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movement and turns by Yuko Matsuyama

Turn around, make a round turn -

Thinking *around*¹ the transpositional options of movement

Abstract: This paper continues an enquiry developed through a series of transformative modes of presentation that emerged as lecture performances in collaboration with one or more dancers.

In setting the definition of movement prior to thought/representation, as well as the dependent situatedness into a constellation that draws on S. Ahmed's definition of *dis/orientation* and equally on the *hauntological im/possibilities* K. Barad proposes, the paper works diffractively through ideas from sources of different orientation. The situatedness of our constitution as *thing/body* and the consequent impact on the intertwined practices of *knowing and becoming* are considered a crucial directive of the emerging relationality affecting the reciprocation between human and as well as non-human agencies.

The definition of this discursive exchange through an idea of 'measuring' of the locational space through perception that is enacted in motion, and in return might enable to act in a 'non-representative' in-between state, allows to develop a speculative field of shared resonances. The de-centered spatial concept reappears in the work of the choreographer L. Chétouane and is referenced by the dancer. Thus the project turns towards agency as a 'thing', a tool of measurement, which also might include a form of embodiment, but always is regarded as one *among* other essential contributors in the process of *worlding* or in Barad's sense the *spacetimemattering* of *intra-action*.

Keywords: movement / intra-action / measurement / entanglement / perception / space

Text:

turn #1

I have studied many times
The marble which was chiseled for me -
A boat with a furled sail at rest in a harbor.
In truth it pictures not my destination
But my life.

turn from inside to in sight

For love was offered me and I shrank from its disillusionment

Turning towards, turning back, turning inside-out. Throughout this presentation this formulation will be taken to literally involve movement and text - each to be considered as

¹ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p.120: 'orienting around' defines the 'anchor point' or subject

turning on and around the other. The act of turning, as a movement describing an interchanging of directions, activates a liminal space between dis- and re-orientation. Similarly, the turning movement is a transposing of established or just assumed relations, a dynamic that may activate within an encounter what is perhaps otherwise averted, whether due to being seen as ‘other’ or simply dorsal, i.e. in the back. As such, the movement of turning may trigger the unforeseen as the arcane, in the sense of obscured options, the haunting *im- and possibilities*, of these entangled relations of ‘otherness’.

There is a relation to the options of the prefix *trans-*, that is used in particular to denote movement or conveyance from place to place (transfer; transmit) or complete change (transform), forming meanings like “crossing,” “on the other side of,” or “going beyond”². In this way, *trans-* adheres to certain spatialities, orientations and directions which confront the angle of view (POV), or the *turn* away or towards certain directive lines. *Trans-* as a bridging and yet modifying term indicates active dynamics at work that come in effect through the connectivity established as a *between, across, through*, and *beyond* of paradigms or areas.

This text suggests an affirmative reading of *trans-*, in the way of a mediating prefix, one that turns towards or around two anchor points: *disorientation* by S. Ahmed and *hauntological im/possibilities* (i.e. *multiplicity*), as K. Barad proposes. Both strongly relate to the situatedness of the thing/body we are and the relational impact that emerges from this intertwined relation. A view that finds resonance in a piece by the choreographer Laurent Chétouane, in which he developed a movement praxis that is orientated towards a concept of the space *as looking at you*, not vice versa.

turn #2

I have studied many times

For love was offered me and I shrank from its disillusionment
Sorrow knocked at my door, but I was afraid;
Ambition called to me, but I dreaded the chances.

turning back

Sara Ahmed brings attention to the point that direction, as the way we face as well as move, might be organized rather than casual.³ Lines, she states, “are both created by being followed and are

² <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/trans-> (25.07.2013)

³ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p. 15

followed by being created. The lines that direct us, as lines of thought as well as lines of motion, are in this way performative: they depend on the repetition of norms and conventions, of routes and paths taken, but they are also created as an effect of this repetition”⁴. There is an inherent ambiguity evolving from the relation to “follow a line” and the conditions for the emergence of lines. *The repetition of the act of following makes the line disappear from the view as that ‘point’ from which “we” emerge.*⁵ It recedes into the background not only as the object of recurrent interest, but as “[t]he bit of earth that supports me [...; that] supports my experience of objects”.⁶

