

**THE POLITICAL PROMISE OF DISIDENTIFICATION: ASSEMBLING
BUTLER AND DELEUZE&GUATTARI**

By

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Abstract

The following thesis explores the possibilities of assembling the thoughts of Judith Butler, on the one hand, and Deleuze and Guattari, on the other, through an analysis of political considerations of disidentification that points towards the shared dedication of the two philosophies to finding possibilities of thinking change and transformation. While Butler finds the possibility of change within the quasi-transcendental principle of discursive citationality, a Deleuzo-Guattarian perspective searches for the possibilities of change in an immanent reading of pre-individual differentiating matter/affects. In order to think these two (political) thoughts together, the thesis engages with assemblage theory as an analytical appropriation of heterogeneous logics that are spelled out as a constant dynamic movement between a (quasi-)transcendental logics (of the signifier) and an immanent logics (of matter and affects). In political terms, the two logics of assemblage sketch out two forms of (political) individuation: negative discursive subjections/subjectifications and positive affective individuations-haecceity where each presents the limit of the other. The assembled reading is centered on highlighting the oscillations, the tensions between the two poles of assemblage. It shows how Butler's deconstructive performativity with its negatively charged performative politics of resignification draws out the discursive limits of Deleuzo-Guattarian affirmative politics of becoming, while Deleuzo-Guattarian becoming opens Butler's performativity to ontological considerations of thinking matter and affects in positive terms. In this sense, the statement, at the core of the thesis, is that in tracing out a political line of thinking about disidentification Butler is becoming Deleuzo-Guattarian and Deleuze and Guattari are becoming Butlerian.

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1. Introduction

In the following thesis, we will provide insights into how theorizing gender and sexuality is being translated into political terms of radical democracy in Judith Butler's earlier works and compare it to Deleuze and Guattari's two most notable works, namely, *Anti-Oedipus* (2009) and *A Thousand Plateaus* (2004). Since both theoretical approaches, Butler's and Deleuze&Guattari's, have been classified as post-structuralist it is safe to assume that they share a fair amount of common vantage points like criticism of representationalism, anti-foundationalism, a critique of the volitional subject and the search of potentialities that spring from failed dialectics, as Butler (2004, 198) makes it explicit in *Undoing Gender*. However, for everything these approaches share they also seem to diverge. In Butler's own understanding, her thought is incommensurable with Deleuze's supposed rejections of negativity and the unconscious. To Butler's insights we would add another salient point of divergence, which is their respective views on materiality.

According to Jasbir Puar (2013), who draws on Giffney and Hird (2008), a division of contemporary queer theory has been established within the academia. Queer theory, in her view, is divided into deconstructive approaches (we could call this the Butlerian strand) and 'affective' approaches that focus on sexuality-as-assemblage (the Deleuzo-Guattarian strand). While we also see a similar (analytical) divide, our wager at the core of the presented thesis, is that assembling these approaches can have productive outcomes in thinking the possibilities of political change even if, at times, in a conflictual relation. Our project is situated in an ongoing academic debate that tackles the problem of (in)commensurability of the philosophies of Deleuze and Guattari, on the one hand, and Judith Butler, on the other. Hickey-Moodey and Rasmussen (2009) provided an insightful article on the possible synergetic effects of reading Butler and Deleuze&Guattari together for all their differences (ontology, relationship to psychoanalysis) and their commonalities (concept of becoming, political stance). This article served as the initial inspiration for the following thesis, especially their statement that "beyond a hagiographic focus on the theorists themselves and their philosophical structures, their writings are used in ways that effect similar politics. This is the most pressing and immediate reason to acknowledge that a union of sorts already exists between them" (ibid, 46). In our process of reading the two strands of theory, we aim to extrapolate their differing and, at the same time, mutually reinforcing perceptions of disidentification as a potentiality to envision a political project of radical democracy.

An assembled reading of these two blocks of theory will be made possible through an exploration of Deleuze and Guattari's concept of assemblage. Our engagement with assemblage theory will be an analytical appropriation of heterogeneous logics that are spelled out in a constant dynamic movement (becoming) between a (quasi-)transcendental logics (of the signifier) and an immanent logics (of matter). In other words, a synthetic reading of Butler and Deleuze&Guattari will be an assembled critical reading of processes of discursive subjections (and their deconstruction) and potential affective transformative individuations (and their reterritorializations). Even though political derivatives and normative claims drawn out of Deleuze-Guattarian thought are often based on a prioritization of the immanent plane and its variations and positive, affirmative up-takings of affect, our reading will center on the oscillations, the tensions between the two poles of assemblage. We will show how Butler's deconstructive performativity with its negatively charged performative politics of resignification draws out the discursive limits of Deleuze-Guattarian affirmative politics of becoming, while the latter opens performative politics to an intense, affective, material *beside*. As an assemblage itself, our textual endeavor will tend to articulate and, at the same time, embody, that is to say, textually perform its affective desire for political intervention. In a plainer manner, we could say that we are trying to make sense of reading Butler and Deleuze&Guattari together, instead of finding the sense in (undertaking) such an endeavor.

However, prior to elaborating the political dimensions of reading Butler and Deleuze&Guattari together, we will have to indicate in what way the two theoretical corpuses can be read together. The entry point of the comparative analysis of these two clusters of thought will be language. The main focus of the first section of our thesis, will be to provide an analysis of Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of language and how it compares to Butler's performativity as citationality. Through an analysis of Derrida's (1982) account of language (signification) as an open, heterogeneous system of iteration, we will show that, on a conceptual level, Butler's performativity and Deleuze and Guattari's collective assemblages of enunciation do not depart significantly. Nevertheless, we will explore disparities in the two theoretical corpuses; disparities that will still enable us to put them into communication. In an effort to read the two strains of queer thought together the two main (and interconnected) issues that we will tackle will be the problem of immanence/transcendence (positivity/negativity) and materiality.

Firstly, the two approaches seem to depart in formulating the governing principle of language in terms of immanence and transcendence. Insofar as Butler's understanding of language as discourse hinges on a mandatory negativity that delimits the signifier from the referent, confounding productive difference to the sphere of culture, Deleuze and Guattari extended notion of forms of expression relies on a positive, generative view of the process of differentiation. Nevertheless, when dealing with the issue of negativity/positivity, we will stray away from Butler's own interpretation of Deleuze, for she has, as we have mentioned above, claimed there is no register of the negative in Deleuze's thought. Dorothea Olkowski (1999) has already fleshed out an analysis of Butler's relationship to Deleuze. In her view the negativity that Butler searches for in Deleuzian thought yet fails to find is "the importance of negativity (that) lies in its identity-making and remaking function, a function that only negativity, through the action of corporeal desire, can carry out" (Olkowski 1999, 42). Instead of taking Deleuze and Guattari's thought as a philosophy of affirmation and positivity exclusively, we will expose/resignify it as a philosophy of relationality between the positive and negative. This consideration has to do with Deleuze and Guattari's assertion that signification as collective assemblages of enunciation is a formalization of expression that finds its specific place in an assemblage. More accurately, we will show how Butler's quasi-transcendental performativity can be re-read as a formalization of expression of Deleuzo-Guattarian collective assemblage of enunciation.

Secondly, the two strands of critical theory have a significant but not an incommensurably diverging relationship to matter. With the help of Vicky Kirby's (2011) deconstruction of Butler's thought, we will investigate how new materialism resonates in Deleuze and Guattari (or better yet, how Deleuze and Guattari resonate in new materialism). Kirby's new materialist interventions will sketch out a perspective on matter that does not distinguish between culture and nature, but sees them as one differentiating immanent system. In contrast to Butler's view on materialization, which appears as a process of sedimentation of effect of discursive performativity, a naturalistic reading of Butler opens a possibility of thinking about ontology proper beside or, better yet, *with/in* the discursive. As a consequence of their views on matter, the core difference between the two 'camps' seems to be the relationship between Deleuze and Guattari's ontology and Butler's politics (confined to culture), between the emphasis on positivity (of differentiation) and negativity (of signification). However, if Deleuzo-Guattarian collective assemblages of enunciation can be re-read in light of Butler's performativity (as a deconstructive critique of historically specific

formalization of expression), we will show how Butler's performativity can become the (quasi-)transcendental pole of an assemblage. The two views on matter, hence, do not become incommensurable, one is not subsumed into the other, rather, they become two distinct logics of materialization that function together by posing the limits (of perception) to each other.

With an assembled reading of Butler and Deleuze&Guattari in place, the second section of the thesis will focus on explicating the political consequences of this theoretical assemblage. It is precisely through the conceptual apparatus of assemblage that a queer political partnership between Butler and Deleuze&Guattari will be rendered possible for us and will in turn legitimize our desire to assemble these thoughts. In order to keep up with our synergetic and eclectic reading of Butler and Deleuze and Guattari, becoming, at the level of theoretical abstraction, will ultimately be 'exposed' as a relationality between the negative, endless deferral of meaning in language (signification as a formalization of expression) and a positive proliferation of creative difference (of matter and effects). In political terms, the two logics of assemblage sketch out two forms of (political) individuation: negative discursive subjections/subjectifications and positive affective individuation-haecceity where each presents the limit of the other. If Butler's logic of the constitutive outside calls for a proliferation of molar identity categories that are opened up in order to become culturally recognized as viable forms of life through a call to collectively disidentify with dominant discursive interpellations, Deleuzo-Guattarian politics of becoming calls for an ontological acknowledgment (affirmation) of differentiating pre-individual/desubjectivized material particles and affects that in some sense elude discursive mediation. As the two logics of disidentification delimit the scope of each other, they create the political promise of situated disidentifications and allow us to reiterate Cohen and Ramlow's (2006) assertion that Butler is becoming Deleuzo-Guattarian and Deleuze and Guattari are becoming Butlerian

2. Language as the site of contestation: Butler's resignification and Deleuzo-Guattarian becoming (of matter)

To what extent does Butler's cultural analysis (and political operationalization) of language match the Deleuzo-Guattarian take on language? Since Butler is renowned for her analysis of language via the notion of performativity, the question of language presents the most fruitful entry point of negotiating a partnership between Butler and Deleuze&Guattari. Since both strands of theory engage with and depart from Austinian performativity, discussing their respective takes on language presents a vantage point that will enable us to expose the confluences and discontinuities of their thoughts. After an initial elaboration of Deleuzo-Guattarian assemblage and of Butler's performativity, we will show how Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy of language presupposes a new materialist counterpoint¹ to Butler's view on matter paving the way for a negotiation of a synergetic queer relationship between Deleuzo-Guattarian immanent becoming and Butler's quasi-transcendental resignification as potential tools of a political promise of disidentification within the queer logics of assemblage.

2.1 Two understandings of language

In this first subsection, our task will be limited to an exegetic elaboration of two theoretical understandings of language. Firstly, we will delve into Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical understanding of language and situate it in their concept of assemblage. We will compare Deleuze and Guattari's collective assemblage of enunciation to Butler's performativity in order to establish an initial meeting point of the two theoretical corpuses.

For Deleuze and Guattari "language in its entirety is indirect discourse" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 93), which carries important consequences. Each statement becomes indirect discourse - it can be ripped out of a specific moment of utterance and inserted in new contexts,

¹ Our engagement with new materialist thought will be limited to a strand of Australian feminist new materialists. Specifically, we will be highlighting the work of Claire Colebrook, Vicky Kirby, and Karen Barad. While all of them share a commitment to discussing matter-in-itself, they come from very different philosophical backgrounds. While Colebrook identifies herself as a Deleuzean, Kirby's main philosophical reference is Derrida. Barad, an American thinker, however, is renowned for combining insights from theoretical physics and performativity studies. All of these feminist theorists, however, engage with Judith Butler's thought, which provides a fruitful vantage point for the development of our won view on Butler's possible affiliation with new materialism and the thought of Deleuze and Guattari.

thus infinitely multiplying the potential voices that utter the statement. Deleuze and Guattari's claim:

The performative itself is explained by the illocutionary. It is the illocutionary that constitutes the nondiscursive or implicit presuppositions. And the illocutionary is in turn explained by collective assemblages of enunciation, by juridical acts or equivalents of juridical acts, which, far from depending on subjectification proceedings or assignments of subjects in language, in fact determine their distribution (ibid, 87).

The quote accurately spells out Deleuze and Guattari's logic of how language, as a formalization of expression, functions in the socio-political. Order-words are relations of all words/statements to implicit social obligations (norms, laws, rituals) as (speech) acts. Consequently, Deleuze and Guattari cannot but conceive of order-words as being conditioned by impersonal collective assemblages (of enunciation). This means that they are preconditioned by a complex cluster of historically situated sedimentations, to use Derrida's vocabulary, of un/conscious social relations that determine the shifting distribution of (relative) processes of subjectification and attributions of individuality. What this boils down to, simply put, is Deleuze and Guattari's view on language as a 'phenomenon' invested by power: "A rule of grammar is a power marker before it is a syntactical marker" (ibid, 84). Order-words (by virtue of illocutionary force) and their capability to effectuate coercion (perlocutionary effects) hinge on their socially accepted meaning, which is contingent but not arbitrary.

