write a PhD thesis involved all of the fears that it represented with all of the insecurities, feelings of being an imposter and affective dynamics. At some point, I thought, *If I don't let go, I'll never finish.*

My own practice of maintaining a sense of control would moreover prove contradictory to my theoretical and writing practice, as my research was showing me that the dynamics of worlding are not controllable in the classical sense of human control, or in a positivist understanding of science. While I believed this as well, in another area of my practice I was still controlling something that I was simultaneously viewing as uncontrollable. As a result, I had to change myself and my approach, and that was perhaps one of those moments at which I challenged (and I hope this stays with me) my own practices of performing God Tricks,⁴ of

which operations and feminist criticisms I was, simultaneously, very much theoretically aware. It's kind of funny that for many years I've been engaging with feminist approaches to situated knowledges in a conceptual way, but that engaging with them in an embodied way took me much longer to achieve. I think this will be a never-ending pursuit.

Thus, all of these struggles were very challenging but also very good for both my work and me. They also helped me to start developing my own vocabulary. I needed this vocabulary for the specific interventions I cared about and for which I had no other terms available that would simultaneously incorporate an agential realist approach. All of these interventions were coming from my material. My research process was very often divided between the amazing theories, concepts and work I admired and wanted to apply to my own work and feeling that I couldn't simply force breathing to fit into the theoretical frameworks I enjoyed. However, on this point, my supervisor Nina was very helpful, because she always told me: "Start from your material." Many times throughout my research I resisted her advice. The process of letting go or of following my research process was a real struggle. However, once I started to let go and to work from my material, I was able to see what existing theories could help me with and what new concepts and vocabulary I needed to develop myself to articulate what I cared about. Now, I'm the one who tells my students: "Start from your material!" But I also think that the embodied experience of working with anxiety and panic attacks was really central to this process. Starting to live with anxiety and panic attacks was an extremely transformative time for me personally in terms of my politics and in terms of understanding my situatedness in politics. I think that from this bodily and affective – or corpo-affective as I call it – experience, my theoretizations and politicizations also changed. Corpo-affectivity is a concept developed in *Breathing matters* that articulates the operations of corpomateriality and affect as intra-actively constitutive and differencing.

The agential cut

Analytical work always entails struggles. One of the things that we enjoyed while reading Breathing matters is the ways in which you help the reader maintain sight of the many agencies entangled in breathing. Nevertheless, in our mail correspondence prior to this conversation you mentioned that, during the research process, you felt you were constantly failing to articulate the relational complexities that you were engaging with. Can you elaborate on how you worked to overcome these challenges, because when we read Breathing matters it appears that they were largely overcome?

Maybe that's because I saw and still see all of the exclusions I was making. Maybe that's the thing. In the end, I know I don't discuss underwater beings. I don't discuss trees, and I don't discuss soil, dancing, singing or drugs. I also know that there's so much more I don't discuss. I think that my constant feelings of failing to articulate all the relational complexities concerns the pain experienced

from an agential cut that makes it clear there's always something that's excluded. There's always something that you lose. I think Kristeva's notion of the abject – as constitutive exclusion – is still very relevant within the realms of agential realism or of new materialism more broadly (1986). What's absent is a specific phenomenon that's excluded through an intra-active and differencing process. Thus, for me, in relation to this specific dissertation, the phenomena I excluded are present in their absence and in the ongoing ways in which they were prompting my thinking, without in the end making it into the text. Thus, for me specifically, those excluded phenomena are present, but in a way that perhaps isn't visible to someone who doesn't specifically know what I excluded. However, of course, Kristeva's notion of abjection extends far beyond the exclusions that we're aware of.

However, agential realism also spurs this attention to complexity, and this is also why I think the neologism of intra-activity is so important. It reveals this complexity, and this is also why I think the agential cut is important. Together with intra-activity comes differencing and boundary development and always some kind of exclusion. I think that's a form of struggle that never ends. Thus, while not being able to attend to all the complexities may be experienced as a "failure," the issue is also to reframe what this failure is. It's a constitutive failure and not a failure in a judgmental sense, as we're taught to live and understand personal or other kinds of failure. It's a form of failure that's part of life and of worldly intra-activity and differencing, and it's also a matter of accountability.

Did the respites (the intertexts of the dissertation) assist you through this struggle?

