

Gregg  
Lambert

Nick  
Nesbitt

Adam  
Nocek

Dominic  
Pettman

Alex  
Taek-Gwang  
Lee

Tom  
Tyler

Szymon  
Wróbel

# Wondering about **MATERIA**LISM

**7-8 NOVEMBER 2022**

**UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW, DOBRA 55**

**TECHNO-HUMANITIES LAB  
FACULTY OF "ARTES LIBERALES"  
UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW**



TECHNO-HUMANITIES LAB  
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# Book of abstracts

# CONFERENCE PROGRAM

**DAY I – 7 NOVEMBER** (DOBRA 55, ROOMS 1.132 & 1.128)

09.00–09.15

Registration

09.15–09.30

Opening Address: Jerzy Axer, Szymon Wróbel

09.30–10.30

**Keynote Lecture I.** Chair: Szymon Wróbel

Gregg Lambert, *Is Philosophy merely the Continuation of Politics by another Means? Or Vladimir Lenin Comes to Dinner*

10.30–10.45

Coffee Break

10.45–12.15

**Panel I. Frontiers of Materialism.** Chair: Szymon Wróbel

Mateusz Janik, *Becoming Apart: Materialist Disenchantment and the Labor of Undoing*

Katarzyna Szafranowska, *New Jewish Materialism? The Curious Case of Heidi M. Ravven and Spinoza's Systems Theory of Ethics*

Maciej Bednarski, *Spiritual materialism? Interpreting Stiegler's general organology as materialism*

12.15–12.30

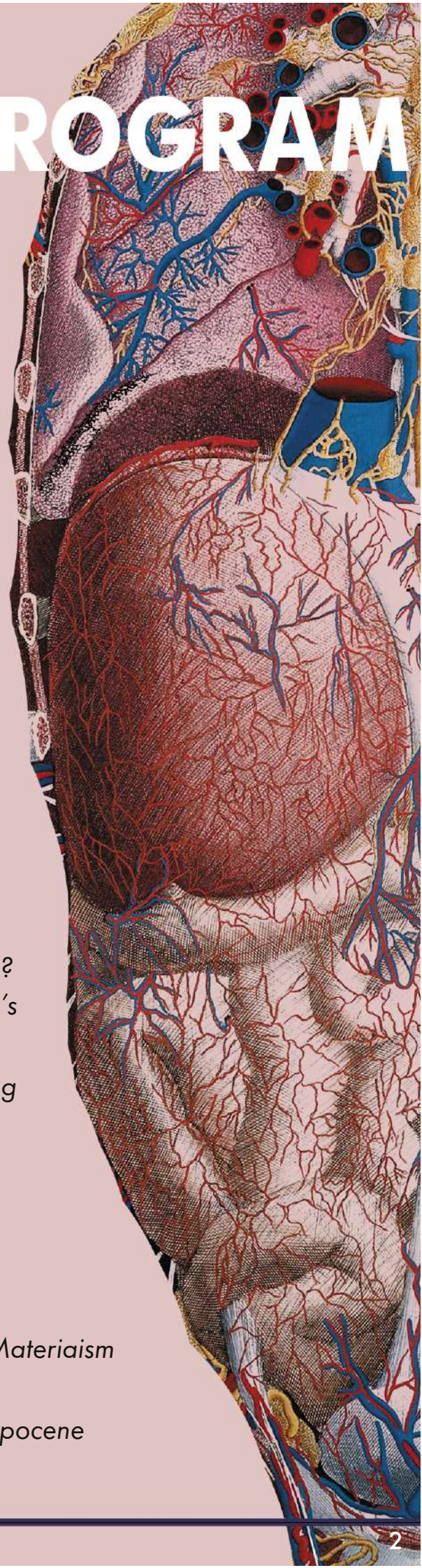
Coffee Break

12.30–14.30

**Panel II. New Materialisms.** Chair: Krzysztof Skonieczny

Philip Højme, *Agential Realism - Remarks on New Materialism and Philosophy-Physics*

Maja Rup, *Purity as an impossibility: ethics of Anthropocene from feminist new materialism perspective*





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# CONFERENCE PROGRAM

Dominika Wasilewska, Weronika Zalewska,  
*earthbody memory - toward ethics of response-  
ability and embodied archiving*

Magdalena Krzosek-Hołodny, Patrycja  
Orzechowska, *'Embracing the Dark'.* Geological  
*vibrant matter and minerals as companion  
species*

14.30–15.15

Lunch Break

15.15–16.15

**Keynote Lecture II.** Chair: Szymon Wróbel

Dominic Pettman, *Sad Planets: Some Remarks  
on the Pathetic Fallacy*

16.15–16.30

Coffee Break

16.30–18.00

**Panel III. Materialism as Method.** Chair: Adam Cichoń

Maria Wodzińska, *The new materiality of evidence*

Maciej Talaga, *Matter as an Endospore. Processes  
of Becoming Preserved in Material Relics of the Past*

Rodrigo Gonsalves, Daniel Fabre, *Materialist dialectic  
and Normativity*

18.00–18.15

Coffee Break

18.15–19.45

**Keynote Lecture III.** Chair: Krzysztof Skonieczny

Adam Nocek, *On the Materials of Art and Biology*





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# CONFERENCE PROGRAM

**DAY II – 8 NOVEMBER** (DOBRA 55, ROOMS 1.132 & 1.128)

9.00–10.00

**Keynote Lecture IV.** Chair: Krzysztof Skonieczny

Alex Taek-Gwang Lee, *On Fourier's Naturalism and Engels' Dialectics of Nature*

10.00–10.15

Coffee Break

10.15–11.45

**Panel IV. Post-Marxist Materialisms.**

Chair: Katarzyna Szafranowska

Andrzej Frelek, *Materialism, not mysticism: on Adorno's critical materialism, the environmental crisis and social mediation*

Adrian Sobolewski, *Representation Revisited. Benjamin, Debord and Internet Images*

Jakob Muraschkowski, *Ernst Bloch's Concept of Matter*

11.45–12.00

Coffee Break

12.00–13.30

**Panel V. Matter and Technology.** Chair: Adam Cichoń

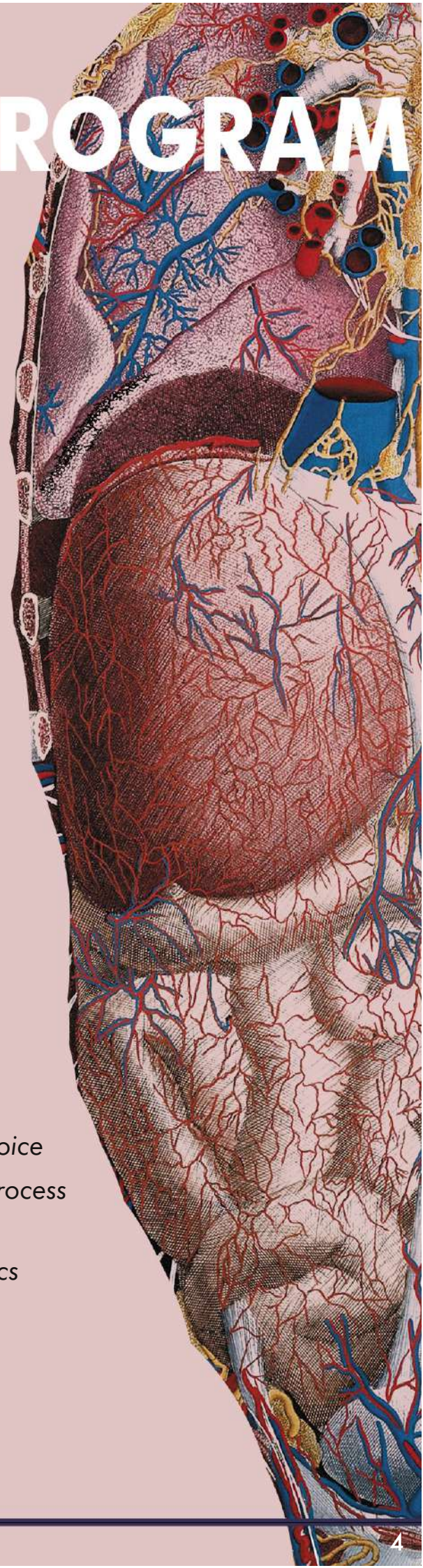
Julia Krzesicka, *(Un)expected materialisms of the voice*

Bartosz Mroczkowski, *Designing The Future as a Process of Self-organization of Matter*

Hubert Będkowski, *Heat Signature: Thermodynamics of Human-Animal Interactions*

13.30–14.30

Lunch Break





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# CONFERENCE PROGRAM

14.30 – 15.30

**Keynote Lecture V.** Chair: Szymon Wróbel

Nick Nesbitt, *A Materialist Dialectic: Marx and Spinoza*

15.30 – 15.45

Coffee Break

15.45 – 16.45

**Keynote Lecture VI.** Chair: Krzysztof Skonieczny

Tom Tyler, *Brutal*

16.45 – 17.00

Coffee Break

17.00 – 18.30

**Panel VI. Art and Literature.** Chair: Krzysztof Skonieczny

Andrew Maillet, *A Practical Matter: Pragmatism and Materialism in the Philosophy of Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz*

Iwona Grodź, *Artist between materiality and virtuality...*

Piotr Wesołowski, *Rococo materialism? Folds of Pierrot's smile*

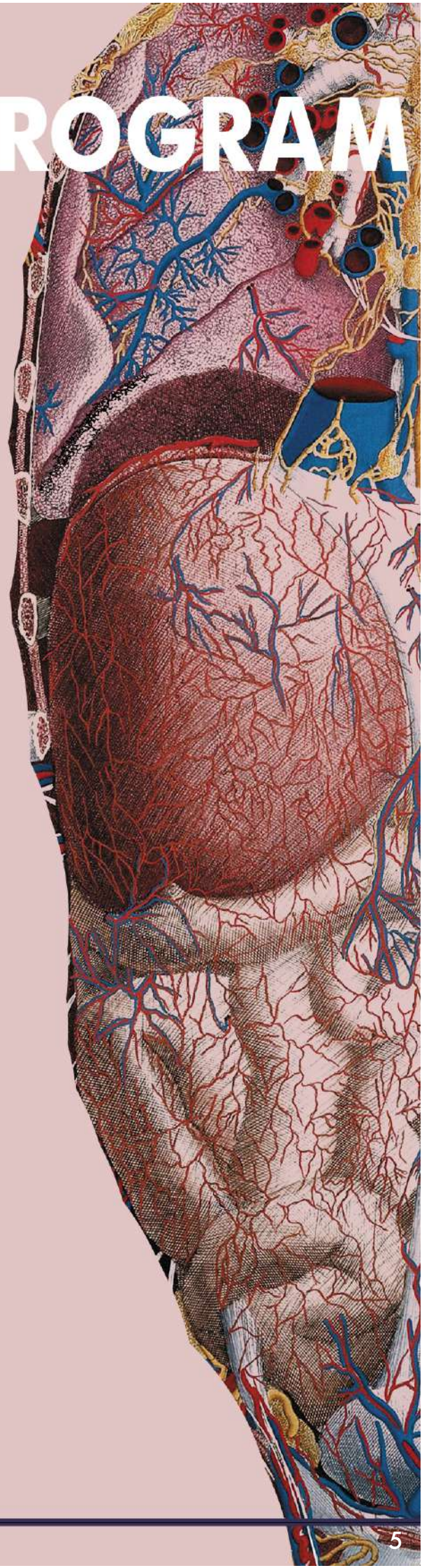
18.30 – 18.45

Coffee Break

18.45 – 19.45

**Closing Address**

Szymon Wróbel, *How to Be a Good Materialist?*





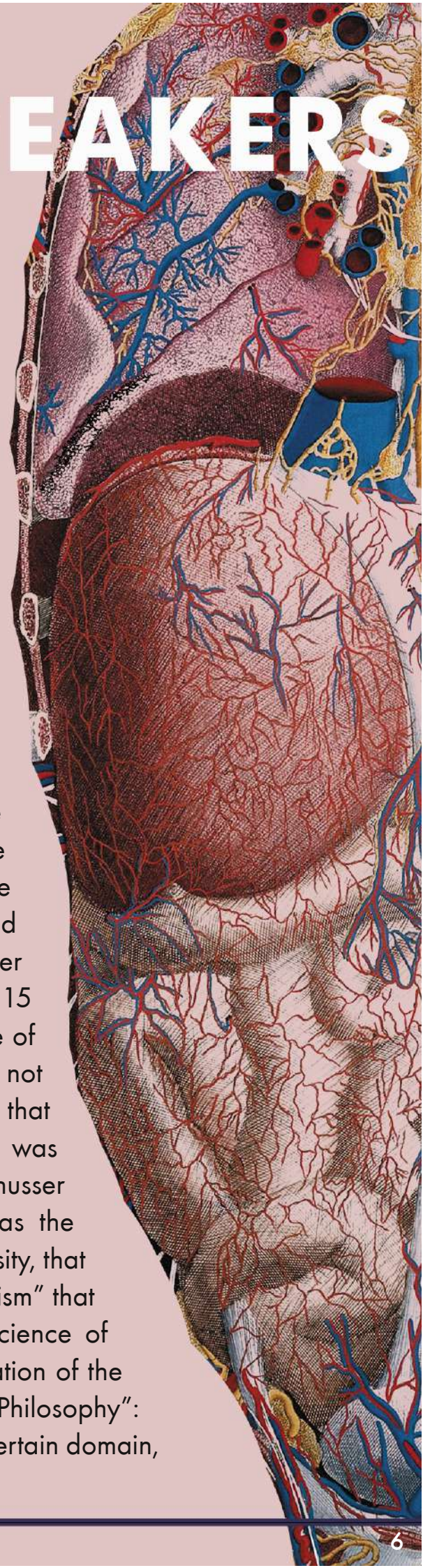
Gregg Lambert

(Syracuse University)

## Is Philosophy merely the Continuation of Politics by another Means? Or Vladimir Lenin Comes to Dinner

### ABSTRACT:

So, the question my talk will address is the following: "Is philosophy just a continuation of politics by other means?" Of course, the audience will already hear the echo of the phrase by Clausewitz, "war is merely the continuation of politics by other means," a phrase that was taken up by Foucault in his 1975 lecture course later entitled *Society must be Defended*, where he inverts the original proposition of Clausewitz and says that "politics is a continuation of war by other means." (The audience would benefit from reading p. 15 in the English version, which is the most crucial page of this reverse hypothesis). However, what you might not remember—and so I will point it out to you—is that Foucault's appropriation of Clausewitz's formula was already performed by the French Marxist Louis Althusser eight years earlier concerning what he feared was the destination of Marxist "theory" in the Western University, that is, a bastard form of the "theory of historical materialism" that is opposed to the correct understanding of "the science of historical materialism." Hence, we have a third variation of the original proposition first stated in "Lenin and Philosophy": "Philosophy is a certain continuation of politics, in a certain domain,





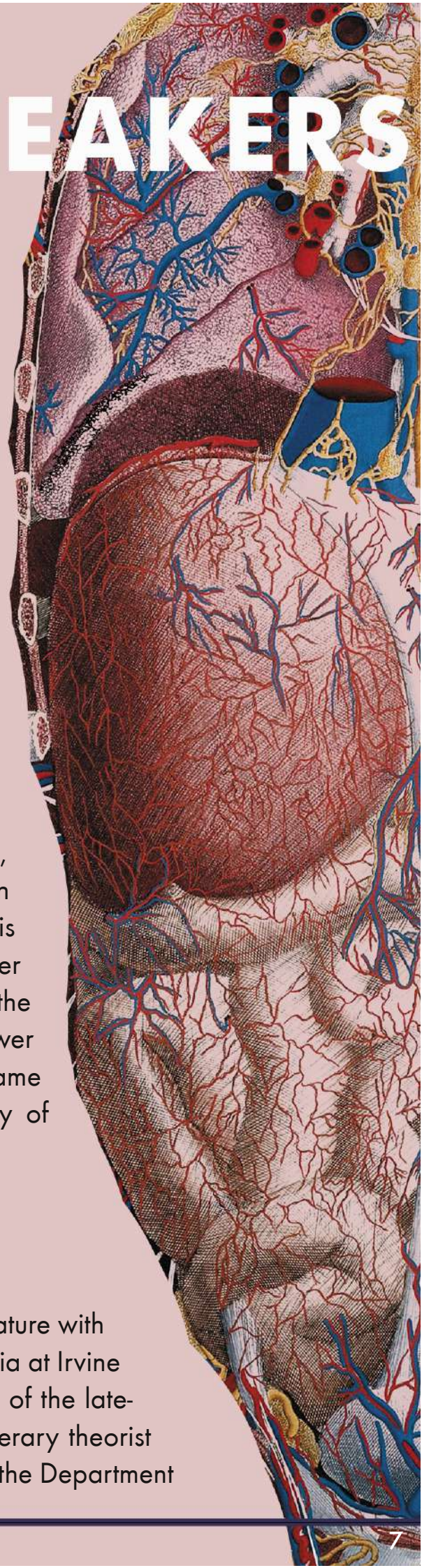
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*vis-à-vis* a certain reality.” (And I always loved Althusser’s style of parsing his sentences with endless qualifications.) Behind the questions posed in the call for this conference, one can hear the echo of the same “crisis of materialism,” when matter is seen merely as information, as quantitative data, as the self-organization of energy in material form, then this may portend not the disappearance of materialism—as Lenin said quite clearly, matter is a philosophical category and as such cannot disappear one day!—but rather only the most recent effect of the confusion between the philosophical category upon which the science of historical materialism has depended and the contents of the new scientific concepts of matter. Nevertheless, according to the philosophical genre of “crisis,” that is, the manner by which philosophy historicizes its own categories in relation to the natural sciences, there is always the same fear that where the concept of matter goes, there goes materialism as well! But where does the theory of materialism go? Following the earlier answer given by Althusser, in my talk I will argue it goes the same place it has gone many times before in the history of philosophy: back to idealism!

## BIO:

Gregg Lambert received a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature with Emphasis in Critical Theory from University of California at Irvine in 1995, finishing his dissertation under the direction of the late-French philosopher Jacques Derrida and German literary theorist Gabriele Schwab. In 1996, Professor Lambert joined the Department





of English at Syracuse University, N.Y., and was later appointed as Chair between 2005 and 2008, and founding director of the Humanities Center and Central New York Humanities Corridor between 2008 and 2019. He currently holds a research appointment as Dean's Professor of Humanities in the College of Arts and Sciences. Professor Lambert is internationally renowned for his scholarly writings on critical theory, the contemporary university, Baroque and Neo-Baroque aesthetics, and especially for his work on the philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Derrida. He is the author of many works of contemporary philosophy, most recently *The World is Gone: Philosophy in Light of the Pandemic* (2022), *The People are Missing: Minor Literature Today* (2021) and *Towards a Geopolitical Image of Thought* (2021).

