Researching the Assemblage of Cultural Diversity in Norway
Challenging Simplistic Research Approaches

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Abstract This article's point of departure is practicing an(other) methodology than those that are dominant within educational research in Norway. Dominant research can 'rely on the authority and normativity of methods to produce knowledge devoid of critical reflection and contextual consideration' (Koro-Ljungberg & Mazzei, 2012, p. 728). Koro-Lungberg (2012) calls this the politics of simplification (p. 809), which is powerful through its control of qualitative research. The authors try to poke holes in this scheme of representation regarding cultural diversity by installing themselves in agentic realist positions *with* a piece of data – a snapshot of an Internet Web page. To think otherwise about cultural diversity, the authors 'think-feel' (Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, in press) and are on the 'lookout' (Boutang, 2011) for events and transformative moments (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) around the folding of the assemblage of cultural diversity in Norway. Inspired by Lather (2012), we try 'to live' the data in new ways.

Keywords: *simplicity, data, cultural diversity, assemblage*

Introduction

This ongoing work is part of the Norwegian project within an international criticial childhood studies collaborative focusing on early childhood policy and dominant childhood assemblages. As teacher educators and researchers, we are situated in the geopolitical location that is early childhood education and care in Scandinavia, a site different from those that are Anglo-American historically, socially, politically, and pedagogically (Biesta, 2011). We have in Norway a national framework plan focusing on children's right to participate and influence curriculum decision making from one year of age. All children are also entitled to have a place in a kindergarten. There is a holistic approach to learning including care, well-being, humour, free play, and access to cultural and democratic values which are based on idealistic

ideas positioning children as democratic participants in the society. Within educational policies and early childhood institutional settings, cultural diversity is seen as one of the most important issues to deal with as part of the government's social equalization project. Politics and arguments connected to equalization processes often deal with how the other (or the minority child) has to become fluent in the Norwegian language. This perspective, we believe, indicates that equalization is reduced to efficiency in Norwegian language, or put in another way, to become a Norwegian citizen.

As a way to challenge these processes that seem to, again and again and in innumerable ways, work on Norwegianizing in particular ways children with minority background, we try to push our own bodily habits when researching within the field of cultural diversity. One way to confront such habits is to approach cultural diversity in Norway as an assemblage within early childhood locally and globally. Another example of how we have tried to work differently as researchers is that we have asked the somewhat strange question 'when is data?' (see Lather, 2012) as a strategy to think otherwise within this field. These and other related methodological approaches constituted within the posthuman/new materialist/Deleuzian vain in social sciences has, for us, opened for an unfaithfulness towards an 'original' piece of data and also for reading data as something else than a piece of representation. Our research can be designated as an experimental and experiential inquiry where matter, here folds of cultural diversities, provides capacity of affect (Semetsky, 2010, p. 477). To open for uncertainty brings in the unknown and the yet-to-come.

When the question 'when is data' is posed, it is not so strange to say that our data in this paper starts with a photograph from a Web page for a Norwegian university's early childhood education teacher preparation program. The photo, together with the text surrounding it on the original Web page, was chosen by Camilla, one of the authors of this article. She has suggested this piece of data because it can, in a traditional way of reading data, be understood as representing a dominant discourse in ECEC in Norway, a discourse that tends to identify multicultural pedagogy as that practiced in 'the name of' children and professionals with dark skin tones and/or with dark skin serving as the face of cultural diversity. The photograph was surrounded by text about the structure and content of the program called 'International understanding and multicultural work'. Instead of avoiding this somehow static and problematic 'representation', we try to engage in it, for us, in novel ways throughout the paper. We have chosen to display the image here in the introduction so that readers might follow more intensively how we struggle when we try to disrupt representational thinking(s) through experimentation.

The original image from the university program's website.

In the Middle

Both of us have for years worked with various theoretical perspectives and ways of approaching and analyzing data to encourage new ways of thinking about cultural diversity and challenge dominant ways of doing research. Dominant research approaches can, following Koro-Ljungberg & Mazzei (2012), 'rely on the authority and normativity of methods to produce knowledge devoid of critical reflection and contextual consideration' (p. 728). We are indebted to researchers within the field of early childhood education and care (ECEC) who have inspired us to challenge what we understand as simplistic research methodologies (e.g., Cannella & Manuelito, 2008; Rhedding-Jones, 2007), methodologies that we see as part of a neoliberal assemblage of cultural diversity in the Norwegian ECEC landscape.