Yes, they did. They opened up the text and myself. They tapped into something that I felt but that I didn't know how to incorporate. For example, in the text, I don't discuss all aspects of the Black Lives Matter movement or my issue of differential affinity with this movement, in relation to my own position, privileges and some deprivilegizations that are part of my life. However, for me *Breathing matters* – of course in a different way than the Black Lives Matter movement and with reference to my own positioning in power relations, with my interviewees and with the issues I raise – involves an affinity with anti-racist and decolonial projects that ask whose lives matter, whose lives are breathable and whose lives are suffocating and fighting for social change. Rather, due to the operations of social power relations and structures of oppression, in this specific spatiality and time, not all lives are considered important, not all lives are breathable and many lives are situated in close proximity to death (as articulated in the concept of necropolitics developed by Mbembe [2003]). Thus, I don't engage with the Black Lives Matter movement in a specific chapter. However, through the respites, I aim to form an affinity that is delimited and particularly enabled and constrained by my specific positionality in power relations and by my privileges, or lack thereof. Thus, the respites are designed to inspire more dispersed relationalities throughout the text, and beyond it. I'm very glad to have worked with creative writing, and I want to work with this medium in my other projects.

Breathing, politics and feminism

Maybe we should speak more directly about the political aspects of Breathing matters and about the question of how breathing is a relevant phenomenon for feminism.

This was one of the questions I was asking myself all the time, while at the same time my goal was not to force politics onto breathing. Originally, I was interested in finding a way to think about material agentiality (the concept of matterwork that I discuss). Thus, the politics of breathing are an outcome of my engagement with breathing. I was also hoping to convince my academic colleagues that breathing is an interesting topic. Politics came out of my engagement with breathing and from the circumstances of my life.

I was – and still am – lucky to have amazing people around me. Like my friends in Berlin, for example, I’m surrounded by people who breathe politics and, as I worked on the dissertation, they were always asking very important, kind and political questions that made me wonder. Through *Breathing matters*, I was asking myself more specifically: “Okay, you talk politics because you care about social change and because you care about issues of social justice; how can this text contribute to this goal?” So, in a way, the political facet of the dissertation originated from how I am in the world. This wasn’t the goal per se. It was something I needed to inhabit. Thus, it’s again something that came from the environment, and it’s really “of the world,” to use Barad’s words.

Berlin and other places play an important role for you, don’t they? You were in Linköping and Santa Cruz. Maybe you could describe the geopolitical places that were important to you and to the dissertation?

My politics started in Poland in the context of being an anarchist, while at the same time being critical of the socialist totalitarianism that we experienced in Poland. Then, when I was 15 years old, I moved to the Czech Republic, and I started to participate in different forms of anarchist and anti-globalization organizing there. The Czech context is very important, and particularly the Gender Studies Department at Charles University, its faculty and specifically the scholars Věra Sokolová and Hana Havelková. Věra specifically was one of those teachers who really changes your world because she asks questions that baffle your mind. Thus, she was one of the people who politicized my world in terms of feminist and queer politics.

As part of my master’s studies, I also spent a semester on the Graduate Gender Program at Utrecht University, where I took wonderful courses in feminist studies and where I was generously mentored by Rosi Braidotti. This one semester in Utrecht was very inspiring in terms of the high-level discussions we had and for my contact with students who had intimidatingly vast and impressive knowledge. While I read Barad’s work for the first time, together with a Czech research team of the KNOWING project that I was part of at that time, I was a visiting student at Utrecht and I was taking Rosemarie Buikema’s course on the Linguistic Turn, at which Iris van der Tuin and Rick Dolphijn gave a

guest seminar on Barad's work. This was the point at which my relationship to agential realism really opened up. After completing my MA in the Czech Republic, I received a PhD position in Sweden and joined the Tema Genus department at Linköping University, where I participated in many great discussions on posthumanities and new materialism. On top of this, I was lucky that in my cohort – which included only two people – my colleague and very quickly great friend and intellectual companion was Wibke Straube. Thus, my connection to Berlin was initiated through Wibke, who had already been commuting between Berlin and Linköping, and at some point, I started to do the same. This is how Berlin entered my life. During my PhD studies, I also went to Santa Cruz. I was a visiting scholar with the Feminist Studies Department at the University of California, Santa Cruz. There, I had the privilege of attending two amazing talks by Angela Davis; I met with Donna Haraway and attended her lectures; and I had the pleasure of spending time with Karen, who also invited me to participate in one of her courses. I also joined seminars of the Science and Justice group, where it became clear to me that politics are central to Barad's conceptualization of agential realism.

