Doctoral Thesis

Towards a New Materialist Ontology of Clothing

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To Danno, my partner in life and in crime

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1. Introduction: Growing the Clothing Project

1.1 Where It Grows From: Fashion, Dress, and a Four-Parted Methodology

This project is growing from two directions. Firstly, it emerged from fashion. For more than five years, I worked as a fashion model, for high fashion and commercials, for shootings and runway. Yet I never gained the big jobs. When I worked for Etro, the Italian high fashion brand with a touch of bohème, I did so as a rehearsal model. It was my task to give the runway choreography a trial before the costly big stars of the branch were flown in. Instead of wearing the expensively produced pieces, I was to carefully hold them on hangers in front of my body while walking over the runway. When I worked for Wella, the well-established company for hair products, I did so by wearing a wig and miming a zombie at a show they staged in order to present new hairdos to their clients. And when I worked for Puma, the German sports brand, my face was cut off in the online-shop.

The "big moments" in my modeling career were afterwards either inaccessible for me (and my beloved), such as when I appeared in a Chinese Shopping-TV program; or I was altered beyond recognition, not to say: my personality was censored, be that due to interesting photoshop-applications (such as when a picture, the setting of which I personally remember very well standing within, of someone who bears not the slightest resemblance to how I know myself, was put up as poster in every other bus stop throughout Madrid) or immense sunglasses (which at one Fashion Week were even covered with a crocheted pattern and thus rendered walking complicated). This gave these successfully gained jobs a touch of awkwardness.

Nevertheless, I can confidently claim that I am experienced in dressing and wearing clothes ("cloth" is primarily understood in the sense of "garment" here, for its in-depth approach and working definition see 2.2.3) - maybe even more experienced as usual, as on some days I got in and out of clothes approximately up to 200 times. For instance, working at an online-shop shooting, I found a huge pile of T-Shirts in that corner of the room which was scantily constructed as my fitting room. All of them were of the same cut, yet printed distinctly, and even printed with the same illustrations, yet in distinct colors. It was my task to switch from T-Shirt to T-Shirt every two to three minutes, dependent on the time it took me to strike a pose that satisfied the photographing team as well as the client. Dressing a T-Shirt, stepping in front of the camera, pose, *click*, next. Why it was chosen to pay me for un/dressing all

these clothes instead of a photoshopping guy editing a singular shot in order to depict all designs, shall be left for another discussion to figure out.

Besides, there were days (of which I spent several months almost nonstop in Shanghai) on which I frequented up to 15 distinct castings. In China I was mostly driven by my "shi-fu", my lovely chauffeur; in Europe I rather commuted from casting to casting via public transportation. The latter was not easy a task, as back then I was lacking the support of a functioning smartphone, but was merely equipped with a first generation button mobile phone in order to be able to receive my agency's calls that announced spontaneous changes in schedule, as well as a foldable map in order to find my way around in the city.

Shortly before I opened the door to a casting location, often in the elevator or on the uppermost stair, I got into my casting-heels. If it went well and the client shortlisted me, I was to dress one or two outfits of the respective company, walk back and forth, turn around left and right, strike one or two poses, before it was the next girl's turn and I was told to leave the scene as fast as I could. I got back into my own clothes, which I carefully selected or at least adjusted explicitly for this casting (e.g. top tucked into pants for swimwear companies, top hanging out of pants for edgy couture), and departed as silently as possible. As soon as I closed the door behind me, I replaced the casting-heels with my sneakers, in order to sit back in the car and relax on the ride to the next location, or in order to snatch the city map out of my backpack and start searching the route to the following casting.

However, when I moved to Barcelona and began undertaking my PhD, I wanted to leave this world behind, and was, to put it mildly, hesitating when my supervisors suggested me to research the topic of dress, which we back then equated to fashion. Yet their argument, that this preceding phase of my life could be valuable for the present project, made me curious, had I often wondered if I did not lose my time in this branch. Despite meeting interesting people, being invited to some quite special parties, and restocking every now and then my notoriously empty student-wallet; the day-to-day business back then was quite unproductive, or better: often hard to actively influence in its productivity.

So I set out on the path into research. Also my path, which surely is a path that opens up for many who start dealing with such topics as the design of couture, the meaning of garments, or the practice of dress, began at the point of fashion. I began to read fashion texts. On the one hand, I studied fashion theory, such as Barthes, Lipovetsky, and Svendsen; on the other hand, I read as well (auto-)biographies of fashion designers, such as the ones of/about Alexander McQueen, Karl Lagerfeld, Gabriele Strehle (my personal favorite) and Christian

Dior (on my reading list there still are: Vivienne Westwood and Elsa Schiaparelli). By these means, I thought I could find out what it was all about, this fashion.

Under way, I recognized that all these voices, with which I confronted myself during this time, deal with something different when they talk about "fashion". As it will be shown in more detail in 2.1.3, some deal with fashion as a general change in taste, which by no way is limited to clothes; whilst others treat it as a subcategory of clothes; and again others see it as a kind of temporary attention-attribute via which clothes enter and exit our focus. In addition, via dealing with fashion literature, I realized that it indeed is not precisely fashion that I am interested in, in none of the aforementioned understandings, but something more quotidian, something more personal, something less circumventable caught my attention.

I thus came to feel the worth of the distinction between fashion and dress, which bifurcates hitherto theoretical approaches, and thought that my primary research interest rather was dress, the smaller and less glamorous sister of fashion. Tout de suite, I entered studying ethnographic approaches, such as the fame gaining wardrobe studies inter alia of Else Skjold or Sophie Woodward. Wardrobe studies made me understand that, indeed, fashion, the industry, the system, cannot remain unnoticed. Yet what interests me much more is what everyone of us constantly walks around in, brings with herself to wherever she goes, and whereby we all are uninterruptedly influenced, even conditioned. So, for some time, I thought that dress would be my topic of research, namely an aesthetics of dress.

I even went so far as to try to construct a schematization of existing dress pieces in analogy with Barthes' famous classification of "written" dress in his "inventory of genera" (see Barthes 1985, 111-116; English translation taken from Ward and Howard 1983, see attachment to Barthes in bibliography; as the present project is citing in the Chicago style, only ever the concretely used edition is named, and the original dates of publication are left out, wherefrom such combinations result as in the present first quote, in which the author's voice is dated to five years after his death). I structured what I found in reality (not, as Barthes, in magazines) into "upper body pieces", such as T-Shirts and pullovers; "lower body pieces", namely skirts and jeans and Bermudas; and "full body pieces", e.g. coats and dresses. In my dress grid, shoes were the extreme for lower body pieces, and belts were the nexus of upper and lower body pieces.

In order to ensure the completeness of my grid, I talked to elder relatives and other cultures, who told me about items long forgotten or otherwise marginalized, such as hat pins, bonnets, brooches, stoles, or saris (for a delicate in-depth account of the sari, see Miller and Banerjee 2008). And I observed my partner when he dressed for work in the morning, in order to

include as well cufflinks and suit vests. I then continued to form minimal pairs, in the way I back then, in my Linguistics Bachelor classes, learned to do it with words: A slipover is a pullover without sleeves. A longsleeve is a T-Shirt with long sleeves. A cardigan is a pullover with a zipper/buttons. And a coat is a jacket that is an upper and lower body piece. Although this schematization of items was fun for a certain time, I soon reached a cul-de-sac. I could not account for pullovers worn around one's shoulders, knotted in front of one's chest (as it can often be found on golf courses). Or for belts that are worn not inside their loops, but on a female's hips, in order to stress her waist in a wide dress (to both of these examples, chapter four returns). Or for a shoulder (and thus upper body) bag the straps of which are so long that it reaches down to one's thighs. What I hence found out on this path is that clothes cannot truly be researched by inserting them into a grid and attributing them with a singular, static, and thus restricting identity. In order to approach the different identities clothes can embody throughout cycles of dressing and wearing, it rather takes a dynamic approach, which focuses not precisely on things as such, but on the relations in which these things are involved, because only in and eventually by these relations are clothes attributed with temporary identities. What is thus needed is a research of the relations in which we humans are entangled with clothes, and which here shall be pinpointed to the "clothing" (see 2.2.4).

And a clothing, a particular humans/clothes relation, is shaped by both, fashion and dress. Thus, similar to fashion, as well the concept of dress revealed itself to be just a partial depiction of what is happening on our bodies, within our wardrobes, on the streets, and in our judging minds. Whereas fashion is commonly understood to be an immaterial research matter, and only a few steps were undertaken so far to draw it into material research (the only one I could find was the one of Woodward and Fisher 2014); dress has always been understood as an object to be researched materially (see ibid., 1). However, my attempt to schematize garments in analogy to Barthes's method made me understand that fashion and dress are not only "interrelated" (Entwistle 2015, 40), but literally entangled, threaded through one another, and thus can be researched just as little apart from one another as it is possible with regard to humans and clothes.

Besides, I soon understood that with my schematization, I investigated clothes in dependence to the human body (self-evidently, "upper body clothes" are titled as such because they are worn on the upper parts of the human body). I had immediately structured the clothing in a hierarchical manner, granted priority to the human, and assumed clothes to be mere (bodily) devices (see 2.3.2). Thereby, I had erroneously limited clothes. Not always

do clothes reside on bodies. And not only are clothes made in order to be applied, in order to serve. To especially attend to clothes as remarkably the aspect of clothings that hitherto was left most untouched, and to see how they behave, engage with us, with others of their kind, and with other kinds of things, is one of the main aspirations of the present project.

As a general statement for this overall research project, which is yet for you, reader, to be walked through, the following shall function: I am not a designer, and thus cannot talk about the cutting and the sewing of clothes (my sewing is not even mediocre, but quite amateurish, although I am eager to learn more about how clothes are made). Neither am I a trader, retailer, or salesperson, who would be able to talk deeply about how clothes are assembled by a variety of materials from distinct regions, how they are distributed worldwide, and why certain clothes are bought and worn at specific times and in specific places. But about what I can talk, and about what I do know, viz. into what I gained an insight maybe deeper than the quotidian, is *the relation between humans and clothes*. A research of this I shall realize. And to this matter I shall stick in what follows.

Fashion is the first direction from which this project is growing. Based on practical working experiences, I set out to academically research this field. The second direction from which this project grows is aesthetics. During my Master in Culture Management, I took a class in aesthetics, and even though it was held by an empirically working researcher, I came in touch with the aesthetic notions of inter alia Kant, Levinson, and Seel. Back then I discovered my strong interest for the aesthetic, and throughout the first year of my PhD in Philosophy in Barcelona, I continued examining this field. During that time, I studied several aesthetic classics, such as Kant, Hegel, and Dewey, having the plan in mind to apply their theories to the field of fashion/dress theory. However, I soon discovered that with regard to the clothing, which I elaborated as my primary research interest within the latter field, something more basic is needed, before an aesthetic of the clothing might be drafted.

During my readings and writings, I repeatedly came across the research hole of a for me functioning conceptualization of what the clothing is. Hitherto realized approaches will be re-read below in chapter two. What the clothing thus needs, so do I opine, is first and foremost an ontology. Such an ontology has to map the clothing as a humans/things relation, in order to then allow research to continue in such diverse directions as e.g. an aesthetics of clothing (see 5.2.2.4), or an attempt to show the speciality of the humans/clothes among humans/things relation, which could be based upon the arguments of continuity (with all breaks being purposeful and thus happening within the clothing's borders) and intimacy (no

other things do we habitually allow to reside so close to us, even under our armpits and in between our thighs, see 4.1.2.5 and 5.1.2.6).

But if it is not apparent, not for me and for nobody else, what the clothing is after all, how could the questions be answered: Where is the aesthetic in the clothing? What makes a clothing aesthetic? What kind of clothing is aesthetic? And eventually: What is aesthetic clothing? Therefore this project rather dedicates itself to the ontological question: What is the clothing? This very question weaves itself through the present project, and will surely not stop short at being answered by: "It is a humans-clothes relation", because this formulation still carries a binary with it.

In order to fill this ontological hole at the basis of fashion/dress research, it is necessary to relate the latter field to a philosophical school that aspires to approach reality, hence an ontology, that works within the field of materiality, and that is recent enough to cover such phenomena as fast fashion (see 2.1.2), fake fur (see 4.1.1.4), and global production chains (see 4.1.2.1). Two schools were found that meet all these criteria: Object-Oriented Ontology (in short: OOO, pronounced as "triple o") and New Materialism (abbreviated from now on as NM). Whereas the former focuses on the material thing, and considers humans/things relations as not more than secondary; NM covers both the material and the relational, and was also for this reason selected as main philosophical realm in which to roam.

Researching about interactions and relations, I discovered Karen Barads concept of "intra-action" (for an accessible introduction of this concept, see Barad 2012b; ibid. 2012c, 32), which was the starting point for my engagement with new materialist literature. When I started reading the clothing intra-actively, it allowed me to see that in the clothing, the borders between humans and clothes blur, which is why it was decided for a slash in preference to a dash when describing the clothing as a "humans/clothes relation". A human apart from all clothing relations exists as little as a cloth-entity deprived from all its relations. This is why the present project selected the clothing as its primary unit of research, that shall be grown new-materialistically.

However, for this undertaking, this project does not aspire to reinvent the wheel, but seeks assistance in the mingling of four kinds of approaches. First of all, approaches running parallel to it, viz. philosophical approaches that deal with distinct topics of research in a new materialist manner (see 3.1) will function as methodological database that shall be related to the issue of fashion/dress in order to eventually fill the "clothing gap" that gapes open within this kind of literature.

Secondly, another philosophical school, which will be cited throughout the present project, is the one of OOO. Beginning with Meillassoux, a figure at the fringe of NM, or better: a figure in between NM and OOO, and being led by a curiosity to comprehend the relation in which NM and OOO stand to each other, what convictions they share and at what crossroads they depart, also the writings of OOO were dealt with during the present project. Even if OOO is often understood as a sub-school of NM; it shall rather be stated here that NM and OOO form part of, if not a disciplinary dualism, then at least a disciplinary difference, which has already been accurately subsumed in a brief list of bullet points by Harman (see Harman 2016, 14-16).

It will be retained from granting a separate section to an introduction to OOO, such as it will be provided to NM (3.1) and Material Culture Studies (3.3), because OOO is not engaged with in order to effect a deep queering of the latter with NM. But it only is consulted when NM shall be reworked and grown further. So to say, OOO will be approached here and there, when NM is considered in need of a further impulse. And although OOO will be appreciated for the gainful approaches and sometimes even NM-paralleling and thus supporting thoughts it can contribute; at times when it comes to a *tête-à-tête* between both schools, the present project mostly sides with NM's relational/agential approach and speaks up against the entities-in-the-void ontology proclaimed by OOO. And as there neither is an OOOist approach towards fashion/dress existent, NM's clothing gap remains in need to be filled.

Thirdly, fashion/dress theoretical voices, that try to make NM as a predominantly philosophical school fruitful for their own thinking, have already started to materialize (see 3.2). These approaches are located at the same research intersection as the present project. Yet instead of coming from philosophy, even from NM, and dealing with the topic of fashion/dress; they rather stem from the cultural theoretical field of fashion/dress and approach NM in order to re-think their own topics. In short, their research runs antiparallel to the presently grown approach, which is one of the first voices emitted within philosophy that tackle the field of fashion/dress from a new materialist direction.

And last but not least, although it neither resides within philosophy, there nevertheless is a school existent the re-working aspirations of which are running parallel to NM: Material Culture Studies (abbreviated from now on as MC, see 3.3). On the one hand, MC can be understood as materializing via a queering of anthropology/archaeology. Due to its focus on the "matter-ness" (a neologism grown here that intends to circumvent both the *Zeug*-like character inherent in, and the Miller versus Ingold debate led in MC about the concept of "material/ity", see 3.3.3) of the everyday, the clothing evidently forms part of its research

— be that through practices of wearing, rituals of shopping, routines of dressing, or conventions of judging others and/in their clothes. Yet its ethnographic methodology is not the only issue that hinders it from functioning as more than a concrete database for the present project.

On the other hand, the part of MC that deals with especially dress can also be considered a specific section within the field of fashion/dress theory. As such, MC will be used by the present project as a queering-link between fashion/dress theory and NM, as well as a collection of materialist clothing thoughts, that will be cited side by side with NM throughout the present ontology (see chapter number four).

Approach	School of Thought	Matter of Research
present approach	NM	fashion/dress
support I	NM	other topics
support II	OOO	other topics
support III	fashion/dress	NM
support IV	MC	fashion/dress

figure 1: Methodology of The Present Clothing Ontology

The here realized clothing ontology can hopefully be valuable for all four fields it draws from: NM, OOO, MC, and fashion/dress studies. It aspires to be valuable for the field of fashion/dress theory by throwing a new approach into its shark tank. Instead of focusing solely on things (e.g. 2.1) or on how things affect the human (bodily) being (see 2.3), this new new materialist approach rather grants humans and clothes an equivalent standing within their relation. Thereby, it aims at showing that we humans indeed are not the masters of clothing, and neither are clothes our numb servants. On the contrary, we humans are constantly conditioned by clothes, and clothes do many more things than solely conditioning us. Hitherto approaches to clothes and clothings thus are in need of a flattening reworking. Humans and clothes are not equal; but they are equally valent players within the clothing.

Besides, this project attempts to grow as well a value for the field of Material Culture Studies. Although especially Daniel Miller speaks up against philosophical approaches (see

e.g. Miller 2005, 3, 8, 11-12, 34-37), the latter shall nevertheless be shown as being helpful for a re/thinking further of MC. Therefore, in chapter 3.3.3, the basic assumptions underlying MC will be split up philosophically, in order to reveal it as being based upon a misconception of its own mission.

And last but not least, the present project also wishes to radiate its merit into philosophy. Especially the object-orientation of OOO shall be re-thought via a new materialist clothing thinking, which reveals that relationality indeed is not contradictory to agential accounts. Instead, it becomes apparent that relation and the related are merely a blink of an eye apart, so that from one second to the next, they are splitting from relation to related to relation. Thereby, using a Latour/Barad-queering terminology, the network is reiteratively reconciled, viz. re-re-re-conciled (ad infinitum) with the actor, whereby the "actor-network" becomes an "actor/network" theory. In the latter Baradian re-conceptualization of the Latourian theory, actor and network are not static identities of beings, but facets of every existence.

Henceforth, the here presented clothing ontology is hopefully persuasive in revealing the potential of the clothing as matter for philosophical research, and eventually might even be capable of taking a part in initiating a change in philosophers' (and scholars' in general, despite fashion/dress theorists) conception of the clothing, from "ephemeral" and even "frivolous" (as already criticized by Lipovetsky, see Lipovetsky 2002, 139), to being essential to who we humans are, and to what we do.

During the course of my PhD, when talking about the clothing at congresses, my contributions were arranged in the order of panels in quite interesting manners. When attending these events, I found myself talking within feminist panels, amidst queer theorists (among talks dealing with drag and Die Antwoord, the South African rap-rave band), and even in activist panels (such as at the latest, namely 21st International Congress of Aesthetics (in short: ICA) in Belgrade, July 2019, where I was talking in the same panel as an approach to a Japanese performative artist who calls herself "the priest of the polka dot church").

Indeed, it was these wide-ranging assortments of approaches and theoretical positions that made me discuss topics which I usually would not have confronted myself with, so I have to admit. Yet I found and continue to find it stunning that my contribution about the clothing, in which I talk about something much less extraordinary, not at all gendered or gendering, and much less extravagant, was arranged in this manner. As my concern is an ontology of the clothing, it concerns us all, as we all are clothed and clothing beings (see 4.1.3.1). Those clothings, that usually are reserved to females, or that are exclusively realized on and by

males, are ontic variations of the ontological phenomenon of the clothing, and as such are not part of the present research.

And just as much do I find it astonishing that e.g. at the ICA 2019, which in its Call for Contributions was seeking for almost any project having to do with the aesthetic in the widest sense this concept and field can be understood, my contribution was the only one dealing with something similar to fashion/dress. If we understand the aesthetic as a philosophy of the arts (of which I am not a proponent), then all other art forms were represented at this event, ranging from street art to dance, music, performative art, and even poems. Yet fashion, sometimes understood to be the art we wear on our bodies, could not be found in the schedule.

It seems as if Lipovetsky still hits the mark with the statement he uttered in 1994: "The question of fashion is not a fashionable one among intellectuals" (Lipovetsky 2002, 3). I do hope that this will change, and that the following clothing ontology can contribute to such a change, so that philosophers, not only but as well in the aesthetics, will see the importance and enjoyment a research of the clothing can bring. To bring the clothing, the entanglement with and in clothes everyone of us constantly finds herself residing in and conditioned by, into scholarly, especially philosophical, and even into new materialist awareness, is the only activism I undertake.

In summary, this project ventures to grow a new new materialist ontology of the clothing. For this aim, it reads the fields of NM (and OOO) in philosophy and especially MC within fashion/dress theory through one another. With the help of NM, it grows its ontology and relates it to the clothing. From fashion/dress theory, it takes captured phenomena in order to, in a truly new materialist style, re-consider them rigorously. And from MC it selects approaches that deal with fashion, dress, and clothing in a manner that is considered as running parallel to the new materialist philosophical cartography, and engages with them as an additional support.

1.2 Where It Grows To: Materializing the Plan

So far, it has been shown that via the route of researching first fashion and then dress, the focus on the clothing as humans/clothes relation grew. The present project now sets out to research the ontology of the clothing, and aspires to do so in a new materialist way. In order to do so, in chapter number two, it will show approaches towards clothes that are already

existent within hitherto fashion/dress theory. And as it becomes evident thereby that a sole thing-approach necessarily remains ontologically partial, it thereafter treats hitherto approaches towards humans/clothes relations. In chapter number three, it will introduce NM in its status quo, show in what ways it has been approached already by fashion/dress theorists, and prepare its queering with the part of MC that is dealing with fashion/dress. Based thereupon, in the chapter number four, it will be able to grow a new clothing concept via a renewed NM, and to rework NM via relating it to the clothing.

To be more precise, in chapter two, hitherto cloth and clothing conceptualizations are presented, dealt with, and revealed in their deficiencies. Leaning on Entwistle's four-partition (see Entwistle 2015, 40), approximations to the phenomenon of clothes are subsumed to adornment, costume, fashion, and dress (see 2.1). Whereas in the adornment approach, clothes are understood to be appendages of a complete-in-itself human body (2.1.1); when treated as costumes, clothes rather are identity toys engaged with by a human that owns a separate, original, and stable identity (2.1.2). As already hinted to in 1.1 above, fashion might be a concrete kind of clothes, or a system in which all clothes find themselves at a certain point (usually: from more to less, in order to maybe reverse from less to more) (2.1.3). And dress emphasizes the cloth's dependency upon the human body. Although it might be the term coming closest to what is aimed at here, neither dress can function as a main term for the present purposes (2.1.4).

For reasons that will be discussed in 2.2, adornment and costume are mostly neglected, and used solely as synonyms for unproductive clothing approaches (see 2.2.1); meanwhile fashion and dress will be shown as entangled (2.2.2). By revealing both latter approaches as being grounded on the textile, the concept of "clothes" is grown as queering and thus uniting fashion/dress (2.2.3). Yet all five hitherto dealt-with approaches, the four found in literature and the one grown here, are "thing-approaches", approaches outgoing from matter. In a new materialist manner, it is held that a thing is only ever denoted by the relations that it resides in, and that it (intra-)actively shapes. This is why an approach first and foremost focusing on things remains incapable to account for its relations, and thus cannot picture a (cloth-)thing in its ontological richness. Therefore, a shift from cloth to "clothing", from thing to relation will be prepared in 2.2.4.

Hitherto attempts to approach what here is captured as the clothing, the humans/clothes relation, shall be dealt with in 2.3. As there are multiple of them existing, what has been found will be grouped into three. These groups are titled "self" (2.3.1), "bodily self" (2.3.2), and "self-self" (2.3.3) approach. They could have been named e.g. "identity", "somatic",

and "social" clothing approach; yet the selected terminology directly clarifies that all three share a direction and thus principal matter of research, which is the human self. As subsumed in 2.3.4, thereby all three approaches miss a big part of the clothing reality. What is thus lacking is a new clothing ontology, which treats humans and clothes as equivalent players within their relations.

The materialization of such a new clothing approach must be left for chapter three, as we therefore first need to grow a methodology that allows to queer clothes-things and clothing relations. As such a methodology, the philosophical school of New Materialism was selected, which shall be introduced in the first place of the second chapter (3.1). As Dolphijn and van der Tuin claimed that the "new" of NM is often neglected in favor of an extensive focus on NM's materialism, in 3.1.1 both components of this school are given equal attention, in order to show that the new (3.1.1.2) and the materialism (3.1.1.1) are neither a static dualist pair nor a pre-given sequence. Instead, they can be dynamically read through one another: NM is not only a new way of thinking the material; but it also is a materialist way of thinking many things anew.

Although several attempts have been undertaken to ascribe the founding of NM to a concrete personage; in 3.1.2 it will be stated that instead of a specific researcher, NM's origin rather is a body of thought, or simply a milieu. This milieu is surely entangled with certain researchers in an "apparatus" (a Foucauldian term Barad revives, see e.g. Barad 2007, 63). But it is far from being homogeneous, and does not let itself be "found", be forced to materialize, and rather affords to be respectfully grown (3.1.2.1). Having claimed that, the task remains to re-read past voices that attempt to attribute a particular person with the founding statement of NM, and that contradictorily stem from NM's own milieu (3.1.2.2).

Once its origins are clarified, it is time to treat the way in which NM situates itself within the overall area of philosophical research. In fact, it does not turn its back towards other thinking styles. It rather is open for intra-actions within the academic entanglement. The most fundamental intra-actions, in which it is already involved, will be dealt with in 3.1.3. By the just described attitude, NM aspires to a) push its own body of thought further, which turns it from a discipline to a post-disciplinary cartography (3.1.3.1), and b) stimulate existent thoughts, of which the most prioritized are Cartesian dualisms, by re-reading the assumptions on which they are grounded (3.1.3.2). As NM holds that self and other are threading through one another, point a) and b), viz. NM's own and other milieus cannot be clearly demarcated from one another.

After having introduced the kind of school NM is, in 3.1.4 the latter's ontology will be entered. Hitherto undertaken attempts to subsume NM will be discussed (3.1.4.1), before an own approximation towards NM's "milieu" will be ventured (3.1.4.2.1). In contrast to the existent approaches that were selected for discussion, the presently ventured approximation does not consist of a list of pillars; but it rather is a thinking map. By not listing but mapping the present cartography, it is aimed at summarizing NM in a new materialist vein, viz. at methodologically staying within NM, because only by this apparatus can NM truly be approximated, so it is opined.

Apart from the milieu, there are several voices speaking about and/or from within NM that try to capture the distinct realms of their cartography. Two of them will be treated (see 3.1.4.2.2), in order to show that they do not depict given branches, but can only ever picture temporary halts as which NM materializes. This reveals NM's specializations to be less important than its milieu, and 3.1.4.2.2 as attempting to liberate NM from several straightjackets that indeed are not posed upon it by the Cartesianism it re-reads, but that materialize from within its own ranks. On the milieu shall thus lie the focus of the present project. In its status quo, it has been mapped in 3.1.4.2.1, whereby hitherto achievements of NM were made explicit. In chapter four, it will be diffracted further.

Last but not least, in 3.1.5, it will be attempted to shift NM from theory to a style of life, and it will be asked: What would it mean to live new materialistically? This is done because, as a matter of fact, the present project eventually aims at entangling NM with the clothing. And the clothing, by its very definition grown in the first chapter, is a decisive knot in the web of the quotidian. Fertile soils as much as weak points of NM as a lifestyle will be revealed, and it will be shown what points still need to be re-readingly filled in NM's milieu in order to truly make it not "applicable" as a mere device, but respectfully "relate-able" to in one's everyday life.

After introducing NM, in 3.2 it is time to relate this school of thought to the field of fashion/dress, which was introduced in chapter two. As it has been mentioned already in 1.1, although there exist no new materialist literature about fashion/dress; there indeed are approaches in the field of fashion/dress that apply new materialist thoughts to their matters of research. The most well-known of these stems from Anneke Smelik, a Dutch cultural theorist, who relates NM especially to the fashion designed in her home country. Smelik's writings will be discussed extensively in 3.2.1 before further, rather marginal voices will briefly be touched upon in 3.2.2. Of these voices, three were selected, namely the ones of Bruggeman, a former PhD-scholar of Smelik holding a professorship at ArtEZ (Arnhem),

who focuses mostly on a NM-shaped aesthetics of fashion; Seely, a queer and gender studies Deleuzian at Newcastle University, who approaches "affective" fashion on a bodily basis; and Lei Ye, researcher at the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology, who engages with new materialist literature in order to explain the heightened affectivity of self-tailored dress. These approaches do not exhaust the true potential of the entanglement of NM and fashion/dress, so it is found. Not only because they focus mostly on fashion, and leave the everyday relation we entertain with clothes aside (apart from Lei Ye, who nevertheless treats another rather specific subcategory of dress). But also because their cultural theoretical lens inhibits them from a deep reading and even re-reading of NM. The true potential of new materialistically researching the clothing is much stronger than it so far has been assumed, and much deeper than it has been scholarly documented yet, so it shall be stated.

NM does not only allow to re-think high-fashion phenomena such as van Herpen's 3D-printed couture, probably more sculptures than clothes (as it is dealt-with by Smelik 2018; ibid. 2016, 172-173), or McQueen's dresses made out of bird's feathers (as it is treated by Seely 2011, 1; ibid. 2013, 256); and neither is it restricted to the agencies of homemade dress (as researched by Lei Ye 2019). No, every cloth (with a short "o") is affective, before, during, and after its designing into a cloth (with a long "o", see introductory text to 2.2). And every cloth is a becoming that shapes our becoming, so it shall be stated.

The present project is thus not following hitherto realized approaches in approximating NM from a fashion/dress theoretical perspective. But it rather flips the coin around and aspires to approach the humans/clothes relation from a new materialist point of departure. Hence, instead of fashion/dress being the matter of research as well as the methodology, which only becomes interwoven with new materialist elements; here NM shall rather function as the main ontological methodology for researching fashion/dress. In so doing, the present project is pioneering within the field of NM, but consults MC as its neighboring school of thought, which will be introduced in 3.3.

In 3.3.1, the cartographies of NM and MC are compared. Whilst NM is an ontology-focused philosophy, which nevertheless is informed by the natural sciences and owns a generally embracing attitude; MC materializes via queering the disciplines of archaeology and anthropology. Yet although their academic entanglements and thus methods evidently diverge, MC can nevertheless be seen as another track of research which arrived by different means and ways at the same stance as NM, and equally questions the commonsense hierarchy that is read into all kinds of humans/things relations.

In 3.3.2, Marxism, semiotics, and phenomenology are briefly touched upon as the strands informing MC. Whereas Marx is also seen by some new materialists as an early founding father of their cartography; NM clearly positions itself against phenomenology as a canonical and internalist school of thought (and does so in opposition to OOO). With regard to semiotics, there are voices existent within both cartographies that aim at departing from this kind of approaches, side by side with voices (such as e.g. Massumi for NM and Layton for MC) that rather found their theories upon semiotics and thus aim at a queering of sign and thing.

Nevertheless, not only its distinct academic entanglement and thus methodology, but also a misconception of its own mission impedes MC from acting as more than a concrete database in the present philosophical project. The fundament on which MC is built is the trialism of the social (human), the material (thing), and the cultural. Up to the point of writing, MC investigated both the material and the cultural in dependence on their gains for the social. Thereby, it adhered to what it aspires to queer, namely the conventional Cartesian research direction from thing to human, and was impeded to think deeper, so it will be claimed.

If, however, MC achieves to shift its focus, and research the social and the material in dependence to the cultural, it will live up to its name (in which culture functions as noun in relation to which also the material must be understood). As it would thus come to an understanding of culture as the queering relation of human/thing, social/material, (new materialist) philosophers could become more interested in its achievements, and might even seek in it the resolution of philosophy's widespread struggle with the concept of culture (see 3.3.3).

Throughout the present project, MC will thus be respected as the cultural-theoretical school of thought that it is. It has its focus on the everyday, and thus contains also a research about the clothing since its very onset. As it allows NM to "lend" its connection to the clothing, similar to how good neighbors lend each other e.g. a lawnmower, it spares the present project the need to initialize a connection between materialist thought and fashion/dress, and rather equips it with the task and means to grow such a connection *on*, to allow it to become deeper, thicker, and stronger. Hence, a queering of NM and that part of MC which deals with the clothing, shall be prepared in 3.3.4. In this queering, NM functions as main philosophical map, and MC as its material support, viz. as its kit to the field of fashion/dress.

By now, the clothing (chapter two) and New Materialism (chapter three) were introduced. In the fourth chapter, they will be entangled, which however must not be understood as the

achievement of the writer alone, but rather of an apparatus, of which researcher and research matter are a part. As already hinted to when previewing 3.1.2.1 above, if NM and the clothing would not jump with agility, and allow to be jumped into a singular intra-active web, the writer could have attempted to force such a connection, but no doctoral thesis would have materialized. By thus not enforcing, but rather by granting their entanglement space to materialize, it will be possible to grow a) a new NM via the clothing, and b) a new clothing concept via NM. In short, the last chapter reworks both introduced fields via their entanglement with one another.

Chapter 4.1 sets out to rework the thing into a composite of webs and knots, hence to a web/knot. In other words, it reconsiders the thing as the unit that is dominating everyday as much as scholarly thought, explains why it considers hitherto "thing-isms" as not aptly picturing the uncanniness of reality, and grows a "post-thing-ism", in which every existence is defined as immanently split, viz. as existing-within (as a knot) as well as consisting of (as a web) (4.1.1.1).

This stream of thought does not allow for an independent existence; but rather is based upon the premise that every existence exists only as related (4.1.1.2). Therefrom can be deduced that borders are always elsewhere than we so far understood them to be, because a thing is not demarcated and thus defined by a given set of borders. It rather is involved in an ongoing practice of bordering. This queers all dimensions (commonly understood as given attributes), and turns the latter to mere momentarily fitting ascriptions, that always run the risk of lagging behind (4.1.1.3). All this will be grown in 4.1.1, before the latter chapter will conclude with relating the so far abstractly grown thought to the clothing relation (4.1.1.4). As a first step of the following chapter 4.2.1, section 4.1.2.1 examines why NM's rhizome might be argued to be more favorable an approach for the present research's purposes than the comparable concept of "flatness", which is grown by OOO. Having clarified that, 4.1.2.2 "rhizomizes" webs and knots as the only two materializations as which existence (temporally) manifests, whereby it detaches itself from hitherto grown NM. Yet if every existence is both web and knot, where could research preferably set in, at the web or at the knot materialization of existence? Despite introducing an artificial sequence, a thinking trick here is of help, which will be elicited in 4.1.2.3.

Based on the hitherto grown ontology, 4.1.2.4 reworks conventional hierarchic understandings of the clothing, in which the human is understood to be the one applying clothes for her purposes, into a rather rhizomatic clothing conception, that sees humans and clothes as equivalently relating to each other. As such, the clothing is a kind of

humans/things relation that might be unsurpassed with regards to its intimacy. This led 4.1.2.5 to suggest (more as a line of flight pointing beyond the scope of the present project than an integral knot within it, see also 5.2.1.5) to detach from the Cartesian habit of hierarchizing entities within relations, and rather begin to hierarchize relations, which themselves must not be understood as given frames, but as active framings. For such an undertaking, a three-part grid of distinction, ranging from loose to personal, and then to entangled relation, will be proposed.

However, a high degree of entanglement is not a continuous state for humans/clothes; but it rather is restricted to dressings and wearings as two kinds of clothing webs (or better: as two kinds of webs that materialize as knots within the clothing), so it will be outlined in 4.1.3. Yet even when humans/clothes are not entangled, viz. when the knotting of one knot is not responded by the other, such as is the case in nakedness (4.1.3.1) or in a closed wardrobe (4.1.3.2), human and cloth nevertheless remain relating to each other. Based thereupon, chapter 4.1.3.3 queers the claim that there is a human mind independent reality existent (realism) with the claim that every existence is ontologically related (relationalism), and grows a relational realism of the clothing.

Whereas chapter 4.1 dedicated itself to a reworking of the thing-entity into a web/knot; chapter 4.2 rather focuses on reworking the hitherto materializing ontology into a dynamic ontogenesis. For this reason, 4.2.1 claims that existence is not a web/knot-being (4.2.1.1), but it rather is a becoming that materializes as webs and knots (4.2.1.2) There is no existence which "is" and only then becomes, but the becoming is all there is (4.2.1.3). And this becoming takes place as a difference in-between webs and knots. Therefore, webs and knots are the materializations of existence, viz. they are that as which what exists exists; yet existence never comes to a close in, it never restricts itself to a particular web/knot constellation, but rather remains constantly on the move, in constant alteration (4.2.1.4).

Leaning on Bergson's distinction of differences (introduced in 4.2.1.5), there are two manners in which a becoming materializes. On the one hand, 4.2.2 will rework Bergson's difference-in-nature into a splitting into webs and knots. The splitting of clothes can also be called a "fashioning", which is not a potential inherent in, but a becoming immanent to clothes (4.2.2.1). Therefore, by queering OOO/NM, the split that OOO detected to reside within beings will be reworked into a splitting that existences are (4.2.2.2).

As such, the splitting is making clothes fold, not only around human bodies, but on, via, and sometimes even elsewhere than the latter, which is why, as Deleuze already remarked, it is time to free clothes from their subordination to the human (4.2.2.3), and show the folding,

the splitting of clothes as queering hierarchies, dimensions, and directions (4.2.2.4) In order to approach the splitting which existence is, the Baradian method of diffraction will be of help (4.2.2.5).

On the other hand, 4.2.3 reworks Bergson's difference-in-degree into a jumping. This approach to the clothing allows to detach from the conventional adherence to identities, and rather come to see that a cloth becomes another with every outfit it is involved in (4.2.3.1). The jump will be introduced as denoting the point in which e.g. a cloth-knot moves in-between outfit-webs, whereby the roles of self and other become intra-changed (4.2.3.2). Even if, for reasons that will be explained in 4.2.3.3, the "jumping" remains an impure concept; it does depict an immediate change effectuated by a queering of entering/exiting, and as such will be related to in the present project.

Bergson as well as Deleuze (in his rereading of the former) saw the difference-in-nature as superior to the difference-in-degree with regard to their existences-defining capacities. Yet in hierarchically modelling the two differences, both researchers adhere to the entity as their unit of research, so it shall be claimed. As, however, the present project will rework the entity into a web/knot, also the relation between the two Bergsonian differences, which here take on the form of splittings and jumpings, will be re-fashioned in 4.2.3.4. In order to approach the jumpings in-between existences, the Deleuzian differentiation shall be suggested as a method (4.2.3.5). In sum, 4.1 reworks the thing into a web/knot and depicts existence as ontologically related, and 4.2 reworks the former's ontology into an ontogenesis by depicting existence as ontologically becoming.

In the conclusion rounding this project off, the grown clothing ontogenesis will be subsumed in the section called "How it Materialized" (5.1). The present project had two main aims of research. It aspired to a) renew new materialist thought by means of entangling it with the clothing (5.1.1), and to b) new-materialistically reread conventional clothing conceptions from hierarchical to rhizomatic (5.1.2). By carving out webs and knots from hitherto new materialist writings and queeringly dynamizing the latter, a post-thing-ism, a reworking of beings into becomings materialized (5.1.3). By what precise methodology this stance was reached will be subsumed in 5.1.4.

A final section 5.2 "Whereto It Heads" will then dedicate itself to possible working steps that could be undertaken on (5.2.1) and with (5.2.2) the present project, before 5.2.3 will conclude with the sketching of a renewed and renewing clothing practice in the everyday, that could be deduced from the present research, and to which the latter wishes to animate.