Their account of order-words, as explicit commands, supports their position that language produces social institutions and situations via signification or, to put it more bluntly, order-words make subjectification possible. However, since order-words are not equivalent to language itself, but function as historically sedimented implicit presuppositions, they put into force the condition of possibility of language, they delimit the possible (proper) usages of linguistic elements. Through a series of definitional modifications, Deleuze and Guattari's order-words become (speech-)acts through the incorporeal transformations they express and finally they become variables of collective assemblages of enunciation: "Thus if the collective assemblage is in each instance coextensive with the linguistic system considered, and to language as a whole, it is because it expresses the set of incorporeal transformations that effectuate the condition of possibility of language and utilize the elements of the linguistic system" (ibid, 94). In short, the performative

force of statements can only be assessed against a backdrop of circumstances, i.e. in relation to socially determined implicit presuppositions they depend on, acts they enact, and transformations they express. In order to clarify the full meaning of this quote, we need to further elaborate how Deleuze and Guattari see the functioning of language within a matrix of the tetravalence of an assemblage or, in other words, the abstract machine of language upon which pragmatics, semantics, syntactical and phonological determinations depend (ibid, 101).

“The order-words or assemblages of enunciation in a given society (in short, the illocutionary) designate this instantaneous relation between statements and the incorporeal transformations or noncorporeal attributes they express” (ibid, 90). As we have seen above, speech acts can be described as all incorporeal transformations assigned to bodies. They distinguish two different domains in regard to bodies: firstly, actions and passion that affect bodies and, secondly, acts as incorporeal expressions of a statement (ibid, 89). At this point, Deleuze and Guattari make an important distinction between speech acts as incorporeal transformations, or forms of expression, and corporeal modifications as bodies affecting bodies, or forms of content. These distinct assemblages have a certain independence from each other, but are nevertheless meshed together in a bigger assemblage in a way that it cannot be said they are in a contradictory relationship but are, rather, “confirmed by the fact that the expression or expresseds are inserted into or intervene in contents, not to represent them but to anticipate them or move them back, slow them down or speed them up, separate or combine them, delimit them in a different way” (ibid, 96). An assemblage is a thought experiment through which we can think heterogeneous elements/objects (forms of expressions as incorporeal objects and forms of content as corporeal objects acted upon by forces of (re)territorialization or deterritorialization) not as in a classical causal relationship, but as interconnected and imbricated with each other without reducing one sphere into the other.

Deleuzo-Guattarian tetravalence of assemblage:

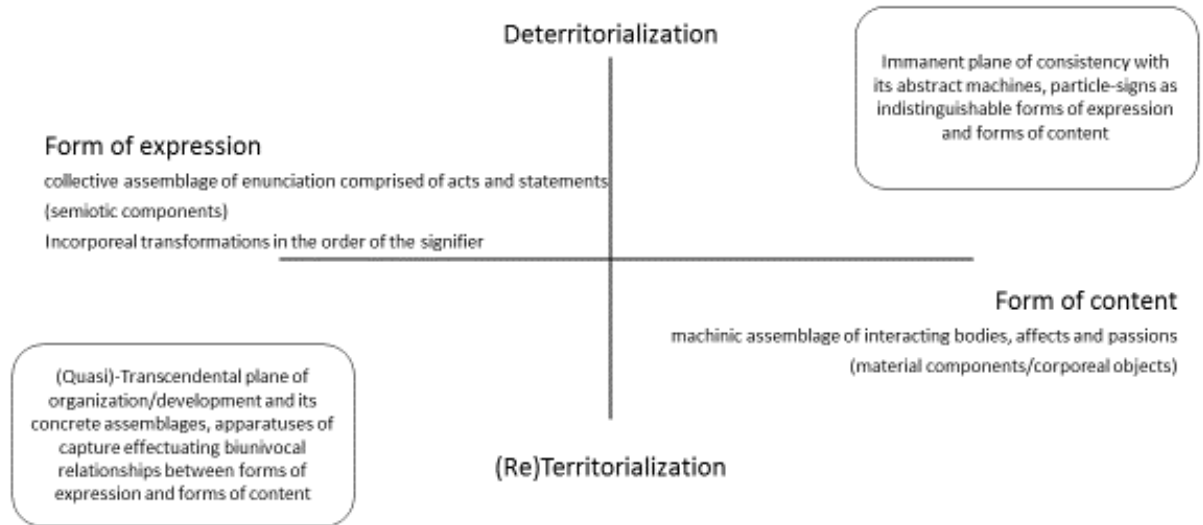


Figure 1: Deleuzo-Guattarian tetravalence of assemblage

Deleuze and Guattari draw on these insights to produce the concept of an Assemblage (in general), which is comprised of two axes. The horizontal axis is devised into two parts that reciprocally presuppose each other. Firstly, the form of content, that is, a machinic assemblage of interacting bodies (material components) and, secondly, the form of expression, that is, a collective assemblage of enunciation comprised of acts and statements (semiotic components). The vertical axis serves to (politically) intervene in the continually variable character (in Deleuzo-Guattarian parlance this process of variation is usually referred to as the process of deterritorialization) of the horizontal axis. The vertical axis thus expands from deterritorialization as a process of carrying away variable elements of the forms of content and expression to (re)territorialization as a process of fixing or stabilizing these variables (ibid, 97-8). For Deleuze and Guattari machinic assemblages are primary to bodies and collective assemblages of enunciation are primary to language and words (while both assemblages are ultimately indistinguishable from each other in the instance of absolute differentiation on the plane of consistency) or, if put in slightly different terms, “a social field is defined less by its conflicts and contradictions than by the lines of flight running through it” (ibid, 100).

At this point, we are equipped to understand why Deleuze and Guattari claim there is no exteriority of language, why it is ultimately heterogeneous, why linguistics cannot make a claim to scientific objectivism without a recourse to political violence or, in short, why language is constantly exposed to political labor:

The pseudoconstants of language are superseded by variables of expression internal to enunciation itself; these variables of expression are then no longer separable from the variables of content with which they are in perpetual interaction. If the external pragmatics of nonlinguistic factors must be taken into consideration, it is because linguistics itself is inseparable from an internal pragmatics involving its own factors (ibid).

Now, let us turn to the political consequences of Deleuze and Guattari's discussion of language as ordered. It is precisely by being ordered (stratified), that it is exposed as ultimately political. They deem language as heterogeneous by virtue of declaring all of its elements variable. If there are elements of language that can be defined as constant, it is by virtue of a political intervention into fixing, stabilizing, centralizing, homogenizing variable elements "for it is obvious that constants are drawn from the variables themselves" (ibid, 114). This indicates Deleuze and Guattari's endorsement of the primacy of positivity/affirmation (of difference). However, negativity as an aspect of ((violent) political) ordering of the constantly differentiating, primary lines of flight is a salient feature of their thought, as can be seen from their engagement with linguistic constants (or constant relationships between variables) and variables: "Constant is not opposed to variable; it is a treatment of the variable opposed to the other kind of treatment, or continuous variation" (ibid).

As we have seen, Deleuze and Guattari hold that the function of language is not to represent or refer, but to performatively enact what they label as incorporeal transformations. If language is composed out of order-words, Deleuze and Guattari are more preoccupied with what language can do, instead of what it can represent or refer to. And, perhaps even more importantly, they stress how "language is invested with relations of power before subjects put it to use and, in important ways, language works upon and determines the subjectivity of the subjects who use it" (Barton 2003, 237). From this perspective, their theory of language is comparable to Butler's performativity.

For Butler (1993, 225), “the performative is one domain in which power acts as discourse.” Butler deems performative acts as statements that, at the same time, enact something as well as exert a binding power. In a synthetic reading of Foucauldian conceptualizations of power and discourse, on the one hand, and Derrida’s formulation of iteration, on the other, Butler pronounces that the binding power of the performative is not something that can be accorded to a singular or deliberate act (of a volitional subject), but to the structural quasi-principle of iteration/citation. In this sense, Butler uses Derrida’s intervention into Austinian theory of the performative, as she declares that citationality constitutes the performative force of speech acts. In other words, an “act emerges in the context of a chain of binding conventions” (ibid).

In lieu of arguing for a volitional subject that speaks/acts and consequently produces discursive effects, Butler stresses that what is primary is a discourse; a discourse that enables the conditions of possibilities of an emergence of a socially recognizable subject. However, Butler utilizes Derrida’s understanding of iterability as a movement that is not a simple mechanical repetition. In order to account for a possibility of agency within the schema of performativity described above, she needs Derrida’s *différance* and iterability that allow for a possibility of change and transformation within the citational chains of conventions.

Derrida, by affirming a permanent, structural possibility of parasitism (as reoccurrence of *différance*) in language, derives two consequences out of the principal of general iterability² and its three main characteristics (absence, reiterability, *différance*) that transform Austin’s speech act theory: “Given the structure of iteration, the intention animating the utterance will never be through and through present to itself and its content” (Derrida 1982, 18) and “above all, this essential absence of intending the actuality of utterance, this structural unconsciousness, if you like, prohibits any saturation of context” (ibid). Clearly, in Derrida’s intervention into speech act theory, special attention is given to the failure of signification, which becomes a structural law of the

² Derrida (1982) deals with the concept of absence (as negativity) in writing in order to make it the general principle that inverts and displaces the classic hierarchical duality between speech and writing in communication. Derrida argues that absence in writing is a ‘rupture in presence’ and enumerates the nuclear traits of writing that, due to the structural logics of deconstruction as the law of inversion, become generalizable to “all orders of ‘signs’ and for all languages in general but moreover, beyond semio-linguistic communication, for the entire field of what philosophy would call experience” (ibid, 9). The three generalizable traits of writing are absence/spacing, reiterability and *différance*. Within such a framework all signs are exposed to dissemination, i.e., to language as an open system of context, “without any center or absolute anchoring” (ibid, 12), yet exposed to (or, in the final instance, even equal to) general iterability (*différance*) as the structural quasi-principal.

performative due to the contextual incompleteness of language. It is precisely in this characteristic of the performative that Butler finds particular social significance of iterability that will become a salient point for her conceptualization of expropriation and resignification:

For Derrida, the force of the performative is derived precisely from its decontextualization, from its break with a prior context and its capacity to assume new contexts. Indeed, he argues that a performative, to the extent that it is conventional, must be repeated in order to work. And this repetition presupposes that the formula itself continues to work in successive contexts, that it is bound to no context in particular even as, I would add, it is always found in some context or another (Butler 1997a, 147).

It is this excessive iterability of signification (displaced into the realm of cultural analysis of sex, gender, and sexuality) that allows Butler to pinpoint the linguistic location of resistance (resignification), the possibility of unpredictable change within an immanent critique of signification and the productive capacity of language, its materiality and performativity.

Deleuze and Guattari echo Derrida's and Butler's departure from Austinian performativity, for they too emphasize the impossibility, firstly, to pin down the speaker's intentionality (as the central force driving the system of enunciation) and, secondly, the totality of the context (all language is indirect discourse). If for Butler discourse is primary to the subject, Deleuze and Guattari's collective assemblage of enunciation is primary to language and words. Both theories proclaim that intelligible subjects are produced by the context of a chain of binding conventions (named discourse or collective assemblage of enunciation respectively). In this sense, they share a critique of the volitional subject and an affirmation of a non-masterable language. For Butler, Deleuze and Guattari consciousness (of the subject) becomes an effect of language rather than its origin. Deleuze and Guattari would also subscribe to the decentering of intentionality and meaning that can always be deferred and displaced in an open, heterogeneous system of signification. The force of the performative (act/statement) does not emanate from its pre-established legitimized context, rather, it emanates from its citationality/iterability, its circulation in the socio-political that instantaneously inaugurates its singularity and iterability.

2.2 Re-reading collective assemblage of enunciation in terms of Butler's performativity

Having indicated the shared postulates regarding language in Deleuze&Guattari and Butler, we will now turn to their focus on investigating the possibility of changing dominant uses of language. In this subsection, we will explicate how Butler's performativity can be re-read as a historically specific formalization of a Deleuzo-Guattarian collective assemblage of enunciation and how collective assemblage of enunciation can be enriched by Butler's political considerations.

For Deleuze and Guattari (2004, 118) "the order-word is the variable enunciation that effectuates the condition of possibility of language and defines the usage of its elements according to one of the two treatments." The referred to two treatments are the majoritarian (reterritorializing) and minoritarian (deterritorializing) function of language. Deleuze and Guattari assign order-words an ostensibly negative role clearly connected to the power relations inherent to the treatment of language as major: "The order-word is a death sentence" (ibid, 118). Nevertheless, they also assign it a positivity, for the order-word brings with it "a message to flee" and, at the same time, warn that "it would be oversimplifying to say that flight is a reaction against the order-word; rather, it is included in it, as its other face in a complex assemblage, its other component" (ibid).

This immanent reciprocity (relationality) between a/n violent/ordering use of order-word and their positive use, as we have described it above, strongly resonates with Butler's (1993) notion of performativity. Butler's performativity explains signification as one system, where a potential (subversive) reiteration of speech acts is possible on the basis of a sort of immanence, which means the possibility of a reiteration is enfolded within a discourse as a system of signification.