Thus, throughout my studies, my understanding of politics developed from the many places I inhabited, from discussions I had, from connecting environmental and social justice issues that were part of my own personal history and from academic debates I was interested in. Throughout my PhD, these all clicked somehow. And on top of this, after visiting the USA and upon returning to Linköping and Berlin, I fell apart as a result of experiencing anxiety and panic attacks. From this new way of being, a new form of politics began for me – the politics of vulnerability. All of a sudden, I realized that my interests lay not only in matterwork but also in corpo-affective processes.

Intersectionality

We're also keen to hear your considerations on engaging with intersectionality. Considerable efforts must have been dedicated to this. How do you regard relationships between feminism, breathing, politics and intersectionality?

For me, gender studies and feminism concern power relations and creating opportunities for critical engagement with power relations for developing affirmative (but also separatist, when needed) forms of resistance and an imagining future. At the core of these power relations is intersectionality. Thus, for me, what's political about breathing or what's feminist about breathing can't be considered without engaging with intersectionality. Rather, for me, intersectionality is about engagement with power relations and about the ways they enact the particular social environments that we live in, the social subjectivities and embodiments. Thus, in a way, not engaging with intersectionality would feel like completely missing the most important facet of feminism, which I understand very broadly as multiple – often conflicting – spheres of thought, politics,

ethics and struggle. Of course, contemporary discussions of intersectionality are very complex and also involve conflicts – and perhaps they always have and always will. I don't think conflicts are necessarily something to be avoided or disregarded. Thus, for me, the question rather concerned – and still concerns – how I can engage with the term, its genealogy and presence in Black feminist thinking and activism, and with the knowledge and politics it raises, and how I can navigate through intricate discussions through which so much amazing scholarship has been done.

In relation to my interests in material agentiality and power, in terms of intersectionality as an analytical concept, I was concerned with two issues that I think have important consequences for addressing my matters of concern: the issue of power relations and social and environmental justice that I mentioned earlier and the issue of how to think of categories in relation to developing politics that attend to the intra-active and differencing dynamics of hierarchization, privilegization, and de-privilegization that operate within the embodied and affective living of intersectional operations of power. The second issue was very important to me because thinking about power relations in terms of the dynamism of intra-activity and differencing is also central to how I engage with intersectionality.

One of the most common – but also very much criticized (see e.g., Erel et al., 2008; Hornscheidt, 2009; McCall, 2005) – views of intersectionality notes that it reflects an additive approach, whereby different power relations are categorized and combined through the use of clearly delimited definitions of gender, sexuality, race, class, etc. As many scholars have already pointed out (e.g., Erel et al., 2008; Hornscheidt, 2009; McCall, 2005; Mirza, 2014; Puar, 2005), the boundaries between categories can be understood not simply as stable and contained but also as permeable and relationally and mutually transformative. Thus, in relation to these scholars and thinkers of agential realism, I came to understand categories in terms of processes of relational dynamism whereby categories obtain different meanings and materializations in relation to the specificities of their enactments in particular lives. This is where I observe affinities between agential realist, intersectional and social-justice-oriented thinking. Such thinking should of course remain cognizant of the anti-racist struggles through which the logics and politics of what was coined in 1989 by Kimberlé Crenshaw as *intersectionality* (1989) came into existence (see the 1981 manifesto of the Combahee River Collective, the works of Angela Davis [1981] and Audre Lord [1984] and a much earlier [1851] articulation of intersectionality by Sojourner Truth [1995]).

What helped me to articulate my agential realist approach to intersectionality was also that, quite early in my doctoral studies, I came across Nina's text on intersectionality and intra-activity (Lykke, 2006) and fell in love with it. I think that, for quite a long time, this article remained at the back of my mind. However, at some point I started to work with it, and I also started to articulate more clearly the relationship between intra-activity and differencing as a form of

dynamism that also forms part of my understanding of intersectionality as a concept and as a part of power relation dynamics. I was also considering whether it wouldn't be more consequential to start writing about intersectionality as *intra*-sectionality to make the agential realist features of such thinking more explicit. However, as I discuss in more depth in *Breathing matters*, I don't think this would be right. I believe in the importance of genealogies of concepts and in the power of intertextual and political stories and the struggles they carry. Especially in relation to intersectionality, I also think it would be a shame to leave all of these legacies, politics and discussions behind by doing away with the concept and introducing a new one. However, these are just my personal feelings on this issue.

