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Sonja, Artemis, Greta, and Bernard: An Interview on *S/CARE PACKAGES*

1. **John Tinnell**: *I am interested to hear more about the film's title, S/CARE PACKAGES. In the film, when you invoke Martin Heidegger's conception of care, you say: "Care is scary – it partakes of the pharmakon." How does this pharmacological bend manifest in the "crises of care" that the film addresses?*

Jon McKenzie: "S/CARE packages" came to me long ago as a sound-image that captures the pharmaka of American B-52s dropping cluster bombs flying one direction over Afghanistan and then dropping CARE packages flying back. Since I earned my creative license watching cartoons and Laurie Anderson, "S/CARE packages" is a giant flying X whose range covers the world, x-amplified by potentially anything. X may or may not be equal to X: it violates the identity principle and thus "To be or not to be?" is not the question and perhaps hasn't been since Hegel. World is pharmakon, not just writing and language and drugs, and s/care is precisely the precarious, sometimes careening, care it gives and takes from us (who? what?). S/care is the whywhathow thinging we attend. Or not. Our arts, sciences, and professions, our cults, cultures, and traditions, our disciplines, methods, and techne all comprise regimes of s/care packaging the terrible truth of Silenus, to wrap things up in tragic Greek terms, or to breathe in another atmosphere, प्रतीत्यसमुत्पाद or *pratītyasamutpāda*, the interdependent co-arising and falling away of phenomena described by Guatama Buddha, or perhaps, again, Jacques

Derrida's spectral figures, *life death, hauntology, psyche*. Schizopoetically: *machinic phylum, genre mechanique, dharmakon*.

The collaborative, recombinant *S/CARE PACKAGES* film gathers several haunting figures whose individual crises – those they "address" and those they "enter" – and those we thereby encounter and perhaps enter ourselves – also gather different techniques and rituals and performances of care that all attend to something "scary", and all potentially, eventually, may turn scary themselves, with or without scare quotes. Hospitals worldwide have been overwhelmed by COVID; schools face massive mental health problems of students and staff; governments recoil at societal violence and cyberwarfare; and our world's atmosphere holds all this scary emergence while holding our breath, tense with futural packets of care. Amidst this cascade of scary systems, who or what cares, responds, takes flight – and how?

Prior to COVID, Ana Vujanović and I invited Bernard Stiegler to make a lecture performance around three figures: Sonja Vujanović, Artemis, and at his suggestion, Greta Thunberg, and like all figures, these three holds and spill out others whose recombinant appearance produces shock and awe, terror and wonder as the production-product unfolds and is made bare. For me, thought-action figuration is s/caring, and this project consists of a *making cure* in the form of an exquisite corpse – or rather an exquisite child, a newborn exquisite world – a body of collective thought-action figures passed serenely, surreally between three sets of hands via email, Zoom, and Google drive, with a fourth set, Dan Ross's hands, coming in at the end. And here we now hand things off to others, telepathically, at a distance.

Through Stiegler's death and Dan's reflections, Bernard became, *mise en abyme*, a figure within the collaborative figuration. In his wake but proceeding him, Ludwig Boltzmann's figure emerges within a procession of scientists who now – through our voices and images and arrangements – weave their way up the Danube, the Ister, the river of Time, *Lethe*, where they encounter Sonja, her hands, the forest, children, and camps. Greta makes but a cameo appearance in Bernard's intergenerational notes with grandma and grandpa writers George Sands and Victor Hugo, and still other children emerge, children of Artemis, *physis*, nature: Carlos Henandez Rivera whose film *The Damaging and the Uniting* serves as my local catalyst, Karin Campbell and her Corny Flakes project, Larry Eaglespeaker and the scars of *UNeducation*, and Rrose Salevy/Marcel Duchamp, whose Étant *donnés* and even *The Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even*, glimpsed in blurry transition, evoke Artemis and her Actaeon Complex (those who carefully or carelessly gaze upon figures seeking…).

Heidegger's figure haunts the film and us all. As Avital Ronell dialed it up in *The Telephone Book*: what's the status of a thinking that takes the call of the SS for the call of conscience? Truly s/cary, and the collect call from "Martini Heidegger" that Derrida refuses to take in *La Carte Postale* – made I hear from a Floridada area code – puts us all on the line in ways we can't easily hang up. The Frankfurt School g/hosts Heidegger (Adorno and Marcuse making very different calls), Wittgenstein cites him to taunt Carnap and the logicians of the Vienna School, and Arendt introduces Benjamin to America by stamping his passport "Freiburg" rather than "Frankfurt".

Translation, transference, transmediation are all in play in *S/CARE PACKAGES*, in and between its many figures, human figures, yes, dogs, deer, forests, rivers, bridges, graves, beautiful spring mornings, fiery nights, yes. I chanced upon Heidegger's lecture courses on Heraclitus, taught in Freiburg in 1943 and 1944, the height of the war, the Holocaust, the worldwide conflagration, long after he'd left the Party but just after he ditched Nietzsche as bad Will to Power. As a good Greek son, Heidegger cites Artemis and her brother Apollo in his opening remarks to – but just who or what heard these lectures on Heraclitus at Freiburg, which Germans, the folk, nation, *Geschlecht* that Heidegger still invokes in his call to thinking? After the war, his reeducation, breakdown, and "release", he would instead invoke Europe, pinched between Asia and America, East and West.

I was taken by the 1986 English translations of "The Inception of Occidental Thinking" and "Logic: Heraclitus's Doctrine of the Logos". A recent book cover carries an image of Artemis, the *Diana of Versailles*, a Roman copy of a Greek sculpture by Leochares. The marble stands in the Louvre, only Bloomsbury flipped the photograph left-to-right, revealing what s/cary things happen making border crossings in France, Germany, the UK, the US, and around the world.

It is necessary and perhaps too easy to call Heidegger on this invocation of Artemis to Germans, precisely because today rhetorical, urgent, at times highly political calls in the name of – X – have become ubiquitous. As I write from Ithaca, New York, January 18, 2023, down in the state of Florida – the state of my birth, primary and secondary education, and BFA and MA degrees, a land expropriated by waves of Spanish, British, Confederate, and US governments (sovereign s/care packages) – today the Florida College System Presidents (an association of 28 state and community colleges) announced with tortured logic that they "remain committed to developing campus environments that uphold objectivity in teaching and learning and in professional development and that welcome all voices – environments in 'which students, faculty, and staff can pursue their academic interests without fear of reprisal or being 'canceled.'" Here (where?) we have *thinking as s/caring*. Meta-canceling-culture: X marks the crossed-out crossing, the intersectional spot where caring and scaring cross if not bifurcate, where critical responses and problem-solving have officially become part of the problem, assuming there is one. Chiasmosis, again.

Ana and Dan may lay down their Heidegger hands, as Bernard Stiegler did many times. Mine are played by reading Heidegger backwards (late to early) with cards dealt by Derrida, Ulmer, and Ronell; and by Reiner Schurmann, who provocatively marries his teacher Hannah Arendt's natality and Heidegger's deconstructive mortality; by Andrew Mitchell, who traces Heidegger's fourfolding of Aristotle's four causes into earth, sky, mortals, and gods; as well as by Eugen Fink, extraordinarily playful student of Husserl and Heidegger (and Heraclitus); and by Pierre Klossowski, the transmedial figure who perversely poses and transposes *Artemis as figure of aletheia* across different spacetimes, different worlds exposing us to still others. In some sense, my bits of *S/CARE PACKAGES* stage the event *Artemis Stripped Bare by her Actaeon Complex, Even*.

Ana Vujanović: My take on care, as well as on its scary shadow is situated in feminist thought, rather than Heidegger.

Apart from Donna Haraways' writings, I am inspired by Maria Puig de la Bellacasa's book *Matters of Care,* where care is conceived as a layered engagement with the world, which can be seen as 'a vital affective state, an ethical obligation and a practical labor'. As such, it is a world-making affect and activity. It is scary because if 'beings do not pre-exist their relatings' (a Haraway's thought to which Maria Puig comes back several times), then there is no one to give care, no one over there, as a solid individual. All stable configurations of human agents are shaken here, even the traditional woman's subjectivity of caregiver. At the same time, these thoughts are liberating, to me at least, because they push me beyond the Western (modern, male) concept of the liberal, autonomous, and self-possessive individual into the field of caring relations, wherefrom co-dependent individuals could emerge.

Sonja, a grandmother of mine, who was an anti-fascist fighter, communist, and Auschwitz survivor, is a figure who fully takes on a relational subject of care. In herstory of the resistance and revolution, she is not a big hero; she is all the time surrounded by her comrades, lover, and girlfriends; after the first successful armed action she doesn't celebrate her deed, she is in fact crushed by the burden of the act of killing an SS officer; she is scared, nevertheless she takes part in the resistance movement at Auschwitz-Birkenau; she has doubts, she looks around, she listens to the voices, she never leaves the dense web of relations, which make her into what she is. A transindividual of anti-fascist resistance and socialist revolution.

