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**GENDER BEFORE SEX / POPULATION BEFORE SUBJECTS.
GENDER SELECTION AND SDL (SEXUALIZING DIVISION OF LABOR) VS TECHNOQUEER FUTURES**

1. *The Body (as a) factory*
2. *Sex selection through Cultural Politics of Emotions for SDL*
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ABSTRACT: GENDER BEFORE SEX / POPULATION BEFORE SUBJECTS. GENDER SELECTION AND SDL (SEXUALIZING DIVISION OF LABOR) VS TECHNOQUEER FUTURES

The aim of this paper is twofold: to show how neoliberal reproductive technologies articulate life following a patriarchal economy of gendered otherness through the production of docile individuals and populations (Cooper, Waldby, Bathia, Clarke, Thomson), and to encourage a shift towards a collective implementation of liberating technologies through both queer theory (Parisi, McCormack) and Feminist Science Fiction (Peirce, Silberberg).

By adopting the figuration of the body as more than a purely biological fact but as an interface for socio-cultural and intimate techno-mediated inscriptive codes, I will discuss both the techno-production of sexes as gender-based artifacts suitable to

perpetuate the status quo and the possibility to hack bio-determinism, as well as neoliberal socio-constructivism, by collective and queer thoughts and practices. Firstly, I will analyze non-medical sex-selective artificial reproductive technologies (ARTs) in transnational bio-economy; secondly, I will frame them into the horizons of sexual division of labor at the core of neoliberal era; thirdly, I will conclude by reading diffractively queer de-gendering theorizations and Feminist Science Fiction's incentives as a critical escape path.



1. The Body (as a) Factory

In March 2019 the trans* philosopher Paul Preciado gave a challenging lecture at the PAC - a prestigious public space for international contemporary art based in Milan. The talk, titled *Revolt in Technopatriarcal Times*, encouraged the audience to

recognize that nowadays *the body* lies within the same figurative space occupied by the *factory* in the XIX. In doing so, Preciado remarked that the space-time conjuncture we call a *body* is the *topos/tropos* where the most significant processes of re/production and therefore of appropriation, expropriation but even liberation currently take place.

The body works as a factory in two mutual and *intra-connected* respects: from an *organicistic* point of view, it operates as a biologically framed source for population control which functions as a material interface to discipline behaviors but also birth&death rates, basic reproductive ratio and fertility rate; from a *molecular* one, the body works as an organic stock for potentially unlimited biocommodities, namely it has been transformed in the *organic facility* where *bio-commodities* (sperm, oocytes, immortalized cells, blood, new drugs etc.) guarantee the proliferation of *biovalue* in late capitalism thanks to an unprecedented usage of biological sciences. Specifically, from the 70s the neoliberal postindustrial turn used *life sciences* as a bio-political lever to transform «life itself»¹ in a biochemical script-code. It follows that, once equipped with a new *molecular* understanding of bodies and minds, the biological existence was reduced to mere information and pure re/generative power becoming docile to techno-mediated processes of capitalization: when/where cybernetics, information science, genetics and molecular biology intertwined, human and non-human vital processes were converted in wares and source of surplus – as well as new forms of existence – by the extraction and mobilization of their re/productive ability².

¹ N. Rose, *Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power and Subjectivity in Twenty-First Century*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 2006.

² See C. Waldby, *Stem Cells, Tissue Cultures and the Production of Biovalue* in «Health: an Interdisciplinary Journal for the Social Study of health and Medicine», 6, 3, 2002, pp. 305-323; C. Thomson, *Making Parents: the Ontological Choreography of Reproductive Technologies*, MIT Press, Cambridge (MA) 2005; M. Cooper, *Life as Surplus: Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era*, University of Washington Press, Seattle&London 2008.

