

Marina Fuser
London, August 29th, 2014
MFM University of Sussex
Report & Notes on Rosi Braidotti's Course
Critical Theory Beyond Negativity:
The Ethics, Politics and Aesthetics of Affirmation

Report on Critical Theory:

The Ethics, Politics and Aesthetics of Affirmation

I have watched the summer course Critical Theory Beyond Negativity: The Ethics, Politics and Aesthetics of Affirmation conducted by Prof. Rosi Braidotti and Prof. Iris Van der Tuin at University of Utrecht. The University of Sussex is sponsoring this class due to the relevance of Braidotti's legacy as far to my theme of research, which is the nomadic subjectivity applied to Trinh T. Minh-ha's films.

This course has been fundamental to the theoretical framework and development of my research, because of its theoretical depth, by unraveling the complexity of nomadism - both as a theory and as a methodology that constitutes a multiplicity of cartographies. Rosi Braidotti dedicated the first day to this idea of the nomad, of drawing cartographies and tracking subjectivities. The starting point of this course was directly about the Nomad, with a lecture on Cartographies, Locations, Difference in the morning and a tutorial on Nomadic Feminism in the afternoon.

The second day consisted on a lecture by Prof. Iris Van der Tuin on Doing Epistemology Different: Feminist New Materialism and the Question of Knowing. Basically, she taught about diffractive readings and methodologic approaches between ontologies and epistemologies. In the afternoon, I watched Rosi Braidotti's tutorial on The Theoretical Roots of Posthumanism,

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expanding this cartographical work to multiple processes of becoming situated amongst but also above the human in the fulcrum of advanced Capitalism.

The third day was a day dedicated to Aesthetics of Affirmation, through a lecture of Maria Hlavajova on the multiple temporalities that coexist and dispute new hegemonies in terms of art and the tracing of new itineraries through and within artistic practices. In the afternoon we watched a film directed by Paul Poet which reflected on the escalating xenophobia and racism in Vienna and the excessive surveillance toward the population of immigrants and refugees. The film was followed by a Q&A.

In the fourth day, Braidotti taught a lecture on The Powers of Affirmation, highlighting the Posthuman condition in times of drones and cyber cultures, in times when the Humanities' primary focus ceases to be the human. This lecture also deals with issues that appear in Trinh Minh-ha's films, mainly in *Fourth Dimension* and *Night Passage*, where technology is given much attention, perhaps in a relational approach hand in hand with Braidotti's notion of the Posthuman. After this, a few students introduced in five minutes some of their research projects or work-in-progresses related to this course. The fourth day closed with a lecture conducted by Nicole Dewandre on Hannah Arendt's Affirmative Philosophy.

The fifth and last day kicked off with a lecture by Prof. Rosi Braidotti on The Posthuman, with multiple slides and images that illustrated the idea which she had introduced in her last lecture. After bombarding us with images of negativity, she finished with affirmative messages, leaving it up to us to trace our own cartographies. I'm still digesting the ideas thrown in this course, and this is why I chose to attach my notes to this report. At last, but not least, we had a new session of student presentation in which I had the honor to present the short film I made in Berkeley and

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talked briefly about the connection of the film with my research on Nomadic Subjectivity in the Film of Trinh Minh-ha, walking through the cartography of my research. This was the first time I talked about my research in front of 80 people (and screened my film), and on top of all, in front of Rosi Braidotti, my key theoretical reference in the research. I felt like my work was well-received, given the limited time I had to present it, and the film inspired curious questions which are not directly related to the research. After sitting through very interesting presentations of my colleagues, there was a brief closing of the course. This was by far the most intense course I have ever attended and it will shape the chapter I am currently working on, about the concept of the Nomad in Braidotti's work.

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NOTES:

Day 1: Cartographies, Locations, Difference, Prof. Rosi Braidotti:

An intense course is an exercise in frustration.

It's important to take it into consideration your place of enunciation. It's the first map you need to draw.

Drawing a road map.

Thinking in our culture is very versatile and dangerous.

Foucault's power differentials. He's logophyllic and logophobic.

Post-Structuralism is a moment in the History of thought. Patterns of dissonance: from equality to difference. Difference in a variety of ways.

Philosophy Post 1968: Emerges from France after World War II. Frankfurt School, Sartre, Beauvoir. Psychoanalysis : Lubiana / Dubrovnik. Lacan: Invitation to read the texts the nazis had burned (mostly he was referring to Freud). / Althusser: Invitation to read Marx. The missing links in the Grand Wall of Silence left by the War.

I don't get it how come some people can actually read Martin Heidegger without mentioning the role that he took up on Nazism and remained faithful to it until the end. Watch The Conformantist by Bertolucci.