The other related concern I invested into this work is storytelling without heroes, storytelling as an act of carrying in and by words number of people who are involved in an event or a situation from the time and space of the event to the time and space of the audience's attending the story. Two things interest me here: carrying and the story. I put them together while reading Elisabeth Fisher's *Woman's Creation* and her 'carrier bag anthropology', Ursula K. Le Guin's "Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction", Svetlana Aleksievich's *Unwomanly Face of the War*, and Adriana Cavarero's *Relating Narratives*. I experimented with carrying dramaturgy as a caring storytelling act in the documentary film *Landscapes of Resistance*, directed by my partner in life and work Marta Popivoda, where Sonja as the main protagonist and storyteller features. In our *S/CARE PACKAGES* I additionally worked on *feminisming* Cavarero's account on storytelling as a traditional female discourse by putting in the same carrier bag stories of Sonja, her comrades, and two other Yugoslav female partisan fighters from the 1940s and a philosophical discourse on transindividuality, which (philosophical discourse) was historically a male domain.

A lateral thought that I have is that in the history of communist (real-socialist) societies, a care for the collective subject of oppression and exploitation – that is, working class – often neglected individual specificities, needs, and desires. For me, every care that cannot see an individual is scary, because for me an individual is relational, transindividual, 'a singular of a plural', but exactly as such - unique, precious, and indispensable.

Daniel Ross: Laying down the Heideggerian portion of my hand, the subject and object of my PhD was decisively conditioned by the publication of the English translation of two of Heidegger's lecture courses, *Hölderlin's Hymn "The Ister"* in 1996 and *Plato's Sophist* in 1997. Like the courses on Heraclitus to which Jon refers, *The Ister* course was delivered at the height of the Second World War, in 1942, that is, contemporaneously with the Wannsee conference. It repeats the analysis of *Antigone* carried out in *An Introduction to Metaphysics* in 1935, but this repetition seems almost like a necessity, made as if in answer to a call required by the fact that Heidegger has "ditched Nietzsche" and is looking (back) towards Hölderlin for another thought, another Germany, another relationship to Greece – that is, for another "West", another *source* of the West in the co-implication and counter-swirl of West and East.

The theme of that course is thus that the "image" of the river presented in Hölderlin's poetry (and specifically the Danube), which Heidegger is at pains not to take "metaphysically" as a "symbolic image", is of the "abode" of human existence as a relationship between flowing and remaining, between journeying and what we could call the metastability of the counter-flows of locality. In this way, Heidegger is drawing on and drawing back to the questions of *Being and Time*, that is, to the question of the conditions of the *Da*, or of any *there* worthy of the name, characterized in its essence by the possibility and necessity of *Sorge* (but also of *besorgen*). It is not too difficult to see the way in which this could and does become Stiegler's question of locality at all the scales of life and *technical life* (that is, noetic life) as a question of the negentropic and neg-*an*thropic counter-tendency to the irreducibly entropic tendency of the universe and the irreducibly anthropic tendency of the universe that we – technical beings that we are and noetic beings that we try to remain – try to stabil*ize* by re-fashioning it as a desirable cosmos, at the perpetual risk of thereby losing the capacity for *re*-stabilizing what inevitably becomes unstable. Such is our tragic condition, according to Stiegler… and Sophocles.

Long before Stiegler turns explicitly to questions of entropy, however, this 1942 lecture course had also become the metastabilizing focus for the rather erratic journeying that led to *The Ister*, and, through that, led *me* to *Bernard* – and at a very interesting moment, after the end of the twentieth century but before the events of September 2001 that will so decisively, disastrously and disorientingly mark the first two decades of the twenty-first, and as its opening event (which also seems to close it off in advance, as Stiegler will say). Another way of saying that is to say that I encountered Bernard at the moment when he had written the third volume of *La technique et le temps* but had not yet undergone the experiences that he would *suffer* as a call to write *Aimer, s'aimer, nous aimer* and all the texts that would follow as a concatenation of responses to this carefully planned and globally televised spectacle of terror. But we could also take that third volume as foreshadowing what was to come in the form of a globalized flow of images coinciding "live", and point-by-point, *with* our "lived experience", telescoping our primary and tertiary retentions (to use the language of Husserl and Stiegler) and thereby tending to eliminate the wealth opened up by a sense of temporal depth.

2. **John Tinnell**: *The film's opening text explains how the project was initially conceived to be a live lecture performance with Bernard Stiegler, prior to the onset of COVID-19. How did your turn toward film affect the selection and arrangement of the project's main threads? Also, in broader terms, I am curious if your experiences undertaking this forced change of plans – the shift in medium and collaborative dynamics – prompted any fresh theoretical reflections on the relations between technology and performance.*

    Ana Vujanović: That turn changed everything – the whole context of our work, its role, and the purpose. At the beginning, we worked on an opening keynote lecture at a huge performance studies annual conference (PSi# 26), at the stage of The Croatian National Theatre Ivan pl. Zajc in Rijeka. Now we have a video performance-symposium that wanders through VR, sometimes inhabiting big and small screens as well.

    I enjoy live encounters and working and thinking with people. But Jon and I took that whole change with an understanding of the global changes that came with Covid-19, so rather as a challenge than disappointment. And although none of us was friends with Bernard, we were deeply saddened by and shocked at his death. So, we also felt that we owed it to him to complete this work, which Jon initiated and which we had been doing together.

    What happened with this turn in terms of the ontology of media is that we – Jon, I, and Dan – disappeared as live performers – or, to put it even more fundamentally, living beings – from the work, those who present it to other people. While leaving that set-up characteristic for live performance, we migrated into a two-dimensional image of our cosmologies of care. In that way, we came closer to our figures of Artemis, Sonia, Greta, as well as to Bernard's presence in the form of images, diagrams, and spoken words in a film interview. We started working on our 'critical fabulation' from within the *fabula* we created. During the process of making the video, my impression is that we oscillated between crafting and composing the video scenes and inhabiting them, in the form of voice, thought, silence, text, or an eye that observes the landscape. Now, when the video is done and it exists as an object on its own, we are only figures, thought-figures, visual, textual, or sonic figures who exist and think in *a populated world* (again Haraway) of figures, not living people. It is a big loss and a big gain at the same time, as well as an exercise in humbleness as care-takers and care-givers.

    Jon McKenzie: The platform switch came abruptly for me in March 2020, as Bernard and I were scheduled to perform a first walk-through of our portions of *S/CARE PACKAGES* at the Sorbonne on April 12, 2020 – incredibly, my 60th birthday. But COVID came down hard that March, and I had to cancel flight and hotel reservations. I still have the props: a felt hat with antlers, a small artificial fire, a toy bridge, and a metal "S/CARE" stencil for marking cardboard boxes I planned to buy in Paris. I think I'd recorded audio over all my video elements, and I planned to move around under their projections, packing and unpacking objects from the *S/CARE PACKAGES*. Bernard's plans were a mystery: all we had were some images, infographics, and diagrams: no title, text, or

PowerPoint, no outline or shot list. I knew he'd written on Greta and Kant's "*Sapere aude!*" – "Dare to think!" – and from the bits he gave us, I could sense the moves he might have made. I was shocked at the move he did make.

S/CARE PACKAGES, for me, is experimental transmedia collaboration conducted under pandemic conditions that switched us from one collaborative platform to another. I don't know about us disappearing. Such switching is the stuff of everyday lifedeath. I am wary of the "we" in Ana's response, as it often haunts a binary opposition that has proved lethal. The dialectics of full and empty subjects, along with Heidegger's ontological throwing of authentic and inauthentic Daseins and liberalism's progress via education of enlightened citizens from ignorant masses, all have a long and violent history – that of European modernism and colonialism. All harbor the all-too-human "we" and "they", and all infamously informed the breakup of Yugoslavia, as NSK forecast way back in the 1980s and *The Ister* and *Landscapes of Resistance* document in their own different ways.

If Peter Weiss captured the psychopolitical darkside of the French Revolution with *Marat/Sade*, who or what might produce *Tito/Klein* to piece together Yugoslavia's breakup via the partial boundary objects of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia, objects whose sovereign fort-da produced brutal camps along ethnic, religious, linguistic, gender, and sexual lines, confirming Deleuze and Guatarri's insight that contemporary micro-fascisms form along axes of identity and require non-signifying semiotics and molecular revolutions to flip nihilistic partial objects into affirmative desiring-machines that potentially join into planes of consistency. Can a live theater piece, an experimental film – or any work of art – do justice to all the pieces? In which language(s)? style(s)? genre(s)? venue(s)? spacetime(s)? If not, how to proceed, especially when gathered with the figures of Greta, Artemis, and all their incorporated configurations?