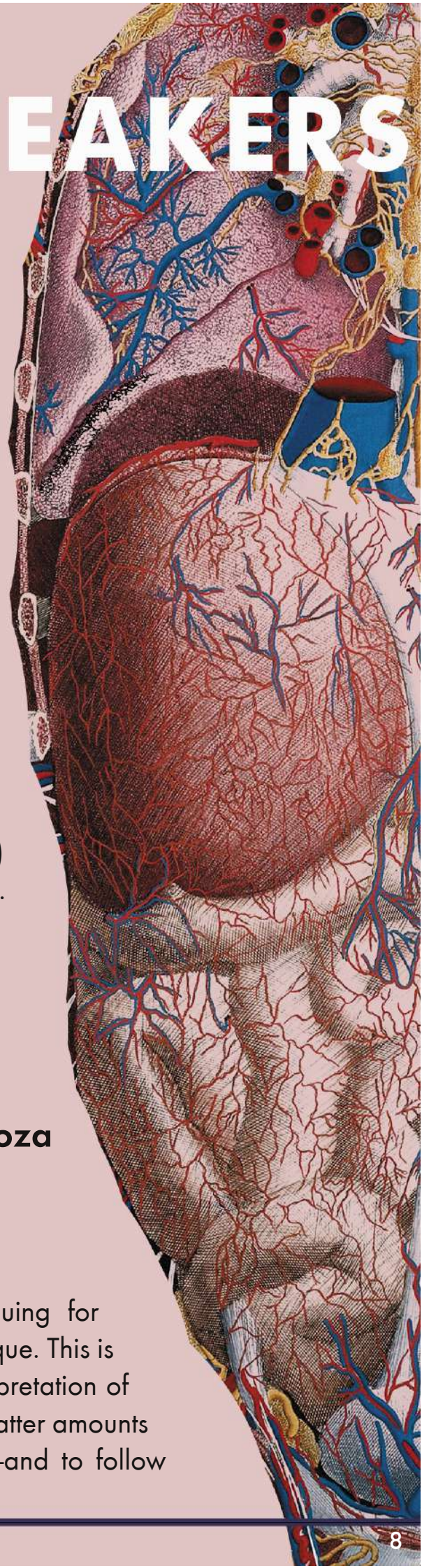
**Nick Nesbitt**

(Princeton University)

## **A Materialist Dialectic: Marx and Spinoza**

### **ABSTRACT:**

In this talk I will follow Pierre Macherey in arguing for a positive, Spinozist understanding of materialist critique. This is to refuse the still-influential Plekhanovist-Stalinist interpretation of a monist Spinozism—in which the hypostatization of matter amounts to a mere inversion of Hegelian absolute idealism—and to follow



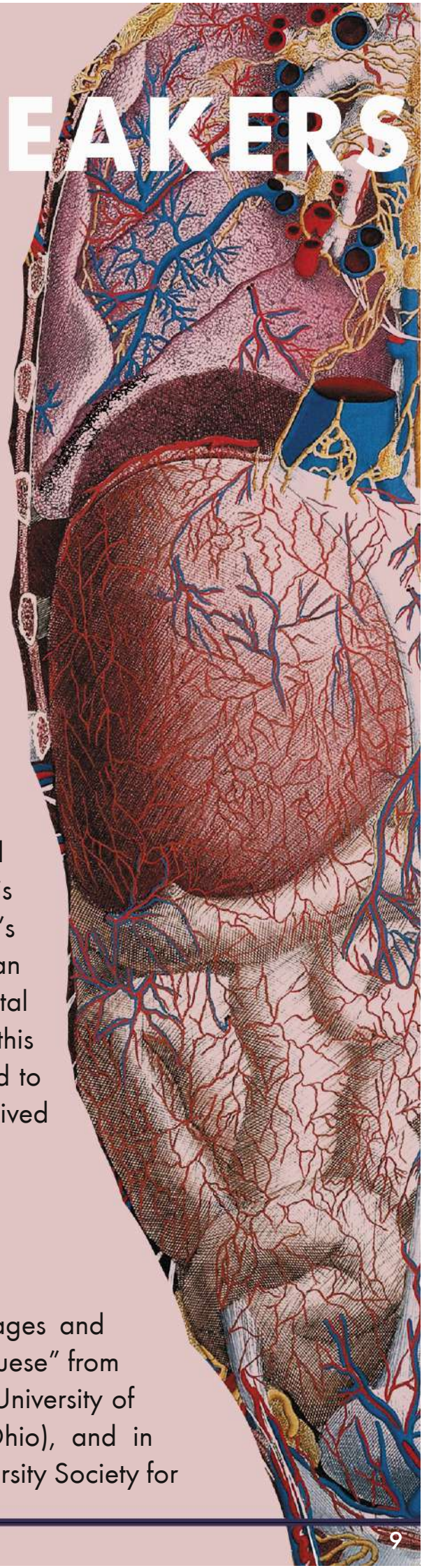


# KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

instead Althusser and Macherey's fidelity to materialist critique as the rigorous distinction (without sublation) between the (infinite) attributes of substance: thought and extension. As a case in point, I will argue that in his revisions to the first chapter of *Capital* after 1867, Marx eliminates the ("Hegelian") categories of contradiction [*Widerspruch*], the negation of negation, and *aufhebung* from his initial exposition of the concept of the commodity, to implement instead a novel materialist dialectic in the mode of additive synthesis. Essentially, Marx revises his initial (1867) demonstration to conclude that there is no constitutive contradiction between use value and exchange value [*Reflexionsbestimmungen*], but instead that their real "opposition" [*Gegensatz*] constitutes an essential attribute of the concept of the commodity. This analysis confirms Althusser's incipient proposition of Marx's objective, tendential development after 1857 (as an ongoing epistemological transition rather than eventual "break") of a non-Hegelian, materialist critique (and this despite what Marx might consciously have continued to believe to the end of his days about his imaginary, lived relation to Hegel).

## BIO:

Nick Nesbitt received his PhD in Romance Languages and Literatures (French) with a "Minor in Brazilian Portuguese" from Harvard University. He has previously taught at the University of Aberdeen (Scotland) and at Miami University (Ohio), and in 2003-4 he was a Mellon Fellow at the Cornell University Society for





the Humanities. He is the author of "Caribbean Critique: Antillean Critical Theory from Toussaint to Glissant" (Liverpool 2013); "Universal Emancipation: The Haitian Revolution and the Radical Enlightenment" (Virginia 2008); and "Voicing Memory: History and Subjectivity in French Caribbean Literature" (Virginia 2003). He is also the editor of "The Concept in Crisis: Reading Capital Today" (Duke 2017), "Toussaint Louverture: The Haitian Revolution" (Verso, 2008); co-editor of "Revolutions for the Future: May '68" and the "Prague Spring" (Suture 2020); and co-editor (with Brian Hulse) of "Sounding the Virtual: Gilles Deleuze and the Philosophy of Music" (Ashgate 2010). For 2019-21, he is the recipient of a GAČR grant as Senior Researcher at the Philosophical Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences. His last book is entitled, "The Price of Slavery: Capitalism and Revolution in the Caribbean" (University of Virginia Press 2022).

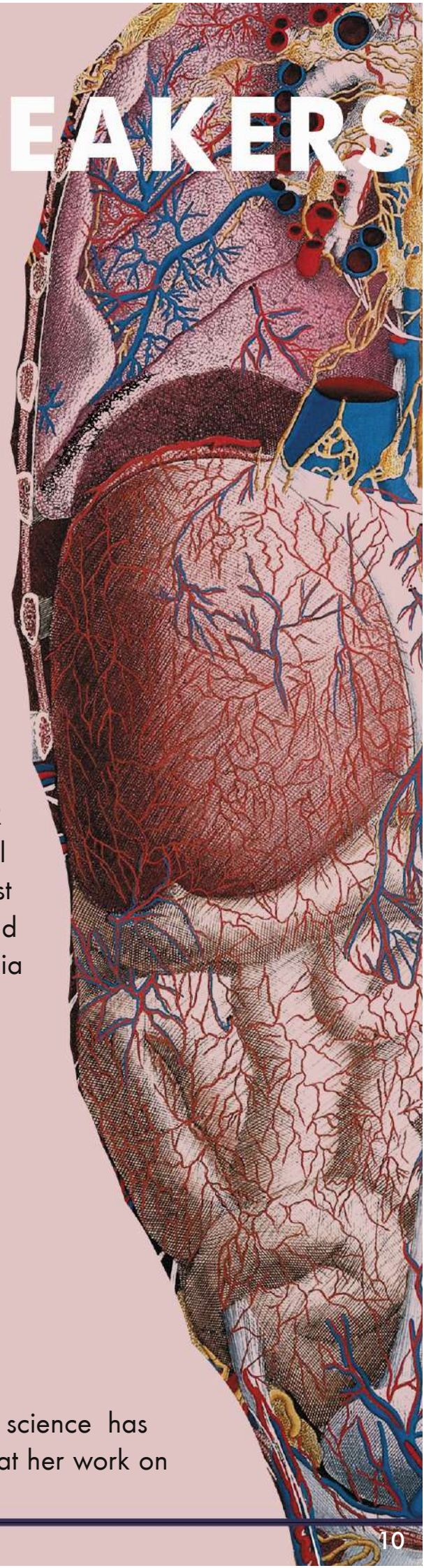
**Adam Nocek**

(Arizona State University)

## On the Materials of Art and Biology

### ABSTRACT:

Susanne K. Langer's work on the philosophy of science has received precious little attention. This is not to say that her work on

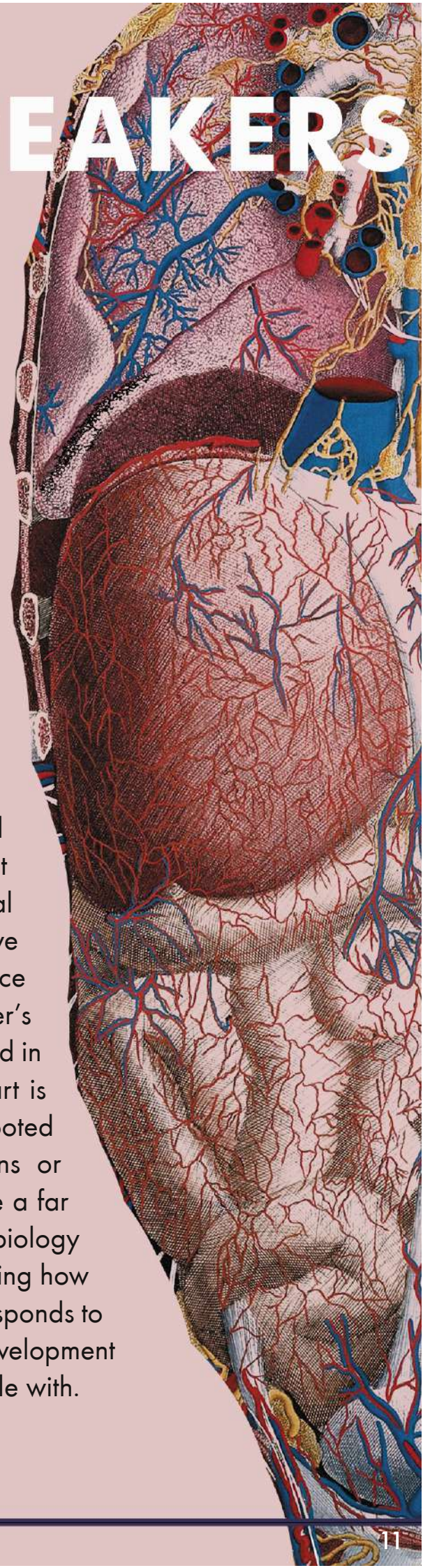




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aesthetics and symbolism, for which she is better known, has gained the recognition it deserves either, though she has a modest following in American pragmatism, the philosophy of art and aesthetics, and to a lesser extent process philosophy. Nevertheless, her contribution to the philosophy of science, and the philosophy of biology in particular, has been met with little to no recognition. This talk aims to find those elements in Langer's "philosophical biology" set out in her first volume of the *Mind* trilogy that are relevant to the biological sciences today.

To do so, the piece examines Langer's attempt to develop a concept of mind that can be understood in terms of the "highest physiological processes," and thus fully "rooted" in organic activities, without resorting to reductive materialism or metaphysical dualism. To avoid these dead ends, which have plagued the history of philosophy and modern science for centuries, the talk pays special attention to Langer's use of art to construct a materialist theory of mind, and in particular, examines how the symbolic function of art is essential to building concepts of biochemically rooted feeling/mind that do depend on psychic additions or theories of mechanism. And while this may seem like a far cry from the data-intensive landscape of theoretical biology in the twenty-first century, the talk concludes by showing how Langer's arts-based method of biological research responds to problems in the conceptualization of organismic development that theoretical biologists are just beginning to grapple with.





**BIO:**

Adam Nocek is Associate Professor in the Philosophy of Technology and Science and Technology Studies in the School of Arts, Media and Engineering at Arizona State University. He is also the Founding Director of ASU's Center for Philosophical Technologies. Nocek has published widely on the philosophy of media and science; speculative philosophy (especially Whitehead); design philosophy, history, and practice; and critical and speculative theories of computational media. His last book is titled *Molecular Capture: The Animation of Biology* (Minnesota, 2021).

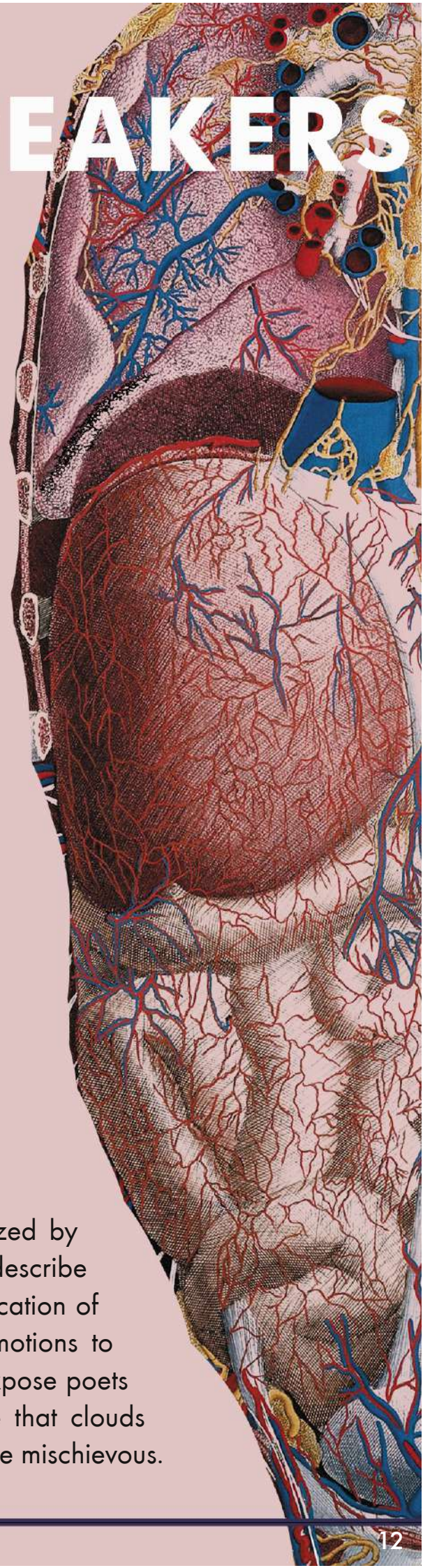
**Dominic Pettman**

(New School)

## **Sad Planets: Some Remarks on the Pathetic Fallacy**

**ABSTRACT:**

The notion of a "pathetic fallacy" was first formalized by John Ruskin in the middle of the 19th century, to describe a persistent theme in art and literature: the personification of nature, and the erroneous attribution of human emotions to insentient elements. Ruskin was especially keen to expose poets of a Romantic persuasion, who seemed to believe that clouds could truly be lonely, or that streams could actually be mischievous.



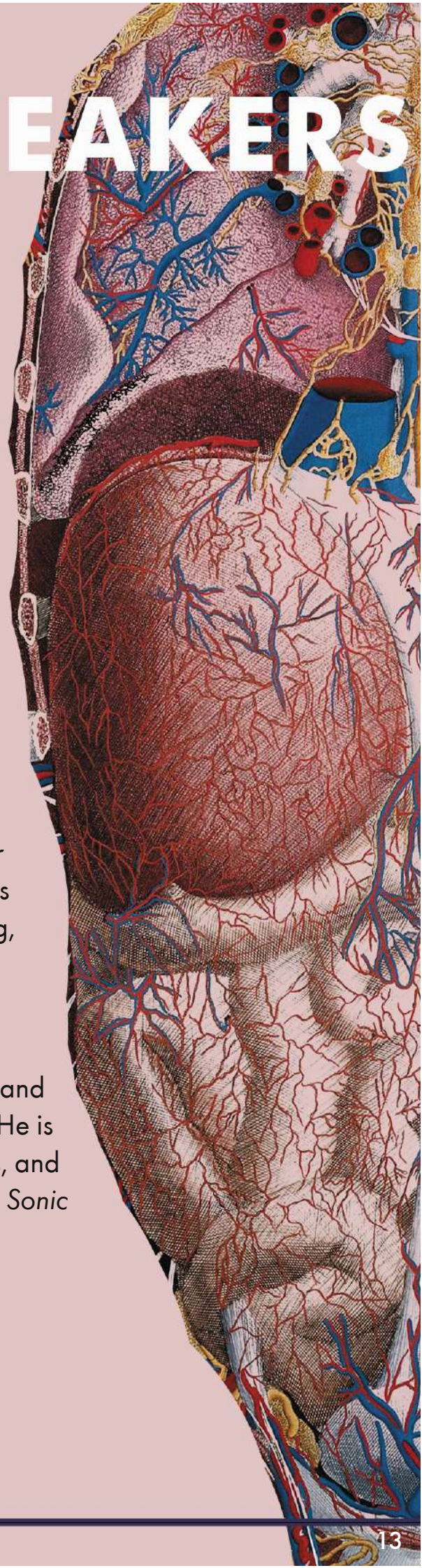


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(Beyond the aesthetic service of metaphor.) This talk will revisit Ruskin's skepticism, on the other side of the new materialist turn, in which a new generation has entertained the possibility of matter itself exhibiting, or even experiencing, vital properties and animating tendencies. These remarks stem from a larger project – a book-in-progress entitled, *Sad Planets* (with Eugene Thacker) – that asks what happens to our understanding of affect when projected on to – or scaled up to – the cosmic level. Are we simply succumbing to anthropocentric delusion, or a centrifugal species-wide narcissism, by attributing, for instance, sorrow or melancholia to the non-human world (or even extra-terrestrial worlds)? Or is there a possibility that we are part of a much larger affective ecology, which complicates – and perhaps even erases – the distinction between thought, feeling, and "brute" materiality?

## BIO:

Dominic Pettman is University Professor of Media and New Humanities at the New School, New York City. He is the author of numerous books on technology, humans, and other animals; including *Creaturely Love* (Minnesota), *Sonic Intimacy* (Stanford), and *Peak Libido* (Polity).