I think that engagement with intersectionality also involves paying attention to processes of its whitewashing. I do agree with scholars such as Sirma Bilge (2013), Kathy Davis (2008) and Erel et al. (2008), who argue that the use of intersectionality – which, for example, often serves the pragmatic goals of white scholars to receive research funding or of hegemonic institutions, such as the EU, in wishing to appear inclusive – not as a social justice tool but as a depoliticized buzzword reproduces hegemonic structures of power. Thus, in my work, I try to remain aware of my own positionality in such power structures, of the ways that I use intersectionality as a concept and of affinities and separations that I enact. I also find the words of Patricia Hill Collins – which are US-situated but which I believe have global resonance – central to understanding the history, presence and my own involvement in intersectional understandings of social power relations. She notes:

[S]ince Black women cannot be fully empowered unless intersecting oppressions themselves are eliminated, Black feminist thought supports broad principles of social justice that transcend U.S. Black women's particular needs.

(Hill Collins, 1990, p. 22)

I find this quote extremely important because it articulates, at least for me, a need to think about politics as both strategically separative as well as affiliative. I don't think of politics in terms of an either/or approach, because I prefer to think that, depending on goals and specific material-discursive realities, it's important to use tools that may sometimes require the application of separatist strategies and sometimes the building of affinities. Thus, for me it makes sense that some scholars and activists challenge the use of intersectionality by white people, whose privilege may grow further from using the term in their work (a term that has been developed to specifically contest such forms of privilege). It also makes sense to try to develop ways of engaging with intersectionality as a person who is privileged by white hegemonic power relations while using the concept to challenge such relations.

Nina's work on intra-activity and intersectionality also helped me to make this connection with agential realism, while I also tried to highlight facets of differencing, as I mentioned earlier. Thus, thinking about intersectionality and agential realism – always together with the historical and contemporary anti-racist, anti-classist and anti-phallogocentric legacies and commitments of the concept – allows us to develop a specific understanding of causal dynamics and relate it to the genealogies and importance of intersectionality as a concept, methodology and politics that analyze and challenge power relations. I think that, through such a reading, intersectionality works beyond categories and also beyond the human. Rather than meeting or crossing categories, it articulates a dynamic process of privileging and deprivileging within constantly transforming power relations which take place in a quotidian, individual and structural manner. Here, Foucault's notion of power relations is important to me because it allows me to understand such relations as formative and normative, while not inherently deterministic. Together with Butler's notions of materialization and performativity, and with the posthumanist aspect that Barad contributes, such power relations are intra-actively reproduced and potentially subverted in local and structural ways that are matters not only of human subjectivity, affect and embodiment but also of human, more-than-human and nonhuman material and discursive worlding.

Thus, when I engage with the world as a worlding process (not as an entity or an essence) wherein dynamics constantly take place at local, structural and geopolitical levels, the use of definitions as singularities with clearly delimited and impermeable boundaries doesn't make sense – this is also what feminist critical race studies scholars and activists have been articulating for decades now. This is where processes of intra-action and differencing make sense to me in terms of understanding the dynamics of specific constitutions of privilege and deprivilegization and their individual and structural patterns. It's also important for me to not individualize intersectionality or reduce it to identity politics. Intersectional operations of power relations do, of course, have individualized effects on particular lives and on the ways one moves through life as one's intersectional positionings of privilege and deprivilege change throughout life. However, they're also matters of the structural dynamics of power. Thus, intersectionality helps me understand the ways in which such dynamics of worlding create quotidian, individual and structural patterns of intersectional intra-active constitution and differencing.

Then, the question also concerns what kinds of politics I want to engage in with such an understanding. This returns us to the issue of the politics of separatism and/or affinity. For me, such types of politics don't cancel one another out. It depends on what kinds of work (individual, collective or structural) are sought to be enacted in relation to particular political interventions and, through such interventions, both individual and structural processes matter – intra-actively but also in a differential way. Thus, while everyone is positioned differently

in terms of levels of privilegization and deprivilegization, each person living through dynamics of privilegization and deprivilegization in specific localities and globalities – in our case (those involved in the interviews), for example, structural operations of privileging whiteness – lives through structural dimensions of social inclusion/exclusion, emancipation/subjugation and empowerment/discrimination and their spectra.

Vulnerable pedagogy

Earlier today, we talked about what you termed vulnerable pedagogy. Maybe we can complete our conversation by talking about your concerns in relation to this issue?