For the French, the Holocaust was a point of non-return: They took it from there.

Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari accomplished the denazification of Greek philosophy.

Thinking about thinking give you positive road maps.

Fascism was Colonialism coming home. It was all experimented by the Colonial setting.

Drawing a cartography of how we put these elements together features in the negative effect.

In fact, Negativity is structuring.

Our starting agreement: Let's not psychologyze the negative.

Negativity is a function of thought, a factor.

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The negative is a function in thinking. You think against something, you think in relation with something. You think relationally. Thinking is a connector.

Memories are also bridges, time travelling entities. Do you remember what happened in World War II? The repetition of events that you forgot to forget. It thinks in you. The presence of others in you, like an inner landscape. There is a World History written in your bones.

There are flows of relationality and interaction: people that forgot to forget, critical theories. Let's track what we forgot to forget.

The location of Europe:

Multilingualism: the feature of a Globalized World. Language as locations. We hop between languages, breaking the purity of mother languages.

Damasio is a graphomaniac.

Writing is a complex strategic way of positioning yourself in the world. A life doubled up on writing. Writing can be an intransitive activity. Crucial topos of cultural theory: Maurice Blanchot. Writing as a mode of positioning into existence. Composing intensity. It's like a filter, a radar, crucial to the activity of critical thinking. The primacy of structures over the self: languages were there before you and will be there after you. Structures are there prior to the formation of the self. It is up to you to negotiate with them. The self is not the center - the self is a negotiation of forces that relate.

Sexual difference is a fundamental law, and then again, it is not fundamentally human. Gender is a social construction, a coding system. Sexuality is not gender.

Language conveys laws. IE: Laws of sexual difference. A structure that you cannot costume away. Race is dehumanizes. Language constructs, from our way of thinking.

Kristeva borrows from Lacan the idea that we can't change the laws easily because they have become forces of habit. She's a right wing Lacanian. In the Left, we take these structures and we elaborate them.

A Gender system is a social convention. You scramble the gender system, you go back to sexuality. Sexuality as a role material force embeded and not just human.

Derrida: deconstructionism. Language vizualizes our relationality. Language is an ontological a priori external to the self and the most intimate expression of the self.

The primacy of relation: There's a radical relationality divinding the human mind.

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Sexual differences become the Gender System. In writing you disclose them, you play with them.

Derrida: what happened in the endeavor of language?

Irigaray: lips, placentas, dirty things: "Think placenta..." and "Think through those thighs. Go with the body.

Kristeva: the Feminine. She's against gay marriage, and is friends with Sarkozy.

Barthes: seduces language into making it other than codes. He flirts with language. Read: "Fragments of a lover's discourse."

Writing as a way of undoing the master's signifier.

Non-personal approaches.

Getting rid of the obstacle of identity: a vote of non-confidence in the stability of categories.

Subjectivity: structures that position you, that locate you.

Power: prevents you from (postestas / allows you (potentia).

No one is free of power.

Stand-point-theory / Post-Colonial theory: speaking from the margins.

The center only knows itself. Power gets conjugated with the verb to be, not to have. What counts as power? Bill Clinton was brought down by an intern.

Complexity of network of power: negativity - filtering the horrors of the world, injustices. The negative begins with the problem you are trying to solve.

Identity is a matter of self-representation in the sense that it is an image in your body; a mental representation. It's a construction, a social convention. It's an entire archive that falls on you; it comes with a baggage. It's a repertoire. Thinking means processing thought with many interactions, with others. Being drawn toward certain issues.

Consciousness raising: Becoming aware of the power raising. The splitness, the contingent.

Looking for the missing people: the community that allows you to resonate, build your own power cartography.

Embedding of categories (Spinoza): Temporary, nomadic, action oriented.

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Consciousness: Becoming (Deleuze) - Awareness to operationalizing ; awareness into making changes.

BECOMING: A deprogramming exercise. Awareness of your cartography of power. It's multiple, it's complex, it's shifting. Becoming: tranverses dialectics (consciousness structures self by producing negative locations of difference.

It's always between woman, native, other.
Replace the dialectics with processes of becoming.

Demolition of categories, replacing the conceptual schemes. Identity is where you start from.

Day 1 Afternoon / Tutorial Braidotti: Nomadic Feminism

Parody is a transition.
Becoming...

Freud: Dora, little Hans, The Wolfman, Annah Oh...

Psychoanalysis depathologizes the basic neurosis.
A symptom doesn't have to be solved, it has to be dealt with.

Freedom is our understanding of the sources of our bondage.

In 1939 Freud said "There is nothing wrong with her. She just loves a woman."