Do justice to all the pieces? As I recently told BADco director Sergej Pristas, who drove me to Zagreb decades ago: I fear Yugoslavia has become a pilot for the U.S.

I'm thus wary also of maintaining a mimetic ontology of media, one that projects the presence of a living paradigm and its deathly fall into media, for this is the paradigm of logocentric mimesis that defines and haunts Western colonial discipline and neocolonial performativity. The spectral is not Hegelian mediation, as Benjamin might have written Adorno as he set off for Spain. Thus performance "and" technology is a set-up, something performance theorists ritualistically forget, along with their organizational histories and ontological apparati. Plato excluded the poets and techne from the Republic, and Aristotle "saved" them with the *Poetics*, but at a tremendous cost – second-class status in a bivalent world (real/imaginary) that modern and contemporary artists seem content, if not happy, to reoccupy. It gives us a "critical function", one secured by logos. Concept/metaphor, literal/figurative, real/imaginary: these distinctions tip the hand that when things get rough, when "you're either with us or against us" and, philosophically speaking, determinate negation kicks in, then politically speaking, "they" may be off to the camps. The other of figure is not the

literal but a function of power, just as the other of life is not death but a function of – X. Ontology, proper names, signification fail here. What art becomes …

S/CARE PACKAGES's thought-action figures (TAFs) are very much alive, more so (lifedeath), and entangled in transpacetimes near and far, channeling particle waves running deep insideout onto-historical strata layered and folded in bodies organic and inorganic. Haraway's string figures connect to Lazzarato's diagrammatic politics, what I call the micro-performativities of power/knowledge operating algorithmically at scales and speeds that discursive performatives and embodied performances – today the algorithmic stuff of all-too-human Platonic presence and Heideggerian presencing – cannot go unless put into disastronautic, cosmographic flight.

At times, TAFs (see the film's rivers and bridges, forests and fire, children, women and men, philosophers, artists, engineers) challenge machinic enslavement by any media necessary, operating as components of living-dead desiring-machines performing within larger sociotechnical systems, systems not limited to art institutions, universities, cultural spheres, and nation-states. All theory is Cold War theory, institutionalized by First, Second, and Third World countries through organizational, technological, and cultural performance paradigms, among others. Ideologies, aesthetic movements, critical schools, community organizations, modern civic institutions – all now perform-or-else to multiple conflicting imperatives that identity politics, ideological critique, and mimetic media maintain and extend rather than engage and transform.

How to "do" theory otherwise? I think our interests may happily converge and diverge here.

My collaborative work with StudioLab and transmedia knowledge builds desiring-machines that connect researchers, designers, and community organizations working on death row cases, social and environmental justice, and rural healthcare in US and Africa. Neither art nor critique, it's critico-creative performance design. It is precisely here that my respect for NSK, BADco, MaMa, Walking Theory, etc. lies – and indeed, for similar groups across Eastern Europe: for onto-historical, cosmopolitico reasons, they approach institutions and infrastructures as creative media with different viscosities and trajectories than the subjects and objects sympoetically coming and going in them. NSK mimes totalitarianism, fcs. Similarly, in addition to his extraordinary theoretical gifts, what most impressed me about Bernard was his organizational and technological creativity with IRI, his joyful chutzpah in bringing together scientists and programmers with artists and social theorists and building a production platform that attempted a collective assemblage of enunciation, an Internation, even if briefly. I had looked forward to working with them but with Bernard's suicide, things have changed, and I drive fast.

Daniel Ross: I joined Jon and Ana's project only after the onset of the pandemic, but perhaps I can say something about why I was led to make a movie with a philosophical connection, and something about how Bernard saw the significance

of cinema. For the directors of *The Ister*, the age of cinematic reproduction implied a challenge to philosophy, which had always been (and still is, insofar as there still *is* any philosophy) a history of the use of the implements of writing to produce the unfolding of a chain of thinking and rethinking (births and rebirths of thinking/caring) lasting two and a half millennia. What difference does the rise of the cinematic age make, we wondered, not to the *illustration* of this history but to the very possibility of its *continuation*, of its being *rethought*? And it should be recalled that in that film, Syberberg, in some ways an even more "controversial" figure than Heidegger, will say, in a Heideggerian spirit, that the rubbish-filled rivers, and the flow of river-images that has itself become a kind of rubbish, no longer have the possibility of speaking to us (but he then immediately imagines another possibility, an alternative, not a text but a performance or a film, one involving a glass of polluted river water set in contrast to Hölderlin's words as spoken through Heidegger's voice).

For Stiegler, the archi-trace, which he thinks as a process and as the history of what he calls grammatization (rendering the temporal flows of life and consciousness spatially by analyzing and discretizing them in order to reproduce them "hyper-materially" as tertiary retentions), should be thought not first of all in terms of archi-writing but rather archi-cinema. It begins, in other words, not with writing but with "proto-cinema", that is, with those decorated prehistoric caves such as Lascaux and Chauvet, whose apprehension, according to Marc Azéma, was deliberately constructed so as to involve the use of fire as a means of animating them (while Godard will say, about the other end of cinematic history, that "for fifty years we have, in the dark, burned imagination in order to heat reality" and that art, "like fire", is "born from what it burns"). On 28 December 1895, this history of grammatization sees the inauguration of a new epoch, that of cinema "proper", which for Stiegler derives its flowing, burning, incandescent power from its structural resemblance to the conditions of our own conscious/unconscious experience: first, in the unfolding of its audiovisual temporal flow that so resembles our own fixation on the sensory flow of sights and sounds; second, in always involving a process of post-production, of editing, which tends to escape our notice in the synthetic apprehension of the images of the movie, as of consciousness. For Stiegler, the lives, *anima*, of noetic souls such as ours try to be, *are* always already *cinema*.

3. John Tinnell: *I imagine that the most difficult part of making this film was, in every way, the passing of Bernard Stiegler. I was especially moved by a segment toward the film's end in which Stiegler's recorded remarks – his general reflections on technics and the presence of the dead – become a kind of poignant tribute to his own legacy. Might you speak to a few of the ways his thinking infuses or haunts the film?*

Daniel Ross: After the death of Derrida, Bernard wrote a very beautiful little text on the fate of his supervisor and colleague's memory and thought, "We Enter

the Return of Jacques Derrida", in which he compares Derrida with the condemned Socrates, a gadfly of the city and an "uncompromisingly exemplary intransigence", in Derrida's case precisely because he could think "that which in life is not living" – the supplement, the archi-trace, as the challenge to all existing metaphysics that throughout its long history twisted its way around all of these problems of life-death by endlessly combining and recombining oppositions and dichotomies. One might say that Heidegger tried to think his way out of this metaphysical maze not only via Hölderlin's twisting, seemingly counter-flowing rivers but via the condemned Antigone as well, another who preferred "to die rather than to bow", and who is represented in *The Ister* via the tragic and condemned figures of Agnes Bernauer and, more elliptically, Saint Teresia Benedicta a Cruce (Edith Stein).

For Bernard himself, prior to his being ultimately and more-than-tragically self-condemned by himself (for reasons about which it is not possible to do more than speculate, but about which we perhaps *must* speculate – even if such speculation is bound to be inadequate, if not impossible – if we are to enter the return of Bernard Stiegler), we might say that, as a figure, he is a kind of Tiresias, the latter inspiring Bonello's *Tiresia* (2003) – a cinema of blindness (and of the transsexual), of the blind, and also of the premonitory pre-vision of those who have been blinded, and blinded by the "nightmare of blinding images" in which today we try to live (Stiegler wrote a chapter about Bonello's film in *Symbolic Misery*). For Bernard himself, in the end, this blinded world showed in its blinding obviousness that it is rushing headlong to its more-than-tragic-fate by its inability to see or to hear the words of Greta Thunberg, who on the contrary this world seems all too anthropically eager to condemn – a figure about whom Bernard said to me that he saw her as a kind of "sign", no doubt a sign that must be read in a way that is "dechristianized and tragedized" (*Symbolic Misery 1*, 92). His last and longest book was about the lesson of that sign, the lesson of Greta Thunberg, but also and especially an attempt to teach some lessons to her generation about the questions of the possibility of re-forming a generation at all: the regeneration of the generations. That book was itself the second volume of a work whose first volume argued that not only must we reinterpret Nietzsche's transvaluation of all values, but we must do so by recognising that Nietzsche *did* know Boltzmann, that the question of nihilism is also a question of entropy, but that he did not (and could not) know Schrödinger and Lotka, whom it is our political and economic duty *to* know. And in a fourth volume of *La technique et le temps* that he left to us, circulated among friends but never published, this necessity of combining and recombining the "fertile revenances" of the past, which is the condition of possibility of any worthwhile future whatsoever, including any future for the generations and their epochs, has a name:

> The *there* no longer being there, wretched [*immonde*] monsters return *in place* of what *fails to return* of the traumatypes giving intermittent access to the extra-ordinary. This is so because the rubbish [*immondices*] of informational, computational and other retentional waste does not

> manage to decompose into *humus*. The issue is reprocessing [*retraitement*, recycling]. Now, such reprocessing has a name in philosophy: it is called critique, which ana-lyzes – and, in so doing, decomposes.