By assuming a feminist and queer standpoint³, some questions follow. Firstly, how women's bodies – the reproductive ones *par excellence* – are exploited as factories, and synecdochically as productive tools, in order to control and re/produce the population? Secondly, what is a body? Is the body natural? Can technology change the ontology of a body? How did neoliberal high technologies change the bodies? And which bodies are re/produced in our bio-info mediated days? For whose interests and desires? The complex system Laura Mamo called *Fertility Inc.* indicates exactly the growing field of artificial reproductive technologies (ARTs) industry where life sciences, biopower and *biodesires* meet: here the body became a facility and a product simultaneously. In this paper I aim at discussing a specific form of ART – high-tech sex selection – as a *figuration*⁴ for our technopatriarcal times where neoliberal technologies and old binarisms coexist at the core of new dispositifs for the *government of the living*⁵ through both the production of specific forms of human desires and binary-based human life.

2. Sex selection through Cultural Politics of Emotions for SDL

Sex selection has a long history and was initially practiced post-birth by the act of killing the children of the undesired sex/gender: the female one, without exception. Thanks to the obstetric usage of the ultrasonic waves, sex selection could be progressively pursued through abortion. Then, by the beginning-1990s was registered a semio-material spillover of two sex-selective ARTs from the agricultural livestock industry to human biomedicine: MicroSort® in the US and preimplantation genetic diagnosis (PGD) in the UK.

³ S. Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca&London 1986.

⁴ See for a discussion around the term: D. Haraway, *When Species Meet*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis&London 2008, pp. 4-5; R. Braidotti, *The Posthuman*, Polity Press, Cambridge&Malden 2013, pp. 163-164.

⁵ M. Foucault, *On the Government of the Living*, translated by G. Burchell, Palgrave Macmillan UK, London 2014.

MicroSort® works as a flow cytometric sorting that separates male sperm based on sex chromosome content, and it requires artificial insemination (AI). More extensively explained, differential fluorescence emitted by stained X- and Y-chromosome-bearing sperm enables sorting and collection of samples enriched in either X- or Y-bearing sperm in order to influence the likelihood that the offspring will be a particular sex. PGD is instead a technique using *in vitro* fertilization and genetic analysis of the embryos before them being implanted into the womb.

Criticized for their tendency to *guide* rather than *assist* nature, sex-selective ARTs were originally designed to implement massive economies of in herd management⁶. Indeed, together with insemination without contact (AI), ovulatory cycle's hormonal manipulation, embryo transfer and gametes' cryoconservation they permitted a qualitative improvement of farm animals' genetic composition and a better income due to consistent quantitative cattle's incrementation. Both processes could be transferred to human medicine under the promise to operate as *medical* solutions to purely *medical* problems: several inheritable genes' mutations as Duchenne muscular dystrophy, spinal atrophy and hemophilia are as a matter of fact X-linked. It means that these conditions are caused by a mutation in a gene of the X chromosome expressing themselves actively only in males (XY) as genetically unable to compensate a damaged X with a "normal" one as it happens for female carriers (XX).

Scientists realized that these mutations could be avoided by selecting the sex of the future child before starting gestation, eliminating the usage of sex-selective abortion as a solution for the incidence of X-linked genetic disorders in little boys.

Combined or alone, MicroSort® and PGD first applications provided *direct* or *explicit* empowerments in therapeutic prevention, but

⁶ A. Clarke, *Disciplining Reproduction: Modernity, American Life Science and "the Problem of Sex"*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1998.

indirectly or *implicitly* they even supplied proofs of viable human sexing technologies. In few years *lifestyle sex selection* follows as a way to produce a gender-based offspring⁷.

Legal mosaicism and lacking data about sex-selective practice do not permit a linear discussion about relative ruling legislations. Thus, 2019's International Federation of Fertility Societies' Surveillance (IFFS) makes clear that of 91 countries surveyed, medical sex selection is permitted by sperm sorting under 21 legislations whereas in 20 it is allowed by PGD. Since a first consultation, it was clear that the IFFS survey does not provide any data on sex selection for non-medical reasons. However, it emphasized whether the surveyed countries specifically ban the implementation of ARTs for non-medical sex selection purposes. Therefore, lifestyle sex selection has to be considered available at the core of a legal loophole in those countries that do not openly forbid it.