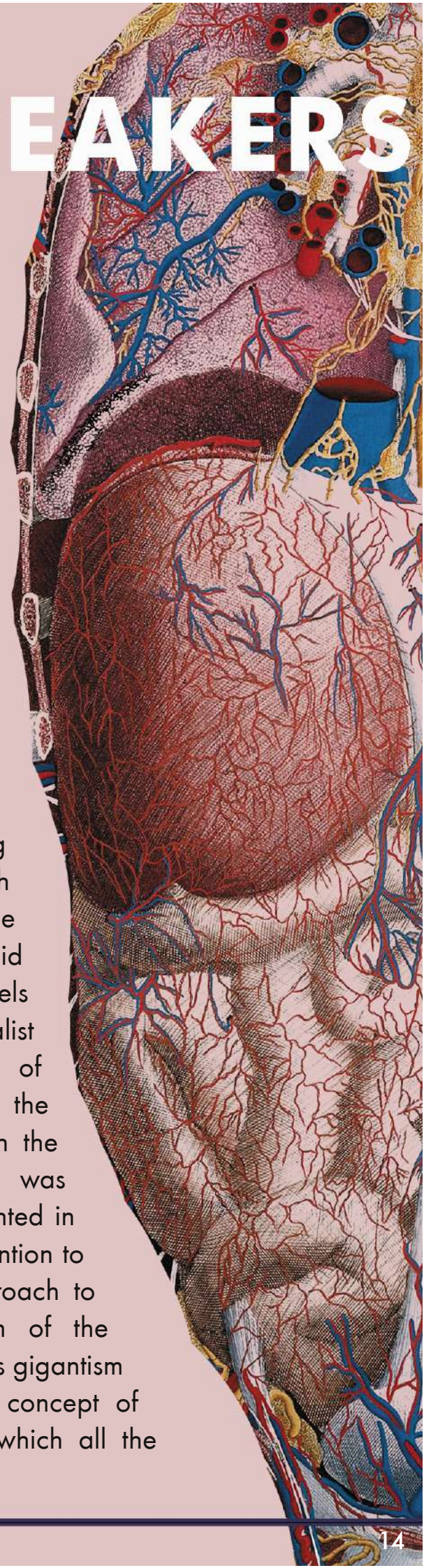


Alex Taek-Gwang Lee  
(Kyung Hee University)

## On Fourier's Naturalism and Engels' Dialectics of Nature

### ABSTRACT:

It was Frederick Engels who firstly found the radical aspect of Fourierism, which was different from the Hegelian theory of history. In "A Fragment of Fourier's On Trade," Engels depicted the "comical arrogance of German theory" and its "Hegelianisation" of communism. As for Fourier, particularly, Engels acclaimed Fourier's sharp criticism of existing social relations and his wit and humour," even though he admitted that Fourier could not achieve knowledge of absolute truth because of his utopianism which did not start out from the Hegelian theory. Perhaps, Engels found out the possible radical critique of capitalist production in Fourier's nonsensical speculations of communism. An excerpt that Engels introduced in the fragment was Fourier's monetary theory based on the speculative analyses of capitalist trade, which was originally published in *La Phalange* and later reprinted in *The Theory of Four Movements*. Beyond Engels' attention to Fourier's critique of the capitalist system, my approach to Fourier's works more focuses on his revelation of the relationship between desire and production. Fourier's gigantism can be translated into Deleuze's and Guattari's concept of a "cosmic plane," the plane of immanence, on which all the

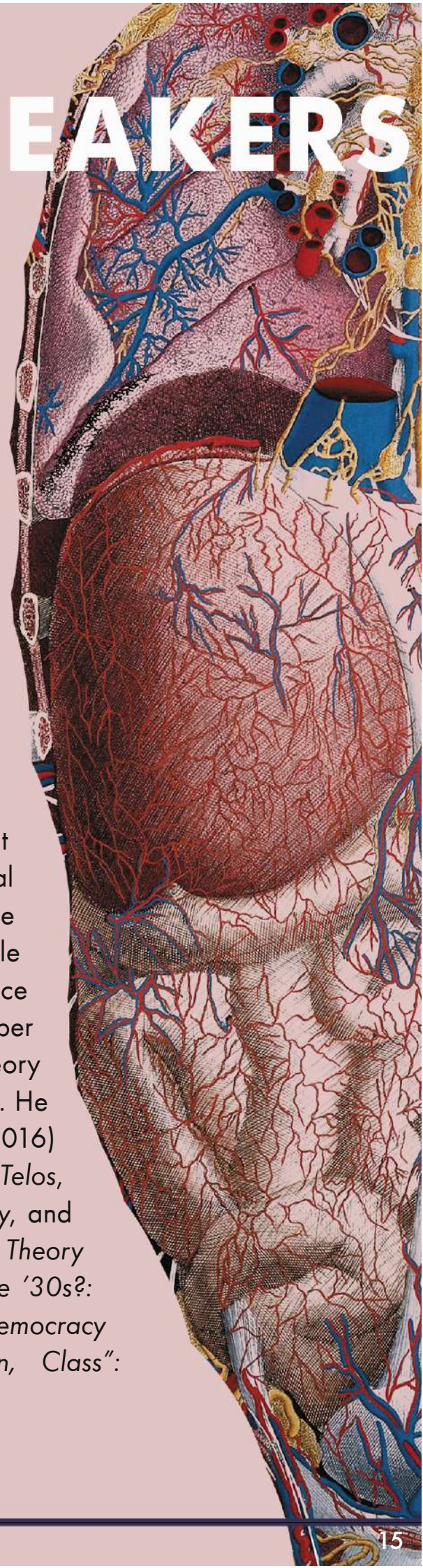




differentiated elements are gained. This eruption of multiplicity should be considered as the foundation of minor materialism. For this argument, my presentation will compare Fourier's visionary naturalism with Engels' dialectics of nature.

## BIO:

Alex Taek-Gwang Lee is a professor at the Department of British and American Cultural Studies and a founding director of the Center for Technology in Humanities, Kyung Hee University, Korea. He was invited as a visiting professor at the Centre for Culture Media and Governance, Jamia Millia Islamia University, India and an international visiting scholar at Institute for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences, National Taiwan University, Taiwan. He served as an academic adviser for Gwangju Biennale in 2017 and a program manager for the Venice Biennale of Architecture in 2021. He is a board member of The International Consortium of Critical Theory Programs (ICCTP) and Asia Theories Network (ATN). He edited the third volume of *The Idea of Communism* (2016) and published articles in various journals such as *Telos*, *Deleuze and Guattari Studies* and *Philosophy Today*, and chapters in *The Bloomsbury Handbook of World Theory* (2021), *Thinking with Animation* (2021), *Back to the '30s?: Recurring Crises of Capitalism, Liberalism and Democracy* (2020) and *Balibar/Wallerstein's "Race, Nation, Class": Rereading a Dialogue for Our Times* (2018).





Tom Tyler

(University of Leeds)

## Brutal

### ABSTRACT:

To call someone “brutal” is to accuse them of being excessively rude or ill-mannered, perhaps even cruel or savage. When contemporaries of the austere Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein spoke of his “brutal directness” and the “cold brutality of his behaviour,” they meant to suggest that he was uncaringly, inhumanly blunt. Those who are brutal, it is implied, are no better than animals in their treatment of others. It is in this sense that the architectural style labelled “brutalist” is generally understood to be brutal: as coarse and lacking in sensitivity. Brutalist buildings are characterised, at least in the popular imagination, by imposing scale, uncompromising angles, and unadorned concrete facades. According to their detractors they are harsh, impersonal, and experienced as unwelcoming and even alienating by those who are required to come into contact with them. Brutalist buildings, we are frequently told, are “concrete monstrosities.” Concrete is a versatile material however, whose virtues are frequently overlooked, and monsters, as the ancients well knew, can show much to those prepared to look. In this presentation I will explore, and perhaps even invert, what we might call “the myth of the brutal” by means of an examination of architecture, videogames, and a certain spinach-eating, one-eyed sailor.





**BIO:**

Tom Tyler is a lecturer in Digital Culture at the University of Leeds, UK. He has published widely on animals and anthropocentrism within the history of ideas, critical theory and popular culture. He is the editor of *Animal Beings* (Parallax #38, 2006), co-editor of *Animal Encounters* (Brill, 2009), and author of *CIFERAE: A Bestiary in Five Fingers* (Minnesota UP, 2012) and *Game: Animals, Video Games, and Humanity* (Minnesota UP, 2022). Further details of his research can be found at <http://www.cyberchimp.co.uk/research/>.

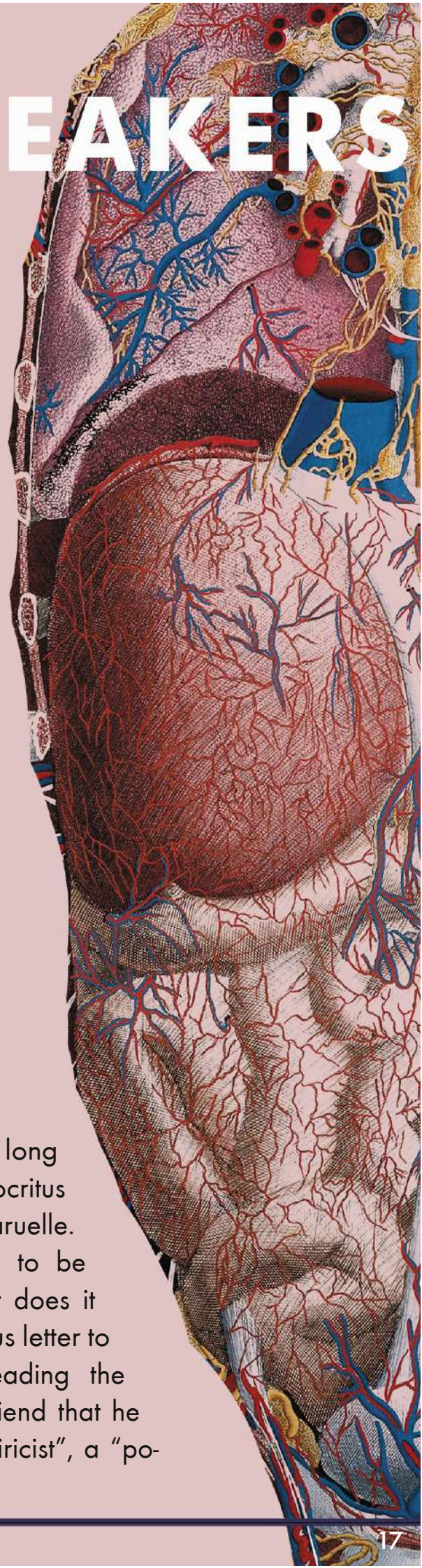
**Szymon Wróbel**

(University of Warsaw)

## How to Be a Good Materialist?

**ABSTRACT:**

Disputes about materialism and its conditions are as long as the history of philosophy, and extend from Democritus and Lucretius to Alain Badiou and François Laruelle. I claim that we are still not sure what it means to be a “good materialist” or a “real materialist”? What does it mean to be faithful to “true materialism”? In a famous letter to Walter Benjamin, Theodor W. Adorno, after reading the introduction to the Arcades project, reminded his friend that he was not a “real materialist”, but only a “naive empiricist”, a “po-

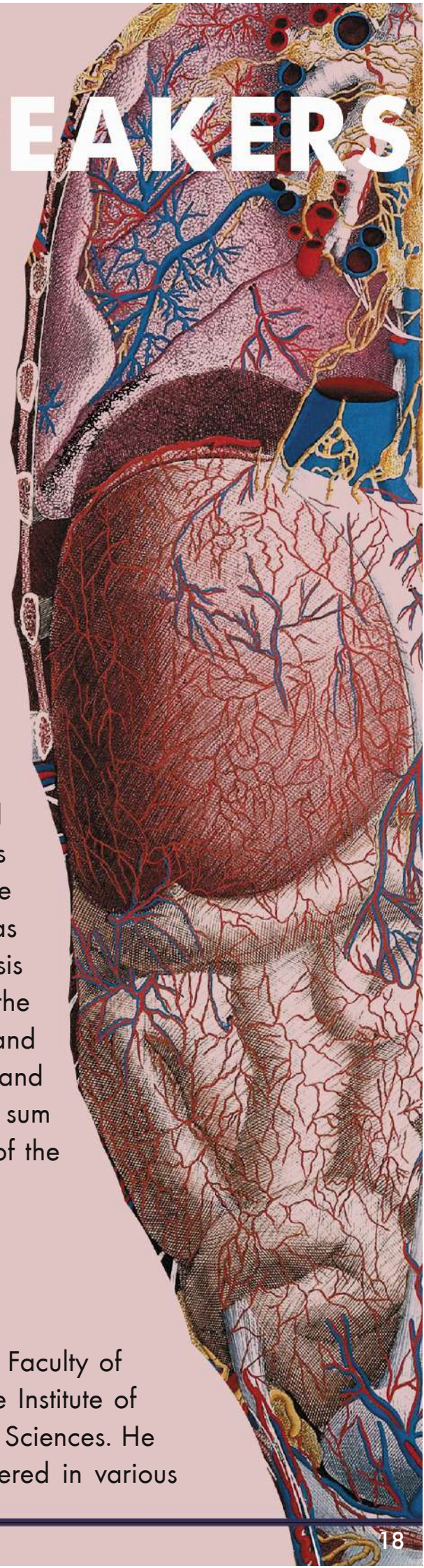




sitivist" who believed in the magic of directly given reality. For Adorno "materialist determination of cultural traits is only possible if it is mediated through the total social process". "Immediate materialism" is located at the crossroads of magic and positivism. According to Adorno, Benjamin is making the mistake of interpreting phenomena not so much to elucidate them as products of the social whole but rather to relate them directly, in their isolated singularity. From this diagnosis, it is only a step to accuse Benjamin of "vulgar materialism", resulting from forgetting the concept of mediation. For Adorno, materialist determination of cultural traits is only possible if it is mediated through the total social process. In my speech, I will not verify Adorno's judgments on Benjamin, instead I will consider the formula of a "real materialist". Continuing some ideas of G. Agamben's philosophy, I will propose a thesis according to which the only "true materialism" is the one which abolishes separation between animal and ratio, between nature and culture, between matter and form, never seeing in concrete historical reality the sum of structure and superstructure, but the direct unity of the two terms in praxis.

## BIO:

Szymon Wróbel is a professor of philosophy at the Faculty of Artes Liberales at the University of Warsaw and the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. He is the author of numerous books and articles scattered in various

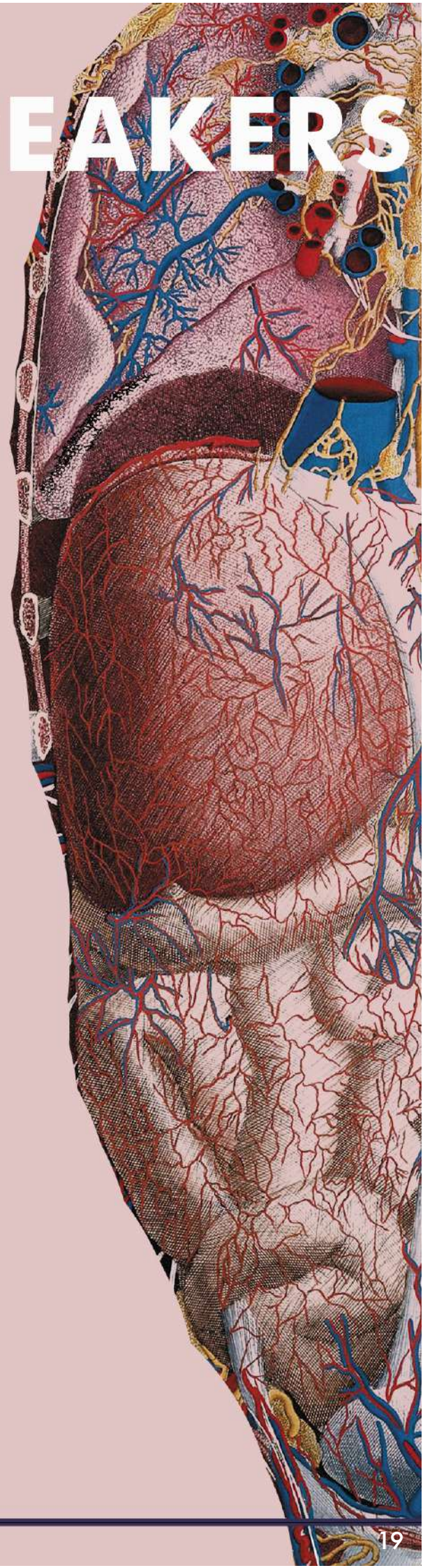




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scientific journals. Together with Krzysztof Skonieczny, he is co-editor of three books — *Atheism Revisited*, *Rethinking Modernity and Inventing New Modes of Life* (Palgrave Macmillan 2020), *Living and Thinking in the Post-Digital World* (Universitas 2021), and *Regimes of Capital in the Postdigital Age* (Routledge, forthcoming). Currently, he is the head of the experimental Laboratory of Techno-Humanities at the Faculty of Artes Liberales where for several years he is conducting the “Technology and Socialization” project: Technology and Socialization — Techno-Humanities Lab Research Project ([th.al.uw.edu.pl](http://th.al.uw.edu.pl)).





Maciej Bednarski

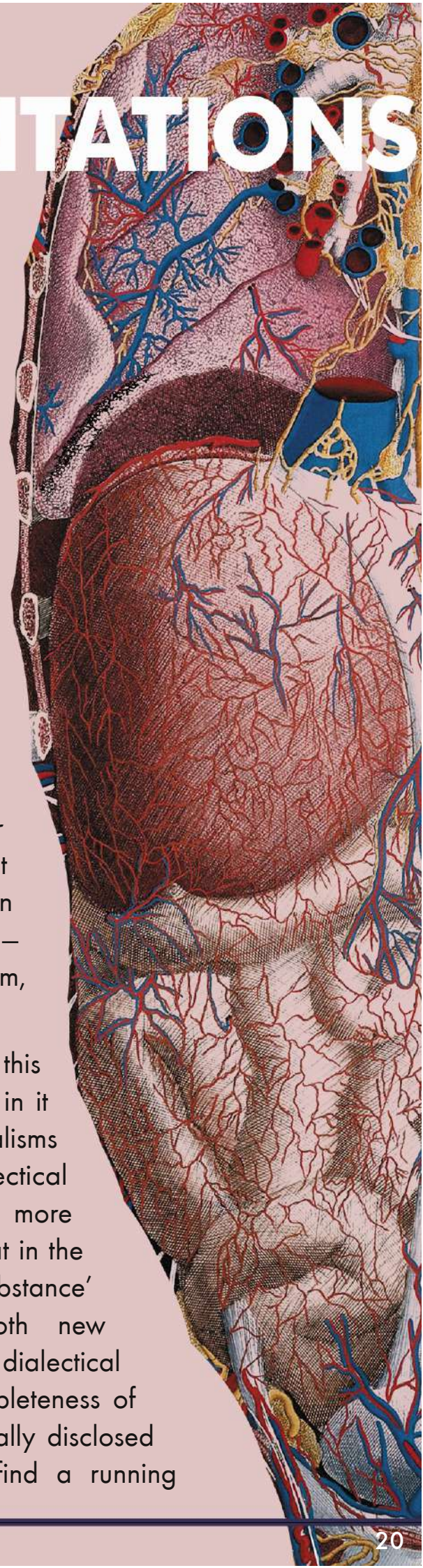
(University of Warsaw)

## Spiritual materialism? Interpreting Stiegler's general organology as materialism

### ABSTRACT:

Can Bernard Stiegler's project of general organology be classified as a kind of materialism? What kind of a-typical materialism could that be? Stiegler declared himself, although rather on seldom occasions on paper, as a 'spiritual materialist' or 'material spiritualist'. His philosophical engagement with matter evolved in last years of his work into an epistemologically-oriented concept of hyper-matter – but could we interpret his thinking as hyper-materialism, then?

In this short paper I want to discuss the outlook of this 'spiritual materialism', what role hyper-matter plays in it and how it relates to other contemporary materialisms (post-Deleuzian new materialisms, Žižek-driven dialectical and transcendental materialism as well as other, more exotic ones by Meillassoux or Harman). I argue that in the context of a major debate on 'Subject' and 'Substance' Stiegler's organology distances claims of both new materialism with its 'all Substance is Subject' and dialectical materialism with its 'Subject arises from the incompleteness of Substance'. In what I read as a form of only partially disclosed non-dualism of Stiegler's general organology I find a running





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similarity to what has been proposed by Gamble, Hanan and Nail as 'performative new materialism'. Finally, I discuss on what 'matter' could mean in such an atypical materialism and whether this meaning is more or less meaningful for a non-philosophical user of this term.