In the end, even though it was very difficult, it was also very empowering for me to write *Breathing matters*, and so is teaching. Opening up to my students involves a completely different form of relationality, and I realize that working with vulnerability as part of our way of living is extremely important. I think it challenges, in a practical, embodied and face-to-face manner, the Enlightenment's sexist, racist, homophobic, classist and able-bodied and able-minded history and currently still hegemonic conceptualizations of reason, science, strength and control that – as Nikita Dhawan (2014) articulates so well in relation to the colonialist nature of the Enlightenment – dominates Western conceptualizations of the world and of human and nonhuman relations. Ways in which the performance of humanity is normatively delimited – at least within the contexts I've inhabited – are set very much against vulnerability.

However, I think that something important happens when you begin to explicitly work with vulnerability. Thus, working with vulnerable pedagogy is now a life experiment for me – to see what kinds of pedagogy it will enable in me and how it will influence my students' work. Focusing on vulnerability isn't something you're told to do when you start teaching, nor is it how the expectations of students are articulated towards their teachers or towards themselves when they write or present and discuss in a classroom. In neoliberal academia, we're expected to perform excellence in a form that's very narrowly defined, and I think such definitions, combined with academic structures that are now increasingly being based on precarity and on economic, racial, gender and ablist injustice, and the acceleration of time, are suffocating. I also think these processes are consequences of the Enlightenment and of colonialist ideas about humans as conduits of disembodied reason. It's amazing how we still experience this reality in so many ways. Thus, I think the main challenge I face right now is to develop the vulnerable politics of my pedagogy (but also of my own ways of living), to learn how to act in a way that creates an environment where vulnerability can be shared beyond a dualism of condemnation versus celebration, and to determine how this can be pursued as part of an intellectual and lived-experience project.

I also think it's a challenge to bring agential realist thinking into pedagogy, and I think that Hillevi Lenz-Taguchi's work can be of great help here (e.g.,

2011, 2013; Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, 2013), especially if I don't wish to work with this only in advanced courses and only in terms of reading theory. Thus, in one course I taught this year, I simply started by highlighting the relationality of ontology, epistemology and ethics, even though I didn't introduce my students to Barad's work right away. I tried to allow my students to think about their research process in ways that hold them accountable for the entanglements and differentiations that they're working through. Simultaneously – because I also want to remain open to other possible ways of thinking – the challenge for me was to engage with my own theoretical and practical investments while creating space for other people to think differently. This is why I always tell my students: “This is my perspective. You can think about this completely differently because there are many different ways of approaching an issue.” There's always a hierarchical relationship between me and my students whether I like it or not, but I think that making myself open as a teacher and empowering others to think independently is part of my vulnerable pedagogical practice. Thus, as I teach more extensively than I did during my PhD studies, bringing agential realism into pedagogical practice – not only in terms of content but also in terms of teaching practices, myself as a teacher, the engagements that I facilitate in class and vulnerability as a productive pedagogical element – is a new personal goal for me.

Notes

- 1 Matterwork is a concept developed in *Breathing matters* to address the work that matter does. The notion of matter is understood relationally and phenomenally (rather than essentially), and work is analyzed not only in human but also in nonhuman enactments. Matterwork articulates how human and nonhuman material agencies work as forces of the worldly, natural-cultural dynamism of production, reproduction and destruction; of care and exploitation; and of how they simultaneously enact the potentiality of social and environmental change and transformation. In *Breathing matters*, for example, matterwork is used to analyze the work of human corpomateriality (understood in a posthumanist sense) in (re)enacting, articulating, challenging and transforming social power relations. However, the concept can also be extended to engage with forms of matterwork other than anthropo-situated ones, such as those of animal corpomateriality (e.g., in relation to global warming, social and economic structures, and the agency of animal digestive systems in increasing CO₂ levels related to industrial animal farming and meat production); geological sedimentations like coal (e.g., coal's role in the spatio-temporal metabolism of the planet and as a pollutant or fuel for neoliberalism, consumerism and war machines); or the role of trees, soil and coral reefs in global respiration. Therefore, the concept enables an analysis of natural-cultural relations enacted through material workings. Importantly, social power relations and environmental and social justice are at the center of the ethics and politics of matterwork analysis.
- 2 Sia (2015): Big Girls Cry. Music Video. www.youtube.com/watch?v=4NhKWZpkw1Q.
- 3 www.malinarneil.org
- 4 The God Trick is the scientific belief in a faceless, bodiless and context-less researcher who can stand outside and rise above what is being analyzed and from a given position can produce objective knowledge of the world (Haraway, 1988). Haraway's criticism of the God Trick and her introduction of situated knowledges have been central to feminist reconceptualizations of objectivity as a sense of the neutrality of science (God

Trick) towards the notion that science and knowledges are always situated within specific research practices and in the position of the researcher (situated objectivity).

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