The turn Ahmed takes offers *to think of space through orientation* as an option that allows turning towards *a new direction, which opens up how spatial perceptions come to matter and be directed as matter*⁷ in the sense of *meaning*. A move that enables the partly shared ground of *dis/orientation* for a diffractive reading of Ahmed’s *Queer Phenomenology* with the re-workings K. Barad applies to the causality of *spacetimemattering* in her *agential realism*. It is a partial shared ground as Ahmed is aiming to dis/orientate the directive lines within Cartesian space to open it up for the ‘other’ and the ‘queer body’, while Barad’s path seems almost oppositional with its start at *Quantum dis/continuity* that simply undoes with any *fixed essence or substance [...] for the measuring*.⁸

Both authors might agree to understand movement in general as a dis/location in the sense of a certain locality of non-locality that marks the in/stability of a system’s homeostasis. Nevertheless Ahmed and Barad orientate towards each other by way of their interest to excavate *the other* (thing / body; non-human / human) in the spectrum of nature’s *hauntological im/possibilities*⁹ that, according to Barad’s outline, are not restricted to solely operate within the confines of *a superimposing of human values onto the ontology of the world*.¹⁰ And one that in Ahmed’s sense allows an orientation towards those queer moments¹¹ where a slipping object can appear and have it *pass through, in the unknowable length of its duration*¹².

⁴ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p. 16

⁵ Ibid. p.15/16

⁶ Levinas, *Totality and Inifinity*, 1969, p.138; in Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p.166

⁷ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p.12

⁸ Karen Barad, “Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come”, in *Derrida Today,3.2. Edinburgh University Press. 2010.* p. 254

⁹ Ibid: p.264; .. if they [revisitings: might be read as events] were taken to be matters of indeterminacy in the nature of being/becoming, not uncertainties in human understanding? How would it matter to have them speak to us as *co-existing multiplicities of entangled relations of past-present-future-here-there* that constitute the worldly phenomena we too often mistake as things existing here-now?

¹⁰ Ibid: p.265

¹¹ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p. 167: Queer becomes a matter of how things appear, how they gather, how they perform, to create the edges of spaces and worlds. [...]

¹² Ibid: p. 171-172

turn #3

I have studied many times
The marble which was chiseled for me -
A boat with a furled sail at rest in a harbor.
Yet all the while I hungered for meaning in my life

turn – matter/meaning (relation)

And now I know that we must lift the sail
And catch the winds of destiny

Ahmed's suggestion that "what matters is shaped by the directions taken that allow things to appear in a certain way"¹³ connects her concept of *dis/orientation* to crossing or aberrant lines that interrupt the space of social construction. Here a major wave of diffraction might be caused by Barad's notion of *intra-action* that speaks across humans and non-humans, thus not in a democratical distribution of agency, but to the particularities of the power imbalances of the complexity of a field of forces¹⁴, as she specifies.

The important aspects S. Ahmed brings *in sight* are that bodies and objects become oriented through their interrelations¹⁵ – a point that resonates in Barad's definition of *agential intra-actions* that attempt to define processes between *things*, as a form of discourse between human, as well as non-human agencies that enable a different outlook onto the environment and the 'Other'. An approach that appears in its abstractness even harder to grasp as those lines that seem to vanish when becoming common, that Ahmed mentions. It is the *queering* effect of a reversible figure that Ahmed describes in that as soon as we notice the background, former still, almost absent objects come to life.¹⁶ It evolves in social orientations as *dis/orientation* in how things are arranged that makes the familiar become rather strange.

For Barad *matter* is, in its double meaning, an agentive factor of iterative materialization¹⁷, a contingent and temporary performativity without fixity or closure of *things and situations (matter and meaning)*. *Intra-actions* necessarily entail constitutive exclusions, but due to their non-classical causality, they break open the binary of stale choices between determinism and

¹³ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p. 165

¹⁴ Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Turin, *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies*, "3. Interview with Karen Barad", Open Humanities Press, 2012, p. 54/55

¹⁵ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, E.Grosz on the bookcover

¹⁶ Ibid: p.168

¹⁷ Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway. Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*, Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 2007, p.178

free will, past and future¹⁸, causing an irreducible openness. Barad defines this agential and affirmative capacity for change of *matter* as the ongoing *hauntological transformation* of the world's intra-active becoming and not-becoming, iterative (re)openings of responsiveness, "a cross-cutting of topological reconfiguring of the space of response-bility".¹⁹ It entails *othering* as response and optional chance through the undefinedness of *dis/orientation* that exposes 'Otherness' as an entangled relation of difference (*différance*). The enfolded traces of differentiating bind and inherit an indebtedness to the 'Other' that is complementarily bound, and threaded through the 'self'.²⁰