## BIO:

Maciej Bednarski – a PhD student in Philosophy at the Doctoral School of Humanities, University of Warsaw, Poland. His doctoral research project is concerned with a topological account of digitalization of the University as his main academic interests travel between philosophy of education, philosophy of technology and philosophical topology. He is also interested in new accounts of philosophical materialism.

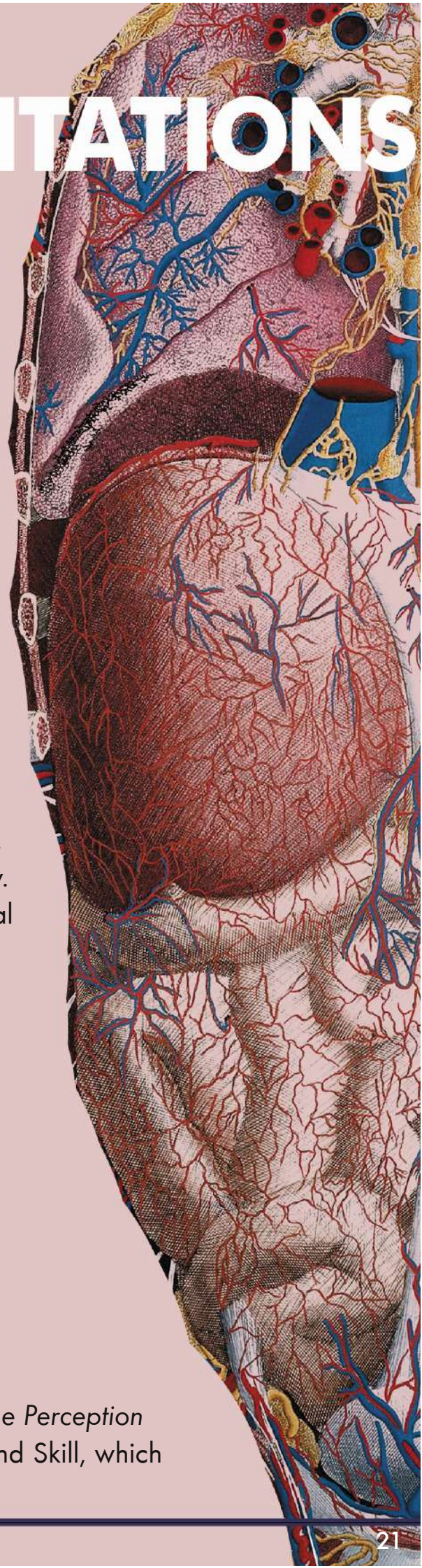
Hubert Będkowski

(University of Warsaw)

## Heat Signature: Thermodynamics of Human-Animal Interactions

## ABSTRACT:

One of Tim Ingold's beginning notions in the book *The Perception of the Environment. Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*, which





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deals with anthropology of senses, is that of animal presenting themselves to human. Thinking about materiality of animal presence, presentation and representation, we think not only about its visibility but also smells, noises, the sensation of touching the fur or skin as main aspects of those. Even after overcoming egocentric tendencies our interactions are anchored in sensual spectrum governed not purely by our sensual capabilities but also our perception of senses and therefore perception itself. In the paper I propose the reading of human-animal interactions focused on mostly overlooked aspect of heat, primarily bodily one, as the important issue that shaped early interspecies relations and is still important factor – nowadays probably experienced mostly by house dogs and cats owners. Looking into examples of the first hunting strategy of humans and first ever domestication of an animal, I want to consider the shaping of human-animal thermodynamics. In the paper an important cultural root of thinking about heat, earliest Indian religious texts such as Rig Veda, will be also presented to showcase another link to heat as a one of dominant factors of thinking about materiality of animals, even if nowadays read mostly spiritually. The paper is also a pretext to open up possibilities of rethinking the heat in general, an invitation to think about thermodynamics of other interactions.

## BIO:

Hubert Bedkowski is a master of Artes liberales, currently finishing PhD in Culture Studies at Nature-Culture PhD Programme, with thesis



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focusing on human-animal-objects interactions in zoological gardens. As an interdisciplinary Animal Studies researcher, his main scientific interests are biopolitics of animal related institutions, misrepresentations of animals in popular culture, and relations between conceptualizations of animals and practices related to them.

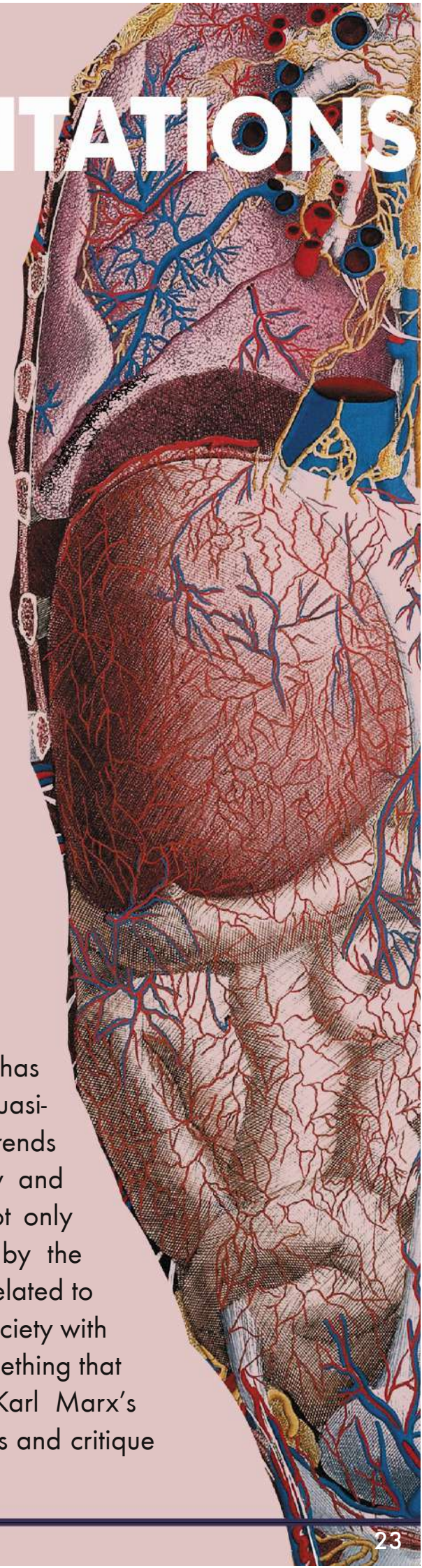
**Andrzej Frelek**

(Polish Academy of Sciences)

## **Materialism, not mysticism: On Adorno's critical materialism, the environmental crisis and social mediation**

### **ABSTRACT:**

In recent years the discussion around materialism has shifted towards an emphasis on the agency and quasi-subjectivity of objects and matter, causing waves of trends and discussion both within the field of philosophy and outside of it. Many facets of this discussion are not only relatively novel, but also timely – as evidenced by the attention given by many theorists to various matters related to the environmental crisis and the relations of human society with nature. But the new materialisms seem to eschew something that has become synonymous with materialism since Karl Marx's repositioning of the term – a focus on social relations and critique





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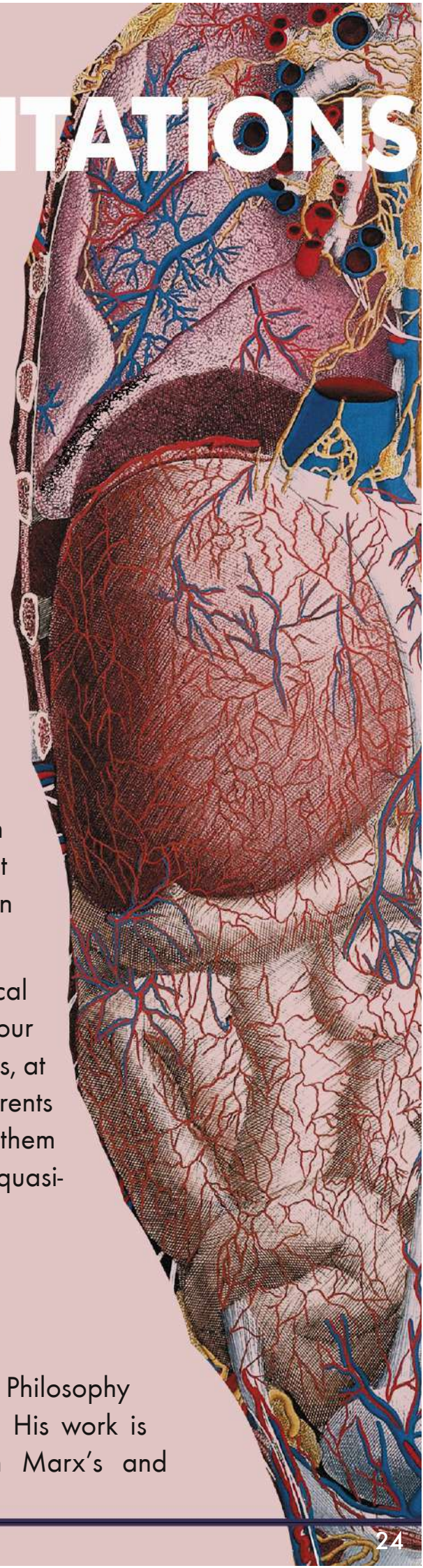
of the modes of mediation between humans and matter that are pertinent to them.

My aim here is therefore to notice what is important and what is lacking in the theories of new materialists, and this sees me turning towards the materialism of Theodor W. Adorno, which has seemingly not been given the attention it is deserved. By examining his reading of Marx and Hegel we can find a novel conception of critical materialism that seems to anticipate the most important parts of new materialist theories, especially where they pertain to the disparity between reason and matter. In contrast to the contemporary discussions Adorno seeks to understand the social, historical roots of the modes in which this incommensurability becomes apparent and which necessitate that it resolves into domination of both human and non-human nature.

I argue that this focus makes Adorno's critical materialism uniquely suited to understanding our contemporary times of environmental and social crises, at the same time making apparent the mystical undercurrents of many new materialist theories – ones that lead them towards either veiled despair or updated forms of quasi-occult environmentalism.

## BIO:

Andrzej Frelek is a PhD. Candidate at the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences. His work is centered on understanding the relation between Marx's and





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Adorno's critiques of political economy and their relation to the environmental crisis.

Rodrigo Gonsalves

(University of São Paulo)

Daniel Fabre

(University of São Paulo)

## Materialist dialectic and Normativity

### ABSTRACT:

The concept of normativity has profound theoretical and practical implications of several orders. It is usually treated from the standpoint of moral philosophy or ethics, but it is also a crucial concept within the scope of law and the legal domain. More recently, in addition to these two "classical" strands of normativity, both the so-called identity theories and legal philosophy have given new contours to the concept, providing an unconscious and structural character to it, which is plural and multiple to existing societies. Despite the theoretical contributions of these currents, normativity remains to this day a concept in need of analysis from the materialist point of view. It is precisely under this context that the so-called materialist dialectic, anchored in the works of Alain Badiou, Sylvain Lazarus and Slavoj Žižek, with its connections and dissonances with the historical materialism from Marx and Engels emerges as an important philosophical contribution for nowadays. In particular, Alain Badiou's mathematical ontology, as well as the



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presuppositions of a non-totality, the inconsistency of materiality or otherwise of the material presence of an *Événement*, are theoretical frameworks capable of providing a new and vigorous conceptualization of normativity, conceived in its material multiplicity with its ontological implications with the state-of-situation, processes of subjectivation and, in finally, the processes of true transformation of human societies. The present work aims at developing a contribution towards materialist dialectic against impasses of normativity.

## BIOS:

Rodrigo Gonsalves is a practicing psychoanalyst. He graduated in Philosophy and Psychology. Earned his M.A and PhD in Philosophy, Critical Theory and the Arts at European Graduate School (EGS) and a M.A and is a PhD candidate in Clinical Psychology at the University of São Paulo (USP). He co-edited the books: *Essays on the undead: A Critical Review* (2018) and *Essays on Vampires and Zombies: psychoanalysis, philosophy and the arts* (2021). Author of many book chapters and articles about Lacanian psychoanalysis and the new directions in Marxist theory. He is currently a researcher for Latesfip (Interdepartamental Laboratory of Social Theory, Philosophy and Psychoanalysis/USP), member of GPOL/PSOPOL (IPUSP), member of the editorial committee of the journal *CT&T: Continental Thought and Theory* and an editor-member of the publisher *Lavra Palavra*.



Daniel S. Mayor Fabre is a lawyer, philosopher and teacher. He graduated in Law from the University of São Paulo (USP), where is currently also a PhD candidate in Philosophy and General Theory of Law. He is author of many articles about law, philosophy and psychoanalysis, focused on Marxist Theory. He is a translator of several books to Portuguese and also, an editor-member of the publisher *Lavra Palavra*.

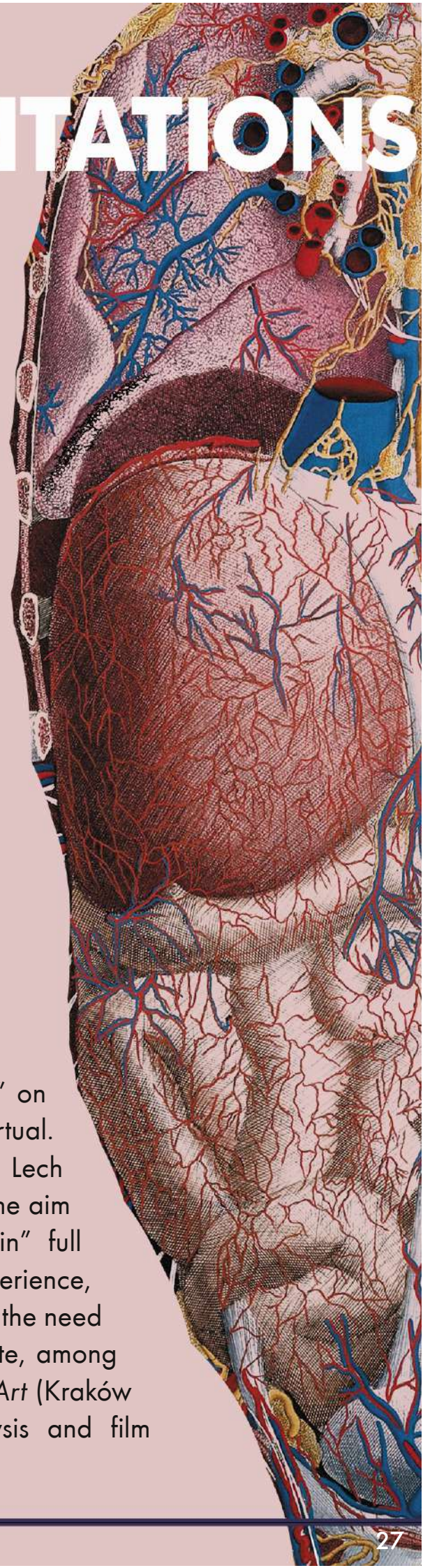
**Iwona Grodź**

(Polish Society of Film and Media Researchers,  
University of Social Communication)

## Artist between materiality and virtuality...

### ABSTRACT:

The subject of the lecture will be the artist's "game" on the border between what is material and what is virtual. The research material will be selected films by Lech Majewski (*The Garden of Earthly Delights*, 2003). The aim is to make people aware of the need to "regain" full connection with things and the world of real experience, about which people of art, including filmmakers, and the need to reflect on "alternative realism", about which wrote, among others, Ewelina Twardoch-Ras in the book *Biometric Art* (Kraków 2021). Methodology: theoretical discourse analysis and film studies analysis.





**BIO:**

Literary scholar, film expert, art historian, musicologist. Iwona Grodź is also interested in theater, cultural studies, philosophy and psychology, as well as the idea of "correspondence" of arts, especially: literature-film-painting-theater and music. Author of books (among others): *The Saragossa Manuscript* by Wojciech Jerzy Has (Poznań 2005), *Encrypted in the picture. About films by Wojciech Jerzy Has* (Gdańsk 2008), *Jerzy Skolimowski* (Warsaw 2010), *Synergy of art and science in the work of Zbigniew Rybczyński* (Warsaw 2015), *Between Dream and Reality* (Berlin 2018), *Hasowski Appendix* (Kraków 2020).

**Philip Højme**

(Polish Academy of Sciences)

## **Agential Realism — Remarks on New Materialism and Philosophy-Physics**

**ABSTRACT:**

With this presentation, I aim to conceptualize the notion of agential realism (Barad, 1996; 2007) through a close reading of Niels Bohr's various philosophical texts (2013). The reason for conceptualizing Karen Barad's agential realism in relation to Bohr's 'philosophy' is to inquire into the limits and possibilities of reading Bohr as a trained philosopher.



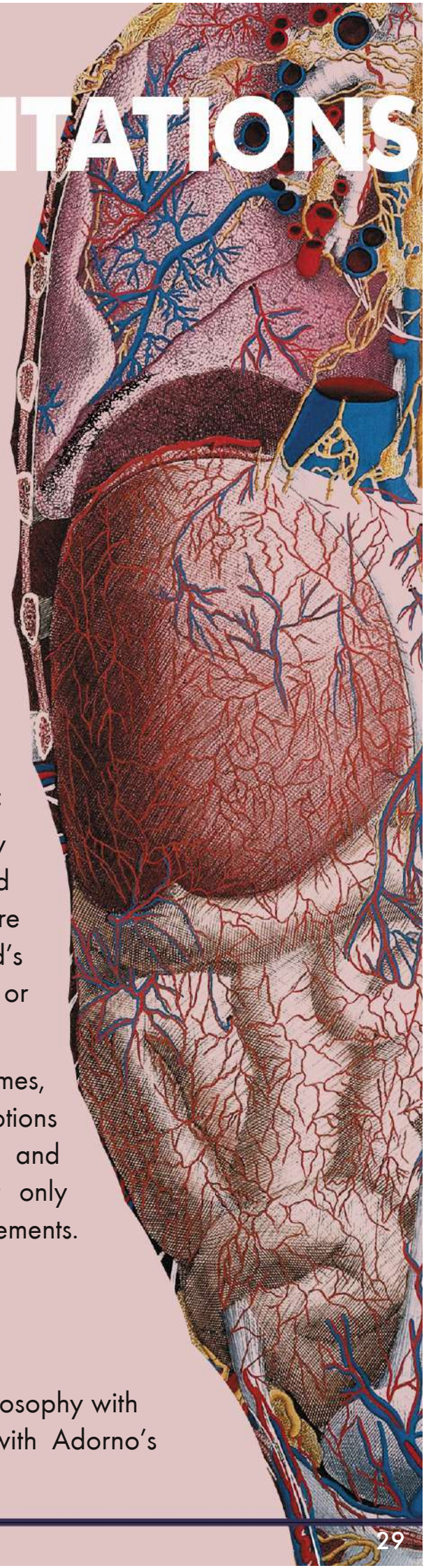
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The presentation is divided into three parts. The first is an account of Barad's agential realism – itself a part of what is broadly called New Materialism – where I will outline and elaborate on its reliance on central notions that Barad takes up from Bohr: e.g. "philosophy-physics" (Barad, 1996, 165) and "Complementary" (Barad, 1996, 168; 190 [note 9]). The presentation proceeds with accounting for how Bohr understood these terms as well as some using David Favrholt's accounts of Bohr's understanding, or lack, therefore, of philosophy (1992; 1993) to show how Barad's reliance on Bohr comes with an ambiguity that could potentially threaten the philosophical foundation of agential realism. In the third and final part of my presentation, I will then show precisely how and where this becomes problematic for Barad and venture to state some preliminary notes on how Barad's argument might be proffered against Bohr's eclectic or un-philosophical ways of using philosophical terms.