Lacan works with Saussure. Uses language to access the unconscious. The mechanisms of unconscious are the mechanisms of language formation.

God is a man! We express the universal through the masculine. Man kind. "Woman is not!" (Lacan)
Find me one universal word conjugated in the feminine!

Women : Irrationality, lack of self-control. Like Cassandra, she speaks, yet no one listens. It's a symbolic absence.

Lacan: fem / masc are imaginary constructions that implement the symbolic. Embodied material elements. The gender expectations are already played out for you.

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The Great Lacanian Revolution: women can have masculine identifications, men can have feminine identifications. Anatomy is not destiny! The imaginary and playful negotiations alter the symbolic law. IE: lips, fluid, mucus, etc. Women divine: double symmetry. Female organicity. Cixous / Irigaray / Adrienne Rich

Thinking the roots of our embodiment, the uniqueness of the placenta. We have not spared a thought for it. The lack in Lacan is not fear of castration like in Freud (it is dated in Freud). The only people that suffer from castration are men. The penis doesn't represent something significant in Lacan. It is different from phallus (symbolic). The lack means that ontologically, we come from others. We are the effect of the desire of others. Lack means we need to enter the symbolic language and we enter it by surrendering to representation. We need to give a pound of flesh!

What are you lacking? You can't be everything that you want. There are things that are non-negotiable. ie: Death, aging, etc. The non-negotiability of certain conditions - the principle of not one. The inevitability of the law.

Jessica Benjamin: The bonds of feminine.

Sado-masochism has the key to Western love.

For Lacan: Love as lack - the institution requires a name, a label. The law is stronger than the empirical agents. Irigaray: Lacan fails her on her PhD.

For Lacan, sexual difference is the law.

1st and 3rd chapters of Anti-Oedipus: Conceptual critique of Lacan. Relationship between the Imaginary and the Symbolic. Attaching the imaginary to Spinoza. Beyond history: they bring in history and moment.

Foucault: Contracted HIV at 54 in California. The History of Sexuality was supposed to undo the Lacanian legacy and elaborate an alternative theory of desire. Foucault went transatlantic (to the States) and split. There are 2 Foucaults: The Californian raging queen and the closeted French traditional man. The transatlantic disconnection: difficulty to bridge the two.

Identity politics square roots - get rid of identities.

Polarized.

Deleuze and Guattari: Conceptual critique on Lacan.

Intersectionality: it's all imbricated. There could be endless becomings.

BECOMING WOMAN: To sex the foundations of subjectivities in motion. It's a praxis, it's a project.

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Cognitive Capitalism needs a new condition that could change the panorama of nomadism.

Counter-memory is a methodology, the Foucauldian notion. A critique of the history of philosophy. The history of philosophy is a history within a history. There are highly selective texts. Foucault wants to liberate philosophy from the canon. The canon inscribes it into a timeless frame, a collective memory. What happened to all the texts that don't make it into the canons? There is much more discourse being produced that do not make it to the canons, meaning, that don't get recognized as knowledge.

Counter-memory: we need to infuse into the system alternative memories. Alternative voices in the history of ideas.

Deleuze / Guattari: Philosophy of time. Freeing time from the authority of the past. Why should things be better because they happened a long time ago?

Trauma: something happened in the past. The authority of the past is the authority of the trauma. Pornography of suffering. A trauma, like a license or a certificate that allows you to talk about trauma. Historic traumas: holocaust, women being raped in the world every 5 mins.

Colonialism - Glissant - Poetics of relation - Nomadism
Affirmative sustainability - marking the threshold of vulnerability.

Parody: the last shot is the one which is gonna kill you. The alcoholic always drink until the second to last shot. One shall learn to stop at the second last.

Map the boundaries: Free yourself from your dependence through your understanding.
For Deleuze and Guattari, drugs are black holes. (Logic of Sense)
Being drunk on the water, being high on life. They're talking metaphorically, they are not referring to alcohol or drugs.

What are you looking for in your own cartography? Allow relationality to operate.

Nomadism is not at all travelling empirically. It's about shifts in awareness, interventions on the form of mobility across advanced Capitalism.

Klein: cognitive functions by enforcing mobility.

We need different cartographies in the forms of mobility. Inserting complexity in thinking practices. Bodies without organs.

Intervals, pauses: Bergsonian time continuum mixed with Spinozal affects. Intensities, acceleration, the idea that "time flies".

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Deleuze: the body needs a house, intensity needs a frame.
Artaud: pure delirium. Listen to his voice...

The interval is the almost organic sustainability, like to catch a breath. Interval is breathing in between.

The intensity is excessive.

(We're actually training you for unemployment. Don't laugh, look at statistics!)

Be careful with Irigaray on becoming.