Koro-Ljungberg and Mazzei (2012) address what research simplicity can achieve or hinder. For example, in Norway there is an increased focus on evidence-based research projects that measure children's language and behaviour skills, especially among minority children. A recent national research project, 'Better Provision for Norway's Children in ECEC' (Research Council of Norway, n.d.), a longitudinal study following and measuring 1,600 children's well being in *barnehager*, defined 300 out of 1,600 children as marginalized. Children and families moving between translocational and transnational positioning are often designated as from an ethnic cultural background or as living in poor families in the Norwegian welfare state. As such, research in Norwegian ECEC is described as measuring economic investment for the future, a practice that is common internationally. We thus ask what common sense of 'culture' is circulating here, intrigued by the complexities of the lived world. Norwegian ECEC is also part of a complex global landscape in which educational research seems to have an increased emphasis on neoliberal ideologies (Ball, 2003, 2012; Ozga, 2007, 2009). Further, researchers within Norwegian ECEC seem to be caught up in 'politics of technologies' (Ozga, 2007) as standardization, quality benchmarking, and data harmonisation is embedded in comparative studies aimed at controlling and shaping the students (e.g., the Bologna process). Such standardizations ask for result-based outcomes and a (re)searching for 'what works'.

Finally, when we elaborate on the primacy of the cultural we might be in danger of giving the reader an idea that we focus on the discursive and the linguistic to the exclusion of the 'stuff' of matter and materiality (Barad, 2003). Barad (2003) presents a line of provocative posthumanist questions to social constructionist feminist research here that we attempt to continuously consider in our struggles against simplification:

> What compels the belief that we have direct access to cultural representations and their content that we lack toward the things represented? How did language come to be more trustworthy than matter? Why are language and culture granted their own agency and historicity while matter is figured as passive and immutable, or at best inherits a potential for change derivatively from language and culture? (p. 801)

Regarding our positions and simplification, researchers could ask how they might work against their own simplicity in forms of representation and scholarship (Koro-Ljungberg & Mazzei, 2012). Through our collaborative thinking, rethinking, and unthinking, the thinking becomes the doing[1] among us in our participatory research. To get beyond description, we have worked hard to create a vocabulary together,

such as a 'conceptual speed dating' on Skype, to always encourage the doings in processes of entanglement of the yet unthought of.

Experimenting with New Materialities

We are interested in reconfiguring the Web page with an image of a girl holding her stuffed toy by installing our bodies, inspired by Barad's (2007) agentic realist approach and new materialist/posthuman theories (Lykke, 2010), together with a Deleuzian lookout for what might happen with this image. Koro-Ljungberg (2012) says that 'methodological simplification also has a material presence and implications' (p. 809), and as such we are not satisfied with just this image to use as data. We put ourselves in a lookout position entangled with the assemblage of cultural diversity in Norway by manipulating the image into something else, by using manipulation to do the analyses rather than just creating textual descriptions of the image.

Hekman (2008) says we cannot privilege reality over construction, and we cannot privilege construction over reality either. What we need is a conception that does not presuppose a gap between language and reality as opposites that must be bridged; rather, we see language embedded in the materialization already there. Material feminisms (Barad, 2003; Hekman, 2008; Lykke, 2010) aid in this understanding as theories and examples to experiment with how the body, reality, and socially constructed discourse are in interdependent relationships and in processes of mutual ongoing transformation by going beyond the nature/culture and reality/discourse binary divides (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). In this assemblage, we as researchers also appear as entanglements of bodies and discursive material positions which are affected by and affect us; the transformation of the Web page occurs. Because the body, acting with experience, is defined by its capacity, it is equally impossible to know 'the affects one is capable of' (Deleuze, as cited in Semetsky, 2010, p. 479). We do not yet know what passion occurs when we try to stretch our thinking further in new moments to come, as a destratification of old ways of thinking. As part of the theoretical skeleton of this paper, we now present our reading of a 'logic of assemblage' (MacLure, 2013) before we elaborate further on diffraction and intra-activity.