Avoiding to list all suggestions given in these last sections, in the proposed diffractive lines of flight, especially a deepening of the kind of humans/things relation that the clothing is stands out (5.2.1.5); whereas among the suggested narrative streams of thought, inter alia a continuation of the present web/knot ontogenesis towards the aesthetic, a field which hitherto resided exclusively within epistemology, could be promising (5.2.2.4).

2. Clothes And The Clothing

Clothes are things that become designed, cut, and sewn; viz. they are "textiles", made out of diverse fabrics. Clothes are things that are dressed and undressed. They are dressed for the sake of being worn in specific surroundings and for specific purposes (compare, for instance, clothes dressed for trekking versus clothes classically dressed for ballet dancing); and they are undressed because of specific reasons, be that a switch of wearing surroundings, a non-fitting, or a stain in the textile. Hence, clothes are "dress" in the sense of both "attire" (from Latin "a-tirare", drawing near, towards and into) which refers to the act of dressing as reciprocal reaching out and drawing in, viz. as mutual connecting, and "garment" (from French "garnir", to adorn, to fortify, to garnish) which refers to reasons for dressing.

And clothes are things that are worn, that are phenomenologically felt and emotionally related with while residing on our bodies. We live in clothes, we live with clothes, we live them out, and are outlived by them (most of us would find it somewhat queer to meet their grandmother in a trendy crop-top, or their grandfather in a baggy-pants and XXL-shirt hip-hop outfit when visiting them the next time). We consume them and are consumed by them. Clothes are worn out and thrown away, they become replaced by newer and less lived-out clothes — an aspect of clothes which might become most evident in "footwear" (see e.g. Hockey et al. 2013). Thus, clothes are "wear" (and tear), they walk with us through the lives we lead in and share with them.

Hence, whenever the term "clothes" is used in the present project, if not indicated otherwise, it is meant to be understood in its threesome variety of textile, dress, and wear. Thereby, "clothes" becomes a new approach to the matter of research, that hitherto has been titled inter alia either adornment, costume, fashion, or dress (see Entwistle 2015, 40). In what follows, the latter four approaches to the phenomenon of, or phenomena similar to clothes shall be scrutinized, in order to come to a justification of the presently used terminus. Only thereafter will it be shown why neither clothes can act as primary research matter here, and why instead of a thing-approach, rather a relational approach is needed, as which shall function the clothing. Once the clothing relation has been grown, clothes can be approximated via the latter.

2.1 Hitherto Fashion/Dress Theoretical Thing-Approaches

2.1.1 Adornment

As such, "adornment" is how clothes are often referred to in ethnographic and anthropological texts (although this kind of literature also uses the term "clothing" to refer to manifest things). Adornment denotes a certain culture's, tribe's, or niche's way to adorn their selves and their bodies, which is why adornment can be associated most strongly to clothes' aspect of being garments. In a way, anthropologists seem to take for granted *that* humans clothing-adorn themselves — Entwistle explicitly writes: "no culture leaves the body unadorned" (Entwistle 2015, 6) —; and by talking about "adornment", they put the emphasis on the "how" or "with what", with the final aim to find out the "for what" of adornment.

One tribe adorns itself with feathers, another with flowers. Whilst young females might adorn their earlobes with pearls, and thus often become thoughtlessly labelled as daughters of upper middle class families; punks put safety pins through the holes in their ears in the intent to position themselves against capitalism. But in adorning, the pearly "good girl" and the punky "bad girl" coincide. And neither do they diverge in the "for what" of their adorning activities. According to many anthropologists, in so doing they both reside within the spectrum of Georg Simmel's famous social clothing dualism of imitation ("Nachahmung") and differentiation ("Differenzierung"), or connecting and discerning ("Verbinden und Unterscheiden", Simmel 1986, 180-181), which in today's fashion/dress theory is often as well paraphrased by fitting in and standing out, or inclusion and exclusion (see e.g. Leutner 2008, 8).

At the side, Simmel's dualism is by no way the first approach to the "for what" of adornment. Upstream (and also downstream, see e.g. Vinken 2013, 75-76) to it, a whole history of attempted explanations of the adornment phenomenon can be found, that either side with imitation or differentiation (for a historical overview, see Marino 2016). Yet the precise achievement of Simmel was it to combine the two hitherto streams of convictions, out of which he created his often cited dialectics.

Although the concept of adornment certainly has its raison d'être in the corresponding literature, it implies three shortcomings for philosophical thought, that render it unapt for the present purposes. First, adornment is a singularetantum. It is a singular term denoting a plurality (similar to Miller's "stuff", see Miller 2010, or Heidegger's "Zeug", see Heidegger

2006, 68). Adornment means the addition of a plurality of things to an already existent whole. Thereby, the whole, which usually is the human body, forms as much part in the monism of adornment as do the things added. And the things added as adornment to a whole are not solely clothes, but can as well be accessories, jewelry, tattoos, or hairstyles. Thus, a singular cloth cannot be denoted by the term adornment; and adornment does not denote precisely enough clothes' aspect of being textiles.

Second, adornment implies a superficiality (Schiller explicitly called adornment "das Unnötige", Schiller 1795, 59, "the unneeded", "the superfluous"). The whole, to which the adornment is added, is complete in and for itself before and without the adornment. This makes adornment only an ornament, a decoration, which could easily be left away without altering the essence, turning the substance, or manipulating the whole's identity. As such, it can be considered an opposite to the term "gear", which grasps clothes in their sole function of being utensils for a specific purpose (e.g. fishing gear), or for the sake of prevention (e.g. rain gear in order not to get wet). Hence, when Sullivan, in scrutinizing the potential of Marx' writings for fashion theory, talks about the "duality of adornment" (Sullivan 2016, 36) as the wants of the stomach plus/versus the wants of the fancy; to be precise, "adornment" does not contain such a duality, but merely covers the latter part, the fancy, the unnecessary, the decorum, and in this sense owns no means to influence the human's deep interior.

Adornment thus implies what Miller calls a "depth ontology" (Miller 2010, 16), and what Deleuze has reworked with his concept of the fold, namely dualistic conceptualizations of surface/depth or appearance/essence (see Deleuze 1993; see also Conley 2014, xii and O'Sullivan 2005a, 103), which are so commonly adhered to in fashion/dress theory. If adornment acts within the realm of surface or appearance, the essence or depth then is either the whole, or it is granted by another kind of clothes (usually: less fashionable ones, see Miller 2010, 14). And the wholes to which adornment is added are not necessarily humans. But just as possible to think of here are e.g. horses, whose mane is adorned with ribbons before a tournament, or the interior of a house, that is adorned by an expansive stucco. This shows that adornment not only is not restricted to clothes, but that it just as little is limited to clothings.

And third, when talking about adornment, the final question implied is always: Who or what is adorned? This shows that in the concept of adornment, clothes remain means for a human end. Who is adorned? The human (or animal, house) is adorned. Yet it is one of the main purposes of the present project to show that clothes indeed are not only means to human

ends, that they not only serve, but also act for their own sakes. Why this is the case, and why a subordination of clothes to our human selves is to the detriment of the human in both ontology and epistemology, will be elicited in 2.3 as well as concluded in 5.2.3.

In sum, the term "adornment" will not be used as primary designation of what shall be researched in the present project, because of its three philosophical shortcomings, which can be subsumed to the buzzword of plurality, superficiality, and servitude. Nevertheless, it shall not be left unmentioned that adornment indeed contains a certain philosophical potential, due to its implication of the process of adorning, which it implies maybe even more than the result of the adorned. Thereby, it already hints to the queering of status/act of dressing/being-dressed, dressing/wearing (see 2.1.4 and 5.2.1.4), as well as to a queering of subject/object, human/cloth, in their mutual adorning and being adorned.

2.1.2 Costume

"Costume" is how clothes are traditionally called by historians. Besides, in today's general language, this term is used to denote three specific types of clothes: the clothes worn as local/national identity, the clothes worn by females in business surroundings, and the clothes worn on (carnival, theatrical) stage.

As symbols for a local or national identity, costumes are usually related to specific customs, rituals, and festivities. In this vein, although neither adornment takes into consideration the issue of fashion in the sense of change; costume and fashion can be seen as even more strongly opposed: Fashion is that what changes and wanes; and costume is that what remains, and is maintained. Understood in this manner, costumes are used to represent the tradition in the frame of which they occur, and to produce the identity connected to this tradition.

Second, costumes denote the female pendant to the male suit-and-tie that appears in white-collar business surroundings. In this case, just like the suit, a costume is there to conceal the personal taste of its wearer, and to level her with all other females working for a certain company or in a specific branch. Hence, similar to the first context in which costumes are used, here they stand as well for the attempt to conceal individuality and rather make the wearer represent a corporate identity.

However, in both its so far discussed significations, costume strongly genders. Discerning between male and female is possible in just one glimpse when females wear no suits but costumes — and is almost as easy as it is to distinguish between "Dirndl" and "Krachlederne" on the Oktoberfest in Munich. Yet whereas the costume/suit was originally

intended to level, and thus missed its mark; the Bavarian costume was designed to stress the secondary sexual characteristics of both male and female. The knickerbocker-style of the Krachlederne is made to reveal muscular calves, once a sign for the bodily strength of a good farmer, today rather reinterpreted as promising footballing skills; just as the wide cleavage and tightly-cut, even rod-supported midriff of the Dirndl is there to reveal who is "well stacked", or, as it is colloquially put in the Bavarian dialect: who "has quite some wood in front of the cottage". Besides, both the Bavarian costume as well as the business costume got entangled long since in the game of fashion.

And third, costumes are the type of clothes worn in the theatre/cinema and during carnival. In these surroundings, a costume is used to mask its wearer's common or private personality, and allow her to enter and enact a new and temporary role. As already remarked by García Düttmann when treating Flügel, the term "mask" is of Arabic origin. Yet it does not solely mean "the disguising face" (see García Düttmann 1986, 438 and 456, footnote no.2); but the Arabic term "maschara" can be translated by "mockery" or "imbecility", and thus directly conveys the playful character owned by this third sense of the "costume".

Instead of illustrating genders, in this regard, the costume enables a female to temporarily act as male, and a male to play with and live out his femininity (e.g. in the case of drag). This role embodied by costume is remarkably staged in the film *The Danish Girl* (2015), a British production directed by Tom Hooper, in which a male painter (played by Eddie Redmayne) realizes his true female identity in part by playing with female theatre costumes. What began as a game becomes a joke, a secret addiction, until, to the puzzlement of his wife, he starts wearing these costumes in public.

Hence, in this last sense, costume implies the chance to be someone else than one usually is (a chance that is also implied by costumes as business wear, potentially bordering the private off from the professional self), viz. the chance to escape one's common self and enter, so to say, a Deleuzian becoming (see e.g. Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 263). As such, the costume owns its very own historicity, apart from, or better: starting from the theatre.

Sennett describes that until the 18th century, strict rules were intact regarding who was allowed to wear what, depending on the person's class. When these rules gradually relaxed, which interestingly happened simultaneously to the uprising of the theatre, people took their chance to get engaged with clothes that were usually out of their class' reach, trying to relate to these clothes as if they would have always been intended for them. This created a general social game as well as much confusion, because everyone was trying to find out who was

hiding behind the clothes the other one was wearing, a true nobleman or a pretender, a real lady or a betrayer; while being oneself potentially engaged in such a role play.

Whereas beforehand identities could easily be read from the clothes worn; hereditary versus staged identities could now not be discerned anymore from what was worn, but solely from how something was worn, viz. from the professionalism of the attitude with which what was worn, was worn. What took place here was a shift from fixed rules to a, following Sennett, almost unregulated open game. What once was easily readable from clothes, now became potentially covered by clothes. So to say, society was turned into a stage (see Sennett 1986, 309ff.; for a similar account see also Vinken 2013, 50-51).

However, although the way clothes were (allowed to be) related with changed; the role of clothes remained the same: They were representations of statuses and thus identities. And this conceptualization continues to wind itself through fashion theory until today, when the discourse about authenticity seems omnipresent in popular magazines as well as scholarly journals, and when clothes are still defined as means to masquerade, which, however, has been normalized since Sennett's 18th century, and now is a welcomed means which is widely applied and accepted.

Understanding costume as disguising oneself and playing out identities, today it happens a) on concrete occasions or in specific surroundings, such as carnival or theatre, where it might take place apart from fashion; and b) in every chain store and on every urban street, where it is linked to, even fostered by fashion. In light of the latter, fashion comes to be regarded as the game of creating always new shapes and forms of clothes, which allows for the costume-mechanism to happen. If there would be no new clothes thrown onto the market, then the game of costumes would presumably get stuck. Yet with new trends coming up every season, always new identities can be tested. Thereby, the dualism of costume/fashion, that above was mentioned with regard to national/regional costume (so to say, to the "custom-costume"), is queered. Costume rather becomes a historical starting point for fashion, as well as a game played within and made possible by fashion.

To subsume, the concept of costume is linked to a strong representationalism. A costume either represents a specific tradition, a company, or a character in the theatre or the stage of the street. In all its significations, costume is about roles that can be entered and exited. The human is perceived as owning a private, normal, or original identity. She comes to meet and interact with certain costumes. And as each of them represents a specific and material identity, she receives the chance to always take on new and timely limited identities. Thus, identities are perceived as fixed entities, which are represented by costumes, and which the

human can enact and abandon. To be concrete, it is not the identity as such that changes; but the human switches in and out of costumes/identities. In such a stream of thought, costumes are the identities we can un/dress.

Furthermore, although the concept of costume perceives its matter of research as owning the capacity to influence us humans and our behavior; it investigates clothes solely for the identities they allow us humans to take on. Yet the true identity of clothes remains to research still. To be more precise, the identity, which seems to be fixedly inscribed into clothes, is a rather human identity, for which the costume is a mere dummy, so to say, a placeholder. To liquidate the connection of cloth and identity, which is taken for granted in "costume", is one of the aims of the present project.

Put differently, the here grown new materialist approach towards clothes aspires to research the latters' conatus and capacity to bring themselves into transformation by and via transforming us. In German, the term "costume", as used in its third treated sense, is called a "Verkleidung". This German noun consists of the knots of "ver-", signifying a change, an alteration or transformation, a shift, a turnover, and "Kleidung", clothes. Whilst costume as Verkleidung hitherto was understood as a human shifting which is allowed for by clothes; in the present project, it rather shall be shed light onto the fact that clothes also change themselves by changing us, and only change us via changing themselves.

2.1.3 Fashion

Extracted from a concrete context, "fashion" remains an unclear term. What does it refer to in particular? Is fashion the system of designers, photographers, magazines, and models that makes us buy certain clothes? Is fashion the clothes that the system's protagonists currently define as fashionable, "in", or trendy? Or is it the industry that constantly provides us with these lately fashionable clothes?

In either case, fashion implies a superficiality, which is why Bovenschen calls fashion "lightheaded" ("leichtfertig", see Bovenschen 1986, 25), and why Lipovetsky famously titled fashion "the ephemeral" (Lipovetsky 2002, 139; a notion which today e.g. Frances Corner revives and reworks, see Corner 2014, 39). However, both Bovenschen and Lipovetsky do not remain at this one-sided understanding of fashion. In the very title of the work she edited (German: *Die Listen der Mode*, Bovenschen 1986), Bovenschen ascribes a cunning ("die List"), a slyness to fashion. And also Lipovetsky comes to understand that fashion is both ephemeral *and* unavoidable, viz. that it is precisely fashion's superficiality

that turned it into "the key" to modern collective life (see Lipovetsky 2002, 6). Hence, both researchers saw a certain queerness in the matter of fashion. Whilst scholars thinking in and with the concept of adornment see clothes as mere surface phenomenon, apart from which the body is complete; fashion scholars, such as named here, understand that fashion queers the surface/depth ontology, as it is both superficial and an inherent part of who we are.

When engaging with the concept of fashion, we are confronted with the question: Can we circumvent fashion, and still clothe? As a matter of fact, we all clothe everyday. Are we thus always entangled in and with fashion? On the one hand, we evidently are free to not align our selection of clothes to fashion's dictates, and to merely see clothes as gear, as functional utensils for covering and warming the body. On the other hand, in today's world, fashion is quite encompassing, as most of the clothes we wear were at least in the moment of their creation intended to be fashionable (see Wilson 2003, 5). From this point of departure, clothes are diminishing in their fashionableness more or less gradually. Given that a) since the onset of modernity, the majority of conventionally worn clothes sojourn at a certain point in the cycle of fashions (see e.g. Barnard 2011, 1), and that b) we can still see them as gear; fashion must be capable to drive a wedge between our perception of clothes (epistemology) and the clothes themselves (an issue for ontology).

This "fashion agency" can also be spotted on the other end of a cloth's life cycle, namely in the moment of its disposal. In his cult essay *Walden*, Thoreau asks: "Who ever saw his old clothes […] resolved into its primitive elements?" (Thoreau 2016, 22), and thereby presumably leads most of us to confessingly shake their heads. Why so? Why do we discard goods, clothes in particular, that are still functional? The only answer that makes sense is: Due to fashion. Because they are no longer fashionable, which makes them no longer "like-able" and thus no longer wearable.

Fashion hence can also be seen as the force that enacts clothes in the sense of determining (the process as well as the end of) our intra-action with them. This notably contradicts common Cartesian thought, according to which it is us humans who sort clothes out. In contrast, we humans are constantly entangled in a clothing web, in which also fashion plays a role. In deciding to no longer wear a particular cloth, we humans do not act autonomously; but just as much is fashion an agent that discards clothes. And as clothes are (the material of) fashion, fashion enacts and stops to enact, viz. it eventually discards itself. Hence, when throwing out clothes from our wardrobe collection that are practically still wearable (in the sense of functional as gear, as covering and warming devices), but that we judge as no longer

likeable, we can observe ourselves, the respective clothes, and the discarding-activity as being enacted by fashion.

This also shows that a cloth is neither "in" nor "out" once and forever. To be in/out is not an inherent essence, not a static identity of clothes; but clothes rather are enacted as non/fashionable by specific clothings, in which they happen to partake. Worn in one outfit, a cloth can be fashionable; worn in another outfit, a cloth is out of fashion. The human certainly can be "a", but is not "the" decisive factor determining the temporary fashionable-ness of clothes. Control is not only in human hands. Instead, fashion enacts singular clothes as well as overall outfits, and the fashionableness of clothes is enacted by the clothings they are engaged in.

What becomes clear here is that fashion, if used to refer not to the system or to the industry, but to clothes themselves, never is a neutral synonym, but rather denotes a specific kind of clothes, namely precisely those clothes that currently are en vogue. So to speak, fashion is an up-to-date category of clothes. In this sense, fashion becomes opposed to the temporality of the custom-costume (see 2.1.2). Whereas the custom-costume is about a conservation of traditions inherited from the past; fashion offers "a way out of the world of tradition" (Lipovetsky 2002, 4). Instead of being directed towards the past, or being about the preservation of the past in the present, fashion leads to "pessimism about the present, optimism about the future" (ibid., 8).

Fashion then are those clothes that were recently produced by the industry and are currently worn by the system's protagonists, who obtain the power to seduce the masses to follow them. This reveals how fashion functions: A fashion is created by a protagonist of the system (be that as part of a designer's collection, or in form of a streetstyle-snapshot of an it-girl/boy), and once it is documented by the media, it is spread and imitated by more and more people, first by the "fashion crowd", and then, not without help of "fast fashion" brands, by the wider masses. This is what in the respective literature is called to be fashion's "trickle-down" effect.

Some scholars thus treat fashion and its trends as mayflies or falling stars that, once spread into the public, quickly wear off and die. In this vein, Bovenschen writes: "a fashion has to pay for its identity with its extinction" ("Eine Mode muss ihre Identität mit ihrer Vernichtung bezahlen", Bovenschen 1986, 13). This also allows to draw the analogy between fashion and a wasp that has to pay with its life for the one and only sting it can dispose. And Lipovetsky even compares fashion's endurance to the one of disposable diapers: Both things are not made to last (see Lipovetsky 2002, 135). Henceforth, by treating fashion as a nonrecurring

phenomenon, scholars such as Bovenschen and Lipovetsky depict fashion as opposed to everyday dress. Why this is not expedient shall be discussed below (see 2.2.5).

Apart from (the industry producing, or system seducing to) clothes, the term "fashion" contains a fourth aspect, which might be its broadest. Fashion can also be understood as a "change [of taste] for change's sake" (Entwistle 2015, 45) that has its origin in the beginning of modernity (at least so the majority of fashion theorists say, see Marino 2016, 18-19; Vinken explicitly names the French Revolution as the onset of fashion, see Vinken 2013, 33), and that by no way is limited to clothes, but spans over many other cultural issues, such as food, interiors, cars, or manners.

In this sense, fashion, an issue that, when denoting clothes, has classically been disregarded by the academia (see Lipovetsky 2002, 3-9; Marino 2016, 15-18), has been commented on broadly by scholars of different fields. Kant defined fashion as "variable ways of living" ("veränderliche Lebensweisen", Kant 1912, 175). Schiller warned us against "taste", "Geschmack", as it steers our mind into the dangerous direction of neglecting truth and morality for the sake of "an attractive disguise" ("einer reizenden Einkleidung"), (Schiller 1795, 18; here clothes have an emblematic, even metaphorical role within the range of objects of taste, as the "Einkleidung", old German for clothes or dress, stands for all kinds of wrapping surfaces). Henry David Thoreau wrote about "the love of novelty" as leading us more often than "true utility" (Thoreau 2016, 20). And Walter Benjamin described fashion as "a fetish of goods" (see Benjamin 1982, 53), but nevertheless saw its "extraordinary anticipations" as of philosophical interest ("Das brennendste Interesse der Mode liegt für den Philosophen in ihren außerordentlichen Antizipationen", ibid., 110).

Whereas Bovenschen strongly criticizes this overarching usage of the fashion concept by calling it an "overstretching" via which fashion loses all its force of expression (see Bovenschen 1986, 7); Lipovetsky rather can be seen as an explicit proponent of this application of the discussed term. Much to the discomfort of Sennett, who also sees this attitude as blurring the discussed term (see Sennett's foreword to Lipovetsky's work, 2002, vii), Lipovetsky sees fashion as a general way of production/consumption.

At the side, Lipovetsky's position and work hardly can be allocated to a specific discipline within the realm of fashion/dress theory. When Svendsen subsumes Lipovetsky's understanding of fashion to being a "general social mechanism" (Svendsen 2006, 13), the Norwegian philosopher, so it shall be stated, misses the kernel of Lipovetsky's position. Instead of a social, the latter rather treats fashion as an economic-political issue. For him, fashion is a type of economy which equalizes, and thus leads to a political indifference. In

other words, because we all wear the same, we think that we all are the same, which makes it unimportant which party to vote for, which power supplier to make a contract with, or in general: which discursive position to take. If fashion really owns such far-reaching consequences shall, at least at this point, be left open for discussion.

In sum, "fashion" depicts a bundle of phenomena. It can either be understood as a specific type, or as a part of clothes. It can be a more than clothes, a system of which clothes are a subordinate, an industry of which clothes are the produced outcome, or a culture of changing tastes in which clothes are entangled since the onset of modernity. Or it can mean something completely distinct from clothes, as this culture of fluctuating products spans as well over further goods of taste.

So far, the three terms "adornment", "costume", and "fashion" have been discussed. Whereas adornment implies an understanding of clothes as superficial attachment to the human; the concept of costume rather is based upon a static cloth-identity connection. As such, both terms are insufficient for the purposes of the present project. As most clothes are entangled in fashion, the latter concept comes closer to what is aimed at researching here. Yet there is more to research about clothes than their current status within the fashion web, which makes also "fashion" only a partially suitable term.

2.1.4 Dress

And last but not least, let us discuss "dress". On the one hand, dress implies the act of (and reasons for) dressing (attiring and adorning, garnishing). In this sense, "apparel" can be understood as a concept closely neighboring dress, that etymologically resonates a preparation for "appearing" in public. Yet "apparel" leads to the old-fashioned distinction between "private" versus "public" self, often repeated in fashion/dress literature, and as such is not only a strongly dualist term, but simply a term which is not anymore up to date in a time when jogging pants and baggy hoodies have long been extracted from their couch-surroundings, and become worn just as much to work as do white shirts and business suits; and when "out-of-bed-hair" materializes as a Parisian trend that is intentionally mimicked by fashionistas everywhere. With dress, only a shadow of this distinction remains.

On the other hand, dress implies the status of being dressed, meaning to be conditioned by what one has dressed and what one is dressed with. Dress thus is not only related to the clothes's aspect of the wear, but the gerunds of "dressing" and "wearing" can be queered in their linearity (see 5.2.1.4). The former does not simply stop when the latter sets in. But the

wearing rather is pervaded by un-/re-/dressings, that are stimulated by every room we enter/exit, every bodily activity we (do not) realize, and every other being that we reside with (see also Corner 2014, 50). Just think, for instance, of a morning on which you have to run in order to catch the bus. Once inside the crowded vehicle, you will surely get rid of your jacket. With more and more people exiting the bus, when someone opens a window, or the latest when arriving at the stop at which it is your turn to jump off, you re-dress that jacket, until entering the building you are heading to, or the next means of public transport, were you undress it again. Or think of a normal day at the office: Every meeting, every coffee break, every adjustment of the heating/AC, every time you have to walk to the printer, and every colleague moving around the room influences the wearing you are currently involved in via initiating un/dressings.

Entwistle describes already the first here defined aspect of dress, the getting dressed, as both a preparation of the body "for the social world" and an "ongoing practice" (Entwistle 2015, 7), and hereby also shows that the dressing is not over when we have dressed. Whenever we have dressed, we are dressed, which we are most of the time. Hence, ontologically speaking, there is no past to dressing. And dressing is both, upstream and simultaneous to, hence threading through the wearing.

But taking a closer look into Entwistle's bifold conceptualization of the act of getting dressed, it reveals to have the same temporality as Lipovetsky once ascribed to fashion: "pessimism about the present, optimism about the future" (see Lipovetsky 2002, 8, cited already in 2.1.3). By seeing not only the being dressed but as well the getting dressed as permanent, Entwistle does not describe a general kind of dressing, viz. she does not touch upon an ontology of dressing; but she rather caught hold of a specific kind of dressing, which is the dressing that happens in line with fashion. This fashionable dressing never comes to completion, because whenever one trend is mastered, a new trend appears, to which the present dressing manifestation has to adapt.

The dressing described by Entwistle is ongoing because whenever we are dressed, we are already involved in future dressings, which are yet to be planned and realized. Thus, "fashion-dressing" is a practice that constantly needs to be exercised, refined and adapted to what is new, because this new is a constantly renewing new, which evidences that "one can never *be* in fashion" (Wissinger 2016, 294, original emphasis). But when we think our selection of clothes to be "in", it already is on the brink of becoming "out" (see 2.2.5). Recently, this led several researchers to claim fashion to be a Deleuzian "folding" phenomenon, see e.g. Smelik in 3.2.1.3, which makes it hard for the dressed and dressing

human, so Entwistle and Wissinger could argue, to e.g. remain attractive, conserve her coherent sense of self, or achieve the aesthetic.

Hence, Entwistle's concept of dressing is not exactly a queering of fashion/dress, but rather a subordination of dress to fashion. As such, it remains a partial account of what is to discuss here, namely the ontology of dress/ing. This is so because there indeed are dressings, in the sense of acts of getting dressed, that are not ongoing; but are turned into a being dressed when the wearing begins. This is not to say that the phenomenon of dressing comes to a halt, turns into a passive being when the wearing begins; but that it remains active as a conditioning and partial refining, and indeed not as an overall conceptualizing. For this reason, here it will be adhered to calling the dressing ongoing only in its conditioning of the wearing, and not in its self-perpetuation.

After having discussed especially Entwistle's treatment of dressing, the term "dress" shall now be scrutinized more thoroughly. As such, dress implies the thing's dependency on the human and her body, which has already been attributed to adornment above (2.1.1), yet comes even more to the fore in the concept of dress. The body here is the reason and locus for this hierarchy: There is a human who has a body. In the act of dressing, the dress is applied onto this body. And throughout the being dressed, the dress covers, adorns, manipulates this body meanwhile and by means of residing "at the periphery" (Woodward 2005, 21) of that body.

Entwistle goes so far as to define the getting dressed as "individuals acting on their bodies" (Entwistle 2015, 2), whereby dress is pushed even more to the margins, and materializes as a sole means, which is applied by the human to her body. Hence, the concept of dress implies that clothes are put into service for the body, that clothes alter this body; but the body remains within human possession. Thereby, dress misses to show that indeed, clothes are dependent upon the human and her body; but the human (bodily) being is equally dependent upon dress. The human dresses (herself with) dress, but dress also dresses us, our selves and our bodies (act). And the human is dressed with (status), but also by dress, whereby status and act, being dressed and dressing are queered.

This mutuality, however, does not materialize directly when philosophically engaging with "dress". Instead of clearly depicting that it is dress that conditions our bodily human being, it is rather held as if we humans were capable to condition ourselves (and steer this conditioning) by means of dress. That this is not the case will become evident in the present clothing ontology. It is again Entwistle whose statement "human bodies are *dressed* bodies",

(Entwistle 2015, 6, original emphasis) most aptly concludes the shortcoming of the concept of dress: It cannot exit this human/thing hierarchy, but even though it asks what dress can do, it asks so only in the sense of what it can do with and for us humans (and our bodies) — a shortcoming that as well has been detected in the concept of costume (see 2.1.2).

Entwistle's approach of dress as a "situated bodily practice" (Entwistle 2015, e.g. 34) was intended to counteract the tendency in research to disembody dress (see ibid., 4), and thus surely has its raison d'etre. Yet an approach too strongly focusing on the human body (see therefore also the "bodily-self approach", 2.3.2) as locus of the dressing, or of the clothing in general, misses to see and capture that dress can do something, although often (and remarkably not always) on our body, still not directed to it, but directed to itself as well as to others of its kind. Such a research lens fails to take into consideration that dress can do something to dress, wherever it is located, be that on a body or a hanger (to which it will be attended in 4.1.3.2).

Eventually thus, the concept of dress seduces to a hierarchical thinking of humans/things relations, in which the human is prioritized over the dress, and in which the dress remains a means to human ends. In so doing, dress hides its light, or the light the phenomenon it depicts could have if only perceived otherwise, under a bushel. Although from all four compared terms, dress (in contrast to adornment, costume, fashion) is the one that comes closest to what is aimed at here; due to its dependency upon the human body, it also disqualifies as main term engaged with here.

2.2 From Cloth-Thing to Clothing-Relation

When talking about their matter of research, fashion/dress theories commonly speak about either adornment, costume, fashion, or dress. These four concepts, and the approaches that come along with them, have been discussed in 2.1, and it has been shown why each of them is considered but partially capturing the ontology of the correspondent matter, and thus inappropriate for the present purposes.

To summarize, adornment does not allow to depict a singular item but only a bunch of pieces creating an outfit, it refers to the appearance/essence dualism, and does not allow to think the item as end in and for itself — buzzwords: plurality, superficiality, servitude. Costume contains a strong representationalism, and depicts identities as statically inscribed in clothes, that we humans can enter and exit. Fashion is an inconclusively used term, as it can either

mean a more of which clothes are a part, a certain category of clothes (so it was hitherto stated), or a general change in taste which also happens aside from clothes. And dress does not achieve to exit its dependency on the human body. Although dress asks what clothes can do, it only ever asks what clothes can do to/for/with us (of which a shadow can be found as well in costume), and thus remains within anthropocentrism. Hence, a new approach is needed. Or better: To approach the phenomenon which is grasped in part by the existent four concepts, a renewing concept is needed, which bundles the gains of hitherto approaches, allows to bypass the latter's shortcomings, and achieves to create a new picture of a phenomenon that has already long been occupying the minds of scholars.

As such an approach, so it has been announced in the beginning of this chapter, and so it surely already shone through in the past written lines and paragraphs, the one of "clothes" shall function. "The cloth", pronounced with a short "o", means textile, but "the cloth", pronounced with a long "o", means dress and wear. "Clothes" mean "the cloth" (thought as both, with a long and a short "o") as much as "to clothe". "To clothe" only ever happens via "the cloth", and "the cloth" yearns for the permission to clothe the human, and for being-clothed by the human.

For reasons that will be outlined in depth in the following chapter, immanent to the concept of cloth is the notion that things, such as clothes, can only ever be denoted within and via their relations, so it shall be stated. In short, the clothing enacts clothes. This is why the present chapter shall lead us away from conventional thing-concepts and towards a relational approach, viz. away from the cloth-thing and towards the clothing relation.

2.2.1 Reworking Adornment and Costume

In delineation to adornment, there are clothes and there is a cloth. Hence, the here suggested concept allows to depict and think singularities. Besides, there is no hidden essence lying behind, before, or underneath the cloth. When breaking up a cloth, we find no essence, but several other things, such as buttons, leather, zippers, velvet, yawn, and indeed humans (see 4.1.2.4 and 4.1.3.2). Instead, when breaking up adornment, first and foremost, we find different clothes and clothing-related items (jewelry, accessories, tattoos, body painting). These items are applied onto a human (her body). Yet the human self was already complete before being adorned/adorning herself by/with adornment, so it is resonating within this concept. In contrast to this sequence, the here grown cloth approach rather sticks to the notion, expressed as well by Butler when treating de Beauvoir, that the human body is

"naturally", viz. always already clothed (see Butler 1986, 49), even before she dresses or in moments of "non-dressing" (see 4.1.3.1). And whereas adornment is a surplus added to a human, and thus can only ever be thought in dependence to the human; the concept of clothes does not entail such a servitude, and even allows for a relational realism (see 4.1.3.3), which is interested in the happenings within the clothing, between clothes, that can, but need not take place on a human body.

Apart from that, clothes, so it has already been hinted to above (in 2.1.1), queer the adornment/gear dualism, because they imply both the useful and the garnishing. By no means does the term "cloth" state something about whether a thing wears and is worn because of a specific intention (e.g. to go fishing), or "only" to decorate, ornament, or embellish. It thus has the potential to show that the own embellishment indeed can be a specific dressing intention; and that for whatever goal it dresses and is dressed, the cloth can always also be decorative. Interestingly, especially in this latter part of the queering, the cloth ceases to be decorative or "ornamental" in the sense Kant restrictively defined the latter term (see Kant 2007, 57); but rather can be aesthetic, and thus heighten the specific action for which it is dressed (e.g., and using a loosely Deweyan terminology here, turn the fishing into a *better*, a more intense experience, see Dewey 2008, 27).

Now the concept of clothes starts to materialize via re-reading the adornment approach. Let us further outline "clothes" by reworking the costume. Meanwhile adherent to every costume is a concrete and static identity; a cloth, clothed distinctly, is a different cloth, with a different (temporally enacted) identity. In so doing, the cloth provides the human who clothes it, and is clothed with it, a potentially always distinct identity. Yet the clothed and clothing human does not solely appear as someone else in distinct clothes meanwhile remaining the same "at the inside", as it resonates within the costume; but rather potentially becomes a new human, another personality, a distinct character, with every new cloth dressed and worn. Henceforth, clothes are as incomplete and as nonessential as are we humans. None is complete without the other, and both push each other towards further identities. By thinking the humans/clothes relation in this way, the concept of cloth queers the appearance/essence dualism inherent in both adornment and costume.

Whilst adornment and costume are aspects of clothes that will only now and then reappear during the course of this project; fashion and dress are more crucial for understanding the core of the cloth concept as outlined here. Let us therefore turn towards the latter two already introduced concepts, and show how queering them will allow to grow "clothes" further.

2.2.2 Entangling Fashion and Dress

According to Svendsen, Simmel has created the fundament for the bifurcation that rules over the research field of fashion/dress studies (see Svendsen 2006, 12) by distinguishing between functional, purposeful dress, and fashion as the changes in tastes (see Simmel 1986, 182). In today's fashion and dress studies, some see dress studies as a section of the overall area of fashion studies; others consider both fields as delineated from one another; and again others treat fashion and dress as complementary areas within the research discipline they share.

In fact, the very name of this discipline/these disciplines reveal(s) its/their discrepancies, which evolve from treating fashion and dress as distinct phenomena that call for a distinct methodology. Whilst fashion studies are usually concerned with clothes e.g. as social motor, as crucial part of our economy, as play with form or simply as design, or as interplay between street and institutions; dress studies rather treat their matter of research as e.g. museum-stored material witnesses of cultural history, as textile complements of our human bodily being, or as means to express our beliefs, opinions, and the identities we daily select.

It was Entwistle who explicitly claimed that this bifurcation must be overcome: "What is needed is an account of fashion and dress which looks at the ways in which they are interrelated" (Entwistle 2015, 40). Yet, taking a look into the correspondent literature, it can be found that such fashion-dress inter-relational approaches have already been grown. A common approach is the one of seeing dress as the "functional" (Svendsen 2006, 11) or "utilitarian" (Lipovetsky 2002, 135), and fashion as the "playful" (ibid.) or even "aesthetic" (Entwistle 2015, 43; Marino 2016, 18). Although on the first sight, it might seem as if these voices understand fashion and dress as antagonists; when scrutinizing these approaches more thoroughly, it becomes evident that they rather see dress as the basis needed for fashion to evolve (see e.g. Svendsen 2006, 13).

In this vein, fashion is built on dress, because whenever thinking fashion in the way it is done by the scholars just cited, the fact that we need to dress daily, the restrictions given by this daily dressing, and by the everydayness of this dressing, have already been considered. Fashion here is a part of dress, which is somehow "historically and geographically specific" (Entwistle 2015, 47). Leutner even writes that fashion took possession of what was classically the function of dress, "Die Mode hat sich der klassischen Funktion der Kleidung bemächtigt", Leutner 2008, 6, whereby she hints to a dissolution of dress into fashion, which, however, shall not be followed here.

On the other hand, there is once more the voice of Entwistle who states: "fashion provides the 'raw material' of daily dress" (Entwistle 2015, 1), viz. who considers fashion as structuring dress, and later also defines dress as the creative interpretation of fashion exercised by the individual (see Entwistle 2015, 55). In so doing, she turns the common thinking order around, and rather puts fashion at the basis of dress.

All the just mentioned approaches have in common that they see fashion and dress as interrelated in the form of basis-outcome, source-effect. Whilst conventionally scholars begin their thinking at the unavoidable dress practice from which (the idea of) fashion materialized; Entwistle rather puts fashion, the inevitably store-confronted phenomenon, as the material that provides us with opportunities for, but also sets constraints on how we daily dress.

However, in the thought trajectories indicated by these approaches, it seems as if it would be necessary to decide between and choose only one suggestion, which must then be the truth to which to stick: Either dress is the basis for fashion, or fashion is the basis for dress. But why can dress not be the basis for fashion *and* fashion be the basis for dress? Why did we so far remain in a linear thinking, when a new materialist and hence entangled approach allows to propitiate both phenomena?

There interestingly is one fashion/dress scholar who, although not immersed in new materialist thought, has already hinted to the mutual shaping of fashion and dress. On the one hand, Wilson writes: "Fashion is dress in which the key feature is rapid and continual changing of styles" (Wilson 2003, 3), and thus seems to understand dress as the basic and broader phenomenon. Yet on the same cited page she can be found claiming that: "fashion sets the terms for *all* sartorial behaviour" (ibid., original emphasis), and further writes that: "dressing is inevitably determined by fashion" (ibid., 5), whereby she rather puts fashion as inherent in all dress, and thus as the determining basis for the dressing practice.

Hence, maybe not in a historical manner, but rather in an ontological way, in the here and now, none is there first, none is broader or is located upstream, neither fashion nor dress. As again Wilson accurately points out: "even uniforms have been designed by Paris dressmakers; even nuns have shortened their skirts; even the poor seldom go in rags — they wear cheap versions of the fashions that went out a few years ago" (Wilson 2003, 3).