Survival, territoriality.

Donna Haraway: Alliance of endangered species. Gaya wins!

Plenary:

Capitalism doesn't break; it bends. It bends infinitely.

The extent of the mediation of our agency is growing more and more with advanced Capitalism. Computation networks run our economies, our war machine. They self-correct and self-organize.

Revisit your thinking parameters prior to this course (organized and fragmented). Can you relink them into what has come into focus today?

Reorganize, redrawing boundaries: What points of entry can you draw? The ecologies of belongings.

Can we reorganize images, texts, thinking, thinkers, etc. in ecologies of belonging? Extended species, endangered species.

Cartographies: your practices: activism, thinking, arts, writing?

Would you define your research as part of your practices? Is it political? What part of it is political? Exactly how far are you prepared to go in thinking? What price am I prepared to pay to succeed in it?

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Day 2: Doing Epistemology Differently: Feminist New Materialism and the Question of knowing. Dr. Iris Van der Tuin.

Why epistemology?

Sandra Harding: epistemology X ontology.
The move from knowing to being.

Replacement of epistemology with ontology (work from a certain location).

Onto-epistemology: based on representationalism.

The minute you negate something, you also confirm it.

The epistemic twist: women, lesbian, gay and black liberation movements.

“Standpoint theory”.
Social disadvantage = epistemological advantage

Twist: moving from individual problems to social facts.

Activists were working at the university and they started to produce their own knowledge outside the university spectrum.

Standpoint theory: Does justice to the epistemic twist, based on the formulation that a social disadvantage translates directly into epistemological advantage. Hegel's master-slave dialectics: knowledge is positional on the side of its master.

Insight: gradual steps toward change. Hierarchy is a materialism.

1980's: the Postmodern twist.
Hyphenated identities.

The standpoint does not exist. Standpoint theories were way too universalists. For instance: are all women socially disadvantaged? Shouldn't we diversify these standpoints?

Donna Haraway: situated knowledges. (1988)
Modernists and Postmodernists approaches share foundations.

The Human.
Totalization and Relativism are two of a kind. The persistence of vision. The cyborg does the knowing. We are all cyborgs.

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The cyborg deals with embodied knowledge production. We have to affirm the embodied nature of all vision. Vision and looking is the preferred sense to every knowledge.

Haraway's white headian twist: what this particular knower answers to produce knowledge.

Studed assumptions from embodied level.
Embodiment implies technology.
Cartography and defractive reading.

Braidotti on Haraway "Posthuman all too human?" (2006)

Cyborg - yes - the minute we start to look at what the knower has to assume, we have to frame cyborg as the knowledge position.

Humans / Cyborgs. Include animal cyborg.

The Posthuman should be positioned as forces, forces which position the humans themselves. We don't drive, but are driven.

Haraway: too oppositional to psychoanalysis. Agency is distributive. Agency, however, is above, amongst and underneath subject.

Is Haraway changing the epistemological unit (who is doing the knowledge) in order to deal with contemporary questions?

She does justice to hierarchies, what happened before the subject.

From "who does the knowing" to "where do we know".

Where do we know? Critical theory in the human sciences or on the natural sciences?

The "Two Cultures" of C.P. Snow (1990's)

Two is a very dangerous number. We haven't been able to do that. We keep two realms firmly, in place. Bergson, Whitehead.

"Minds in a groove".

Whitehead in *Science & the Modern*, 1925: "Another great fact confronting the Modern world is the discovery of the method of training professionals who specialize in particular regions of thought and thereby progressively add to the sum of knowledge within their respective limitation of subject. (...) This dituation has its dangers. It produces minds in a groove. But there is no groove of abstraction which is adeqaute for the comprehension of human life."

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Bergson in *Laughter: An Essay on the Meaning of the Comic* (1900)
The mind chystalizing.

Ways of "grooves":

- Generation of 1890: Marx, Freud, Darwin, Nietzsche, Bergson.
- Critiqued enlightened Modern subject.
- May of 1968: included so-called French feminism.
- Foucault "event" (*Discipline & Punishment*)
- Entity event (Deleuze and Pavnet)

When we want to produce knowledge about knowledge, we should look at the event of knowledge production. The subject is not yet the subject. / The object is not yet the object.

XXI Century New Materialism:

Braidotti's cartography.

Barat's diffraction: reading texts through one another.

Karen Barat:

We can't make assumptions about knowledge production anymore.

Braidotti (2002) on cartography.

Deleuzian Methodology:

- Diagnostic & Utopian
- Material & Discursive
- Utopian element affects the knower: cartographic exercises always generate surprises.

Cartography-making is dealing with topics trying to shift a classificational way.