Researching Cultural Diversity When Following the Logic of Assemblage

The concept of assemblage might allow us as researchers to work with cultural diversity in unthought of ways (Giugni, 2010; MacLure, 2013; Sandvik, 2012). In *A*

Thousand Plataus, Deleuze and Guattari (1987) write that 'all we know are assemblages' (p. 25), and by this they introduce a radical notion of multiplicity into phenomenon that we usually understand as being structured and stable (Haggerty & Ericson, 2000), such as the chair we sit on or motherhood. Patton states that an assemblage is a 'multiplicity of heterogeneous objects, whose unity comes solely from the fact that these items function together, that they "work" together as a functional entity' and that 'any particular assemblage is itself composed of different discrete assemblages which are themselves multiple' (as cited in Haggerty & Ericson, 2000, p. 608). What Deleuze and Guattari call an assemblage is thus something at work, something with a specific structuration that makes something happen (Bennett, 2010). It is a togetherness or groupings of diverse elements, such as birds outside our window, rash on our skin, memories, and intentions, that function and produce effects.

Effects generated by an assemblage are emergent properties, 'emergent in that their ability to make something happen is distinct from the sum of the vital force of each materiality considered alone' (Bennett, 2010, p. 24). Bennett (2010) states that although what she names 'proto-members' of the assemblage (or according to Patton, 'different descrete assemblage') have vital force, there is also an effectivity proper to the grouping (p. 24). Bennett talks about this effectivity as the 'agency *of* the assemblage' (p. 24), and by this she challenges theories that only recognize humans as agentic. Agency here is something heterogeneous where both humans and nonhumans are working together and generating effects. When thinking and rethinking of researching cultural diversity through the logic of assemblage, we understand our bodies, theories, expressions, discources, computers, software, and various other fragments as working together. What follows are a few more examples of proto-members (what we also name *ongoings*) in a Norwegian ECEC landscape that are specific to our geopolitical location. The limited space in an article allows us to briefly point to only three major components.

First, Norway and other Nordic countries (Sweden, Finland, and Denmark) most commonly represent themselves as outsiders in relation to colonial power relations. These countries' colonial ties are usually regarded as weak and their international relations are seen to be characterised by 'development aid, peace building and cooperation, rather than colonialism and imperialism' (Mulinari, Keskinen, Irni, & Tuori, 2009, p. 1). Although antiracist movements and academic commentary on issues of race and colonisation have been active in these societies since the 1970s, these countries have maintained an image of themselves as untouched by the legacies of colonialism and imperialism (Mulinari et al., 2009). This might be an effect of the

case that these countries, in contrast to the colonial centres in Europe, never went through 'a period of critique of colonialism and its presence in everyday environments and encounters' (p. 2). When connecting ourselves to our data, we wonder if nations who have had their period of critique could have chosen such an image to illustrate a bachelor degree model of education for future teachers who theoretically should be well prepared to work with cultural diversity within preschools.

Second, another aspect intertwined in the ongoing cultural diversity assemblage is how the educational system has shifted political values from *Bildung/*upbringing and solidarity in the Nordic countries towards a results-based outcome pedagogy privileging competition embedded in neoliberal ideologies. This shift reconstructs research into a universal travelling trade/business (Ball, 2012; Ozga & Jones, 2006) and local aspects into comparisons between nations in and out of the European Union and OECD. On an individual level, neoliberal politics seem to change social democratic values of solidarity into individual responsibility. Each individual becomes responsible for his or her inclusion, usually connected to speaking Norwegian fluently as the foundation for participation in the society (Sarwar, 2010).

Third, cultural diversity is a highly visible topic in Norwegian society after July 22, 2011 (Reinertsen, Ryen, Otterstad, & Ben-Horin, 2013), when Anders Behring Breivik activated a bomb in the political centre of Oslo that killed eight people and then shot dozens of people at a political summer camp for youth, of which 69 died. This event casts a large threatening shadow on what many (also globally) understood as a peace-promoting and inclusive nation. This event has had, and will continue to have, effects on how Norwegians understand themselves as citizens in a multiracial, multicultural, multireligious, and multilingual nation. One difference that can be seen after this cruel event is a larger focus on terrorism and extremist groups and further affects the becoming of the Norwegian society. From within this context, we want to elaborate new materiality and diffraction as analytical stances, trying to do research differently.