Apart from Wilson, hitherto researchers thus treated fashion and dress in an interactive manner. Loosely leaning on the Baradian definition of "interaction", it means: There is fashion and there is dress, and somehow they happen to be connected. It means: It is possible to sometimes think fashion and dress as separate, to spare one out and think just the other.

And it is equally possible, at other times, to focus on the ways in which they are related, and to think them as related. Thereby, inter-relational approaches, such as called for by Entwistle (see above), do not achieve to queer, but remain within the fashion-versus-dress dualism, which Simmel initiated; yet a queering of which can interestingly as well be found when attentively reading Simmel's words, such as when he writes: "das Bleibende im Wechsel […] der Wechsel im Bleibenden" (Simmel 1986, 181), ca. "the permanent in change, and the change in the permanent", or when he describes fashion as a "unification" ("einheitliches Tun") of social equalization and individual differentiation (see ibid.).

To depict the interactions between fashion and dress is not enough, so it shall be stated. Instead, what is needed in order to understand how fashion and dress mutually enact, and thus cannot exist without each other, is a Baradian "intra-active" approach. In other words, the present project shall not remain thinking with and in the dualism of fashion and dress, and content itself with modeling it in one or the other way; but it shall rather confront and re-read this dualism into a positive relationality (see 4.2.1.5), and thereby find the difference, the monism in which fashion and dress share. Instead of being concerned with the relation between fashion and dress, which implies that although they are related, they nevertheless both contain an essence which can be sharply delineated from the essence of the other; here fashion and dress shall rather be read through one another. in order to reveal their borders as blurring, and reach the entanglement that makes them blur.

Reading one through the other does not merely mean to show that there is no fashion without dress, and that today there probably is not even a dress anymore that can completely escape the realm of fashion. Instead, this methodology means to stop short before the concepts of fashion and dress, to break them up, and to take what is found as usually denoted by them, in order to show that this matter is one, and not two. And that what has so far been accepted as two phenomena, rather are only two manifestations of the same phenomenon. Fashion and dress have long been studied as two phenomena by scholars of different fields; only that their entanglement has not been properly approached by now.

2.2.3 Clothes as Queering Fashion/Dress

What thus shall be grown here is an approach that queers all dualist characteristics that are usually attributed to fashion and dress, in order to eventually queer the dualism of fashion/dress as such. One of these dualisms ascribed to the two phenomena is the one of immaterial fashion versus material dress (see e.g. Lehnert 2013, 7; Woodward and Fisher

2014, 1). In what follows, by illustrating a queering of the im/materiality dualism, it is aimed at suggesting a first step towards a "fashion/dress" approach.

By understanding fashion as a sign system informed by texts and images, Barthes (1985) can be understood as elaborating a fashion theoretical research that might be the one most strongly delineated from the matter-ness of daily dress. The matter that dress is attributed with, and that e.g. Barthes demarcates fashion from, is the textile, the cloth with a short "o". But how could fashion ever be truly demarcated from being textile? As idea-like as fashion might appear, and as glamorous as it might present itself in its misty cloud of posters and blogs, trends and trendsetters; eventually, fashion is made out of clothes, out of textiles, which more often than not are the same textiles that daily dress is made of. Posters show these textiles, blogs write about these textiles, and trendsetters decide to wear these textiles earlier than others. This reveals the bifurcation, which Barthes intended to reinforce, as eventually inapplicable, because without textiles, there would be nothing for fashion to linguistically/pictorially depict, to talk about and judge, to dress and wear. Therefore, fashion and dress are united in their textile being.

When discussing fashion, it is often attempted to write in immaterial (e.g. semiotic or representational) ways about material things — with the detrimental consequence that the matterness of fashionable textiles is neglected. In fact, a first methodological step towards a queering of the im/materiality dualism of and within fashion/dress has already been undertaken by Material Culture theorists Sophie Woodward and Tom Fisher, who transcend the given distinction of methods by approaching fashion in a way in which commonly dress is investigated: as a material phenomenon (see Woodward and Fisher 2014). The other way around, when discussing dress, too often to ignore, it is written extensively about the matterness of textiles, and about the daily practice of dealing with these textiles. Thereby, it is forgotten to take a look at how these textiles came into being, how these textiles act, and due to what actions they are discarded.

Thus, a sole focus on fashion/dress-matter as static thing-being neither is sufficient for the present queering. Rather, in order to not only introduce the material into fashion, but to as well queer dress with fashion's dynamic, what is called for here is a vital approach to matter, which treats textiles not as matters, but rather as ongoing materializations . Hence, fashion and dress shall not be denoted here as being static textiles, but rather shall be queered here by their, to put it a Deleuzian way, "becoming-textile".

When thus approaching a singular textile-piece which is dressed and worn, and which dresses and wears, in short: when approaching a "cloth", it is not considered a finished thing,

which is closed within itself and owns a static identity, viz. which "represents" a specific fashion trend and is supposed to be dressed and worn accordingly. The concept of clothes does not treat fashion and dress as distinct to one another; but it rather shows how dress practices bring forth fashion trends bring forth new dress practices, and how trends shape dressings shape trends.

Being more precise, fashion needs the practice of dress, or else: trends need to be dressingly engaged with and materially realized in order to be existent. As soon as a fashion ceases to be dressed, it ceases to exist, and becomes replaced by another, now dressed fashion. Hence, dress is part of every fashion. And it has been repeatedly stated throughout the history of cultural reflection (see inter alia Kant 1912, 175; Wilson 2013, 5; Marino 2018;) that fashion is part of every dress. It is a shadow always following dress, from being clearly contoured at a dress' birth, when it is most fashionable, to becoming harder to outline the longer the dress exists, assuming that a dress is not a fashion-evergreen, but fades in its fashionableness until the dress as such, a material textile as much as an immaterial idea, ceases to be dressed and dies — sometimes just to be re-lived in a more contemporary form (as it is often attributed to the corset, which once was a conventional item for upper class females, and today is often insinuated in evening gowns, wedding dresses, fetishized and subcultural dress).

Henceforth, clothes here are not static beings, but are rather understood as constantly re/de/materializing becomings. Dressed in one outfit, and on one human, clothes can surely grow completely distinct trends than when dressed in different ways. And one fashion trend can surely seduce to dress a cloth in completely different outfits (long blouse to trousers versus long blouse as a dress) and styles (blouse tucked in trousers versus blouse hanging out of and over trousers) than another trend. Henceforth, the cloth, not as matter, but as materialization, not as a being-textile, but as a becoming-textile via dressing/wearing, is what unites fashion and dress. It is the monism in which fashion and dress are entangled.

And clothes not only reveal the entanglement of fashion and dress, but they also show how a particular dress is never fully "in" ("one can never *be* in fashion, as it is always becoming something else", Wissinger 2016, 294) nor completely "out" of fashion ("no clothes are outside fashion", Wilson 2003, 3), and thus queer another dualism conventionally reigning within fashion/dress theory. With the alteration of only one element, be that a button, a shoe, or another cloth with which the respective cloth is related, the latter moves from hip to passé, from passé to hip to passé. Hence, instead of static cloth-things, clothes rather are gerundial becomings.

2.2.4 From Clothes to Clothing

So far, "clothes" has been suggested as an alternative concept for adornment, costume, fashion, and dress. In contrast to adornment, clothes allow to depict singularities, they do not present themselves as additions to an already pre-existent whole, and they begin to push the human from her central role within humans/clothes relations. "Clothes" is also more adequate a term than costume, because clothes do not contain any representationalism, they consider both human as well as things' identities as changing, and thus break the strict cloth-identity connection. Thus, clothes are capable to sketch a picture of humans/clothes relations, in which all players, by being open for alteration, and by becoming altered by the respective other, stand on an equal footing.

Apart from that, clothes queer hitherto conventional approaches to fashion and dress, because it shows that the latter both are entangled with one another in their becoming-textile. As a very material yet dynamic concept, the term "clothes" hence unites both aspects of glamorous immaterial fashion and the quotidian and material dress, and shall therefore function here as main term engaged with.

However, in the beginning of chapter 2.2, clothes were defined as textiles, dress (as both attire, the act of dressing, and garment, the reasons for dressing), and wear. It must now be asked: What, then, about fashion? If the concept of clothes is explicitly said to involve dress as one part of the dichotomy which is conventionally bifurcating the overall research field, is it not a biased concept, that sides with dress and is constructed to sooner or later declare itself against fashion?

By no means! Constructing the clothes-concept in the present way is meant to involve as well the concept of fashion. Yet fashion shall not be related to as one, and especially not as "the other" part of a dualism, but as a cycle: Textiles are designed, dressed, and worn, until they are "worn out" by dress/fashion, and are replaced by or recycled into new textiles. This is not to put fashion hierarchically above the other clothes-aspects; or to bring it back into the sphere of immateriality. Instead, fashion is as material and as much part of the clothes-concept as are the other aspects of the latter. Yet, if clothes were defined as "textile, dress, *fashion*, and wear", the presently grown and growing concept would have run the risk to backslide into the fashion/dress dualism, and define both concepts in delineation to each other. Hence, by calling clothes "textile, dress, and wear"; fashion is resonating every time the term "clothes" is pronounced/written.

However, the former four as well as the presently proposed are "thing-concepts", concepts departing from matter. And although clothes were already defined as materializations, viz. not as textile-beings, but as becoming-textiles; what they denote first and foremost are textile-forms that are shaped by fashion as well as our routines of dressing them every morning, undressing them every evening, and our habit of wearing them on our bodies. This shows that inherent in the cloth is as well the human who designs, dresses, wears it. Humans and clothes flow into each other, namely within their relation, their entanglement. In order to make this explicit, viz. to show how humans and clothes shape and are shaped by their relation with each other, another, a new approach is needed, which is not precisely a thing-approach, but rather a relational approach. As such, the "clothing" shall function.

Note here that in the present project, "cloth(es)" and "clothing" are not related to and shall not be understood as synonyms, although colloquially as well as in certain academic literature (for instance the one of Material Culture), "the clothing" is often used as another way to refer to clothes (see inter alia Tilley et al. 2006, 5; Guy and Banim 2000, 313; Woodward and Fisher 2014, 5). In fact, when referring to material things, "clothing" states a singularetantum, just as has been criticized with regard to the adornment. Yet "clothing" also is the gerund of "to clothe", and as such denotes especially, but not only the dressing and the wearing.

In order to be able to delineate between relation and thing, in the present project, the "clothing" shall not be understood as the cloth's becoming; but rather as the relation in which humans and clothes are entangled, that becomes via their intra-actions, and that makes them become, makes them materialize. Clothes can only ever materialize within, but never outside of a relation. What a cloth is, its identity (e.g. as non/fashionable) is only ever temporally set by the relation it currently finds itself in. And also the clothing relation is not a set nominalization, not a fixed frame, not a situation in which humans/clothes are embedded, but it rather is a gerundial becoming itself.

This already reveals that the matter treated here is not as easy as to distinguish between the cloth as thing and the clothing as a relation. Instead, the present project aims at queering the very concept of the thing via clothes, and queer the cloth in its being-thing, by showing that also the cloth is a relation, in which the clothing partakes. Or else, there is a phenomenon, a monism in reality, which materializes in clothes and clothings. And just as true is it to state that the clothing is the monism in which clothes and humans materialize. How this can be the case will be outlined in 4.1.2.2 and throughout 4.2.2, when treating reality as splitting.

So far, hitherto approaches to the phenomenon which here was titled "clothes" were treated, before coming to an introduction and justification of the selected term. Clothes were then shown as necessarily entangled and thus materializing within a relation, which is a relation which it entertains (as we will see in 4.1.2.4: also, but indeed not primarily) to humans. This relation was called a "clothing". In what is to follow, hitherto approaches to the phenomenon of humans/clothes relations shall be dealt with.

2.3 Hitherto Approaches to the Clothing

Up to the point of writing, the relation in-between humans and clothes, here titled as clothing, was seen as a relation in which humans are the creators and users of clothes; and clothes are the products and servants of humans. Being more precise, humankind creates clothes in order to apply them onto itself. Some focus more on the self onto which clothes are applied, viz. that clothes are made by some selves to be worn by other selves, and that they are selected by most to apply them onto themselves: the "self approach" (2.3.1). Others particularly stress that this human self, onto which clothes become applied, is a bodily being: the "bodily self approach" (2.3.2). And again others attend more to the message a clothed (in the sense of: being conditioned by the clothes dressed and worn) and clothing (in the sense of: actively engaging with clothes) self sends out to other equally clothed and clothing selves by applying clothes onto herself: the "self-self approach" (2.3.3).

The just effectuated grouping of the complex mass of hitherto humans/clothes relational approaches was undertaken by the present project. Yet as it will become evident throughout the upcoming pages, in each of these common clothing approaches, the clothes themselves, the clothes' selves are barely touched, but are only ever seen as means to an end. And this end is the human. For this reason, it is called out for a new clothing approach, which allows to treat humans and things to the same extent. Such an approach will be approximated throughout chapter four.

2.3.1 The Self Approach

In clothing conceptualizations that here shall be subsumed to the "self approach", the humans/clothes relation is depicted as an interplay between a human who is temptingly trying out distinct identities via engaging with clothes, and clothes that merely function as

"identity toys" for the human. The human is free to embody every identity she wishes to, and her game of identities is merely restricted to the clothes she can access. She only needs to apply a certain cloth onto herself in order to embody the respective identity. And with every cloth changed, she becomes someone new, she receives a different identity. In this regard, Francis Corner understands "trying out new clothes" as tantamount to "trying out new worlds" (Corner, 2014, 109). And Leutner writes that in the relation to clothes, every person becomes a "designer" and "exhibitor" of her "self" (see Leutner 2008, 8).

In this vein, clothes are understood as having a fixed identity which is imprinted onto them during their creation, viz. which they already own when reaching our wardrobes. From this inscribed identity, clothes cannot detach, and thus are restricted to only those actions that correspond to their singular identity for as long as they remain this cloth. This reveals the self-approach as paralleling to the concept of costume as described above (see 2.1.2). Humans have many selves, and can explore a variety of them by means of all clothes-selves they happen to have access to. Yet clothes are limited to a singular and human-made self which they embody since their design. In short, the self approach is dynamic with regard to humans, and static with regard to clothes.

Why not every human constantly switches between the most diverse identities is a query which this line of thought usually answers by saying that there simply are human selves who are more amenable to trying out new identities; and human selves who are more conservative, who are more averse to the clothing's identity game, but prefer sticking to the identities they already know they like embodying. This shows that in the self approach, not only clothes are a priori framed by a certain identity; but also the human's clothing behavior and thus self-exploration is framed by something like a pre-inscribed attitude, inclination, and thus identity.

In this regard, the aim of the clothing is the human's "finding" of her self, of the identity that suits her best and that she wants to represent, which reveals the presently discussed as an essentialist approach (culminating in the esoteric). For this undertaking, clothes function as mere "road signs" offering the human ways into identities that she can compare her already constructed self to and is free to embody, which discloses the self approach to also be anchored in semiotics. As humans thus come to represent an identity via clothes that always already represented that identity, the clothing becomes a play of the representation of the representation, which leads thought deeper and deeper into the spiral of representationalism.

The self approach hence understands the clothing as directed onto the human self; and clothes seem to dutifully subordinate themselves to this human-driven and human-targeting undertaking. Everything clothes are is an "objectified selfhood", as Woodward defines clothes in reference to Gell (see Woodward 2005, 35). And all clothes do is enabling the human to find out who, what kind of human she wants to be, by suggesting pre-set identical frames which are at her disposal, are ready to become embodied.

Diving deeper into this clothing conception, the identity that the self-approach imprints into clothes is not a true cloth-identity, a cloth-kind of identity; but it rather is a feature of an identity embodied by a multiplicity of humans, that is projected onto the cloth. For instance, there are clothes that represent the identity of a punk, e.g. a studded belt. Yet the studded belt will never be the punk. The punk is the human. And the belt is only the tool, the means, the assistant supporting the human in becoming a punk.

Hardliners of the self approach now say that it only needs the right clothes in order to be a punk. They see e.g. the studded belt as a magic wand that, *simsalabim*, turns people into punks. Yet this also means that a human undresses her punk-identity everytime she undresses herself. Just wash the color and the tons of spray needed for a mohawk out of your hair, get the studded belt off, and your feet out of the Dr. Martens, and you are not a punk anymore. But in this vein, what is a human when she applied no clothes, when she has stripped off every cloth, when she is naked? Does she then have no identity, viz. is she turned and returned into a blank page every time she undresses? Hence, are punks no punks under the shower?

Other rather moderate, "softlining" voices within the self approach say that clothes are not enough; but that also certain dispositions and actions of the human are needed to turn her into e.g. a punk. Beginning with the most drastic, such criteria range from: One needs to have lived on the streets, to be an anarchist, to be politically left-winged, or to listen to certain bands in order to be a punk. Yet especially for the latter criterium, the same holds true as for the clothing. What happens to a punk at those moments when she does not listen to music? Does her punk-being fade out, only to be reinforced whenever listening to punk-music? It is not at random that Woodward and Greasley compare music and wardrobe collections in their telling article (see Woodward and Greasley 2015). Hence, whereas hardliners understand the human as a blank page that fills herself by means of clothes; softliners rather consider clothes and humans as working together in order for an identity to arise. What identity the human chooses then becomes part of a correspondence between her own identity and the identity she projects onto the clothes she achieves to catch hold of.

Nevertheless, both camps agree upon, on the one hand, the intimate connection of humans and clothes. Only if the cloth is able to touch upon, affect and even alter the inner sides of the human, the latter becomes capable to play with her selves via playing with clothes-selves. On the other hand, both camps of the self approach attribute clothes with a certain kind of agency, namely the capacity to influence, to temporarily coin an identity of the human. With distinct clothes, the human moves and walks, behaves and talks differently. Having a studded belt hanging around her hips, the human walks nonchalantly. Wearing Dr. Martens instead of some airy Ballerinas, her steps are cumbersome. Dressing a heavy leather jacket in the darkest of all colors, her shoulders broaden. And finding herself in a black oversized tour-shirt, adorned with a band's monstrous logo, her jawbones tense.

Yet being precise, the just given examples do not really denote an "agency" in the deeper philosophically meaning of this term, namely a capacity to actualize one's own intentions (see e.g. Malafouris throughout 2013, esp. 136f.). Rather, the capacity which the self approach grants to clothes is merely the one of executing human commands. A human forms the cloth to embody a concrete identity, and from that moment on, the cloth is there to represent this identity wherever it hangs, and whoever it dresses. It is made to guide the human towards, and to help her in embodying this identity. Hence, clothes are programmed, they are remote-controlled, and as such are there to deepen (for the human self) and reveal (whereby the self-self approach is anticipated, see 2.3.3) e.g. a human's (temporary) punk-being.

Besides, taken for granted that every cloth owns a fixed identity, what happens when several clothes come to mingle within an outfit? In fact, we humans seldom wear only a singular cloth; but most of the time, we clothe ourselves with outfits, with a constellation of several clothes. And remarkably, within an outfit new identities arise. So far, the punk-identity of the studded belt was taken for granted. When combining such a belt with Dr. Martens, the human stays in the picture, and her own identity as much as the one of the belt and the boots remain the same and are reinforced as being punk. But think, for instance, of combining the studded belt with a pleated skirt in a soft rosé tone, which, if scrutinized in the self approach, embodies a girly and innocent, a ballerina identity. What happens here? When the two items confront each other, both the belt and the skirt lose their hitherto identities, and rather become something new, receive a new identity, which could be called "Lolita" (a subcultural kind of clothing which has its origin in Japan and is a queering of Victorian, Rococo, anime and doll-like features).

The self approach surely notices this alteration of identities, yet it cannot account for this conversion. As an essentialist approach, the only way it can understand the Lolita is as a deviation of both clothes' original identities. But it refuses to admit the thought that a cloth can switch in-between identities. This inhibits the self approach from seeing the immense agility inherent in the clothing. And the researcher approaching the clothing in this way remains in a tracing, an inelegant following of the identity-switches a cloth potentially experiences with every new outfit it enters, and with every new human it dresses.

What is more, the combination of studded belt plus pleated skirt can be dressed by a woman who claims for herself to be a Lolita, and who wishes to underline this identity of her by combining those clothes and the identities they own. Hence, this combination can be dressed and this identity can be created by someone intentionally. Yet it can also happen that this combination becomes en vogue, becomes (re-)enlivened as fashion. When such event takes place, it seduces many "fashionistas" to dress the combination of studded belt plus pleated skirt without intending to, or being even aware of what it means to embody a Lolita.

It could now be said that fashion has the agency to create a "soft-Lolita", a soft version of the Lolita identity. But does fashion really play with the punk, the ballerina, and the Lolita identities? Or is it not rather that clothes, when moving from one point to another in the fashion cycle (see 2.1.3), viz. when turning from out to in, lose their formerly ascribed identities and become freshly coded, even re-coded with a (re-)newed fashion-identity? When Vinken distinguishes between menswear as showing personality and fashion as showing the cloth (see Vinken 2013, 77), aside from the gendering aspect of her statement, it also reveals that in and out of fashion, a cloth functions distinctly. It has another identity. Fashion-Lolita and "conventional" Lolita thus are not more or less authentic versions of a Lolita. They are not more or less strongly embodying a Lolita-identity; but they simply are two distinct phenomena.

This means that the self approach and its thesis that clothes have fixed identities with which we humans can play, cannot be upheld, but must be replaced by saying: Clothes receive their temporary identities via the relations in which they partake. A studded belt can be punk. It can be Lolita. It can be fashion (whereby fashion becomes the umbrella term for a particular strand of identities). It can be carnival. And a pleated skirt can be ballerina. It can be punk. It can be Lolita. It can be fashion. It can be drag. It can be worn by females and males alike (a fashion designer famous for wearing pink dresses and skirts is Marc Jacobs).

Hence, a cloth loses and wins always new identities depending upon the clothing it is engaged in. The self approach ascribed the human the exclusive capacity to change her

identities; yet in addition to humans, it is shown here that also clothes are capable to switch in-between identities. There thus is no distinction in kind between human-identity and cloth-identity, and no need to apply double standards. Rather, a human's identities is deeply interwoven with the identical halts of a cloth. And a cloth's identities are coined by its entanglement with the human. In their together, in the clothing, both are equally open to change, to shift, to move on and to become.

In summary, the self approach conceives every human as capable, yet some humans as more disposed to switch between and try out new identities via clothes than others; whereas it grants clothes the sole capacity to depict human projections. It is unable to account for the destiny of human identities in moments of nakedness. And neither can it explain why a punk belt and a ballerina skirt together become Lolita, viz. why an identified cloth and identified cloth together create a new identity. This reveals that the self approach cannot be a sincere depiction of the clothing reality, as it in incapable to account for the multiplicity of identities of humans/clothes.

2.3.2 The Bodily Self Approach

When the clothing is not scrutinized for human identities, it is often researched in the direction of and in dependence to the human body. Entwistle, for instance, claims that: "individuals must attend to their bodies when they 'get dressed'" (Entwistle 2015, 11). Smelik declares that clothes are "by definition made for and worn on the human body" (Smelik 2018, 49). And also for Vinken, clothes surrender the individual to her bodily being (see Vinken 2013, 37). Subsuming inter alia these voices as "bodily self" approaches, they shall be treated in what follows.

The relation between body and cloth has been thematized frequently. In the positive, the circumscription of clothes as a "second skin" has become most common in fashion/dress literature (see e.g. Horn and Gurel 1981, or Lehnert 2013, 8). McLuhan described clothes as an "extension of the skin" (McLuhan and Fiore 1967, 38-39). And Quentin Bell referred to clothes as "a natural extension of the man" (Bell 1948, 14). In contrast, Benjamin rather saw clothes as conflicting with the organic (see Benjamin 1982, 130). And also Vinken observes an opposition between skin and fabric (see Vinken 2013, 30).

Diving into the bundle of bodily self approaches, it can be differentiated between voices that focus on clothes (1) as covering, (2) as adorning the human body, and voices that treat clothes (3) as means to modify the human body. Whereas Flügel already noted shame,

protection, and adornment as the primary functions of clothes (see Flügel 1986, 209); here his former two points are bundled together as cover (shame is defined as the sociocultural counterpart of environmental dangers, and clothes are understood as covering and thus protecting from both), and a third function of clothes is added, namely the one of modification.

(1) The bodily self approaches that treat clothes as covers can be further subdivided into those who stress clothes' facet as covers *from*, viz. as a protection from outer environmental or social influences and dangers, such as cold winds, sharp edges, or unwanted glimpses; and those who tend more towards thematizing clothes as covers *to*, viz. who see the politics inherent in every clothing, which constantly impels us to decide what body part to cover, what part to leave uncovered, and what part to so loosely and heedlessly cover that it captivates the eyes of others, who are wondering if the now-covered will remain a still-covered in the next second.

To the cover-to approach, as well those voices can be counted that treat clothes as inherently gendered and gendering, such as the one of Vivienne Westwood, who famously exclaimed: "fashion is always about sex" (as which a documentary about the British punk designer is titled, directed by Gillian Greenwood, 2009), as well as the one of Vinken, who states that clothes seldom are more than a marker of sexuality (see Vinken 2013, 36). Besides, when Vinken distinguishes between male clothing as "spiritualizing the body" versus female clothing as "meat inspection" (see Vinken 2013, 76), both her conceptualizations of clothes set in at the human body, only that the former attempts to turn its back towards human corporeality; whereas the latter strategically embraces it.

Both cover approaches, the cover-from as much as the cover-to, treat clothes as intermediate layers between the human and her world. Yet the difference between them is that the cover-from approach sees clothes as enfolding, as enveloping the body similar to a caterpillar's cocoon; whereas the cover-to approach rather considers clothes as mediators in what could be conceptualized as a dialogue, and thus hints towards the yet to treat self-self approach.

(2) In the adornment as second bodily self approach, clothes are considered a potential bodily enhancement for the human. In this vein, Corner describes fashion (here seemingly a non-discerned synonym for clothes) as "the art of self-adornment" (Corner 2014, 7), and Vinken and Lehnert describe clothes as the means to stage the human body (see Vinken 2013, 44, 76; Lehnert 2013, 8). The focus of this second camp of bodily self approaches has already been discussed before (see 2.1.1) when treating hitherto approaches to the cloth as thing, which were grouped in line with Entwistle's suggestion. Only that beforehand, it has been

focused on the cloth as adornment; whereas now, the cloth is scrutinized in its function of adorning. Yet both foci lead to the question: What does the cloth adorn? Whereby we arrive at the answer: The human body. Hence, adornment can be understood as both a thing- and a relational approach, which shows the porosity between thing and relation, as it was already hinted to in 2.2.4.

(3) And the third camp of bodily self approaches treat the modification of the human body's shapes and sizes, contours and silhouettes as the purpose of the clothing. In this regard, Leutner describes the clothing as a kind of body formation (see Leutner 2011, 3). In the permanent exhibition "El cos vestit. Siluetes i moda (1550-2015)" (meaning: "The Dressed Body. Silhouettes and Fashion (1550-2015)") of the Design Museum Barcelona, the clothing methods via which the body is altered in its shape are subsumed to five, as well listed in a paper of the exhibition's director Ventosa: widening, reducing, lengthening, contouring, and unveiling (see Ventosa 2018, 317-318).

Whilst in Ventosa's approach, clothes are applied onto the human body in order to alter the latter; German fashion theorist Lehnert rather sees clothes as potentially substituting the human body with another kind of body, which she titles "Modekörper", "fashion-body" (see Lehnert 2013, 7, 10; ibid. 2015, 233). Hence, when for Ventosa the human body acts as both, basic material as well as modified outcome; for Lehnert, the latter ceases to exist when clothes are applied on it, and in its stead a new phenomenon materializes, which is a conglomerate of clothes and body, half organic half inorganic (Lehnert 2015, 236), half alive half inanimate (ibid., 240): a human/cloth-existence.

So far, the cover-to/from, the adornment, and the modification camps existent within the bodily self approach have been presented. Let us now take a closer look at the way these three camps conceptualize the clothing. All three camps are researches that take place in the direction of the human. And what the bodily self approach distinguishes from the self approach discussed above is that, as its title already tells, it has its focus not only on the human self, but on her body, viz. on the fact that the human is a bodily being.

Diving deeper into the matter reveals that the distinct approaches conceptualize their direction of research in different manners. The cover-from approach depicts the human body as a being which is worth protecting. Here, all covering-clothing actions undertaken are directed towards the safeguarding of the own body. The cover-to approach grasps body and clothes together as a conglomerate which is used *to* (to persuade, to differentiate, to seduce, to align), whereby body and clothes become means to an end. However, as the individual

human can apply these means for her personal purposes, this end remains her (bodily) self, which delineates the bodily self approach from the self-self approach which is yet to introduce.

The adornment approach understands the body as our primary possession which we enjoy decorating, in dependency to which stand e.g. our well-being, our self-confidence (see Corner 2014, 93-94), and our social status. And the modification approach treats both clothes and bodies as means to alter the human self. Clothes are there to transform the human body, and in so doing, they transform the human self.

However, the cover-from approach treats the human body as fixed, and not only worth but even in need for being protected; and the adornment approach sees it as fixed and only decorated. In so conceptualizing, both bodily self approaches think contrary to the self approach discussed above. In delination, the cover-to approach as well as Ventosa's and others manipulation approaches rather treat the human body as open for being changed by clothes, and thus align themselves to the self approach.

In this regard, Lehnert's approach is a rather specific voice, which here is counted to the bodily self approach. As already outlined above, she sketches clothes as erasing and overwriting the human body in the way it existed before it entered the clothing. This implies that there is something like a "natural" un-clothed body existent. By conceiving clothes as effectuating a "hybridization" of the human body, which becomes the human's "second nature" (see Lehnert 2015, 240), Lehnert directly evokes, even if not explicitly, the question of a first human nature. Thereby Lehnert opposes herself to Butler's view on clothes as naturally clothed (see already 2.2.1), as well as to Vinken's view that clothes are taking part in the cultural construction of the human body (see Vinken 2013, 222). Further down, also the present project will claim that clothes are involved even in nakedness (see 4.1.3.1).

The cover-from approach paints the picture of a vulnerable human bodily being; the cover-to approach rather lets us grasp both body and clothes as tools for the human mind. In the adornment approach, the body acts as canvas onto which the cloth can draw its own identity, which it nevertheless only owns as a proxy for human identities. The difference between the adornment approach and the self approach as discussed beforehand is that in the former, the clothing is targeting a bodily enhancement; whereas in the latter, the focus rather lies on an enhancement of the self (the own identity) via clothes. And in the modification approach, the human body already has an identity prior to the clothing, yet via the clothing, her "natural" or "original" identity can be cultivated and adjusted.

Hence, the cover-from approach sketches the naked human as incomplete; whereas according to the cover-to, the adornment, and the modification approach, a human is bodily complete even without clothes. In the cover-to approach, clothes are accepted as helpful tools. In the adornment approach, clothes act as a mere addition to; and the modification approach engages with clothes as enhancements for the human body.

In all discussed bodily self conceptualizations of the clothing, clothes are devices for the (human, at least in the beginning) body. Clothes are those things humans apply onto their bodies, for the reasons inherent in the titles of the diverse approaches (to cover, to adorn, to manipulate). This reveals that all discussed somatic clothing approaches grant the human with a prevalent role argued for by a double power, consistent of mind and body, in comparison to a rather plain thing, the cloth. Hence, a bodily clothing approach eventually focuses on researching the human, and conceives clothes as mere means for this aim.

Besides, all these somatic clothing approaches restrict clothes to owning only a particular agency. And although it is a different agency in each approach; none of these approaches witnesses other cloth-agencies apart from the one they notice and name. What is more, similar to the self approach, the capacities ascribed to clothes by bodily self approaches are not true "agencies"; but they rather are instrumental executions. In so doing, these approaches miss to see the variety of agencies, understood as the ability to realize commands as much as truly intended actions, that clothes are capable of. Precisely on this, a light shall be shed in the clothing conceptualization grown in the present project, which will be outlined in chapter four below.

What should not be left untouched when discussing bodily self approaches to the clothing are phenomenological clothing conceptions, most of which are based on French philosopher Merleau-Ponty. There has recently been an upsurge of such voices, which might be partially caused by Entwistle's call for researching the body as the connecting link between fashion and dress (see Entwistle 2015, 1, 4).

In the presently grown grid, these voices can be counted as part of the modification approach. They grant clothes the capacity to influence us, our perception of the world as well as our proprioception in the world (Merleau-Ponty himself here draws the example of a female wearing a hat, see Merleau-Ponty 2005, 165, see also 4.1.1.4 and 4.2.1.1). To give some further examples, wide trousers, even à la Marlene Dietrich, steer the human's focus towards her legs and make her strides become greater. Dressed with a tight top reducing her upper body in its volume, the human's movements become more filigree. And wearing shoes that

lengthen her body, be that high heels or plateau soles, things and other people become smaller or are lowered in space.

Merleau-Pontian approaches certainly allow to think in new ways about the clothing. Nevertheless, they still own especially two shortcomings. On the one hand, they did not attend yet to the fact that humans are usually engaged with a variety of clothes, and that, in fact, within this clothes-multiplicity, cloth and cloth also engage with one another. Thus, even if Marlene-trousers have the potential to expand our strides; if combined to some high heels that the human is unpracticed in walking on/in, her strides will be reduced in width. And combined with some skinny jeans, a tight top might make the body increase in the perception of its beholder as the human feels clenched within this outfit. In delineation, when wearing a tight top with Marlene-trousers, this combination stresses the contrast between upper and lower body, and thus makes the torso-in-top become filigree, even more filigree than it "usually", even nakedly is.

On the other hand, to express it metaphorically, for Merleau-Pontian clothing approaches, the human body acts as a setting for the clothing movie to be played. Clothes are treated as fabrics hanging on the surfaces, living "at the periphery" of (Woodward 2005, 21), or "next to the body" (ibid., 23), "next to our skins" (Corner 2014, 74). They are part of the spectacle, but as supernumeraries; whereas the main protagonist is the human and her bodily being. Such approaches neglect that also clothes have a body, and that the clothes' body is as much dressed by the human and her body as the human body is dressed by clothes and their bodies. Hence, a renewing clothing approach has to show that clothes' bodies become dressed by a human body who fills them in, and that human bodies become dressed by a cloth body who fills them up.

Almost constantly, we clothe ourselves with clothes. And clothes are there to clothe. This reveals it as pointless to attempt to unravel a human body from the cloth bodies it commonly is related to. As will be outlined further below (see 4.1.1.4), it is more gainful to directly set in at a "clothing body", a body of humans/clothes. Instead of segmenting the body into upper and lower part, and segmenting the clothing into clothes (as attempted in preparation of the present project, see 1.1); it is time to see that where our feet are, are the clothing body's shoes; where our arms are, are the clothing body's sleeves; and where our neck is, is the clothing body's collar. Thus, a clothing body is capable to queer feet/shoes, arms/sleeves, neck/collar, and come to see that both parts of each dualism modify each other.

With her account of the "fashion-body" (see above), in which she sets aside any distinction of humans and clothes, Lehnert indeed comes closest to attending to what here was called a

clothing body. Yet in the writings of the German fashion theorist, both body and clothes eventually surrender to the caprices of fashion. According to her, the human body ceases to be human when entering fashionable clothes; and clothes first and foremost act as means for fashion to come into being (see Lehnert 2013, 11). Thereby, she imposes clothes with just another duty, forces clothes to shoulder just another dependency, which is the one of becoming and remaining in fashion, and bringing the human towards a fashionable identity. Hence, instead of primarily focusing on the bodily relation between humans and clothes; Lehnert rather subordinates the daily (and bodily) humans/clothes relation to fashion.

To subsume, within the bodily self approaches, there are voices that depict the human body as end goal of their research. Others see the human body as mediator between the clothes and the inner human self (her identity). And again others rather focus on the clothes as intermediate layers between the human and the outer world. However, even if at times both human body and clothes are means to an end (e.g. in the cover-to approach); who eventually is covered, enhanced, manipulated, viz. who walks off with the dis/advantage here remains the human. This reveals the deficiency of the overall bodily self approach to be caused by its hierarchical comprehension of the clothing, which might be culminating still in Erasmus von Rotterdam's definition of clothes as "the body of the body" (cited in Elias 1993, 101).

2.3.3 The Self-Self Approach

The third group of conventional clothing approaches can be subsumed by their focus on the dialogue between (bodily) clothed/ing self and (bodily) clothed/ing self, an interplay between human identities acted out via clothes: the self-self. Here, clothes are social means, tools for establishing and maintaining walls around and within inter-human relations. Via clothes, humans close ranks and dissociate from.

The focus of this third approach to the clothing lies not on the individual's search for her own identity, and neither does it lie upon her bodily existence. Instead, the clothing here is understood as a "social sign system" (see Lehnert 2013, 8), viz. as "the natural, appropriate language of the socially mobile" (Polhemus 2011, 55). The most radical approach heading into this direction of research might be the one of Lurie, who attempted to establish a "fashion grammar", in which e.g. jeans are treated as slang words, and accessories become adjectives (see Lurie 1981). In the self-self approach, the clothing is depicted as being about the expression of one's identity via the own selection of clothes, with the final aim to find

some clothed/ing humans who own an identity similar to one's own, as well as to keep other clothed/ing humans at a distance who are perceived as not having a corresponding identity: Simmel's well-known dualism (see above 2.1.1).

The self-self approach presupposes the identity play of the self approach, so that the first here discussed clothing approach can be considered as resonating within this third approach in quite particular a manner. In fact, unlike the self approach, in the self-self approach it does not need a concrete disposition to find out about one's own identity via the personal clothing. Instead of obligatorily being "keen to explore and express our individuality through our purchases", as Corner normatively claimed (Corner 2014, 42); the self-self approach rather is interested in the fact that as soon and as long as we clothe, we are bound to express our identity via clothes. And as we humans are constantly clothed and clothing, we are constantly "clothing-uttering", uttering statements via our clothes. Nakedness thus is not a hush, but a very peculiar message. Vinken's distinction between females as expressing themselves with clothes, and males as uttering solely words (see Vinken 2013, 167), is thus not only dubious, but evidently untruthful.

On the other hand however, in order to perceive the "personality-statement" (Corner 2014, 107) others are sending out, are offering and presenting, one needs to be receptive to the identity game inherent in the clothing. In such a view, much can be read into clothes, that become a "visual presentation of ourselves to the external world" (ibid., 7), and thus a socially heavy toy to play with. Although we humans cannot not send out clothing messages, which is why already Schiller wrote: "the wish to catch others' fancy subjugates even the socially powerful to the delicate tribunal of taste" ("Das Bedürfnis zu gefallen, unterwirft den Mächtigen des Geschmacks zartem Gericht", Schiller 1795, 60); in order to be able to interpret others' messages, it requires a certain attunement to the clothing.

Besides, as well the second clothing approach, the bodily self approach, lies inherent in this third approach. Already Merleau-Ponty understood the body to be "the means of communicating with the world" (Merleau-Ponty 2005, 106). Even if writers working within the self-self approach might not have listened to Entwistle's call to re/introduce embodiment into fashion/dress (see Entwistle 2015, 40), and stay conceptualizing the clothing in a disembodied manner; it nevertheless remains questionable how communication, not only in its clothing form, could happen apart from the (human) body.

In this third approach, the human is perceived as a being that constructs her identity via wearing certain clothes on her body, with the aim to convey her identity to others. She hopes

that others will understand her messages in the way she intended, in order for them to allow her to obtain or preserve a certain social standing. This makes the human (as a bodily as much as social being) incomplete without clothes, whereby this third clothing approach stands in opposition to the adornment, the cover-to, as well as the modification bodily approaches. Here, the human rather is conceived as being in the need for clothes in order to grow, steer, and endure within social relations.