Barat: Intersectional points between nature and culture.

Quantum: physical methodology

Physical phenomenon (object) and to "what boundaries provisionally contains remainings of generative, productive of meanings and bodies"(Haraway).

Text as living entities - Reader as a relay point which changes the diffraction.

Read texts through one another (ie: Foucault through Butler)

-Doing epistemology differently:

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No need to exit the human sciences.

“What the Humanities can become” (Braidotti on the Posthuman)

“Humanities’ scholars theorize via and with Science”.

“A text theoretical and scientifically as well as literally is a relay point between different movements in space and time, as well as different levels, degrees, forms and configurations of the thinking process.”

Cartographies V. d. Tuin:

Activate cartography: symbol and meaning, feeling and form. Open cartography that traverses classifications.

One philosophical system from different standpoints: how texts interpellate one another.

Diffraction: Actively entering an object through a simple act in a manner that transports us out of the immediate present.

Producing insights.

Out of the academic Feminism's ivory tower, these fields interlink. ie: ecologic sustainability, conflicts over gas or oil, the transposition of rivers, Capitalist exploitation of natural resources, etc.

Politics of Life.

Day 2 Tutorial Braidotti: The Theoretical Roots of Post Humanism

Foucault: We need to account for the power relation to open ourselves up to relations with others.
Bring power home!

The 1970's: “The personal is political.”

A large percentage of rapists happened to know their victims. The home is a very dangerous place.
We need to take women and children out of them!

Trust the victims! The primary location is our body.

Simone de Beauvoir: Methodology of social constructivism: women are, by dialectical reversal, the motors of revolution.

The idea that most women turning feminist, most proletarians turning marxists and most blacks turning anti-racists would lead to a revolution.

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Social constructivism: Assumption that the margins know better and that the margins will know better.

Late 1970's: Foucault - counter-evidence is coming from everywhere! Cartographies in the light of politics of location (Adrienne Rich). Cartographies reconsider the body in new lightings that we have of matter.

Bodily materialism is present in all 1980's feminisms. The body as a factor on its own. Sexuality is not the only possibility of the body. Bring the multiple facets of the body back into the picture.

Don't embody someone else's body! Speak from where you are!

This is not the individualist liberalism. Can we get a reality check? We need to look deeply into subjectivity.

Subjectivity inscribes you in a network of power relations.

Luisa Pasolini: Accountability - Learning to see yourself through the eyes of others.

The becoming is the alternative to the dialectical reversal. There is a structure; it is not linear. Definition by negation is out!

Communication - Expression: communicative relation - dramatization rituals - ceremonial protocols

Slight touch of panic - redefine Saussure and Derrida - move on from deconstructionalism.

A culture of codes Vs. signs:

Communicative codes, genetic codes, computer codes (Gaston Bachelard)

BECOMING ANIMAL

Becoming minority

Different sets of interactions:

- Territory - the look - acoustics
- Non-human / present
- earth / plant

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Day 4: Beyond Negativity: Braidotti

1) Methodology: cartographies of power: relations / accountability

2) Foucault: Power as negative potestas and positive potentia.

You're not a white man on Monday and a black woman on Tuesday. - Location.

Formatting frustration as you go along.

3) Politics as Usual deals with potestas. (le politique majoritarian)

The politics deals with potentia. (le politique minoritarian)

Different temporalities.

Politics = Chronos (linear GMT)

The political = Aion (becoming, rhizomatic)

Multi-directional view of the political.

Emancipatory politics is repair-work - specially mentoring, activism

Away of continuously catching up with the disasters of Patriarchy.

Transformative Politics: Not "either-or", but "and-and".

Politics is postulated in the continuous axis of time.

Time clashes with other temporalities, it's quite unpredictable.

Chronos is synchronized with the present.

Kristeva: linear and circular time.

Nietzsche: Apolynian / Dionysian.

Wider range of action:

They were criticizing 2 things: Liberal individualism / Marxist Leninism

With the Dutch legalization of soft drugs, drug use dropped by 40% while fighting organized crime.

Legalizing soft drugs takes the kick out of them.

Subjectivity requires a criticism on identities.

The woman in the left got sick of making coffee for the male in the left.

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The men is supposed to be the subject of the revolution.

USSR: Gigantic gerontophobic masculine people in charge.

Marxism is a profound source of Humanism, the dream is a dream of a new Humanity as bad as the atrocities from USSR were, we can't say that USSR = Nazism, least of all Marxism = Nazism.

Non-violence is a major element of politics of affirmation.

Diversify!

Location of Negativity - Location of Violence.

4) Embodiment: embedded, embodied, affective, relational structure of the subject.

5) Difference gets the delinked from dialectics and detached from negativity.

