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**A THOUSAND TINY INTERSECTIONS: LINGUISTICISM, FEMINISM, RACISM
AND DELEUZIAN BECOMINGS**

RICK DOLPHIJN AND IRIS VAN DER TUIN

Abstract

Inspired by Deleuze’s becoming-woman, new feminist materialists like Rosi Braidotti have offered a way of reading the sexed body that moves away from the linguistic, Lacanian one offered by Judith Butler. By proposing a monism in which the mind is an idea of the body whereas the body is the object of the mind, as Spinoza put it, they study what Grosz calls the “functioning of differential forces” as they produce mind and body in their envelopment. This new take on difference is mostly played out in theories of sexual difference, for instance when Grosz rewrites ‘a thousand tiny sexes’ of Deleuze and Guattari. But at the same time it is always already at work in Deleuzian concepts of race (as Saldanha has already done this when talking of ‘a thousand tiny races’). Following Deleuze and Guattari we can claim that race and sex are felt in every feeling. They never cease and never finish to exist in every becoming. This then we can conceptualize as ‘a thousand tiny intersections’. It is a rethinking of what is often referred to as ‘intersectionality’, i.e. the inextricable togetherness of what we consider to be various dimensions of human difference and social practices. Intersectionality then concerns in what way the race and sex *immanently felt* always already proposes a new praxis of the body.

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Signifier enthusiasts take an oversimplified situation as their implicit model: word and thing. From the word they extract the signifier, and from the thing a signified in conformity with the word, and therefore subjugated to the signifier. They operate in a sphere interior to and homogeneous to language (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 66).

There is always another breath in my breath, another thought in my thought, another possession in what I possess, a thousand things and a thousand beings implicated in my complications: every true thought is an aggression (Deleuze 1990: 298).

Introduction: Gender Theory is a Representationalism

The Current-day apotheosis in much of feminist theory is an enthusiasm for the theoretical mappings of Judith Butler. Her much appreciated work circles (ever since her dissertation entitled *Subjects of Desire*) around the (French) rereading of Hegel, her great interest in Lacan and Lacanian psychoanalysis and the way these authors allow us to rethink concepts such as sex and gender. In the introduction to her dissertation she admits a lack of knowledge of the works of more contemporary (post-Hegelian) French theorist such as Deleuze, which is of course of importance to us. This is not to say of course that she travels a completely different path. It does however explain –at least to the experienced reader- why her work on sex and gender is not very materialist, but rather keeps on emphasizing a (Lacanian) conceptualization of language. Even when talking of the body, Butler herself notices that “Everytime I write about the body, the writing ends up being about language (2004:198)”. She immediately adds to this that the body is not to be reduced to language and keeps on searching for ways for thinking ‘bodily signs’ in their coexistence with the more formally linguistic ones.

Here, and in many other places, Butler herself offers us a complexification of the by now common concern about her work being structured along linguisticist lines (Butler 1993, Sonser Breen & Blumenfeld eds. 2005, Kirby 2006). Building on from a materialist Deleuzian perspective, Colebrook however states that in the Anglo-American realm of ‘gender theory’, the work of Butler needs to be rewritten while paying attention to the

following set of oppositional pairs. This necessary outlook, pertains to “a constant tension between the insistence on a common humanity on the one hand, and an emphasis on the insurmountable and fundamental gender difference on the other”(2004a:12). In other words, one is either accidentally male or female owing to a fundamental humanity, or one is essentially gendered either female or male. And if the latter stance is taken, shouldn't we study how, rather than assume that, what Colebrook (ibidem; emphasis in original) calls “*sexual gender*” became the “model of all difference”? And furthermore, are we looking at “a biological difference, a cultural difference or a metaphysical difference, expressing two essentially different principles”? The possible answers to these questions seem to be exhausted by the opposition ‘constructivism versus essentialism’. But whereas most of the work of Butler, and most of the canonized Butler-reception, seem to have found a distinctive answer on the constructivist side of the dichotomy, Colebrook asks whether the opposition can be rewritten through the material, or, the ontological.