> This is so because, for the *there* to *be* there, it must *come* into the world, it must be able to come and *come back* into the world, and return *to the world* not only by being born [*naissant*], but by *knowing* [*connaissant*] and being *reborn* [*renaissant*] through knowledge [*connaissance*]: by individuating, by pursuing individuation qua incompleteness, of which biological birth is but the translation of vital individuation qua vital différance. Noetic différance is an always recommenced birth – as (re)conversion, *change of point of view*.

For myself, the question of the possibility of entering the return of Bernard Stiegler implies the question of the conditions of the future of noetic recycling, and this question can no longer be treated as a question of the treatment of texts alone – it is also, if not first of all, a matter of taking care of the future of that flowing-burning (like but unlike the flowing-burning oil-filled Cuyahoga River of 1969, harbinger of a burning world to come, about which Randy Newman sang in "Burn On") that has been the history of cinema, and which, too, finds itself threatened, if not already destroyed, by a carelessness that has forgotten that we are caring beings to the precise extent that we are capable of remaining desiring beings in general, and with the desire to recompose what has been decomposed in particular. Escaping this forgetting is, as Stiegler never stops returning to tell us, a question of changing our point of view – of conversion, which is to say, of rebirth.

And let me just add, finally, in a very simple and uncomplicated register, that for me, there are three moments of genius in Bernard's work: *first*, the thesis concerning the relationship between technicization and hominization, but which should already be seen in the light of his even earlier work on the milieu of the noetic soul and on the idiotext; *second*, the work of his "middle" period on organology and pharmacology, but more particularly his insights on the relationship between grammatization and proletarianization (conceived as loss of knowledge); *third*, the reinscription of all of his work on these questions via a consideration of the necessity of distinguishing negentropy and neganthropy by recognising the difference made by Lotka's notion of exosomatization (the question of a "noodiversity" necessary for the reproduction of exosomatic life is analogous to but also different from the question of the biodiversity necessary for the reproduction of endosomatic life), and the need for a "neganthropology" to think and act on these questions in relation to our current "Entropocene" and the near-impossible possibility of entering a new epoch that he referred to as the Neganthropocene.

The feeling that I had immediately after Bernard's death, which might sound grandiose to some ears, but which has stuck with me ever since, is that there is no

future for philosophy that does not pass through a genuine reckoning or positive critique of Stiegler's work, that this reckoning or critique has thus far not been undertaken, neither by renowned thinkers in philosophy and related fields nor by those more closely related to the Stieglerian "circle", and that, ultimately, the risk is that Stiegler will have brought thinking to a necessary point but, ironically, at the precise moment when the proletarianization that he diagnosed has reached such a level of "denoetization" that there is no longer anyone capable of really receiving or responding to it – which is to say, of taking responsibility for it, and of being converted by it. Maybe Greta, or *another* Greta…who knows?

Ana Vujanović: Speaking about the encounter between technics and death, one of the most vibrant thoughts that Stiegler proposed and that I engaged with in my work is the idea of exteriorization of human memory and its transmission from generation to generation and from region to region by means of 'mnemotechnical devices'. They are technical objects of various kinds, from films and books, which transmit certain memories deliberately to tools and machines, such as knives and cars, which do it by the way, so to speak, but with the same rigor, consequences, and potential.

I here need to leap over many related issues and introduce a sketch of Stiegler's theses on memory. Stiegler distinguishes between three types of memory, which form a meta-stable condition of human's socialization, individuation, and inter-subjectivization:

- genetic memory of the species, inscribed in the genetic code;
- epigenetic memory, acquired through the central nervous system and corresponding to the individual's experience of events, faces, music, etc.; and
- techno-logical memory, which is epiphylogenetic; it is stored in technical systems and transmitted through objects, such as legal treatises, architecture, photographs, films etc.

The epigenetic memory depends on the individual human who supports it and it gets lost with a loss of that individual. The third type of memory is, however, expressive of "a structural coupling between the cortex and the tool", a human being and technical object, and exceeds an individual life. With its political dimension, embodied politics, so to speak, it interests me most. Namely, techno-logical memory has a social-political dimension because the individual acquires it from their social surroundings, and once interiorized, it influences the individual's own experience and behaviour. This is what Stiegler himself inferred. In addition, this whole proposal made me think about the political dimension of the relation between the epigenetic and epiphylogenetic memories. In the movie *Landscapes of Resistance*, as well as in my contribution to the *S/CARE PACKAGES* I opened the following questions: Which memory deserves and has rights to be stored and transmitted, and which one is destined to be lost and forgotten? And the other way around, which individuals as social subjects deserve and have rights and access to store and transmit their memories?

This is precisely the question that Sonja as a thought-figure asks.

I come from a family of grandmothers-storytellers; now all dead. I hear Jon's critical questions concerning the dichotomy that I insinuated when speaking about physical presence and existence on the screen, and I agree that it can go down the dangerous path of essentialist identities. Nevertheless, there are several situations in which I feel a need to ponder and take into account this difference despite the danger. Maybe there are ways to stop differentiating before we enter the essentialist realm of substantializing categories. This is for me one of these situations, the situation in which certain knowledge exists only until the body that holds it lives, while some other knowledge gets the opportunity to be exteriorized, inscribed into mnemotechnical devices (and properly credited), and as such it enters the inter-generational and inter-regional circulation of knowledge, contributing to the so-called 'civilization'. The film and the whole research on feminist storytelling by Yugoslav female partisan fighters that Marta and I have conducted is a feminist intervention, trying to preserve some of those stories that would otherwise die with the death of these women. We did the interviews with them and soon after witnessed their deaths. The stories however live and will reappear in public whenever possible.

Landscapes of Resistance, and to an extent my segments of the *S/CARE PACK-AGES* are illustrative of epiphylogenetic memory being a twofold process: It is an a posteriori exteriorization of our epigenetic memory, so for instance, we recorded events and people remembered and told by Sonja. At the same time, epiphylogenetic memory has a retroactive dimension and rewrites our memory, even when we observe it on the level of personal experience of listening to music, cutting bread, or going to the theatre. In that sense, exteriorized and shared, social, collective memory indicates the transindividual dimension of art and other technical objects in terms of an onto-political capacity. Furthermore, the retroactive dimension of memory formation does not turn towards the past only; it is also an anticipation. It influences our future perception and behavior, which is the main hope of our film – to inspire resistance to today's fascism. The process of individuation enabled by art as a technology of memory is therefore happening simultaneously in multiple temporalities, which may have their own calendars of cosmological time, as well as their speeds and rhythms.

The last remark I want to share here is that inheritance of mnemotechnical devices is thus as important for transindividuation as the creation of tools is. Moreover, these two processes are in Stiegler's philosophy intertwined and this is how in *Acting Out* he describes the "structural coupling between the cortex and the tool", where "the what invents the who just as much as it is invented by it":

> When I inherit an object, a flint-cutting tool, for example, I inherit through its mode of use, the gestures, the motor behaviors that lead to the production of the flint-cutting tool. With the appearance of technical objects, a new stratum of memory is constituted, which permits the transmission from generation to generation of individual experience and permits mutualisation in the form of what we call a we.

As I tried to indicate, what remains open here and I see it as a huge field of exploration is how the tissue of the we is woven, from which fabric, by which weaving technique, and who is credited with that achievement. That open field, which I saw as a feminist woman, doesn't address women only; on the contrary, it is densely populated.

Jon McKenzie: The carnival section from *The Ister* near the end of *S/CARE PACKAGES* is miraculous, the way Bernard's words – connecting techne, lifedeath, and intergenerational care – and the images of rides and stuffed toys return to carry and emit different waves of meaning and affect, their juxtaposition and overlaying by *The Ister* directors striking layered temporal cords whose tonal, existential mood shifts now evoke dramatic cuts in sense and sensibility after Dan's moving reflections and our growing awareness of Bernard's passing, as well as this bit's juxtaposition with Ana's and my bits, *nos morceaux, nos morts.* It's this spatiotemporal, transmedial cutting and mixing that produces spectral effects, angels riding backwards over history's junkyards, slow dancing devilish natures in and between other worlds.