An answer to the question of *what lifestyle sex selection means?* is urgent to understand the politics which stand behind such a viscous practice where bioeconomy, gender and desires met and melt. Situating myself in a global world where the imagined geographies of the West and non-West - as well as the Norths and the Souths - are operatively put to work by representational and structural strategies shaped at the encounter of the market and nation interests, I propose a modest cartography of the main axes alongside which framing lifestyle sex selection's functioning.

Firstly, the development of ARTs into a globalized system is no longer alienable from but it is rather part of the international population order, bridging divides between representational geographic areas and formerly almost independent biopolitical

⁷ See for a discussion around history of lifestyle sex selection: R. Bathia, *Gender Before Birth. Sex selection in a Transnational Context*, University of Washington Press, Seattle 2018.

contexts. Rose and Novas' concept of *biocitizenship*⁸ – that is the complex relationship between the “individual” and the “political” bodies, the “private” and the “public” in a techno-mediated neoliberalist context – needs to be framed in a global intra-connected structure of population governance. For instance, in China and India – where transnational strategies arranged a sizable segment of Fordist manufacturing – sex-selective ARTs are usually oriented to re/produce little boys in a sort of spasmodic necessity of productive labor-power. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) declares that since the 1990s these areas have seen up to 25 per cent more male births than female births. It is evident how biological human re/production is put to work as a tool to perform a top-down programmed role in the field of global biocitizenship by contributing both on national public value and on the state/global markets' biovalue. Secondly, if biopolitical practices are aimed at making up bio-citizens, at the core of white neoliberal Post-Fordist societies, lifestyle sex-selective practices pursue what is known as *family balancing*, namely the attempt to increase the less represented sex in those families that reveal at least two children in gender numerical imbalance. It is what the feminist theorist on reproductive technology Charis Thomson defined as nothing more than *social anxiety* (desire for a boy or a girl) transformed into a sort of mathematical proportionality based on gender stereotypes.

Thomson's proposal brings me to a Spinozian understanding of Sara Ahmed's theory on the *cultural politics of emotions*. Emotions and affects are grounded both on matter and social stimuli. They shape the surface of the individual and collective body by a *naturcultural* network of affects that is always as political as personal. They are subjectively experienced in the flesh and

⁸ N. Rose, C. Novas, *Biological Citizenship*, in «Global Assemblages: Technology, Politics and Ethics as Antropological Problems», edited by A. Ong and S. J. Collier, Blackwell, Malden 2005, pp. 439-463.

bones, but they work as a *moral economy*⁹ which combined liberty&subjection. They are always relational and *in-relation with* a precise political organization of life; they are not existentially a-political, timeless and universal. Likewise, parental desires – especially those related to sex/gender – are disingenuous, and both the result and the matrix of a continuous updating of gender-essentializing technologies. Tereza Hendl pointed it out in a passionate and committed Ted Talk titled *Challenging Gender Selection*. As a feminist scholar, Hendl openly frames sex selection as a *gender biased practice* where in question is not a prejudice against a particular gender but a patriarchal mutual understanding of masculinity and femininity¹⁰. The so-called “family balance” is, in other words, a *psycho-social diagnosis* whose biomedical solution is what Adele Clarke defines the postmodern *tailorization* of the re/produced body: «while the modernist body is *Taylored*, the postmodern body is *tailored*»¹¹. Indeed, this pun is nothing but serious if we keep in our minds the complex and fragmented geographical vectors which shape the global bioeconomy by the externalization of manufacturing as in the already mentioned cases of China and India.