6) Thinking the positivity of Difference against dialectics and against dualism.

Feminist + Pos-Colonial theories: We trust the testimony of real life people, specially those who speak from the margins. We trust the experiences of oppression and marginalization. Empirical in an absolutely cardinal level.

The testimonials of the oppressed: The truth is a myriad of voices speaking from the margins waiting to be heard.

Deleuze and Guattari: Matter, body and experience. They didn't say anything useful about women or gays. Foucault did it a little, but it was contradictory.

Equations of difference with pejoration.

The majoritarian subject is the same as different from. To be different from equals to be less than. The role of difference in determining difference in the discourse of the new right.

Cartography of advanced Capitalism.

7) Anatomy of advanced Capitalism : symbols \$, (euro), (ien)
(Rem Koolhaas)

1- Schizoid - internally contradictory.

2- Perverse Temporality: glorifies the "new" but is conservative. Eating up the future.

3- Controlled mobility.

4- Quantitative proliferation of differences for the sake of profit.

5- The politics of "life itself" - the affective turn.

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6- High degree of technical mediation.

7- Axiomatic systems, but unpredictable.

End of ideology, but the dominant ideology is.

The dismissal of any political ideology, the idea that Capitalism is the fulfillment of evolution.

The New X the Renewal - Gets trapped in the trap of being called old (ideological) implication.

Perverse temporality: zig-zags of Capitalism. There's no logic to the system.

No long term plans: quick intervention is the only way we can make plans.

Advanced Capitalism is the unsustainable system par excellence.

Euphoria / Paranoia

Acoustic bubbles insulated from the roughness of reality. Capitalism is cocaine; a toxic system. We constantly have to come up with a new drug to spare the effects of the old drug.

Governance by fear, by anxiety: who is going to lose that job next?

Precarity as a condition that you probably have started to accept. Precarity is ontologically assured.

The striated social space of controls of mobility: people don't circulate freely.

Deconstruction of the center: mutualization of the space of mobility.

Spinning machine that produces difference for the sake of consumption.

Nomadic Citizenship: Holland.

The endless addiction to consumerism.

The essence of the commodity is a constant jetlag: the ideology of the next gadget is like porn - it teases without fulfilling. Quantitative proliferation for the sake of profit.

Biotechnologies are at the heart of Biogenetic codes - what constitutes Capital.

Codes and life as the Capital.

Biogenetics can be caring toward sustainability.

Donna Haraway: Foucault's scheme is very limited: It is the life's data that counts. Information is life data at the center of the system.

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Study where your university is stronger. Study what budget do they get for it.

Patricia Clough: The control of your moods and affectivity. Technology is always war technology.
Wars are technologically mediated. ie: Drones, advanced mathematics.

Universities have military wings; There's never technology without the necropolitical. Our troops look like they're wearing star wars gear.

How deep is the attachment to life?

Axiomatic system: Computational cultures ran by computer systems (Toscano / London)

Imaterial flaws on our screen.

Brutal materiality X Appearing light fluff.

Changing the rules of the game while the game is on.

Flows of signification.

The axiom of profit knows no limit.

Purely functional modes of regulation without a name. Adaptability: because the axiomatic system is so unpredictable and adaptable.

Different cartographies from different locations.

8) Hegelian-Marxist visions of cultural theory.:

- Oppositional Consciousness.
- Unhappy consciousness.
- The Negative.

9) Switch to Spinozist monist ontology:

- Vital materialism.
- Radical immanence.
- Politics of affirmation.
- Not anthropocentric.

The negative is the material of the change. We do repair work!

Repair damages + positivity of change

Those wounded by the system are able to reverse the situation.

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Femininity as a false consciousness: it starts from the wound; work through it and process it out.

We need to move out of the dialectical scheme because advanced Capitalism doesn't work this way. The starting point is a subject who is relational and performs collective assemblages (agencing). It's the comparison of the cartographies that allow you to track your own cartography.

The flesh is never just your body. It is a socialized factor in relation to others, a highly sensorial system that is oriented to pleasure. The vital materialism contains under the immanent materials. They are anthropomorphic.

THE BOUNDED SPACE IS THE SPACE OF THE BODY
I IS THEY (since Virginia Woolf and James Joyce)

Being embodied: my body is anthropomorphic - there are no limits to my body.

The conditions of the emergence of change rests not on negation, but on creative affirmation, on the vital bodily forces.

We are between the "no longer" and the "not yet". You borrow the energy from the future. The future past: "It will have been".

Time sequence to generating affirmation concerns world events, human and non-human connections.

Actualization of the virtual to enact virtual possibilities that you forgot to forget.

Institutionalization.