By conceptualizing Barad's reliance on Bohr's, at times, problematic usage of highly technical philosophical notions and ideas, this presentation outlines the limits and possibilities of agential realism in ways that not only problematizes but also points toward possible improvements.

## BIO:

Philip is currently a fourth-year PhD researcher in Philosophy with a project seeking to juxtapose Butler's feminism with Adorno's





negative dialectics. The aim is to show how Butler's explicit anti-dialecticism could be redeemed via negative dialectics and how this would lend a helping hand to Butler concerning the critique that Butler 'forgot about the body' (New Materialism). Philip has published articles on diverse topics such as Transhumanism (2019), Democracy and Riots (2021), Covid (2021; 2022), and Biocommunism (2023).

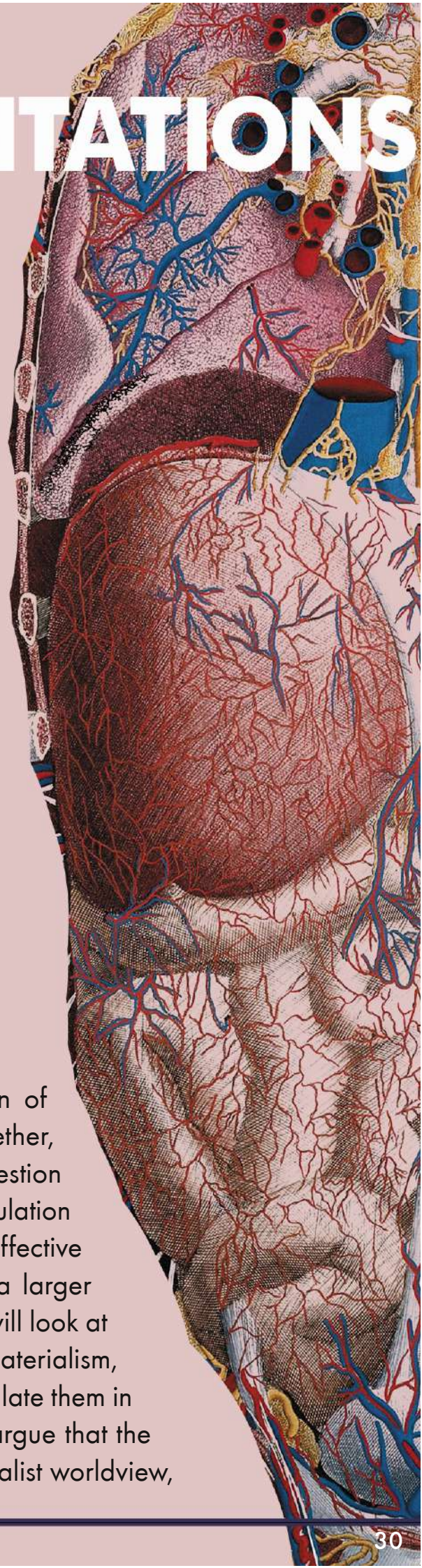
**Mateusz Janik**

(Polish Academy of Sciences)

## **Becoming Apart: Materialist Disenchantment and the Labor of Undoing**

### **ABSTRACT:**

The history of materialism is marked by a question of attraction and attachment: What brings atoms together, and what prevents bodies from falling apart? This question can take a variety of forms: from a metaphysical speculation and naturalistic analysis of forces to political and affective inquiries concerning the bindings of subject within a larger corporeal networks of relations. In my presentation I will look at some of the classical problems of early modern materialism, particularly the principle of individuation, and reformulate them in terms of intimacy and affective entanglement. I will argue that the question of attachment is an intrinsic feature of materialist worldview,





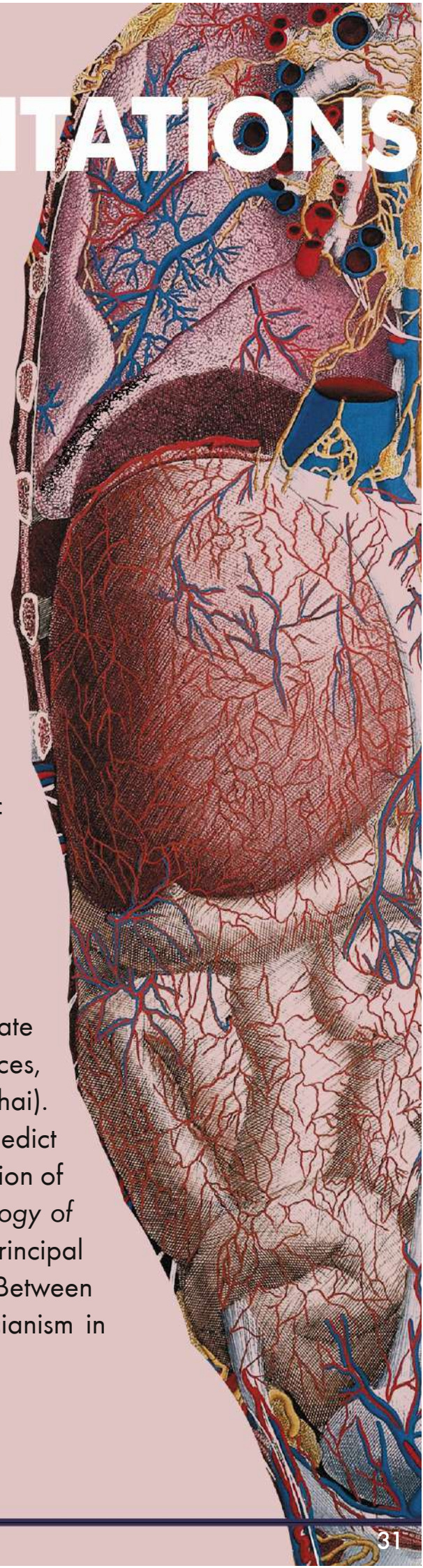
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which implies certain counter-tendency, which might be called a labor of undoing. As things inevitably fall apart, are transformed and reconfigured, undoing is a force closely related with an act of disenchantment in which the very image of an individual, taken as a collective body, loses its integrity and attraction. The close affinity between undoing and disenchantment raises a series of problems concerning the way in which bodies relate to each other. Particularly whether or not disenchantment implies some other, less essentialist mode of being together? By accompanying such authors as Lauren Berlant, Eve Kosovsky Sedgwick or Ariella Aisha Azoulay I will try to draw some social and political implications of the materialist labor of undoing.

## BIO:

Mateusz Janik — Philosopher; studied at Graduate School of Social Research (Polish Academy of Sciences, Warsaw) and East China Normal University (Shanghai). He specializes in the early modern philosophy of Benedict Spinoza, political ontology, and early modern reception of Chinese thought in Europe. Author of *Political Ontology of Benedict Spinoza* (2017, Warsaw; in Polish). Principal investigator in the Polish National Science Center "Between Metaphysics and Politics: Monism and Neo-Confucianism in Early Modern Europe" (2019-2023).





Julia Krzesicka

(University of Warsaw)

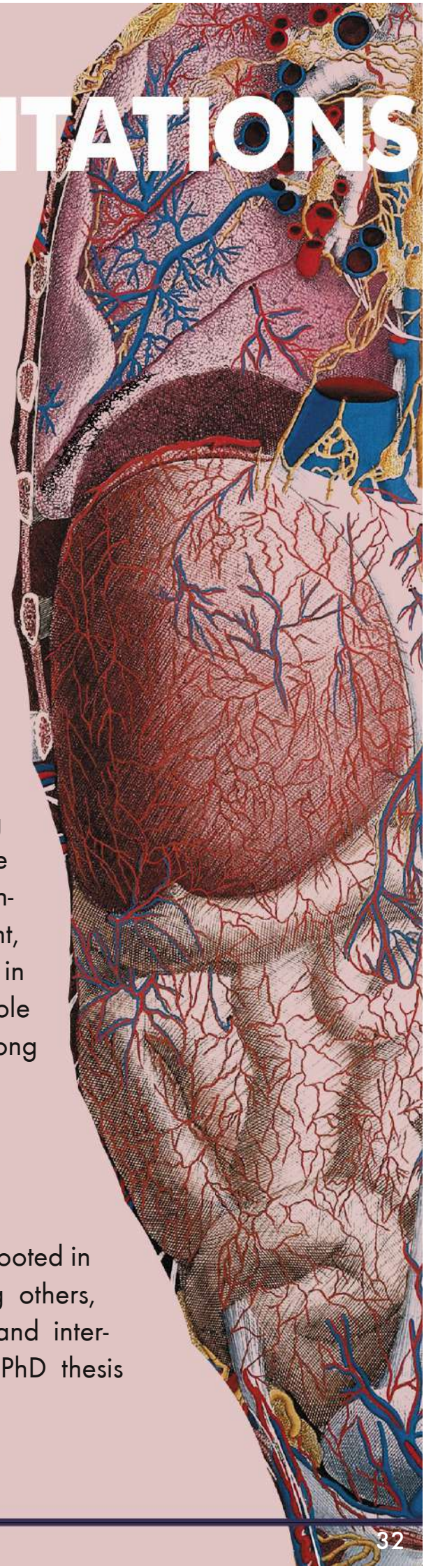
## (Un)expected materialisms of the voice

### ABSTRACT:

Voice is a tricky thing in terms of materiality, as it opposes the qualities that are linked with dominant visual-tactil associations of "materiality", such as stability or palpability. Strong linkage between materiality and visibility (within empirical, sense-based concepts of materiality) makes the voice being perceived as "less material", which is furthermore amplified by its ephemeral nature. Taking these non-obvious characteristics of the voice as a starting point, I will investigate different material configurations in which voice could be involved, showing how the role and conceptualization of the voice may change along with the change of materialistic paradigms.

### BIO:

Julia Krzesicka is an transdisciplinary scholar, never rooted in one discipline and topic; she has studied, among others, sociology, social anthropology, cognitive science and international relations. She is currently preparing her PhD thesis within the Nature-Culture International PhD Program.





Magdalena Krzosek-Hołodny

(University of Warsaw)

Patrycja Orzechowska

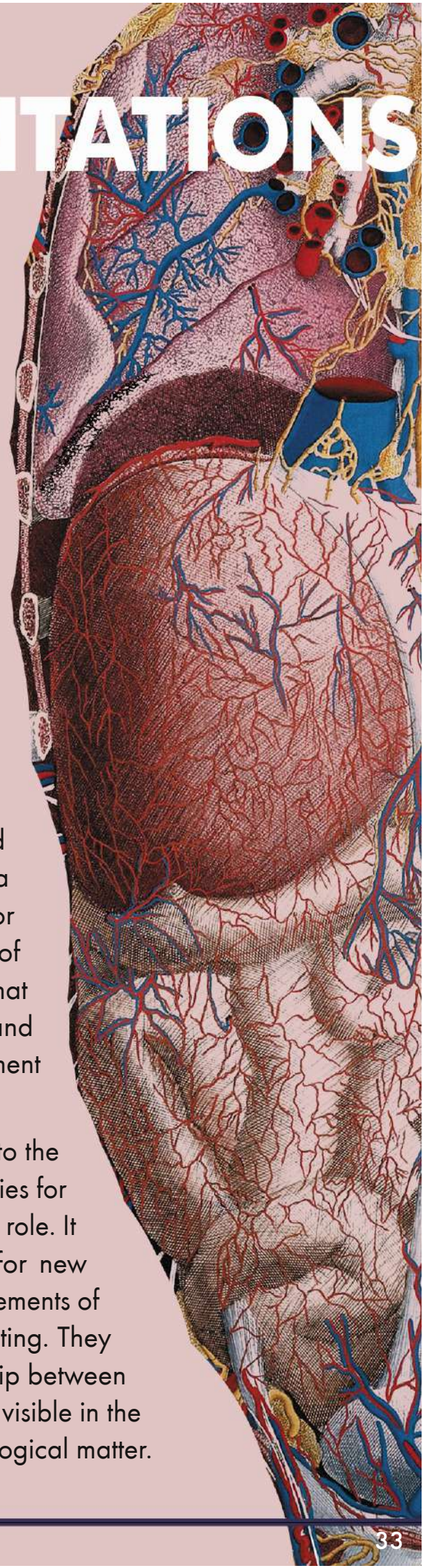
(Interdisciplinary Artist)

## **‘Embracing the Dark’. Geological vibrant matter and minerals as companion species**

### **ABSTRACT:**

In 1926 Vladimir Vernadsky published a book called *Biosphere*, in which (long before the term anthropocene appeared on a scholarly horizon) he claimed that organic life is a force that changes the Earth on a geological scale. Geosphere and biosphere, for Vernadsky, eventually gave rise to neosphere, that of human symbolic culture. It is interesting to note that Vernadsky himself was a trained geologist and mineralogist, who contributed greatly to the development of modern geochemistry and radiogeology.

This very transition – from inorganic, through organic to the virtual is something that was overlooked in the humanities for a long time, but which now appears to play the crucial role. It may also be viewed as one of the fueling forces for new materialisms. In this respect, the contemporary entanglements of the geological and the virtual are particularly interesting. They manifest in the discovery of the ambiguous relationship between the human mind and the mineral world. They are also visible in the direct dependence of the hi-tech industry on raw geological matter.





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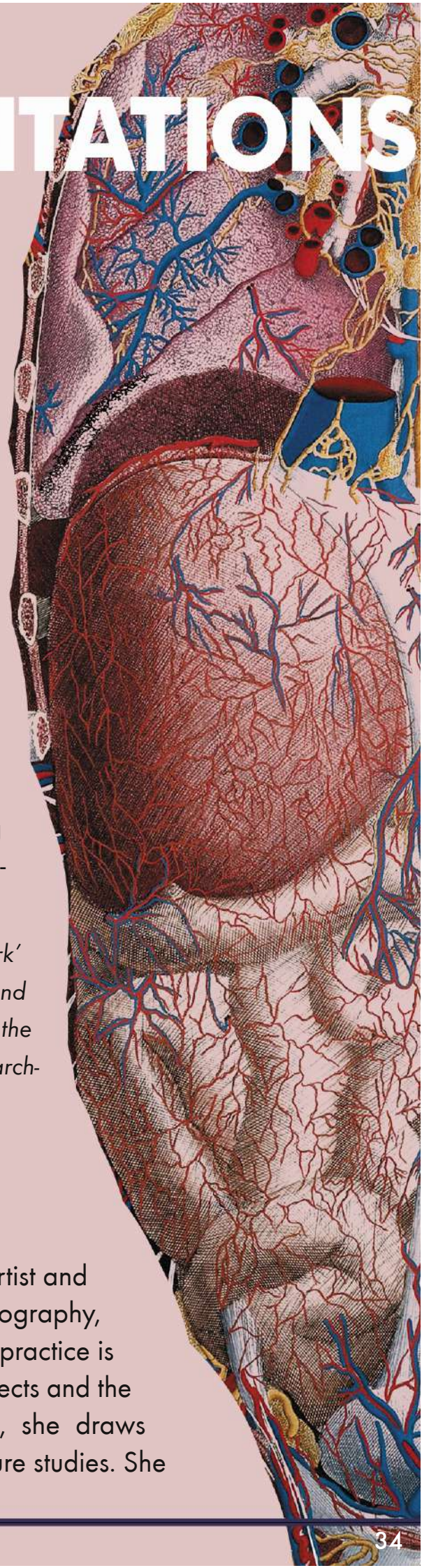
In *Vibrant Matter. Political Ecology of Things* Jane Bennett suggests that we should treat geological matter as vibrant matter, which is capable of its own agency. Bennett writes: "A metallic vitality, a (impersonal) life, can be seen in the quivering of (...) free atoms at the edges between the grains of the polycrystalline edifice." Monika Bakke takes it further. Following Donna Haraway's writings she proposes to recognize minerals as companion species.

In dialogue with the aforementioned theoretical horizon, the authors of the presentation aim at analyzing different entanglements of humans and minerals in the XXIst century, that range from science fiction literature to rare earths extractivism. By doing so, they want to construct a supposed archeology/geology of the future.

The presentation is based on the project 'Embracing the Dark' ('Przytulmy to, co ciemne') by artist Patrycja Orzechowska and researcher Magdalena Krzosek-Hołodny, resulting from the 'Weird Realism – speculative workshops' series (Poznań, March-September 2022).

### BIOS:

Patrycja Orzechowska (b. 1974) – interdisciplinary artist and book author. She works with the medium of photography, graphics, installation art and many others. Her artistic practice is based on the materiality of things, the vague life of objects and the choreography of the human body. Among others, she draws influences from object oriented ontology and past/future studies. She





presented her works in many exhibitions in Poland and abroad and was a multiple artistic scholarships holder, among others of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. She lives and works in Gdańsk.

Magdalena Krzosek-Hołody (b. 1989) – Ph.D. student at the University of Warsaw. Her research interests concern environmental humanities, public art and the relations between art and landscape architecture. She has cooperated with a number of cultural institutions on art & educational projects. She is the author of workshops and academic courses that bury the divides between nature and culture. She lives and works in Warsaw.