I was deeply affected by Bernard's death – twice – in ways "I" will grapple with forever. The summer of 2020: COVID was in full chaotic bloom, I suddenly had to move myself and two sons to a home I needed to find, then my 95 year-old mother, Ina Jo McKenzie or "IJ" – an art teacher who gave me my *eye*, my aesthetic vision – and also the eyes of hundreds of young art students over 40 years teaching high school in Gainesville, FL – she had a stroke and suddenly dropped, dying shortly after. We attended her funeral virtually. One month later, I'd found us a home and first learned of Bernard's death. Still mourning IJ, I was shocked, though I knew he'd been in hospital and assumed he'd died of COVID. After talking with Ana, I emailed Dan in September about Bernard's death and about collaborating on the film. I later followed up with a proposal to organize an event around Derrida's *Life Death* seminar and *Glas*.

The fall passed, StudioLab rebooted via Zoom, and I emailed Dan again. On January 7, 2021, one day after the Proud Boys led a mob into the US Capitol, Dan responded, and I learned then – again with shock but now compounded – that Bernard had taken his own life. Moreover, I soon learned that he had planned to write about his own grandchildren. Bernard's bits, the images, words, and diagrams he'd sent us, suddenly all fell into place – or rather into a very different place, another arrangement, one jolted on my end by an unfolding – and continuing – political crisis over the transition of power in the world's most powerful, even paradigmatic, democratic republic.

Sadly, that was just the beginning of a very tragic week for StudioLab and many others, for on January 13, 2021, a week after the attack on the Capitol, the U.S. Department of Justice carried out 1 of 13 Federal executions as part of the Trump Administration's attempt to project power and judicial might. On January 13, the US government executed Lisa Montgomery, a young woman whose tragic legal case my StudioLab class had joined in September through Cornell's Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide. Our critical design team had been and continued to part of a group

of some 80 lawyers, advocates, publicists, and former and current death row inmates, all led by Cornell law professor Sandra Babcock, whose Center oversaw our collaborative ensemble of strategic storytelling, legal argumentation, and transmedia figuration across courtrooms, press releases, op-eds, celebrity social media endorsements – any platform necessary. The Center scored promising victories at the Supreme Court over our holiday break, with StudioLab helping with legal storytelling and media design, creating, and delivering social media targeting a specific set of stakeholders: Donald Trump's inner circle, for only the President could commute the execution.

Such was the political/social/pedagogic/media milieu in which I was processing news of Bernard's suicide, the death of Socrates, the pharmaka of *Glas*, alongside the recently published *Life Death*, which contains Derrida's seminar touching on the signatures of Freud, Heidegger, Nietzsche, and the politics of the proper name. As part of the legal storytelling, Veronica Cinibulk, a Cornell law student, wrote and recorded *Lisa's Song*, an extraordinary, heart-rending lament whose stark, powerful images seek to tell *her whole truth*, including Lisa's abuse by her family and neglect by social and legal systems. But in the end, at what seemed the brightest moment, all our efforts failed, and on January 13, Lisa Montgomery was executed by lethal injection. The collaborative ensemble was devastated, each individual having put skin into the game in different ways, now feeling shock, trauma, retraumatization, exhaustion, despair… words fail so. Lisa's spirit, our efforts, these *traces* live on in Her Whole Truth, a legal storytelling and media design collaboration that has continued to bridge StudioLab and the Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide, and which, miraculously, helped another woman on death row, Melissa Lucio, win a stay of execution in Texas, something incredibly rare and precious, and a testament to the legal skills of Sanda Babcock and her Center.

As exquisite child, *S/CARE PACKAGES* is recombinant *a la* Oulipo, composed of 3x7 parts or 21 AV bits, alternating between me, Ana, and Bernard/Dan, each bit lasting roughly 3-4 minutes, with 21+1 cuts (*wherewhen* to begin?) total. One of the most precarious – *s/cariest* – parts of editing is finding *wherewhen to make the cut*. A cut, *un coup*, also refers to the blow, the throw, the fall, *la tombe* as in *Glas*, death knell, glottal stop. *Coup d'etat*. What to do when playing with multiple hands, hands of others? *Glas* swings between left and right columns, the families of Hegel and Genet, conception and dissemination, determinate negation and indeterminate affirmation… *oui, oui*. As he had written on the death of Socrates, Bernard Stiegler's fall echoes across many reflections on this tableau and mounts the steps of many, many others. Via their cascading spectral effects, Bernard, Sonja, Artemis, inc… live on, sur-vive this life death we, yes, ~~are~~. Exquisite un/worldings suggests one way to hearseedo s/care packages in everyday life.

4. John Tinnell: *Notions of individuation and transindividuation appear to play important roles in the film and elsewhere in your respective work. Storytelling is twice evoked in the film as a potential means of working toward more fluid configurations of the individual and the collective – of "different ecologies of care". Why is storytelling such a crucial practice with regards to trans/individuation?*

Daniel Ross: Stiegler opens the first chapter of the third volume of *Technics and Time* with what amounts to an answer to this question:

> The propensity to believe in stories and fables, the passion for fairy tales, just as satisfying in the old as in the very young, is perpetuated from generation to generation because it forges the link between the generations. Insatiable, they hold out the promise, to generations to come, of the writing of new episodes of future life, yet to be invented, to be fictionalized [*fabuler*].

Storytelling is above all a way of creating and maintaining the thread of the generations, because those generations unfold through time, and time marked by places, occasions, seasons, rituals and events (cardinally and calendrically, Stiegler will say). In this way, the consistency of an epoch can be maintained, where these epochs used to last a very long time. And in this regard, it is worth remembering that the *second* volume of *Technics and Time* opens by mentioning that only two or three centuries ago, an ordinary person could expect to die in the same bed in which they were born, eat with the same bowl from which their grandparents had eaten, and thus inhabit a world that seemed to be stable and changeless, even though all these everyday objects would then also end up containing a whole set of stories spanning intergenerational time. It is not necessarily that stories necessarily form markers of a changing world, since for most of our history we have lived with the illusion that the world is fundamentally unchanging, but that stories give to the dynamic of intergenerational life the feeling of cohesion and interconnectedness of past and future, where what connects them is the way in which we are constantly drawing our past along with us into new chapters of a continuing narrative.

If we have a desire for stories, in other words, it is because stories are almost the very vehicle of desire itself, insofar as desire is always a matter of drawing on and recycling those "fertile revenances" in order to write or project syntheses of time opening onto new chapters and episodes. There is no story without desire, and no desire without its being fictionalized and narrativized. And because cinema itself operates through time (being a temporal object in Husserl's sense), and through our two most crucial senses for navigating our way through our worlds, and works through syntheses that tend (and are intended) to conceal the edits and other forms of post-production through which these temporal objects are forged, *in this way working in a matter that is very similar to the operation of our perceptual apparatus "itself"* (which is thus

always *already* a kind of cinema)...because of all of this, cinematic stories can be very powerful, which is to say, they can capture our attention, generate affect, move us, transport us, transform us, both individually and collectively.

It was for reasons of this kind that, for example, we opened *The Ister* by having Bernard recount the myth of Prometheus and Epimetheus, even if some of the images chosen to accompany this founding story of humanity that tells the story of the conjoint origin of technics, desire and knowledge (which is why Prometheus is also called the first philosopher) do not move very much (but then, they connect to other stories, for example to Heidegger, through the viewer's realization, much *later* in the film, of precisely *where* these images of Prometheus are located, in precisely what university hall, and with an awareness of what stories were told in that hall seventy years earlier, all of these connections being revealed through certain kinds of editing and visual effects). Our thought was, as I already mentioned, that there could be a way to open (up) philosophy in a new (and very old) way, a cinematic way.

At the same time, it's obvious that Stiegler's reason for beginning *Technics and Time, 3* in this way was to say that the conditions of this relationship between storytelling and desire have transformed with the rise of the culture industry, and that the process of turning everything into stories via marketing has in fact been destructive of this relationship, and of desire itself, and thus of all the links between the generations. And this interferes with the possibility of writing new episodes of future life, yet to be invented or fictionalized. One can see the *desperation* for rekindling those links everywhere (in Australia, to get government funding for making movies is always a matter of showing how you are "telling Australian stories", which is why *The Ister* received no funding whatsoever), including in all those calls to stop telling doomsday stories about the climate or ecology in general, as if our inability to find the will to face up to our situation was just a matter of the inadequate application of marketing techniques. Stiegler's whole thought and approach can be understood as an attempt to ask about the conditions of a renewal of the relationship between stories and desire capable of reforging links between the generations with the prospect of opening genuine new horizons. For him, this was a matter of the creation of a new libidinal economy.