If, as has been noted, the escape from the order-word is indeed already included, enfolded in it as its reverse side, it cannot be said that these lines of flight exist outside of social conventions as norms, rituals, or laws whose power is conditioned and buttressed by discursive citationality and general iterability:

Could a performative utterance succeed if its formulation did not repeat a 'coded' or iterable utterance, or in other words, if the formula I pronounce in order to open a meeting, launch a ship or marriage were not identifiable as conforming with an iterable model, if it were not then identifiable in some way as a 'citation' (Derrida 1982, 18)?

Much like Derrida claims, in the quote above, a (positive) use of the order-words could not be successful if it was not in some sort of relation to an iterative model, if it did not repeat the molar constant to a certain extent. However, this repetition is not only a repetition of the same, only a coercive repetition; rather, it is a repetition that can potentially differentiate the molar constants it repeats (the function performed by Derrida's *différance*, i.e., general iterability). These Deleuzo-Guattarian lines of escape, always prone to cooptation by the powers that be (what Deleuze and Guattari call reterritorialization), are thus taken up as the inverse side of the (power) structure. That is, the reverse side of a discursive power structure that effectuates order-words as commands, death sentences performed by (juridical/molar) law.

In quite a similar way, Butler (1997a, 20) also echoes this possibility contained within the iterative doubling of positive resignification in the case of hate speech: "Is there a repetition that might disjoin the speech act from its supporting conventions such that its repetition confounds rather than consolidates its injurious efficacy?" Butler's affirmative answer to this question is based on her notion of discursive performativity where the possibility of resignification (of a preceding context) partly springs up from the "gap between the originating context or intention by which an utterance is animated and the effects it produces" (ibid, 14). In other words, there is no necessary causal relationship between the speech act and its (injurious) effect, rather, this gap is precisely the condition of a possibility of repetition and resignification. It indicates "how words might, through time, become disjointed from their power to injure and recontextualized in more affirmative modes. I hope to make clear that by affirmative, I mean 'opening up the possibility of agency,' where agency is not the restoration of a sovereign autonomy in speech, a replication of conventional notions of master" (ibid, 15).

Butler, in *Excitable Speech*, was developing a concept of linguistic agency as "an alternative to the relentless search for legal remedy" (1997a, 15) for curing hate speech (a negative-use of the order-word). The deconstructive approach emphasizing a perpetual and irreducible deferral of meaning presenting a possibility for resignification, employed by Butler, becomes the force of deterritorialization of collective assemblages of enunciation. In simpler terms, Butler searches for a possibility to change the conventional uses and meanings of certain injurious words. Butler cautions against legalistic (state) interventions into injurious speech that many a time fix the subject as the sovereign speaker, for it is clear that this speaker is at once intentional (as part

of the citational character of speech acts belonging to specific communities) and unintentional (unpredictability of perlocutionary effects of speech acts) (ibid, 39). As a force of deterritorialization/iteration, the deconstructive linguistic agency (if and when successful) partially eludes the state apparatus (convention/law/norm), but passes through it because its linguistic inception is conditioned by the inauguratory force of a discourse. This linguistic agency becomes the site of what Butler calls collective disidentifications³. Butler's linguistic agency is an attempt to show how the performative structure of collective assemblage of enunciation (discourse) allows for a transformation of meaning accorded to signifiers.

Linguistic agency, as described by Butler above, comes strikingly close to what, in Deleuzo-Guattarian parlance, we could call the possibility of variation, deterritorialization within a system of signification. Specifically, the minor use of language, as a positive use of order-words, that we have mentioned earlier, decenters the importance of contexts and intentionality (predictability of the effects of speech-acts), hence stimulating a process of differentiation of constants, i.e. of ordered language as a formalized form of expression. What escapes these conventions of constants - these lines of escape always enfolded in *concrete* assemblages - is an expression of a possibility of divergent constellations, i.e. novel assemblages of enunciation (cf. Baktir 2013, 110). Put differently, Deleuze and Guattari see the positive side of the coin; one that comes close to what Butler might call an affirmative mode of speech acts: "The more a language has or acquires the characteristics of a major language, the more it is affected by continuous variations that transpose it into a 'minor' language" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 113). But let us not take this statement at face value, for we have already noted that major and minor are only two treatments of the same language: "Even politically, especially politically, it is difficult to see how the upholders of a minor language can operate if not by giving it (if only by writing in it) a constancy and homogeneity making it a locally major language capable of forcing official recognition" (ibid). These negative aspect of order-words, in Deleuze and Guattari, situates language and power (as a formalized system of signification) within the framework of

³ "Although the political discourses that mobilize identity categories tend to cultivate identifications in the service of a political goal, it may be that the persistence of *dis*identification is equally crucial to the rearticulation of democratic contestation. Indeed, it may be precisely through practices which underscore disidentification with those regulatory norms by which sexual difference is materialized that both feminist and queer politics are mobilized. Such collective disidentifications can facilitate a reconceptualization of which bodies matter, and which bodies are yet to emerge as critical matters of concern" (Butler 1993, 4).

subjectification; that is, the ‘proper’ and ordered use of language that is unavoidable and resonates with Butler’s performativity.

There is a valuable political lesson in Butler’s reinstatement of Derrida when producing the notion of the constitutive outside. With the utilization of this notion one can politically account for structures of exclusion and devaluation of bodies in the realm of cultural intelligibility; that is, of granting specific, abjected groups of people the possibility of legitimately articulating their experiences despite and in spite of “the constitutive force of exclusion, erasure, violent foreclosure, abjection and its disruptive return within the very terms of discursive legitimacy” (Butler 1993, 8). These groups are not rendered obsolete, rather, with the notion of the constitutive outside, they become the condition of possibility of the ‘normal’, for they “circumscribe the domain of the subject” (ibid, 3). So, if the law constructs bodies, bodies that successfully materialize by citing the regulatory norm and, thus, come to matter, it also produces (a) category(ies) of abjected bodies, devalued, deprived of the status of the subject, a constitutive outside that provides referential support for legitimate bodies (ibid, 16). In comparison, Deleuze and Guattari would state something similar that pertains to the effects of negative uses of order-words: “Any new body requires the erection of an opposable form, as well as the formation of distinct subjects” (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 119); however, the political considerations regarding cultural recognition of subjects/objects in Butler’s thought are unmatched to any concept in Deleuzo-Guattarian philosophy.

Furthermore, Butler is not only interested in how the norm/law (violently) produces subjects and objects, but also attempts to extrapolate a possibility of change within the performative structure with a recourse to Foucauldian models of individuation, which are immanent to power:

The paradox of subjectivation (assujettissement) is precisely that the subject who would resist such norms is itself enabled, if not produced, by such norms. Although this constitutive constraint does not foreclose the possibility of agency, it does locate agency as a reiterative or rearticulatory practice, immanent to power, and not a relation of external opposition to power (Butler 1993, 15).

We can see how, for Butler, agency can only be located within a discourse, within the limits that a discourse poses by producing norms (effects) that it names itself. In a Foucauldian sense,

discourses and their norms are regulatory practices that effectuate materializations by virtue of coercive reiteration. However, Butler claims the sole fact that the norms need to be reiterated points towards their inherent instability. These ‘spaces’ of instability as place of potential resignifications “opened up by this process that mark one domain in which the force of the regulatory law can be turned against itself to spawn rearticulations that call into question the hegemonic force of that very regulatory law” (ibid, 2). In other words, the possibility of transformation, in Butler’s thought, is always firstly conditioned by disidentifying from this generative aspect of a discourse’s iterable force that enables the production of intelligible subjects. The incentive for enabling this transformational trait of reiterable discursive conventions, in Butler’s thought, is usually a negative affect (melancholia, mourning, guilt, terror).

All these negative aspects of transformative (de)subjectivations are under-theorized in Deleuze and Guattari, thus providing a valuable incentive to enrich their conceptualization of collective assemblages of enunciation in light of Butler’s performativity. True, Deleuze and Guattari bracket the possibility of the positive (resignificatory) uses of order-words, their transformational effects and redeployment, by what they call the first aspect of the order-word – a death sentence. Nevertheless, their reasoning falls short of articulating all the negatively charged intricacies of Butler’s culturally situated notion of linguistic agency that takes discourse as primary. This, however, does not mean that Deleuze and Guattari’s collective assemblage of enunciation are incompatible with Butler’s performativity. Let us not forget that what is at stake in Butler’s deconstructive performativity is significance and subjectification (and the deconstruction of the logics of identity its limits, the negative conditions discourses impose on the production of subjectivity), which corresponds to what Deleuze and Guattari are calling the signifying and post-signifying regime of signs⁴ (the critique of molar identity/identity politics and its limits). In this sense Deleuzo-Guattarian collective assemblage of enunciation can be re-read/resignified as a historically specific system of signification that has formalized as Butlerian performativity.

⁴ Deleuze and Guattari (2004, 123-164) distinguish several regimes of signs (or semiotics) as systems of signification (formalized forms of linguistic expression or collective assemblages of enunciation). They identify four analytically distinct semiotics: pre-signifying, signifying, post-signifying, and counter-signifying semiotic; however, they make it clear this is not an exhaustive list nor do they presume any of these appears as such in everyday life, for there are only mixed semiotics.

Nevertheless, there is also something in Deleuzo-Guattarian thought that is unaccounted for in Butler. That is a molecular level of analysis that goes ‘beyond’ the domain of the discursive/symbolic, for Deleuze and Guattari (2004, 123) claim that an analysis of any semiotic system in itself is practically impossible, because “there is always a form of content that is simultaneously inseparable from and independent of the form of expression, and the two forms pertain to assemblages that are not principally linguistic.”

Deleuze and Guattari add something extra to Butler’s account of performativity that can be understood as an “internal dialectics of the One (the discursive)” (Zupancic Zerdin 2011, 41) or, in Deleuzo-Guattarian parlance pertains to collective assemblages of enunciation only. This machinic addition might loosely be called the virtual real, a real quite distinct from the Lacanian Real as we shall explain in section 3.1 of the thesis. Deleuze and Guattari’s virtual real, refers to something outside of yet in contact with the discursive, to the other side of the horizontal axis of an assemblage (look at Figure 1), to non-representational matter-in-itself (machinic assemblage) and to the diagonal abstract machine – the virtual, intense aspect that both conditions concrete assemblages and opens them up to becomings. This *beside* is a regime distinct to that of a signifying system, these are “other zones infinitely muter and more imperceptible where subterranean becomings-animal occur, becomings-molecular, nocturnal deterritorializations over-spilling the limits of the signifying system” (ibid, 128).

Claire Colebrook, a Deleuzean feminist, explains why this machinic aspect is important apropos Derrida’s and, by extension, to Butler’s thought:

If Derrida’s philosophy is a radicalization of phenomenology’s attention to ‘the lived’ in his insistence that a present can only be lived if it is already structured by some relation to an anticipated absence, Deleuze would seem to have allowed a way to think bodies and desires themselves as already machinic, as already productive of difference and relation, and therefore not being structured by an ineradicable and unthinkable alterity or ‘anarchic genesis’ that cannot be thought (Colebrook 2010, 162-3).

Colebrook shows how Deleuze and Guattari’s consideration of matter and affects as machinic situates Butler’s quasi-transcendental performativity as a historically specific system of signification. This is the crucial difference that emerges between these two views on performativity. As far as Butler, through her utilization of Derrida’s quasi-transcendental principle

of iterability, searches for the conditions of possibility that allow the functioning of speech acts (Barton 2003, 229), Deleuze and Guattari explicitly investigate the usages of signification, for they claim that “language is not life; it gives life orders” (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 84). Butler’s view on human language remains contained within the system of culture and can, as such, from a Deleuzo-Guattarian perspective, be perceived as a formalized expression exerting its force over life:

This (Deleuzo-Guattarian) perception of language provides insight into the flows of desire and matter out of which regimes of signs develop to order political structures and practices in a society. As linguistic marks freed from their territorial contexts and encodings, deterritorialised signs break off in various lines of flight until a particular regime reterritorialises them. Such signs therefore take on a performative dimension which, like the transformative power of iterability, implies that they always do more than they simply intend to do (Barton 2003, 253).

For Butler, though, “what defines language as language is the play of substitution, enabled by a founding absence that the sign attempts to fill... Butler understands this absence or loss as the originary difference that language is unable to repair” (Kirby 2007, 109). Clearly, for its indebtedness to Foucault, Butler’s subject is immanent to the discourse that constitutes it. Butler couples Foucauldian discourse characterized by “its presumptions about social regulation and social possibilities” (Kirby 2007, 122) with a Derridean quasi-transcendental principle of iteration that prohibits the closure of the discursive power play. Butler’s appropriation of Derrida’s iterability limits the “generative movement of differentiation” (ibid) to the sphere of culture. It is from this perspective, a perspective of delimiting the positive up taking of differentiation to culture only, that we can clearly see the (quasi-)transcendental function of Butler’s performativity a propos nature/matter. Insofar as loss and absence (what Barton, in the quote above, referred to as flows of desire and matter in-itself) are the necessary conditions of possibility for change in Butler’s cultural thought, a certain mandatory negativity or incompleteness also becomes the condition of possibility for the (negatively charged) political production of specific subject-position in two specific ways: “(1) as the failure of any particular articulation to describe the population it represents; (2) that every subject is constituted differentially, and that what is produced as the

‘constitutive outside’ of the subject can never become fully inside or immanent” (Butler in Butler et al. 2000, 12).