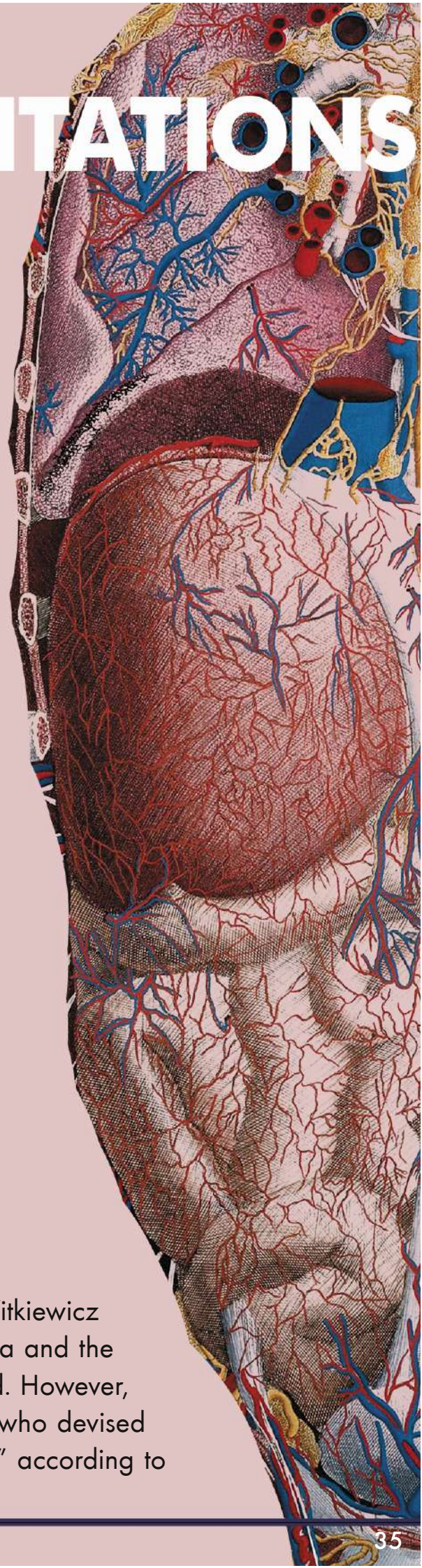
**Andrew Maillet**

(University of Warsaw)

## **A Practical Matter: Pragmatism and Materialism in the Philosophy of Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz**

### **ABSTRACT:**

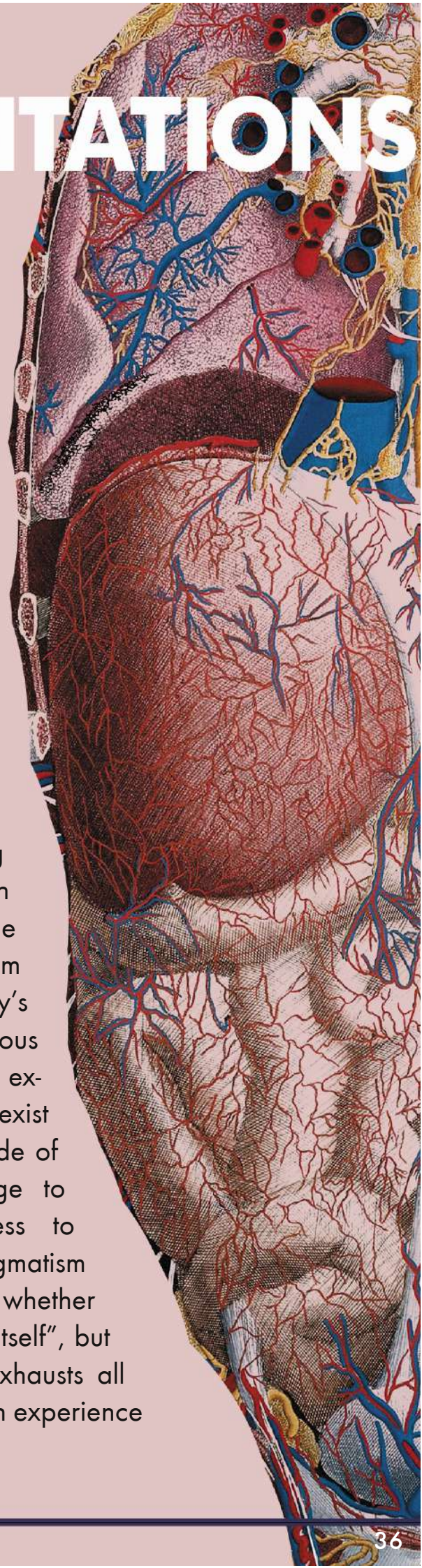
The Polish artist and writer Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz (1885-1939) was well-known for his devilish persona and the chaotic profusion of avant-garde projects he pursued. However, much less is said about "Witkacy" the philosopher, who devised in all seriousness a system of "biological monadism" according to





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which Leibniz's irreducible units of matter possess powers of psychical perception and consciousness. The idea that all beings are connected analogically by some primitive metaphysical capacity was a fixture of Witkacy's thought going back to his theory of Pure Form in painting. But Witkacy's panpsychism appears in perhaps no more perplexing a format than in the context of his highly unusual interpretation of American pragmatism. Witkacy claimed that all individual beings down to the tiniest protozoan are "pure pragmatists", existing in accordance with a "working definition" of truth at the level of unconscious instinct. At the same time, Witkacy understood pragmatism as a suicidal impulse which forces philosophy to get ahead of itself, shirking eternal mysteries by means of preemptive belief. With its confounding compression of consciousness into one immanent moment of "forced action", pragmatism posed a vital threat to the dualism inherent in Witkacy's thought, which kept an objectivist ontology at a precious distance from a body-bound phenomenology of experience. If we are all pragmatists, do we actually exist only insofar as we oscillate perpetually from one side of the abyss to another: from subjective knowledge to objective belief, from reflexive self-consciousness to empirical evaluation? And if so, to what end? Pragmatism would lead Witkacy to speculate, in spite of himself, whether individual existence may not be merely "in and for itself", but rather always in relation to some outside which exhausts all human description, a molluscan metastructure we can experience only because we are the matter that makes it up.





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## BIO:

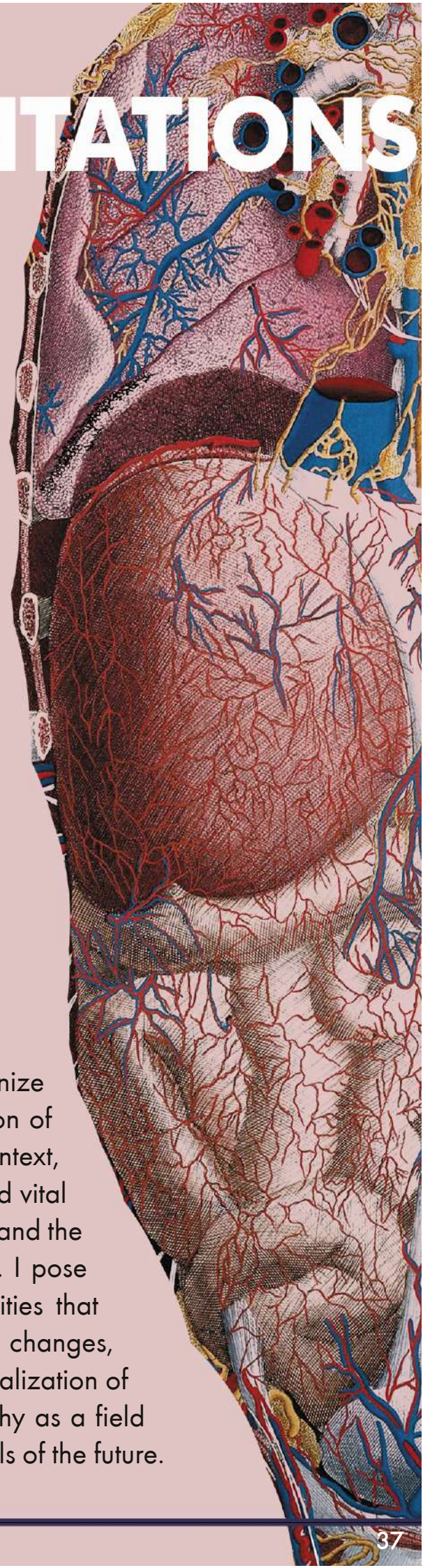
Andrew Maillet is a writer and performer based in New York City. He is currently a member of The Wooster Group, a theatre company founded by Elizabeth LeCompte and Spalding Gray in the 1970s. Andrew holds a B.A. in Music and Humanities from Yale University and recently completed a Masters degree at University of Warsaw's Faculty of "Artes Liberales".

**Bartosz Mroczkowski**  
(Independent researcher)

## Designing The Future as a Process of Self-organization of Matter

## ABSTRACT:

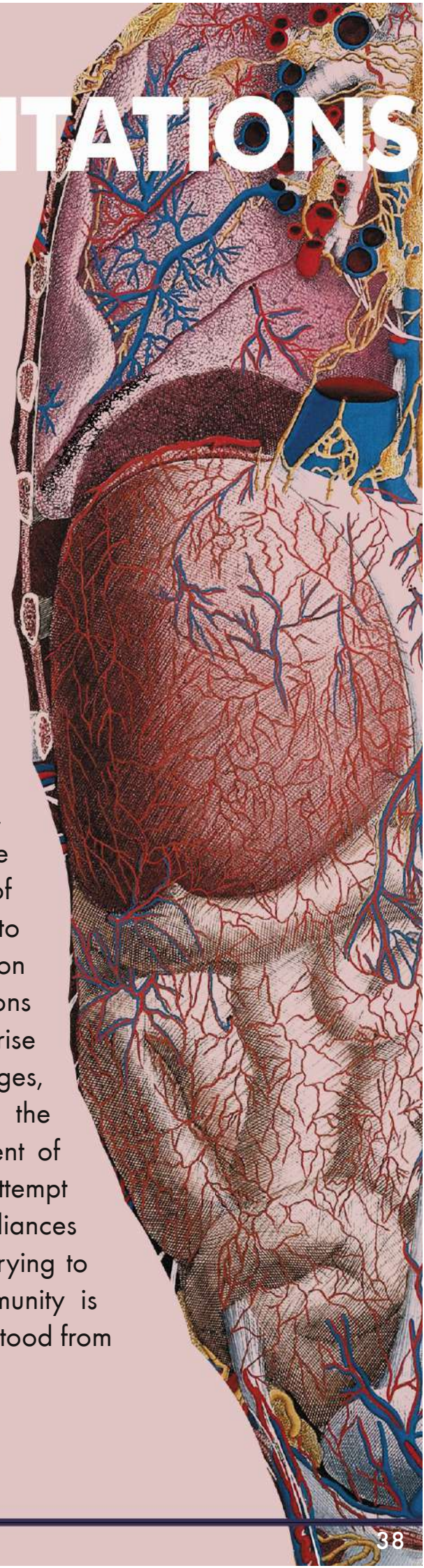
My presentation aims to discuss how we can recognize designing different models of futures as an expression of the process of self-organization of matter. In this context, I understand various models of the future as living and vital communities, becoming different bodily relationships and the connection between the human and the non-human. I pose questions about the possibility of creating communities that arise in the conditions of dynamic planetary changes, considered precisely as various variants of the materialization of the future. From this perspective, I consider philosophy as a field of knowledge capable of designing alternative models of the future.





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The broader context for my reflections is the widely developed debate on the Anthropocene in environmental humanities. The concept proposed by the biologist Eugene F. Stoermer and the atmosphere researcher Paul J. Crutzen, denoting a new geological epoch, was to indicate the critical importance of human activity in shaping planetary processes related to the climate. Studies related to the Anthropocene, in most cases, direct our attention to the belief that life on Earth is doomed to destruction, caused by humankind. This state of affairs is to be expressed in overlapping economic, climatic, social, and cultural crises. It can be concluded that the concept of Anthropocene represents a kind of loss of ontological imagination, and thus the ability to develop long-term visions of the future. Expanding considerations in the field of posthumanism and the new materialism, I would like to show a different path. Using the concept of companion species proposed by Donna Haraway, I pose questions about the possibility of creating communities that arise in the conditions of dynamic planetary changes, considered precisely as various variants of the materialization of the future. Following the argument of a feminist researcher, I focus in this context on an attempt to rethink the way of initiating and concluding alliances between human and non-human organisms. I am trying to explain why each vision of an interspecies community is a different proposal for a model of the future, understood from a planetary perspective.

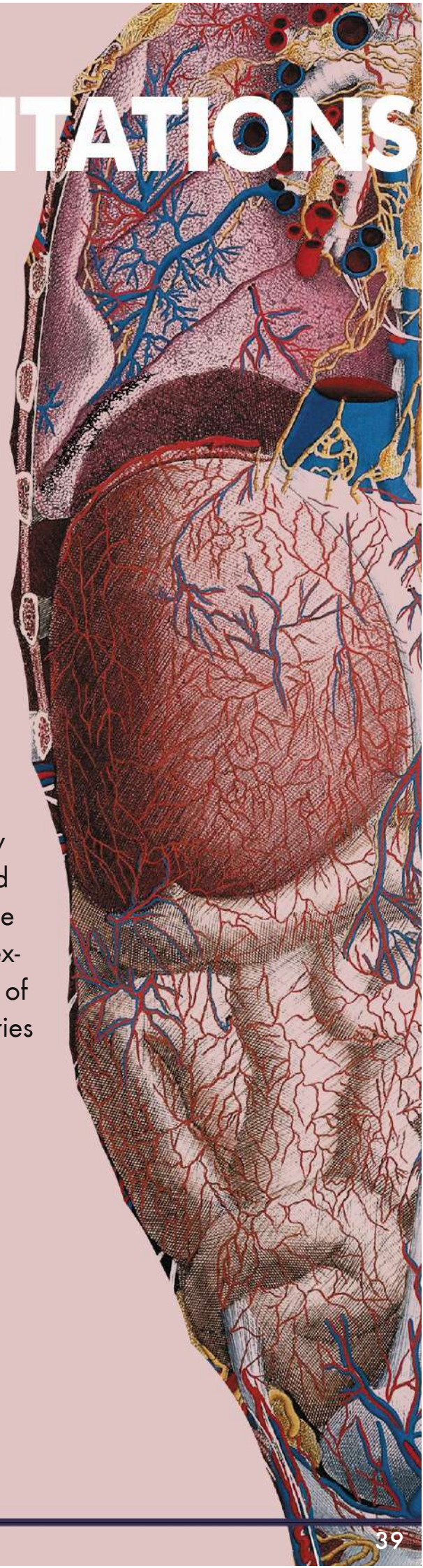




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## BIO:

Dancing philosopher. He obtained his Ph.D. in philosophy based on a dissertation entitled „Conceptualizations and Practices of the Body in the Perspective of Posthumanism and New Materialism“ (2021). Founder of the non-governmental organization Thinking Machine and co-editor of its website (2014-2017). Member of The Sense of Movement Foundation (2015-2020). He uses a transdisciplinary perspective in his research work, combining tools from the field of philosophy and practices of the body (martial arts, dance, performance, meditation, etc.), aimed at developing bodily awareness and mindfulness in movement. His research interests are focused on the contemporary trends of posthumanism, new materialism, and aesthetics of existence, with particular emphasis on the broadly understood corporeality/materiality and experiments related to it. He published in „Time of Culture“, „Theoretical Practice“, the scientific series „Scripta“ IFK UW, and „Thinking Machine“.





Jakob Muraschkowski

(University of Warsaw)

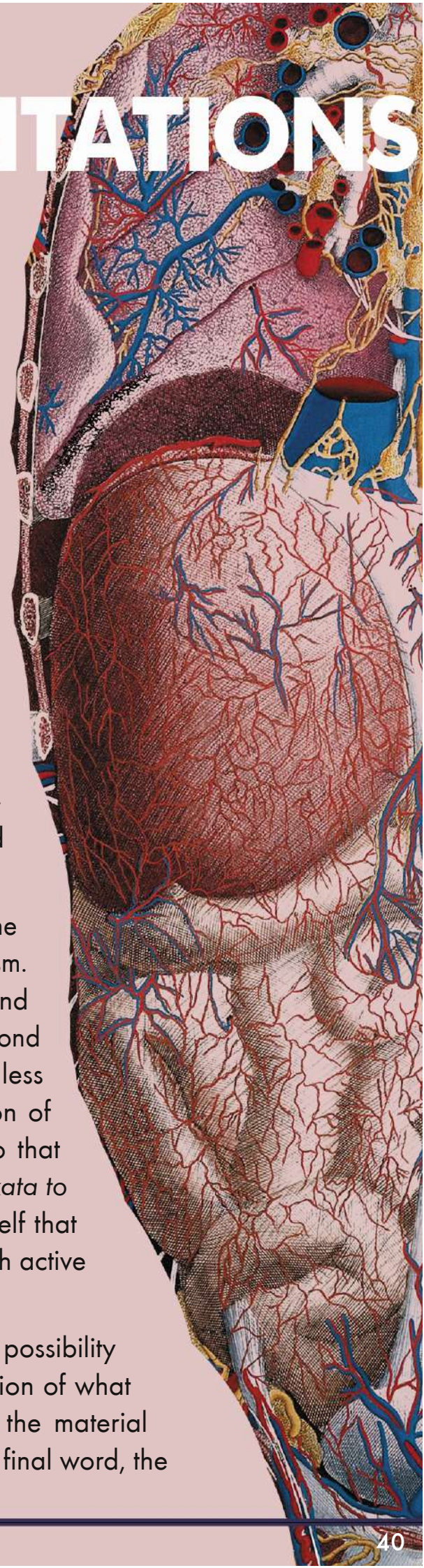
## Ernst Bloch's Concept of Matter

### ABSTRACT:

In my presentation, I would like to offer a short excursion into Ernst Bloch's concept of dialectical materialism, which is heavily inspired by Hegel and Marx but, probably even more so, by the great Aristotelians of the east: Avicenna, Averroes and Avicbron, to whom Bloch refers to as the "Aristotelian Left". His main point of departure is their reconfigurations of the dualism between active form and passive matter.

I argue that Bloch offers a compelling perspective to the reignited debate about the different forms of Materialism. He adopts a notion of matter which is full of form and internal movement, capable of qualitative change, beyond the purely quantitative alternatives of merely more or less of the same. Heavily inspired by Aristotle's definition of matter, he develops his own double-notion of it into that which conditions everything according-to-possibility (*kata to dynaton*) and yet, on its front side, harbors within itself that what-is-in-possibility (*dynamei on*) and is brimming with active potency for its actualization.

Herein enters the crucial notion of objective-real possibility which, according to Bloch, is but the logical expression of what has been described above: dialectical matter and the material openness of the ongoing world process, in which the final word, the





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one naturalizing man and humanizing nature (Marx), is yet to be spoken. It allows him further to formulate his notion of the acting and working human being as an agent, the subjective factor, of the translation of that which is an objective-real possibility, which reveals parts of itself as historical tendency, into full actuality.

## BIO:

My name is Jakob Muraschkowski and I am currently in the process of finishing my Master's degree at the faculty of Artes Liberales at the University of Warsaw. Currently, I am working at the Ukrainian House in Warsaw as an assistant to the coordinator for cultural affairs.