Actualization is a praxis.

The mind needs a house, it needs a structure to create affirmative structures.

Non-spectacular: not big revolutions led by the potential projectuality.

What modes of relation to the other do we need?

10) What is an ethics of affirmation?

11) What is negative affect?

12) Endurance & Pair: not disavowal of conflict

Ethics of affirmation is the belief in and the practice of turning a negative into an affirmative condition.

Sustainability: Bodies are capable of taking different dosages of change.

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Depersonalize yourself: distance the problem with critical thinking. We are as human as others, but we are more mortal.

About suicide: please, not yet!

Keep the levels of sustainability high (endurance). Lasting in time, enduring the pain. We don't need heroes or spectacular revolutions. We need to shift from quantitative to qualitative. Negativity can be transformed.

Glissant: the poetics of Relation.

Ethical good empowers, increases your potential.

Negative is what disables you from acting.

Affect of blockage, rigidification, boredom, the accumulation of negativity that comes with experience.

Life as a generative and impersonal beyond the self, and even non-human, connects you to non-human. It's a spiritual element, but non-theistic.

Key to morality: A certain amount of pain has to be part of this exercise, accounting for a positionality in the world. Delink pain from suffering!

Too much of a morality (Nietzsche): protects us from feeling, being affected by.
Pragmatic mechanisms of processing the pain.

Between pain and suffering there's cruelty (Bataille)

Trace a cartography of your own bodily practices. Deconstruct that morality is avoidance of pain.

13) Being worthy of what happens to us:

- Ontological relationality
- Transformative ethics
- Relation to non-human forces
- Ecosophical implications.

Empathetic co-presence, but in the mode of moving beyond.

Mode of processing: speaking truths to power, not avoiding pain or conflict allow mechanisms of reworking that.

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Dignity for complexity: things are not simple. Not to simplify what history has made complex.

The political is the non-reactive and non-habitual forms of life that can be at the core of processes of becoming.

Non unitary.

Lula and Guattari (odd!!!!)

Ecosophical: Guattari 3 Ecologies: Self, Social and Nature

Chaos-osmosis - A return to Guattari.

Dependence: importance of action that are very localized.

14) How does the production of affirmation work?

Not in metamorphic flash but the gradual co-creation of qualitative changes. Deleuze: the great metaphysician of the century: the qualitative leap:

1) Reason is not independent: it is embedded; there is no safety in thinking.

2) Always referring to common sense. Loss of respect for the masses. How do we protect democracy from the idiots in the masses?

Opposition: Standing in the middle of this. "I would prefer not to." Negotiation of affirmation.

One person saying no is enough. We know that there is an alternative, but we can enact in assemblages. To act here and now according to what we now know. Embodied and embedded process of action!

Knowledge as tool to achieve ethics: the freedom of becoming all that we could be collectively. Collective endeavor, responsibility.

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Day 3 Afternoon - Hannah Arendt's Affirmative Philosophy or How Hannah Arendt Enables Politics to Step in Hyperconnected Era:

@nicoledewandre
Advisor for Societal Issues

Hannah Arendt: "defractive living".

You, sometimes audience, sometimes witness...

Mary Daly: "A wind mill knows that it's not a ventilator."

The mainstream as the other.

What was lost in the center?

Enterprise became citizens of the European Union.

Enterprises as sensitive beings.

People as functional beings- split as consumers, workers, etc.

The deconstruction movement cannot work as advice.

Genealogy: move from deconstructive toward the affirmative movement or act.

Societal relevance through problem-solution framing.

Can we stand between catastrophism and denial?

Anchor against hegemony of competitiveness.

Catastrophism as another deadlock (Arendt - Rose - Ostrom)

"On Life Manifesto".

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Day 5: The Posthuman - Prof. Rosi Braidotti

Digital garbage: the materiality of the super etereal.

Militarization

Bodies: proliferation of pornography, proliferation of sameness, a quantitative repetition of the same body, body modification, the transformative machine of advanced Capitalism.

Baby-boomers' refusal to age - there is a direct link with anorexia.

Dolly the sheep - quite a piece of racheology that broke the frontiers of reproduction. She was cloned, embodied an ancient dream of eternity, until she contracted a normal disease. Sarah Franklin.

Synthetic biology - Genetically modified foods.

What counts as matter?

The role of the universities in Biotechnology.

Human enhancement.

The insect constitutes a paradigm. Resiliency. There are insect drones for surveillance, but for the most part they are used by the war machine against terrorism.

Aganben- the camp, detention / refugee center

Extent of rapes in War Rape as standard feature of war machine. Syria. Other forms of brutality, other forms of pornography. Abu Graib's photographs. Prostitutes are part of the logistics of war. War is a private business now. The wake up call is the pornography of war pictures. The role of mediation: the viral circulation of digital images. Commercialization of the private: the private public. Gaddafi.