Deleuze and Guattari’s difference, on the other hand, is not exposed to any mandatory negativity ascribed to nature, rather, difference is itself productive, transformative, and vital and not confined to the specific system of culture. As such, it provides a perspective that can open up possibilities to think of affirmative, positive ‘sources’ of individuation that are not under a totalizing duress of negative discursive limitations that Butler speaks of. Because these material aspects (of desire) attain a political role, resulting in a development of an affirmative form of individuation derived from this positive up-taking of material/machinic differentiation, we will have to elaborate on some new materialist perspectives regarding Butler’s thought (section 2.4). It is from this perspective that Butler’s performativity can be re-read as a formalization of expression (that is, signification) with its quasi-transcendental principle of citationality and as such thought alongside Deleuzo-Guattarian machinic becomings. As a formalization of expression, Butler’s performativity attains a certain autonomy from matter-in-itself. The immanent, intense, machinic aspects of becoming and the quasi-transcendental aspects of performative significations become two different perspectives forming two poles of an assemblage, limiting each other.

2.3 Molar and molecular sexual difference: (quasi-)transcendence and immanence

In order to explicate the logic of an assemblage, oscillating between the immanent (of matter) pole and quasi-transcendental pole (of signification), let us look at the problematic of sexual difference in relation to the molar and molecular in Deleuzo-Guattarian thought, which Butler took issue with in *Gender Trouble* (1990). Butler criticized Monique Wittig’s alliance with Deleuze and Guattari that pertained to the endorsement of the “limitless proliferation of sexes” (ibid, 118). Butler proclaims that such a stance includes a negation of sex *tout court*, for if every individual has its own sex, the category of sex has no applicability: “One’s sex would be a radically singular property and would no longer be able to operate as a useful or descriptive generalization” (ibid, 119).

Butler, in *Gender Trouble*, does not discuss the relevance of contemplating these singular, molecular n sexes. Interestingly, though, her insight into the troubles with sexual difference seem to change in her later essay published in *Undoing Gender* where Butler (2004, 197) asks Rosi

Braidotti: “Why can’t the framework for sexual difference itself move beyond binarity into multiplicity?” With this provocative question, Butler seems to be (unintentionally) hinting at a more faithful reading of Deleuze and Guattari than that of Deleuzean feminists of sexual difference like Braidotti (1991) and Grosz (1993) who diligently insist on utilizing a binary notion of (molar) sexual difference.

How can we understand this paradoxical situation? For Grosz and Braidotti, it would surely not mean they would like to keep sexual difference in a binary mode of thinking altogether, however, they do accuse Deleuze and Guattari of assuming a symmetrical understanding of sexes. Such a reading, however, does not fare well when reading this passage by Deleuze and Guattari (2004, 320): “Why are there so many becomings of man, but no becoming-man? First because man is majoritarian par excellence, whereas becomings are minoritarian.” What Deleuzo-Guattarian thought offers, is not so much a fundamental positing of sexual difference, rather, it is a positing of difference-in-itself that makes connections on a molecular level without ever refuting its dependence on molar aggregates. Sexual difference becomes both binary and multiplicitous at the same time. “Since becoming and multiplicity are the same thing” say Deleuze and Guattari (2004, 275) “it is a problem not of the One and the Multiple but of a fusional multiplicity that effectively goes beyond any opposition between the one and the multiple” (ibid, 170). On a molar level the asymmetry between sexes is affirmed by Deleuze and Guattari, while on a molecular level it is both affirmed and repudiated at the same time. Becoming is appropriable by molar structures, it remains in relation to them but, at the same time, eluding their binary mechanisms and troubling them. On the molecular level, the symbolic molar laws have no *absolute* jurisdiction and from this point of view the molecular proliferation of sexes cannot be problematic for a generalized use of the molar category of sex as Butler argued in *Gender Trouble*. The subject is what is missing in desire (*cf.* Deleuze and Guattari 2009, 26), “there is no fixed subject unless there is repression”. Therefore, “even women must become-woman” (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 321), which means that becoming is not identical with the molar category (i.e. the identity) of woman, rather, it destabilizes the molar binary concept of sexual difference, for something escapes it, spills over it. The political implication for Deleuzo-Guattarian feminist politics is as follows:

The woman as a molar entity has to become-woman in order that the man also becomes- or can become-woman. It is, of course, indispensable for women to conduct a

molar politics, with a view to winning back their own organism, their own history, their own subjectivity: ‘we as women ...’ makes its appearance as a subject of enunciation. But it is dangerous to confine oneself to such a subject, which does not function without dying up a spring or stopping a flow. The song of life is often intoned by the driest of women, moved by resentment, the will to power and cold mothering (ibid, 304).

Sexual difference, above, is not erased, female bodies are not desexualized. On the contrary, they are affirmed in their machinic logic (as a response to what is given biologically) but, at the same time, warned against the exclusionary pitfalls of fixed molar identity positions (of subjectification/post-signifying regime of signs, i.e. as the meaning of the given), thus awaiting to be enriched by Butler’s two claims to mandatory incompleteness of subject-formation. For Deleuze and Guattari, sexual difference needs to be schizophrenized further, both in theory as well as in feminist practice, thus opening it up to flows of productive affective desire. Deleuze and Guattari (ibid) would claim that “it is thus necessary to conceive of a molecular women’s politics that slips into molar confrontations, and passes under or through them.”

This intense, molecular sphere or the register of becoming, in Deleuze and Guattari, however, is undeniably characterized with immanence of reciprocal relations of both forms of content (question of the body, the movements of singular particle-signs/haecceity) as well as forms of expression (questions of the organism, history, subject of enunciation), on the one hand (horizontal axis of assemblage), and effectuating their lines of flight, which are “only in connection to general causalities of another nature, but in no way explained by them” (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 312), on the other (vertical axis of assemblage). These lines of flights, as becomings, can attain multiple functions; true, they are exposed to the ‘threat’ of being stratified or, to say it differently, (re)territorialized, i.e. put into service of molar function, but they are lines of potential variation (not of blind mimesis) as well. Lines of flight, though, should not be understood as (Foucauldian) “resistance or counterattack in an assemblage, but (as) cutting edges of creation and deterritorialization” (Alliez 2004, 10). Precisely because lines of flight are lines of becoming, that is to say, they pass between points, between points of two different logics or plan(e)s enveloping an assemblage – on the one hand, the immanent plan(e) of consistency and the plan(e) of transcendence (or organization/development), on the other – they attain an ambiguous status for Butler.

The limitless proliferation of sexes in Deleuze and Guattari's molecular register refers to the line of flight tending toward the plan(e) of consistency where one speaks of immanence. For Butler, these material or affective molecular n sexes are imperceptible, for she speaks from a position of deconstructing the plan(e) of transcendence:

If movement is imperceptible by nature, it is so always in relation to a given threshold of perception, which is by nature relative and thus plays the role of a mediation on the plane that effects the distribution of thresholds and percepts and makes forms perceivable to perceiving subjects. It is the plane of organization and development, the plane of transcendence, that renders perceptible without itself being perceived, without being capable of being perceived (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 310).

Butler's provocation regarding the displacement of the framework for sexual difference into multiplicity surely does not rely on a proliferation of molecular sexes, but on a proliferation of discursive (molar) categories of sexes that can potentially become (culturally) recognized. Deleuze and Guattari (2004, 311), however, argue for a position of oscillating perception that will be able to account for both the molar (discursive) and the molecular (material, affective): "Perception will confront its own limit; it will be in the midst of things, throughout its own proximity, as the presence of haecceity in another, the prehension of one by the other or the passage from one to the other: Look only at the movements." In other words, the molecular as the field of proliferating variation might indeed be deemed primary by Deleuze and Guattari; however, it is in constant relation to the molar constants. This dynamism of assemblage in Deleuzo-Guattarian theory is what we consider as their focal point of departure: "The opposition we should set up between the two planes is that between two abstract poles" (ibid, 298). In regards to our task of partnering up Butler and Deleuze and Guattari, this means we do not have to let go of Butler's quasi-transcendental plan(e) of performativity, rather, we have to be attentive to the movements that happen between this plan(e) of performativity, as a (discursive) deconstructive critique of the plan(e) of transcendence (a historically specific system of signification), and the immanent plan(e) of consistency with its machinic involutions⁵.

⁵ We have noted how Butler's quasi-transcendental performativity subscribes to a radical separation of matter-in-itself and the representation of matter. In contrast, Deleuze and Guattari hold the view that matter-in-itself can be expressed under specific conditions, which is not to say they would disagree with Butler. Deleuze and Guattari do

The descriptive/transcendental identity model rests on creating molar categories as ordered signifiers (what Butler would refer to as identity positions) on the basis of which it attains an explanatory potential. Following Claire Colebrook (2000) we might extrapolate three possible outlooks on sexual difference. Firstly, a Derridean (close to Butler) outlook that, would render sexual difference “to be a difference among others, a particular determination of *différance*” (ibid, 120). Secondly, an Irigarayan (close to Grosz and Braidotti) perspective would not deem sexual difference as a difference among others but as responding to a certain problem rendering sexual difference as autonomous, as a form of recognition of an other. These two positions rest on a model of thought that works “with the transcendental programme of the subject’s relation to the given, and the genesis of the meaning of the given” (ibid, 113). According to Colebrook, Deleuzo-Guattarian immanent philosophy, on the other hand, does not search for (quasi-)transcendental principles that would present an “account for the condition or meaning of the given” but, rather, creates concepts that respond to the given (ibid).

In opposition to Colebrook’s interpretation of Deleuzo-Guattarian philosophy of immanence, we would say they do not privilege one of the poles; rather, we have shown that Deleuze and Guattari are primarily focusing on the oscillations between the two poles, the movements that form assemblages branched between the plane of immanence and the plane of transcendence: “Look only at the movements” (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 311). Insofar as their philosophy strives to produce concepts that respond to the given it, at the same time, through an inclusion of Butler’s performativity, also looks to account for the condition or meaning of the given. The question, then, is not whether the former (beings) or the latter (Being) carry more weight, it is the affective relational force between them - the so called becoming - that is at the core of the analysis. This relational force, in Deleuzo-Guattarian parlance, is called either (re)territorialization or deterritorialization depending on which pole it is leaning towards. In order to be faithful to our synergetic reading of Butler and Deleuze&Guattari, we would claim that three qualitatively distinct heterogeneous logics that form an assemblage have been identified: signification and it’s (quasi-)transcendentality, matter and its immanence, and affect-becoming as the relational force between the former.

contend that matter cannot be represented through a signifier. For a further discussion on how non-representational forms (of being) can come to be immanently expressed in Deleuzean thought look at Kerslake (2007, 4).

2.4 Matter, affect-becoming and performativity

If we have established that Butler's performativity can be re-read as a historically specific formalization of expression, i.e., Deleuzo-Guattarian collective assemblages of enunciation, and as such included in a theoretical assemblage we have been building, we have to address the notable difference the two theoretical approaches hold in regards to conceptualizing matter(-in-itself) and its relationship to discourse/signification. As we have argued in the previous section, the assemblage is composed out of three distinct, heterogeneous logics in which Butler's performativity attains the function of a quasi-transcendental logic of signification.

From this perspective Butler's eclectic reading of Derrida's reiteration together with Foucault's notion of regulatory power that compose her own discursive notion of performativity as citationality (signification) produces a distinct view on materialization (*cf.* Butler 1993; *cf.* Barad 2003, 821-2). In regard to Butler's theory, Jarred (2008, 44) stresses that we can only know a body through signification as a system of representation and its norms that constitute the body. In comparison, we have indicated how Deleuze and Guattari, in their analysis of the negative function of order-words, similarly show how effects of order-words are not limited to linguistic effects, rather, they also effectuate these discursive materializations. If order-words have the capacity to produce both noncorporeal as well as in some sort of way interact with corporeal elements, if order-words possess the force to produce subjects by virtue of coercion and reiteration of a social presupposition, as we have seen in our reading of Deleuze and Guattari, do we not come extremely close to Butler's notion of performativity as citationality? "Performativity is thus not a singular 'act,' for it is always a reiteration of a norm or set of norms, and to the extent that it acquires an act-like status in the present, it conceals or dissimulates the conventions of which it is a repetition" (Butler 1993, 12). Performativity as citationality is a process of sedimentation, or materialization, an incorporeal transformation effectuated by iterable powers of speech-acts (order-words). This performative force of ordering differentiations of non-representable material life attains a certain (quasi)-transcendental quality apropos matter-in-itself in Butler's thought.