Thus, as a clothed and clothing being, the human constructs and conveys a certain alterable identity via clothes to others. Yet in so doing, she eventually does not aim at other selves. The others, to whom she is clothing-conveying her identity, do not gain as much from her efforts as she herself does, maybe despite the fact that they are surrounded by a fellow human being who delights them by resembling them clothing-wise. Instead of being guided by altruistic motives, the focus of the clothed/ing human rather lies on her own self, e.g. her well-being and prestige, which reveals the self-self to be a variation of the self approach.

The self-self approach pictures the clothing as being about extracting ready-made facets of a human self on a daily basis, in order to wrap them into conveyable and easily graspable clothing covers. The risk which is often conceived thereby is to equate the individual human with the facet of her self that she has chosen on a specific day to stress (in case the identity part is already an established one) or to test (in case a new identity is fitted) via the clothing. A selected part can easily be confused with the whole; a momentary halt can be mistaken for the overall essence.

The clothing hence is often labelled a superficial game which is taking place between human exteriors, meanwhile the interior life of an individual human is much more complex and intriguing. To play with a careless and thus sluggish clothing becomes the gallant task of those humans who think of themselves as being especially interwoven in and with their interiors (as it has been enjoyably described by Miller, see Miller 2010, 14). Thereby, the self-self approach soon enters into what Miller titled "depth ontology" (ibid., 16, see also 2.1.1) and what here shall be subsumed to an essentialist conceptualization of the human self.

In delineation to both the self and the bodily self approaches, the self-self approach pays credit to the fact that the clothing only ever happens within multiplicities. Alone in the void, there is no clothing. Yet whereas so far, in the self-self approach, this was understood as depicting a scenario à la Robinson Crusoe, who stranded on an island, but who did so in-clothes, who had his clothes with him meanwhile stranding; the present project rather understands "the void" not only as a world devoid of other humans and hence of social

interactions, which diminishes the need to cover one's body at least from social dangers (whereas the worldly dangers remain, and might even be reinforced due to a lack of social shelter), but as a true vacuum, a "nothingness", as Barad calls it (see Barad 2012e; ibid. 2017). In the void, the human is cut off not only from social contacts, but from everything, including her clothes.

However, none of both scenarios, neither a "social void" nor a "material void" as they could be discerned, is truly possible. It might be that Crusoe feels lonely on his island; yet he remains confronted with the possibility to meet other humans. Hence, his aloneness, his social void is temporary and thus ontic; whereas he ontologically stays within what Heidegger called the "Mit-Sein", the being-with, the worldly coexistence with others of our kind, which determines our very human being (see Heidegger 2006, 120, see also 4.1.3.1). As also Deleuze and Guattari put it, and as it becomes all the more valid in times of social media and uninterrupted smartphone reachability: "There is always a collectivity, even when you are alone" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 169).

Yet whereas the self-self approach restricted this collectivity to consist exclusively of humans, and thus sketched the clothing as an inter-human communication by means of clothes; it is the task of a new clothing approach to take up the expansion of the Heideggerian "Mit-Sein" to the nonhuman sphere, which has already been initiated by OOO (see e.g. Morton 2011, 165). It thus needs to show that the multiplicity within which we exist, and that we are, indeed is shaped by the fact that we communicate with each other via clothes, but thereto has to add that a) we also are and communicate with clothes: the clothes we select, the clothes we stand in dialogue with but eventually do not select, and the clothes we could never think of selecting; and that b) clothes also communicate with each other, on our bodies and apart from our bodies, e.g. in closed wardrobes (4.1.3.2).

The self-self approach interprets clothes as utterances intended by their current wearers, which we (as other wearers, as other-clothes-wearing other humans) can no more than insinuate. Thereby, this approach not only understands clothes in the form "this means that", whereby clothes become mere signs or representations. But in addition, the self-self approach remains open and vulnerable to many kinds of misunderstandings (see Corner 2014, 91). We can never ascertain that what we send out is received in the way we meant it. And neither can we make sure that what we interpret in a certain manner was not meant (by the sender) to be understood distinctly.

For instance, if I wear neon-colored sneakers in combination to a chic black dress to a congress, I might want to be perceived as a still young researcher who is quick, dynamic, and versatile in her thinking (the sneakers), yet serious about what she does and credible in what she utters (the dress). Some of the people I meet at the event might understand me in the way I hope to be understood, and even appreciate me in the sending out of such a message. Yet others may conceive the sneakers-dress combination I chose as being somewhat inappropriate (maybe: "too fashionable", or simply "not fitting") in its mixture as such, as well as for the present setting. And some might even think it not just out of place, but so provocatively improper that they will tend to judge me (as a person, an identity), my appearance, and my verbal utterances harsher.

It certainly is the case that there always are receivers who will understand a clothing message as it was intended, side by side with receivers who will not at all understand, or misunderstand a particular message. In a room full of people, at a congress or, to take another example, in the metro, as this is a limited (from station to station) and narrow place where people usually pass their time (if not engaged with their smartphones) people-watching, viz. where everyone is simultaneously clothed/ing and observing clothed and clothing others, each person will interpret a singular clothing-utterance distinctly. For the self-self clothing approach, every time you take the metro, you become confronted with a bunch of allies and opponents, whose dispersion changes with every stop at which the metro halts, when some people are leaving and others are entering the wagon in which you happen to travel.

Hence, the self-self approach depicts the clothing as a blind walk everyone is constantly taking through a tunnel of ambiguity, in which it can only be hoped in every moment, in every situation anew, that your personal clothing choices will happen to be accepted by the majority of the fellow human beings that are currently surrounding you. If this will be a walk of shame or a walk of fame, if this will be a well respected or an even unnoticed walk, is dependent upon the subjective judgement of others, so that everyone remains forever reliant on the functioning of the clothing communication taking place between human self and human self. Why do we care? Because we cannot stop emitting utterances ourselves, and thus necessary are a subject to others' scrutinization. Indeed, clothes not only cover us from, but clothes also make us vulnerable.

So where does the self-self approach lead to? What is its use, for the individual wearer, as well as for scholarly fashion/dress research? If the correctness of any singular clothing interpretation remains dependent upon subjective and situational criteria, is it not that this

third clothing approach is treading water? And maybe even more important: Where does this ambiguity within the clothing arise from? Is it really just the game of Chinese Whispers taking place between human selves about each other's clothes? The self-self approach does not allow for any further explanation, and therewith misses out on a large share of the clothing's reality.

Instead, by its focus on material ongoings, a new materialist clothing conception, such as will be grown in the present project, is able to show that a third player is standing between, has mingled itself among the two human selves of the presently discussed clothing approach. This player is the cloth, or better: is the multiplicity of clothes. Clothes stand between self and self. They are beings that are not exhaustedly grasped when conceptualizing them as representations for. Clothes express many more utterances than we intend them to. And clothes undertake many more actions as their common usage allows us to perceive. Therefore, clothes, as a second (in the (bodily) self approaches) or third (in the self-self approach) and equally agile player within the clothing, are able to fog the clothing issue and thus make our interpretations thereof seemingly ambiguous. It hence is time for us to attend to what clothes are saying and doing; and stop misinterpreting clothes' utterances as human utterances made via clothes.

However, this venture takes some courage. It requires to free oneself from the search for fixed points onto which one can cling in an already complex inter-human world, and rather allow this world to complicate even more, by shedding light onto the cloth as a further player that has always been as well on the scene, yet was pushed to the gloomy background since the play set on. Put differently, this communicative clothing approach is based on a human insecurity, so it shall be stated. It is fueled by a quest for shelter within the social, in which the individual human easily gets lost due to the infiniteness of possibly made utterances. Yet instead of defining clothes and clothings in dependence to a communication between humans (Leutner, for instances, writes that without being communicated, the language of fashion ceases to exist, see Leutner 2011, 3); it rather is time to immerse oneself into occasions of and evidences for human dependencies on clothes.

As we are constantly engaged in covering our bodies to an extent that rises with falling temperatures, clothes not only are omnipresent and manifestly obvious existences; but they seemingly give way easily to being interpreted as just another kind of human utterance, which instead of being packed in words, is packed in clothes. Meanwhile up to the point of writing, this definition of clothes was taken for granted among self-self approaches; it shall be stated that instead of touching upon the cloth's self, this interpretation rather reveals a

facet of what Bennett and other new materialists would call the cloth's "recalcitrance" (see e.g. Bennett 2010, 1, see also 3.1.1.1).

It has already been treated above that we judge other humans based upon the clothes they wear. What so far has been neglected is that we also interpret clothes based on the humans who wear them. We might dislike Jack Wolfskin jackets because they remind us of our teachers back in school, so that we associate these clothes with rather stuffy or even meticulous characters. We might be averse to Birkenstock because of the masses of German tourists combining these sandals with socks, that cannot be circumvented in the Mediterranean during summer. Or we might feel reluctant to Louis Vuitton bags because of the hoity-toity females who can be spotted wearing them, which leads us to interpret these bags as a manifestation of a mincingly flaunting behavior.

But we might like to wear, feel, and watch the movements of long woolen cardigans, because of our mother who dresses them ever since, and because whenever she comes close to us, we feel a stroke of extra cordial warmth and caressing smoothness uttered by these clothes. Or we might like the combination of white and beige clothes, because of the summer holidays (on the safari? at the beach?) it reminds us of and allows us to playfully re/enter even in the everyday (Barthes already noted clothes' capacity to beam us to heterotopian or even utopian (for this distinction, see Foucault 1992) places, see Barthes 1986, 296). Yet the self-self approach, with its directionality towards an interpretation of the human via her selection of clothes, disregards an interpretation of the cloth via the human. What hence is needed for scholarly as well as commonsense clothing comprehension is an approach that is equally directed towards humans and clothes.

In summary, although the self-self approach seems to aim at inter-human relations which are conceptualized as happening via clothes; eventually, similar to the former two discussed clothing approaches that evidently resonate within this third approach, the individual human self remains the goal onto which also this clothing conception is directed. The human self has to persist in the social sphere; and clothes might not be her primary weapon of choice; but they certainly are her obligatory complement.

The self-self approach discloses that the singular human self is immersed in a pool of many human selves with which she necessarily is related. Yet this multiplicity remains a purely human interplay, in which clothes, excluded from the primary research focus, are depicted as numbly serving. Thereby, as well this approach misses to see that also clothes exist within

multiplicities, and that singular clothes relate to and act upon humans as well as each other within these multiplicities, that span over e.g. outfits, wardrobes, cafés, or metro wagons. Adhering to picturing the clothing as a dialogue, this conversation by no means takes place exclusively between human and human. Clothes are not solely "words", means used to realize human-intended utterances. Instead, within the clothing, there dialogues materializing in-between humans, clothes, and humans/clothes, in which sometimes the human might even act as means for the communication taking place between two clothes. The clothing shall thus be remodeled here from an inter-human play via clothes, to a humans/clothes "intra-play".

2.3.4 Subsuming Hitherto Clothing Approaches

The three here discussed conventional approaches to the clothing could have been titled: the identity, the somatic, and the communication approach. Yet in order to directly transmit the directionality of research towards the human self, which is shared by all three approaches, the titles "self", "bodily self", and "self-self" were chosen. Whilst some approaches see clothes as toys, other approaches treat clothes as a shell, shelter, or envelope of a human bodily being, and again others see clothes as utterances constructed and conveyed by one human to an other. However, all three conceptualizations share a subordination of the cloth to the human being, which will never allow to find out why we feel, act, and are different in distinct clothes, and why a cloth can only be combined to certain and not to any other cloth. We have to finally attend to clothes, in order to find out about the actions and relations which so far escaped our grid of attention, and of which we only ever felt the effects, namely on our own bodies.

A thinking of clothes as toys is based on a distinction between human and cloth. A thinking of clothes as envelopes implies that they shield the human from something, namely the outer world, whereby clothes are depicted as interlayers between the dualism of human and world. In such a view, clothes might be one of the most graspable dividing lines existent, which enact the dichotomy of human within versus world outside the cloth. And thinking clothes as utterances means that clothes are intermediators between two humans, who are demarcated from but can communicate with one another.

Hence, all three conventional clothing approaches are based upon a thinking in entities-within-dualisms. That such a thinking is incapable to truly grasp the clothing reality has already been shown. What is thus needed is a new approach to the clothing, which precisely

aims at confronting the dualisms that manifested themselves within hitherto fashion/dress studies: the one of human versus cloth, human versus human, and human versus world. For such an undertaking, one philosophical school imposes itself as especially apt, as it has as one of its main declared tasks to re-work a thinking in dichotomies. This school is the one of New Materialism, which so far has turned its back to the topic of fashion/dress; yet which scholars of the respective field have already begun to pull towards the latter issue.

By reading hitherto fashion/dress theoretical and new materialist stances through one another, the present project grows a new form of NM, and in so doing aspires to queer both, the entities (primarily: human and cloth) and the dualisms (see above) inherent in widespread clothing assumptions. It aims at showing that there is no such thing as an entity, but that every singular entity is in itself a relation, or as Deleuze and Guattari already put it: "each individual is a multiplicity" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 280). And it aims at revealing that what hitherto was understood as a dualist relation between two entities, rather is a monism in which the boundaries between entity and entity blur. The line between fleshy human and nonhuman other, which here is the material textile, the woven and webbed fabric, the cut and sewn, the knitted and crocheted piece, is thus not an opposing line, and not even a straightly drawn line at all; but rather a contingently enacting, dotting, solely sketching line, that can become different in every next second.

3. The Clothing's Entangling in Research

The clothing approach that will be put forward in the next chapter (4.) materialized and is materializing via a queering of especially New Materialism (NM) and Material Culture Theory (MC). Before entering the clothing in detail, the present chapter (3.) shall thus introduce both research fields. NM is dealt with first, because it is this philosophical cartography that the present project primarily engages with for the development of its ontological thesis (3.1). Yet there are no new materialist thinkers who explicitly treat the topic of fashion/dress. And although there indeed are fashion/dress theorists who aim at pulling new materialist thought into their own discipline; their thoughts and findings reveal to be insufficient as sole base for a philosophical clothing approach (3.2). This is why NM has to lend its connection to the clothing from another school of thought which, although it evolved at the intersection of anthropology and archeology, treats the topic of especially dress, but also of fashion, and does so in a manner which can be seen as paralleling to NM: MC (3.3).

3.1 New Materialism

3.1.1 New Materialism's "Thumbing"

3.1.1.1 The Materialism of New Materialism

Putting it in a nutshell, NM is about attending to materializations. It re-reads elder and other schools of thought in order to establish a balanced comprehension about humans and things. Its point of departure is the Cartesian worldview, in which humans are seen as masters of their surroundings, and which NM reworks into a conception of humans as "molded by matter" (Marenko 2014, 229). Hence, whereas hitherto and other philosophies focus on the human as their matter of research (and define all materialities in dependence to her); NM grants extensive room of research to the material.

By focusing primarily on things, it is the impetus of NM "to give meaning to an otherwise incomprehensible world" (Marenko 2014, 231) and awaken us from our hubris of seeing ourselves as central agents around which the world revolves. With this in mind, a new materialist program for thinking evolved (attempted to subsume in 3.1.4.2.1), that ideally

leads to a heightened awareness of the material ongoings that are so extremely wide-spread and entangled in so complex manners not only around, but as well through and within us; and that our common worldview and/or the things themselves so far impeded us from approaching.

In order to begin sensing this "massive materiality" (Coole and Frost 2010, 1), which we humans cannot stop engaging with, and which eventually defines us as human (such as claimed by Malafouris' conception of homo faber, see Malafouris 2013, 153), one may just think of the plentitude of things every singular human possesses, ranging from clothes to cutlery to furniture, to books and other spare time things, and then add the variety of public things (e.g. owned by one's company or the city) that surround us every day, from office equipment (every punch set, every print paper) to street signs to trash bins. Approximately, with how many things does a human deal with every day, consciously, and only in the passing-by?

But it is not just their quantity whereby things by far outpace us. Apart from this, things also outlive us in duration. The time it takes e.g. plastic to decompose has long entered not solely physicist and biological, but also philosophical and artistic thought (see e.g. Kriemann 2019). An account of "waste matter" can be found e.g. in Edensor 2005. And how especially clothes continue their lives after the decease of their holder is a matter that I started treating together with Finnish photographer Ida Taavitsainen (see Martach and Taavitsainen 2018).

Neither do we know much about the complexity of things. Things present themselves to us in a "brute 'thereness'" (Coole and Frost 2010, 7). They are naturally there and thus "unassailable" (Devellennes and Dillet 2018, 16). They are enclosed in themselves, encapsulated off from our understanding, which new materialists title "recalcitrance" (Bennett also speaks about a negative thing power, for both, see Bennett 2010, 1) and object-oriented ontologists rather call "withdrawal" (see e.g. Harman 2009, 132).

What is meant by both terms is a thing's ability to not reveal itself completely (OOO would say: its essence) to us when we try to find out about it; and to rather act on us subtly, in ways we can hardly track, and in moments in which we do not pay attention to it. Thereby, things inveigle us to take them for granted, and to perceive ourselves as acting on passive existences. That this is quite presumptuous an attitude shall be lifted in the present project with regard to one thing in particular, namely clothes.

But how did it come that we are surrounded by beings that we do not understand? Descartes claimed that there is nothing within or about things worth a research, as everything despite the human res cogitans plainly follows the laws of nature as detected by Newton. In part,

also we humans are bound to these laws. Yet the very fact that we realize ourselves as being in this position, whereby we eventually are capable to apply these laws for our own purposes, in Cartesian thought makes us a not only a special, but the only category of being that must be philosophically researched. The rest is up to physics.

Slightly yet importantly diverging from Descartes, Kant opined that there indeed is something about the thing-being. It has an essence which exceeds our human understanding of it. There is a "Ding an und für sich", a thing in and for itself; yet we cannot access it. The only thing we can access is our access to the thing, viz. how the thing presents itself in our perception. According to Kant, to this, research is forever restricted, and there is no way we could exit our human lens and step into "the great outdoors" (Meillassoux 2008, 7) of realism.

The impetus given by both thinkers led not solely philosophical inquiry, but even commonsense thought to be infected with an immense focus on our own kind of existence. For Descartes and his descendants in thought, this is rightfully so because there is nothing else to research (an ontological restriction). For Kant and Kantians, this is necessarily so because we cannot properly research anything else despite ourselves (an epistemological limitation). As the latter two positions achieved to prevail and set the canon, whereas with the course of time the human became a widely written and researched about topic; the thing was pushed more and more into epistemological isolation, with but few advocates to speak up for it and its importance for the quotidian, wherefrom resulted its neglection in research. A matter we know little about might either be plain and thus of little importance for research; or it might indeed be immensely powerful hence important, precisely because it achieves to pass through our human grid of attention. In the second case, even if they fall into oblivion, such matters remain haunting us. And so it was the case with things. That there indeed is something the matter with matter can already be seen as having driven earlier forms of materialisms, such as the ones of e.g. Marx or Spinoza. Yet probably until today, things would have remained misunderstood, were there not such a school as NM (as well as OOO, yet the latter schools thereby reaches conclusions distinct from the ones of NM, which is why it shall be left out at this point, only to come back in later, in 4.1), that takes up the role of advocating for objects, things, matter — for everything that hitherto was seen as standing opposed to the living in the spectrum of existence. Put differently, in order to counter the superstition about the material, that has long been attached to our human existence, but that these days increases further by technological, "intelligent" things such as self-parking cars, self-steering vacuum cleaners, or self-refilling fridges, and that leads to either indulgence or

not only rejection but even rebellion; NM as a school aspires to replace believes with knowledge about things.

However, being precise, it is not that NM aims at increasing our knowledge of things. Instead, it is about the things themselves, of which we have to deepen our knowledge. This might sound queer on the first sight. Yet NM is not an epistemological, but an ontological school of thought, meaning that it is not interested in how we perceive and experience things (this is a question that NM all too willingly leaves for e.g. phenomenology to investigate); but rather has its focus on the material ongoings themselves. Hence, although finding out about things themselves necessarily happens via our human perception, and eventually will lead to a deepened knowledge of things, NM first and foremost is interested not in how we perceive things, but in what things do. If NM would primarily be an epistemology, its matter of research would be an approach to matter. Yet as an ontology, NM's matter of research rather is the matterness of matter. And an epistemology corresponding to this research matter can only in a second step be deduced therefrom.

3.1.1.2 The New of New Materialism

According to Dolphijn and van der Tuin, in the majority of the literature about NM, "the materialism of new materialism is reflected upon, whereas a clear perspective on how new materialism is *new* rather remains underdeveloped" (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 115, original emphasis). This shall not be said about this project.

So the "new" of NM is a rather decent, aware, and informed new, and as such queers the distinction of old versus new. Or, to use a Deleuzian terminology, NM's new is a de-territorialization, which keeps in mind the need for re-territorialization. It is not a new that claims for itself to be a creatio ex nihilo, viz. a total, complete new, a new coming from nowhere. But it rather adheres to an approach that phenomenologist Heidegger aptly expressed by writing: "The already-thought prepares/creates the yet-to-be-thought" ("Aber das schon Gedachte erst bereitet das noch Ungedachte", Heidegger 1982, 38; by Heideggerian habit, the German "bereiten" plays with preparing, arranging, setting up prior to something ("vor-bereiten") as well as the actual making, creating ("zu-bereiten"). Both connotations were tried to depict in the translation.). Hence, the presently dealt with new is a grown-up new, a circumspecting and recording new, a new that knows about the existent traditions, and that is interested in keeping itself open to be always a *new* new, a shifting and becoming new.

Instead of being new out of the blue, New Materialism's new is more like the gesticulation of the thumb, which Michel Serres dedicated an entire book to. In the original, Serres' work is called *Petite Poucette*, whereby he refers to the tale written by Hans Christian Andersen, that in French is called *Petit Poucet* and in English is known as *Thumbelina*. Serres realizes not only a feminization (that has always been there in English), but indeed a sort of re-reading of Andersen's tale, a reworking of Thumbelina from a singular story's protagonist to a concrete feature that characterizes the whole of today's generation of civilians, students, patients, voters (as repeated throughout Serres 2013): their eagerness and thus trained skill to gesticulate their thumbs as a main means for e.g. communication, identification, or consultation.

Yet the newness of the thumb gesticulation is not new ("Die Neuheit ist nicht neu", ibid., 71; in the original: "Cette nouveauté n'est pas nouvelle", ibid. 2012, 28). The thumb has always been a feature of human anatomy, and we have used it ever since, e.g. to grip, to press, to squeeze. For Serres, the supremacy of the thumb in today's society rather materializes the victory of old "procedures" (see Serres 2013, 71). Via suggesting itself to be engaged with for e.g. the handling of smartphones, or the facilitation of personal recognition, the thumb, not so much as another finger, but rather as a practice, a "thumbing", renewed itself, adjusted to and at the same time shaped postmodern times, and thereby achieved to prevail over other fingers, other body parts, other movements, other practices.

Similar to the thumb, NM's new is a flexible and Deleuzian folding (see e.g. 4.2.2.3 and .4) new, and as such has not only good chances to endure, so the present project opines, but might even work itself up to onto-epistemological prevalence. In so claiming, it is leaned on an ancient idea which is formulated inter alia by new materialist Grosz: "What endures […] is not what remains unchanging or the same over time, a Platonic essence, but what diverges and transforms itself with the passage of time" (Grosz 2005, 110), and which as well MC theorist Hodder expresses via the words of Bavasanna, a 12th century Indian philosopher: "Things standing shall fall/ But the moving ever shall stay" (see Hodder 2016, 1).

As method for the cartography, and as new-remaining, self-maintaining strategy for itself, the new of NM is a "renewing" new, a new that is renewing hitherto thinking, and thereby constantly becomes renewed. It is a rewriting of the history of philosophy (as initiated especially by Deleuze) and of modernity (as proclaimed by Lyotard), a returning to older intellectual traditions, a rereading of every other thinker, not only the canon (or hitherto materialism, as one might be tempted to think), a reworking of dualisms, and a rethinking of static being — and as such becomes constantly renewed.

Thus, what is methodologically new about NM is its positioning towards older/other thought, the "intra-theories" relation it establishes, by which it enables itself to, yes, be constantly renewed. NM's new is a "once more" (Coole and Frost 2010, 2), Barad would say: a diffraction (see 4.2.2.5), by which it might become an "always".

3.1.2 A New Materialist Rhizome

3.1.2.1 From Founding to Growing

Although Dolphijn and van der Tuin ascribe the name finding of "New Materialism" to both Braidotti and DeLanda (see Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 93); it is in fact only the latter who, not really in the "late" (ibid.), but rather already in the midsts of the 1990s titles the field of research in which he locates himself, and which he actively constructs "Neo-Materialism" (DeLanda 1996). In 2000, Braidotti took up DeLanda's term (see Braidotti 2000, 157), which soon became "New Materialism".

However, the content with which NM deals is grounded on further back reaching research. This is due to, on the one hand, NM's re-reading approach, and on the other hand, its necessary entanglement within research, as owned by every new school appearing. Nevertheless, to search for a concrete founder of NM would be contradictory to the thinking and thus as well self-understanding of the present cartography. Or else, if not a singular book, and not even a singular thought can be attributed to an individual writer, as it is stated in NM (see Barad 2007, ix-x) and OOO (see Bryant 2011, xii) alike, then how could it be possible to ascribe a whole research school to a particular personage?

A founder would be a singular root, coming from which NM would then have evolved in a tree-like form. Yet NM has contingent borders. It is not only open for being re-read, but it actively motivates scholars to re-work its current status quo. Besides, NM sees all its parts as linked to one another, the present-day with earlier writings, the writings from its feminist strand (represented e.g. by Braidotti, Barad, Grosz) with its sociological area (in which e.g. DeLanda works), and its reference to the natural sciences with its very ontology. In short, the new materialist cartography does not only "understand itself as", as this statement would put epistemology first; but it ontologically is a Deleuzian and Guattarian rhizome, so it shall be stated.

In their work *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari describe the rhizome as contrary to the root. The root (e.g. of a tree, see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 13) grows organically and thus creates a hierarchy of branches, sub-branches, and sub-sub-branches; whereas the rhizome grows equally, without a "central government" (Bennett 2010, 24). This is not to say that every part is equal, in the sense of equally big or small, strong or weak. Not everything has equal power (see ibid.). But it is to say that every part of a rhizome is equally connected to every other of its parts, and as such is an equivalent part in its partaking within the rhizome.

The two French scholars inter alia instance grass or weed, in which no singular blade superimposes itself on any other (see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 17); as well as ginger, in which every new part grows out of and circulates around a middle (ibid., 23), a "milieu" (a term explained in ibid., xvii) (for more examples of rhizomatic becomings, see ibid., 7), as very visual, haptic, quotidian, simply "real" (in the sense of taken from reality, not as a metaphor, see also Honeychurch 2016) manifestations for their concept of the rhizome.

Besides, to describe NM as "created" would imply a certain anthropocentrism, as the question following up on this statement would be: Who is the creator?, whereby we would find ourselves back at the beginning of this query. Evidently, a re-reading of NM's hitherto thinking of its own origin is needed. One proposition of such a re-reading shall be made by the present project, namely by calling the upcoming and uprising of NM a "growing" (see already this section's title), which can be understood as a reference to Serres' statement: "A work evolves by growing" (Serres in Serres and Latour 1995, 81).

This implies that it was not solely human hands who grew and are growing NM. Something, be that a plant, a thought, or a whole research school, does not allow to actively "be grown by" a human. Indeed, if the human forces too much, she will not foster, but inhibit the growing of matter, the materialization. If watering a plant too much with the wish to speed up its growing, the plant will drown. And it sometimes happens that, when urging yourself to have a new thought, this thought simply does not appear, but takes some time, another text read and a further voice listened to, another stroll in the park and a further night of good sleep, until it materializes.

So to grow something means to engage with, to be involved in the matter and its growing, and thus is opposed to the armchair attitude which is habitually rumored to philosophical work (see Walton 2007, 152). It means to set incentives for the growing of matter, viz. to help the matter grow, but, and this is crucial, it just as much means to grant the matter the space and time it needs to evolve.

To talk about a growing thus has to do with a certain respect for the matter, and with attributing the researcher, the philosopher a humble role within the "apparatus" (understood in a Baradian manner see e.g. Barad 2007, 63) of research. She indeed contributes to the growing of matter, but she does not understand herself in the position of creating that matter. Her role is more that of a gardener who helps his plants grow, or a conductor who steers an orchestra. When asked "What is growing in the garden?", the gardener surely does not say: "I am growing the plants", but "The plants are growing". Similarly, the conductor would never claim for herself to be the one making music. When asked "Who plays?", she rather replies: "The musicians and their instruments".

Thus, both gardener and conductor see themselves in more humble a role than they in reality are having, as without care, attention, consequent watering, and the relief of removed leaves, the plants would not grow so healthily and prettily as they do with the contribution of a gardener. And without the conductor's sensitivity for each musician and instrument, as well as her understanding of the overall play, the piece could not be performed to, or even: would not perform to the audience's delight.

To take a step back from conventional role allocations within philosophy and, metaphorically speaking, to take a leaf out of the gardener's and the conductor's book, is a task that new materialists have set themselves. In this manner, they are of the opinion to best contribute to the growing of their orchestra of matter, which is more a posing of the right conditions to let thoughts effervesce than a pushing and pulling, forcing a thought to come up.

3.1.2.2 Re-Reading Some "Founders"

Henceforth, there is no such thing as a singular founding thought of NM, and neither is there a singular founder. Such attributions thus have to be handled with care as, strictly speaking, they exit new materialist thought. Dolphijn and van der Tuin, for instance, title Baruch de Spinoza, until Deleuze's re-reading of his works a rather "subterranean", "subjugated" philosophical fellow (see Coole and Frost 2010, 8), the "first new materialist" (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 151). They undertake this attribution because of his dictum "the idea of the body and the body, that is to say […], the mind and the body, are one and the same individual" (Spinoza 2006, 41), which, due to relying on a different translation, they cite as: "the mind is always already an idea of the body, while the body is the object of the mind"

(Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 91), and which the two Dutch scholars consider "indisputably the starting point of all new materialist thinking" (ibid., 151).

Widening Spinoza's explicit impetus here, this thinker can surely be understood as basing everything immaterial in the material sphere, viz. to put the material first. Yet he could also be criticized for thinking in a dualism, namely the one of materiality versus immateriality (a dualism that, as has been shown above, has also long dominated the field of fashion/dress, see 2.2.3), and thus seems to have already been influenced by his contemporary Descartes. For this reason, others locate the concrete origin of new materialist thought three centuries later, namely in the writings of Foucault. Dolphijn and van der Tuin ascribe to Foucault the first addressing of dualist thought shaping commonsense thinking (see Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 163-164), and elsewhere even state that: "[Foucault's] views can definitely be considered the opening statements of new materialism" (ibid., 88), whereby they contradict their own decisiveness as quoted above. NM's founding figure becomes disputable again.

Others however, such as Meillassoux and Barad, are far from seeing Foucault as the root of their thinking. They even are skeptical of the gains a re-reading of Foucault's writings could bring for new materialist thought. As Meillassoux put it bluntly: "He [Foucault] can bring us nothing in regards to the disqualification of strong correlationism" (Meillassoux 2012, 77; the concept of "correlationism" will be explained in due course, see 3.1.3.2), as his ontology "remains unthought in its deep nature" (ibid.). And also Barad accuses Foucault for remaining in the traditional human-versus-thing hierarchy by attributing both agency and power only to humans, and continuing to see matter as passively acted upon (see Barad 2007, 145-146, for a helpful subsumption of Barad's critique of Foucault, see Lemke 2015, 6-8). Lemke summarizes: "Even though these [new materialist] scholars do not always explicitly engage with his work, there seems to be a general consensus that Foucault has to be subsumed under the category of social constructivism and anthropocentrism" (Lemke 2015, 5).

Nevertheless, Foucault remains a recurring reference in new materialist literature. Coole and Frost, for instance, praise Foucault's focus on the materiality of power (see Coole and Frost 2010, 23, 32, 35). Jane Bennett bases both her positive and her negative thing power inter alia on Foucault's conception of things (see Bennett 2010, 2, 40). And even Barad claims to have borrowed her concept of the "apparatus" directly from the French thinker (see again Barad 2007, 63). In reality, it is probable that Barad's concept grew from a queering of Foucault's apparatus (wherefrom at least the wording stems) and Deleuze's "point of view" as "not what varies with the subject", but rather "the condition in which an eventual subject

apprehends a variation" (Deleuze 2014, 20). Thus, Foucault can be said to inhabit an "ambiguous role" (Lemke 2015, 4) within NM.

It presumably was Lemke who realized the most affirmative new materialist re-reading of Foucault. Lemke leans e.g. on the French philosopher's concept of government, which he understands as reworking the human sovereignty over things (see Lemke 2015, 8-9), and rather sees it as attending to the "entanglement of men and things" (ibid., 5, 13). In fact, Foucault's concept of government could already be understood as queering the dualism of human and thing due to the many facets it contains, such as: Humans govern humans via things, humans are governed as things (see ibid., 10), humans are governed by things, and things are humans in their power relation to things (see Foucault 2007, 134). In Foucault's account, there are no such things as stable entities, but every being is constantly reshaped and reshaping within power relations (see Lemke 2015, 4).

Also Foucault's "subject-object" (Foucault 2007, 66) can be read, if not as a new-materialist queering of activity/passivity, then at least as an attempt to detect the monism that lies behind a common dualism (see Deleuze 1991, 95-96). And the "milieu", a Deleuzian and Guattarian concept which has already been mentioned, and which will be used in what follows in order to explain the growing of NM, is a concept that can as well be found within Foucault's writings, to which he remarkably attributed a circular causality (see e.g. Foucault 2007, 36), and thus already queered the commonsense linearity of cause and effect.

There definitely is not one singular, harmonic, smoothened New Materialism; but as Coole and Frost rightly state, there are several "New Materialism*s*" (Coole and Frost 2010, 1,4 emphasis added). Hence, in this cartography, some present-day thinkers and writers lean on Foucault, while others have extensively studied Spinoza, and again others are engaged in the exercise of re-reading and reading through one another of e.g. Foucault and Marx, as it can be attributed to Lemke.

For this reason, the present project is incapable of touching upon every new materialist writer, and neither can it embrace every strand of this cartography. It rather has to select a singular strand of voices on which to base its own thinking, in order to thereupon grow and let grow its own voice which to utter especially, but not only into the new materialist sphere. This has to be undertaken in the awareness that such a strand cannot be disentangled neither from the milieu nor from others of its kind, and shall therefore be depicted in this entangling. The strand that here is selected is the one of Barad-Deleuze-Bergson, knowing well that Deleuze is informed inter alia by Spinoza, Bergson, Leibniz; and that apart from her

Deleuzian influence, Barad's writings are full of re-readings of Haraway, Bohr, and indeed, Foucault.

3.1.3 New Materialism's Pros are its Cons

3.1.3.1 The Post-Disciplinarity of New Materialism

In their introductory work to NM, Dolphijn and van der Tuin describe this minor realm of research as "interdisciplinary" (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 92) as well as "meta-disciplinary" (ibid., 105). If NM would research in an interdisciplinary manner, it would accept hitherto thinking schools as given and attempt to connect them in potentially novel ways. And if NM would indeed aspire to be a meta-discipline, it would position itself above other disciplines. This would mean that NM considered itself as a superior school of thought, which takes up the task to scrutinize and surely also criticize the other then perceived as inferior disciplines.

This, in fact, is not what a new materialist research attitude is all about. NM neither accepts any borders as given, nor does it put itself above other schools. For this reason, it shall rather be called a "post-disciplinary" study. Post-disciplinary, because what NM sees as its leading edge is its breaking-up and queering stance towards all kinds of disciplines. It does not tally other schools of thought; but rather tarries with their contents and borders. Diagonally, NM queers (natural) sciences and philosophy, whereby it materializes as a science-influenced humanities. As a physician turned metaphysician, Barad probably is the most evident personification, and her works might be the most vital articulation of the new materialist queering of sciences/humanities, which comes to the fore e.g. when she uses the examples of social amoebas (Barad 2012c, 26-27) and dinoflagellates (ibid., 37-39) to queer notions of fixed identity.

As well Meillassoux grants science the "power to decentre thought" (Meillassoux 2009, 121), sees mathematics (which once was titled a "monster slang", able to produce the smoothest spaces, by Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 26) as capable of realist inquiry (Meillassoux 2008, 26), and leans his speculative materialism, which Dolphijn and van der Tuin titled a "radical anti-anthropocentrism" (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 88), on scientific achievements.

And vertically, NM queers elder thoughts and today's world. It does not negate, but reads, re-reads, and re-re-reads hitherto created knowledge — towards the reiterative (see 4.2.2.5). In other words, rather than being coined by a "no, but" attitude, it says: "yes, and" (see Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 89, 90) towards not only elder materialisms. In this vein, at the risk of becoming deprecated for it, also the present project engages with more or less new materialist voices, such as the ones of Heidegger (who rather is the inspiratory source for OOO), Dolphijn and van der Tuin, and Smelik not precisely in a criticizing, but in a truly new materialist re-reading manner: What is understood as gainful for this project is quotatively relied upon and reinforced. And what is considered as rather misleading, is highlighted as such, before a line of thought is suggested that does not circumvent, but queers the quoted concept.

Hence, NM is neither between (inter) nor above (meta), but ahead of disciplines. It is post-disciplinary, and as such might be more aptly called a "cartography" (here agreeing with Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012), whereby the Deleuzianism on which NM often relies is directly disclosed.

3.1.3.2 Re-Reading the Basics

So far, NM's affirmative attitude was shown, in which it embraces most of hitherto materialized thought. Nevertheless, NM only is affirmative in so far as it accepts to deal with research matter, and in so doing it dares to approach with a wide variety of matters. Taken as such, this already is one of its strengths. Yet the way NM treats existent matter is by no way a simple and soft nodding through. Instead, it sets out to re-think already thought and ticked-off matters, and thereby grants priority to the dualisms that since Descartes have dominated our commonsense thinking.

Hence, although NM indeed has a positive attitude towards existent thought, precisely by embracing it, NM places everything accepted under a scrutinizing glance in order to rework it anew. Thereby it directly queers the very dualism of positive and negative, pro and contra, and rather turns it into a pro/contra, which characterizes its re-readings. In what is to follow, some basic re-readings of NM shall be elicited.

Devellennes and Dillet speak about the "Cartesian-Newtonian-Euclidian [sic]" model of thinking as the "straightjacket" NM liberates itself from (see Devellennes and Dillet 2018, 9, 11). Given the historical occurrence of the three figures, this model shall be referred to as "Euclidean-Cartesian-Newtonian".

Euclid inter alia modeled perception as happening by immaterial visual information that evolves in the human eye, is sent out, and projected onto the material world. Hence, for Euclid, perception was a human projection of the world, a creation of the human, especially of her eye. The role he thereby ascribed to the material world surrounding the human is the one of inertia, of passivity. Put in a nutshell, we humans see, and the world is seen.

As already shortly described above (see 3.1.1.1), Descartes' achievement was it to distinguish between human and world, cogito and matter, subject and object, which he famously posited as two distinct types of substance (commonly referred to as "the Cartesian dualism"). As the highest creation of God, we humans are distinct from the rest, which justifies our "human mastery" (Coole and Frost 2010, 8) over the inert lifeworld. Not only the content of Descartes' famous dualism, but the dualism as overall style of thought, which can be roughly subsumed to a distinction between self and other, is strongly influencing our commonsense worldview up to today. Of this, the dualism of human versus thing is just one materialization.