Colebrook's ‘Postmodernism is a Humanism’ reminds us also of the fact that the essentialism-constructivism dichotomy appears as non-exhaustive in the work of Butler itself, yet that this important move is being undone in the very same work. Butler tries to complexify the relation between gender and sex that is generally considered to be Beauvoirian. In Butler, gender, then, is *not* to be the system of signs that imposes itself on sex, and sex is *not* to be a neutral and inaccessible materiality (Colebrook 2004b: 293). At the same time, however, following Butler,

Our position within a system of norms produces a radical difference between norm and that which the norm supposedly orders, organizes and represents. It is in the repetition of norms or signifiers of gender that one produces oneself, one's sex or the real as that which was there to be signified (ibidem).

Eventually sex ends up being a neutral, passive, and inaccessible materiality in the work of Butler. Butler thus enacts a feminist rewriting of Lacanian psychoanalysis on the basis of the privileging of a (Master) signifier, a representation governed by the logic of One, which “*precludes real difference*” (ibid.; emphasis in original). Both the assumption of an essential and an accidental femininity/ masculinity is a representationalism, according to which “any linguistic entity exists only in virtue of the association between signal and signification” (Saussure [1972] 2006: 99, 144). The essentialist stance of incommensurable and fundamental gender difference cannot understand its own implication in a system of norms or signifiers of gender, while ‘the real’ is wholly out of reach for the constructivist alternative, is ‘impossible’ to put it back into the Lacanian paradigm, which is to say it is mute, non-intelligible. The body, whether female or male, is then just as possible as the signs allow it to

be. Butler claims: “Signs work *by appearing* (visibly, aurally) and appearing though material means” (quoted in Blanton 2007: 135). From which Blanton rightfully concludes that “If the corpse cannot be displayed, it cannot signify” (Blanton 2007: 135).

In *Gender Trouble*, Butlers most influential work, there is no attempt being made to rethink the notion of race next to (or with) her theories of gender. Yet at the end Butler invites all thought difference into her theory of signs, by stating (1999; 143):

[T]heories of ... identity that elaborate presicates of color, sexuality, ethnicity, class, and ablebodiedness invariably close with an embarrassed ‘etc.’ at the end of the list. Through this horizontal trajectory of adjectives, these positions strive to encompass a situated subject, invariably fail to be complete.

Reading this ‘etc.’ then once again as an emphasis on the ‘illimitable process of signification itself’, Butler meets theories of ‘intersectionality’, offering them all a radically linguistic basis.

Pushing Feminist Theory to Ontology

The work of Deleuze and Guattari is no doubt among the fiercest critiques of the work of Lacan (and Hegel) and can very well be read as a critique on the Butlerians that rule feminist theory today and that by now have also written her theories into issues concerning queer theory, race, class and age, to name a few. In *Anti-Oedipus* Deleuze and Guattari fiercely reject Lacan’s notion of the real, claiming that “the real is not impossible; on the contrary, within the real everything is possible, everything becomes possible” ([1972] 1977: 27, 35). How different a starting point this is compared to Lacanian fundament of Butler and the Butlerians. For indeed accepting the real to be possible, a wholly new materialist theory of sexuality, of racially, of age, and actually of all possible categorizations of the real starts to expand. Not waiting for a particular sign to appear but really opening thought up onto the unforeseen, onto whatever the body might be capable of doing, these turn out to be theories of difference itself.