The structural operative principle of the functioning of Butler's performativity, displaced to the socio-political sphere of gender, sex, and sexuality, is the fact that the possibility of botching a stable identity position makes it authentic in the first place. Not only does this amount to a critique of a conscious master subject, rendering the operations of power more complex (having

both prohibitive and generative functions) but, we would argue, it also points towards the possibility of contemplating an underlying (reiterative) vitalist⁶ understanding of continuous variations (lines of flight, productive difference) that power appropriates. In this section of the thesis, we will explore Kirby's new materialist intervention into Butler's thought in order to provide insights into a Deleuzo-Guattarian inspired becoming of matter-in-itself. We will see how Butler's quasi-transcendental performativity can be thought alongside a naturalistic, immanent reading of nature that attains its own capacity to write and how oscillations between these two perspectives compose an assembled reading of Deleuze&Guattari and Butler; a reading that carries important political consequences.

2.4.1 Butler's (quasi-)transcendental materializations meet Kirby's new materialism

Of course, it would not be appropriate to think of the above mentioned lines of flight as origin (the least in Deleuzo-Guattarian thought) in a conventional meaning of that word; however, it does stimulate us to think of nature as a process of differentiation as well, where nature (matter) would become the constitutive outside of Butler's quasi-transcendental thought. In this case, is it possible to think of Deleuzo-Guattarian lines of flight as a complementary addition to Butler's analysis of the cultural, where Butler's culture can be inscribed within Deleuzo-Guattarian thought enriching it with its emphasis on negatively charged considerations and limitations imposed on the processes of continuous variations by molar power structures (as a quasi-transcendental system of cultural signification)?

If the regulatory norm functioning within Butler's performativity as citationality is at once generative and prohibitive, Deleuze and Guattari's order-words could be labelled as at once generative and transformative. But Deleuze and Guattari add two more components to regimes of signs, the diagrammatic and machinic. This means that regimes of signs as semiotic machines (as

⁶ A consideration of vitalism within performativity is touched upon by Butler in the last chapter, called *Critically Queer*, of *Bodies that Matter* (Butler 1993, 223-4). Butler counters the vitalist impulse in Nietzsche and Foucault that stresses the value of "the 'ever new' possibilities of resignification" (ibid, 224) extrapolated from the pure contingency of historically conditioned terms within sign-chains. Butler's focus, in contrast, lies in emphasizing the continuity of sedimented citational chains of discourses that constrain the possibilities of resignification. In spite of this divergence in emphasis, our reading will tend to push Butler's rationale into the direction of contemplating the vitality of sign-chains in relation to matter. Nevertheless, we will pay great importance to Butler's focus on these limitations of discursive resignification – in the logic of assemblage they will become the (quasi)-transcendental limit of 'untamable,' immanent differentiations of matter.

formalizations of expression), composed of order-words, are exposed to machinic assemblages, assemblages of bodies (as forms of content). Deleuze and Guattari label this diagrammatic governing principle, the structural principle that puts “forms of presupposition, forms of expression or regimes of signs (as semiotic systems) and forms of content or regimes of bodies (physical systems)” (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 155) into a mutually constitutive relationship as an abstract machine that “operates by *matter*, not by substance; by *function*, not by form” (ibid, 156). The, we could say, molecular, intense abstract machine is a virtuality of variation where substance and form are indistinguishable: “Substance is formed matter, and matter is a substance that is unformed either physically or semiotically” (ibid), where matter-content is only a degree of intensity and function-expression has “only ‘tensors,’ as in a system of mathematical, or musical, writing. Writing now functions on the same level as the real, and the real materiality writes” (ibid.).

In this last statement, *from the perspective of the virtual, intense plane of consistency*, we see an anticipation of or a reverberation of Vicky Kirby’s intervention into Butler’s thought. Kirby (2011), in an attempt to deconstruct Butler’s own position on Nature-matter, provocatively asks: “What do we forfeit if we concede that Nature reads and writes, calculates and copulates with itself in the most perverse, creative, and also destructive ways” (ibid, 95)? In her immanent reading-effort, she effectively shows how there is a prohibition of its own at work in Butler’s oeuvre, namely, how the all-encompassing domain of the discursive, or Culture as Kirby likes to call it, prohibits “the incestuous nature of Nature, its ‘unnatural’ capacity to reproduce itself in myriad manifestations that, in a very real sense, are all true” (ibid, 108). From this point of view, Butler’s discourse creates a constitutive outside of its own. Some kinds of matter (specifically, discursively mediated matter) become intelligible, while others (matter-in-itself) are abjected. In order to ward off misunderstandings, let us emphasize that Butler does not deny the existence of matter-in-itself; rather, she does not grant it “a frame of reference that is properly its own” (Kirby 2011, 74). From Butler’s quasi-transcendental perspective, matter-in-itself can only be known through discursive citational chains, for Butler “representation of matter is something ultimately separable from matter itself” (Kirby 1997, 109).

Kirby’s work pushes Butler’s post-structural logic to its extreme; that is to say, it extends the logic of an open system of Culture to an open system of Nature. In thinking Kirby through Deleuzo-Guattarian terminology, we come to a point where the process of differentiation

(becoming/deterritorialization) is neither in an autonomous domain of Nature or Culture but is a process that runs through both. More accurately, in alliance with Kirby (2011, 110) we claim that, from the perspective of the plane of consistency, Nature is now a system within which Culture is an expression of Nature's own differentiation. Or, better yet, both Nature (machinic assemblages of bodies) and Culture (collective assemblages of enunciation/Butler's performativity) are a part of one system-Assemblage. In a peculiar inversion of Derridean logics, Butler's deconstruction becomes a part of the system, not the system's demystification. Or, to put it in different terms, Butler's performativity is a formalization of nature's form of expression that attains a limited autonomy. It constitutes a quasi-transcendental perspective, an undeniably powerful perspective, explaining how human language comes to order life.

From a different, materialist perspective, Kirby (2007) was extending Derrida's claim 'there is no outside of text' in a manner that does not confound it to human language only: "Derrida does not assume that the human condition is bound within language/discourse nor that this binding mediates the unrepresentable substance of the world" (ibid, 109). Her intervention into Butler's thought is a critique of Butler's 'reductive' reading of the sign as solely a signifier, "the reduction of expression to the signifier" as Deleuze and Guattari (2004, 73) would say. In this sense, Deleuze and Guattari's 'forms of expression' might as well be more compatible with Kirby's interpretation of the 'no outside of text'⁷ than Butler's 'Cultural' readings of Derrida. Such a reading of Derrida, does not grant culture any specificity in regards to writing and differentiating (Kirby 2007, 122). Kirby pushes the envelope even further:

Différance is "becoming itself." It is a writing and reading whose many expressions include the workings of bio-logy in a conversation that reconfigures what and where "intelligibility" is. If the logic of morphing is the complex mutation of limit-ing, then this re-articulation cannot be restricted to the polysemous possibilities and constraints of what is conventionally understood as language (Kirby 2007, 127).

⁷ "But there is another approach to the dictum "there is no outside of text," and it comes in the suggestion that "the worlding of the world" as "writing in the general sense" articulates a differential of space/time, an inseparability between representation and substance that rewrites causality. It is as if the very tissue of substance, the ground of Being, is this mutable intertext—a "writing" that both circumscribes and exceeds the conventional divisions of nature and culture." (Kirby 2007, 61). In short, Kirby rereads Derrida's "no outside of text" as "no outside of Nature."

Kirby's extended reading of Derrida⁸ promises a reinterpretation of the sign, of the interrogation of its atomic constitution that resonates with Deleuze and Guattari's concerns over the sign: "The question here is not whether there are signs on every stratum but whether all signs are signifiers, whether all signs are endowed with signifiante, whether the semiotic of signs is necessarily linked to a semiology of the signifier" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 73). Différance no longer comes from outside of Being, as a quasi-transcendental principle, but becomes the internal principle of ontology itself⁹: "In a very real sense, for Derrida the origin is a relentless reformulation of itself. It is not absent or lost, never to be retrieved: rather, it is the enduring morphogenesis of a worldly expression" (Kirby in Kirby and Wilson 2011, 231). As such, it troubles Butler's insights into conceptualizing difference as lack/absence (signification as a play of substitution unable to mend its originary loss of the materiality of the referent) and instead highlights the productive traits of a relational entanglement of language (in a general sense) and substance.

What Kirby calls language is practically analogous to what Deleuze and Guattari call forms of expression. What Kirby calls substance is practically analogous to what Deleuze and Guattari call forms of content. Nature and Culture, substance and interpretation, "these seemingly separate entities are the *différent* expressions of a unified field, 'a general text.'" (Kirby 2011, 13). Is it not the logic of the Deleuzo-Guattarian assemblage *from the perspective of the plane of immanence* being described here? That is to say, isn't Kirby talking of the logic of the abstract machine where contents and expressions become indistinguishable, imperceptible; where one can truly speak of

⁸ Due to spatial restrictions of our discussion, we are not able to fully elaborate on the underlying problematic of the relationship between Deleuze and Derrida. However, we are distancing ourselves from some of the canonical interpretations of this relationship by engaging with Kirby's materialist appropriations of Derrida that allows us to conceive of this relationship in materialist terms that suit our argument. However, for the sake of academic transparency, it is appropriate to hint how and why we part from at least one view of the burning problematic of this relationship. Daniel Warren Smith (2003, 51) argues that: "For Derrida, *différance* is a relation that transcends ontology, that differs from ontology, that goes beyond or is more 'originary' than the ontological difference between Being and beings. Deleuze's aim, by contrast, is to show that ontology itself is constituted immanently by a principle of difference (and is thus a 'concept', in the Deleuzian sense of the term, and not merely a 'quasi-concept')" and continues "in Deleuze one finds an ontology that seeks to expunge from Being all remnants of transcendence, whereas in Derrida one finds an ontology that seeks to trace the eruptions and movements of transcendence within Being" (ibid, 55). In contrast to this view, we have argued (section 2.2) that we perceive Deleuzo-Guattarian philosophy as, primarily, the relation, the oscillation between the poles of immanence and (quasi-)transcendence.

⁹ In another way Kirby (2011, xi) with a Deleuzo-Guattarian diction asserts: "Life reads and rewrites itself, and this operation of universal genesis and reproduction is even internal to the tiny marks on this page, which are effective transubstantiations."

an ontology of language as “systems of becoming whose relational imbrications do not separate out into ideality plus substance” (Kirby 2011, 9), into distinct forms of content and forms of expression?

2.4.2 Assembling Butler’s performativity and Deleuzo-Guattarian becoming

Nevertheless, our end point of *assembling* Butler and Deleuze&Guattari still has not been reached. For Deleuze and Guattari (2004) two planes are always enveloping assemblages (look at Figure 1) - the diagram (or plane of consistency) and the strata (or plane of organization/development). However, Deleuze and Guattari are careful not to assign any part of this general dualism of the assemblage primacy, keeping them in a perpetual dynamic relation of *intra-acting*, to borrow Karen Barad’s (2003, 815-8) term: “We cannot, however, content ourselves with a dualism between the plane of consistency and its diagrams and abstract machines on the one hand, and the strata and their programs and concrete assemblages on the other” (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 159).

It is precisely in the oscillations of this relationality that we can further our argument. A theory of assemblage we are trying to sketch out, includes a multi-linear logic that travels from the (quasi)-transcendental principle of language as signification (Butler’s performativity) to the becoming of becoming of the plane of consistency (indistinguishable expression-contents, Kirby’s no outside of nature). This conceptualization of assemblage, thus, acknowledges that (Culture’s)/”anthropomorphism’s infinite differentiations/specificities are expressions of one phenomenon, one implicated spacetimemattering” (Kirby 2011, 21) from the perspective of the plane of consistency but, at the same time, takes into account a different perspective. That is, the riddles Butler’s deconstruction of Culture poses, are exactly those that we term (quasi-)transcendental because they are already expressed in a modus of a historically situated (formalized) form of expression, i.e., signification. The reterritorializations, the captures, the impositions of Culture on Nature carry about their own effects that instantaneously effectuate incorporeal transformations.

Butler’s deconstructive performativity is thus a specific critical description (perception) of a system of signification that can be thought of as a formalization of expression, what Deleuze and Guattari’s loosely referred to mixed semiotic of signifiante and subjectification. It is precisely as

such, that discursive performativity can be incorporated in the logic of assemblage. Butler's thought is surely a line of flight, so to speak, a critical tracing of a (quasi-)transcendental system of signification. The lessons she teaches us, especially those of how violent and pervasive (discursive) power effects can be (especially to the social world, but to nature/matter as well), are indispensable. It is from this perspective that we are enacting Sara Ahmed's (2008, 33) call to use or compare Butler's "definition of matter as an effect of a process of materialization, which is a theory of matter as temporal, to other forms of materialization."

The main difference between the two strands of theory is the function of positive differentiation assigned to matter and affects¹⁰. While Deleuze and Guattari grant them a constitutive place in the dynamic, Butler affirms the primacy of the linguistic sign's constitutive role on processes of materialization, but does not speak of the constitutive role of matter itself. She does not grant nature/matter a capacity to write, thus exiling it into the constitutive outside of some sort. Our use of the concept of the constitutive outside, here, is intentional, as it points toward our political impetus that strives to ontologically acknowledge the agentic potential of matter-in-itself, just like Butler's politics of the constitutive outside strive to grant cultural intelligibility/recognition to social objects.