Jon McKenzie: The civic storytelling project inspired by Carlos Hernadez Rivera's documentary film, *The Damaging and the Uniting*, whose beginning we see in Part 2: Bridges, provides a related way into the relation of individuation, transindividuation, storytelling, and different ecologies of care. Carlos, now starting community college, made his documentary film at 14 years old precisely as a making cure after the suicides of two friends. *Making and sharing* the film was key, as this gathered Carlos' own pain with that of others who had also lost family members to suicide, enabling them all to share their filmed stories at Cinemapolis Theater in downtown Ithaca. The project raised concerns, troubling some. Working with educator Sunshine Miller, who helped Carlos produce and present the film, I met him and his mother and invited Carlos to present to my media design course. His project inspired Sunshine

and I to undertake civic storytelling – *real stories about real issues for real audiences* – in collaboration with the Board of Cooperative Education Services, the Dryden and Ithaca City School Districts, and the History Center for Tompkins County. We sought to help nurture intergenerational ecologies of care, as I had been reading Bernard's *Taking Care of Youth and the Generations* while also working with Aneta Stojnic on a series of lecture performances that staged and reposed figures of Rodin's *The Thinker*, Freud's couch, and Austin's performative wedding scene. The shift from talking cure to making cure is key for StudioLab now.

The civic storytelling project involved working with three high school classes and the History Center on Project-Based Learning (PBL) projects where students could undertake, create, and present research at the center, located on Ithaca Commons. The PBL pedagogy, a corrective to decades of standardized "teaching to the test", meshes very well with StudioLab, and we had intergenerational learning and media-making up and running until COVID-19 hit mid-term – and then we lost all contact with students, schools, and the History Center. It was spring, 2020, the very semester Bernard and I were to rehearse *S/CARE PACKAGES* at the Sorbonne. The schools, the world are still reeling years later. Incredibly, the Cornell team channeled shocks of stopping, leaving Ithaca, and then restarting the studio in Zoom. Quite the Odyssey. Somehow, the teams produced an epic: an online Make Media! toolkit for civic storytelling: short videos on community engagement and media genres, project ideas and design frames. We are using them with 4-H right now. Looking back, it is shocking what those teams produced in a shocked world: it was a truly transformative event for everyone – for better and worse – and a threshold or bifurcating event for StudioLab. That next fall, we went virtual in Zoom and began co-designing weekly with a very different set of NGO and non-profit partners: al-Marsad (Golan), Black Farmer Fund (New York), Women on Death Row (US), and Labor Ready (New York). StudioLab's platformism commenced, for me was book-ended by news of Bernard's death and suicide.

The configuration or design of StudioLab's platforms varies term to term with our changing partners and *their* stakeholders, those they touch, attempt to reach, and sometimes recoil from. With Women on Death Row/Her Whole Truth, a StudioLab team connects their small platform – their passions and desktops, their desiring-machines – to the Cornell Center on Death Penalty Worldwide, whose own small platform has at times connected us to a critical ensemble of 80+ lawyers and advocates – students, lawyers, former and current women on death row, PR professionals, elders – all operating their own platforms or means of desiring-production, organized temporarily, ad hoc but iterative, around the lives of Lisa Montgomery and Melissa Lucio, whose lives were/are literally at stake. We make media to share their whole stories, stories whittled and belittled away by society and dominant care systems: child services, police, schools, courts, abusive families… What's s/cary and s/caring are ways things (can) turn insideout.

Within this critico-creative network, StudioLab's Her Whole Truth teams have researched, planned, and produced strategic storytelling campaigns, social media content, styles guides, film screenings, and fundraisers, seeking to intermediate and connect different worlds: secular legal practice, feminist activism, judiciary and executive state powers, conservative fundamentalism, public relations, mainstream and social media... With the political execution of Lisa Montgomery and the extraordinary suspension of Melissa Lucio's death penalty in Texas, we have experienced the tragicjoy faces of media design and strategic storytelling, its pharmakology of inspiration-termination, the s/care packaging of affects, media, and lifedeath that shuttles us (who? what?) through different ecologies of care. Her Whole Truth *is* trans/individuation conducted by cosmic partial boundary objects passed between a series of troubling, transmediating worlds. Staying with the troubles is live-action, rapid-response disastronautics.

Stepping back, the civic storytelling project is itself an interrupted story, a failfast, broken allegory for thinking-acting the displacement of orality and literacy by digitality (Ulmer's electracy, McLuhan's medium is the *massage*), the emergence of something beyond mythos and logos, story and logic, arguably the two most powerful, contested grammatizations the human world has known, closely tied, respectively, to imagos and eidos, image and idea. Reiner Schurmann shows how modern colonial Enlightenment updates and restamps the Greek eidos-logos pair, translated through Latin, and institutionalizes it globally – *transmediates it worldwide **as** modern disciplinary praxis* – via churches, schools, businesses, armies,etc. – *while translating and printing its grammar **as** modern vernacular Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, Dutch, etc*. Conceptual eidos-logos critically analyzes, breaks up and puts imagos-mythos in its place, West to East, North to South. Mitchell translates Heidegger's *Gestell* not as Enframing or apparatus but as *positionality*, which I map as Descartography, terrestrial grammatization via geometry, geography, and geology. From this disposition we can dig the geology of morals, guided by cosmograms.

The Amazon is not the Ister, nor is the Inca Mama Killa the Greek Artemis, though thought-action figuration allows *S/CARE PACKAGES* to gather these two worldly grammas together with others, jointing Heidegger's question with European colonial conquests with Jason Eaglespeaker's quest of *UNeducation: A Residential School Graphic Novel* as well as Eaglespeaker Publishing. Eaglespeaker is not Gutenberg, but along with Sean Muir of Indigenous Story Studio and Brandon Mitchell of Birch Bark Comics, these Indigenous Canadian publishers have created a collective ensemble of annunciation operated by an intergenerational nexus of young and old media makers, platform builders, and world-sharing cosmographers who mix words, images, and rhetoric to issues calls of adventure and action for specific quests – to combat addiction, suicide, COVID, and other ills – while simultaneously sharing pluriversal wisdom within specific traditions and communities. In desperate times, they've built an extraordinary Indigenous ecology of care they share online and off. While storytelling has great power, it's the pluriversal rhetorics of mixing story and

theory, imagination, and ideation that my students and I find so compelling in these graphic novels and info comics: the power to situate different knowledges and make and receive different spirited, caring calls cast across a vast range of sociotechnic and onto-historic divides, that's some powerful transmediation going on there, da.

Ana Vujanović: So many beautiful and far-reaching thoughts are shared here and I myself have several times come back to that liaison, that not much is left to be added. Maybe, I can just tell a story instead.

Sonja was a humble and gentle woman, a librarian, who graduated from literature. She knew by heart a number of poems, mostly on the issue of social justice and, curiously, some lyric poetry about nature and landscapes. She lived with a cat, Micha and her second husband Ivo, an old communist and partisan fighter, even a dissident in socialist Yugoslavia. He had a different mindset, always speculating about marco-politics and dreaming about world revolution. He was a charming and funny guy, who adored Sonja. When Marta and I would come to speak with her, she would leave tapestry on her lap and start telling about her revolutionary youth, as well as today's political situation in a form of a meandering story with million pockets and sideways. She had a beautiful eye for detail, a beautiful soul for what is unique in every single human being. Her resistance to Nazis and hatred of fascism came from that love. And when she would start recalling small details, Ivo would sometimes correct her, saying: "It is not important for the story, don't bother them with that". Sometimes he would even jump in, interrupt the narration and, as a political economist, make a macro-analysis of the situation, contextualizing it within history. He would do it in a charming way, but still… Marta was especially irritated by his 'corrective interventions' and encouraged Sonja to continue her way.

One day, I came to Marta and told her that I had just read Svetlana Alexievich's book *Unwomanly Face of the War*, where she describes exactly the situation we had with Ivo and Sonja. And while the big story, *his*tory of the World War II has always been told as a monolithic narrative with Heroes, good and bad guys, and the ultimate categories of the good and the evil, the stories Svetlana heard from female partisans in Soviet Union were different, full of details, everydayness, questions, and emotions. That is why she decided to gather them in her documentary novel, trying to brush a herstory of that epochal event in Europe.

After reading the introduction together, Marta made a radical cinematic decision - Ivo is to be deleted from the movie, and Sonja is to be given the whole stage! It was a rewarding decision, which I admire. Sonja is an Auschwitz survivor, who when asked about the notorious tattooed number on her forearm didn't tell us about her pains and personal horrors; instead she humbly answered: "It was a transport of 110 women from the concentration camp Banjica to Auschwitz".