Following Deleuze and Guattari, Colebrook’s suggestion to develop “sexual gender” ontologically as the “model of all difference” necessarily pushes Lacanian thought out of gender theory. The development of his “sexual gender” seems to be much inspired by the feminism Deleuze and Guattari offered us in *A Thousand Plateaus* with their ‘becoming-woman’. Their realist or new materialist alternative to the representationalisms developed by Butler and her followers, offer us a radically different feminism not in need of language or signification, but *only* upon this real and its morphogenetic real-ity “it must be said that all

becomings begin with and pass through becoming-woman. It is the key to all the other becomings” ([1980] 1987: 306). Rather than pursuing any kind of dualist identity politics, the feminism of Deleuze and Guattari is thus not so much a (Hegel inspired) *opposite* of power, but rather comes with a wholly different ontology. Becoming-woman is much more an *act upon* the fundamental phallogocentric organizational politics of society, claiming that every emancipation (also of men) has to take up a femininity, as a necessary means to undo the masculine. Probably inspired by Beauvoir’s idea that femininity is necessarily about a becoming, they accept that what we call ‘woman’ has always already been the sum of trajectories away from the centre of power, an introductory power (*pouvoir/potestas* and *puissance/potentia*) necessary for any metamorphosis or ‘nomadic ethics’, as Braidotti would call it (for instance 2006: 205), to take place.

In a 1985 interview Félix Guattari commented on the first primarily negative reception of their ideas in feminist theory by emphasizing that their goal with this concept becoming-woman was to move away from the essentialism-constructivism dichotomy that haunted the field already by then. Avoiding a becoming-woman he then suggested a becoming-homosexual as an alternative concept that proposes to call for this emancipation, even providing us with an example: “This could be a ‘becoming-homosexual’... to present this simply, brutally: if you want to be a writer, if you want to have a ‘becoming-letters,’ you are necessarily caught in a ‘becoming-woman.’ That might be manifested to a great extent through homosexuality, admitted or not, but this is a departure from a ‘grasping,’ power’s will to circumscribe that exists in the world of masculine power values” (Stivale 1988: 217).

The sheer arbitrariness of this example (also in the original interview) shows us how fundamental and prior to every possible identification (prior to every possible sign)) Deleuze and Guattari wish to position emancipatory movements. Rather than connecting becoming-woman to any biological or cultural or social identity (of women opposed to men for instance), which, especially in the early years Deleuze and Guattari were falsely accused of, Guattari suggests to understand becoming-woman rather as “[...] the first sphere of explosion of phallic power, therefore of binary power, of the surface-depth power [*pouvoir figure-fond*] of affirmation.” Thus he concludes: “[...] the ‘becoming-woman’ has no priority” (ibidem: 217).

Keeping in mind that ‘becoming-woman’ is primarily about situating emancipation *before* identity, we cannot but conclude that the concept is by no means limited to a rethinking of the female. Becoming-woman is a necessity for all emancipation from the phallogocentrism or perhaps humanism (as Colebrook could have it) that haunts society. This is why Kaja Silverman (1992: 347) concludes that Deleuze and Guattari’s becoming-woman is in the end “...a process leading beyond the symbolic order altogether”. The symbolic order as it equals Lacanian linguistics, as it denies the possibility of the real, as it insinuates the

constructivism versus essentialism thesis, is the first and foremost myth this materialism is exposing.

Intersectionality is a Representationalism

Albeit prominent in contemporary feminist theory, theories of 'intersectionality' revolve around representationalist issues similar to Anglo-American gender theory. Intersectional theory was installed vis-à-vis a canon of Western feminist and anti-racist theory structured by a seemingly exhaustive dichotomy, here framed as 'sameness versus difference'. Just like the preference for gender when it comes to the distinction between gender and sex, intersectional theorists have voiced a preference for difference-as-diversity, while trying to complexify both difference, and the dualism between sameness and difference itself. The question is, however, whether a radical ontological shift, as scholars like Colebrook (and Braidotti, Grosz, and to a lesser degree Silverman), inspired by Deleuze's emphasis on becoming, are establishing in feminist theory, has also taken place with intersectional thinking.

In what is about to follow, we will show that at least the major voices in intersectional theory seem to have founded their distinctive answer on the same grounds as Butler and Butlerians, that is, by sticking to difference-as-a-construction, to a representationalism while conceptualizing difference-as-diversity. Difference, the claim is, should never be an essence. What we thus witness is a repetition of a problematic, representationalist logic of One to the detriment of what was set out to be a revolution in thought in the Deleuzian sense of the term. Thus we will both work through the diagnosis just provided and present a radically alternative conceptualization of the intersectional concern.