And as well Newton understood matter as inert substance, which can impossibly act, but which is constantly exposed to being acted upon, determined in its being and guided in its becoming by the world, its laws and forces. We humans are the only creatures in the world that, within the range of possibilities granted to us by the world and its structure, are capable to act, namely precisely on this world.

All three figures stand for representationalism as well as constructivism, two epistemological schools of thought that NM does not simply pose itself against, but which NM intends to re-think. Representationalism is classically defined as the view that what we perceive is not the world itself, but a representation of the world. But just as well can representationalism be explained as the view that things are incapable to directly engage with us, but need to be linguistically, pictorially, semiotically represented by us humans in order to be able to become cognitively processed, remarked, and known. NM reworks this notion by showing that things are indeed actively meaning-making on their own, so that humans/things relations are by no means one-sided. They are not characterized by an active/passive dualism, but rather consist of a mutual exchange of energies (see therefore also Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 98, 109).

And constructivism is the view that it is the perceiver who constructs both perception as well as the perceived, which is why in a constructivist lens, there is no reality apart from a beholder. NM reworks this notion by postulating a realism, viz. the existence of a human-independent reality (see e.g. Barad's agential realist account, Barad 2007, 132f.).

The most radical new materialist on this position might be Meillassoux. The French philosopher famously titled modern epistemology "correlationism", (see Meillassoux 2008, 5), as it considers exclusively the correlation of thinking and being as accessible for philosophy. Morton therefore straightly pinpoints correlationism as "anthropocentrism in philosophical form" (Morton 2011, 164). To contradict correlationism, Meillassoux poses the phenomenon of the "archefossil", a material indicating the existence of an ancestral reality, a reality before thought (see Meillassoux 2008, 10, 28). For the correlationist, the archefossil remains a self-contradiction: If every reality is constructed, there can be no reality apart from human thought. There thus can be no world before human existence, and certainly not an access for us to such a space/time (see 4.2.2.5). Yet the archefossil indeed is thinkable and researchable for us, which is why Meillassoux reworks hitherto philosophy into a radical and "speculative" (as repeatedly named throughout ibid.) realism.

Not only Meillassoux, but NM in general is eager to rework constructivism, also by leaning on a Deleuzianism. In this sense, the fact that Deleuze titles his own approach "constructionism" (see e.g. Deleuze 1995, 147) is rather confusing (as also remarked by Currier 2003, 327). Yet what Deleuze thereby means is "the need to build new concepts" (Deleuze 1995, 147) as an orientation in thought (see ibid. 148). For Deleuze, "[c]oncepts aren't universals but sets of singularities that each extent into the neighborhood of one of the other singularities" (ibid., 146). This is to say that thought is never exhausted by the concepts already existing, but remains a nomadic traveling, that is fueled by a construction of concepts. As long as new concepts are constructed, thinking goes on. And as thinking necessarily and by its very nature exceeds the already constructed concepts, further concepts must always be constructed.

Deleuze's "construction" is an attempt of the French philosopher to pose an alternative for the common concept of "reflection" (see ibid. 147). Whereas the latter has a tendency to look backwards on; the former rather looks forwards to. This reveals that the Deleuzian constructionism is about re-constructing theoretical conceptualization; whereas constructivism is a modern approach that understands reality not as given, but as constructed.

With his model of perception, Euclid stands at the very core of a constructivist as well as representational kind of epistemology. For the Greek philosopher, perception happens not in the world, but in the human eye. What we see is not the world itself, but reality is a construct elaborated by us and our bodies. We thus construct our own representation of the world. Descartes established the most basic distinction between the human "thinking-thing",

and other kinds of things, and thereby put the latter in dependency on the former (to be represented and constructed). And Newton understood matter in general as embedded in a world in which it readily gives way for being acted upon by us humans.

Hence, Euclid, Descartes, and Newton can be seen as epitomizing constructivism as well as representationalism. Uniting all three of them into a singular model presumably was undertaken by Devellennes and Dillet in order to give a name to the existent philosophical canon that new materialists, starting from Deleuze, are reworking. Yet, for the sake of simplicity, this customary and commonsense way of thinking, to which the majority of philosophical thinkers throughout history can be counted, in the present project shall not be referred to by its lengthy name "Euclidean-Cartesian-Newtonian"; but from now on, it will simply be called "Cartesianism".

Besides, understanding "materialism" as the viewpoint taken towards matter, the Cartesian materialism could indeed be called "modern materialism" (as done by Coole and Frost 2010, 8). On the one hand, this is surely an accurate designation, as Descartes has immensely shaped the thinking which lies on the basis of modernity, our modern self-conception as distinct from the world, and our commonsense approach towards and dealing with things. Yet, on the other hand, calling Descartes' thinking that way makes it difficult to delineate "modern materialism", which new materialism decidedly aims at reworking, from "older materialisms" (also called "historical" or "crude" forms of materialism, see Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 89; Coole and Frost 2010, 5) on which individual new materialist theories rely to distinct degrees. Therefore, in the present project, it shall be adhered to calling that what NM reworks "Cartesianism", and that what NM is leaning itself onto "older materialisms".

3.1.4 From Listing to Mapping

As elicited above, NM did not start at a singular point from which this cartography evolved in branches. There is no point of departure, or as Deleuze put it: "the point of departure is […] duration" (Deleuze 2004b, 50). Rather, there is a centre, a "milieu", as Deleuze and Guattari (and Foucault, see above) would call it, which does not consist solely of an exclusive circle of thinkers, such as collected and interviewed by Dolphijn and van der Tuin (see Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 19-81). Strictly speaking, by structuring their work into thinkers, the two Dutch scholars already contradict the cartography they aim at

introducing. What NM's milieu rather consists of is much more a "body of thought" (a formulation which directly reveals the matterness of thought and the discursive, as stressed by new materialist thinkers, see e.g. Barad 2007, e.g. 25-26 or 42), which is shared, affected, intra-acted with and via by thinkers that lie in the core of NM (a contingent attribution) and thinkers that currently reside rather at the fringe, or in a concrete realm of new materialist thought.

But how could NM's body of thought be subsumed? What mainstays can be spotted and carved out of a new materialist view on the worldly-material humdrum? How can NM be made accessible, viz. what can we give scholars and interested minds at hand in order to be able to enter new materialist thinking? And what subsumption of NM's thinking program will ease and enhance new materialist thought?

In recent years, several scholars have undertaken the attempt to structure the plurality of new materialist voices into a single program of thinking, that can be attached to, leaned on, and by that one can be guided, not only when dealing with new materialist theories and writings, but when beginning to approach reality in a new materialist vein. Some of the hitherto realized summarizing attempts will be presented and discussed in what follows (3.1.4.1).

What all these have in common is that they aim at subsuming new materialist thought into a list of pillars. Yet, as Barad explicitly writes: "Lists simply cannot do justice to entanglements" (Barad 2007, xi). For this reason, the own position that will be grown in 3.1.4.2.1 rather nomadically sketches NM as a thinking map, whereby it aspires to derive an epistemology from this cartography that indeed corresponds to the latter's ontology.

3.1.4.1 Hitherto Drafted New Materialist Pillars

3.1.4.1.1 Smelik's One, Two, or Three Pillar(s)

In her 2018 paper "New materialism: A theoretical framework for fashion in the age of technological innovation", Smelik identified two new materialist pillars: rethinking dualisms, and material agency (see Smelik 2018, 38). Both pillars are paraphrased a page later as "a decentering of the human subject" and "an understanding of things and nature as fundamentally 'agentic'" (ibid., 39). Smelik here definitely touches upon new materialist paradigms; yet her subsumption still remains in need for a re-working. Firstly, by describing one of NM's paradigms as "rethinking dualisms", she leaves it open for her reader to imagine how, in what way dualisms shall be rethought, and by no word explains that dualist parts are

to be read through one another in order to re-conceptualize their relationality towards the affirmative (see 4.2.1.5).

And secondly, when NM is about rethinking dualisms, and, as it soon discloses to anyone approaching new materialist literature, one of the main dualisms that is in need of a re-thought is the one of humans versus things, then calling the second pillar "material agency" makes it hard to draw a line between both pillars. It seems somehow evident that when dualisms shall be rethought, the thing, the other, the being that is opposed to the human self therein must be ascribed more active a role.

Or else, even if not all dualism-shifting entails the granting of material agency; is not all granting of material agency already a shifting of a dualism? In a way, agency can be understood as a limited resource within the density of relations. Either the human is the master of the relation; or, if things can act, human agency must be limited. As Deleuze already wrote: "If the status of the object is profoundly changed, so also is that of the subject" (Deleuze 2014, 19). The analogue can be sketched for all other kinds of relations: If one protagonist masters the other, the other consequently becomes restricted.

Thus, material agency is not a second independent pillar, but a necessary feature of the first pillar, rethinking dualisms. In other words, rethinking dualisms becomes necessary once material agency is spotted. This reveals that by her subsumption of NM to the two pillars she names, Smelik unnecessarily restricts the overall spectrum of new materialist thought to not even two, but a singular one of its themes.

3.1.4.1.2 Dolphijn's and van der Tuin's Focus on the (Intra-)Individual

Also Dolphijn and van der Tuin note two new materialist pillars. For the Dutch scholars, NM can be brought down to a focus on activity, process, and event; and a queering of cause and effect (see Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 163). They certainly approach what NM is about; yet the focus of their subsumption lies not on the dualism that needs to be traversed and turned into a monism; but on the individual agencies therein. The first pillar says: The (non/human) individual is not static, but rather active. It is not an entity but a process, not a being but a happening. And the second pillar states: What has formerly been regarded as the cause, now is cause and effect. And what has hitherto been seen as the initiator, now becomes also the affected. Hence, the second pillar stated by Dolphijn and van der Tuin means a shift from a linear to a circular causality, as it was already attributed above to the milieu (see 3.1.2.2).

Also here, the second pillar is dependent upon, even necessarily inherent in the first. If everything is granted an agency, if everything is seen as actively processing, the human is necessarily affected by many more forces than hitherto considered real/possible. What we so far understood as a one-sided acting-upon (from human to the material), now becomes an acting and being-acted-upon, which is circularly spreading from a milieu into a multitude of directions.

Thus, Dolphijn's and van der Tuin's subsumption scratches NM's core. Yet here, and in contrast to Smelik's résumé, the focus primarily lies on the intra-individual level, on the individual within. They leave the realm of the whole, of the assemblage within which the individual exists broadly untouched. In short, their focus resides on what happens in relations, without treating the relation as such.

3.1.4.1.3 Devellennes' and Dillet's Methodological Focus

Charles Devellennes and Benoît Dillet propose a three-partition of NM's dimensions: "an emphasis on the novelty of the theory", "an ontological claim that is made […] about the nature of matter and how it impacts our lives", and "methodical implications of taking material objects seriously in our academic practices". They even boldly state that, "to qualify as a 'new materialist' theory, a work must meet all three, at least to some extent" (all quotes taken from Devellennes and Dillet 2018, 7). This new materialist program focuses solely on a new materialist epistemology, especially its methodology, leaves a respective ontology mostly untouched, and is thereby already contradicting NM's programmatic prioritization of ontology over epistemology. But let us discuss their approach either way, and see what we can gain for the present project from it.

Devellennes and Dillet themselves explicitly restrict their first dimension of NM. Rather than stressing the newness of their achievements, new materialists often explain their source of inspiration and their historical precedents (see ibid.). In other words, instead of claiming their approach (and thus cartography) to be purely "new"; they rather are interested in renewing hitherto approaches, whereby new approaches materialize (as it has already been outlined also here, see 3.1.1.2).

Regarding the second dimension, it is surely true that all new materialist writings grant a special focus to matter (as became already evident in the formerly discussed programs sketched by Smelik, and Dolphijn and van der Tuin), so we can readily accept the first part of this second new materialist pillar posed by the two scholars. Yet they continue their pillar

by writing: "how it [matter] impacts our lives", whereby they restrict not only their approach to NM, but NM as such again. In a way, they can now be accused of the same restriction for which hitherto approaches to fashion/dress were animadverted (see 2.3): They claim that it is NM's aim to find out what things do to, for, with us, whereby the human remains the final direction of research. But NM is not an epistemology, but first of all an ontology, namely a realist ontology. It does not restrict itself to researching solely how we humans become affected by things, but rather takes as well into account what things do if their actions are not primarily directed towards us. Thus, NM is also interested in how things affect each other, and sees our being affected by this intra-action as just one effect among many.

At last, it shall be claimed that Devellennes' and Dillet's third pillar is already inherent in their second one. To take matter seriously in academic theorizing is an evident consequence, given that matter "impacts our lives" in ways we hitherto did not think it possible. Yet by their order of pillars, the two scholars indeed grant ontology the priority NM considers it to have, whereby their pillars correspond to new materialist thought. Although one can surely quarrel over the entirety in which NM is depicted by Devellennes' and Dillet's three methodological pillars, they will nevertheless be taken to heart in/by this project. It will be tried to adhere to them, in order to let an approach grow that will be able to withstand as new materialist.

3.1.4.1.4 Coole's and Frost's Ignorance of the Human

Coole and Frost see the new materialist program of thought as based on, on the one hand, an "emphasis on materialization as a complex, pluralistic, relatively open process", and, on the other hand, on an "insistence that humans […] [are] immersed within materiality's productive contingencies" (Coole and Frost 2010, 7). Thereby, the two researchers describe both the human's and the thing's standing in new materialist philosophy: things are not, but become; and we humans are entangled in this material becoming. Yet it is left open how we humans affect these entanglements, and in what precise relation humans and things stand to each other.

They continue to write:

> "new materialists emphasize the productivity and resilience of matter. Their wager is to give materiality its due alert to the myriad ways in which matter is both self-constituting and invested with — reconfigured by — intersubjective interventions that have their own quotient of materiality" (Coole and Frost 2010, 7).

When talking both about things' active self-constitution, viz. materialization, and their reception of other's actions, viz. their partaking within assemblages, the two researchers dive deeper into what was already above described as the "matterness" of matter (see 1.1). Yet further on, they define "materiality" as what "renders matter active" (Coole and Frost 2010, 9) and thereby, so it shall be stated, confuse the matter. What this definition asks for is a clear distinction between matter and materiality, which they sadly are omitting. In fact, as it was claimed already above (see 1.1), material/ity remains an anthropocentric term, as it restricts matter to its usage-to, to a tool, a means, an instrument. For this reason, the terms "material" and "object" shall be neglected here in favor of "matter" or "thing".

Besides, Coole's and Frost's clarification of a new materialist program also leaves out a concrete definition of "intersubjective interventions". It only explains that every intersubjectivity is in part material, viz. that every assemblage contains a material aspect, and thus denies the existence of purely human relations. Therefore, similar to Dolphijn and van der Tuin, they do not explain their new materialist understanding of relations further, and rather remain on the level of the individuals therein. The only way the bridge from a focus on materializations to a focus on relations could be crossed, is a queering of humans and things. Yet Coole and Frost remain at clearly distinguishing between the latter as two matters for research.

3.1.4.2 The Cartography of New Materialism

All hitherto undertaken attempts to subsume NM into several buzzwords or "buzz-phrases" do not fully capture the milieu of the new materialist cartography, so it became evident in the precedent sections. The reason therefore is that NM is not a hierarchically constructed building, which eventually upholds itself by just a few mainstays, meanwhile the majority of the walls and bricks and other building materials play a subjugated role. Instead, NM is an entanglement, a rhizome (see 4.1.2.1 and 4.1.2.5), in which everything is connected to everything else, and in which everything is equally valent. And in this entanglement that NM (which at this point materializes as the matter of research) is, the apparatus of new materialist epistemological approaches is as much included as the realist ontology it proclaims.

Hence, an approach that aims at subsuming NM to a list of pillars necessarily inhibits itself from truly approximating new materialist thought. In order to allow us to access its milieu, NM rather affords to be treated accordingly and hence respectfully, viz. to be approached

and subsumed in a manner that corresponds to its own style of thought, and that is capable to keep pace with the distinct halts as which NM materializes. Such a subsuming approach does not cut off certain features of NM, viz. it does not segment NM; but it rather diffracts distinct new materialist features within the entanglement they share. It shall thus be claimed that instead of a list of pillars, NM affords to be subsumed into a map. An attempt to map NM's milieu will be ventured in what follows, before several concrete and already spotted materializations will be discussed.

3.1.4.2.1 A Bergsonian Mapping of the New Materialist Milieu

Broadly speaking, NM's point of departure is its aspiration to rework Cartesianism (see 3.1.3.2). Being more precise, NM is unsatisfied with the roles that since Descartes are allocated to humans and things in their relations, because the human's supremacy over her material counterpart, viz. the hierarchy which is inscribed into these relations is taken as inherent in them by philosophical as much as commonsense thinking. However, this conceptualization leaves a whole bunch of phenomena within humans/things relations unexplained. For instance, a Cartesian thinking cannot account for why we are urged to check our phone every other minute, or why we feel lifted when wearing heels. To not change the relation (reality), but to alter our conceptualization thereof (ontology), whereby it hopes to grant us access to happenings hitherto only felt but impossibly researched, is the aspiration of NM.

In order to thus rework the Cartesian conception of relations between humans and things, NM engaged with Bergson's method of intuition, which can be summarized as consisting of four steps. It begins with a) a monism that is detected as being only a badly constructed composite, and that therefore b) has to be divided or decomposed into a dualism. This dualism must c) be re-read as a difference, a positive relationality, in order to d) reach the true monism behind it and thereby finally master the composite at which thinking began (see Deleuze 1991, 95-96).

It could be said that Descartes and modern thought in general already shouldered the task to divide numerous composites of common experience into dualisms (steps a) and b)); so that starting with Deleuze, NM has especially taken up the exercise to bring the Bergsonian method of intuition to completion, meaning to take as well steps c) and d). Yet engaging with the whole of Bergson's method, it shall now be shown how NM achieves to rework human/thing relations from hierarchy to rhizome.

a) As a first thinking step, NM detects Cartesianism's restriction of agency to the human sphere, viz. its definition of agency to be an exclusively human characteristic, even the trait that makes us human, as an untruthful depiction of the reality of and in relations, viz. as a "badly analyzed composite" (Deleuze 1991, 28), a non-balanced and hierarchized monism which it realizes as in need of a reworking.

b) NM hence turns this bad or impure monism into a dualism by widening the realm of agency and ascribing it as well to things. This is done because new materialists notices that things do things, that the phone guides our thumb over its display, that the pen dictates us how to hold it in order to be able to writingly materialize our thoughts, and that the cloth steers the movements with and styles within which we dress it. In this sense, scholars refer to matter as vital (Coole and Frost 2010, 9) and living (ibid., 24), alive and animate (Marenko 2014, 221), "energized and energizing, enlivened and enlivening" (Barad 2012a, 59), vivid or vibrant (as repeatedly written in Bennett 2010).

As a matter of fact, NM shares this finding with OOO. Bryant, for instance, writes: "Objects require no subject to manifest themselves in the world" (Bryant 2011, 88). Hence, a flattening of the hierarchy which dominated hitherto Cartesianism, in which the human subject was self-evidently put over worldly objects, is the impetus of both cartographies here considered, and is one of the reasons why they are considered here. Nevertheless, as will be outlined now, whilst NM departs from this point towards a queering of humans and things, and chooses their relation over these entities as its matter of research; OOO adheres to the thing as unit of thought.

c) If matter is alive, if things have the capacity to act, then it is not valid anymore to say that we humans act "on" matter, that matter is passive and in the need of being represented by us (semiotics), or constructed in us (phenomenology). Rather, humans and things interact with each other. Their together is not one-sided, but mutual, reciprocal, two-way. This makes it necessary to re-read every encounter we have with things, namely from a dualism as a kind of relationality which Bergson detected as negative, into positive relationalities, which the latter called "differences" (see also Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 122, 126). As also Deleuze writes: "Dualism is [...] only a moment, which must lead to the re-formation of a monism" (Deleuze 1991, 29). The importance of this step becomes tangible e.g. when Dolphijn and van der Tuin title NM as a whole a "philosophy of difference" (see Dolphijn and van der Tuin, 119).

Or else, having reworked a badly analyzed monism into a dualism, it is time to realize that also the dualism is not the only possible way in which reality can be seen, viz. it is not real, but only an approach to reality. In contrast to what Cartesianism wants us to believe, dualisms are not given, but are only one "reflexive" (see Deleuze 1991, 95-96) yet necessary step within reworking trajectories. They are not the only thinkable ontology of two beings in their relation. But they only are one approach among many, that by finding the most allies has achieved to persuade commonalty from its truth. This, however, does not mean that relations cannot be thought otherwise.

Reworking dualisms into difference is what distinct new materialist voices call to "traverse" (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, esp. 133-136, etc.), to "pass through" (see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 23), or to "queer" (Barad 2012d, 5, 2014, 171) a dualism. Henceforth, NM never avoids, as wrongly stated by Coole and Frost (see 2010, 8); but actively engages with dualisms. Thus, NM is not "devoid of all dualisms" as written by Dolphijn and van der Tuin (2012, 85); but it is boldly administering to and re-working dualisms. Deleuze and Guattari even emblematically call dualisms "the furniture we are forever rearranging" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 23), whereby they reveal the importance of dualisms for new materialist thought.

However, when Dolphijn and van der Tuin write that NM "is the activity of pushing difference to the limit by traversing dualism" (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 132) and elsewhere refer to Bergson in claiming that his method means a "push[ing] dualism to an extreme" (ibid., 86, see also ibid., 118-119), all too easily, a confusion of dualism as found negative, and difference as established affirmative relationality takes place. What shall be pushed to the limit/extreme now? Dualisms or differences? Sadly, the two Dutch scholars do not elicit this point further, and thereby create a gap that shall be filled (as well as a confusion that shall be lifted) by the present step-by-step mapping of the new materialist thought.

For reworking dualism into difference, trace the routes that conceptualize the selected dualism. Take a closer look at the bricks, the elements, the knots that make up the dualism, in order to realize that their relation is not a negative, but rather a positive one. Whereas up to now, in dualist thought, both beings were perceived as autonomous from and rivaling one another; it is in fact true that they are very much entangled with/in one another.

For instance, it is not that we merely "use" our phones in order to call someone; but just as well are we guided by the phone in every call we make. Human and phone together realize the call. The phone seduces us "to thumb", and steers our thumbing over its display (see

3.1.1.2). It tells us where to next tip, and what buttons not to press. We humans then tip and press, and together, human/phone are able to realize the action of calling.

When we are unable to call the person we wanted, this is equally caused by us who have dialed the wrong number, clicked on the wrong name in our list of contacts, and by the phone that did not read our signals right (e.g. when we intended to call Carla, but the phone called Corinna as the name coming next in our list of contacts). Besides, the intended call might also be impeded by the phone's current connection, or its battery that is running low, and that we need to re-connect to cable and socket in order to continue engaging with it. Similar thinking trajectories can be drafted not only for further technological (even "artificially" intelligent), but for all kinds of things, be that a knife, a candle, a chair, a tin of sardines, a garment, or a simple cup of tea.

Thus, the non/realization of an action, here: of a call, cannot be attributed to the human/thing alone, but is the result of their relation. Malafouris is a voice not within NM but within MC, that speaks up decisively against an attribution of agency to a singular protagonist (either human or thing). He rather claims that it is the relation which is capable to act, e.g. when he writes: "we engage with things, things engage with us, and together we shape each other's being" (Malafouris 2013, 149). As such, Malafouris is especially located at this step of thought, which he wishes to deepen and spread.

d) The fourth thinking step taken by NM is to realize that if there are no entities alone that can act, but if only in conjunction entities can effectuate something, then the primary matter of research must be their relation. At the basis of this last step lies Serres' assumption that "[a]n idea opposed to another idea is always the same idea, albeit affected by the negative sign. The more you oppose one another, the more you remain in the same framework of thought" (Serres in Serres and Latour 1995, 81), which can be subsumed to the simple statement made by Dolphijn and van der Tuin: "negation implies a relation" (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 98). Elsewhere, the two Dutch scholars also write that we need to be "clear about the fact that one term of a dichotomy is 'grafted upon' the other" (ibid., 122), *viz.* that "[r]elated terms belong to one another" (ibid., 127).

In other words, the last step in NM's method of thought consists of the finding that neither humans nor things are independent from one another; but they rather are constantly, constitutively related to one another. As also Morton put it: "The life-non-life boundary is far from thin and rigid" (Morton 2011, 166). If researching a human, we need to consider the things she engages with; and in order to approach the thing, we need to take into account

the human that designs, uses, abrades, discards it. For this reason, it is their relation that must be researched. This is the step of thought which Deleuze names the narrowing of what was broadened, the integration of what was differentiated, the intersecting of what was cut (see Deleuze 1991, 29). In so doing, NM achieved to rework hierarchic humans/things relation (as the bad monism) into a rhizome, which here becomes the truly analyzed, the true monism.

To subsume, (1) NM detected the Cartesian restriction of agency to the human realm as a bad monism. (2) Agency was thus widened from humans to include as well things, so that a dualism evolved. (3) By realizing that neither humans nor things alone can act, agency was relocated onto their together, their relation. Thereby, the dualism was turned into a difference. And last but not least, (4) humans/things relations were embraced as unit for research, which now have been reworked from hierarchic to rhizomatic, and as such are the analyzed monism that results from the presently undertaken reworking. For a visualization of the Bergsonian thinking steps undertaken by NM, see figure 2 below.

Relating the grown method to the clothing as the matter of the present research, and therewith giving an outlook of what will be effectuated especially in 4.1.2, the respective thought trajectory sets in at an understanding of the human as clothing herself with clothes, as engaging with clothes for her purposes (1, see also chapter 2.3). By realizing that clothes act (2), NM can come to understand that humans and clothes cannot be researched apart from one another (3). Eventually, it can re-conceptualize the clothing as a rhizomatic humans/clothes intra-action (4), and select the latter as its unit for research.

Bergson's method of intuition	bad monism		dualism		difference		true monism
	a →		b →		c →		d →
New Materialism	human agency		material agency		relational agency		rhizomatic relation
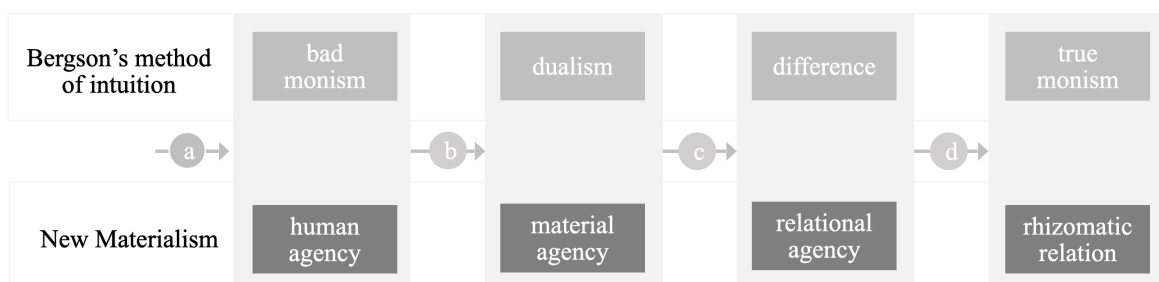
figure 2: NM's Bergsonian Reworking of Humans/Things Relations

What has just been elaborated was a map, a true cartography of new materialist thought. In a map, an infinite number of points can be marked, an infinite amount of landmarks can be registered. Concretizing the map, so to say, zooming more and more into the map, the dots

drawn on the map can be accumulated to the infinite. This shows that the steps (a) to (d), as grown above, are just one approach to new materialist thinking. There are mappings possible that contain more steps, and mappings that contain less. Another enumeration of mapping steps, say from (a) to (c), or from (a) to (f), is not more or less correct; but only manifests a different halt in zooming into the map of NM. This means that the presently suggested map must not be taken as finished, as closed in itself, as entity standing autonomously against its background. It is not meant for a rigorous usage without diffracting its steps further. But it rather shall be considered as one halt in the becoming of new materialist thinking, and as one reading of NM, which certainly remains open to be re-read and re-re-read, very much in a new materialist manner.

Furthermore, in a map, every marked point can be connected to every other point in the map (see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 7), which discloses the map to be a rhizome (see ibid., 14). This shows that the here presented steps (a) to (d) shall not be blindly followed down the line, but read diffractively through one another, jumping around between them as one pleases. Every point can act as entrance to new materialist thinking, as end point of the trajectory, and as a point necessary in order to reach a new materialist thinking style. In fact, not every new materialist walks all the way. Some focus on (a); others (such as Malafouris, see above) concentrate on (c); and again others directly set in at (d). Yet this does not undercut the presently grown map, but rather reveals NM once more to be a cartography and not a discipline (see 3.1.3.1).

Potentially, trajectories can be depicted and planned from every point to every other point in a map. And as the marking of points cannot be exhausted, the number of journeys possibly undertaken is infinite. Deleuze and Guattari write: "To think is to voyage" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 537), whereby they offer a true line of flight leading into the variety of new materialist thoughts. Nevertheless, the here drafted Bergsonian cartography is a reasonable mapping of NM and thus, so it is opined, states one of this project's values of newness for philosophical thinking.

3.1.4.2.2 The Milieu and Its Materializations

Having approached NM's milieu as such, let us now take a closer look at the realms that rhizomatically grow out yet within the latter. Coole and Frost, for instance, depict NM as spanning over a wider variety of subjects than grasped by many other theorists, when they define three new materialist realms of thought: the realm that is interested in growing a

posthumanist ontology, the realm that deals with biopolitics and bioethics, and the realm they call critical and political materialism (see Coole and Frost 2010, 7).

However, by calling the latter realm "critical", Coole and Frost already contradict NM's milieu. Although it surely is open for and interested in approaches stemming from critical theory, NM rather attempts to re-read critiques of either sort into diffractions (see 4.2.2.5). Hence, when Horkheimer writes: "true theory is more critical than affirmative" (Horkheimer 1972, 242); NM is more affirmative than critical (see also Coole and Frost 2010, 8) towards critical as well as many other theories that it re-thinkingly embraces.

In comparison, Devellennes and Dillet define four new materialist realms: A historical realm, a posthumanist, a technological, and an emancipatory realm (see Devellennes and Dillet 2018, 5-6). To name one new materialist realm "historical" is a structuring that can impossibly be maintained. In this vein, the two scholars instance Bennett, who considers e.g. Thoreau and La Mettrie her "sources of inspiration" (ibid., 9). Yet Bennett is citing and leaning just as much on Deleuze and Spinoza (see e.g. Bennett 2010, e.g. 21). And as it has in part already been mentioned, Deleuze is actively engaging and re-reading Leibniz, Spinoza, Bergson, Simondon, and Nietzsche.

So why should Bennett be more historical in her writing than Barad or DeLanda, two further Deleuzians? And why is Bennett a historical new materialist and not a posthumanist new materialist, e.g. when she writes that the human matter is just another kind of thing matter (see Bennett 2010, 10)? In fact, there is no writing that is not historical, which reveals the re-reading "historicism" of NM (as already elicited in 3.1.2), to be not a specific realm of NM, but rather a methodology which is shared by and evolving from this cartography's milieu.

On the other hand, to call one segment of NM " historical" is already conflicting with NM as such, because, and this becomes the most explicit in Barad, NM is less interested in telling (hi)stories and narrations, and rather aims at getting divergent thoughts entangled and realizing diffractions. This is due to the fact that e.g. Barad does not see time as being, or what she calls "time-being" (Barad 2017, 62) as segmented into events that happen one after the other.

Therefore, neither a telling of new materialist history, nor a historical new materialism is capable of happening in a sequence, starting with Bergson, moving on to Deleuze, and therefrom to today's writings of e.g. Barad or Bennett. Instead, the only new materialist approach that remains faithful to, and that truly happens in a new materialist vein, is the one

of not "leaning on", but actively reading older and newer approaches through one another in order to let a *new* new materialist approach not result, but materialize.

The second realm Devellennes and Dillet define is posthumanist NM, which they delineate from the third and technological realm of NM. Yet already Haraway grew a posthumanism which was based on technology, most famously with her notion of the cyborg (as elaborated in Haraway 2016). This example shows that a sharp and given delineation of posthumanism and technology is impossible to uphold within NM.

And last but not least, the fourth new materialist realm detected by Devellennes and Dillet is the emancipatory. Literally, emancipation means to leave, to depart from (*ex-*) the hands (Lat. *manus*) of an other, which commonly were the hands of, as Deleuze and Guattari poignantly named it, "the average adult-white-hetereosexual-European-male-speaking a standard language" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 116). Barad, Braidotti, and Bennett, not only by being females working and succeeding within philosophy as a classically male-governed terrain, but also with regard to the content of their work, could be ascribed to this field. But is this not another reductionist approach, similar to the historical segmentation above?

In fact, NM is interested in liberating its body of thoughts from several hands, be that the philosophical or even generally theoretical canon, into which Deleuze re/introduced subjugated voices — an undertaking which he reasons for together with Guattari by claiming that: "majority is never becoming. All becoming is minoritarian" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 117) —; the ruling of social majorities, which is why Barad grants (e.g. indigenous, see e.g. Barad 2017, 60, homosexual) minorities space for intra-action; or the normalized bifurcation of bodies that Braidotti is reworking (see e.g. Braidotti 2000). Hence, all NM is emancipatory to a certain extent. Or else, emancipation is at the heart of NM. The means NM engages with for its emancipatory aspirations are as diverse as technology (the cyborg, which Currier re-worked into an assemblage, see Currier 2003), historical re-readings, or posthumanist postulations (à la Bennett, see above).

Nevertheless, the label "emancipatory" shall not be easily accepted. To be emancipatory, viz. to be attuned to emancipatory thought conventionally means to first observe a border between the self and an other, in order to then see the other's hands as controlling or ruling over the own self, and the self as willing to exit this frame. Yet, as shown in the former chapter, new materialist thought does not come to terms with such dualisms, but rather achieves to see that the self and the other are only temporary manifestations of a singular being, a monism, so that "othering", posing an other to which to confront the self (a Baradian

concept that will be elicited further in 4.2.1.4), becomes an instrument for the construction of a self. This is to say that the hands of that other, that I see myself as held by, are just as much my own hands, and the other, in holding me, holds himself (an intended gendering), because self and other, me and him, her, or even it (referring here e.g. to technology, that is enslaving as much as it is liberating) are the same, are sharing in, are only different materializations of a monist existence.

Therefore, rather than accepting an other as given, out of whose hands it is NM's task to liberate itself, from whose hands NM wants to turn away; NM is turning towards these hands, understands how they are part of itself and how itself is entangled in and with these hands, in order to then read the other's and the own hands through one another and show how together, in collaboration, they can grow something new. For this reason, NM is not emancipatory in the sense of critical (see Coole and Frost above); but it rather is emancipatory in a diffractively affirmative way.

The just realized diffraction of segmentalizations of NM that were undertaken by Coole and Frost, as well as by Devellennes and Dillet, does not aspire to declare any of these two approaches as either "false" or "correct", precisely because it does not understand the realms they note as ontologically stable. There currently indeed is a realm that is more concerned with the political, and another realm that is more interested in the ethical. Yet these are just materializations of NM, which do not detach themselves from the milieu, but which, in connection to the latter, constantly grow, re-grow, and "de-grow", and thus remain open for re-readings, whereby they circularly grow on. Hence, Devellennes and Dillet's four realms, and Coole and Frost's three realms all are "correct" in depicting one temporary articulation of NM's becoming.

To be explicit, this is not to say that realms are (read as) crossing over and under each other. To talk about "cross-readings" would be the same as to talk about "interdisciplinarity" (see 3.1.3.1): Both concepts take the distinct realms for granted, they start thinking in different realms, in order to then connect them. Thereby they eventually adhere to thinking in these realms, and their connections remain superficial. And this is precisely what makes NM's re-reading approach so gainful. It allows to start thinking not at the distinct realms, but at their connection, viz. at the milieu, in relation to which realms re/de/materialize. Diffracting Barad's terminology, what therefrom results is not an interdisciplinarity, but an "intra-disciplinarity", whereby the concept of "discipline" as such is re-conceptualized, and is turned into a cartography.

By implication, to be concerned with the realms growing out of and within NM becomes less important than to focus on NM's milieu. Or else, instead of segmenting NM into realms that all too soon appear as given, viz. as tree-like branches, it is more in the interest of the present project to show what all these realms have in common. Thus, it here shall be focused on the new materialist milieu, which in its status quo has already been approached in the former chapter 3.1.4.2.1, and which will be grown further throughout chapter four.

Yet both undertaken approaches, the one that can be found above and the one that will be grown below, are indeed mere approximations. And nothing other than approximations will ever be possible to realize towards NM, because not only its realms are, but also its milieu is constantly shifting. The milieu is not a stable centre around which strands circulate, not a fixed kernel that can be detected in all new materialist writers/writings. Instead, the milieu is a web in which all kinds of new materialist ontologies, the ones that date already some years back and might now be seen as founding pillars, and the ones that currently materialize and gain popularity, find themselves entangled. Yet basics can be rewritten, and whether a freshly materializing ontology is solely a trend or will last can never be said with security, which is why NM's milieu itself is not a static being, but an ongoing materialization.

3.1.5 A New Materialist Appeal

When first confronted with NM, I found it a striking tool for thought, because it opened up for me a complete new way of perceiving myself and the world. Had I hitherto thought of myself as the master of her surroundings - it was me who used her phone, who bought her food and converted it into dishes in her kitchen, and who dressed herself with and wore her clothes -; it now revealed itself to me that the phone also has the power to guide my actions, that I can only use the kitchen in ways it allows me to engage with it, and that my clothes afford to be dressed and worn in specific ways, movements, and gestures.

Hence, via engaging with new materialist literature, it theoretically became clear to me that humans and things are what in NM and OOO alike is said to be "ontologically flat" (see DeLanda 2006, 28; Morton 2011, 165; the most accessible explanation of this concept might stem from Bryant, see Bryant 2011, 73, 88), or what Deleuze designates as rhizomatic (for a distinction of both terms, see 4.1.2.1). They stand to each other in an if not equal, then equivalent exchange, in which *their actions are not the same, but worth the same.*

But what happens when we engage with new materialist thought not as a theory, but as an everyday practice, viz. when we start to exercise it as a personal philosophy or even "lifestyle"? The clothing, which is the matter of research here, is an everyday practice. And precisely as such a phenomenon shall it be researched here, namely in a new materialist manner. Thereby, a new phenomenon/research-apparatus will be added to, and will rework NM, that with its hitherto research matters, such as social conglomerations (see DeLanda 2006) or civilizations of amoebas (see Barad 2012c, 26-27), remained somewhat in the abstract for its conventional (e.g. if not physicist) readers. In delineation thereto, the new materialist clothing ontogenesis ventured in chapter four queers the borders between research and life, theory and practice, and introduces some practical philosophical thought into new materialist theories. In so doing, it not only is a deeply new materialist undertaking; but it also brings to the fore several biases and entangled implications that NM (still) contains, and thus is gainful as well for NM's own milieu.

As a preparation for this clothing/NM-queering approach, in what follows, it hence will be asked: What does a turn towards things really mean, not just in theory but in life? Is it livable, and also morally supportable? In order to approach not "the", but one possible answer to this query, issues of a new materialist everyday shall now be sketched.

3.1.5.1 The New Materialist's Care for Things

If humans and things are equivalent in their relations, then it is just clever to attend to things, to change one's hitherto worldview and start aspiring to perceive the world of matters, in order to find out how e.g. one's phone, clothes, kitchen act upon oneself. The primary and egocentric aim thereof, and this might be just reasonable, is to find out who ("who" here becomes denoting a hitherto "what") is influencing us in ways that we so far did not realize, in order to become aware of these forces acting upon us and, eventually, master them — not in the sense of recovering ourselves as masters, rescuing our mastery over things; but merely in the humblest sense of becoming increasingly capable of deciding what forces we allow to act upon us, what forces we alter towards our advantage, and, presumed that we can, what forces we even exclude from our personal surroundings.