We have seen how Deleuze and Guattari assign the same structure of generative and transformational (that is agentic) function to both matter-affect and discourse. It is an addition to Butlerian citational performativity (as a description and a critique of a quasi-transcendental system of signification) that constitutes both an extension in space (connection to machinic assemblages) and an extension to intensive states (to the molecular plane of immanence). This is what allows

¹⁰ The reason for including affects in the mixed bag of matter and affects is Sedgwick's (2003, 3-9) benevolent departure from Derrida's and Butler's performativities. In our expose of a new materialist critique of discursive models of performativity we aim not to deny or refute the epistemological impetus of deconstructive takes on performativity, but to widen their scope. In this sense, we see an apparent alliance between a Deleuzo-Guattarian approach to thinking about phenomena through the lens of assemblages (inclusive position of latitudes and longitudes, space and time, linguistic and non-linguistic elements) and Sedgwick's turn to affects. Thus, it is not surprising that Sedgwick herself starts referring to Deleuze's philosophy in order to find a *beside* to deconstructive performativities: "Invoking a Deleuzian interest in planar relations, the irreducibly spatial positionality of *beside* also seems to offer some useful resistance to the ease with which *beneath* and *beyond* turn from spatial descriptors into implicit narratives of, respectively, origin and telos" (Sedgwick 2003, 8). Even though affect, in strictly Deleuzo-Guattarian terms, is taken as an intense state that equals becoming (i.e., an oscillation between the plane of immanence and the transcendental plane of organization), we think it attains a fruitful relationship to Sedgwick's/Tomkins' conceptualization of affect.

Deleuze and Guattari to speak of an ontology (of difference), whilst Butler's ontology is always a sedimented effect of discursive performativity.

In this sense Butler's performativity takes on the role of the plane of (quasi)-transcendence in relation to nature/matter. However, it is our wager, our reading of Deleuze and Guattari, that transcendence within immanence does not take on the role of a simple illusion: "An order-word machine overcodes language, a faciality machine and overcodes the body and even the head, a machine of enslavement overcodes or axiomatizes the earth: these are in no way illusions, but real machinic effects" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 565-6). Rather, it is an abstract principle governing the plan(e)s of organization/development, discursive models, strata and is as such analytically and abstractly opposed to the immanent plan(e)s of composition/consistency with its own machinic, molecular, intensive logics. It is the concept of assemblage that opens up towards both plan(e)s; on one side (the reterritorialized side of collective assemblages of enunciation and machinic assemblages) it touches the stratified transcendental plan(e)s of organization/development while it extends towards the (immanent, intensive, deterritorialized flows of particle-signs) plan(e)s of consistency, on the other side. The assemblage, in this sense, is the constant dynamic movement between transcendental discursive models (with their logics of subjectivation, molar identities, histories and organisms) and immanent physical models (with their haecceities, molecular individuations, and pre-individual affects).

We could say, then, Butler's deconstructive performativity with its quasi-transcendental principle of citationality inscribed in signification complements and adds to Deleuze and Guattari's search for a necessary minimum of strata. This principle is, far from being an illusion, the negative condition of thought/social life. In this sense, Butler's discursive materializations present the limits of Deleuzo-Guattarian affirmative becoming of matter and affects.

In short, our naturalistic interventions into Butler's deconstructive performativity were not attempting to deny its rudimentary postulates; rather, they provide a different perspective to contemplating nature as a process of differentiation itself. From this new materialist perspective, discourses do not work by themselves, rather, they are co-implicated with matter/bodies and affect-becomings. Discourses appear as formalizations of nature's own differentiations; however, formalizations that attain a certain autonomy, they construct their own plane of organization. This perspective allowed Deleuze and Guattari to explore a form of singular individuation called

haecceity that in their view comes to be over-coded by apparatuses of capture. This metaphor of capture is telling from a political perspective we are attempting to provide in this analysis. It points towards a Deleuzo-Guattarian emphasis on the primacy of differentiation that is captured by transcendent structures (state apparatus, capitalism, discourses/singification, etc.). Surely enough, however, it is clear that our use of Butler's theory has situated these 'untamable and singular' differentiations and indicated how discourses exert their own performative effectuations.

It has become apparent to us how Deleuze and Guattari already accounted, although to a limited extent, for the negatively charged discursive impositions that delimit embodied and situated forms of agency. Our reading of Deleuze and Guattari has extrapolated the possibility to contemplate the oscillations of assemblages between the two abstract poles. From this perspective Hickey-Moodey and Rasmussen's (2009, 42) assessment that Deleuzo-Guattarian (queer) theorizing would be better off if it did not do away with "located and embodied notions of agency developed by Judith Butler" resonates with our argument. Even more, we were trying to establish that these performative limitations were partly accounted for in Deleuzo-Guattarian theorizing but can be made fully explicit through a Butlerian reading. In this vein,

Butler is becoming deleuzoguattarian. Akin to her own notion of what we might call a potentially subversive disloyal repetition, becoming isn't mimetic. She is not "being," or reproducing, or regurgitating Deleuze and Guattari, but allying with them with a difference. Deleuze and Guattari are part of Butler's own queer assemblage, her war machine and line of flight (Cohen and Ramlow 2006).

To this insightful observation, we might add that in our reading Butler is also becoming part of the Deleuzo-Guattarian assemblage, their resignification. It is necessary to think of an assemblage as opening up to both the transcendental plan(e) as well as the plan(e) of immanence, to think of their mutual preconditioning, the oscillations from one end to the other; thinking both in terms of evolution (of subjects and discourses) and involution (of matter and affects). Butler's thought attains great importance in our assemblage theory as it provides insights into embodied and situated forms of agency, forms of subjection, the negative aspects of conflicts between political subjectivities (melancholia, mourning, guilt, terror), thus enriching, we are tempted to say resignifying, what has, by some, been perceived, also by Butler herself, as an almost: "manic defense against negativity" (Butler 2004, 198) in Deleuzean thought.

3. From a critique of the psychoanalytical Real to assemblage as a confluence of performative political signifiers and a politics of becoming

In the last part of the thesis we will extricate the political consequences of assembling Butlerian and Deleuzo-Guattarian thought. We will start by engaging with Butler's conversations with Žižek and Laclau (and Mouffe) that took place in order to draft a theoretical alliance for a project of radical democracy. Our engagement with this debate will extricate Butler's position on the notion of the Lacanian Real and compare it to Deleuze and Guattari's real. While we will show that both theories declare the Lacanian Real, as an ahistorical lack, a discursive effect, they have very different reasons for doing so. The two critiques of the Real carry with themselves two distinct outlooks on the political potentiality of disidentification. In order to continue our goal of creating a queer partnership for a politics of disidentification we will assemble Butler's politics of performative resignification (disidentification from dominant discursive interpellations) and Deleuzo-Guattarian politics of becoming (affirming desubjectivized proliferation of material-affects).

3.1 Butler's hegemonic alliances

Firstly, let us examine how Butler, in *Bodies that Matter* (1993), criticizes the ahistorical universality of the Real, of negativity, of lack in Žižekian thought, a gesture that is so extremely close to Deleuze and Guattari's dissatisfaction with lack in psychoanalytic theory, pronounced in *Anti-Oedipus* (2009), that it cannot be counted as mere coincidence. We will try to illuminate how Butler's retheorization of Žižek's appropriation of the Real as the prediscursive outside to symbolization, or the discursive, into her concept of the constitutive outside that is immanent to specific discursive regimes, echoes Deleuze and Guattari's critique of Oedipal psychoanalysis.

Succinctly put, Butler's dissatisfaction with Žižek's appropriation of the Lacanian Real is based on her assessment that the Real, advocated for in Žižek's *Sublime Object of Ideology*, rests on foundational grounds, as it invokes a founding prohibition that takes the name of lack and of negativity or, more precisely, contingency: "The real constitutes the contingency or lack in any discursive formation" (Butler 1993, 192). Contingency, as the traumatic outside, becomes the backbone of the theory of (radically democratic) hegemony developed by Laclau and Mouffe

(1992) for it marks a “failure of complete determination” (Butler 1993, 192) and constantly destabilizes the ideological field rendering it instable and thus open to intervention.

She reads Zizek’s take on the Real “as the unsymbolizable threat of castration, an originary trauma motivating the very symbolization by which it is incessantly covered over” (ibid, 195) that is being posited as external to any and all discourses. Zizek’s Real, in Butler’s view, takes recourse to a prediscursive law that posits itself as radically external to the symbolic, i.e. as the ahistorical law that can never be subjected to the logic of contingency that it itself imposes on the symbolic. Butler’s critique of the psychoanalytical concept of lack hinges upon the discursive historical critique of Zizek’s and Laclau’s absolute distinction of the traumatic kernel (as the Real) and the historical (as differences between specific social formations).

It is clear what Butler is attempting to achieve here – a historicization of trauma, to redeploy trauma as an (discursive) effect of a law, thus opening it up to a possibility to interpret it as a (violent) effect of a discourse. In the following pages Butler goes on to reevaluate psychoanalysis’ relation to historical trauma and the limits of symbolization where, opposed to Zizek, she stresses the multiplicity of mechanisms of foreclosure that produce the unsymbolizable (as effect) within specific discursive regimes that are themselves “historical workings of specific modalities of discourse and power” (ibid, 205). Butler resignifies Zizek’s (psychoanalytic) Real as outside proper into the constitutive outside. When the constitutive outside replaces the Real as outside proper, it becomes possible for Butler to ponder over how and why signifiers are excluded from the Symbolic due to contingent relations of power that structure the real, in lieu of accepting its essential and ahistorical character present in Zizek and Laclau and Mouffe (ibid, 204). In this vein, Butler ascertains that she would agree with Laclau and Zizek on the point “that there is an “outside” to the socially intelligible, and that this “outside” will always be that which negatively defines the social” (ibid, 206), but only under the condition that this *constitutive antagonism* is exposed to social and historical scrutiny and is not subjugated to a single law that unifies and “secures the border between the “inside” and the “outside” of symbolic intelligibility” once and for all (ibid).

Before tying Butler’s deconstructive approach to finding the political promise of disidentification based in performative political signifiers, let us see how Deleuze and Guattari tackle a critique of psychoanalysis. It is widely known that Deleuze and Guattari are two of the most prominent adversaries of the psychoanalytical notion of lack. In *Anti-Oedipus*, Deleuze and

Guattari (2009, 306-13) effectively show how psychoanalysis' omnipresent distribution of lack into desire is only a structural operation at the level of molar aggregates. They criticize the representational understanding of the unconscious that is imposed by classical psychoanalysis: "Oedipus, castration, the signifier, etc., exist at the crossroads of two operations of capture: one where repressive social production becomes replaced by beliefs, the other where repressed desiring-production finds itself replaced by representation" (Deleuze and Guattari 2009, 313). Lack, and consequently negativity, in Deleuzo-Guattarian thought is not erased or denied, rather, it is displaced into the sphere of representations (of the Imaginary and the Symbolic), into the realm of the molar: "Desire does not express a molar lack within the subject; rather, the molar organization deprives desire of its objective being" (ibid, 27). What this amounts to, in terms that will help us advance our desired point of bringing together the respective thoughts of Butler and Deleuze and Guattari, is a logical conclusion that Deleuze and Guattari do not rid their philosophy of negativity completely as Butler stressed in *Undoing Gender*. As we have noted, time and time again, the negative in Deleuze and Guattari is registered¹¹; it is registered on the molar level, while there seems to be an endorsement of the primacy of the positive/affirmative at the molecular level. On the basis of our discussion, it now seems safe to assume that both Butler and Deleuze and Guattari would view psychoanalytic lack as an effect of the social, that is, of a discursive law constituted within the social.

At this juncture, it is worth asking ourselves the same question that Judith Butler asked about Žižek's work: "Which rendition of the real is appropriated from the Lacanian corpus" (Butler 1993, 195). However, this time around, we are asking this question in relation to Deleuze and Guattari. Considering their ambiguous relationship to Lacan, at once critical and laudatory¹², it seems Deleuze and Guattari do not refer to the Real as a rock, as primary lack as Slavoj Žižek would. On the contrary, Deleuze and Guattari would argue for a positive notion of the Real that in some sense still appears to be tied to Lacanian notion: "The objective being of desire is the Real

¹¹ "That is to say, for Deleuze, desire consists of one's involuntary impulses/affects which have been assembled in a positive relation to (i.e., positively invested in) the social formation. According to Deleuze, then, one's desires are not her own, but are impersonal, unqualified forces of the social formation. Taken in this way, desire, affect and so on, can never be held in relation to lack. This formation thus asserts that the piece's asymmetries cannot denote lack, as some art critics have maintained; for Deleuze, lack only appears at the level of personalized interest because the social formation, in which one has already (involuntarily) invested one's desire, has produced that lack" (Rodríguez 2012).