Mainstream ARTs work as a social control mechanism that recurs to biomedicine as a new instrument for what should be recognized as *biopopulationism*¹². Indeed, biopower acts smartly producing the individuals with the purpose to employ them to re/produce docile population: I consequently argue that non-medical sex selection is nowadays a wasteless governmental process that moves from politics to market, from population to individuals.

⁹ S. Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh 2004; S. Ahmed *The Promise of Happiness* Duke University Press, Durham&London 2010.

¹⁰ T. Hendl, *Challenging Gender Selection*, TEDxMacquarie University, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZg-GgToBEE>.

¹¹ A. Clarke, *Disciplining Reproduction: Modernity, American Life Science and “the Problem of Sex”*, cit., p. 11.

¹² R. Bathia, *Gender Before Birth. Sex selection in a Transnational Context*, cit.

In the following section, I will specifically analyze lifestyle sex selection through the lenses of the gender binary as a whole but chameleonic matrix for different variables of what is called *sexualization* of labor, tasks and roles in the Global North. If the practice sends out the message that it is justifiable to create children of one specific sex for pursuing particular gender roles, as Hendl proposed in her talk and I will argue in the following section, *sex selection* is a synonym of *gender selection* in neoliberal techno-patriarchy.

3. Gender before Sex: *Sexual Division of Labor in Technopatriarcal Times*

By transforming the body in a factory that produced tailored commodities, neoliberal techno-*ratio* undermines the borderline between production and reproduction, a borderline that Marxist feminism recognized as the foundations of gender binary itself. A borderline drawn by the intertwining of sex determination (male or female dichotomic subjectivity), vertical *reproduction-ability* (cis-heterosexual procreation) and sexuality (sexual practices and orientation). These three elements are equally indispensable gender-producing *relata*¹³ as their relations do not follow ontological autonomous existences: they do not exist separated, and they are neither pure cause nor pure effect of each other. Sex determination, procreation and sexuality are, indeed, an enactment of *programmed differentness*, a way of making/marking population through individuals shaped in oppositional gendered categories. Situated in *technopatriarcal times*, where/when the body-factory produces other tailored bodies, we are asked to accept a hard challenge: why do we need to believe in gender if high technologies went so further that sperm and eggs may be obtained from a single male or female donor' somatic cells in order to

¹³ K. Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, Duke University Press, Durham&London 2007.

produce embryos?¹⁴ Why should we split the individuals between males and females when trans* people can lactate?¹⁵ Why?

My answer lays on the *sexual division of labour* (SDL). Briefly said, discussing Fordist society I understand SDL to be the delegation of different tasks between male and female subjects. But in neoliberal times, the mechanism change following the re/productive entanglement which rapidly contributed in dismantling the Fordist welfare state: the binary apparatus of otherness and hierarchization between the unionized *male breadwinner* and the *female caregiver*, according to which the employed and salaried men had to produced economical-value whereas women had to reproduce *labor-power* – through procreation itself and unpaid *care-work* –, got transformed alongside lines of racialization, complex phenomena of *genderization* and overall marginalization. The related institution of the nuclear family ruled by *compulsory heterosexuality* ended up transformed while labor was largely *feminized*¹⁶ by its *precarization* through nonpermanent employments, new contractual forms, work-readiness, volatile wages and the progressive dismantling of social insurance: the historical invisibilization and *precarity* of those tasks traditionally considered women's duties were translated into the transversal *precarization* of the labor market¹⁷; women started to be progressively involved in the labor market whereas labor itself becomes more and more exploitable.

¹⁴ C. Yamashiro et alt., *Generation of human oogonia from induced pluripotent stem cells*, in «Science», 362, 2018, pp. 356-360.

¹⁵ T. Reisman and Z. Goldstein, *Case Report: Induced Lactation in a Transgender Woman* in «Transgender Health», 3, 1, 2018, pp. 24-26; J.M. García-Acosta et alt., *Trans* Pregnancy and Lactation: a Literature Review*, in «International Journal and Public Health», 44, 2020.