That was *her*story, and this is why for me storytelling is a powerful medium, place, and tool of transindividuation. In storytelling – in difference to philosophy and politics, which operate with universal notions – that which we are individually, exists

only as populated with others, whose traces, potentials, battles, and scars exceed our individuality and move us further along the process of individuation, individual as well as collective.

5. John Tinnell   *Thank you all for this robust conversation – it mobilizes a wonderful range of humanities frameworks and humanistic objects of study, which brings me to my final question.*

The legitimation crisis debated by Habermas and Lyotard in the 1970s unfolded in the 1990s with globalization, the Internet, NATO expansion, and the post-Cold War rollout of "audit culture" and "high performance schooling". The latter informed national and international "innovations" in higher education, such as the UK's Research Assessment Exercises and the Bologna Process which transformed institutions across Europe, for better and for worse. Today, in the United States, the much-discussed "crisis of the humanities" appears to be entering a new inflection point marked by sharply declining enrollments, unprecedented institutional divestments, and waning public support. In what sense does the humanities crisis represent or suggest a crisis of care, and to what extent is it manifesting in your respective region of the world?

Ana Vujanović: The crises are many and which one one sees, which one affects them probably depends mostly on where they stand (work, live, research, befriend, sleep…) in the field of humanities.

What I have witnessed in the last two decades of my professional work at and around academia in Europe – former Yugoslavi and the EU – is the implementation of the Bologna declaration, which is a specific signal of the crisis of the humanities in today's Europe. For the readers who come from other regions, I want to mention that the Bologna process basically aimed at internationalization of higher education across Europe with a goal of making diplomas comparable within 29 European countries who signed the declaration (which later became the European Higher Education Area). However, with its requests for standardization and quantification of the educational processes and its neglecting local contexts and histories, it quickly led to the triumph of the global audit culture and high-performance education. Therefore, it became a nightmare of Ivan Illich (*Deschooling Society*), who already in the late 1960s and early 70s noticed that Western (European) educational system structurally fosters the pupils and students towards gaining, acquiring, collecting, and obtaining grades, points, and diplomas. He criticized it exactly for that appropriating tendency, saying that the school is not a setting for research and the intellectual growth of pupils and students, ultimately confusing learning, education, and competence with teaching, grade advancement, and diploma.

Now even artistic education in the Bolognese educational universe is predominantly assessed quantitatively, and most of my talks with students as their year head are 'ciphered' in numbers – we are looking into the process of collecting credit points, of the

percentages of the study program for part time students, of the hours of mentoring left for the coming year, and of moving through the modules system by earned credit points. These activities didn't exist or played a really small role in the education in the arts and humanities 20–30 years ago. A peculiar side of the Bologna process is this: what looks appealing is that the standardization enables students to easily go abroad and study one semester in another country, with a prospect of the professionals to work in other countries and thereby increase their chances to find jobs, while at the same time this process reduces everyone to the living labor and serves above all the expansion of neoliberal capitalist market across Europe, which requires mobility of workforce.

It can be seen as a crisis of humanities, not (only) because it hinders the old-school European idea of self-growth by studying, but also because it calls for a redefinition of the human, who is a subject and object of the humanities, which address them as highly individualistic, flexible, and mobile unit of workforce.

This doesn't look like an environment for transindividuation through the collective learning process. And yet, there are still cracks and gaps, through which one can keep the discourse in humanities vibrant and critical, once the general institutional structure remains intact. So even within that academic structure – and I don't remember any other – I have had beautiful experiences of working on building and changing imaginaries. In that I often try to further Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's understanding of 'aesthetic education' as a training of imagination for epistemological performances (from *Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization*) and examine its potentials to be a training of imagination for *different* epistemological performances.

Jon McKenzie: The cracks this question opens are broached in the 3 or 4 figures of *S/CARE PACKAGES*: Sonja, Artemis, Greta, Bernard. In this story of thought-action – if it is a story – lifedeath suspends us (who? what?) in the air. All of us are transgenerationally suspended, in between Sonja – an elder – and Greta – a child – and Artemis – Nature, Goddess, Truth, the Veil of Isis, a labyrinth of myths and paintings and figurines... As well as with a belated fourth, Bernard, who in *How I Became a Philosopher* writes of flying like a fish out of its element, the supplemental element of differance, what I call perfumance, the figureless figurative medium of lifedeath, the figure *drawn and withdrawn with all figures*, *mise en abyme*.

I studied maya-lila play within one of my doctoral area exams, along with freak shows and ethnographic media, and I marvel now at how the Cold War produced a global, multi-centered R&D apparatus that made such interdisciplinary study possible: field after field of research and development, research archive after research archive, generation after generation of knowledge production. For decades, this lecture machine was recursively "profitable" in that its rhetorical promise exceeded its perceived efforts. After a series of geopolticoeconomic crises, however, the 4-year EVENT of COVID-Trump-Accelerating Climate Change (2016–2020) has broken the wheels of American education, along with those of justice, healthcare, and decorum. It's the culmination of processes unfolding over decades, centuries, millennia.

Socioeconomically: the Hayek Austerity Chicks released by the Chicago Boys (Milton Friedman and crew) in Peru, Ecuador, and Chile in the 1970s have flown around the world and now come home to roost and roast in American schools as cost/benefit analyses, dataveillance, gun violence, and social-emotional learning. In the US, we have active shooter lockdowns and Google Classroom for our youngest students and annual assessments, companion pets, and belonging workshops for our most advanced. Today, another round of crises targets the humanities by reverse-engineering the very discourse of critical theory that it has come to depend on while non-secular grand narratives vie with remnants of modern grand narratives.

This churning, fractal crisis unfolds back and forth along different tracks, onto-historical networks whose speculative remix suggests futures unknowable if not inexperienceable. Venerable professional organizations have been reeling, including the American Historical Association, American Philosophical Society, and the Modern Language Association; the latter's presidents have included Judith Butler and Christopher Newfield, both unable to stop the institutional and symbolic hemorrhaging which has accompanied the last 4 years in the US.

I write now from the road to finish this interview, from St. Augustine, FL, an untimely, moving city over 4 centuries old, whose founding by the Spanish in 1564 first brought African slaves to North America. In 1964, its 400th anniversary, Ku Klux Klan violence brought Martin Luther King, Jr. to America's oldest colonial-era city, where he was arrested sitting in a local segregated restaurant. Today, Aprii, 3, 2023, my home state of Florida, aka the Sunshine State, is sunsetting its open government "sunshine laws", while Governor DeSantis and the legislature built on decades of GOP efforts to transform public education, targeting two institutions I attended, New College in Sarasota and the University of Florida in Gainesville, where I studied with Ulmer, first saw Derrida speak of the perfumative, hosted by John Leavey, and where I first encountered the traces of Laurie Anderson, the language of the future, though books, images, videos, and music. I drive to Gainesville today. West of the campus, White supremacists have reportedly been gathering regularly in a park. I read that NASA announces a diverse astronaut crew for its new Artemis mission to the moon.

How to figure humanism *mise en abyme*, humanity placed in the abyss, fallen Man, the un/worlding of humanism, other than its Anthroposcenic sunset and accompanying crises of care? What and how do our figures mean, what's their drift, what and how do they showtellmove us, what might we (who? what?) become via these figures? Can something be made from them – and/or nothing – letting them be?

In his afterword to *Foucault*, "On the Death of Man and Superman" – which channels his "Postscript on the Societies of Control" – Deleuze writes that the death of Man is much less the death of humanity and much more than a change in concept: we might say it's posthuman, post-conceptual. Three decades after these essays' publication, I tune in Deleuze's drift through interfaces of the machinic phylum, different flows and articulations: eg, new materialisms, Global South, Indigenous media, pluriversal design, AI and what Ulmer calls "Artificial Stupidity".

In terms of Guattari's three ecologies of self, society, and world: what if humanity's *mise en abyme* felt cosmically recursive and fractal? If what I call the catastoration of behavior and the catachristening of discourse *buzzes and cracks in more than one world*? If transindividuation were itself pluralized, multiplied and divided, if there are more than one *we*, if *we* are not only plural and divided but also presuppose multiple *thems*, and also *it* – multiple *its* – and thus also multiple abysses, cliffs, spacings out, hauntologies, *pluriversal daseins?*

Amidst such spectral mediations, *what then, here and now, da*? Lifedeath recurs, differance transmediates, places take place *across and as* n+1 worlding-unworldings, foldings-unfoldings whose structure-process might be rediscofigured via the cosmological toryx of engineer Vladimir Ginzburg or the chiasmic chorology of Nishida Kitarō or the string figures of Donna Haraway or, returning to Guattari, the four ontic functors of recursive chaosmosis, whose practice is metamodelization, *da*. Shit happens and we act, individuate, as Sonja show and tells and emits, and *Landscapes of Resistance* and its wake of storytelling workshops in turn transindividuates on .