¹² For analyses of this relationship between Lacan and Deleuze and Guattari see Smith (2004) and Cadwell (2009).

in and of itself” (Deleuze and Guattari 2009, 27). A few lines below they make an additional statement about the real, this time around, a non-capitalized real: "The real is not impossible; on the contrary, within the real everything is possible, everything becomes possible " (Deleuze and Guattari 2009, 27). This machinic real of desire presents Deleuze and Guattari’s shift to contemplating immanent, machinic ontology that confronts both structuralisms and Foucault’s dispositive of biopower (with its conceptualization of resistance)¹³, on the one hand, and transcendental ontologies, on the other.

Deleuze and Guattari’s real is hinting at something different from both Lacan’s Symbolic and Butler’s social/discursive, something that formalizes in a manner distinct to signification. It is the immanent, machinic real of materiality (of affect); the real of matter to which Butler’s quasi-transcendental can only respond to through a discursive mediation. This Deleuzo-Guattarian real is not representable, yet it intra-acts with the discursive field of enunciation. It becomes the basis for their contemplation of haecceity, of virtual singularity, which “is a mode of individuation very different from that of a person, subject, thing, or substance” (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 287), an individuation distinct from that of the Foucauldian inspired assujetissement that Butler discusses in her political work (discussed in section 2.2).

3.2 Political implications of Butler’s performativity

Butler’s theoretical endeavor is bound to her dedication to the theory of performativity. As has been shown above, Butler finds a strong alliance with Žižek and Laclau and Mouffe in asserting that every discourse functions through exclusion:

“the field of differential relations from which any and all particular identities emerge must be limitless. Moreover, the ‘incompleteness’ of each and every identity is a direct result of its differential emergence: no particular identity can emerge without presuming and enacting the exclusion of others, and this constitutive exclusion or antagonism is the shared and equal condition of all identity-constitution” (Butler in Butler et al. 2000, 31).

¹³ For a discussion of these two points see Alliez (2004).

However, her theory of performativity does not rely solely on this negative aspect. For its Foucauldian origins it also ascribes discourses a generative role. Discursive performativity has the power to produce what counts as ‘being’ both through negative exclusion and a more positive generative reiteration (Butler 1993, 188). Butler’s theory spells out a complex understanding of how identification hinges on the discursive law that enables some specific identifications and forecloses others. The law, governed by a logic of an exclusionary matrix, produces its constitutive outside populated by objects, i.e. those people whose identifications do not fall under the banner of social intelligibility, consequently denied the status of a subject. In spite of the emphasized situated and embodied nature of linguistic agency that can occur within the framework of performativity, she also locates a certain vitality within the realm of bodies that are constructed as unintelligible: “Social transformation occurs not merely by rallying mass numbers in favor of a cause, but precisely through the ways in which daily social relations are rearticulated, and new conceptual horizons opened up by anomalous or subversive practices” (Butler in Butler et al. 2000, 14).

These social practices exceeding identity categories also point towards the impossibility of fullness of identity categories and signifiers denoting them. Categories and their concomitant signifiers as non-referential terms (the infamous examples of ‘women’ and ‘queer’) can never fully live up to the descriptive ideal, thus prompting “factionalized disputes over self-definition” (Butler 1993, 221). However, a promise of collective disidentification for Butler lies where the logics of identity politics, relying solely on the force of legal right’s discourses (and concomitant search for legal recognition), fail:

Factionalization, understood as a process whereby one identity excludes another in order to fortify its own unity and coherence, makes the mistake of locating the problem of difference as that which emerges between one identity and another; but difference is the condition of possibility of identity or, rather, its constitutive limit: what makes its articulation possible is at the same time what makes any final or closed articulation possible (Butler 1998, 37).

Butler’s endorsement of hegemony does not rely on a unification of dispersed (leftist) social movements as a synthetic gesture of arranging conflicts; rather, it accentuates the productive traits of conflicts. That is to say, various social groups should articulate their identities and goals

against one another without becoming identical. In this sense, Butler's promise of a radically democratic project, on a structural basis, hinges on employing political signifiers functioning in terms of performativity as citationality. For, if subjects are inaugurated by signifiers as discursive laws/norms/customs, these signifiers have to function in a radically different manner than they do today are there different kinds of 'subjects' to be effectuated. Performative political signifiers involve a double movement "to invoke the category and, hence, provisionally to institute an identity and at the same time to open the category as a site of permanent political contest" (Butler 1993, 222). In other words, the political promise of the performative is "an exercise of articulation that brings an open-ended reality into existence" (Butler in Butler and Athanasiou 2013, 130).

This is not to say Butler's political project operates only through a creation of performative signifiers, as it also advocates for a whole set of performative political practices. And it is important to note, that if there is space and time for a possibility to perform these 'actions' disruptively, even if always through and against (violent) recitations of the law/norm, these political performances are always unprefigurable, always exposed to recitations, permanently rendered as perilous political promises. In short, what seems to be at stake here is the notion of becoming: "As a consequence of being in the mode of becoming, and in always living with the constitutive possibility of becoming otherwise, the body is that which can occupy the norm in myriad ways, exceed the norm, and expose realities to which we thought we were confined as open to transformation" (Butler 2004, 217). One is constantly exposed to the power-knowledge nexus of (discursive) norms that circumnavigate the realm of cultural intelligibility but it is through the differing repetition of these norms that they can be altered. In Butler's Deleuzo-Guattarian inspired words: "One surely cites norms that already exist, but these norms can be significantly deterritorialized through the citation" (ibid, 218).

The political trajectory of Butler's thought can be spelled out without any reserve or hesitation. Namely, it is a normativity that does not go by the name of normalization, but by way of finding possibilities of living (in recognition) within the (quasi)-transcendental plane of organization. We have already shown (section 2.1) the salient political gestures undertaken with the notion of the constitutive outside – once objects are understood to have a constitutive role in the constitution of subjects, once their role is resignified from a function of unintelligibility to a function of marginalization, the political impetus of Butler's thought is to pinpoint possibilities of

articulating/enacting culturally recognizable forms of viable lives. One of the most prominent actions that prompts these possibilities are processes of disidentification from/deterritorializations of regulatory norms; disidentifications that are, in Butler's theorizing, unleashed by a negative injury or loss pointing towards the impossibility of full recognition: "It may be that the affirmation of that slippage, that failure of identification is itself the point of departure for a more democratizing affirmation of internal difference" (Butler 1993, 219).

Can we think of this political promise of disidentification, this 'affirmation of internal difference,' as an affirmation of the bodily affect/flesh, in terms of affirming non-human properties of human beings? Can we think of it (this molecular *it*, in Deleuzo-Guattarian parlance, is the body without organs – BwO – the body of desire) as a remainder after we undo the (quasi)-transcendental interpretation, signification, subjectification? We will not ask if Butler's undoings as disidentifications, as (in)felicitous failures of identification/signification, *can* be assembled with Deleuzo-Guattarian asignifying and asubjective affects of the BwO; rather, it is time to ask how they are assembled?

3.3 Assemblage as the political confluence of Butler and Deleuze and Guattari

In order to situate our queer political partnership between Butler and Deleuze & Guattari let us make use of a contemporary adaptation of assemblage theory. Jasbir Puar (2013, 41-2), draws on a division of contemporary queer theory into deconstructive approaches and 'affective' approaches that focus on sexuality-as-assemblage. In order to keep up with our synergetic and eclectic reading of Butler and Deleuze&Guattari, becoming, at the level of theoretical abstraction, is ultimately a relationality between the negative, endless deferral of meaning in signification (but we have seen, with Kirby, that Nature also reads and writes) and a positive proliferation of differentiating matter (but we have seen, with Butler that signification imposes its own quasi-transcendental logic on matter).

The conceptual structure of an assemblage does not prohibit performativity, rather performativity is enfolded within an assemblage (see section 2.4). This is why we have to slightly depart from Puar's (2013) *articulation* of assemblage theory. Puar ascribes to a separation of queer deconstructive approaches that critically intervene into discursively constructed (sexual) identities, on the one hand, and a strand of queer theory that contemplates "sexuality as assemblage and not

identity” (ibid, 42), on the other. In the latter case, Puar’s use of assemblage seems to be pointing towards the espousal of perceiving sexuality from the perspective of the immanent plane of consistency where identity becomes imperceptible. At other times, however, Puar seems to be keenly aware of a need of critical thought to assemble both deconstructive as well as affective perspectives: “If signification and representation (what things mean) are no longer the only primary realm of the political, then bodily processes (how things feel) must be irreducibly central to any notion of the political” (Puar 2012a, 151). It is interesting to see what sort of understanding of assemblage is taken up by Jasbir Puar in her *I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess* (2012b) where she revisits her ‘reductionist’ reading of assemblage in *Terrorist Assemblages* (2005). There she delimits the notion of assemblage solely to (bodily, affective) molecular processes that destabilize fixed identity position (as an analytic prerogative of intersectionality). Puar (2012b), in revisiting the latter stance, explains assemblages in terms of connections: “The priority is neither to the state of affairs (essence) nor to statement (enunciation) but rather to connection.” Puar refuses to fuse intersectionality *into* an assemblage, for she firmly believes that assemblages ultimately have to do with bodies as “unstable assemblages that cannot be seamlessly disaggregated into identity formations” (ibid). For Puar intersectionality and assemblage are two distinct analytical principles, where the first has to do with identity positions and the second with “the non-representational referent of matter-in-itself” (ibid). Puar still seems to be resorting to a resistance to the notion of identity and the politics of recognition tied to it. In her recent work, *Homonationalism as Assemblage: Viral Travels, Affective Sexualities* (2013), she seems to insist that assemblages (as unstable variable bodily particles) can circumnavigate identity, because identity is opposed to assemblages’ mode of being as becoming.

Nevertheless, in order to buttress our view on assemblage theory, we have to be attentive to Puar’s hesitation to fully acknowledge the political potential of deconstruction to think (old and new) normativities as open-ended identities (categories) that carry their own weight, not as epistemological illusions but as signifiers (themselves imbued with affective desires) that produce individuals (and reality as such). Consequently, we have added to Puar’s assemblage (see Figure 2) a deconstructive trait, which we deem necessarily enfolded in it if it is to become a terrain on which a political promise of disidentification can be thought.

Puar's sexuality-as-assemblage (as part of an assemblage of biopolitical control!) & homonationalism-as-assemblage:

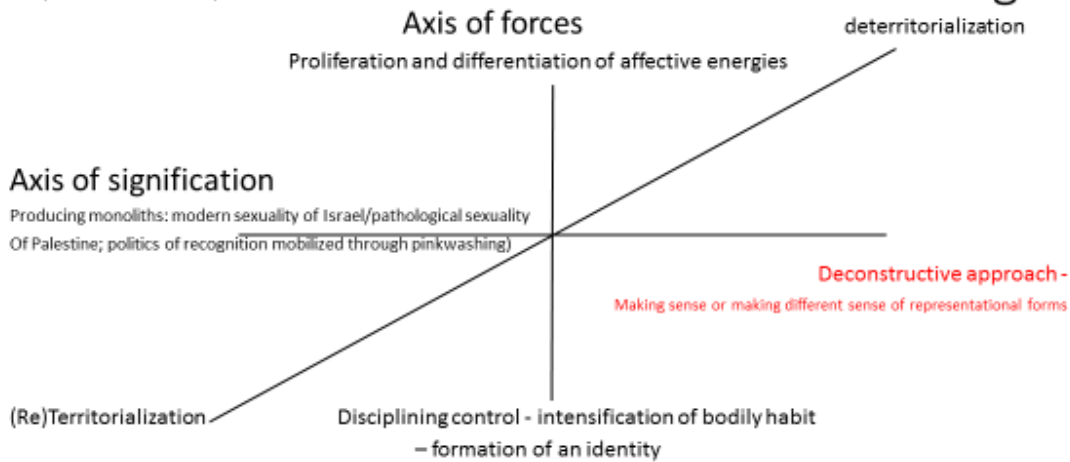


Figure 2: Puar's sexuality-as-assemblage & homonationalism-as-assemblage

In our reading of assemblage theory we pay special attention to the transformative oscillations between immanent multiplicities of affirmative becomings and the (quasi-)transcendental apparatuses of capture of signification. The conceptualization of assemblage, that we have been drafting, allows for a possibility of including the logic of deconstructive performativity, adding to it concomitant, but qualitatively distinct, logics of affect and matter – the intense becoming of disidentification. Butler's deconstructive performativity is a thorough immanent critical approach to the binary systems of signification that advocates for a proliferation of discursive categories that destabilize the political impositions of discursive binaries. These proliferations, however, in Butler's theoretical approach, can only spring up as reiterations of primary discursive subjectifications. In short, her critical approach exposes the limits of the logic of signification, representation, and identity while, at the same time, also becomes the limit of the non-representable, intense, positive proliferation of pre-individual matter-affects.