¹⁶ See for a discussion around the term: C. Morini, *Per amore o per forza. Femminilizzazione del lavoro e biopolitiche del corpo*, Ombrecorte, Verona 2010; A. Balzano, *Le conseguenze dell'amore ai tempi del biocapitalismo*, in «Il genere tra neoliberalismo e neofondamentalismo» edited by F. Zappino, Ombrecorte, Verona 2016; B. Casalini, *Il femminismo e le sfide del neoliberalismo. Postfemminismo, sessismo, politiche della cura*, If Press, Roma 2018.

¹⁷ I. Loray, *State of Insecurity: Government of the Precarious*, translated by A. Derieg, Verso Futures, London 2015.

In *The Origins of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Engels depicted SDL as a pivotal mechanism for the maintenance of class-based societies through women's subordination, bourgeois familistic naturalized values and milestone production/reproduction binarism:

According to the materialistic conception, the determining factor in history is, in final instance, the production and reproduction of immediate essentials of life. [...] On one side, the production of means of existence, of articles of food and clothing, dwellings, and of the tools necessary for that production; on the other side, the production of human beings themselves, the propagation of the species¹⁸.

Beyond Engels' *production and reproduction of immediate life*, my situated understanding of reproduction involves a sensitivity towards those forms of invisible, unregulated and dislocated semio-material-affective labor that from the 70s increased up to involve communication, social-working, service industry, lifestyle etc. It is to say that rampant neoliberal forms of domination are not based upon the direct exercise of essentializing binarism but rather in the processual production of marginalizing submission by changing processes of subjectivation. The *feminization* of work refers to a general mode of re/production which consists in widespread mobility, servility and availability and which can consequently be translated in an overall precarity alongside the connections every body has with States, markets, intimacy, health, sexuality and desire.

In connection with previous arguments, the re/production of the sexed bodies continues as a process of embodiment and subjectivation which is both bound and struggling in the whirling of neoliberal conditions. In this sense, SDL does not lie anymore on essentialist Fordist gender-basis, but on useful processuality. Neoliberalism does not need an ontology of gender-binary according to whom "females" are necessary and teleologically entrusted with the household and carework, but it need the availability of a

¹⁸ Based on the digital edition of Marx and Engels, *Selected Works*, Volume 3, Moscow, Progress, 1973, available at www.marxists.org, p. 110.

feminizing process; and only an *a posteriori* idea of femininity. Neoliberal societies need the possibility to feminize all those subjectivities, skills, places and practices that they require to be docile in order to exploit energies, accumulate value and constitute new hierarchies as tools to guarantee their preservation. In other words, sex binary works as a governmental demographic dispositif which needs first *to function* and only successively *to be*. Sex is a technology of precarization – as it is race – and it works as a neutral biological reference for that *gender* from which it cannot be really distinguished: it is the retroactive element that guarantees for gender-binary. For this reason, from now on, I will use sex and gender ambivalently as coextensive terms.

The neoliberal world needs fluid but remunerative relations between exclusion and inclusion processes. If neoliberalism obfuscates the frontiers between production and reproduction, maleness and femaleness, men and women, nevertheless it does not permit this continuity to penetrate way down to its capitalistic foundations: neoliberal inclusivity is effective and functional only when built as a system of openings and closures determined alongside those distinguishing lines which canonize the differential *sacrificability* of subjects. Modulation and tweaking have to soften identitarianisms, whereas loyalty to some last categories has to protect the capital from disidentification's uncountable exuberance. Various overlapping and progressive stages of market capitalism and governmentality coexist in a neoliberal *and* neoconservative world¹⁹.

