

'How Matters Come to Matter'*Thinking/Practising In-Betweenness Through Posthuman Method Configurations*

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(Post)critical International Relations (IR) has emphasised the performativity of methods as they enact and intervene in modes of being within the world (e.g., Aradau & Huysmans, 2014; Leander, 2020; Salter & Mutlu, 2012; Shapiro, 2012). In these 'after-method' frameworks (Law, 2004), methods exert onto-politics (Mol, 2003), by 'inventively' configuring 'happenings of the social' (Lury & Wakeford, 2013). As such, they exist (*in-*)between the actual and the virtual-empirical; the subconsciously sensed and consciously known; the material and the semiotic; the multiple and the singular.

Those working within an 'interpretivist' tradition have sought to navigate method performativity by questioning subject-object dichotomy, advocating instead for 'reflexivity' as an alternative methodological resource for epistemic trustworthiness (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). However, reflexive endeavours tend to remain human-centred, by focusing on the socio-political situatedness of knowledge claims and the individuals making them (e.g., Amoureux & Steele, 2016).

Therefore, an *indispensable* shift in after-methods entails what Denzin et al. (2024) define as a 'fourth methodological moment' in qualitative methods, that is, distancing from humanist cosmologies. Methodologically, this means acknowledging that human and non-human entities, 'tentacularly' (Haraway, 2016) partake in method configurations, symmetrically enacting and displacing worlds as they are put into friction throughout the research (Vannini, 2020). Post-humanist approaches also expand the horizon of knowledge that these method configurations can perform by encompassing not only textual-verbal forms of knowing, but also (multi)sensory, 'non-representational' ones (e.g. Lury & Wakeford, 2013; Pink, 2015; Vannini, 2020).

IR has established the theoretical significance of posthumanism and new materialism (e.g. Cudworth & Hobden, 2021; Leander, 2021; Salter, 2015, 2016), yet only recently has begun to consider the methodological implications of the human/non-human in-betweenness, both as a 'dynamic' 'lexicon' (Lisle, 2021) and as sensuous performative material-aesthetic assemblages (Austin & Leander, 2021, 2023; Shapiro, 2012; Weitzel, 2023).

The workshop aims at contributing to this emerging debate by reflecting on and practising posthumanist method configurations. Thus, we take Barad's (2003) question on 'how matters come to matter' to a method(ological) level by exploring the following questions:

1. Where do we start the inquiry within the in-betweenness of relational assemblages, acknowledging human, non-human, cyborg entities as ontologically equally significant?
2. Through what pre-intentional, pre-conscious, and affective modalities are phenomena encountered and experienced in-between spaces? How do we, as researchers, attune ourselves to the bodily, sensory, and affective resonances within these assemblages, recognising our embodied responses as part of the relational field?
3. What practices support a *tentacular* approach to knowledge that accommodates the tactile, visual, and auditory textures of these assemblages?
4. What (non)representational strategies best capture the emergent, relational, and multi-layered aspects of posthuman assemblages, honouring both embodied affect and cognition?

We invite junior and senior scholars to present papers reflecting on the methodological implications of integrating posthumanist configurations into their research. Moving beyond textual-verbal debates, participants are encouraged to convey digital or physical more-than-human entities —such as documents, images, audio, artistic pieces, archives, interviews, exhibits, architecture, digital platforms, interfaces, infrastructures, drawings, memoirs, cartoons, bodies, other-than-human living beings etc.—to work with during the workshop.

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