To do so we must return to the first writings on intersectionality, by Kimberle Crenshaw. In 'Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics' Crenshaw (1989: 150) surveys several court cases dealing with discrimination in order to conclude that

Black women are regarded either as too much like women or Blacks and the compounded nature of their experience is absorbed into the collective experiences of either group or as too different, in which case Black women's Blackness or femaleness sometimes has placed their needs and perspectives at the margins of the feminist and Black liberationist agendas.

Here we are looking at a situation of either universalism (a common humanity) or marginalization (essential racial/sexual difference). Universalist theories of sex are unable to

specify sexual Blackness, and universalist theories of race are unable to specify Black femaleness. And on the other side of the spectrum, sexual Blackness is subsumed under sex and Black femaleness under race. The analytical differentiation notwithstanding, Crenshaw claims that the effect is the same: “Black women [have been treated] in ways that deny both the unique compoundedness of their situation and the centrality of their experiences to the larger classes of women and Blacks” (ibidem). Leaving reference to black feminist standpoint theory (see Harding 1986, Collins 1991) aside,¹ how is this ‘unique compoundedness’ theorized? Similar to the Deleuzian questions Colebrook asks about Butler’s gender theory, it seems necessary to ask the fundamental question about the way in which this new approach to difference relates to the seeming duality between signification/ representation (active) and materiality/ reality (muted).

Intersectional theory sets out to break through ‘single-axis’ or ‘either-or’ approaches in court, but also in feminist and anti-racist research practices. Crenshaw (1989: 140) states that the latter “are predicated on a discrete set of experiences that often does not accurately reflect the interaction of race and gender”, thus working towards a politics of ‘inclusive’ or ‘both-and’ approaches. After all, feminist philosophy is based on the insight that substance dualism is key to the naturalization of women (Beauvoir [1949] 2010; Lloyd [1983] 1994), just like anti-racist philosophy is based on the insight that substance dualism has naturalized, thus muted, the non-white (Zack 2002). Intersectional theory has thus far been a representationalism, wherein “representationalism is the belief in the ontological distinction between representations and that which they purport to represent; in particular, that which is represented is held to be independent of all practices of representing” (Barad 2003: 804). Barad shows how the axiometric take structuring intersectional theory is indeed a representationalism that underlies both essentialism and constructivism, and prevents for ontological musings, based on the implicit agreement about substance dualism, founding the representationalism, of essentialist and constructivist philosophies. The attempt to shift axiometry is not new, but it can only be fully enfolded with a Deleuzianism. Anthony Appiah has already argued for a shifting of axiometry structuring Black thought, albeit in a postscript that he himself called ‘unscientific’ at the time. After reviewing the work of W.E.B. Du Bois in ‘The Uncompleted Argument: Du Bois and the Illusion of Race’, Appiah ([1985] 1986: 36) stated:

In his early work, Du Bois took race for granted and sought to revalue one pole of the opposition of white to black. The received concept is a hierarchy, a vertical structure, and Du Bois wished to rotate the axis, to give race a “horizontal” reading. Challenge the assumption that there can be an axis, however oriented in the space of values, and the project fails for loss of presuppositions.

Sexual Difference equals ‘A Thousand Tiny Sexes’

The canon of feminist theory being Anglo-American dominated, a specific response to the type of theorization that comes from intersectional theorists can be found in the work of what is commonly termed ‘French feminism’. Quite paradoxically, the linguistic turn towards constructivism has mostly been picked up by Anglo-American and therefore sociologically-oriented feminist theorists, which is where the intersectional ‘paradigm’ in feminist theory is developed these days (see Franken et al. 2009). The other side of the so-called ‘trans-Atlantic dis-connection’ (Stanton 1980) is less prone to engaging itself with intersectional theory, for conceptual reasons which we will now discuss.