In such a negatively disorientating conjuncture, SDL is maintained as a procedure of almost transversal exploitation and should be renamed *Sexualising Division of Labor* stressing how the

¹⁹ See for a discussion around neoliberalism and neoconservatism: M. Cooper, *Life as Surplus: Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era*, cit.; A. Balzano, *Le conseguenze dell'amore ai tempi del biocapitalismo*, cit.; I. Santoemma, *Biolavoro. La riproduzione tra neofondamentalismo e nuove tecnologie in Se il mondo torna uomo*, ed. by L. Cirillo, Alegre, Roma 2018.

marginalizing process is not an essentializing ontology of the self but a centrifugal/centripetal force of assimilation which both marginalize and centralize subjects through the technologies of gender, race, ability... Sex-selective ARTs in the Global North are understandable only under these schizophrenic lenses, lenses determined by the neoliberal marriage among neoliberal progress and neocolonialist conservation. Here, gender-based parental desires and the genderization of chromosomes can be read as an essentializing collateral effect of neoliberal schizophrenic fluidity.

4. *Techno-Queer Futures*

In the previous sections I have shortly analyzed lifestyle sex selection ARTs as conservative capitalist tools. However, I have in mind Shulamith Firestone's *The Dialectic of Sex*, which in the 70s offered a theoretico-political twist to essentializing technophobic feminism by revealing how technology could open new escape paths by freeing women from the tyranny of SDL and gender binary.

As a situated feminist, I problematize beyond morality the insurgence of new and old technologies in a complex mediated world: paraphrasing Sandra Harding, I ask myself *which technologies? whose technologies?*²⁰ Embracing feminist technoscientific practices and reflections, I believe in the possibility to implement collective technologies in order to hack biological determinism and concerning injustices beyond dominant white, heterosexual, male, privileged perspectives. Indeed, the *body-factory* reveal the processual dynamic *artifactual* nature²¹ we are all part of, and consequently it encouraged towards those theoretical postures that read technology as not different and

²⁰ S. Harding, *Whose science? Whose knowledge?*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca&London 1991.

²¹ D. Haraway, *The Promises of Monsters: a Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others*, in «The Haraway Reader», Routledge, NewYork&London, 2004.

separated from nature and humans but as a mode of biological revealing which can be even further implemented.

Inspired by Feminist Science Fiction (also known as FS) tradition, I want to conclude this paper with a fabulative exercise by reflecting upon a *trans*feminist-Land*²² where technologies - even ARTs - are collectively dreamed and produced in order to liberate, not subjectivate, people.

In *Woman on the Edge of Time*, Marge Piercy depicts a world where motherhood is conceptualized and practiced as a collective non-familist experience, equally shared by the three “mothers” every child has - “mothers” regardless of sex/gender. In Piercy’s fiction, several new technologies have been developed to gestate babies in mechanical brooders (i.e. ectogenesis), men have been enabled to breast-feed, and the care-work is collectivized beyond SDL. In this pivotal novel, the overlap between sexual identity and sexual reproduction - which stands at the core of our essentialist understanding of human sex as nothing but natural - is recognized as a historical and cultural representation of feminine sexual identity as deterministically related with sexual reproduction. Something similar to Piercy’s fantasies about a technologically mediated but collectively liberating sexuality is philosophically examined by Luciana Parisi through her beautiful *semio-material* conceptualization, the *abstract sex*. «Abstract sex embraces the Spinozist hypothesis about the indeterminate power (or abstract potential) of a body suggesting that “we do not yet know what a body can do”»²³. In *Abstract Sex* Parisi depicted a cyborg *sexual-genderless-body* in *intra-productive* relation with those bacteria, fungi and viruses who lies on our cavities, with economic inputs and outputs, physical and environmental condition, culturally-induced desires, resistance practices and even genetic

²² This neologism is a linguistical hacking of Charlotte P. Gilman’s famous and controversial feminist utopia: *HerLand*.