Ahmed expresses a similar line in her emphasis on the term of being oriented 'around' that enables both, relating and differentiating aspects for the subject. The repetition of tending "toward" [...] produces the subject as that which the world is orientated "around."²¹ To literally *turn around* the subject-centered idea is Barad's radical suggestion of 'de-centering', the *cutting together-apart* of one/self, that finds resonance in a current work of the choreographer L. Chétouane who states: "It is another relation .. It is about you within that space. .. things guiding you".²²

Throughout her *agential separability* Barad reminds with Derrida that despite 'the being of what we are *is* first of all inheritance'²³. This (inheritance) comes as *a task* of inherent difference, as a matter of irreducible heterogeneity which is not undermined by these relations to sameness²⁴. It is a position of "a 'holding together' of the *disparate* itself. [...] without wounding the dis-jointure, the dispersion, or the difference, without effacing the heterogeneity of the other".²⁵.

¹⁸ Karen Barad, "Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come", in *Derrida Today,3.2. Edinburgh University Press. 2010.* p. 254

¹⁹ Karen Barad, "Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come", in *Derrida Today,3.2. Edinburgh University Press. 2010.* p.265

²⁰ Merleau-Ponty, *The Experience of Others*, in V.Kirby, *Quantum Anthropology*, Duke University Press, 2012, p.129: "everything transpires as if the other person's intuitions and motor realizations existed in a sort of relation of internal encroachment, as if my body and the body of the other person together formed a system."

²¹ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p. 120

²² Interview with the choreographer LaurentChétouane, 07.04.2013, Berlin: "It is about reacting and organizing the space by perceiving the outside. [...] The perception of the outside organizes you. To give up the centered idea, also for the others around you - you have to find a relation to it, ... you have to let these things be guiding you."

²³ J. Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, Routledge, 1994, p. 67/68

²⁴ Karen Barad, "Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come", in *Derrida Today,3.2. Edinburgh University Press. 2010.* p.265

²⁵ J. Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, Routledge, 1994, p.35

turn #4

I have studied many times
The marble which was chiseled for me -
A boat with a furled sail at rest in a harbor.
~~In truth it pictures not my destination~~
And now I know that we must lift the sail
And catch the winds of destiny
Wherever they drive the boat.

turn - environment / other

In Ahmed's definition the indicatory condition of arrival is not a given instant as '[t]he body emerges from this history of doing, which is also a history of not doing, of paths not taken, that also involves the loss,...²⁶, as well as the opening up of the future to forms that have yet to emerge²⁷. An understanding that corresponds to Barad's view that not only the future is *radically open at every turn*²⁸, but also that the past is never in itself a finished given.

Whatever was presumed as a fixed identity becomes "undone by a discontinuity at the heart of matter itself"²⁹. The nature of causality becomes disrupted by the 'affective cut' of *intra-action*.

This haunting background of im/possibilities, of non/potentiality is incorporated just by virtue of the perceptual and orientational powers. This is that our bodies inherit experiences of being situated in the 'place-world' – that needs to be almost literally understood as a "*turning of place with body, the intertwining of each with the other*".³⁰ During the preparation for this experiment this became an almost tangible experience, as my collaborator Yuko once stated: "Things turning around me or I am turning around them ..."

Queer moments of disorientation happen when things fail to cohere [...] when things do not stay in place or *cohere as place*.³¹ Disorientation, like orientation, brings things in contact though one in which "things" slip as a proximity that does not hold things in place.³² Merleau-Ponty has given a precise description how the instability of levels not only leads to the

²⁶ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p. 159

²⁷ Ibid: p.42 footnote 11

²⁸ Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway. Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*, Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 2007, p. 178

²⁹ Karen Barad, "Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come", in *Derrida Today, 3.2. Edinburgh University Press. 2010.* p. 248/249

³⁰ Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place*, University of California Press, 1998, p. 239: your body is the very vehicle of implacement, and is sine qua non for being-in-place

³¹ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p.170 (my emphasis), see also footnote 5

³² Ibid: p. 166, 157

experience of disorder, giddiness and nausea, but to the horror with which this sudden awareness of our contingency, our *im/possibilities* fills us.³³

turn #5

I have studied many times
The marble which was chiseled for me –
A boat with a furled sail at rest in a harbor.
In truth it pictures not my destination
...
To put meaning in one's life may end in madness
But life without meaning is the torture
Of restlessness and vague desire –

turn out / turn around

For Satre the *Nausea* isn't inside him, but he “can feel it over there on the wall, on the braces, everywhere around me. It is [...] I who am inside it”.³⁴ In this *dis/orientation* of how things matter, they return to the subject as a sign of interiority, even if that interior is pushed to the outer regions of the body, the regions that are closest to the matter³⁵. To understand this turmoil of dis-jointed orientation as the ethical, since entangled option of otherness I want to turn towards the *quantum implications* of Barad’s *agential realism* again.