Butler's performativity takes discourses and their subjectifying effects as the primary vantage point for a political analysis, while Deleuze and Guattari's point of departure are the immanent machinic differentiations of matter-affects. Deleuze and Guattari do not do away with the discursive force of negativity present in subjectivation as a form of individuation. Rather, their

thought complements this negativity by adding different forms/logics of individuation that are characterized by an accentuation of a certain positivity; that is to say, they introduce different ways of thinking of individuation that is not purely discursive. To use Sedgwick's (*cf.* 2003, 8) term, it adds a *beside* in lieu of a teleological beyond and original beneath. Deleuze and Guattari present another form of individuation-haecceity that is distinct from subjectivation but always exposed to the risks of *capture* of the former. These singular, machinic individuations, sometimes also referred to as lines of flight, are contrasted to Foucault's resistance: "If dispositifs of power are in some way constitutive, there can only be phenomena of 'resistance' against them" (Deleuze 1997). But these singular lines of flight are not reliant on discursive subjectifications, rather, they hold a certain primacy in relation to them. Assembling these two perceptions of individuations demands a situated form of a dual movement of disidentification.

In political terms, a Deleuzo-Guattarian position would advocate for a molecular *revolution* of becoming, which we can imagine taking place (mainly) outside of institutional political arrangements (however, affecting them nevertheless and vice versa) as a proliferation of (ontologically acknowledged) pre-individual proliferations. On the other hand, a Butlerian politics would entail a *subversion of/resistance to* social norms/conventions; an open ended struggle on the macro-level of political analysis (hegemony), a struggle taking place in the sphere of creating and upholding unprefigurable social meanings, struggling over/for cultural recognition of subjects/objects. Assembling these two political positions would demand an articulation that would call for experimentally discovering what bodies and languages can *do*, what they can *do differently*, and what they can do differently in a *conflictual productive alliance*.

Finally, we are arriving at the point when we are equipped to understand the assembled political consequences of Butler, on the one hand, and Deleuze and Guattari, on the other. For Deleuze and Guattari a political project would follow some sort of a line of escape, a becoming, a deterritorialization, an affirmation of a non-human/pre-individual variability, while for Butler it would mean a resignification of rigid political signifiers that are the precondition of effecting intelligible subjects. In both cases, we can identify an impetus to disidentify; for Deleuze and Guattari it means an affirmation of pre-individual variability of matter-affects, whereas for Butler it means a disidentification from discursively imposed categorizations and orderings that delimit (culturally) intelligible possibilities of life:

Do not demand of politics that it restore the "rights" of the individual, as philosophy has defined them. The individual is the product of power. What is needed is to 'de-individualize' by means of multiplication and displacement, diverse combinations. The group must not be the organic bond uniting hierarchized individuals, but a constant generator of de-individualization (Foucault in Deleuze and Guattari 2009, xiv).

If the individual is indeed the product of power, Butler's analyses of the persistent force of discursive subjectifications are not to be jettisoned hastily. Her probing of the structural impossibilities of the totality of discourse give way to rediscovering linguistic agency in the temporal discontinuities of discursive performative enactments (*cf.* Sedgwick 2003). Nevertheless, Deleuzo-Guattarian becomings add a layer of intensive texture rendering discursive deconstruction insufficient to account for pre-individual matter-affects without reducing them to the quasi-transcendental principal of signification/representation. Disidentification, a politically normative impulse of critical theory, does not run through discursive elements only, rather, it takes on a non-human guise as well. The politics of becoming complement deconstructive critiques of subjections and push the logic of disidentification into the realm of affects and matter. In a sense, the politics of becoming disidentifies from the confines of Culture, exposing matter-in-itself as an agent itself. The politics of becoming desubjectifies the discursively mediated, representable organism, it desubjectifies desire. It strives to free desire of the molar (symbolic/social/humanist) lack imposed on it, thus enabling the possibility to enact and think of possibilities that are not yet intelligible, that might not even be representable.

Our reading of assemblage does not rely on exclusivity, on a separation of identity and affects/matter, of a prioritization of either linguistic deferral/discursive foreclosures or proliferating variations as the uncontested field of affirmation/positivity. This is the political message of assembling Butler and Deleuze&Guattari. Social and political fights and struggles are not only representable, they exceed representation and discourse, but remain in constant contact with it. The political project of disidentification that an assembled reading of Butler and Deleuze&Guattari draws out is queer – relationally queer, queer in its constantly changing perspective. It relies on queerness in more than one sense, because queer is, to a certain extent, non-representable (affective) itself but it, nevertheless, passes through regimes of representability (identity). From one perspective, Butler's *queer* as a political signifier seems to hint at what we

are looking for. Butler's (2001) queer: "is an argument against lesbian specificity: that if I am a lesbian I have to desire in a certain way. Or if I am a gay I have to desire in a certain way. Queer is an argument against certain normativity, what a proper lesbian or gay identity is."

If this is a glimpse of queerness that can be termed as an embodied and situated disidentification in a political signifier, can we perceive queer from a different perspective, from a perspective of an ontological beside? Practices of *situated* disidentifications that build through and with this open signifier promise to work out a less rigidly formalized form of expression in an open-ended signifier, a signifier *always yet* to be filled with culturally recognizable content. Our benevolent critique of deconstructive performativity takes the latter political impetus as only one manner in which individuation (as subjectification) takes place, i.e. through the force of citational chains of a discourse. However, with the aid of Deleuze and Guattari we have seen how affects and matter also become co-actors of individuation that have a different logic to that of textual deconstruction. The political consequences of these material interventions is a production of analytic models of non-linear, non-binary modes of thinking that point toward a need for political involvement not only in the sphere of discursive structures of political signifiers, but also in the sphere of lived experiences, of relational affectivities, of interacting (parts of) bodies. The multi-layered logics of assemblages do not deny that the latter become discursively mediated, on the contrary, assemblages try to conceive of these interrelated phenomena in a highly complex manner, exposing the paradoxes, dangers, and potentialities affects, matter and signs form together.

Queer, in this sense, does not circumnavigate identity, it passes through it and composes its multiplicitous intertwined material and discursive traits. Even when, and if, struggles become affective/molecular we must acknowledge that they are translated into formalized language (signification) and thus exposed to and captured by its dominant binary logic that has been thoroughly investigated and denaturalized by deconstruction. The non-representable itself is *becoming* a part of signification, it is enfolded in signification as much as signification is enfolded in the non-representable. It is in this sense that we say Butler is becoming Deleuzo-Guattarian and Deleuze and Guattari are becoming Butlerian. A notion of performativity is enfolded in any and all assemblages insofar as one of their axes is composed of collective assemblages of enunciation that have crystalized/formalized as a historically specific hegemonic account of signification.

This queer relationality of disidentification could represent the non-normalizing normative impulse to open up ways of thinking about a world where many worlds are possible, a type of not-purely-human sociality that does not completely rely on subverting identity and concomitant search for political recognition but, adds to it the politics of becoming; a politics of desubjectivized (pre-individual) singularities and disidentifications (from discursive subjectifications), an always open project that seeks ontological acknowledgment *beside* cultural recognition. Ontological acknowledgment does not grant rights, rather it grants the possibility to conceive of changing forms of being (dynamic affective traits, material conditions, and queer embodiments) that exceed the confines of formalized signification/identity. Ontological acknowledgment grants the possibility of co-evolution/co-involution amongst different forms of O/others that do not need to contemplate affect/matter as meaningful but, rather, as affirming difference, as a functioning of the production of subjectivity through experimental transformations of situated social practices and the erection of their performative political signifiers. It is precisely when something is acknowledged in its difference (how does it work) and not recognized in its normalizing-normative claims (what does it mean) that it becomes imperceptible. This claim to imperceptibility, in turn, would surely go against the grain of what has traditionally been (that is, in a strictly deconstructive manner) conceived of as queer politics.

But neither is the point to celebrate unintelligibility as its own goal. The point, rather, is to move forward, awkwardly with others, in a movement that demands both courage and critical practices, a form of relating to norms and to others that does not ‘settle’ into a new regime. I take this to be a way of opening to new modes of sociality and freedom. This is not to say that we do not require recognition; rather, it is to say that recognition is always partial, and that our capacity to practice freedom critically depends on that very partiality (Butler in Butler and Athanasiou 2013, 68).

If cultural recognition is indeed always partial, this partiality can be tied to a change of perspective. Ontological acknowledgment, from this other perspective, is not solely tied to the human world; rather, it is extended to nature/matter as well. Queer spatio-temporality, the processes of disidentification/desubjectivization, the concept of difference-in-itself are all shared points of departure with new materialism and its understanding of nature as a process of differentiation. If nature is the process of differentiation and if queer (perversion, multiplicity, contradiction) is its

corollary, agency (as a capacity to make an impact) is everywhere, normalization and value attributions can only be contemplated as an effect of the (socio-political) capture of difference. But this seemingly unavoidable ordering of difference, translated into signification with its quasi-transcendental principle brings about its own effects that compose lived reality as such. This relational queerness thus performs delirium and neither movement, that of immanent (material) differentiation nor of (quasi-)transcendental discursive capture, can be granted primacy; rather the oscillation between these two perspectives (two forms of disidentification) bring about a political promise of disidentified imperceptibility.

The promise of political disidentification is indeed a promise of a new politics, albeit a fragile one considering the (re)territorializing forces of *disciplining controls* exerted upon what Puar (2013) calls affective energies (as particles that can be ontologically acknowledged): “Affect is therefore a site of bodily creative discombobulation and resistance but one that is also offered up for increasing monitoring and modulation” (Puar 2009, 161). It is precisely because of these recuperative forces of (discursive) power exerted over processes of becoming that we feel an obligation not to jettison deconstructive queer approaches, but to include and embrace them, for politics of becoming themselves *become* stratified and codified into discourse. The political promise of situated disidentification is thus both a disidentification on a molar (identity categories one is interpellated into) and molecular level (of pre-individual affects and differentiating matter). Or, better yet, disidentification is becoming, a line of flight oscillating between the molar and the deconstruction of its plane of organization and the molecular with its intense state of producing its plane of immanence. Hence, assembling Butler and Deleuze&Guattari is a political operationalization of the dual movement of disidentification. A politics of disidentification provides incentive to build stable political institutions that allow for variation, yet are themselves (open-ended) norms and laws, on the one hand, and effectuate relational, experimental, and responsive queer political ethics that does not operate only in terms of (partial) cultural recognition but also in terms of (partial) ontological acknowledgement.

Deleuzo-Guattarian affective desires are always assembled, they invest and transform assemblages, and animate signifiers. However, when paired with discursive performativity that is known for the unpredictability of its effects (pertaining to the politics of naming, categorization, and identification) they seem to be put within an assemblage that can become a fruitful source of

experimental subjectivity production. A subjectivity production based both in academia and social practice without catapulting itself out of the field of structural and structured (in a sense of producing constants) hegemonic relations of power; rather, it invests them, building and opening the horizons of producing political alternatives. This is not to say subjectivity production is solely based on disidentifying from fixed concepts of identity or blindly embracing pre-individual affects; rather, it draws up new queer architectures of political structures that rely on producing their own constants; however, constants that are prefigured as contestable and non-totalizable. The assembled linking of Butlerian performativity and Deleuzo-Guattarian affective desire amounts to a queer partnership of discursive performativity and (new) materialism, of academic and activist knowledge production, of analysis and politics, of identity and affective desire, of micro and micro politics, of revolution and subversion, of negativity and positivity, of transcendence and immanence – of a curiously queer political project with curiously unpredictable outcomes.

4. Disidentified conclusions

Our working thesis has come to a conclusion that there is something queer in Deleuzo-Guattarian desire and something that is Deleuzo-Guattarian in performativity that enables both camps of critical post-structuralisms to function together in order to produce synergies in search of a politics that sees difference in affirmative terms, yet also conceives of a negativity that is constitutive of (molar) identity (preventing it to be determined for an indeterminate time period), which is the point that enables the possibility of a radical democracy. Both approaches search for paths of creating the new (reiteration of the norm, proliferation of preindividual affects) and this creation of the new is tied to a political impetus of a less violent future.

In drafting an assembled reading between Butler and Deleuze&Guattari, we have focused on providing insights into the transformative exploration of disidentification. Each theoretical approach attained their own place in the assemblage having the function of delimiting the scope of the other. Firstly, Butler's quasi-transcendental discursive performativity indicated the point where Deleuzo-Guattarian becoming exhausted itself and was 'captured' and transformed by discursive regimes. And, secondly, Deleuzo-Guattarian affirmative, productive difference opened Butlerian performativity to a material and affective beside.

In the process of reading Butler and Deleuze&Guattari together we have resorted to assemblage theory. This rich conceptual apparatus not only accounts for discourses and matter, but also builds upon an espousal of a proliferation of discourses within it. Not only one form of subjectivation, not only two sexes, not only one political goal. Assemblages bring together various, contradictory forms of individuation (subjectivation, subjectification, becoming), a number of sexes (be them molar or molecular), a plurality of political goals. One could say, an assemblage can even become a nesting ground of multiple contesting discourses, their analytics and their pragmatics. Not only how does it work, but what does it mean as well, where both endeavors are bound to fail since they present each other's limit, each other's translation into a different perspective/perception. The sole ability to read these distinct lines of thought together inspires hope for opening up new possibilities of thinking and acting. We have tried to show how an inclusive reading of Butler and Deleuze&Guattari attempts to explain the force of situated disidentification in terms of a desire to politically produce future forms of sociability that do not

rely on exclusivity, but rather on a production of subjectivity that fosters the complex and sometimes paradoxical intersections of difference, desire and identity.

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