The power of our drones and the incredible perversity of media culture. The long shadow of war technology.

Environmental disasters. The natural elements have been questioned. Fukuyama - who builds a nuclear plant in that area? Katrina has been known for a while, nothing has been done to prevent the disaster. They are results of the lack of responsibility and care.

Environmentalism. Destruction of olive trees by Israeli army. We need strong sharp environmental cartographies. What do you do when you defend a tree?

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The recomposition of humanity for the sake of profit. Benetton campaigns. Memories of black slavery.

The metals that feed advanced technology - The Chinese (China and Africa under Chinese control).

Transhumanism- the seek for immortality. In Oxford - Nick Bostrom: Center for Transhumanist Studies. Brain Researches - the brain as the container of the body (Yet the brain is what it is because it is in a body). Robotics. The mind is not the same as the brain.

Chardin - Haraway. Canguillem.

Obama: The genome is not the center, now it's the brain. It's a war declaration.

Necropolitical imagery. Waist - whose bodies can be waisted? We've left death way too far from the equation. Too much research has been done of biopolitical. Follow the garbage by all means. Particularly digital garbage.

We should stop trying to use linguistics as a method. Derrida is outdated.

Vampires and zombies: liminal figures between deaths and lives. They are neither nor. Resonance of horror films in real life; political economy of bodies in the social space.

What does this mean for Critical Theory?

Inconsistent data. Ethereal culture materially grounded. Transitions and contradictions. Linear logical sequential, dualistic thought cannot account for this complexity.

Holocaust Studies / Trauma Studies / Memory Studies/ Peace Conflict Studies / Human Rights and Humanitarian Studies/ Security Studies (I rest my case!)

Philosophical anti-Humanism: The Biopolitical. Does not necessarily move out of anthropocentrism.

Media and Science Technology. The cultural studies of science.

What would it mean to give moral agency to a machine?

Deleuzian Monistic School - Critical Post-Humanities.

Anthropocene.

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Operationalize a sharable working bench. Either harmonious or antagonistic - what matters is the relation itself, the space of academic becoming. Shared methods and accountable evaluation procedures. We need evaluation procedures based on complexity in the Humanities.

The primacy of relationality.

Collective distribution of knowledge, transversal bonds. Assemblage in the doing. Dramatization of a shared concern. Potentia not potestas. The proper object of Humanities is no longer the Human. The subject of Humanity is life. The old binary system is not useful today. The qualitative leap transforms...

A discipline is also an archive. Trace your ecology of discipline belonging? Which books can you not live without?

The methodology is defamiliarization: distance from the most familiar, the necessary distance to look at the other and look at yourself through the eyes of others.

Defining the ordinance of placing yourself in the world. Scales: to be gravitational, to be pulled toward something.

What imaginary appeals to you? Look at the center from the center.

Deterritorialization: What is the center? It's the empty heart of the panopticon. Defining the center, coming to terms with it, make it accountable. Self-replication of dominant categories.

Power of the church / Power of the State: Religion is a beligerant category. The persistence of certain structures of power. The physicality of contemporary despotic members. Becoming-Other, becoming-minor. "My center is the center." There are multiple centers, scattered hegemonies, nationalisms.

We Europeans have perfected Nationalisms, but we have reflected about it and denazified it to a certain extent. Nationalism is a factor, connected to physicality, legality.

Track the possibility to open the world and change it from the center.

Cartography - consciousness raising is a collective practice.

Irigaray: There is no air in Heidegger.

Affects: give a frame to intensity. Desire is not just sexual.

Desire: one of the 5 fundamental forces of passion. The forces that drive you.

George Eliot: The roar of intensity that lies on the other side of silence.

The spectacular roar and the heatbits of a squirrel.

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Abandoning the primacy of the I. The self is a social convention . We need it to function. Yet it is not the convention of Truth. You let others define you. Subjectivity is the deeper structure toward the self. Strategies of exiting the categories that oppress the others.

Freud / Lacan: What kind of subject of desire am I?

“Endangered categories” such as masculinity. High level of awareness of manipulation of identities.

Subjectivity: Relationality and cartographies of power.

How to reconnect to sexuality as a vital force? Read Diderot.

“Should we burn Sade”? “Yes, but first we’ve got to read him.”

Split between sex and sexuality: Sexuality exits sex, going in all sorts of activities that have little or nothing to do with sex. If sexuality as a life force is divorced from sex, where has it gone?

It has gone into other practices and areas. Desire has constructed our being in the world against and besides sex.

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