Her specific definition of intra-actions appoints co-constitutions of determinately bounded and propertied entities as a *complementarity* that is haunted by the mutually constituted and excluded other as *exteriority within*, a paradoxical differentiated inseparability. This *cutting together apart* undermines an inherent fixed subject-object distinction. And furthermore this un/doing of interiority and exteriority, subject and object, *familiar and other* (Ahmed) appears as *without having been anywhere between*³⁶ - a *quantum dis/continuity* of cutting ‘itself’ (into two or more). It is the un/doing of identity – the transformational leap of inside out and outside in, that occurs as *affective cut*.

As *agential cuts*, they do not mark some absolute separation but a *cutting together/apart*, that interrupts, disjoins, cracks open the ongoing (non-successive) iterations that find their definition in the enacted possibilities which are enabled only on the background of all impossibilities (thus haunting multiplicity³⁷). It is the slipping leap from the back into the

³³ Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, Routledge Classics, 2002, p.296: “*The instability of levels produces not only the intellectual experience of disorder, but the vital experience of giddiness and nausea, which is the awareness of our contingency, and the horror with which it fills us. The positing of a level means losing sight of this contingency; space has its basis in our facticity.*”

³⁴ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p. 162

³⁵ Ibid: p. 165

³⁶ Karen Barad, “Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come”, in *Derrida Today*, 3.2. Edinburgh University Press. 2010. p. 246

³⁷ Ibid: p. 263/4

foreground that enables an obviously dis/jointed movement that is described in the *cutting together/apart*, as discontinuity and evolving disorientation, that enhances the vertiginous experience of a not yet strictly defined opening.

Ahmed uses Satre's early novel 'Nausea' to describe how things become *alive not by being endowed with qualities they do not have* but by being allied *in specific ways*³⁸. Merleau-Ponty states if it "is not the idea of signification but that of *structure*, the joining [jonction] of an idea and an existence [...] the contingent arrangement by which materials begin to have meaning in our presence"³⁹ then disorientation emerges from the discontinuity of a move.

The dis-junctured moments and movements of *quantum* gaps open up into a *w/hole* that cannot be defined as void or 'nothing', but one that only becomes determined and determinable in the moment of engagement and entanglement, that entails mutual change. Entanglements cannot be seen as intertwinings of separate entities, but are rather irreducible relations of *responsibilities* and dependencies. *Matter and meaning* only emerge in their relating situatedness of iterative becomings at the rupture of an agential cut, that as the affect of *being affected* occurs at an interstice that may relate to J.L. Nancy's⁴⁰ description of the reciprocal 'interruption of sense', that occurs in the other sense of sense (as to make sense).

This idea of mutual affective encounter, defines Barad's *agential realism*⁴¹. "Environments" and "bodies" are regarded as *intra-actively* co-constituted, as being enmeshed as "a doing, a congealing of agency"⁴² that results in the differentiating experience of *worlding*, a marking by *agential cuts* which leave *marks on bodies* as their specific *spacetimemattering* as the condition of a momentary *exteriority-within-phenomena*, within the larger material arrangement of which "we" are a "part." In this giddiness the *fixation* of 'position' (space) is enacted through an *agential cut* that is a *cutting together-apart*¹ of exclusionary moments (time) within the ongoing *intra-activity* that re-entangle without becoming a feedback loop.

³⁸ Sara Ahmed, *Queer phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p. 164

³⁹ M. Merleau-Ponty, *The Structure of Behavior*', Beacon Paperback, 1967, p. 206-207

⁴⁰ J.L. Nancy, *Corpus*, Fordham University Press, 2008, p.125; "We are touching on a certain interruption of sense, and this interruption of sense has to do with the body, it is body. And it's no accident that the body has to do with sense, in the other sense of sense, sense in the sense of sensing, in the sense of touching. Touching on the interruption of sense is what, for my part, interests me in the matter of the body."