If humans and things are standing to each other in a rhizomatic ontology, then we need to care for things, e.g. our couch table and our water bottle, as much as we do for our partners and families, because we all are equivalent. And then it is okay to tell your partner that you hold her/him as dear as your wrist watch, as one of my colleagues in Barcelona once did.

But then it is not okay to throw away a piece of furniture, even if IKEA, when it is still, not precisely "usable" (as this terminology leads back towards a hierarchic conception of relations), but "engageable". And it is not acceptable to sort out clothes that are still wearable, just because we do not like these things anymore, or because they came out of fashion. The throwaway-society we live in then needs to rethink its handling of things. It means that we cannot run down, wear and tear our belongings, that we are not morally empowered to apply and abrade our goods and chattels; but that we have to deal with them respectfully, in the ways corresponding to these things, in the ways things plea us to relate with them.

A new materialist, for instance, cannot simply press-shut doors, but needs to press down their handles whenever they approach their casings. Yet, whilst my grandfather still aims at educating me in this direction for the sake of preserving the doors at his home in their function, in their servitude to us humans; for a new materialist, the respectful dealing with doors is rather reasoned for by putting us, our human selves, on the same level as every door we ever opened and shut, and by perceiving doors as beings, and these door-beings as worth to be dealt with in an attentive manner. As this attentiveness means to deal with doors in the way we are supposed to, in the way it is intended for us to do by the door-beings, we thereby allow the doors to guide our actions.

A new materialist cannot leave the tableware in the sink but needs to wash it directly, in order for the leftover food not to become touch dry, so that she later needs to use a steel brush to wipe the tableware clean, whereby its surface often gets hurt. And a new materialist cannot shuffle around in her shoes, because it makes their soles abrade. Instead, she needs to lift her feet in every step she takes, not because of civility (a cultural reason which e.g. in China simply does not apply), but in indebtedness to her shoes (a philosophical and thus, in a way, potentially "universal" reason).

Thus, a new materialist needs to deal with things in precisely the way we are always, by convention and society, told to deal with living beings, be that the potted plants on our balcony, our house pets, our children, parents, and partners. This brings a change of mind, from use and apply to relate, indifferent to purchase prices or emotional values such as evoked by inheritances; but simply due to the respect that *every* thing deserves. And eventually, if every new acquisition merits to be looked after, and every undertaken activity merits to be correspondingly performed, then this leads to a less, doing less, having less (friends as much as possessions). A minimalism, that lures with deeper relations.

So how does a new materialist treat clothes, the present matter of research? How can she respectfully relate to clothes? The clothes she owns, she treats with care. This means to sort them neatly in her closet, and to not leave them crumpled on the laundry pile for too long, but wash them soon. Yet washing clothes too soon, too often, as well has an abrading effect, and thus cannot be what a respectful humans/clothes relation is all about. Owning less clothes, it is easier to keep her wardrobe in order. Yet the clothes have to be exposed more often to the hardship of being washed, in order for the new materialist to be neatly clothed. In contrast, owning more clothes (excluded from the present considerations shall be the difficulties of purchasing clothes in a new materialist manner), clothes might remain in a better state due to being affected less by washings and wearings. But it becomes more difficult to keep the wardrobe in order, and things easily get into a muddle, and thereby abrade. Summer clothes mix up with winter clothes. Day-dress falls in between the pajamas. And singular clothes slide backwards off the pile or down from the hanger, and land between the shoe cartons that reside on the wardrobe's ground, where they not only fall into oblivion, but become harmed by resting in uncomfortable positions.

Hence, in her relation to things, of which clothes are only one manifestation, the new materialist faces biases she needs to weigh. Shall she decide for less clothes and more washings, or more clothes and less washings, which also means more ordering effort in the wardrobe? If striving for a new materialist lifestyle, the best case for things must act as the ground for the human's decision, so much is clear.

If deciding for the best case for a singular cloth, it would be the new materialist's task to wash less in order to preserve this cloth in its color and softness. The water used for the cloth-washing is also a thing. For the earth's water resources, it indeed is advantageous to wash less, not only because it thereby is preserved in its quantity, but also because it increases in its quality. How clothes emit micro-fibers into our oceans every time we machine-wash them is accessibly explained in the video "The Story of Micro-Fibers" (see *The Story of Stuff Project* 2017). So the best case for the cloth seemingly is the best case for the water.

Yet things get more difficult when taking as well the washing machine as another thing entangled in the same web into consideration, which hence is equivalent to water and clothes. If not extremely stained, a wash at 30°C is for the cloth's best, as it gently treats and cleans the cloth. But from time to time, the washing machine needs a wash at 60°C in order to avoid the building and spreading of germs therein. Thus, to do justice to both her clothes and her washing machine, and to not unnecessarily waste water in an empty washing cycle,

hence to act for the clothes', the water's, and the machine's best, it now becomes the new materialist's task to attentively weigh up what clothes she can expect to put up with a wash double the temperature than what her clothes are used to. She presumably will choose towels as highly robust clothes, that can withstand the increased temperature, and that in addition will also benefit from being freed from potential germs spreading within their fabrics. And yes, in this case as well as in many further, towels indeed materialized as clothes, things dresses and worn, as will be elicited in more depth in 4.2.3.2.

This anecdote shed a light onto the fact that in a new materialist everyday, it takes time, effort, and attention to weigh up the affordance of distinct things, and to see the overall web of things in which oneself, as merely another thing, is just as immersed as are the thing one encounters therein. And this reveals NM to be a day-to-day style of life which, although not always easy to handle, is nevertheless tempting. The reasons for its temptation will be attempted to clarify further in what is to follow.

3.1.5.2 Why the New Materialist Never Is Alone

If humans and things are ontologically rhizomatic, we are not alone when things are around us, because things are contemporaries equivalent to humans. This renders it acceptable when a child tells her friend: "Today I do not want to spend time with you, because I prefer playing with my toys" — a statement most conventional parents indeed find alarming. It renders it a possible solution to turn to your dishwasher when you need a friend to talk to. And it renders it helpful to open your closet when on a Friday night loneliness comes up as you are bound to stay at home due to an exam that awaits you the next morning, yet your partner and friends all went out to have fun.

This might sound queer on the first sight, yet people knead rubber balls to relax, and hug trees to find some affection. So why not busy yourself with taking the cleaned dishes out the dishwasher when feeling worried? The dishwasher might have a sympathetic ear for you, and by providing you the task to empty it, it gives you time to think, so to say, it gives you a task during the realization of which you can calm down, whereby frequently a solution to your worries is found. Who found the solution now? You, you on your own? You while and because of engaging with the dishwasher? Or was it even the dishwasher as such?

And when you miss partying, why not take your favorite party dress out of the closet, touch its sequined fabric, hold it in front of your body, and watch yourself in the mirror dancing around in the dormitory? In so doing, the dress can either seduce you to indeed go out

(whether you eventually go remains a question of your rationality), or it can allow you to get over this wish and enjoy the time you can spend with it at home. In the first case, the dress can either "affirmatively" seduce you to go, as it brings you into a dancing mood and provokes you to turn the music on and search for some glittery heels as well. Or it seduces you to go partying out of the negative, as it increases the feeling of loneliness in you, although you are not alone, but have inter alia the dress as your companion. If the latter scenario happens, the dress is indeed a "bad company", equivalent to a human that makes you wish to be somewhere and with someone else, even preferably alone, or better: deprived of other people, meanwhile you spend time with her.

Yet in the second case, the case in which the dress helps you to get over the wish to go out, the dress definitely is a good companion. It might evoke in you a certain nostalgia, and lead you to cherish the good times you had together, you and your friend, you and your dress, you and your dress-friend. Yet a certain nostalgia is not always a bad thing. And if it does a truly good job, the dress will make you appreciate as well the quiet time you are able to spend in the here and now, without the need to be social (in the conventional sense), but at home, with a focus on you and your dress and shoes and music and mirror, experiencing a truly pleasurable and intimate moment together.

Hence for a new materialist, the entertainment value of a dear thing and a dear person are the same. Provided that you equally enjoy doing both activities, the one in relation to a thing and the one in relation to another human, a human/thing rhizomatic account means that you can busy yourself as long, as devotedly, and as affectionately with a thing as you can do with a human. This is not only valid for social media (which themselves can be understood as digital queerings of humans/things), but for any kind of human/thing relation, be that book-reading, water-drinking, jojo-playing, light-switch-flipping, or whatever relation you experience as joyful.

The other way around, however, the ontological rhizomatics of humans/things implies that there are social relations that are as usage-based as the relation you might entertain with your doormat or your kitchen towel (avoiding here to go back to Lipovetsky's disposable diapers of part 2.2.3). And this, in the present thinking, would be just as morally acceptable. Yet this is not meant to say that doormats or kitchen towels can only ever be engaged with in a usage-based kind of relation. Just as possible is it that precisely the relation to these is a source of pleasure for you, viz. that exactly this relation materializes as aesthetic (for a deepening of this thought, see 4.1.2.5). And it certainly is but seldom the case that a particular human/human relation is solely and continually usage-based. At times, it might be, in one

or the other direction. And at other times, it might be aesthetic (reducing here to two specifications what in reality is a wider variety). A good friendship surely is a well-proportioned mixture of both.

3.1.5.3 The Cartesian versus the New Materialist

There are a bunch of psychological and further scientific voices telling that we humans today grow increasingly lonely due to our smartphones and wifis and online-shopping facilities such as *Amazon* or *Asos*. In the picture drawn by those voices, we already are more in love and more engaged with our shoe-collections and app-compilations than we are with other people, whereby we become, so they say, more and more annoyed, alienated, depressed. So, if NM proclaims an even stronger turn towards things, does it not go, and do we not go with it into the wrong direction?

To react on this query, let us quickly return to the Cartesian worldview, in which the human counts more than the thing, and in which things are primarily there to facilitate the life of the human. If humans are more important than things to attend to, then it is of greater priority to play with your child than it is to clean the flat. And it is of higher relevance to spend the weekend café-sitting and city-strolling with your partner or a friend than to "get things done", meaning to re-fill your kitchen stocks, and/or to repair that lamp on your balcony that did not work for ages.

These issues are "just things". If you loose them, e.g. your kitchen stocks of noodles, rice, and oats, you are not hurt. You just go and buy some new. Indeed, you buy all the latter things in order to "loose" them, namely via consuming them, which might complicate it to enter an affectionate relation to them, or at least to a particular one of them (a particular package of oats, even a particular oat). And even if you loose the lamp on your balcony, e.g. when it breaks due to a short, or the wind blows it off the wall and it bursts into pieces, you might be a little sad about the loss, yet in one or the other way (at a pinch: via eBay), you are surely capable to replace that lamp. In comparison, you cannot replace your partner or a good friend that simply. Therefore, attend to them primarily. This is the credo that lies at the basis of the Cartesian worldview.

Yet this is not the only attitude one can have. You can be affectionate and caring about having your kitchen-stocks filled up. And you can hold a particular lamp dear, and reaffirm your caring every time you switch it on/off, you wipe it clean, you re-adjust it, you decorate around it. Therefore, even at the risk of touching here a classical issue between the sexes (at

least the one of feeling the urge to refill the kitchen-stocks on a Saturday; when you partner prefers reading the newspaper without a thought for tomorrow), what is discussed here concerns us all, so it is opined. Although we might not always be aware of it, we all are confronted with and conditioned by our reaction to the question whom to grant priority, humans or things. We thus can decide in every situation anew whether we act like a Cartesian or like a new materialist. But who is wrong, and who is right?

In fact, none is completely wrong, and none completely right, because the only thing that indeed would be wrong is to per se prioritize one over the other, people over things, or things over people. A more detailed look is needed here, in order to find out about not the thing/human as such, but the relation in which we stand with them. Dependent upon this relation in its concrete and current shape, we might, then, be able to judge individually.

At times, people prioritize in a Cartesian manner fellow people over things, and they do rightly so, so it is opined. Think, for instance, of a situation in which a friend of yours has lent you an expensive and seldom book that you cannot easily shop yourself. Once you have read it, you are confronted with two options: Either you hand it back to your friend, express your gratitude, and continue leading a happy friendship, which is reinforced by you having proven your trustworthiness, viz. that you are a sincere kind of person who does not forget to hand lent books back. Or you decide in favor of that book, cut contact with your friend, and keep that book for yourself.

For a Cartesian, the second option is out of question, as a good friend is always more important to keep than a good book. Yet for a new materialistically driven person, who sees things and humans as equivalent, this question indeed opens up. She thereby is brought into an unnecessarily complicated situation. If she simply remained Cartesian and handed the book back, she most probably would be allowed to lend it once more, so that the possession of that book becomes happily shared by both friends, whose friendship is fortified precisely by this sharing — a win-win situation.

At other times, however, the new materialist indeed is better off than the Cartesian. In line with Cartesianism, it was stated above that it is less important to clean the flat than it is to play with one's child. But playing becomes impossible when the flat is messed up, as the floor will not provide enough free space to e.g. spread the puzzle pieces and begin to ponder. And when the floor is covered with dust, it presumably will evoke the wish, at least in the adult, for a blitz. The adult then will play impatiently with her child, and the child will sensate and resonate this impatience, so that the play not only becomes an unpleasant affair for both; but sooner rather than later, it will come to an end.

Showing this issue in the severity it realistically owns, the German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* already a while ago published an article which stated that children's rooms, with all their plastic toys, and the dust and dirt a common, if not daily and neatly cleaned room contains, is more unhealthy to spend time in than it is to be in an underground parking, or at a metropolitan red traffic light where numerous cars are keeping their engines switched on while waiting (see Matzig 2018, 9).

Thus, it is not only that cleaning allows for (as granting space) as well as inhibits (in a timely manner) playing, but that playing creates joy as much as it creates dust and dirt, and hence necessarily affords the cleaning. The child needs the playing as much as it needs the cleaning, for its enjoyment, for its development, for its health. And an adult, who presently finds herself in the phase of parenting a child in a playing age, surely needs the play with her child as much as she needs a clean home - for herself and to raise her child in.

In this case, Cartesianism hence results insufficient as a logic for day-to-day life. The playing cannot be easily granted priority over the cleaning. But cleaning and playing are entangled, as are adult and child, and adult and child and cleaning, and adult and child and playing. It is NM that attends to this entanglement of humans and things, and reveals the impossibility to eventually prioritize one over the other. Instead, whereas a Cartesian will clean with an irritated attitude, understanding it as a necessary yet annoying task to be done, a task that keeps her from caring for her child; the new materialist indeed is capable to see the cleaning as part of the parenting, and thus can embrace and even begin to enjoy this exercise.

Nevertheless, none of us is completely Cartesian, and even more seldom do we meet people entirely devoted to NM as a style of life. Objectively, from situation to situation, we can decide afresh. As much as we might understand ourselves as Cartesians putting humans first, many of us certainly have run late for a rendezvous because we "got nothing to wear", and thus granted things priority over humans, viz. acted as new materialists.

Yet with the course of time, behavioral habits surely build, that only a drastic change in life, so to say, a stroke of destiny, can unwind. In my childhood, when we were expecting guests for dinner, it always seemed to me that for my mother it was more of a pleasure to neatly clean the house, adjust the whole interior and decorations, and prepare an almost too perfect dinner, than it was to actually eat that dinner in company, even more so when the guests were my father's clients. However, her new materialist priority for food and interior over her guests was queered by the separation of my parents. Today, when visitors come, she "achieved" to Cartesian-like serve the biscuits in the package in which she bought them in

the supermarket, without having to search for a cute little ornamented plate on which to put them.

This little anecdote shows that it indeed is not an inherent part of my mother's character to be either new materialist or Cartesian. Instead, my mother as a person cannot make herself independent from the webs in which she is entangled. Roughly speaking, back then my mother's web was the house, within which she understood it as her task to keep things in order. This web enacted her as a new materialist. Today, her web consists of her work, which is a rather social kind of work (she is a sales representative), her new partner to whom she gives a lot of attention, and as she recently moved houses as well as cities, her focus also is on making new friends, human friends. In and by this web, she rather turned Cartesian. Hence, this cut in her life, viz. this jump in-between webs made my mother switch from a new materialist to a Cartesian worldview — a switch which, although potentially a step backwards in philosophical terms, is a huge step forward for her personally, so I opine.

3.1.5.4 Subsuming the New Materialist Appeal

The Cartesian hierarchy of humans over things eventually cannot be overcome by merely flattening it into a humans-things equality. What is needed is a new materialist queering of humans/things. The borders of the commonsense categories of "humans" and "things" must be revealed as contingent, so that we can start to see them both as intra-acting within the conglomerations they currently share, be that a flat, a car, or an outfit. We need to remodel our thinking, and start thinking at these webs (see 4.1.2.3).

Such a new materialist style of thought can react with a possible answer to several issues that are morally pending, although up to the point of writing, they were not attended to. It formerly was okay to treat things in a careless manner, e.g. to abrade your phone by forcing it to lead a life in the depths of your handbag, where it gets thrown around with and hits onto the other things therein, sharp keys and ball pens and money coins; or to let your clothes decay away crumpled on the laundry pile, which is opposed to, yet just as careless and harmful as abrading your clothes by washing them too often.

But although such an irresponsible dealing with things was morally accepted (if at all, it was merely criticized for a lack of manners), and most often not even thought about; it could already be felt that in this dealing, we are not doing well, we are stressed, we feel uneasy, even harmed. If, for instance, we are unable to directly find our phone in our handbag, this evokes a certain nervousness, an insecurity regarding if we did not lose or forget it

somewhere, which easily amounted to a panic, as running back to the restaurant we just left would ruin our plans for the day. And if we walk around in clothes we did not find the time to iron and hang up neatly, that thus are crumpled, we ourselves become "crumpled" beings, beings that feel and behave disorderly, even sloppy, that walk around in anything but an upright posture, and that run late to every appointment scheduled.

Although we notably are affected in the negative by our anthropocentric and thus presumptuous dealing with things, we would never have admitted, or even come to the idea that the latter is causing our discomfort. In our quotidian "Besorgen", as Heidegger aptly calls it (see Heidegger 2006, e.g. 67, 134, 175, 194), we are not aware of these things contributing to the lack of our well-being. We commonly are so busy with other affairs (what email to send next, where to eat, whom to meet), that we do not think much but repeat the action of rummaging our bags in search for our phones many times throughout the day.

It is already an achievement for us to become aware of this discomfort. Sometimes we might indeed recognize that things lead us towards being stressed; that we lose our precious time and thus become hectic due to, or feel unhappy because of things. Yet it needed NM to explicitly draw the connecting line from thing to human, put both on the same level, and queer them, viz. make us realize that when we harm things, things harm us back. Or else, in harming things, we harm ourselves; and when treating things well, we give ourselves a curing treatment.

Hence, NM guides its thinkers to the "reconciliation with our material environment", as already back then announced by Lipovetsky to remarkably be the capacity of fashion (see Lipovetksy 2002, 136), viz. to a change in the perception of our worldly occupancy in such senses as entitlement, responsibility (as broadly and repeatedly treated by Barad, see e.g. 2012b, 81; 2012c, 27-28, 46; 2012d, 7, 9-10; 2014, 184), and normativity. All these issues are treated here with a bigger portion of hesitating humbleness, which is due to our entanglement and the indebtedness for each other that follows therefrom.

However, NM does not understand itself as a response to those issues, but, at the utmost, as a re-response, as a diffractive response which never ceases to diffract itself, and thus to respond to itself further. And, so it is opined, precisely this attitude will enable NM to a) find answers to hitherto moral issues which yet remain to be reread; and b) approach new moral issues which NM guides us to by its style of thinking, when applying it in academic philosophy as well as as a private lifestyle, and that are yet to be confronted. One such pending issue is the one of attending to the clothes that we carry around with us constantly and everywhere we go.

3.2 Hitherto New Materialist Fashion/Dress Theory

So far, this chapter dealt with NM (3.1). Yet the present project is about a new materialist account of the clothing. In the chapter preceding this one, the humans/clothes relation was already introduced in the ways it hitherto, apart from NM, has been conceptualized (see 2.3). In fact, no new materialist writings could be found that deal with the topic of (a relation of human and) fashion/dress, viz. that treat anything similar to adornment, costume, fashion, or dress (as clothes were approached in 2.1). Thus, in order to be able to pull the threads together and get NM and the clothing entangled (an undertaking that will be grown in chapter four), the present project needs to collect itself a four-parted toolkit, that has already been outlined and graphically depicted in 1.1.

Of this kit, now the supportive approach numbered III shall be introduced. Hence, in what is to follow, the although yet a little meager, still increasing crowd of fashion/dress scholars approximating NM will be given room. Some of them will be discussed, and their understanding of NM as being attractive and gainful for fashion/dress theory will be heeded. However, the now discussed voices stem from fashion/dress and thus cultural theory. As such, they own a distinct approach to research matter than the present philosophical project, which claims to be an approximation to fashion/dress from a new materialist perspective.

Both kinds of approaches, the present one and the ones that were detected within fashion/dress theory, reside at the same intersection. Yet their direction of research is converse, which by no way is conflictive: They are anti-parallel, running parallel to one another, yet towards opposite directions. And as such, they can be seen as complementing each other. Nevertheless, as a sole database for the present project, fashion/dress theoretical voices dealing with NM do not suffice, as will become evident in the upcoming section.

3.2.1 The Fashion/New Materialism of Anneke Smelik

Regarding a fashion approach to NM, the most dominant voice certainly is the one of Anneke Smelik, Professor of visual culture at Radboud University Nijmegen. Her 2018 paper "New materialism: A theoretical framework for fashion in the age of technological innovation" can be seen as a fundamental groundwork for the here discussed connection, and is cited by most of the other fashion/dress voices approaching NM (see e.g. Bruggeman 2014 or Lei Ye 2019).

Besides, together with Agnès Rocamora, now professor of social and cultural studies at London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London, Smelik has edited *Thinking Through Fashion*. Although in this *Guide to Key Theorists*, as the two scholars subtitle their work, they do not focus on contemporary new materialist thinkers, they nevertheless treat the forerunners, way pavers for NM, as which they inter alia grasp Marx, Deleuze, and more recent Latour, and discuss the cartography of NM as such (see Smelik and Rocamora 2016, esp. 11-12).

With this volume, the two scholars intend to ease fashion students' access also to new materialist thinking. Therein, Smelik takes the responsibility to deal with Deleuze, whose thinking might be one of the hardest to follow, not only for fashion, but also for philosophy students dealing with last century's thinkers. Smelik nevertheless approaches Deleuze, led by the conviction that several of his concepts can provoke a new understanding of (phenomena within) fashion/dress.

In her chapter about the French philosopher as well as in further texts, Smelik deals with especially three of Deleuze's concepts: the becoming, the body-without-organs, and the fold. In what is to follow, it shall be dived into how Smelik approaches and understands these three Deleuzian concepts within a fashion theoretical lens.

3.2.1.1 The Becomings of Fashion

For the conceptualization of matter, Deleuze offers the "becoming" as an alternative to the static notion of being. First and foremost, Smelik relates this Deleuzian concept to fashion's self (fashion is here understood as a system), which she captures in a Deleuzian manner as a "practice of change and of 'repetitions with a difference'" (Smelik 2016, 167) as well as a constant process of "multiple becomings" (ibid., 169).

Only thereafter does she engage with the individual human's opportunity to become, which is granted to the human by fashion's changing shapes, colors, and fabrics. As Smelik writes, fashion allows us humans to engage in a "becoming-other" (ibid., 167). It enables and even encourages us to stretch our boundaries (see ibid., 169) and morph (see ibid., 167). To be more precise, Smelik writes: "fashion often probes the limits of what a body can do or what it can become […], potentially freeing it from a territorialized understanding of its matter" (ibid., 172), whereby she hints already to the Deleuzian body-without-organs, which will be treated below.

But what makes Smelik's account of fashion as a becoming even more interesting is the fact that she also ascribes it the agency to dictate "rules as to what (not) to wear this season" (ibid., 168). Although it does not become evident whether Smelik herself is aware of this achievement, she thereby completes a conceptualization of fashion which is very much new materialist in kind. Fashion here becomes a queering of freedom/regulation, which in its most basic form can be depicted as the dualism dynamic/static, becoming/being. Fashion thus is both liberating from the clinging to an original or authentic self, to a self that is always already there and just needs to be encountered and captured; and binding to what manifestations of otherness we are to embody next.

However, Smelik also explains that: "you become who you are" (ibid., 169), whereby she reinforces the concept of authenticity and seems to steal the becoming's thunder. As she misses to back this statement up with the Deleuzianism that lies inherent in it (she solely refers to Nietzsche, see ibid. 169), and which will be addressed and reworked throughout 4.2.1, she might appear as if plainly relying on a common saying. Nevertheless, her utterance indeed corresponds to e.g. Deleuze and Guattari's statement: "Nothing develops but things arrive late or early" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 294).

But in the latter quote, not only the Nietzschean influence on Deleuze (and Guattari) manifests itself. In addition, it here becomes evident that the Deleuzian is a rather neat, careful, sensitive philosophy, in which indeed no "routes of escape" as Bruggeman writes (see Bruggeman 2014, 163, discussed further in 3.2.2), but rather lines of flight are offered, that do aim at de-territorializing, but keep in mind the need for re-territorializing (see also Buchanan 2017, 463; O'Sullivan 2005b, 270). In short, with his concept of becoming, Deleuze queers the dualism of process/status, and as such is resonating, even if not made explicit, in the writings of Smelik.

3.2.1.2 Bodies-Without-Organs only in High Fashion?

Coming to the second Deleuzian concept as addressed by Smelik, the fashion theorist finds several "bodies-without-organs" (abbreviated: BwOs) in fashion. BwOs are an attempt undertaken by Deleuze and Guattari to liberate (inter alia human) bodies from an "organistic" understanding (see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 176-177, see also DeLanda 2006, 9-11), viz. from their segmentation into organs of which each has a concrete function. The BwO thus is a concrete kind of becoming, which concerns the body as a whole, that is constitutively open. In this vein, the two French scholars write: "Is it really so sad and

dangerous to be fed up with seeing with your eyes, breathing with your lungs, talking with your tongue, thinking with your brain […]? Why not walk on your head, sing with your sinuses, see through your skin, breathe with your belly" (ibid., 167). For Deleuze and Guattari, the BwO is an ideal, which is never completely achievable, but remains a "desire" (ibid., 183). That Smelik directly spots several BwOs within fashion awakens the interest to read deeper into the fashion scholar's understanding of this Deleuzian/Guattarian construct. The BwOs Smelik detected in fashion are e.g. the 3D-printed collections of Dutch designer Iris van Herpen, which she describes as de-territorializing conventional organizations of human bodies (see Smelik 2016, 172-173; 2018, e.g. 35); removable air pads in the works of Dutch designer duo Viktor & Rolf, that loosen the models' bodies from all organistic cords (see Smelik 2016, 177); as well as the works of several Japanese fashion designers, which are often read as deconstructionist (see Smelik 2014, 46).

On the one hand, Smelik thereby understands the BwO as referring explicitly to the human body, for which she sees clothes as de/forming means. Hence, clothes are the devices via which BwOs become possible to achieve, or so it seems. This reveals that in her account on fashion, as new materialist as she might claims it to be, she remains thinking in an anthropocentric manner: The (bodily) human is her direction of research, en route to which clothes are met. And although Smelik explicitly writes: "taking the materiality of things seriously entails transcending and undoing the dualism of subject/object, people/things, human/nonhuman" (Smelik 2018, 39); by her account of BwOs within fashion, she does not queer, but reinforces this common dualism. In contrast, the present project aspires to attend to clothes' bodies, and show how they, in the clothing, can enter becomings as well.

On the other hand, Smelik writes: "experimental designs set the body in-motion, liberating it from the dominant modes of identity and subjectivity in the consumerist world of fast fashion" (Smelik 2014, 39), and thus, despite her claim that new materialist thought is based upon "rethinking dualisms" (see Smelik 2018, 38, see above 3.1.4.1.1), consolidates the other main dualism dominating her field of research: fashion versus dress (as addressed already in 2.2.2). Or, to be more precise, she opposes high fashion, designed for the catwalk (more an art form to be showcased and exhibited than intended to be conventionally worn) from fast fashion creating commercial clothing, and finds BwOs only in the former.

What is more, although Smelik states that she understands fashion as happening "in-between" (Smelik 2016, 179); the two polars between which fashion moves in her notion are "looking at a design and imagining wearing it" (Smelik 2018, 53). What she thereby effects is not a subversive queering of e.g. fashion/dress or the im/material (even if she

explicitly aims at so doing, see Smelik 2018, 39); but a concrete localization of fashion within the consumer, whereby fashion remains conventionally immaterial. What, then, is fashion? A seducing-to-buy, a pulling-into-enthusiasm, a preparing-to-spend?

Taking on her view, daily mass-produced and mass-worn dress segments the body into organs, imposes a normativity on it, and dictates how it should look like; whilst couture-designs provide stimuli and visions for BwOs, and thus allow their wearers to "become more fluid and flexible" (Smelik 2016, 172). In this vein, the dualism of fashion versus dress materializes as proxy war for a social dualism, which here bifurcates into those who are capable of buying, and those who can only watch high fashion.

A BwO becomes an opportunity exclusively reserved for the rich and meaningful to experience in the wearing; whereas Joe Public, with the range of clothes at his disposal, cannot stop walking around in a body "stratified" (ibid.) by clothes, and is left with the less effective opportunity to become via observing BwOs on pictures, posters, and screens (see Smelik 2014, 54; 2018, 53). Is he thus meant to continue wearing pullovers and slipovers, but often and joyfully engage in watching (which puts the focus quiet on the visual) and wishing to wear solar panels and acrylic patterns? What does fashion change, then? What does it initiate?

Furthermore, Deleuze and Guattari describe the BwO as "dismantling our self" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 167). Etymologically, the verb "to dismantle" stems from Lat. *mantellum*, which obviously resonates in the cloak, the coat, the mantle. Why is Smelik so sure that a BwO can only be achieved via an adding of certain designer-clothes onto the human body and self? Might the BwO not rather be about a freeing of your self from the clothing as cover-to/from? Not necessarily to free yourself from clothes in the sense of strip them off, substract, undress; but maybe in the sense of freeing yourself from conventional understandings of the role clothes are to have, and engage with clothes in general, with dress, fashion, adornment, costume, in novel ways, so the BwO could also be understood.

In summary, in Smelik's account, clothes remain "identity-toys" (see 2.3.1). And she misses to see that in high fashion as much as in daily dress, there are clothings that are stratifying, and clothings that are smoothening (completing Deleuze and Guattari's dualism, see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 525-526). The two dualisms of human/cloth and fashion/dress thus remain to be queered in a truly new materialist approach to the matter of research.

3.2.1.3 Non/Folding Fashions

At last, Smelik engages with Deleuze's fold. She even dedicates a whole paper to this concept, titled "Fashioning the Fold: Multiple Becomings", which was published in Braidotti's and Dolphijn's *This Deleuzian Century* (see Smelik 2014). Although Deleuze broadly writes: "The fold can be recognized first of all in the textile model of the kind implied by garments" (Deleuze 2014, 121, cited as well in Smelik 2016, 176); in line with her yet-to-cross dualism of fashion/dress, Smelik attributes a folding character solely to certain kinds of high fashion. Although she does not explicitly states so, for Smelik, there are "non-folding" and "folding" kinds of fashion. Hence, some high fashion is folding; but daily dress is never folding.

Entering the milieu of high fashion, Smelik differentiates between fashion that remains a means for the body, and fashion that frees "its own folds from its usual subordination to the finite body it covers" (Deleuze 2014, 121, as also cited in Smelik 2016, 176), which, following her, is accompanied by an equalization of body and fabric (see Smelik 2014, 41; Smelik 2016, 177). According to Smelik, only the latter kind of fashion is a manifestation of the fold, and thus, eventually, a new materialist kind of fashion.

As examples of folding fashion, Smelik names once more the works of Japanese designers (e.g. Yamamoto, Kawakubo, Miyake, see Smelik 2014, 39) as well the Dutch designers Viktor & Rolf (their ribbons and ruffles, see Smelik 2016, 178-179; whereby Smelik is a step ahead of Bruggeman, who describes Viktor & Rolf's collections as merely rhizomatic, but does not relate them to the fold, see Bruggeman 2014, 165-166) and Iris van Herpen (see Smelik 2018, 50). But what exactly makes the difference between folding and non-folding fashion?

For Smelik, the examples of folding fashion she names are united in re-working the classic approach in fashion studies, in which clothes are understood as "dead without the human body wearing them" (Smelik 2018, 43), and thus are what she calls "avant-garde fashion" (Smelik 2014, 37). Much in line with Deleuze's concept of the fold as a queering of inside/outside, folding fashion consists of "a fundamental critique of the idea that fashion is a superficial game of exteriority covering over a 'deep' self hidden in the interior folds of the soul" (Smelik 2016, 177).

Furthermore, in folding fashion — and here Smelik begins to think beyond her conceptualization of BwOs, in which clothes remained the means for human bodies to become —, clothes rather "act and move autonomously, irrespective of the wearer […].

Fabrics and clothes take on a life of their own, acquiring non-human agency" (Smelik 2018, 36). In this vein, Smelik understands especially wearables, garments in which a certain technology is integrated, as folding fashions (see Smelik, Toussaint, and van Dongen 2016, 288).

However, what Deleuze intended to capture by his fold is a material flexibility. This he attributed primarily to garments (see above). Yet the philosopher by no way meant to limit his concept to a particular kind of clothes defined as "avant-garde". When Smelik thus writes: "Nowhere is the constantly vibrating dynamic of the fold more visible and palpable than in […] fashion" (Smelik 2014, 37, 39), she unnecessarily narrows the fold as concept, and thus runs a high risk to be contradicted. In fact, not only clothes fold, but also skins do, they create wrinkles and creases and pads and rolls. A candle's hot wax folds, as does a cooked spaghetti. Within the realm of clothes, it remains doubtable how folding van Dongen's solar panels (see Smelik, Toussaint, and van Dongen 2016), van Herpen's 3D-designs, and Kawakubo's bolsters indeed are, not in the reflecting and interpreting, but in the practice, in the clothing intra-action; as well as how much they allow the human who is wearing them to fold, to enter a becoming therein.

It hence shall rather be stated here that neither ribbons nor ruffles (as concrete things that you either have or not have access to) are needed to create a fold; but every cloth is folding (for a deepening of this thesis, see 4.2.2.2). Or, as Smelik herself broadly states: "In so far as matter can fold, it is capable of becoming" (Smelik 2014, 37). Concretizing this thesis, a cloth can fold as soon as it is enacted in a flexible manner and thus becomes ready to become-other, to outpace its organismic structure. When Smelik hence writes in the footnotes of her 2018 paper: "It may be interesting to pursue why theorists and philosophers take recourse to textile metaphors when they try to think beyond the usual confines of conventional discourse" (Smelik 2018, 47), what fascinates theorists in reality is not precisely haute couture, and not even a cloth as cut and designed piece; but the elastic, stretchable, fluent texture of certain materials, that smoothly run through the fingers, and withdraw from an encompassing grip and grasp. For these kinds of materials, the textile functions as epitome, precisely because it is available for everyone, precisely because it is not restrictively accessible.

In fact, when wearing these avant-garde fashions that Smelik describes as folding, and thus, staying in line with Deleuze's concept, as allowing to enter a becoming, it is likely to soon become evident that we humans, despite all freedom of design, cannot stop being bodily beings with a certain need for space. Space to move, space to breathe, space to fold. Hence,

if cramped into an asymmetrical posture that does not correspond to the constitution of our own body, or wedged into the tightest of all mini dresses made of acrylic sheets, there is no "gap" (Smelik 2014, 51; 2016, 177), no rift, no split between body and cloth, that would grant a certain "freedom of movement" (Smelik 2014, 51) and thus might open up possibilities of becoming, for both humans and clothes, not understood as a dualist pair, but as composite partners.

Only if the cloth is not completely and tightly filled-up by the human body, it can take "on a life of its own" (Smelik 2016, 176; see also Smelik 2014, 43). And the human body, loosely enough dressed to move uninhibitedly, also can "free itself" (Smelik 2014, 51) and "commence a process of becoming" (Smelik 2016, 177). Thus, only when allowing each other to fold, to bend, to flex, to decline, to create pleats and creases, do body and cloth become ontologically rhizomatic, and together become (whereby also Stephen Seely, another Deleuzian fashion theorist who will be discussed below, is contradicted, see Seely's approach to the collections of Gareth Pugh, Seely 2013, 261-262).

3.2.1.4 Subsuming Smelik

Smelik's writing is located within fashion/dress theory, and incorporates new materialist (especially Deleuzian) thoughts into the own realm of research. In so doing, Smelik seeks "to show that such a [new materialist] perspective is productive for the study of fashion, because it helps to better understand cultural objects, like fibres, textiles and clothes, as significant and interconnected actors" (Smelik 2018, 36), and thus aspires to strengthen (see Smelik 2018, 48) and freshen up (see ibid., 38) fashion studies.

Yet Smelik also aims at promoting fashion as an attractive research matter for NM. She writes:

> "The focus on materiality in new materialism may be relatively new for a field like cultural studies, but this is less the case for fashion studies, which has its origin in dress history, paying great attention to the details of the object, especially to the 'material qualities of the cloth'" (Smelik 2018, 37, includes citation of Woodward and Fisher 2014, 4, although, to be precise, they talk about the "material qualities of garments").

A page later she claims: "We can […] safely say that fashion studies has always privileged the materiality of clothes and the relation between clothing and the body" (Smelik 2018, 38), and further down writes as well: "New materialism [...] departs from a respectable tradition of taking the body seriously in fashion studies" (Smelik 2018, 43).

It might be true that at least the dress realm of fashion studies focuses on investigating garments as material things, and that the latter realm thus can more smoothly be related to NM than other cultural theoretical realms. Yet the research on fashion remains, if not anymore "dis-embodied" (see Entwistle 2015, 4), as Entwistle claimed in the beginning of this century (the first version of *The Fashioned Body* was published in 2000), then still immaterial (see above 2.2.3). For this reason, time might be extraordinarily ripe to relate NM to fashion studies, which is a finding shared with several other thinkers within the latter realm. Some of them will be discussed now.

3.2.2 Bruggeman's New Materialist Aesthetics, Seely's Affective Fashion, and Lily Lei Ye's Homemade New Materialism

As they add nothing conceptually significant to Smelik's fashion-NM, the three further voices found as working at the research intersection of NM and fashion/dress will now be presented bundled together in a singular chapter. To briefly introduce them, Daniëlle Bruggeman is a former PhD-candidate of Smelik, and currently Professor of Fashion at ArtEZ University of the Arts Arnhem, the Netherlands. Stephen Seely is a Research Fellow at Newcastle University who focuses on women's and gender studies. And Lily Lei Ye is Associate Professor at Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology.

Basically, all three scholars seek an alternative for conventional representational fashion/dress-readings, for which they place their trust if not only/precisely in NM, then in Deleuzian philosophy (see Bruggeman 2014, 159, 161-162, 166, 176; Lei Ye 2019, n.p.). Seely even aims at transforming fashion "from epistemological frameworks of signification, subjectivity, performance, and representation to an ontological framework of affect, sensation, and material transformation" (Seely 2013, 249); an aspiration that corresponds to the research hierarchization found within NM.

Although Bruggeman announces to deal with new materialist literature; she mostly leans on Deleuze's writings as well as on secondary writings about Deleuze (such as O'Sullivan 2005a and b), and only scarcely mentions e.g. the "bodily materialism" of Braidotti (see Bruggeman 2014, 162). Lei Ye self-referentially writes: "this study takes a new materialist approach (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987)", whereby she seems to equate NM with Deleuze's/Deleuzian theory. And although Seely does not mention the label "New Materialism" in his works, his methodological approach might be the most new materialist

of all three, as apart from Deleuze (and Guattari), Seely also engages with Spinoza (see Seely 2013, 253) and Haraway (see ibid., 259).