Overlooking the canon of feminist epistemology from a French point of view, intersectionality overlaps with what Sandra Harding in 1986 called ‘feminist postmodernism’, that is, with the move from constructivist difference to constructivist diversity. The French response shows that what motivates intersectional theory has always already been part of the concept of ‘sexual difference’. It is only the difference paradigm of the Anglo-American feminist theory of the second feminist wave which needed to be broken through in order for an inclusive feminist politics to come to fruition, since sexual difference theory has never been a universalist essentialism, nor has it been linguistically overcoded, that is, a strict constructivism. The specificities, or uniqueness for that matter, of the lives of Black women, and women from ethnicities that are not subsumable under the label ‘white’ have always been thinkable with the sexual difference framework, which has, in addition, always focused on, as Donna Haraway (1988: 595) would have it, the ‘material-semiotic’. The ‘French take’ on the intersectional concern would thus be that intersectional theorists capitalize on dualism (diversity is better than difference), whereas ‘difference’ could have been re-conceptualized in order to sort the same, or rather: the desired, effect. Not doing that, difference remains caught within the net of sameness versus difference, and essentialism versus constructivism, leaving no space for ontological musings that are precluded with the (implicit) adherence to representationalism.

French feminist theories of sexual difference have a conceptual genealogy that is quite distinct from Anglo-American gender theory. In *Nomadic Subjects*, Rosi Braidotti (1994: 147 ff.) shows exemplarily how difference in Western thought has always been a dualism structured by negation. Following Deleuze’s critique on Otherness as it was mainly developed in *The Logic of Sense*, in which he famously stated: “The error of philosophical theories is to reduce the Other sometimes to a particular object, and sometimes to another subject” (Deleuze [1969] 1990: 307), Braidotti concludes that there has only been difference (the Other) as opposed to sameness (the One), and consequently different came to mean

‘different from’, and different from ‘worth less than’. It is exactly this set of implications that French feminists of sexual difference have wanted to revolutionize by stating that power remains distorting (*pouvoir/potestas*) even when the Other gets to be re-valued by theoretical moves based on identity politics. Opening up to difference in itself, to power as *puissance/potentia*, even in the Foucauldian sense of the term (Foucault 1982), takes away intersectionality’s need to think that “gender is not a monolithic category that works for all women in the same way” (Wekker 2002: 17). When sexual difference entails the differences between men and women, the differences amongst women, and the differences within each and every individual woman (Braidotti 1994: 158-67), there is no need to prefer constructivism to essentialism, because identity political difference becomes nothing but a *strategic* essentialism (Darius & Jonsson 1993: 35). The Other might be actualized by real characters, as Deleuze puts it, but we should not forget that otherness itself is always an *a priori* Other that *preexists* these characters. The Other is then necessarily a structure of the possible that can be realized in many different ways.

Grosz’s ‘A Thousand Tiny Sexes: Feminism and Rhizomatics’ invites the ontological discussion that we now ought to have. Following up on these conceptualizations of difference and otherness in the work of Deleuze and Guattari, while also affirming the well-known initial feminist reservations about this work, the discussion of Grosz (1993: 170) precisely focuses on the concept of difference as “a difference capable of being understood outside the dominance or regime of the One [...] in which what is different can be understood only as a variation or negation of identity.” With Deleuze and Guattari, Grosz thus invites a conceptualization of difference that is not framed by identity, but that necessarily precedes it, and as such, she also wants to break through “a pluralized notion of identity, identity multiplied by *n* locations” (ibidem). Grosz questions, like Appiah, the specific *locatedness* that comes with both constructivist difference and constructivist diversity, which leads her to affirming a Spinozist, rather than Cartesian, take on the body (and desire) and representation (ibidem: 171). ‘A thousand tiny sexes,’ then, entails precisely freeing difference from spatial (and temporal) fixity, and, indeed, from the sameness that also comes with the differentiation of *n* forever-fixed, because linguistically overcoded, locations. Arun Saldanha (2006: 20-2) makes the same point when affirming ‘a thousand tiny races’ as he too is in search of what Deleuze ([1969] 1990: 317) in the end calls ‘anotherness’ or a ‘wholly otherness’. Anotherness is not the expression of a *possible* world (which is how Deleuze conceptualizes the Other). It does not intend to colonize the perceptual field, creating dichotomies and identifying bodies as opposites. A thousand tiny races offers us a fluid re-ontologization that indicates a supposedly true world, yet a world entirely unforeseen. A world that had always been hidden from us by these possible sexed and raced others.