²³ L. Parisi, *Abstract Sex: Philosophy, Bio-technology and the Mutation of Desire*, Continuum I, NewYork&London, 2004, p. 10.

engineering and plastic surgery: it is a body which stands beyond the dichotomy between biological essentialism and discursive constructivism; a body whose desires and postures *intra-depend* on proximities that are ungraspable for a human rational understanding of eroticism, as well as our life and genetics, do not only depend on sexual vertical transmission but also on our symbiotic microbioma. Parisi's biotechnological disentanglement of sex from sexual reproduction engages with the new implications of the biotechnological mutations of the body, and abstract sex argues that sex, far from being signified or represented, is primarily stratified. Every layer of such a semio-material *assemblage* is a possibility for a new understanding of life, humanity, sex and re/production; a sort of promise for a future which rhymes with pioneer Marxist geneticist J. B. S. Haldane, who clearly admitted how material bodies are not only queerer than we suppose, but queerer than we *can* suppose.

The feminist imaginative – and simultaneously embedded challenge to *hack* sex as it was historically canonized – is inhabited even by Patricia MacCormack. As a posthuman philosopher, she dedicated her studies in depicting how transgressive forms of sexuality are categorized through hetero-cis-normative paradigms which depend on a productivist obsession – a crucial knot of what I have called sexualizing division of labor. By proposing new libidinal cartographies, she tries to *queer desire* rather than reifying some forms of sexuality *as queer*, and she turns her eyes on a controversial figuration: *necrophilic desire*²⁴ as the quintessence of radical anti-systemic queerness. Indeed, the dead body is an effective embeddedness of Deleuze's «body without organs», an incorporation able to dismantle the organicist optic illusion of the human body as a Vitruvian well-formed whole constructed from, a fully functioning and teleologically oriented pre-determined

²⁴ P. MacCormack, *Necrosexuality* in «Rhizomes: Cultural Studies in Emerging Knowledge», 11, 12, 2005.

sexed construction. The dead body, as well as the body-without-organs, is in/productive insofar it cannot work for modern humanistic aims as the binary differential re/production of a determined fixed nature. MacCormack visionary, profound, sophisticated but disturbing and misunderstandable though reminds Leslie Francis Silberberg's (aka Leslie F. Stone) pulp feminist science fiction. Her avant-gard writings are astonishing but politically very serious: her novels are inhabited by scientists equips involved in projecting extra-womb gestation and artificial oocytes, as in Piercy's literature: women are not anymore frozen in a maternalistic posture whereas their social educational tasks are dismantled and they can finally dedicate their time to fly as balloonists or astronauts. Isn't this a way to hack sex and go beyond the sexualizing division of labor which interprets reproduction and care work as female affairs vs male ones? And isn't this a line of flight far away from an organic understanding of our feminized and disciplined bodies? What is sex if an artificial womb can gestate and a woman *have wings*?

FS novels and queer theories are crucial allies to *become with* a new onto-ethico-epistemology and imagine a future beyond the traps of the neoliberal system. Mind and body, thought and practice are here molded in an entanglement of language and matter where technoscientific innovations cannot be evaluable - condemnable or enthusiastically *celebratable* - regardless of the political and ideological conjuncture they lay in. They are situated and relational and even intra-produced with their environment. By hacking the semio-material juncture among sexuality, gender and subjectivation, FS and transfeminist authresses depicted the possibility of queer and non-capitalist futures where the currently established ideas regarding queer perversion²⁵ and normality are erased deactivating governmental dispositifs as

²⁵ See for a discussion around the term: P. MacCormack, *Perversion: Transgressive Sexuality and Becoming-Monsters*, in «Third Space - a Journal of Feminist Theory and Culture», 3, 2, 2004.

lifestyle sexual selection and SDL by making them both useless and meaningless.

Thus, Marx and Engels were pretty well clear in *The German Ideology* when they recognized the production of material life itself (namely reproduction) as the first historical act. *Historical, History*: what would happen if we take seriously the process of imaging a world where gender is dismantled by modifying sex binarism, the understanding of gendered re/production and sexual practices?

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