Research Against *Interpretosis:* Becoming-Animal and Diffractive Reading (OR, What to Do With Data?)

As already stated, we are striving to get beyond a dominant representational, simplistic approach to data. How can the data and we become something other than a return to the same old categories (majority-minority, etc.)? Or as Deleuze and Guattari (1987) ask: 'How can we unhook ourselves from the points of subjectification that secure us, nails us down to a dominant reality?' (p. 177). Deleuze and Guattari, we

believe, have created a name for the 'thing' we are working with and against: *inter-pretosis*. They state that interpretosis is a disease 'of the earth or the skin, in other words, humankind's fundamental neurosis' (p. 127). In Colebrook's (2002) reading of Deleuze and Guattari, interpretosis is 'a Western disease that traces all becoming back to some origin', and this, she points out, is typical of the Western representational schema (p. 134). In such a schema all experiences are read as the signifier of some original scene, and desire is for the lost origin that requires some form of substitution. Desire in a Western representational schema is thus connected to lack; we desire what we have lost (Olkowski, 1999).

In a Deleuzian-Guattarian reading, however, life is desire, and desire is the expansion of life through creation and transformation. Desire is a production (Colebrook, 2002). Rather than chasing what data means, looking for a signifier or searching for representations of lack, this positive idea of life lets us approach research differently. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) use the idea of 'becoming-animal' to express the 'positivity and multiplicity of desire and affects' (Colebrook, 2002, p. 134). For Deleuze and Guattari, becoming-animal offers a new way of thinking about perceiving and becoming. Becoming-animal is 'a feel for the animal's movements, perceptions and becomings; imagine seeing the world as if one were a dog, a beetle or a mole' (Colebrook, 2002, p. 136). For us, the idea of becoming-animal activates a way of performing data analysis that might attend to 'sensations, forces, and movements beneath the skin, in matter, in cells, and in the gut' (MacLure, 2011, p. 999). Combined with the logic of assemblage and diffractive reading, becoming-animal might open up for creations we did not thinkfeel before and fuel our workings against interpretosis.

Diffraction and Intra-activity – Getting Intimate

We use feminist new-materialist approaches inspired by Barad (2007) and the idea of assemblage via Deleuze and Guattari (1987) to challenge simple/familiar research thinking. We are further inspired by Lather's (2012) call for postqualitative research, elaborating on when is data. To elaborate on cultural diversity, we thinkfeel around the folding of assemblages, which is connected here to apparatus of sociomaterial intra-actions. We have worked hard to create a vocabulary together, twisted around a shift towards the 'when is data'. Data is also our connectedness in the processes of changing concepts as lookouts for movements, trying to displace our thinking as one molecule spins itself onto the next as part of ongoing entanglements. The image/object as 'data' can in our assemblage also be seen as diffractions in intra-activity with us as researchers. When doing zig-zag readings (Lenz Taguchi, 2012), it is the

processes of pleasure and surprise that also take us to places we did not think of before (Reinertsen et al., 2013). As such, being open to data amid pleasure and joy has opened up a space for our diffractions and intra-actions. Intra-activity points to the relationship between any organism and matter, human and nonhuman, a photo on the paper and bodies alive, blood, cells, viruses, materials, and subjectivities. Through reconceptualising new ways of thinking in our collaborative activities, the doings of the blood in our bodies are affected by intra-active movements.

Barad (2007) refers to diffraction as a principle from physics concerning 'the way waves combine when they overlap and the apparent bending and spreading out of waves when they encounter an obstruction' (p. 28). In collaborative thinking, rethinking, and unthinking, we are attentive to details and intrasubjective movements, intertwined with energies, intensities, and tempos that also create vibrations/resonance between the moments as chains of movements in the image. Doing diffraction as analysis of the image(s) provides possibilities for mapping the complexities of cultural diversity as deflected spaces, entangled with the image(s) in transformation and our bodies as researchers – the Web page, a girl, a dress, a toy, shoes, a body, phenotypes, authority of inclusion discourses, resistance, desires, unspeakable presence of 'voice' – all entangled with intra-agential becoming.