In *Recursivity and Contingency*, Yuk Hui argues that despite Stiegler's stress on tertiary traces and tertiary retention, paradoxically he did not theorize *tertiary protention*, suggesting a bias toward retention, even if modeled on an incomplete past posed as Epimetheus' defaulted origin. Such a bias, if it is one, may have bound Bernard to one tragic passage, that of Greek anamnesis and conceptuality and to one reading of the death of Socrates. Cosmography places this scene in abyss, as well as the passage to the act, and opens both to multiple worldings: the Greek anamnestic passage intersects with the path-jumping magic (teleporting) of the Kabbalah, the Doa or path of Doaism, the Buddha's 8-fold path, Borges' labyrinth of forking paths, Anderson's walking and falling at the same time…

The scene of the death of Socrates closes my 2019 *StudioLab Manifesto* book, where it rehearses itself as the primal scene of community engagement: the polis of Athens vs the Akademy's most articulate *daimon* and seemingly willing scapegoat (*pharmakeus*), Socrates. Other worlds are possible. Cosmography explores what might be posed as speculative cosmology via collective thought-action, lines of cosmic flight rehearsed in *Perform or Else* as disastronautics via gay sci-fi and practiced today as pluriversal spacetime travel via critical design thinking. For me, the crises of the humanities emit recursive care packages and other making cures far from discipline.

Daniel Ross: If there is a crisis of the humanities, it has to be seen first of all as part of a more general crisis, a crisis of the university and, beyond that, a crisis of knowledge in general. The whole thrust of Stiegler's thought is to say that, at some time in prehistory, prior in fact to the advent of the human species, there occurred the branching off of another process, giving birth to a form of life whose individuals and groups cannot live by what they are born knowing, and a form of life that changes its milieu so that it *has* to change what it knows in order to be able to live with what

it changes, so that it can live with this milieu's "inconstancy", as Canguilhem would say. More particularly, this is the whole meaning of what he calls grammatization – that is, the spatialization of the temporal flows of life, whether this is a matter of turning speech into alphabetical writing, the gestures of the tool-equipped hand into the programs of the industrial machine, the flows of the auditory and visual senses into TV programs and films, TikTok videos, and so on, or, before all of these forms of grammatization, the flows of individual and collective dreaming (which is always inherently "protentional", to speak in Husserlian terms) into the (inherently retentional and mnemotechnical forms of decoration that are) cave paintings of Chauvet and Lascaux. For Stiegler, in other words, technics, and more particularly grammatization, form, through their particular characteristics, the epochs of knowledge and also of the destruction of knowledge (processes of what he calls proletarianization).

When Habermas refers to a legitimation crisis, we should connect the notion of such a crisis to his famous text on technoscience, that is, on "Technology and Science as 'Ideology'", dated July 19, 1968, the occasion of Marcuse's seventieth birthday, and which begins by invoking "rationalization" in Weber's sense of the term. What rationalization names, in this sense, is the possibility for reason, and more precisely for an *age* of reason, to be turned administratively, institutionally, managerially and computationally into its opposite, that is, into an age of unreason, as Adorno and Horkheimer already argued. This duplicity of the *Aufklärung* should be understood, however, not as dialectical, but as pharmacological. It should be understood as a pharmacological consequence of the re-convergence of science and technics to which Habermas points, which is to say, it is a consequence of the fundamental and thoroughgoing integration of the technical sphere with the mnemotechnical sphere (the sphere of grammatization, in all its forms) – what Marx already understood in the *Grundrisse* as the question of "fixed capital" – where, prior to the Industrial Revolution, these two spheres unfolded in a way that allowed them to maintain *relative* independence (from each other). To say that we should understand this pharmacologically rather than dialectically is to say that the process of proletarianization should not be understood as the vector of some inevitable or possible "inversion" of this negative into a revolutionary positive, but rather as a process of the destruction of knowledge, *where knowledge is the source of all positive possibilities, revolutionary or otherwise*. This would not be to condemn grammatization, but precisely to raise the future of grammatization as a *question*, and as a *political* question, "politics" itself being a process of collective deliberation made possible by the advent of a particular stage in the history of grammatization, as Stiegler argues in the 2017 lectures of the *Nanjing Lectures 2016–2019*.

In an article I recently published (in *Theory, Culture & Society*), entitled "The Pharmacology of the Gift", I try to suggest that the computational stage of the coalescence of this economico-technical "ideology" occurred in the space of a few short years at the end of the 1940s, represented by texts by Herbert Simon, John von Neumann, Friedrich Hayek, Donald Hebb and Claude Shannon – even Claude Lévi-Strauss. But

this coalescence was also made possible by *not* taking heed of other texts from the very same few years but with very different economico-technical implications, for example those of Georges Bataille on "the accursed share", Erwin Schrödinger on "negentropic" evolution and Alfred Lotka on "exosomatic evolution". At the beginning of *States of Shock: Stupidity and Knowledge in the 21st Century*, Stiegler draws attention to the connections between the crisis of the university and the global financial crisis, and to the ways in which academics in general, and economists in particular, have failed to live up to their responsibilities as the bearers of academic and economic knowledge, and as the vanguard (as researchers) of the transindividuation of that knowledge in a world that is rapidly succumbing to the technoscientific ideologies of, first, rationalization, then neoliberalism, ultra-libertarianism, transhumanism and so on. And the second half of that book consists in the elaboration of Stiegler's proposals for a kind of new academic international, founded not on the "university without conditions" (Derrida) but on the recognition that the university *always* has conditions, and that these conditions are those of technics and grammatization – which do not *determine* the present and future of knowledge, but, precisely, *condition* it, pharmacologically. It is here that Stiegler argues for the progressive and urgent development of what he will call contributory research, which is something other than and more than what has come to be called transdisciplinary research. For Stiegler, it is the entire research institution itself (this being what really defines a university) that must be transformed from top to bottom. And this is why he will later describe a "new conflict of the faculties and functions of knowledge", a question to which the fourth volume of *Technics and Time* would have been devoted (in fact, this volume may not have been published, but it was written to a fairly complete stage, more or less).

This process of the reduction of knowledge to information is *also* a process of the elimination of final causality by efficient causality, but also of formal causality, given that processes of the formalization of knowledge must always be conducted on the basis of criteria, which themselves depend on final causes. And if we take it that all of the formalizations of knowledge and research depend on the material (that is, mnemotechnical) conditions underlying those formalizations, then we can say that the reduction of knowledge to information is also an elimination by efficient causality of "the other three". This reduction has occurred in every possible field of knowledge and dimension of life, and even those where it is *not* possible (without destroying it) – not least in universities, and in the way in which the university views and assesses itself and its research. In a very fine recent discussion (also published in *Theory, Culture & Society*, under the title "Comparing Artificial, Animal and Scientific Intelligence"), the scientist Giuseppe Longo measures the stakes of all of this, including the rise of "automated bibliometrics" that "forces us all to adapt to the thought of the majority, channels all minds towards the strongest school of thought, or even towards banality", and the way that this ignores and undermines the fact that every significant step of thought, whether in the humanities or in the hardest of the hard sciences, involves a *challenge* to that majority thought. What Longo describes is thus the academic context

in which the "last man" becomes the "average man" in the rise of the nihilism of ubiquitous efficiency, to put it in Nietzschean terms.

The point, here, for me at least, is that it is not enough, and *never* enough, for those in the humanities departments of all the universities of the world to merely *endure* these consequences, nor just to lambast them, nor even to "resist" them. Academics and researchers, we could say, have a "structural" responsibility, that is, it is imperative, it is *their* imperative, that they find a way of responding that actually measures up to what it is that they are collectively at present only enduring, lambasting and "resisting", in a situation where *irresponsibility* has been structurally inscribed into all of those connections between economics, computation and academic education and research. It might even be that, if humanities departments find themselves in a situation of declining enrolments and waning support, part of the reason for this lies in an ongoing failure to *assume* this responsibility. In a situation of general decline, it is all too easy, all too inevitable and all too human for academics and researchers to become fearful of losing their own little piece of security, and so to devote their energies to tending their own little research garden and exclude the more general question of genuine academic responsibility. But ultimately, we cannot and must not avoid asking: if the so-called "intellectual" class has abandoned the effort to ask how it could be possible not to resist, but to invent and reinvent, what hope for such a reinvention remains? Because we cannot live without reinvention, which means, we cannot live without the research and the experimentation that would make such a reinvention realizable, and we cannot undertake research and experimentation without educational processes capable of producing those *capable* of *doing and devising* such research and experimentation. In short, responsibility lies everywhere: it is *up to us*.

Figure 1: *String figures*. Mixed media. Jon