New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies. Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin. Ann Arbor: Mpublishing, University of Michigan Library, 2012. P/bk 198 pp. ISBN 978-1-607-85281-0. Price $18.99 or free download at http://openhumanitiespress.org/new-materialism.html.

In their brief introduction editors Dolphijn and van der Tuin tell us that in assembling *New Materialism* they have aimed at "producing an open cartography of new materialism that radically explores this new tradition in thought, and that aims at including all that it can virtually do" (3). The cartography is "open" because they do not intend this monograph to be a definitive map of a philosophical territory delimited as "New Materialism." Rather, the interviews and essays are meant to guide readers in such a way that we will not just simply take away an understanding of, but also acquire some degree of orientation toward such a view:

In other words, it is not the interviewers or the interviewee or even the oeuvre of the interviewee that deserves our special attention, but it is the sense of orientation that the interview gave rise to (the action itself) that should engender us. For it is in the action itself that new materialism announces itself (1).

The definition of "New Materialism," it quickly becomes clear, is not a settled one, intentionally so. Each writer or interviewee offers their take on some aspect of the concept, with Braidotti, for example, describing her own "neo-materialism" as being "a method, a conceptual frame and a political stand, which refuses the linguistic paradigm, stressing instead the concrete yet complex materiality of bodies immersed in social relations of power" (2). There are, of course, commonalities: the men and women here share a desire to create a philosophy based on rejecting the idea that things have "essences" that exist apart from their material reality, and that things have a reality independent of our thoughts about them. They are all interested in investigating the consequences of such a view of the world.

New Materialism begins with interviews with Braidotti, Manuel DeLanda, Karen Barad and Quentin Meillassoux. These interviews and the editors/author's chapters here share some common ground—a rejection of dualism, for example—but their areas of concern are anything but monolithic, rather they are like a series of widely spaced searchlights, highlighting different aspects of the wide landscape of new materialist approaches.

In the first interview here, for example, Braidotti's first action is to date the need for a change in the understanding of the term "materialism" to post-1968 French thought. At this point, she says, materialism had to be adapted to reflect psychoanalytic discoveries and "the mutations of advanced capitalism" (2). The new materialism is, in her view, in part a rejection of the dominant linguistic turn that philosophy had taken in the second half of the twentieth century. She instead proposes stressing "The concrete yet complex materiality of bodies immersed in social relations of power" (2).

Feminism is central to Braidotti's thought, and is, in fact, a dominant theme throughout the book as a whole. She analyzes the role of feminism in formulating, and at times hindering, a new materialism. She points out, for example, the way American feminism concentrates on the sex/gender distinction thus preserving an unhelpful dualism, and how this spread across the Atlantic and pushed out a more continental orientation that included sexuality in a way the Americans never embraced, and also pushed aside other feminisms that strove to set gender distinctions aside in favor of considering everyone as human beings. Braidotti's thoughts here give readers an idea of the range with which a new materialism would need to concern itself: she addresses the macro level of political strategies and nimbly moves to observations on our sense of identity that move through psychoanalysis to the observation that "changes of this qualitative kind happen more easily at the molecular or subjective level, and their translation into a public discourse and shared social experiences is a complex and risk-ridden affair" (11).

The short interview with DeLanda covers almost as much ground—including mathematics and the complexities of behavior of single-celled amoebas—and is particularly valuable for some simple assertions and questions he addresses:

> Any materialist philosophy must take as its departure the existence of a material world that is independent of our minds. But then it confronts the problem of the origin of the enduring identity of the inhabitants of the world: if the mind is not what gives identity to mountains and rivers, plants and animals, then what does? (1)

Karen Barad suggests retooling our approach to analysis from "critique"—as a kind of deconstruction to get to answers—to a diffractive

approach, whereby we look instead at the "entanglements" of a subject—how material facts, relevant scientific knowledge, social relations, any number of aspects, all are inextricably intertwined in any subject we come to consider. To better recognize this, she suggests we need to stop separating "specialized subject areas," and consider everything as a whole. Her ideas demonstrate this to a degree: she makes extensive use of aspects of quantum physics, suggesting that it would be profitable to consider the humanities by way of the sciences rather the other way around.

Meillassoux concerns himself much more with modifying the thought of others—Foucault, Heidegger—and with (at the interviewers' prompting) re-addressing such questions as "How is thought able to think what there can be when there is no thought?"

The second half of the book comprises four chapters written by Dolphjin and van der Tuin, which synthesize, question and extend the ideas that arise in the interviews, while adding more from thinkers not included here (such as Vicki Kirby's consideration of mathematics as a language) and, of course, some of their own.

There are a great number of such ideas per page here, ideas that offer rewards particularly for those of us who feel that the way to improve (wo) man's existence is to rethink the entire range of humanity's relations to and philosophical view of the material world.

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