All three scholars toy around with Deleuzian vocabulary, whereby such neologisms evolve as e.g. Lei Ye's "assemblage of becoming" (Lei Ye 2019, Abstract) or Seely's "becoming otherwise" (see e.g. Seely 2013, 250, 265) as well as his definition of the assemblage as "interaction or connection between matter and force" (Seely 2013, 252). And also Bruggeman writes that when a human dresses a cloth, "two assemblages meet" (Bruggeman 2014, 171), whereby she seems to reintroduce if not a hierarchy, then surely an inter-active approach into new materialist thinking. It is questionable to what extent these formulations are in Deleuze's intention; and in what ways they further or mislead Deleuzianism. It might be that Buchanan is correct in stating that in order to achieve a Deleuzian approach, better read the original author himself (see Buchanan 2017).

Whilst Bruggeman and Seely treat fashion, which they understand as a form of art (see Bruggeman 2014, 160, 161, 163; Seely 2013, 260, 263-264); Lei Ye rather engages with not only everyday, but homemade dress as being explicitly new materialist. As such, Lei Ye sticks out as having realized the only so far loosely "new materialist", yet certainly Deleuzian approach to daily dress. And when talking about a certain salience, Stephen Seely could be understood as the first feminist fashion new materialist, which quite lovely corresponds to the cartography's queering.

Nevertheless, none of the here dealt with scholars engages with dress in general in a new materialist vein. Rather, all depict a precise kind of fashion/dress to be apt for a new materialist re-reading. Whilst Bruggeman focuses on specific cases within Dutch "avant-gardist" fashion (see Bruggeman 2014, 167) and thus resonates the tone of Smelik; Seely creates his concept of Deleuzian "affective fashion", which he defines as precisely that kind of "fashion that seeks to harness the body's capacities for transformation and connection (i.e., affect), in order to force it to become-otherwise, beyond the dominant modes of organizing and imagining bodies" (Seely 2013, 250). As such, he reads the works of e.g. Alexander McQueen (ibid., 255-256) and Japanese designer Kawakubo (ibid., 254). And as already mentioned, Lei Ye understands homemade clothes as "foregrounding clothing's 'agential' capacity to affect that has been neglected by existing literature" (Lei Ye 2019). Thus, all three scholars have a denominative approach: Precisely this fashion is new materialist; whereas another fashion or "'normal' clothing" (Seely 2013, 253) is not suited or worth for a new materialist rereading. That in so thinking, all four fashion/dress theorists approaching NM are mistaken, shall be outlined in depth in chapter four.

In addition to reinforcing the fashion/dress dualism, all three scholars also remain thinking within the body/cloth dualism. Lei Ye discerns between the "materiality" of the garment and the "vitality" of the body (Lei Ye 2019, Conclusion). Bruggeman talks about "encounters between bodies and clothes" (Bruggeman 2014, 160), and equally discerns between the "materiality of clothes and the physicality of the body" (ibid., 162). And Seely describes fashion in general as an "image of the human body" (Seely 2013, 260), whereby he leads thought back towards if not semiotics, than to representationalism in general.

Discussing the approaches of several fashion/dress theorists to NM, it became evident that their findings are of limited value for the present project, which aspires to treat humans/clothes relations in a new materialist light. All four discussed fashion/dress approaches mostly deal with Deleuze. Yet although the French philosopher surely has written a lot that can transform and re-work fashion/dress studies, he is not a new materialist in a narrow sense of this term, and by far not the only scholar that can be found within the extended area of NM, whose writings can be gainful for fashion/dress. In short, an in-depth combining of fashion/dress and NM remains yet to be undertaken.

Thus, the present project joins all the just discussed fashion-NMs in arguing that NM "is a way to do more justice to the complexities of cloth in itself and of (dressed) bodies" (Bruggeman 2014, 176). But instead of remaining within the dualisms that already are the convention of the field of fashion/dress, it rather aims at re-reading the latter via a new materialist approach that queers inter alia fashion with dress, and human with cloth. Interestingly, the fashion-NM, as discussed in this chapter (3.2), is less helpful for the present undertaking than what in the beginning of this project (see 1.1 above) was named as fourth methodological supportive pillar, and what will be introduced and discussed in the following chapter: the realm of Material Culture Studies that treats fashion/dress as its matter of research.

3.3 Material Culture

The main school of thought engaged with in the present project is NM, which was outlined in much detail above (3.1). Although no concrete fashion/dress content can be extracted from NM, its rhizomizing and eventually queering of humans/things shall be related to within the present clothing project. As outlined in 3.2, within fashion/dress theory, no in-depth "dress-NM" could be found (despite a new materialist account dealing with Chinese

homemade dress, see Lei Ye 2019): a gap in research. Such a new materialist account of dress, yes, but also of fashion shall be realized here, which primarily aspires to not fall back into the dualism that so far reigned the latter field of research. Yet for so doing, less the hitherto discussed fashion-NMs will act as a concrete tool, but more another school of thought, that indeed contains clothes as one of its usual topics of research: Material Culture Studies.

As two cartographies that brought forth, and were brought forth by the material turn, a cultural-theorist milestone consisting in a reorientation towards matter that took place mostly in the 1990s (as a progress contrasting to the linguistic and the iconic turn), NM and MC sometimes become mingled, e.g. by Smelik (2018). And material culture theorists use NM's theories for their own approaches (e.g. when Woodward and Greasley engage with Jane Bennett's vital materialism, see Woodward and Greasley 2015, 4).

Although there surely are similarities and parallels between both realms of thought, such as their understanding of things as able to act; their approaches decisively differ. Exactly these similarities as well as differences shall be credited within the present chapter. It is thus the aim of the following paragraphs to compare NM and MC, in order to a) show why MC would be insufficient for a philosophical dealing with the clothing as well as b) why it indeed functions well as a rather concrete base for thinking the clothing, and to c) prepare the queering of NM/MC out of which the present clothing approach grows.

3.3.1 New Materialism and Material Culture

NM as well as MC here are titled "cartographies" because scholars in both schools understand their work as being eclectically post-disciplinary (for NM, this was already argued for above, see 3.1.3.1; for material-cultural quotes supporting this statement, see e.g. Tilley et al. 2006, 1; Hicks 2010, 87, 90, 94).

Both cartographies are concerned with a queering of dualisms — a statement to which shall be adhered despite Hicks negating the "overcoming" task of dualist thinking, and rather seeing the task at stake as a "shaking off" (Hicks 2010, 29). Yet it has already been shown, as well within NM, voices can be found that see their work not as queering, traversing, or crossing, but rather as an avoiding of dualisms (see 3.1.4.2.1). The most fundamental dualism NM/MC confront is the one of subject/object, human/thing. For this aim, both

cartographies focus on things, in order to eventually establish a balanced ontology of humans/things.

Yet whereas NM is based on a re-reading practice of elder/other philosophies (and natural sciences); MC rather departs from a variety of fields, that, as explained in-depth by Hicks, have always been concerned with things (see Hicks 2010, 30ff.). Late 19th century's museum studies' obsession with exhibited artefacts and artefacts to exhibit, archeology's fieldnotes, and ethnography's lengthy interviews and case studies are often criticized for being overly descriptive about the things they investigate. Yet via their extensive focus on the material, all these approaches came to question representationalism from quite a different angle than did philosophy, that therefore had to overcome its long-lasting Cartesianism.

Besides, there are critical voices in/outside MC saying that the very concept of "material culture" is found upon as well as states itself a dualism (see Hicks 2010, 69). Until today, the negating and re-affirming, dividing and re-uniting of archaeology and anthropology coins MC's methodology (for a detailed analysis of MC's chronology of thinking see as well Hicks 2010). Whereas anthropology investigates the human via society and culture; archaeology rather approaches the human via her material leftovers. Or else, in order to enact an anthropology that avoids treating the "anthropos" as extracted from her material lifeworld, MC combines it with an archaeology exercised not about the past but about the present (see Tilley et al. 2006, 3; Hicks 2010, 59, 63). Hence, the very term "Material Culture" indeed is a manifest leftover of the anthropology/archaeology, the cultural/material dualism (see Hicks 2010, 29). The question now is: Does MC achieve to cross this dualism, or does it remain within its borders?

Whilst for philosophers it took time and effort, if not to leave the human as its preferred matter of research aside, then at least to understand that the human can only ever be realistically researched when taking her material lifeworld into consideration; archaeological thought begins ever since by scrutinizing excavated objects, and only based thereupon is capable to draw inferences about the human. In short, if the fields on which MC is based can be seen as fetishizing matter (archaeology was even titled "the discipline of things *par excellence*", Olsen 2003, 89, original emphasis); then philosophy as the realm in which NM evolved was long fetishizing the human.

Within the material turn, archaeology/anthropology came to turn their study from one of stable and autonomous things to one of processes and contexts. Philosophy achieved to leave anthropocentrism aside and come to a rhizomatic understanding about human/thing relations. On the side of archaeology/anthropology, the outcome is MC; on the side of

philosophy, it is NM. Although these two schools of thought grow in distinct milieus; they nevertheless equally make manifest academic re-readings of basic assumptions, which began materializing in the 1990s.

3.3.2 Strands Informing Material Culture

In their *Handbook of Material Culture*, Tilley et al. discern between three strands informing MC: Marxism, semiotics, and phenomenology (see Tilley et al. 2006, 7-8; to each of these three strands, the MC theorists dedicate a full chapter directly in the beginning of their handbook). Also for NM, Marxism acts as a "crude" materialism, on which several scholars today lean their theories (see above 3.1.2.2). Marxism enabled NM to queer the social/material, so that coexistence was reworked from being solely a human/human matter of affairs, to including as well human/thing relations. In the words of Marx himself, also relations between persons are "concealed beneath a material shell" (Marx 1976, 167, footnote 29). Hence, Marxism supported NM in thinking the thing as a social cohabitant, and helped it to eventually overcome the dichotomy of humans in their social world versus things in their material world.

Yet in MC, Marxism is understood as allowing "to think materially about the social" (Maurer 2006, 13). This is to say that via Marxism, MC came to conceptualize the social as being based upon the material, instead of, as it was hitherto common, upon the semiotic (see also 3.3.3). Yet for the respective researchers, society remains consisting exclusively of inter-human relations. Thus, although both NM and MC consider Marxism as one of its informing strands; whereas NM uses Marx's theories to overcome, MC remains within the human/thing dualism.

Whilst the majority of new materialist scholars clearly formulate their re-working aspirations towards semiotics (the most keen of whom might be Massumi, who explicitly confronts and queers the dualism of sign and matter by showing that all meaning is materially supported, see Massumi 1992, 10); MC has a binary standing to the latter school of thought. Some MC theorists see their own approach as opposed to a semiotic approach to culture, such as Hodder, who explicitly wishes to distance his work from conventional structuralism (see Hodder 1989). Also Leach distinguishes between a materialist and a structuralist "proto-man": The former is the tool-maker, the latter is a language-user (see Leach 1973, 762). Others see semiotics as an important strand informing material culture, e.g. Layton, who considers semiotics as helping MC to "decode" material prehistoric

expressions (see Layton 2006, 40); or Keane, who claims that: "language should not be the privileged theoretical model for a semiotics of material things" (Keane 2003, 422), and thus calls for a materialist instead of a linguist semiotics.

Following Tilley et al., the third strand informing MC is phenomenology. NM theorists bifurcate in their view on this 20th century school of thought: While Barad bases the ethical part of her onto-epistemology on Levinas (see Barad 2007, 391-392); she actively re-reads Heidegger's being-in-the-world, which according to her implies an embeddedness into a pre-formed context (as she would say: a constructivist approach) into a "being-of-the-world" (see Barad 2007, 160). However, it is necessarily to remark here that Heidegger himself explicitly clarifies that the "in" within his concept must not be understood analogous to water being "in" a glass, but rather is intended to be understood in line with being "at home" or being "familiar with" (see Heidegger 2006, 53; see also Martach 2018). A deeper scrutinization of the worth the Heideggerian concept might have after all for NM could be an interesting further research project, for which it shall be reserved.

And meanwhile Coole and Frost understand phenomenology as potentially furthering NM's approach to embodiment and corporeality, which is why they explicitly call for a re-reading of this school (see Coole and Frost 2010, 19-20), and for which especially Merleau-Ponty's bodily phenomenology could lend itself, so it shall be suggested (see 2.3.2); Meillassoux rather denounces phenomenology as just another correlationist thinking (see Meillassoux 2008, 5).

The "phenomena" as understood in phenomenology, viz. things-as-they-appear (see Heidegger 2006, 28-31) presuppose the inextricable intertwinement, the entanglement of humans and things. The term "phenomenon" as such can therefore be found within the writings of Barad, who refers with it to the human/thing entanglement in general (see Barad 2007, e.g. 383: "phenomena are material entanglements"). The problem is just that phenomenology hierarchizes this entanglement, which it does despite the fact that Heidegger defines phenomena as being always slightly different to the appearance they reveal to us (Heidegger 2006, 29). It needed Harman and his founding of OOO to concretize this withdrawal as indeed an ability of the thing, which resulted in a flattening of these kinds of entanglements.

What renders phenomenology especially interesting for MC is its interest in the ordinary (see Thomas 2006, 46, 56), which by tradition is the focus of archaeology/anthropology. Besides, phenomenology and MC share their interest in the concrete rather than in the universal (see ibid. 46), which, however, for phenomenology remains the concrete

experience(-of-things), whereas MC is interested in the concrete thing, which, at least for Husserl, remained "lumps of matter", as Thomas herself notes (ibid.). Hence, whilst phenomenologists understand things as constructed by humans; MC attributes things with an agency (see Tilley et al. 2006, 1,6). And when Husserl claimed that consciousness is always a consciousness of something (as cited as well by Thomas 2006, 44), this something for Husserl was mental; whereas for MC it necessarily is material.

Hence, although Thomas states that "it is clear that the full potential of phenomenological approaches to material culture is far from having been realized" (Thomas 2006, 57), the present project shall be used to doubt whether a phenomenological engagement with MC truly is valuable. Maybe an in-depth re-reading of phenomenological approaches exercised by NM as another philosophical school, that hence is methodologically closer to phenomenology than MC, might help to find this out.

3.3.3 The Trialism of the Material, the Cultural, and the Social

The name "Material Culture" addresses two dualisms: the ontological one of humans versus things, and the methodological one of archaeology versus anthropology. In these two dualisms MC is entangled, and these two dualisms are entangled with one another in MC, as it shall be shown in what follows.

Material Culture implies that the material stays in an adjectival dependency to the noun culture, so that culture is the main matter of research, and the material is a specific approach to culture which, in both the disciplines on which MC is grounded, is commonly seen as opposed to "semiotic culture". Whilst the semiotic culture approach perceives culture as the product of a consensus of meaning which is achieved by the exchange of signs; the material culture approach rather states that every sign must manifest itself materially in order to exist and be able to be traded by humans.

For instance, a semiotic culture approach would say: If humans do not cognitively contain and communicate the concept "weapon", no such thing as a sword or a knife can be crafted. In contrast, a material culture approach states that if there are no weapons in a culture existing, no linguistic term for "weapon" exists, and weapons thus will not be used as a symbol for e.g. war or masculinity. Hence, MC claims that culture is grounded on material manifestations, or simply: on things. Yet this discloses that so far, not the material dependency on culture was discussed (as grammatically existent in "Material Culture"), but

that vice versa culture's dependency on the material was thematized (so to say, a cultural materiality).

Instead of continuing to focus on the "culturality" of the material, let us therefore rather attend to the materiality (or better: matterness, see 1.1) of culture. First and foremost, this means that the identities of things are dependent upon the culture in which things are located. One must be careful here not to backslide into a constructivist approach, yet as it was already stated that MC considers material things as constituting culture, this trap is somewhat narrowed. Besides, also a trap of representationalism opens up here, as one all too easily comes to approach things here as embodying many meanings, depending on their understanding in specific cultural contexts. Yet what is meant to convey here is that things can materialize differently, can take on another identity, can become other, dependent upon the culture within which they exist. In this approach, culture is re-conceptualized from being a frame of mutual agreement which allows for action and especially communication, into being a specific kind of human/thing relation which is agreed-upon socially and allowed-for materially. The third term that was promised to be discussed here is brought into play, and shall now be explicitly dealt-with: the social.

So far, MC was treated as containing the dualisms of thing and human, and of material and culture. Yet this is somewhat loosely thought. In fact, one must be cautious here not to equate the cultural with the human, and put it in opposition to the material (the thing). Being more precise, MC rather contains a trialism, namely the one of the material, the social, and the cultural. This complicates the issue, as the relation of these three aspects is often only vaguely conveyed. Sometimes, as shown above, the social is not even mentioned, and it is only worked with the material and the cultural. At other times, the social and the cultural become lumped together and as such delineated solely from the material. And then again, the cultural and the material appear to act as means for the social sphere.

Tim Ingold is a MC theorist who even negates the term "material culture" as much as he poses himself against e.g. Miller's "materiality" (see Miller e.g. 2005), which he understands as being based too much on, in fact, immaterial aspects of the material. He writes: "To understand materiality, it seems, we need to get as far away from materials as possible" (Ingold 2007, 2). As an alternative to materiality, he therefore calls for a re-orientation towards *materials and their properties*" (ibid., 3, original emphasis). Nevertheless, Ingold's focus on the materials rather than the materiality of culture does not achieve to circumvent, and might even reintroduce the device-thinking about things, so it has already been claimed

in 1.1. Besides, Ingold's conceptualization still is in need for clarifying the role culture plays therein. Therefore, another attempt to solve MC's riddle shall now be realized.

As it was said already above, MC conceptualizes the social as an inter-human affair, and thus stays in line with Heidegger's "Mit-Sein" (see Heidegger 2006, 120ff., a concept that will as well be treated below, see 4.1.3.1). For this reason, in a MC account, the social can be understood as a monistic term for humans, and the material as an equivalent monistic term for things. The social thus is the multiplicity of humans existing, and the material is the realm of things. And these two multiplicities are enacted by the web "culture". *Culture thus shall be understood as a queering of humans and things, of the social and the material.* For culture to exist, both the social and the material are needed. And as the social and the material cannot exist without each other, their entanglement needs to be given a name, for which "the cultural" or "culture" was selected. In other words, without humans/things there is no culture, and without culture no humans/things relation exists. But every humans/things relation is coined by a certain culture, whereby culture also includes the "how" of humans/things relations.

This reveals that MC contains the potential for philosophy, and thus as well for NM, to see, if not the social, then surely the cultural in a new light. There are several philosophical debates ongoing about a definition of culture, which lead some philosophers to even neglect the concept of culture at all. Yet bringing together NM (as a philosophical school) and MC, as initiated here, might lead to a new and affirmative philosophical understanding of the concept of culture.

So far, MC's ontological dualism of the social/material was discussed. It now remains to discuss MC's methodological dualism. This dualism was stated above to be the one of archaeology/anthropology, two disciplines that, in MC literature, commonly are said to eventually address the human (the social), only that they do so via distinct routes, which are the material (archaeology) and the cultural (anthropology). And precisely here we reached the crux of MC's confusion. MC hitherto was understood as a triangle relation which is pointing towards the human/social. The material and the cultural were located on the other two vertexes, and as such were considered points of departure as well as routes directed towards the human. Yet if MC is read in the way expounded in the former paragraph, the triangle is rotated, and the social and the material are considered laterals pointing towards the cultural (see figure 3 below).

Both the confusion of the trialism with a dualism of ontology and thus as well for methodology, as well as the confusion within the trialism, viz. of the roles of the

material/social/cultural, might be the reason for why MC theorists hitherto have not managed to agree upon a message their cartography wants to convey, and why, maybe, NM theorists have so far not eyed MC as a potential partner in thought. Put in a nutshell, whilst Material Culture Studies understand themselves as having culture as their main matter of research; what they so far research rather is the human, the social.
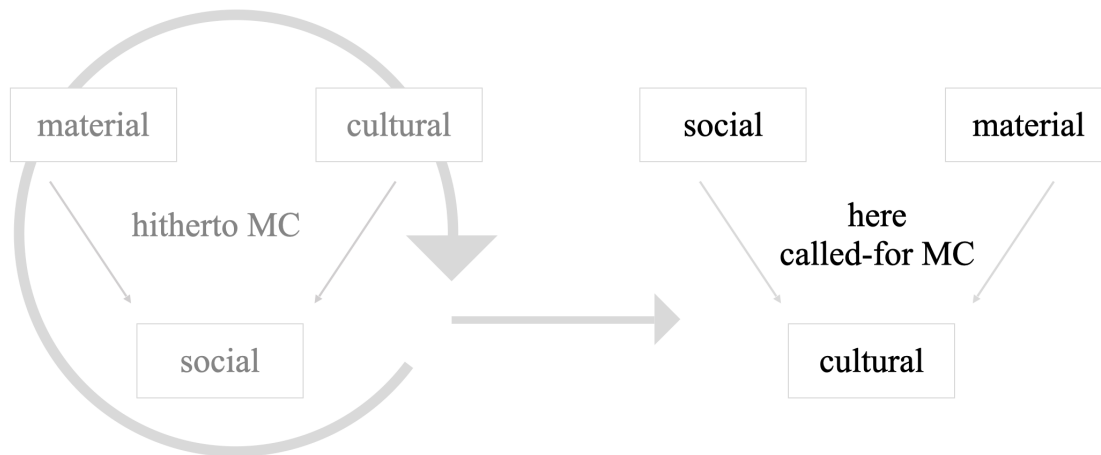
figure 3: Rotating the Trialism of Material Culture: from Social to Cultural

To give just a brief insight into MC literature: The material is often defined as "able to affect and shape the social" (Tilley et al. 2006, 1, 6), as "evidence" for human behavior (see Hicks 2010, 40), as "mediator" between self and world (Woodward 2005, 23), or as mediator of the social. This led Miller to his "humility of things" (see Miller 2005, 4), which reminds of OOO's/NM's withdrawal/recalcitrance. Also Tilley's utterance "we talk and think about ourselves through things" (Tilley 2006b, 7) thinks of things as human instruments. And even Miller's concept of "objectification" treats the material object as mere "mirror" reflecting identities (see Miller 2005, 6-7). Hence, in MC, the material continues to be thought about as instrument for the social, and as means to research the human.

The cultural is considered as "an extrasomatic mechanism employed by a particular animal species in order to make its life secure and continuous" (White 1959, 8), and, similar to the material, is thus seen as dependent upon the social. And the human is talked about as "society" (Tilley 2006a, 61) in the plural, and "self", "individual", or an "identity" (see e.g. Woodward 2005, 21, 22) in the singular. The human hence seems to be the entity the cultural as well as the material are directed towards; an entity that yet eventually remains demarcated off and closed up from the material/cultural. Hence, up to the point of writing, the human, although understood as a materially/culturally mediated being, was MC's main matter of research.

If, however, MC would accept not the human but rather culture, understood as human/thing relation, as material/social entanglement, as its main focus of research, it could effect a furthering reworking of its hitherto achievements, and might eventually receive more attention from the side of new materialist thinkers, so it is opined. Yet in its present form, MC is in an urgent need to realize that the very title of its cartography is not a misnomer because of material's adjectival dependency on culture, but because of social's lacking of explicitness therein. It hence would be more apt to rather call it a studies of "material/social culture", as this term directly conveys the dependencies given within the treated trialism.

In summary, because MC is located on the same pathway of thought as NM, the present project shall engage with MC as a further source for thinking (support IV, see graphic in 1.1). Yet as MC is in need of a re-conceptualization, it can only function as a rather concrete source for research, which does capture a matter hitherto left untouched by NM: the clothing.

3.3.4 Material Culture as Concrete Clothing Basis

The literature about fashion/dress is broad, and the present project's writer has tried her best to work her way through at least its most emblematic texts — to find that it renders itself most appropriate to focus mainly on MC approaches to fashion/dress, because, as it has been just shown, *this is fashion/dress theory's realm that parallels the most to NM.* According to Smelik, it was Barthes who pushed fashion/dress into the immaterial sphere (see Smelik 2018, 36). And MC, so it shall be stated, has the capacity to pull fashion/dress back into the material realm, the realm in which it was at home since the onset of museum studies.

Hence, instead of an in-depth research of hitherto undertaken identical, somatic, or communicational approach to fashion/dress (as discussed in 2.3), it is considered more fruitful here to mainly use MC's approaches towards fashion/dress (admittedly, dress theory is more thoroughly researched in MC than fashion, yet e.g. Woodward and Fisher aim at spreading dress-MC approaches as well towards fashion, see Woodward and Fisher 2014) in order to fill the clothing gap that until now existed in NM. In short, for the present unterdaking, NM will act as main methodology, and (a specific part of) MC as matter of research.

For the question "Why, then, is NM needed for this project?", an answer has already been prepared throughout the former section, in which arguments both against a completely MC-focused clothing approach, and for MC's support in a new materialist reading of the clothing were grown. As a matter of fact, NM is chosen as main thinking cartography here, because

it takes things further than does MC. Although both cartographies emerged as matter-attuned thinkings, and thus aspire to equilibrate and eventually queer modernist human/thing hierarchies; NM's philosophical stance allows it to think in more drastic a manner than does MC's archaeological/anthropological methodology.

When, for instance, MC sticks to the notion of "material agency" as an instrumental term, although theorists of the same realm have long grasped the risks of this concept (Malafouris is the one who states so explicitly, see again Malafouris 2009, 7:39); several protagonists of NM have already re-worked and thus re-fined material agency into accurate alternatives, such as Barad's intra-actions within entanglements (which will be further discussed in chapter four).

When Woodward engages with the Deleuzian concept of assemblages, she relates it exclusively to momentary wardrobe collections (see Woodward 2005, 21; Woodward and Greasley 2015, 15). In so doing, she limits her research to noting differencesin-degree, and thus impedes herself from capturing differences in kind that occur only in duration (for this Bergsonian distinction, see Deleuze 1991, e.g. 21). This dualism of differences will be further discussed in 4.2.1.5.

And although MC theorists attend to clothes; they keep talking about a human self or identity as end-point, which is to be questioned, negotiated, and constructed via clothes (see, for instance, Woodward 2005, 22). Thereby, they continue to see clothes as means to a concrete and indeed human end, viz. they investigate only ever what clothes do to/with/for us humans, and not only miss, but close themselves up from, render their approach unable to think more than clothes' servitude, namely their true existence. Put more generally, by remaining within the research direction of the social (as it was outlined in 3.3.3 above), MC is obstructing itself from reaching the realist (yet relational) thinking of the clothing, which NM admits, and which shall be outlined in 4.1.3.2 and 4.1.3.3.

For this reason, in the present project, a NM/MC-combined approach is grown in order to attempt to overcome the shortcomings both cartographies individually contain. Pragmatically put, NM offers the philosophical methodology to think the clothing. And as the fashion/dress research which is coming closest to NM's approach, MC will have the role to provide NM's "lent" connection to the clothing, viz. to back this clothing thinking up by a plenitude of concrete anthropological/archaeological examples, ethnographic case studies, and fashion/dress conceptions that materialized thereby. Henceforth, a queering of NM/MC will be realized. Knowledge is extracted from both cartographies, a more abstract kind from NM, and a more concrete kind from MC. Or else, as concrete as NM permits, and as abstract

as MC is considered as philosophically truthful and as gainfully contributing to a new new materialist clothing approach.

4. A New New Materialism of Clothing

New Materialism (NM) can already claim to have achieved a reworking of the Cartesian hierarchical conceptualization of humans/things relations into a rather rhizomatic account (an achievement section 3.1.4.2.1 subsumes in a map).Yet NM would not be in accord with its own programmatic conceptualization, would it not be open to be reread further, thus hoping to achieve a step-by-step eradication of prejudicial assumptions as its remaining takeovers from commonsense Cartesianism, a broadening, spreadening, and deepening of its thinking style, and eventually an acquisition of new and yet to renew matters of research for it as a school of thought.

The present project aspires to contribute to a deepening of new materialist thought by means of three main steps of thought. First, it discloses the thing as the latter's primary research interest to which it adheres as a unit taken over from Cartesianism, and shows that what hitherto was perceived as a unit, might rather be seen as a composite of webs and knots, and what was understood as static, might rather be seen as dynamic. Second, it takes serious the notion of webs and knots, that can be traced within various writings residing more or less in the milieu/at the fringe of NM as well as OOO. And third, it rhizomizes the hierarchization that hitherto NM introduced into its web/knot thinking, and which will be revealed as a still pending detachment from Cartesianism, precisely by dynamizing the latter two aspects of existence. In so doing, a new, not a completely other but a renewed and renewing (see 3.1.1.2) new materialist approach will materialize.

Besides, the present project also works for a spreading of NM, by entangling its renewed version with the clothing. Put differently, this new new materialist ontology did not grow in the abstract, but rather evolved via researching the clothing, the blurring of boundaries between humans and clothes, which as such is a new materialist concept through and through. However, this is not to say that the clothing merely functions as a means, which was used in order to develop a new form of NM, and introduce NM into a hitherto almost untouched by it realm of research. The clothing is as less solely a tool for the present ontology, as clothes are solely tools for human application. Instead, clothing and NM, and clothes and humans are entangling with one another, and thus stand on an equivalent footing. What thus remains to do now is to pull the threads together and show that the clothing as such is a new materialist phenomenon, and that the clothing allows to renew new materialist thought. In other words, the present project yet has to elicit a) the worth of the clothing as research matter for NM, viz. how researching the clothing furthers NM, and b) what NM is

capable of turning the dualisms of human/cloth and fashion/dress into, that plagued the minds of hitherto fashion/dress researchers, and what new understandings of the latter NM can materialize. In short, the worth of the entangling of NM and the clothing has yet to be argued.

Why the clothing needs a new materialist reworking has already been outlined in-depth in chapter two: because hitherto approaches, which were grouped into the self, the bodily self, and the self-self approach, are researching in the direction of the human, meet clothes only en route, and thus are insufficiently picturing the clothing reality (see 2.3). And why does NM need to incorporate the clothing into its range of research matters?

In fact, to affirmatively embrace and reread new research matters is what NM's body of thought, its milieu is about. So a general open-mindedness can be expected. Besides, as Coole and Frost write (and as they were cited already by Smelik, see Smelik 2018, 36): New materialist "theorists are compelled to rediscover older materialist traditions while pushing them in novel, sometimes experimental, directions or toward fresh applications" (Coole and Frost 2010, 4). In fact, especially dress studies has been a deeply, sometimes even called an "over-"materialist research field ever since (see 3.3.1 and 4.1.1.1), which explains why it allows NM to enter into and alter its own milieu so smoothly.

But why precisely the clothing? In 3.1.1, it was already claimed that NM is about matters that are not only surrounding us, but in which we are entangled. And what other matter is there that we are so continuously engaged with, so incessantly entangled in, and that we are so deeply "intra-woven" with, apart from clothes? In this regard, Morton's claim: "there is nowhere to stand outside of things altogether" (Morton 2013, 4) becomes all the more truthful, as we are not only entangled in clothes, but also entangled with clothes in any further matter we become involved in. And precisely as such, the clothing determines our everyday life to a hitherto unexpected and unseen extent. For this reason, it is time to fill NM's clothing gap.

Yet combining fashion/dress with a certain kind of materialism might hastily become judged as an obvious connection. People with an interest in fashion and a focus on dress are commonly seen as "materialists" in the sense of "matter-centered", superficial characters. To such characters, usually a neglect of "deeper" issues is assigned, as one of which philosophy is seen. In this regard, Schiller already wrote about the self-adorning and thus self-indulgent person: "the unnecessary soon becomes her biggest joy" ("und das Unnötige ist bald der beste Teil seiner Freuden", Schiller 1795, 59). In his fascinating account of the

"clothing" (a term which he engages with to denote the thing), Miller already identified this thinking as a groundless prejudice that dominates commonsense thinking, and that he aspires to rework by showing en detail "why clothing is not superficial" (Miller 2010). In this vein, the present project aspires to build on Miller's position.

Although back then, at the times of Schiller, things were different; today, as it becomes apparent e.g. in Vinken (2013), clothing remains being regarded a topic for females. This is not true. We all dress clothes, and wear them almost non-stop. Yet, as already mentioned in the introduction (1.1), there remain some steps to walk in order to make people (not only scholars) understand that these things, which they always walk around in, are not passive shells, but active partners in life; and to thus incorporate the clothing as a relevant research topic in NM, OOO, and philosophy in general.

With this aim in mind, a new and new materialist conceptualization of the clothing shall be grown in what follows. Therefore, chapter 4.1 reworks the thing into a web/knot, and shows that instead of autonomous beings; existences are ontologically related (4.1.1). In contrast to what is claimed in hitherto NM, webs are not considered as superior to knots; but a rhizomatic account of web/knot relations will be grown, which accepts the fact that knots need webs to exist, but in addition is based upon the premise that without relata, there is no relation (4.1.2).

After having outlined a rhizomatic clothing account, it is time to show that humans and clothes are not constantly entangled, but sometimes also stand in a simpler relation to each other, such as e.g. in the cases of nakedness or a closed wardrobe. Yet that also in these cases, humans and clothes cannot detach from each other, but one remains a knot in the other's web, explains why we feel naked when we are naked, and as such are clothed (see 4.1.3).

When 4.1 showed that existences are ontologically related, 4.2 refines this ontology into an ontogenesis, as it claims that existences are ontologically becoming. If existence is becoming, viz. an existing, webs and knots are not proper existences, fixed beings; but rather are materializations of existences, so to speak, temporary halts into/out of which existences move. Existence thus does not come to a close in a particular web/knot constellation, but remains the difference, the slash in-between webs/knots (4.2.1).

Now in what way does a becoming, an existing materialize? To this question, the two last sections of 4.2 dedicate themselves. Existing takes place in the form of a splitting into webs and knots (4.2.2). Yet the splitting becoming does not take place in a linear fashion; but

rather is full of changes in directions, which will be denoted as "jumpings" (4.2.3). So whereas splitting is the differing of differences; jumping rather is that what makes differences differ differently.

For the purpose of the present chapter, more new material (support I) than object-oriented ontological (support II), and less fashion/dress (support III) than material culture theoretical (support IV, for this order, see figure 1 in 1.1) voices are consulted, in order to sometimes take them as support for the here presented position, and sometimes re-work in them what is considered in need of a re-engagement.

It thus is not a shortcoming of the present project to on the one hand lean on Barad, and on the other hand reread her concepts. This attitude rather reveals once more, and is in accordance with the not criticizing, but diffracting approach of NM (which, out of coherence reasons, has to wait to be outlined until 4.2.2.5), that grants us the opportunity to not limit ourselves to only one position, either pro or contra, either this or that concept; but instead allows us to read existent concepts through one another, and eventually come to queer what is already there with what is considered apt to add. In a nutshell, the aim of the following chapter is to entangle a) a reworking of hitherto clothing approaches (as listed in 2.3), and b) the growing of a new form of new materialism.

4.1 Post-thing-ism

4.1.1 The Entity as Composite

Within NM's and OOO's milieu alike, several steps have already been undertaken in order to grow a posthumanism, which, following Barad (see Barad 2007, 32, 66, 136) and Bryant (see Bryant 2011, 40), is not an "anti-humanism", viz. it does not negate the existence and agency of the human. It rather detaches thought from its centering around the human, and attributes the human more humble a role than we conventionally perceived ourselves to have. In addition to the reworkings of the concept of "human" that also NM already realized (see as well e.g. Braidotti 2000), the present project aspires to rework the concept of the "thing". So to say, whereas hitherto NM focused mostly on a posthumanism; the present project will now start to grow a "post-thing-ism".

However, the latter term is not in complete accord with other existent "post-"concepts, such as e.g. posthumanism or postmodernism. In posthumanism, the focus on the human is

leveled, viz. the spotlight which was narrowed onto her is widened in scope. Yet she remains being included in the latter kind of consideration. Similarly, it has often been warned to not confuse the "post-" of postmodernism as meaning a simple "after", a mere "finished, next". Instead, it intends to express that a wider variety of things than what was usual in modernity now become "modern" in the sense of trendy, allowed, up-to-date. As such, what was modern in modernity and what was/is modern in other times, in times before and in the present time which is precisely not following, but rather diffracting, queering modernity, peacefully and even fruitfully exist side by side.

In divergence thereto, the post-thing-ism as grown here rather aspires to show the invalidity of the very concept of "thing" as the unit that we take for granted in our day-to-day, and that we juggle with so carelessly in our scholarly lives. It aspires to break up the thing-entity, queer the parts that were found thereby, and raise them to a new alternative to what was beforehand regarded as a thing. Nevertheless, despite the impurity in the analogy of its prefix, the "post-thing-ism" is a concept that is capable to in one word subsume the main aspiration of the present project, and as such shall be used here as an accessible buzzword for the latter. Let me elicit what is meant thereby.

4.1.1.1 Of Wolves and Packs

Up to the point of writing, whatever subject we thought, we thought in entities. This is a car, this is a human, this is a book, and that is an animal. Cartesianism introduced a hierarchy into this thinking-in-entities, in which it places us humans as a special entity, so to say, the entity par excellence, over all other forms of entities. As will be discussed in more depth in 4.1.2.1, OOO flattened this thinking-in-entities in its claim that we humans are just another kind of object. Yet both thinkings, Cartesianism as much as OOO, are thinkings-in-entities. They take the existence of entities for granted, and describe the entity as that what exists. Existence is an existence as entity. All that is, is an entity, so they say.

The present project, however, *queers the very concept of the entity*, be that in form of a human, a semi-human, or a nonhuman, an object, a thing, or a matter. Instead of claiming that there are entities, it shall rather be stated that existence only ever materializes in form of webs and knots.

Webs and knots can be detected in several material-driven scholarly approaches, and as such connect thoughts and thinkers that otherwise might not be considered to own a commonality. Within NM, webs have been articulated in most diverse forms. Braidotti names

"enmeshments" (Braidotti 2000, 169). DeLanda talks about "meshworks" (DeLanda 1996) and "wholes" (ibid. 2006, 11). Latour writes of "networks" and "collectives" (see Latour e.g. 2005). Deleuze and Guattari say: "assemblage" (see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, e.g. 4). Simondon, a 20th century philosopher to whom several new materialists refer (see e.g. the opening citation of Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012; and also Deleuze has dedicated a section of his *Desert Islands* to this thinker, see Deleuze 2004c, 86-89), and who is influenced inter alia by Merleau-Ponty and Bergson, claims the existence of a "reticular structure" (Simondon 2009, 11) and even of a "supersaturated mother liquid" (ibid.). And Barad subsumes it all to "entanglements" (see Barad 2007). Other rather simple designations are "system" (Coole and Frost 2010, 14), "set" (Bryant 2011, 74), and "centre", "One", or "Same" (all found in Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 129).

The new materialist notion of the web has already been pulled into MC by the respective theorists, especially in order to counter their school's obsession with objects as entities (an obsession it inherited from museum studies), and to elicit that humans and things cannot be explained apart from one another (see Tilley et al. 2006, 2, 4). Hicks, for instance, engages with DeLanda's term and theory when titling Ingold's writings as "meshwork studies" (Hicks 2010, 78). Miller calls for a shift from categorical to relational thinking (see e.g. Miller 1990). Hodder engages with the same term as Barad when he talks about "human-thing entanglements" (see inter alia Hodder 2016). And as already mentioned above, Woodward engages with assemblages in her wardrobe studies (see 3.3.4).

On the other side of existence — which is not so much an "other" demarcated off from and standing opposed to the first side, the side of the web, but which rather is a side that is threading through, flowing into, and existing within the former, stands the knot. Latour completes his theory by the concept of "actors" — a term which yet, as Harman already lengthily outlined, puts the focus on what knots can do instead of what they are (see Harman e.g. 2016, e.g. 97-99), and thus only partially captures what is aimed at finding out here, namely an ontology of existence, viz. what existence is, and not only what it can cause, do, effect.