Resisting more of the same research regarding cultural diversity implies that the subject no longer can be understood as a fixed being but rather a way of being in the doings, a verb rather than a noun. The subject is an effect of, and affects, multiple encounters that entail the history of the previous encounters, the present, and the potentialities of the future encounters that might take place. When we install our researcher bodies together with the images at play, both in the moment but also in history and the future, together with other organisms and encounters, we are part of all these relationalities that constitute and are constituted again and again, never separating the other from ourselves. Barad's (2007) intra-active theory serves as an avenue to explore how bodies are materialised within constant becoming(s) both inside and outside what is perceived as a physical body (Rossholt, 2012).

Situating Ourselves *With* the Assemblage

When we focus on an agentic realist materialist position, we install ourselves bodily within the assemblages, with the data, which involves us as an active component of the assemblage, not as objective outsider viewers of data. Instead our installing with the Internet image intra-acts as a way to *thinkfeel* cultural diversity and transition processes. Our project is thus always shifting as long as our thinking, talking, writing,

walking, texting, drop-boxing, telephoning, and Skyping take us to spaces we did not think we were going. It is the creative processes of assemblage and not the product/result of our research project that we are elaborating. In this optics of knowing, the body is put into the processes of seeing (Law, 2000).

Starting (in the Middle Again) . . . aaaand Cut!

What is presented here as data, or as a component of the assemblage that we call cultural diversity, has been chosen without following particular rules or steps. In fact, it was a piece of data that Camilla collected and put in her archive of data for an ongoing research project on professionalism and racialization in Norwegian ECEC. The piece of data that we presented in the introduction is a snapshot of Web page. The site is meant to inform and recruit future students for a bachelor's degree in early childhood education. A bachelor degree at this university can be obtained through various models, and the text on this Web page is about a model named 'Internasjonal forståelse og flerkulturelt arbeid' (International Understanding and Multicultural Work).

Camilla says that what first struck her (although not surprisingly) with this university's Web page was the different phenotypes the editor of these Web pages had chosen to illustrate the different bachelor models. All the other models (with titles such as ICT, aesthetic, children's culture and cultural heritage, nature and outdoors, and main model) were 'illustrated' with a picture of a child with white skin. Without elaborating in depth on why we started with this Web page for analysis, we both felt that the image is more of the same already creating simplistic explanations for cultural diversity. The composition connects a child with a dark skin tone together with text focusing on international and multicultural issues in ECEC, which is always already there. When we read with the text from the Web page – multiculturalism, diversity, culture, identity, ethnicity, racism, equity, tolerance, human rights, and international recognitions – we are affected by these constructions as well as temporality and spatiality are affecting a 40-year immigration history in Norwegian ECEC. We continue to interrupt the text with Camilla's interference with the 'original' image from the Web page.

Camilla writes:
There are altogether seven images on this program's Web site, and in them one child with brown skin, seven with white skin. The snapshot we have chosen illustrates the international understanding and multicultural work-model. In my first reading I am critical of the frequent use of phenotypes signalling African decent when

contextualizing multicultural work (and also in seemingly cool advertisement for children's clothes). I am also critical of the particular image of this girl that is chosen. Her body makes me think of children in need and may thus construct pedagogues as missionaries and as professionals who must help these 'children in need'. This particularly emerges when juxtaposing this with images in the other models. However, when reading discursively, it is possible to read strength in being severe and also agency in the power of choosing not to smile for the photographer. Gullestad (2007), when writing on missionaries and Norwegian self-understanding, states that technologies that objectify, such as photography and movies, create possibilities in terms of self-understanding and self-defense and new dangers in terms of essentialism, alienation, separation, and exclusion (p. 223). This calls for a critical caution when making use of photography to illustrate diversity and multiculturalism.

Although this first reading can be transformative, something else happens when thinkingfeeling with the image from the Web page. Instead of looking at it from a distance and thinking of it as merely passive stuff or as representing discourses, I now allow my bodymind to 'get caught up in' (Bennet, 2010, p. xv) the entanglement of discourse and matter as it is affected by and affecting me. When getting caught up in the material and discursive intra-activity of the event of reading the piece of data diffractively or as a becoming-animal, another reality seems to be produced than the one that made me decide on collecting this image of a Web site. In the latter I was only able to critique how dark skin tones seem to be the face of cultural diversity. That reality could only be described in terms of what this image together with the letters on top of the page forming the words 'International understanding and multicultural work' seem to represent in terms of discourses. And from that I could question such discourses.