From Geometrical Axiology to Topological Dynamics

Intersectional theory has alternatively been called ‘matrix theory’. It wants to

enable[...] us to think how each of us has a determinate social location in the matrix of social relations that is constituted by gender, class, race, sexuality and whatever other macro forces shape our particular part of the social order (e.g., Collins 1991). Women are located at many positions in this matrix, and starting thought from each such group of lives can be useful for understanding social phenomena (including our relations with nature) that have effects on those lives (Harding 1995: 344),

whereby it should be noted that, according to Harding, one’s location does not determine one’s thought (ibidem: 345). However matrix theory is once again showing us how intersectional theory is dependant upon the Other. Matrix theory is a Cartesian sociology which sets out a series of coordinate axes that striate the world (hide its smooth surface). Karen Barad, coming from physics (from Bohrian quantum mechanics) has recently made some very interesting contributions to intersectional theory that clearly echo Deleuze’s for a world without others, not organized through a Cartesian grid but rather attentive to the intra-action, as she calls it, that folds the inside from the outside, or rather, that understands that interiority is about the in-side of the limit, as Deleuze reads this in Simondon. Barad (2001: 90) then wants to rewrite intersectionality according to what she calls an ‘agential realism’ (a concept close to Deleuze and Guattari’s materialist notion of *agencements* (usually translated as ‘assemblages’)), which is to say that:

an agential realist notion of dynamics [...] is not marked by an exterior parameter called time, nor does it take place in a container called space, but rather iterative intra-actions are the dynamics through which temporality and spatiality are produced and reconfigured in the (re)making of material-discursive boundaries and their constitutive exclusions. Exclusions introduce indeterminacies and open up a space of agency; they are the conditions of possibility of new possibilities.

Rethinking time as something that does not happen exterior to the event, and rethinking the inside precisely as the inside of an outside, Barad thoroughly rethinks the spatiotemporal, the ‘world’, that is, matrixial or axiological, parameters of intersectional thinking. Intersectionality, Barad claims, has been developed “as a mutually perpendicular set of axes of identification within which marked bodies can be positioned” (ibidem: 98). The following observations can be made. First, gender, ethnicity, *et cetera* come to the fore as separate

characteristics of individual human beings that should be added to one another (ibid.). According to the reworked notion of agential realism's *topological* dynamics, the focus lies on *inseparability*, excluding pre-determinable intersections (ibid.: 99; cf. Lykke 2010). Again, this crucial rethinking of space-time in terms of the sexual (and the racial) has been set up in *The Logic of Sense*:

Caught up in the system of language, there is thus a co-system of sexuality which mimics sense, nonsense, and their organization: a simulacrum for a phantasm. Furthermore, throughout all of that which language will designate, manifest, or signify, there will be a sexual history that will never be designated, manifested, or signified in itself, but which will coexist with all the operations of language, recalling the sexual appurtenance of the formative linguistic elements. This status of sexuality accounts for repression. It does not suffice to say that the concept of repression in general is topical: it is topological (Deleuze [1969] 1990: 243).