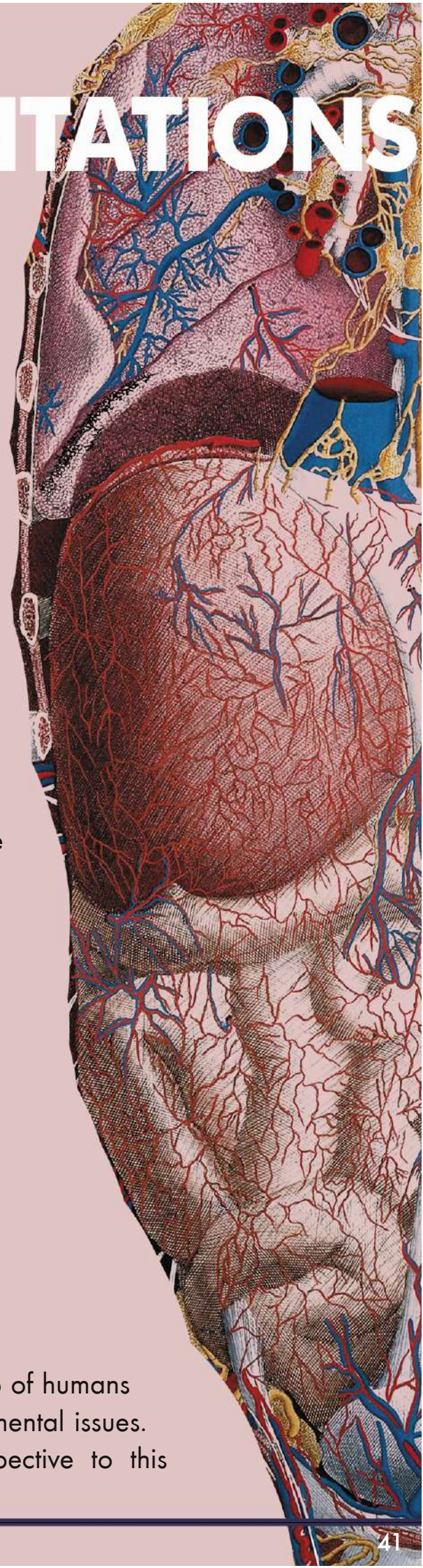
**Maja Rup**

(University of Warsaw)

## **Purity as an impossibility: ethics of Anthropocene from feminist new materialism perspective**

## ABSTRACT:

In times of the Anthropocene, the ethical relationship of humans to the environment becomes one of the most fundamental issues. Feminist new materialism brings a different perspective to this



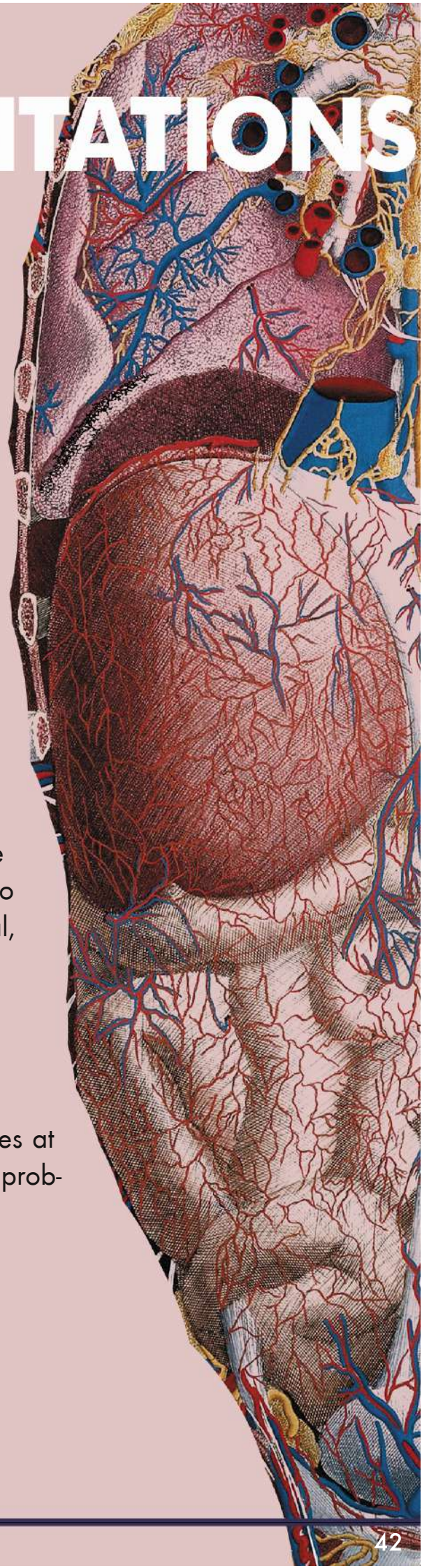


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problem, breaking with human/nature dualism and situating human as part of the material web of life. This posthuman position entails modification of human ethical emplacement in the world. As the environmental and climate crisis arises, defined, direct ethical rules and solutions are no more accessible: human beings are entangled in complex political and ecological (and many others) connections. Following Alexis Shotwell's thought about purity, I find this concept very useful for the ethical situating of the human subject: it is simply impossible to achieve ethical purity, alike it is unattainable to produce clear energy or clear economic growth. Toxicity is the human condition in the Anthropocene and our entanglement in suffering is undeniable. In the presentation, I will use the concept of purity and new materialism methodology to investigate what is ethically significant and material, although often unnoticed or (intentionally) invisible.

## BIO:

Maja Rup – student of Doctoral School of Humanities at Warsaw University. Her research focuses on ethical problems of climate and environmental crisis.





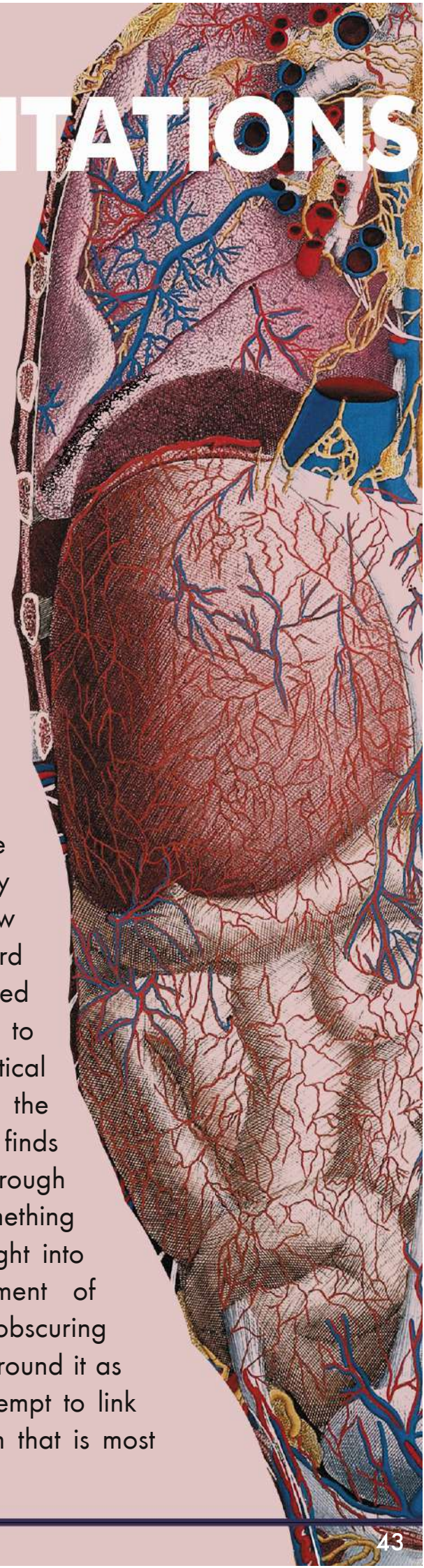
Adrian Sobolewski

(University of Warsaw)

## Representation Revisited. Benjamin, Debord and Internet Images

### ABSTRACT:

The connection, or lack thereof, between representations and material reality, has been a question of philosophy ever since. However, with the advent of the internet and the modes of communication it brings about, the need to explore the possibilities and dangers that representation creates seems to be at an all-time high. Therefore, the relation between representation and material reality needs to be re-thought in the context of this new medium. Already writings of Benjamin and Debord give rise to the question of representation being utilized in then-new media. Both of these authors seek to understand the working of representation and its political possibilities. However, both their accounts and the judgments of the phenomenon differ. Benjamin finds a possibility of showing real material conditions through representation, as well as sees its potential as something that might be a vehicle of understanding and insight into reality. On the other hand, Debord's judgement of representation is strictly negative, as a way of obscuring material reality and building a spectacular reality around it as a replacement to be lived in. In my talk, I will attempt to link these two theories of representation to the medium that is most



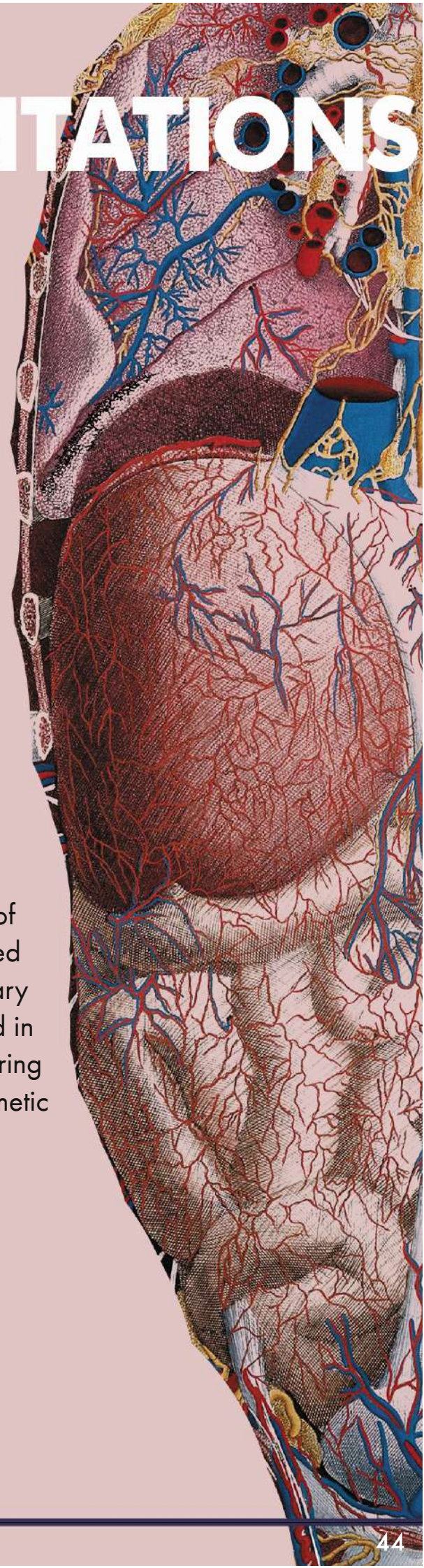


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relevant today – the internet. While both of these thinkers see the multiplicity of images in a different context (that of film, TV and photography), their insights allow for understanding the working of the representation that is utilized today. I want to argue that the theories of Benjamin and Debord are still relevant – if not even more relevant – when analyzing internet discourses. I will also attempt to show how their seemingly contradictory positions might be understood rather as complimenting one another's critiques, which are both equally vital to the proposed understanding of modern-day, internet representation.

## BIO:

Adrian Sobolewski is a PhD student at the University of Warsaw in the discipline of Philosophy. He achieved a Master's Degree in Philosophy and Contemporary Critical Theory at Kingston University. He is interested in memetics and aesthetics, and in his PhD attempts to bring together these two fields of interest by studying memetic discourse and the way it represents reality and itself.





Katarzyna Szafranowska  
(University of Warsaw)

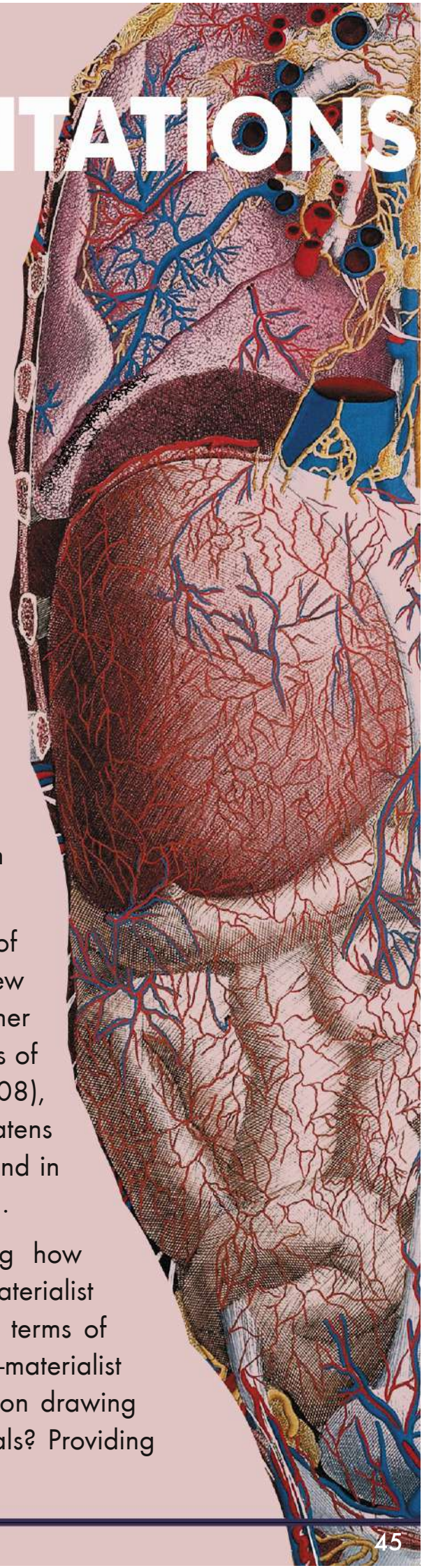
## **New Jewish Materialism? The Curious Case of Heidi M. Ravven and Spinoza's Systems Theory of Ethics**

### **ABSTRACT:**

In my paper, I investigate the work of Heidi Morrison Ravven on Spinozian philosophy. I wonder to what extent her attempt to re-read Spinoza as new feminist ethics could be a valid proposal in the ongoing discussion on the political orientation of Jewish feminism.

In order to determine whether the philosophy of Ravven can be seen as an example of what I call "new Jewish materialism", I examine in what aspects her proposition differs from other contemporary readings of Spinoza (Damasio 2003, Negri 2004, Balibar 2008), how it is distinct from other feminist interpretations (Gatens 2009, Sharp 2011, but especially Braidotti 2012) and in what sense it is Jewish (eg. Goodman, Ravven 2002).

These three aspects seem crucial for establishing how Ravven's materialist stance relates to new materialist cartography. Does her interpretation of Spinoza in terms of systems theory (Ravven 2013) align with the neo-materialist ethics, or is it simply a parallel materialist proposition drawing from different contexts and aiming at divergent goals? Providing





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that Ravven's analysis of Spinoza forms an attempt to redefine Jewish feminism and redirect its orientation toward materialism, I delineate what we could gain by thinking about Jewish philosophy anew in materialist terms.

## BIO:

Katarzyna Szafranowska (PhD) is a philosopher and cultural theorist, currently working as an assistant professor at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales", University of Warsaw. Her research interests include French poststructuralism and 20th century Jewish philosophy. At present, she investigates the influences of French thought on Jewish feminism.

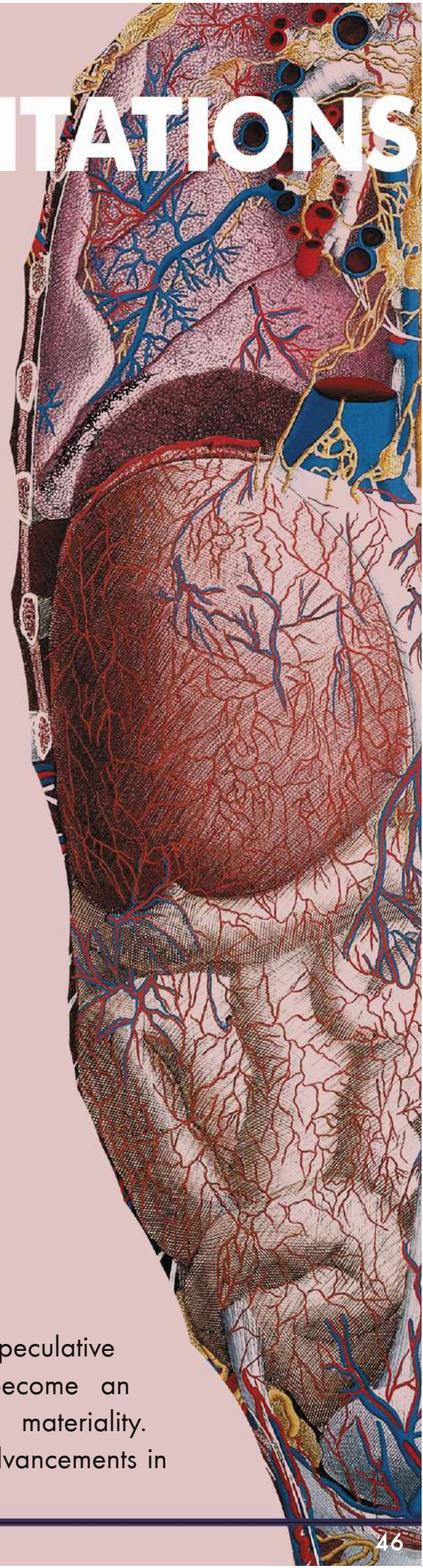
**Maciej Talaga**

(University of Warsaw)

## **Matter as an Endospore. Processes of Becoming Preserved in Material Relics of the Past**

## ABSTRACT:

Since Alfred N. Whitehead, an early 20th-century speculative philosopher, the "process of becoming" has become an important concept in contemporary theories of materiality. Perhaps most notably, it has fuelled many recent advancements in

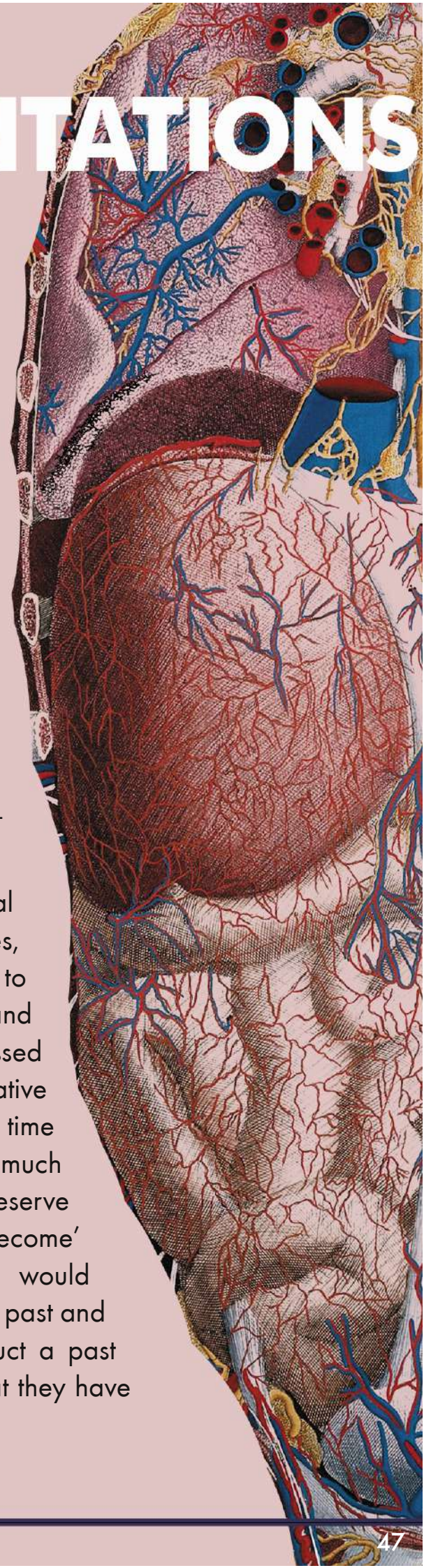




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the so-called 'new materialism' or other phenomenologically- and realistically-oriented philosophies, as represented by Alva Noë or Timothy Ingold, among many others. In result, rather than as things defined by static attributes, all kinds of physical entities, including both human and nonhuman agents, have been conceptualised as being in a constant flux, dynamically (ex)changing qualities and trajectories of development. What has received relatively little attention is the diachronic perspective on this dynamics: Interactions between humans and nonhumans existing at the same time are already understood quite well, but the same cannot be stated about the mutual relations between agents from different temporal planes – between the past and the present.

In my contribution, I will use examples from several archaeological-experimental and experiential studies, including my own, to explore the ability of matter to bridge the temporal gap between historical and contemporary agents. Material objects will be discussed as 'endospores', capable of preserving generative information collected and structured at one point in time in order to launch processes of becoming later – much alike actual biological endospores, which preserve information and resources allowing bacteria to 'become' when favourable conditions occur. This, in turn, would provoke questions about the ontological status of the past and memory: Is it indeed all gone? Can one reconstruct a past process in their own body? Can one remember what they have never seen? Do material objects remember?