In a diffractive approach to this data, another reality evolves when I, inspired by Lenz Taguchi (2012), make 'myself aware of my imaginary and bodymind sensibilities' (p. 275). When I read with data by understanding the data as 'a constitutive force, working with and upon [me] in the event of reading it' (p. 274), I sense a wanting to touch and hold the girl that is depicted on the Web page. I do not think of her as minority or as a child in need. I do not think of her as resisting a strong discourse of 'the colonized'. In my 'bodymind involvement' (p. 276), I instead imagine myself holding her, stroking her skin, smelling her skin's reaction to the hectic and warm event of being photographed in a studio surrounded by hot lamps with bright lights. I can imagine us sitting together after the photographs have been taken. The girl on my lap. We are just sitting there together. Together with the smells, the happenings around us, the stuffed dog left somewhere at the floor, my attentiveness to what she might share with me, my experience of years as a preschool teacher, her ways of being with the world.

Ann Merete writes:

Both of us, as researchers, are part of the assemblage writing-thinking-feeling. Hence, when we look at these, we imagine with our bodies, we can see as vibrant machinery – we see and hear impulses and sounds of neoliberal politics, simplicity, provocations, familiarity, fabrications, cultural diversities connecting us into affections of the already-known stories with/in/about early childhood education and care. Through this image it is possible to ask: Who is who here and there? Somebody has instructed the girl's body into disciplinary technologies objectifying children's bodies into docile bodies, as objects to be manipulated (Jones, MacLure, Holmes, & MacRae, 2012). From my position it is possible to read her body shape within and against simplistic representations of more of the same. Her dress code is gendered, white intra-act with innocence, her black shoes signal social-class connection, picturing a well-behaved body following the docile body practices. Her body doesn't entangle with an institution; she looks more like she is going out visiting somebody, bringing with her a stuffed dog as a companion. An agentic cut on the dog normalises the child by reassembling her as other children, having an animal to hold on to. The discourses from Winnicott's object relations theory are still working through the affection for and becoming affected by the object. The girl is not totally alone; she is connected to her stuffed dog. This takes me further to Derrida's conception of hospitality (2002, 2005). What happens with the girl if there had not been any prior invitations preceding her arrival? What hospitality is the girl given in such an event? Here it is possible to problematize the concept of our assemblage entangled with politics of inclusion. How is this girl entangled in the processes of inclusion if I install Derrida's host and stranger at play? How are Norwegian immigration politics working?

Transformations and Not

To do subversion of the already known, the original image was manipulated[2] to see if the new images can bend our optics in directions for new becoming. The original image is a frame, and the frame is framing our seeing. How could we create new kinds of objects as data? An image can never tell us as researchers about the relationalities or what forces of affects there are in play in the framing, but we can ask some intricate questions about bodily entanglement *with* the virtualities we encounter. To manipulate the image to become something else might frame other lines that we didn't see/thinkfeel through the original image. At this moment we can see through the new compositions, trace the connections among the images and also make agential cuts in them. There are several routes, and we will not take all of them further here. It is

possible to install intensities, flows, and difference to see what happens in the moment of the event.

A computer program was used to manipulate the original image.

Ann Merete writes:

These images are moments in time that enabled me to capture pieces of what I see, which again expose movements of negotiations and becoming. My eyes were drawn into other dimensions when looking at the girl, as she becomes as a triple sculpture in front of me. I ask: Who is looking at whom? And what positioning is the researcher taking? It reveals a complex analysis as topological readings. Can diffraction as analysis open up new understandings of this event? When I transform the image as sculpturing the girl's body into the sculpture, what happens? Being a sculpture might become a transforming event. A resistance to continuing to be the same multicultural girl might occur, embedded in new subjectivities and different belongings with the sculptures. She has become three. Tripled. And not.