This intensive, topological notion of power is precisely how Barad in the end wants to rethink intersectionality. For whereas intersectionality works with a notion according to which when a person is marked by a category, the category is at work (and up for analysis) (ibid.: 98), Barad's notions of repression but also of potentiality then works with fluid "Structures [that] are constraining and enabling, not determining" (Barad 2001: 99). Again this is a Groszian point, alluding to the reworked notion of (topological) multiplicity introduced by Deleuze and Guattari. Finally, as a corollary, intersectionality suggests that it can be known, in advance, that only 'your' gender, and 'your' ethnicity are at work (ibidem), whereas the topological dynamics proposed by Deleuze and today by Barad does not work with linguistic overcodification, here a true constraint. A reference should be made here to Manuel DeLanda (2002: 24; emphasis in original) who, talking of topology and difference, noted that "topology is *the least differentiated* geometry, the one with the least number of distinct equivalence classes, the one in which many discontinuous forms have blended into one continuous one". It is precisely this homeomorphism which allows intersectionality to create its categories, to mould subjectivity in such a way that race and sex can be defined. Barad then, now sees how this return to the ontological takes us out of the essentialism constructivism opposition, put down by Butler: "The space of possibilities does not represent a fixed event horizon within which the social location of knowers can be mapped [essentialism], nor a homogenous fixed uniform container of choices [constructivism]" (Barad 2001: 103)

Becoming, or: A Thousand Tiny Intersections

Replacing linguistics with ontology, the Other with another or the wholly other (world), and difference as it follows from identity with difference itself, we have moved from a Butlerian notion of intersectionality to what a Deleuzian take on this might be. Underneath a representationalist intersectional theory based on codification (an axiometric epistemology) we found another intersectionality of becoming (a topological ontology) that had been there all along but that had been continuously overcoded. The possibility of the real (contrary to Lacan) was necessary to allow for the intersectional revolution in thought. Thinking through compounded experience cannot be done by prioritizing linguisticity. A compounded experience is only to be reached when linguisticity, and the implied pre-existing Cartesian axes, is broken through via a theory of ‘emergence’ (Saldanha 2006: 17-8). With topology we have moved to the ontological prior. We have shown how a pre-existing compoundedness is in fact a thousand tiny intersections: what pre-exists is multiplicity and relations, and what becomes or emerges is unforeseen.

The main driving force behind intersectionality has been an attempt to deal with racism and sexism, and with the ways in which an anti-racism might be sexist, and an anti-sexism racist, as scholars like Crenshaw keep stressing this. Perhaps our attempts to rethink intersectionality along Deleuzian lines have been to show how *in* Spinoza’s ‘common notions’, metamorphoses happen that shake up racist and sexist power as *pouvoir/potestas*, and a Logic of One. Deleuze ([1981]1988: 115-6) noted with respect to ‘common notions’ that these are to be understood as ‘physico-chemical or biological ideas’ that offer a materialist alternative to the more (Darwinian) representationalist efforts to define genus and species into the abstract geometrical states that have been harassing notions of sex and race for such a long time now.

Or better even, let us search for the topological ontogenesis of intersectionality within what Deleuze called ‘the theatre of movement’ (that is against the false drama of Hegel and Butler) and the representations it keeps pushing forward.

“The theatre of repetition is opposed to the theatre of representation, just as movement is opposed to the concept and to representation which refers back to the concept. In the theatre of repetition we experience pure forces, dynamic lines in space which act without intermediary upon the spirit, and link it directly with nature and history, with a language which speaks before words, with gestures which develop before organized bodies, with masks before faces, with spectres and phantoms before characters – the whole apparatus of repetition as a ‘terrible power’” ([1968]1994: 10)

The theatre of repetition keeps pushing us back into those undefined states of a sex and a race to come. Instead of offering us space, time and the traceable (sexual, racialized) subject within it) it introduces us to the power of the unforeseen topological intra-action of bodily production. It won't allow *any* signification, *any* identity to happen from the myriad of kaleidoscopic movements and thus it allows for the real adventures of the spirit to take place, to rediscover the body in all that it can do.

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¹ Note however that Mieke Verloo (2009) has recently argued that Crenshaw's epistemic privileging of the underprivileged is still prominent in intersectional theory. Verloo tries to undo this 'feminist standpoint theory' or 'identity politics' by thinking through intersecting axes according to an interference pattern. Following Barad, we will use this physical phenomenon too in this chapter. We will not discuss Verloo in depth, however, because, contrary to Verloo, interference is not a metaphor in our work.