⁴¹ K. Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway. Quantum physics and the entanglement of matter and meaning*, Durham, N.C: Duke University Press, 2007, "Practices of knowing and being are not isolable; they are mutually implicated. We don't obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know because we are of the world.", p.185

⁴² K. Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 2003, p.817

The ever same re-appears as ever different in an unfolding that touches upon itself in its continuous opening of reconfigurings, which as *marks on bodies*, as sedimenting material effects are written into the flesh of the world⁴³. V.Kirby remarks, that it is the volubility of "the flesh" that "in its turning back upon itself, [...] is the dehiscence, or bursting open, of the origin itself in its infinite iterations. This explains why Merleau-Ponty's elaboration of perception is not dependent upon a notion of the subject or self that [...] must preexist in some foundational way the capacity to engage the world fully."⁴⁴

turn #6

I have studied many times
The marble which was chiseled for me -
A boat with a furled sail at rest in a harbor.
In truth it pictures not my destination
But my life.

It is a boat longing for the sea and yet afraid.

turn in out / out in
(exteriority within)

The choreographer L. Chétouane, who is referenced throughout this experiment by the dancer in the room here, defined the coincidence of the inside and outside as central to a bodily experience of exteriority that has to be allowed in. "I am foreign to myself. The limit between inside and outside, the border is running through us. The Out in, and the In out"⁴⁵. This acceptance of the 'border in us' acknowledges the involvement and inseparability of *intra-action*. If there is a foreign inside, it cannot strictly be repelled as a thing or other belonging to an unaffected outside.⁴⁶

It is the encounter, the contact or *intra-action* that leaves different *marks on the bodies*, a sudden becoming that is at once interior and exterior. Barad states that "others" are never very far from "us"; "they" and "we" are co-constituted and entangled through the very cuts "we" help to enact⁴⁷. In the world's dynamic process of intra-activity, of intertwined practices of *knowing and becoming*, neither nature, body or materiality can be defined as belonging to an absolute exteriority or interiority, nor can the human here be theorized as pure cause or effect⁴⁸. It is the chiasmic structure of *intra-action* from where unknown *phenomena* emerge

⁴³ Karen Barad, "Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come", in *Derrida Today.3.2. Edinburgh University Press. 2010*, p. 266

⁴⁴ Vicky Kirby, *Quantum Anthropologies*, Duke University Press, 2012, p.120

⁴⁵ Interview with the choreographer L.Chétouane, 07.04.2013, Berlin

⁴⁶ M.Jaeckel, "Thinking on the move: Diffractive practices as embodied 'agential intra-action'", paper for conference of Congress on Research in Dance (CORD) and Dance Under Construction (DUC) at UCLA, US. 2013, citing the choreographer L. Chétouane

⁴⁷ K. Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 2003, p.814;

⁴⁸ Ibid: p.812

as *other things within* that in this process of materializing inherit their specific relations.⁴⁹ Barad thus comes to ask what if we were to recognize that differentiating is a material act that is not about radical separation, but on the contrary, about making connections and commitments.⁵⁰

It resonates in Ahmed's project of how the experiences of *dis/orientation* have impact on the lines which mark and run over and through bodies and spaces. She consequently suggests that facing is about a "somatic mode of attention", that as a result of orientation distincts and shapes direction. "We don't always know [...] what might make the lines that direct us [...] But once unsettled it might be impossible to return, which of course means that we turn somewhere else, ..."⁵¹ The point is what we do with such moments of disorientation, as well as what such moments can do as for opening up new directions, and whether these are given a chance to become apparent.

In turning around, and here a round, smooth turn is suggested, one that offers as a shifting perception that is open for the *intra-active* processes of renegotiations of the ever changing results of *matter* and *meaning*. Not a transposition that does attempt normalization, (as suggested in the description of this event,) rather a move that transgresses or transcends the normative. A turning which subsists in the affirmative division *from and in* acceptance of the 'other' self, that happens on a constant basis without fixed measurement or preconception, but radiates whether as a diffractive wave in Barad's sense or as an aberrant line for Ahmed (within the commonly straightened settings).

turn over

The poem *George Gray* is listed as # 64 in the 'Spoon River Anthology'
a collection of short free-form poems that collectively describe the
life of 212 inhabitants of the fictional small town of Spoon River by
Edgar Lee Masters. (published: 1915)

m. jaeckel, Berlin, August 2013

⁴⁹ K. Barad, "Posthumanist Performativity", *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 2003, p.822

⁵⁰ Karen Barad, "Quantum Entanglements and Hauntological Relations of Inheritance: Dis/continuities, SpaceTime Enfoldings, and Justice-to-Come", in *Derrida Today, 3.2. Edinburgh University Press. 2010.* p.266

⁵¹ Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, Duke University Press Books, 2006, p.155