Camilla writes:

In my thinkfeel (Lenz Taguchi & Palmer, in press) involvement with the now tripled image, the desiring machine of race categories that seemed to be at work when collecting this data is still at work. Further, a line that is activated is a feeling of aversion of how the face of multicultural ECEC seems to a specific skin tone, a much darker skin

tone than my own. The now various skintones challenge a stable idea of phenotype, and the sentence 'No matter what you do to me, I am here' is produced in my mind. This tripling somehow also affects me and is affected by me to engage in thinkingfeelings around how children live with things. I believe it is my openness to the stuffed dog's (dis)appearance in this now serial-difference-image that evokes a difference in me. I get carried away thinking of how lately, through readings within the feminist vein of new materialist perspectives, I have become more attentive to how stuffed animals, blankets, chairs, sticks, water, patterns, and oranges are not dead backdrops of children's lives, or anyone else's.

Ann Merete writes:

I ask how will it be possible to make new connections in everyday practices when I thinkfeel by seeing and hearing all these images together. I interconnect with my body and spacetimemattering, which make me unpack material to go beyond discursive practises about cultural ethnicity. If I bring in Deleuze's concept of the fold, it enables me to look for movements between ontology and epistemology that involve time and space. Black and white become something else, which can transform in multiple ways and in many directions. It is the moment in which the event is embedded in a state of affairs . . . by saying here the moment has come (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994). What kind of traces have been left out? Searching for new lines of flight might bring in other sensational moments to simplistic normalized early childhood methodology. By searching for dynamics, struggles, and complexities in everyday routines looking into other elements in practice as rhythm, odors, spaces, sounds, and materials, such bodily language can open up for intra- assemblages.

Staring at the three images for a while connects me to spacetimemattering. The images are now transformed into light and shadows, which in time and space bring my body back to a story my mother read for me in the 1950s. A vulnerable body feeling appears through the images of the girl(s) – she/they is/are here and I am there – here and there are playing in spacetimemattering – in motion. Her body(ies) and mine suddenly intra-act with the story about Little Sambo. My imagination places him in Africa – together with the tigers blurring into butter. I remember holding this book, quite thin, and reading it over and over again. Discomfort appears – of having any possibility of not liking (the story). Sambo eats 169 pancakes that his mother makes for him. In 1972, the Central Committee of Teachers Against Racism complained that Sambo depicted a stereotypical image of African American greediness because Sambo eats 169 pancakes (Bannerman, n.d.). How did I become part of this story? My pulse is working with and against the zigzagging.

By transforming the girl into different images, we resist that she might be read into a stereotyped, essentialised black girl embedded in representation of more of the same. Today's neoliberal politics are continually asking for research projects upholding dichotomies between majorities and minorities, building on universal standardized effects studies. Differences, disruptions, and complexities in research methodology demand ethics of entanglement (Barad, 2010) that might challenge simplicity when cultural diversity is studied. Logic of sense is changing.

Thinking the Doings of the Image Further

Camilla has chosen a virtual image from a Web page as our data-production, and as such the image has a status as virtual. Barad (2007) argues that material feminisms and other new materialisms should embrace a posthumanist ethics by 'taking account of the entangled materializations of which we are a part' (p. 384). We do not meet the girl face to face. The girl is elsewhere, but we treat her like a girl in the neighbourhood, in the *barnehage* pretending that we do ethnographic work. She is still sometimes seen as another. Virtuality is often described as thin or shallow, lacking the depth and length of a real/good/reason research project. Such a critique privileges a certain way of thinking of research, based on categories and physical proximity or sameness. An ethical stance for us has been to avoid otherness of the other in research connected to culture and ethnicities. By using a virtual image, transformed into several images, we see that it is difficult not to encounter the stranger that pops up on our screens without invitation. Through the anonymity of the interface, we are always already reminded of all the other others that might be outside our assemblage, or not. Derrida (2005) talks about the (impossible) hospitality, and we have as researchers, among different intra-activities, struggled to reconfigure the presences of the stranger/the other by entangling the welcoming of the other over and over again. This might spin itself into a movement of politics to come.

Notes

1. The 'thinking becomes the doing' is inspired by Erin Manning and Brian Massumi's talk at the TEDxCalArts conference "Performance, Body and Presence" on March 9, 2013, in Los Angeles.

2. We would like to thank Trine Lise Midtlie Elmholt, Pål Martin Bakken, and Helge Langvatn for their help with transformations of the original image.

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