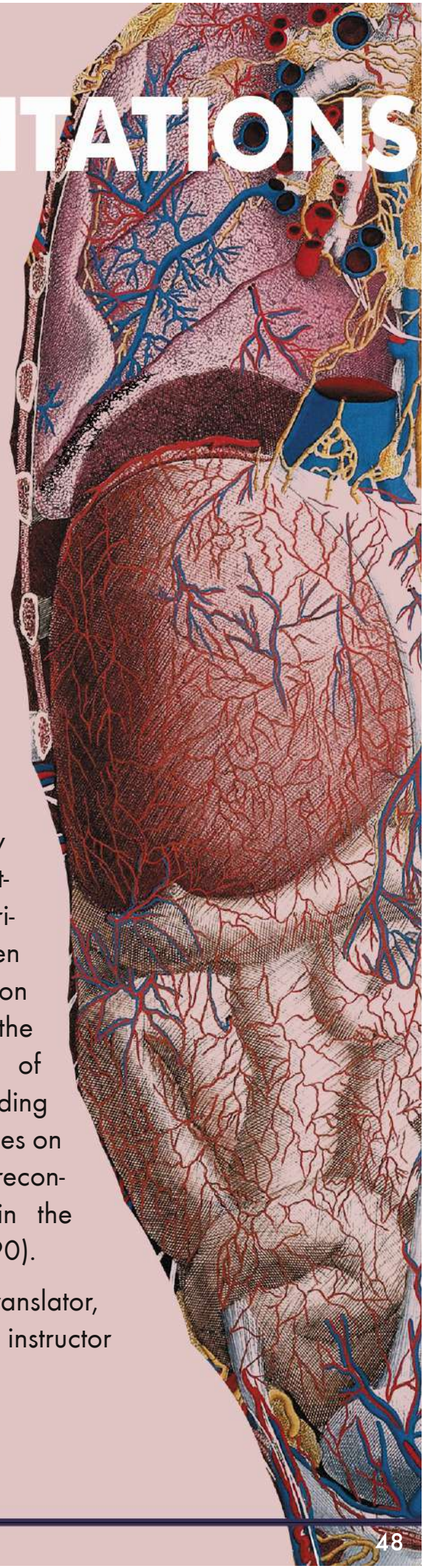


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## BIO:

Maciej Talaga received his MA in archaeology (University of Warsaw) in 2012 and joined the 'Nature-Culture' PhD programme at the Faculty 'Artes Liberales' in 2018. For the last decade his research interests have revolved around pre-modern European martial traditions, with particular focus on late-medieval Central Europe and the so-called 'German school of fighting' (*Kunst des Fechtens*). Having initially approached the topic from purely archaeological perspective – i.e. conducting studies on preserved medieval weaponry as reflections of martial skills – and influenced by his over a decade-long cooperation with the Association for Renaissance Martial Arts ARMA-PL, he gradually adopted a performative approach combining text- and artefact-based studies with practical experimentation. More recently, inspired by the works of Ben Spatz (practice-as-research) and James J. Gibson (ecological psychology), he became interested in the methodological and theoretical underpinnings of research performed on historical sources recording somatic skills. Hence, his doctoral thesis project focuses on developing a methodical framework for practical reconstruction of the martial arts system contained in the anonymous manuscript Hs3227a (Germany, ca. 1390).

Apart from being a PhD student, Maciej is a translator, a martial arts practitioner, and a certified fencing instructor running his own salle.





Dominika Wasilewska

(Independent Researcher)

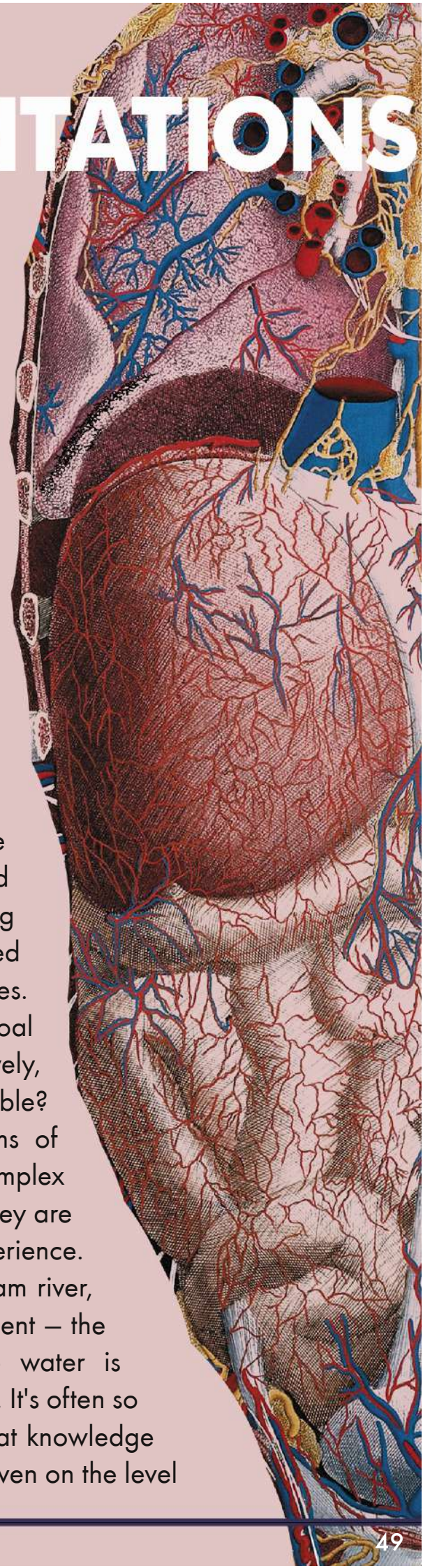
Weronika Zalewska

(Miastozdzczenie / Urban Feralizing)

## earthbody memory — toward ethics of response-ability and embodied archiving

### ABSTRACT:

The western hierarchy of bodies often doesn't take into account the relations evolving within matter's response-ability. These relations inevitably create transformations and challenge the dichotomy of dead and living matter. Even dead coal — with dead being the fair reasoning for extraction — ends up as mutated plants and cancerous cells — it reacts with/in bodies. What if we become more interested in what does coal do instead of what coal is? If we start seeing it as lively, would that make our ethical realm more response-able? Bodies remember. Bodies learn beyond the realms of rational; their impulses are often developed as a complex attention-giving to the environment they live within; they are tuning in and tuning with through sensuous experience. Many indigenous perspectives, including Maori's I am river, river is me — are true on all levels of our entanglement — the body drinks the water, becomes the water, the water is transformed by the bodies.. It's a science of attention. It's often so deeply embodied that its source is untraceable — that knowledge not seldom being trauma, a wound, a warning. Yet even on the level





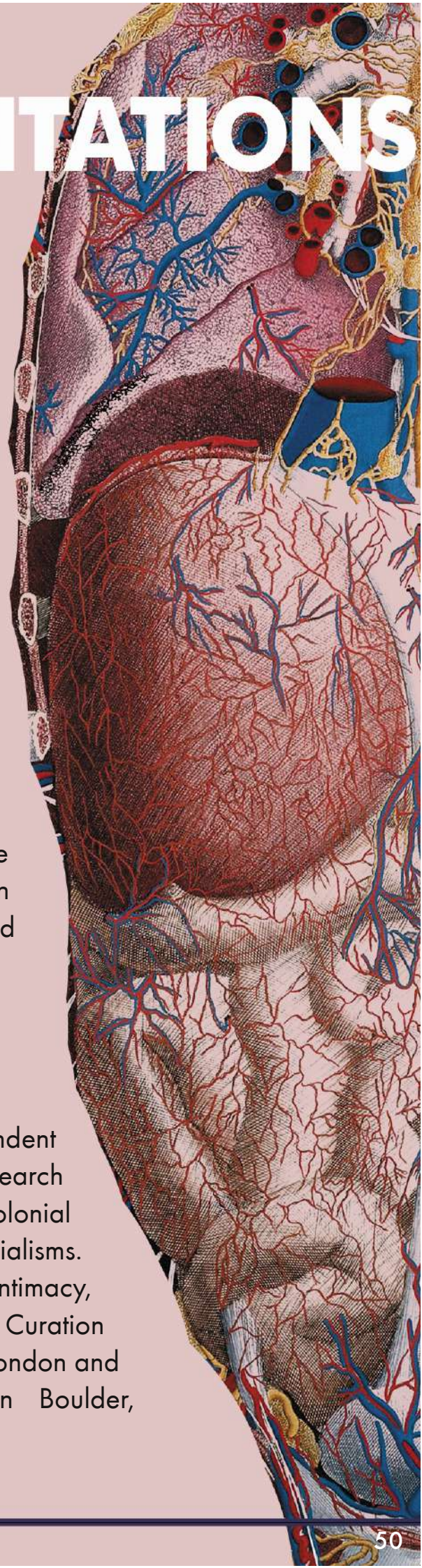
Book of abstracts

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of chemistry, DNA talk and microbe talk, we can find living proofs of such multi-generational traces. In Japan, post-war generations continue to carry nuclear cancer cells (hibakusha). And it is in the mother's womb that the fetus produces fertility eggs to be used throughout its life – thus, a grandma carries her granddaughter in her belly. What interests us to incorporate in our talk is the traces of body memory as well as somatic practices as spaces of knowledge. Body memory of both Earth and human bodies (or, not to separate them, we might call them earthbodies) carry the stories of dialogues; entangled responses on micro and macro levels that bend the sense of linear time. We aim to look at earthbody memory through a multidisciplinary lens that would include the perspectives of evolutionary biology, Spinozian philosophy, postcolonial studies, feminist ethics and artistic praxis.

## BIOS:

Dominika Wasilewska – educator, writer, independent researcher and soon-to-be book publisher. Her research oscillates on the intersection of queer theory, postcolonial studies, posthuman theory and feminist new materialisms. Currently, she examines the notion of posthuman intimacy, queer ecology and postactivism. She holds a BA in Curation and Criticism from Central Saint Martins College in London and MA Ecopsychology from Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado, USA.





Weronika Zalewska – artist, poet, a co-editor of *Miastozdzczenie* (Urban Feralizing). A graduate of Media Arts Faculty of Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw. She's working with themes of grassroots knowledge, narratives of/from the Earth, posthumanism as well as poetry and video as forms of collective metabolisms. She works closely with Bureau of Postartistic Practices. She's currently studying at Dutch Art Institute, a platform for exploring the praxis intersection between philosophy and performance, especially within themes of queerness, ecology, decolonisation.

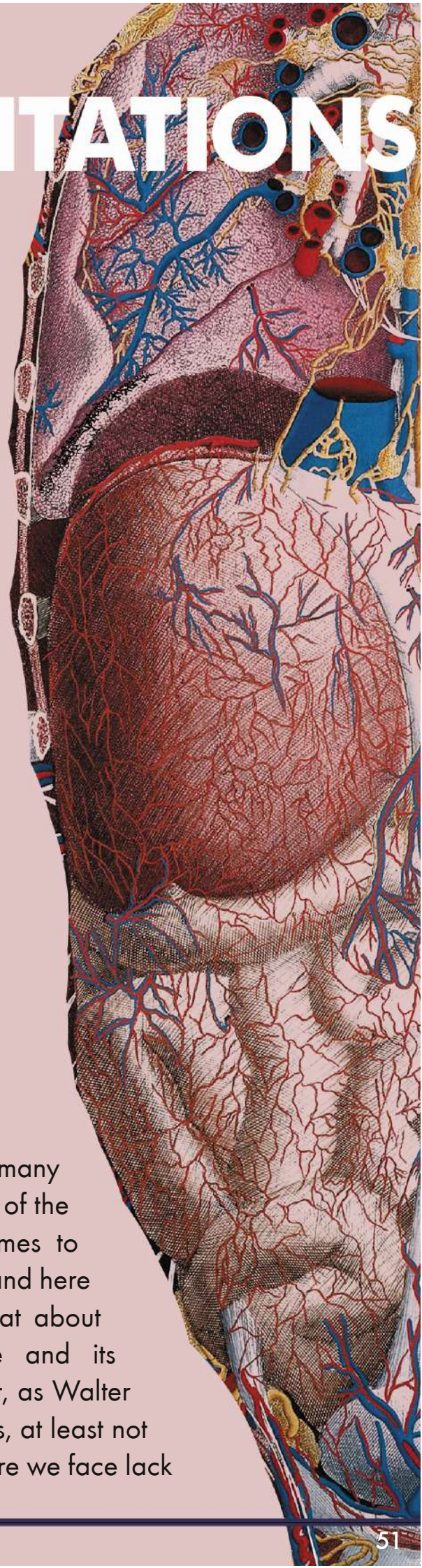
Piotr Wesołowski

(Polish Academy of Sciences)

## Rococo materialism? Folds of Pierrot's smile

### ABSTRACT:

One could have no doubts that baroque had many concepts of matter, and we see their reflections in art of the period. No doubts are also possible when it comes to classicism with its specific approach towards matter, and here we see reflections in sciences it produced. But what about rococo, what about its concept of immanence and its reflections? If transcendence escaped in baroque art, as Walter Benjamin suggests, it was not so obvious in its themes, at least not in catholic countries. It is an early French rococo where we face lack



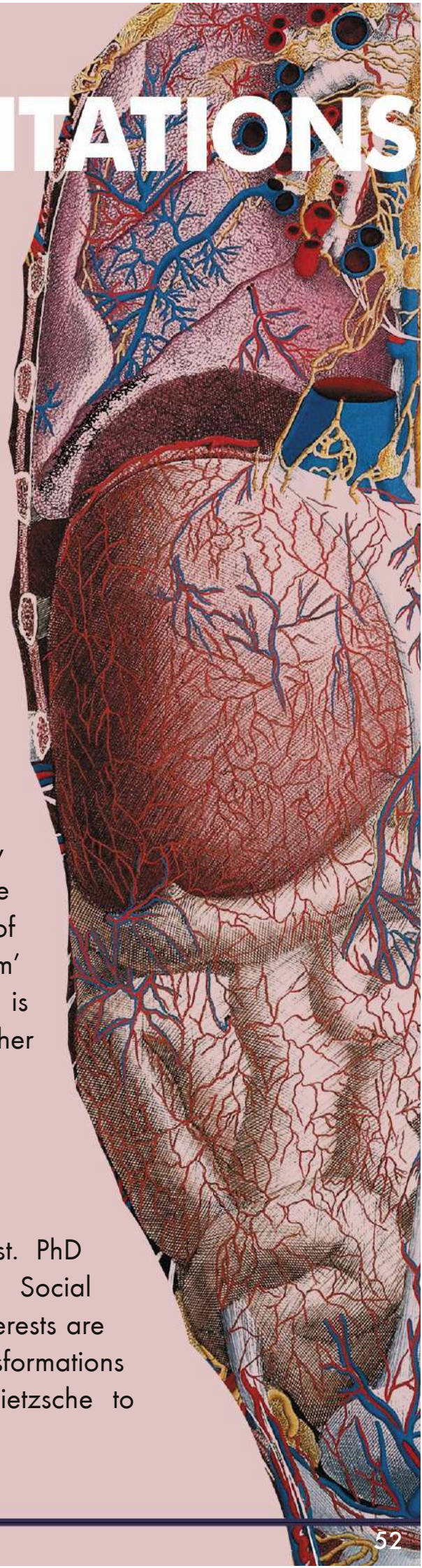


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of transcendence. In Antoine Watteau's rococo paintings of Pierrot we find mainly sensualism, a specific form of materialism as an art theme. That is the moment when historical conditions have formed art that was light because of its focus on material dimension of affects, moment when an allegorical portrait of society was made by use of comedians as a theme. Unwritten, blank disguise of Pierrot is folded on its margins, his lips are also folds. A question that I would like to pose is whether that kind of thinking about history-matter-art constellation is possible? Moreover, whether rococo itself gives an alternative between chaotic Dionysian baroque and strait Apollonian classicism when it comes to the aestheticization of matter? How visual representation reveals our concept of matter and how rococo is something that needs our attention because it may be pretty close to one of today's forms of expression? Does though 'Rococo materialism' resonate with 'Gothic materialism', materialism that is indebted in art style category, which Mark Fisher developed after Gilles Deleuze?

## BIO:

Piotr Wesołowski (1995) — theoretician and artist. PhD student of philosophy at Graduate School for Social Research, Polish Academy of Sciences. His main interests are intersections of philosophy and painting, stylistic transformations of the baroque and figural philosophy from Nietzsche to Deleuze.





Maria Wodzińska

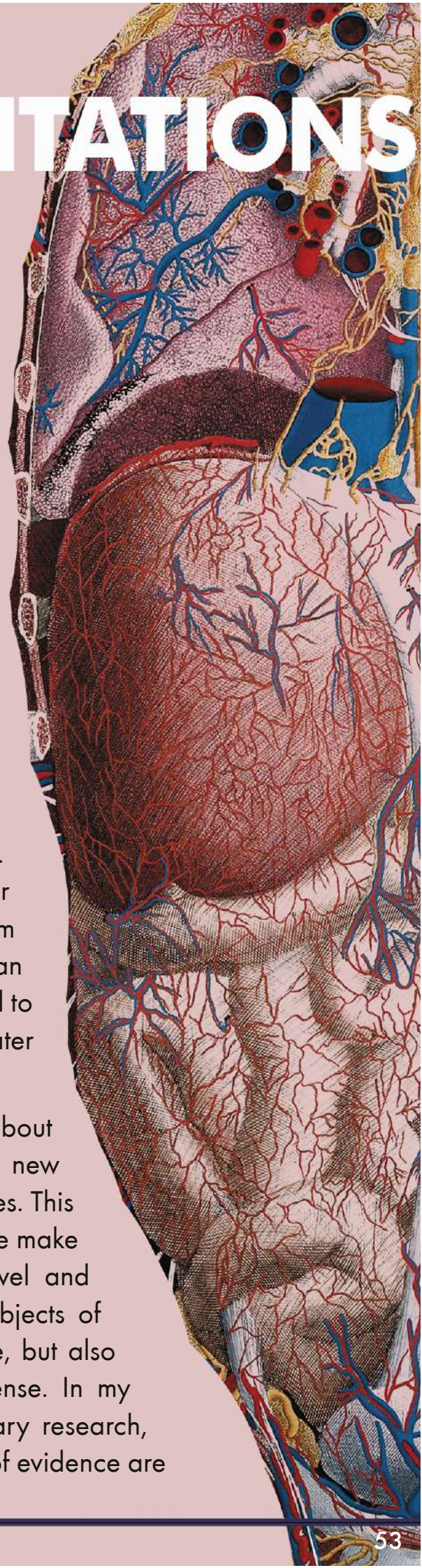
(University of Warsaw)

## The new materiality of evidence

### ABSTRACT:

In recent years, both in academic reflection and in the field of art and activism, we can observe various strategies of a documentary nature that aim to illuminate diverse forms of violence. Thus, we are dealing with both documentary projects designed to highlight, analyze and subsequently map crimes that affect human beings, but also the non-human in the form of destruction, contamination and degradation. This apparent change today is related, among other things, to the so-called forensic turn and the new form of visibility produced within its framework, which can be understood as a specific research program related to the provision of a variety of evidence, which is later presented in a specific forum.

The purpose of my reflection is to attempt to think about the central category of evidence and to discern its new material and mediated status by the latest technologies. This is because I assume that new approaches to evidence make it possible to conceptualize such complex, multilevel and evasive of established and constituted narratives objects of inquiry as modern crimes committed against people, but also those committed against nature in the broadest sense. In my speech, I would also like to trace how contemporary research, artistic and activist practices related to the provision of evidence are





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linked to its materiality. Many such activities place government documents, interviews, reports, art projects, and their own experiences on equal footing, side by side, as they materialize through technology. This kind of evidence is then presented in a forum.

## BIO:

Maria Wodzińska is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of "Artes Liberales" (Program "Nature - Culture") University of Warsaw. Her doctoral dissertation, entitled *Geontopolitics characterized through concept, image and evidence* aims to explore, develop, analyze, and conceptualize the relatively new term of „geontopolitics”. The project is also an attempt to rethink biopolitics and necropolitics with regard to nature in the era of its multifaceted degradation such as plunder, exploitation, expropriation, poisoning and destruction especially by industry, capital, and the state.