NMist Bennett and OOOist Bryant speak of "members" (Bennett 2010, 24; Bryant 2011, 74), Barad and DeLanda of "parts" (Barad throughout 2007; DeLanda 2006, 11). Both the latter terms aptly express that knots cannot exist outside of webs, viz. that they are dependent upon webs for their existence. Without a club, there are no members, no affiliates. And without a whole, there are no parts, or at least that what is, is not understood as a part, but

as an entity on its own. Why, nevertheless, it was decided explicitly for the term "knot" will become clarified in 4.1.2.1 as well as 4.2.2.4 below.

Also Barad's intra-active ontology leads to the concept of the knot. For Barad and further new materialists, there is no void, no vacuum, no nothingness, in which existences could sink, into which they could fall. There hence is no independence, no autonomy, but only a constitutive, ontological relatedness. For this reason, Barad reworked the widespread notion of interaction, as meaning the meeting of two independent existences, into an intra-action: the mutual constitution of existences. This reveals the strong ontological implication of Barad's intra-action: It does not admit the existence of entities, but only what in line with her terminology could be called "existences-within", hence knots.

The duo of researchers, that might be the ones attending most extensively to the knot, are Deleuze and Guattari. The way they do so is similar to how they treat the rhizome, and to call this way "metaphorical" would contradict what was written above (see esp. the reference to Honeychurch in 3.1.2.1). A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a concept is extracted from its common surroundings and placed into others into which it is not literally functional, but works only as a manner of speaking (the very term "metaphor", Greek of origin, expresses a transfer, with "meta-" meaning "across", and "pherein" meaning "to carry", hence: to bring across).

However, it is also worth a doubt whether it does the trick to name the way Deleuze and Guattari work "exemplary". In conventional writing, examples are subordinates to the main thesis, and principally are there to support the latter. When it comes to a subsumption of what was said, solely the theses are listed; and examples are, if not left out, then merely used to orally explain a thesis further in case it is not directly understood.

Yet when Deleuze and Guattari inter alia name ginger as a rhizome, this is neither a metaphor nor a mere example. Instead, the very term rhizome stems from botanics, and ginger literally *is* a rhizome, viz. grows and materializes as a rhizome, in a rhizomatic manner. Precisely from such beings as ginger, that exist in reality and materialize in a certain manner, Deleuze and Guattari have pulled their concept rhizome and pushed it into philosophy. And in order not to extract and abstract the latter, they keep it entangled with its real context, and in so doing allow it to grow further.

Henceforth, a new concept is needed, that enables to describe the way Deleuze and Guattari not only introduce but treat their concepts all the way through. And that, apart from Braidotti's suggestion of "fabulation" or "figuration" (Braidotti 2000, 170), the term "rhizomatic" readily lends itself as a description for this way of writing, is indeed no wonder,

but very much in line with the new materialist queering of onto/epistemology (see e.g. Barad 2007, 89, see also 5.2.1.3).

As it also becomes evident when Deleuze describes the concept of "symbiosis" as the way assemblages hold together by "contagions, epidemics, the wind" (Deleuze and Parnet 2007, 69, and as he already becomes slightly mocked by Harman, see Harman 2016, 49), the list of real phenomena neither are there to solely elicit the concept further, viz. they are more than mere instances; nor do they substitute the concept as such. The wind is not equal to the symbiosis, and neither is the ginger the same as the rhizome. But they are equally valent (see also below 4.1.2.1). They stand to each other in a rhizomatic relation, and as such are equipped to become involved in further entanglements, viz. they are ready grow. Nevertheless, in order not to confuse ontology with epistemology, for the rest of this project, it will be drawn upon Braidotti's suggestion of terms, and describe the Deleuzian (and Guattarian) writing style as fabulous/figurative.

So Deleuze and Guattari treat the knot in a rhizomatically figurating or fabulating manner, namely in form of a wolf. As they write, "you can't be one wolf, but only one wolf among others" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 32). Evidently, this is not to deny the existence of a wolf, of a knot; but it rather is to say that existence only every materializes within, namely within what the two French scholars call "multiplicities", packs, and what here is simply titled "web".

Being more precise, when Deleuze and Guattari negate the existence of "one wolf", it is not so much the wolf they write against, but rather the "one". The above cited sentence is short for saying that there is no such thing as "one" wolf; but there only is "a" wolf, namely a wolf among many wolves, whereby a wolf becomes "the" wolf, this or that wolf. Only ever in a pack does a wolf materialize, and become ontologically denotable. A wolf is a singularity, yes, but a singularity within. It materializes as a wolf by its relation to the other wolves, to the pack, viz. by its relations within. There hence are no entities, but only ever entities-within, namely knots. Wolves only ever exist within packs. Knots only ever exist within webs.

4.1.1.2 Reworking the Entity

The thesis that hence builds the fundament of the present project, and that is built on the fundament of especially hitherto NM, is: *All there is are webs and knots*. "Webs" and

"knots" shall be titled the only possible materializations of existence. In other words, existence shall be reduced to two, webs and knots.

However, this claim does not mean to take the conventionally known bifurcation of entities, if we remain Cartesians, humans and things, and merely substitute it with a new, another dualism of entities, that shall now be claimed to exist: webs and knots. It does not intend to state that some beings are webs and other beings are knots. The presently proclaimed thesis rather states that everything exists within (knot) and consists of (web) other things, so that existence only ever exists *as related*. And the other things of/in which a particular existence exists hence a not completely "other things", as also Hodder says (see Hodder 2016, 3), but one thing and another rather are threading through one another. Henceforth, webs and knots are not distinct kinds of entities, but they are that what queers the very concept of "entity". The other way around, by being the monism that unites them both, existence is that what queers webs and knots before they harden into a dualism.

Put differently, Barad is right when negating the concept of interaction and the whole separative ontology it implies. Yet, despite all the queerings she undertakes, she misses to queer the most basic units of her ontological thinking, namely relation and entity, which here are called web and knot. By understanding them as distinct categories of being, she forfeits to outline a steadfast alternative to interactive thinking, and rather reintroduces a hierarchy into her kind of ontology. However, as will be elicited in more depth below (see 4.1.2.2) by queering webs and knots, and seeing them as equivalent materializations of every existence, a rather rhizomatic ontology can be grown.

This ontology will allow to rework the commonsense dualism of human versus thing. But just as well does it enable a reworking of the other main dualism dominating fashion/dress theory, that has already been dealt-with in 2.2.2 and 2.2.3. A cloth is both, a knot in the web of fashion (fashion here is understood as a system that moves clothes in/out of our gusto), and a web consisting of fashion-knots. As a knot in the fashion web, a cloth comes and ceases to be in fashion, it moves from in to out to in. Presumably, it becomes worn more when it is a knot that currently is in fashion, and less when this cloth-knot is running out of fashion. This shows that, in contrast to how it is usually conceptualized (see 2.1.3), fashion is "enacted" (a term taken from the terminology of Karen Barad, see e.g. throughout Barad 2007) by and materializes via clothes, which makes it a deeply material phenomenon.

But the cloth also is a web, which consists of certain knots that presently are in fashion, as well as other knots that currently are less fashionable. For instance, the width of its sleeves might be of the latest trend that can now be found in the stores; whereas the length of its

body rather pertains to a trend longer ago. Fashion thus enacts distinct knots of the cloth in different ways, and thereby enacts the cloth as a web. Dependent upon what fashion-knots are presently preponderant within the cloth-web, whether the ones in fashion or the ones out of fashion, viz. whether the fashionable outweigh the non-fashionable knots or vice versa, the cloth-web as such is enacted as in/out of trends.

In commonsense thought, in daily life, we experience the world in entities. Yet as Deleuze already noted: "Experience gives us composites" (Deleuze 1991, 34). Thus, what we see as entities, as units, rather are composites. Or else, where we see entities, there in reality are composites, so it shall be stated. And by confusing a composite of webs/knots to be an entity, the ontology we have, viz. our access to reality remains "badly analyzed" (Deleuze 1991, 28). To such an ontology, also OOO can be assigned, as it adheres to the object as its primary matter of research despite seeing it as split.

To be more precise, OOO has already noted a "split" (Bryant 2011, 61) or "rift" (Harman 2007, 193) in existence. Bryant describes objects as a substance plus its qualities (see Bryant 2011, 68). And Harman claims: "Every object is both a substance and a complex of relations" (Harman 2005, 85). It is worth to remark here that although both OOOists coincide at observing two facets of existence, whereas Harman engages with the term "substance" to denote that what here is defined as a knot; Bryant engages with the latter term to rather describe a web of qualities. Reading both scholars through one another hints already to a queering of webs and knots, as it will be grown further below (see 4.2.2.2).

Yet OOO's definition of existence as primarily an object-entity first and foremost effectuates a bifurcation of reality into two kinds of realms, namely into the interior and the exterior of existence, the micro and the macro (see Barad 2007, e.g. 24, 70, 85) or, as Simondon names it, the "psychic" and the "collective" (Simondon 2009, 8-9).

For OOOists, the macro outweighs the micro in power, because as much as the being might be split within itself (e.g. into a substance and its qualities), it nevertheless is capable to act as a unified whole within, towards, and against its exterior lifeworld, from which it is split. In this regard, NMist DeLanda seems to join the ranks of OOOists when he writes about social assemblages:

> "The fact that in order to exercise their causal capacities […] assemblages must use people as a medium of interaction does not compromise their ontological autonomy any more than the fact that people must use some of their bodily parts […] to interact with the material world compromises their own relative autonomy from their anatomical components" (DeLanda 2006, 38).

Despite seeing existence as split, he adheres to its "ontological autonomy" from others, which he nevertheless alleviates to be "relative" in kind (see quote above).

This shows that OOO's object exists as split from others — Bryant, for instance, writes: "To be an object is […] to be distinguished from other things" (Bryant 2011, 61), whereby he discloses that for him, to be primarily means to exist independent from one's relations (see also ibid., 68), viz. to exist as split from others —, and only thereafter exists as split within itself (as we shall here: into webs and knots). Thereby, so one could write, OOO confuses the hierarchy immanent to Bergson's two differences (which will be introduced in 4.2.1.5), and puts the differing-from-others before the differing-from-oneself. What results therefrom bizarrely is a reinforcement of the being as entity, as unity and unit for research, because a being here is not only defined by its possession of a boundary (see Bryant 2011, 61), but being here becomes the boundary between micro and macro.

The present project therefore undertakes the task to indeed analyze the composite of the thing, the object, the being, which is held so dear by new materialists, material culture theorists, object-oriented ontologists, and especially dress theorists alike. By attending to it, not in contrast to the human (see 3.1.1.1), but rather as an overall category of being to which the human is subordinated (whereby we follow Bryant 2011, 61), the present project came to realize that the "entity" is not the only possible, and indeed not a proper approach to reality. It rather is just one approach to reality, viz. just one ontology, that gained enough fame to become accepted as "the" reality.

Another approach to reality shall therefore be grown here, which queers the entity and reworks it into webs and knots. Several voices within NM and indeed OOO (both in their widest sense) already hint to this queering, of which there can inter alia be quoted Deleuze, who writes: "Things […] are always composite" (Deleuze 2004a, 35); Simondon, who describes the living being as "a system within a system" (Simondon 2009, 8), and more figuratively as "both agent and theater of individuation" (ibid.); Bryant in stating that: "every object is also a crowd of objects" (Bryant 2011, ix, see also ibid., 26); and Heidegger, who defined the thing as a unit that unites, or as Hodder put it: "an entity that draws other entities together" (Hodder 2016, 4), whereby Hodder certainly refers to the section in *Holzwege* that says: "jenes, um das herum sich die Eigenschaften versammelt haben" (Heidegger 1977, 7). To subsume, whereas OOO effectuates a bifurcation of reality into a macro that is split into entities, each of which, in the micro, is split into what here is denoted as webs and knots, whereby OOO discloses to be quite a pyramiding ontology; the present project shall queer the micro and the macro, and claim that existence as such is split into webs and knots. When

Bryant thus claims the split to be "at the heart of all beings" (Bryant 2011, 61), putting it a Bergsonian manner, this statement shall not be understood in a spatial, but rather in a durative sense (for this distinction, see Deleuze 1991, 31, 34-35). Or describing it a Deleuzian and Guattarian way, it shall not be taken in an organistic, but rather in a holistic manner, not insofar as it concerns all beings, but insofar as it concerns the whole (assemblage) of being (see 3.2.1.2).

Put simply, by distinguishing between a split within objects and a split between objects, and by prioritizing the latter over the former, OOO reinforces the conceptualization of existence as an entity. Precisely this notion shall be reworked here, and it shall be shown that the being is neither within a split, nor is the split inherent in being; but *the split is immanent to being*. Thereby, the present project can be said to suggest a reconnection of OOO to Heidegger as the voice at its origin. The German phenomenologist describes (although a for him exclusively human, yet his conception is considered of help nevertheless) existence *as* the difference between *Sein* and *Seiendes* (see Heidegger 1982, 40). Therefrom we can deduce that none is within the other, not the being in the split nor the split within being. Instead, the being is *at* this split. It is this split. The split is all there is.

4.1.1.3 Queering Hyper-objects and "Hylo-objects"

OOOist Morton grew already the distinction between object and "hyperobject" (see Morton 2013), which, however, must neither be confused with the here grown knots and webs. By his distinction, Morton attempted to expand the object-oriented ontology as pioneered by Harman, viz. to take Harman's finding and put it onto a grander scale. Away from hammers (Heidegger 2006, 83-84) and cats (see Harman 2009, 189-195), and towards bigger worldly ongoings such as global warming (see Morton 2013, e.g. 3).

It hence is one of his writing's values of newness to take issues that so far were regarded as part of a world "in" which we are, and re-conceptualize them as objects, as things "with" which we are. Only that these objects are somewhat bigger than other objects. To delineate between common objects and the special category of objects, viz. the immense objects with which he preoccupies himself, Morton calls the latter "hyperobjects".

Morton's writings were an important correction of material-led research, that headed towards constructivism by dealing only with approachable and processable things, which it tended to understand as embedded in a worldly humdrum. Nevertheless, in his ontology, Morton adheres to the concept of the thing, the object, and only discerns between different

kinds of objects. And this distinction he undertakes via their size. A distinction between objects and hyperobjects hence remains *an introduction of a dualism based on dimensions*. It presupposes that the extent of hyper/objects is given, viz. that attributes are fixed within existence. Object x is immense in size, which makes it a hyperobject. Object y is small, it is graspable, tangible, visible, hence it is a normal object.

However, dimensions are never given. They are not statically inscribed into the essence of a being (see also 4.2.2.4). Global warming is immense, it makes complete icebergs melt; and it is only a hint, an atmosphere, that we can merely sense. But also this atmosphere can become immense, and can achieve to rule over a whole nation, even a continent, whereby it can become a far bigger manifestation of global warming than a simple phone that is charging, a singular car that is running, as well as a singular iceberg that is melting. This shows that dimensions rather are always on the move, so that, as will be deepened in 4.2.2, existences can split, to remain within Morton's terminology, from object to hyperobject to object, within only a second.

Henceforth, existence constantly diverges from the dimensions we usually ascribe to a simple object. A shirt never fully corresponds to its conventionally perceived borders. The shirt never simply is the shirt. But in its bubbling becoming, it always slightly diverges from itself. A shirt is wider in its dimensions than we so far assumed it to be. It is not determined by the borders of its fabric. But the shirt is bigger than the shirt. The shirt is a web of much effort spent growing and harvesting (e.g. for gathering cotton or linen), multiple hours of sewing, and immense amount of kilometers for transport. Thereby, the shirt by far exceeds the borders that we conventionally understand it to have. Some shirts even span over the globe, as they consist of e.g. Chinese yarn, Indian silk, American jeans, and German zippers. So a shirt can materialize as a hyperobject, an "over-object", so to speak.

But just as well can it become a "hylo-object", an "under-object". As such, the materializing halts of the shirt could be named, in which the shirt undercuts the borders via which conventional as well as object-oriented ontologies define it. Thinking Morton hence further, as a hylo-object, the shirt is smaller than the shirt. It is tinier in existence than we assumed. It is a web of knitted garn. It is a web of fabric and seams. And sometimes it reduces itself to a web of patches and yarn. Hence, the real shirt also is smaller than the shirt we hitherto took for granted. An existence can therefore not be defined by its dimensions, because it queers precisely these dimensions, namely by splitting into big and small and big, into hyper- and hylo- and hyper-object.

Whereas Morton hence intended his "hyperobject" to be a special kind of object, the "hyper" was rather reworked here into meaning that part by which the object exceeds not precisely "itself", as this would imply that there is an original self, an essence, which the object is capable to diverge from via its actions (a thesis that shall be reworked especially in 4.2.2.2); but rather *that part of its materialization by which an existence exceeds the borders by which we conventionally determine it*. In this vein, the mistake for which the present project shall accuse hitherto thing-approaches is that they were confusing their drawing of the thing's borders with the thing's own bordering, two happenings that at times can diverge immensely (in both the hyper- and the hylo-object directions) from one another.

This shows that the borders of what we hitherto saw as entities are a) elsewhere than we assumed, and b) only ever temporary, because splitting and jumping. A "cloth"-being hence is not demarcated by and thus not restricted to the silhouettes we find in our closets; but it rather is a constant bordering, a constant re/de-materializing, and as such is contingent. With every shifting of a border, new clothes are materializing.

4.1.1.4 The Clothing as Composite

In line with the presently growing web/knot-ontology, Human and cloth cannot be defined as two entities that exist as separate from one another and only once in a while come to interact. As Woodward and Greasley put it: "there is not always a clear separation between us and our clothing" (Woodward and Greasley 2015, 14). Humans and clothes flow into one another, and what is one and what is the other is but a temporary manifestation of an entangled splitting. In other words, where the cloth ends and the human starts, and where the human ends and the cloth starts, is only a matter of the current status of the clothing's becoming.

The human is in the cloth. She is the one who designed the cloth, who dresses and wears the cloth, who literally puts her body and self into the cloth, who undresses the cloth, who cares for the cloth (more or less), who washes it and irons it and folds it. Throughout the wearing, her knees make a legging's textile bulk; and this bulge remains within the leggings even when it long has been undressed and thrown over the clothes' chair in the human's dormitory (what role these specific "clothes-chairs" have in the clothing practice might be an interesting particular project worth to research). When the human rolls the sleeves up, the shirt's fabric crumples, and remains crumpled also when the shirt already resides on a laundry-pile. And when the human undresses a top before removing her makeup, the latter

leaves traces on the top, which the top might include until forever. This shows that there is not a single moment in the life of a cloth-web, in which it exists independent from the human-knot.

But the cloth not only is a web. It also is a knot within the human, which reveals the human to be a web. The human's posture and way of walking, how she behaves and how she talks, how she perceives herself and is perceived by others, in part is dependent upon the clothes she wears. As knots, clothes shape us. Very literally, they imprint themselves into us. When taking off our socks, we can observe a band of reddened and whitened stripes that decorate our calves. And when taking off a bra, we still are able to find out where its fastener and where its wires were located — are located.

With the course of time, when being habitually engaged with a particular cloth, it is just reasonable to expect that this cloth will permanently shape the human. When wearing high heels on a daily basis, difficulties arise for women when intending to take a sprint in usually flat-soled jogging shoes. And males that worriedly follow their hair thinning out, and out of social shame habitually rely on wearing a cap or hat in order to hide their scalp from unwanted glimpses, will find themselves entangled in the dilemma of accelerating the process of their hair loss by hat/cap-sealing the scalp off from air and sun. Put simply, who we are is determined to a high extent by what we wear, viz. by what clothes-knots partake in our human-web.

It was phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty who observed that a lady, when habitually wearing a feather on her hat "feels where the feather is in the same way as we feel our hands" (Merleau-Ponty 2005, 165). He thought he thereby would have found an evidence for the fact that by habituation, clothes became "appendages" (ibid., 104) of our complete-in-itself body, and that humans were able to master clothes: He wonderingly describes how feather-hat habituated women are able to move through rooms meanwhile instinctively protecting the feather from door frames and other things that threaten to break it off (see ibid., 165). Yet the true worth of Merleau-Ponty's remark lies in his equation of feather-hat as cloth and the human hand (see quote). It shall be argued that thereby, although he seemingly was not aware of this fact, he found a great evidence for the fact that within the clothing, the borders between distinct entities blur, of which "humans" and "clothes" are only the two most prominent characters.

Where precisely does the feather end and the hat start? When is a feather a feather-on-a-hat, and when is a feather a hat-feather? When is a hat a hat with a feather, and when is it a

feathered hat, a feather-hat? And where precisely does the lady end and the feather-hat start? Is it a lady that wears a hat, is it a lady with a hat, or is it a hat on a lady's head, a lady's hat, a lady-hat, a lady/hat?

What Merleau-Ponty's example shows is that entities cannot be strictly delineated from, but rather are constantly blurring with and flowing into one another. It indeed is a lady that wears a feather-hat. But it also is a feather that wears a hat wears a lady, only to become a hat that holds feather and dictates the lady how to hold herself. This is why trying to respond to the web of questions posed in the precedent paragraph will never lead to a singular solution that eventually can settle the issue. Each response given will remain a singularity-within, which is to say that at best, it materializes as an accurate ontological mapping of the present status of the becoming that takes place in reality, in which feather and hat and lady are entangled. Henceforth, the cloth exists within and consists of inter alia humans. And the human exists within and consists of inter alia clothes. Humans and clothes are knots within and webs shaped in part by each other. Put simply, "Who am I?" is enacted by "What clothes do I wear?"; and "What is a cloth?" is countered by "Who am I in them"?.

For this reason, there are not two entities, human and cloth, but there only is a composite being that is a human/cloth, viz. a clothing. This composite being indeed is sometimes more human than cloth. In such materializing halts, it is approximating reality to describe a human as dressing and wearing clothes. Yet the clothing-composite also becomes more cloth than human. And in such halts, it is more apt to write that the cloth is the one who dresses and wears the human.

MC finds itself on the same pathway of thought, which becomes graspable e.g. when Malafouris states: "sometimes it is the thing that becomes the extension of the person. At other times, it is the person that becomes the extension of the material agent" (Malafouris 2013, 147). And also his fellow MC theorist Tilley certainly touches upon a similar issue when writing: "[T]he thing is the person and the person is the thing" (Tilley 2006a, 63).

The concept of "clothing", in its narrow sense, shall refer to the relation that queers the entities of human and cloth. In its wider sense, the clothing is the monism that is enacted by and manifests as many more knots/webs, such as what we conventionally refer to be the entities of beaches, chairs, makeup, cafés, tattoos, towels, animals, sandwiches, jewelry, mirrors, or a complete opera house.

Yet even in its narrow sense, there are cases in the clothing existent in which more than two conventional categories of existences have to be read through one another. Such a case is

the one of a clothing in which fur partakes, that hence consists of the knots of human, thing, and animal. The very concept of "fur" (be it now authentic or fake), not only when found within a clothing, is a queering of human/animal/thing. As it has already been remarked by Seely (see Seely 2013, 253-255), here the human becomes animal, very Deleuzian (see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 264). The animal becomes human, it becomes involved in the very human concept of clothing, within which the animal becomes thing, namely a cloth, e.g. a jacket or part of a shoe. And the human becomes a thing-wearing creature, whereas she becomes herself a thing-y human, namely by not only wearing, but becoming animal. However, for the present purposes, it shall be focused on queering the human/thing dualism, because these two categories are the ones most present in the clothing, and a reworking of which is due to the popularity of Cartesianism most pending.

We shall hence take this border-blurring between entities serious, and instead of understanding it as an inaccuracy of measuring, it shall here become raised to an ontological fact. What exists hence are not two entities, but it is a blurring. And precisely this blurring reworks the clothing relation from a hierarchy to a rhizome.

4.1.2 The Clothing Rhizome

4.1.2.1 Rhizome versus Flatness

The definition of humans and clothes as webs of and knots within each other necessarily entails a reworking of conventional and hierarchized notions of the clothing, that rule over fashion/dress theory since its onset, into what shall be called a "rhizomatic" clothing conception.

Above in 4.1.1.1, the "rhizome" was described to be a figurative manner of writing, engaged with by Deleuze and Guattari. This writing style is characterized by an equalizing, a flattening in rank of thesis and example. Yet, as it certainly became already evident in 3.1.2, the rhizome by far is not restricted to a methodological tool. Instead, the rhizome is a kind of relation, of which the relation of thesis and example is just one manifestation, as is the relation of humans and clothes. That, in fact, the clothing as well as the writing can be grown rhizomatically is another manifestation of NM's queering of ontology and epistemology.

Whereas OOO brought forth the concept of an ontological "flatness" (see Bryant 2011, 73, 88; Morton 2011, 165), which was already adapted by new materialist DeLanda (see

DeLanda 2006, 28); the present project shall adhere to the Deleuzian concept of the rhizome. Both concepts have in common that they rework any hierarchical conception of reality. However, just to be clear here, their thesis must not be mistaken as claiming that everything is equal. Human and cloth are not equal in the sense of the same. But as we will see in 4.2, the human in one cloth is also not the same as the human in another cloth. There hence might be no such thing as "sameness", at least not in its sense of an essence, a static and unchangeable identity. Instead of an equality, as it has already been outlined in 3.1.5.2, both OOO and NM rather mean to suggest an "equivalence". Humans and clothes are not the same, but they are worth the same.

Yet for this equivalence, the two schools of thought argue in different manners. OOO's flatness unites all forms of existence by their withdrawal into themselves, whereby even hyperobjects are revealed to be (just another kind of) objects, e.g. when Morton writes: "Hyperobjects are not just collections, systems, or assemblages of other objects. They are objects in their own right" (Morton 2013, 2). OOO's flatness hence creates a "democracy of objects" (Bryant 2011, 19) in which no object is more or less an object than any other, viz. in which every object is equally existent in its object-hood (see Bryant 2011, 73, 88).

Deleuze's rhizome rather equalizes all beings in their relationality, viz. in their relating to each other. In short, flatness means to say that everything is equivalent but detached, that everything is equivalent in, because of their detachment. In contrast, the rhizome states that everything is equivalent but, in, because of being related. Whereas OOO hence results in a research of entities; the rhizome rather allows for the present research of webs and knots.

For this reason, the rhizome shall be engaged with here, and it shall be refined for the present purposes as meaning that because of existing within and of each other, viz. in their web/knot existence, humans and clothes are equally valent. The phenomenon of the clothing can hence not only be considered to stand in a rhizomatic relation to the ontological approach of webs and knots; but the clothing materializes as, viz. is a rhizome in reality.

The present project thus queers the exclusive ontology of OOO (objects > relations) with the hierarchic (relation > parts) ontology of hitherto NM. Based on this queering, it grows a rather inclusive and rhizomatic ontology, that holds that everything materializes with/in other things, viz. that everything that exists, exists only as related. And as everything is related to other things, the very concept of "thing" is queered, and reworked into a web/knot.

4.1.2.2 Rhizomizing Webs and Knots

In order to show that in their web/knot-existence, humans and clothes stand to each other in a rhizomatic relation, we first have to "rhizomize" webs and knots, viz. to show that there is no web before the knot, and no knot before the web, but that as soon as a web materializes, it does so as a web-of-knots, and that as soon as a knot materializes, it does so as a knot-in-a-web. Having done that, we can rework the clothing into a rhizome, and show that as soon as a cloth materializes, it involves also (mostly more than) a human-knot in it; and that the human incessantly involves clothes-knots within her being. Only thereafter, yet this will be postponed to 4.1.3, can we treat the fact that there indeed is no human-web without clothes-knots, and neither is there a cloth-web without human-knots, although crucially, this does not mean to say that clothes and humans always necessarily exist simultaneouslyas webs and as knots within each other.

In 4.1.1.1 above, hitherto new materialist literature that evidences existence as split into webs and knots has been detected and aligned to. Yet precisely at the point of rhizomizing the relation of webs and knots, the present project departs from NM in its given forms, that rather place the web as superior to the knot.

To just exemplarily list new materialist voices (more or less in the cartography's milieu) that set the web prior to the knot, feminist new materialist scholar Grosz for instance writes: "The possible is ideally preexistent, an existence that precedes materialization" (Grosz 2005, 107). Barad writes: "Hidden behind the discrete and independent objects of the sense world is an entangled realm" (Barad 2012d, 8). Dolphijn and van der Tuin even define NM as "a natureculture metaphysics of the ontologically prior" (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012, 92). And also Simondon speaks of a "pre"-individual being as individuating itself (see Simondon 2009, 11).

Remaining within the terminology of Simondon, NM reworks conventional "hylomorphic" into an "atomistic" thinking. Whereas hylomorphism poses the knot before the web, and thus sketches an interactive ontology; atomism grants the web "ontological privilege" (ibid., 4) before the knot, and as such is an intra-active model of thought (for the Baradian distinction between inter/intra-action, see 1.1). Similar to the quoted new materialists, Simondon sides with atomism — a stance that becomes apparent when he writes: "instead of understanding individuation starting from the individual being, the individuated being must be understood starting from individuation" (ibid., 10).

However, the problem with these intra-active (Barad) or atomistic (Simondon) voices is that in describing webs as existent before, behind, above knots, they solely turn the conventional causality around: They depart from putting knots before webs, but continue to position webs before knots. Thereby, they remain within a linear and hence hierarchic thinking of webs and knots. One is above and before the other, only that the other and the one exchange positions. This, in fact, shall be reworked here, namely by queering and hence rhizomizing interactive and intra-active approaches, by reading hylomorphic and atomistic thought through one another.

It thus shall be claimed that there are neither knots before webs, nor webs before knots; but that knots only ever exist within webs, and webs consist of knots, viz. that webs only exist as soon as at least not "one" (see the wolf above, 4.1.1.1), but "a" knot is entangled in it. Knots and webs are mutually dependent on one another in their re/de/materialization. Knots need webs to materialize, and webs need knots to materialize. A knot outside of a web is not a lonely knot, a knot in the void. It is no knot anymore. It ceases to exist. And a web deprived of all knots does not become a vacant container waiting to be refilled, driving around like an empty school bus that handed all kids already over, a ghost-like existence. No, a web without knots dematerializes. Thus, as soon as one dematerializes, the other dematerializes with it, the web with the knot and the knot with the web.

A knot can only come into existence within a web, so far hitherto NM is correct. Yet NM is incorrect in deducing therefrom that a web has to exist beforehand in order to allow a knot to materialize. Instead, knot and web only ever materialize in symbiosis, in alliance (see Deleuze as quoted in 4.1.1.1) with one another. As soon as a web materializes, it materializes *as a web*, viz. as made of knots. Thus, at least a singular knot has to exist therein, and come into existence therein. In other words, NM is right in putting entities within relations, and claiming that there is no thing if there is no relation. But neither is there a relation devoid of relata. A relation without relating and related things does not exist. Hence, a web needs knots in order to come into existence. And as soon as a knot materializes, it materializes *as a knot*, which per definition never exists alone, but within a web, which is why a web materializes in simultaneity, in symbiosis with the knot.

Henceforth, without a pack, there is no wolf. But neither is there a pack without a wolf. As soon as there is a wolf, there is a pack. And as soon as there is a pack, there is a wolf. Packs are made of wolves. And wolves are made to live in packs, viz. cannot live if they do not live within a pack. Hence, as soon as and as long as a wolf exists, it resides within a pack. And the pack ontologically is within the wolf, shapes the wolf, turns the wolf into a wolf.

The web is nothing ontologically superior, prior to, or even independent from the knots therein. And knots are not only ontic facets of webs, as OOOist Bryant suggests when claiming that a substance is independent from its qualities, but that the qualities can only materialize in dependence to a substance (see Bryant 2011, 77). Simondon already hints to the equivalence of webs and knots when he writes that: "a relation is […] of the same mode of being as the individual" (ibid., 4). There is no ontological hierarchy between webs and knots existent. Instead, knots exist within webs and webs exist of knots, viz. knots and webs only ever exist in dependence to one another.

Thus, a web is not a leviathan which exists independent of what happens within itself, or stands superior to all its knots. It is not solely a space provider for the construction of and engagement between knots. Instead, a web is sensitive to and becomes affected by the knots that materialize within it. With every shifting that takes place within its borders, the web becomes.

A clothing-web is enacted by the human- and cloth-knots that are blurring within it. If the cloth-knot is too tight for the human-web, or if a T-Shirt-knot is too long to be tugged easily, flow smoothly into, and become invisible underneath a tight skirt-web, the overall clothing-web diminishes in such aspects as comfort, elegance, beauty, and Heidegger's "Zuhandenheit" (see Heidegger 2006, 69). This discloses that a web is not an unassailable being, which imposes itself from above over its knots; but rather a democratically voted assemblage, enacted not "from below", but by the knots that stand with it on an equivalent footing. In fact, it is precisely because of their capacity to mutually enact one another that webs and knots are rhizomatically related.

And neither is the web a static entity. It is not a given frame into which knots are immersed or embedded. Rather, webs are constantly re/de-enacted by the knots that are parking within them. This makes a web not a given matter, but a constantly shifting materialization, so to say, an ongoing re-re-re-configuration of the intra-actions happening therein. Hence why also Barad describes entanglements as "never closed, never finished" (Barad 2014, 169). In short, knots are enacted by and within webs; but also webs are constantly made and remade by the knots residing within their borders.

It is precisely in order to thinkingly materialize and directly convey these rhizomatics that the terms "web" and "knot" are engaged with. Webs and knots are defined via each other: Webs are those beings that consist of knots, and knots are those beings that exist in webs. What is a web? A web is something that is made of knots. A web is of knots. A web is knots. And what is a knot? A knot is a being in a web. A knot is in a web. A knot is a web. Hence,

the concept of "web" straightly implies the question: What is it made of?, and leads us to the knots it as web consists of. And a knot directly asks: Wherein?, and thus has its focus on and steers our focus onto the web in which it exists. Henceforth, "knots" and "webs" directly convey their dependence upon one another. A web is a multiplicity-of, and a knot is a singularity-within.

When thus Wong writes that: "each thing, each body, is actually a mosaic-like assemblage of other bodies" (Wong 2015, 9), we shall add to her statement: And each thing is a mosaic sliver in another thing. When Bennett speaks of Spinzoa's bodies as "modes of a common substance" (Bennett 2010, 117), her thinking shall be continued here by defining a substance as a compound of bodies. When Haraway writes that: "beings do not pre-exist their relatings" (Haraway 2003, 6), we have to add: Neither do relations pre-exist their beings. And when Deleuze claims that a being "is never separable from its relations" (Deleuze 1988, 125), it is necessary to complete his statement by claiming that the relation neither is separable from the being.

4.1.2.3 A Trick of Thought

So far, the post-thing-ism grown here was specified as consisting of the elementary bricks of webs and knots (4.1.1.1), and these two bricks were rhizomized, viz. were conceptualized as equivalent (4.1.2.2). It now remains to outline in detail how to ontologically approach an existence in its webs/knots-manifestations, viz. how to shift from conventional "thing-isms" to a post-thing-ism.

Two ontological stances are available for selection. Conventional interactive ontology begins its thinking with entities, in order to follow them to the web in which they exist. A bunch of houses make up a village. Several cows are a herd. Top and trousers and shoes create an outfit. And thousands of grass blades enact a meadow, so it is understood. Yet, as already shown in the former section of this chapter, NM tells us the opposite: Webs are prior to knots. There first is the meadow, which enacts the grass blades. There is the herd, in the society of which existent cows survive and procreate, and calves are born. There is the outfit, that attracts certain and repels other clothes. And there is a village, which draws new inhabitants near, and allows their homes and lives to materialize in its shelter.

Which ontological stance rightly depicts reality? What are we to follow, conventional interactive ontology (a thinking-in-entities) or the new materialist intra-active (web>knot) ontology? Before these two approaches consolidate a methodological dualism, they shall be

read through one another here. Instead of excluding one in favor of the other, in the present growing thinking trick, both shall be included. In a new materialist manner, the now materializing ontology does not say "either or"; but it rather says "and … and … and …" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 27).

Put thus simply, both ontological stances are partially correct, and partially incorrect. Conventional interactive ontology is correct in showing that entities enact webs, and NM is right in understanding webs as enacting entities, which here are already turned into knots. The only mistake they both make is that they stop here, in this one-sided and linear depiction of reality. Thereby, they miss to see that causality is circular: Several cows make up a herd, and without a herd, hoofed animals could not survive. Several houses enact a village, and the house was built precisely at that spot because of the village's shelter and infrastructure. So meanwhile conventional interactive ontology begins thinking in entities and only thereafter comes to their web; NM's intra-active ontology sets in at a web and follows it down to its knots. However, in order to understand that every existence is both a web-of-knots and a knot-in-webs, it is necessary to read both hitherto ontologies through one another. Both approaches shall thus be queered now. And as thinking has to set in at one point, *the sequence of their queering is of crucial importance*.

If thinking would begin with conventional interactive thought, and spot a being as an entity to thereafter come to see its web, it would fall into OOO's trap of understanding the world as made of autonomously existing houses, cows, clothes, beings, things, viz. of entities that first exist in separate bubbles, in order to then meet each other and create webs. And as true essences, they are free to depart anytime from one another without becoming intrinsically affected or altered by this departure. Yet despite the claims of OOO, there is no autonomy, no vacuum. There are no interactions.

For this reason, it is suggested here to begin thinking with NM's web>knot intra-active ontology. This means to say that thinking should set in at selecting an existence, a house or an outfit, and start perceiving it as the web that it is, and as which it shapes its knots. The structure of the house determines the usage of the rooms it contains. And the outfit decides about e.g. the aesthetics of the participating clothes.

This is the ontology that, up to the point of writing, new materialists suggest. However, if kept as that, this ontology remains hierarchic. Its only achievement is it to turn the hierarchy of conventional interactive ontology around. Whereas the latter sets entities prior to webs; NM, in its hitherto form, understands webs as prior to knots. Yet this is not the case. As the former section elicited in detail, webs and knots are not hierarchically, but rhizomatically

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related. Without knots, there are no webs. If there are no cows, there is no herd. And if there are no houses, there is no village. Webs and knots hence are equivalent because mutually dependent on one another in their very existence. Therefore, the aspiration of the presently materializing ontology is it to rhizomize the hierarchy, that so far was inherent in both hitherto approaches, and that is perceived as not corresponding to reality.

For this reason, NM's web>knot intra-active ontology, viz. the new materialist ontology that sees webs as enacting knots, shall be not precisely "combined", as this term implies a simple addition, a linear sequence, but rather "queered" with conventional interactive ontology, which remarkably *by this queering* is morphing into a knot>web enactive ontology. This means that after having observed a being in its web-materialization, and the knots it enacts as such, the next step to undertake is to observe the same being in its knot-materialization, and the webs it enacts. Residing within the village, the house takes part in forming the village. Partaking in an outfit, the singular cloth shapes the outfit. And currently being located in a train wagon, the outfit determines e.g. the heat, crowdedness, and smell of the latter. Only by this queering of new materialist/conventional ontologies does it become possible to truly approximate existence *in its splitness*.

Hence, the ontological sequence suggested here is the one of thinking an existence first as a web and follow it to its knots (NM's web>knot intra-active ontology), and then perceive an existence in its knot-materialization and let its current web materialize (conventional interactive turned knot>web enactive ontology). Thereby, both hitherto ontologies are queered, and a truly multi-directionally enactive ontology materializes.

If the ontology here suggested would first approach an existence in its knot-materialization, it would run the risk of thinking in autonomous entities. And if it would restrict itself to hitherto new materialist intra-active ontology, it would remain structuring reality in a hierarchical manner. Yet by its queering, the present approach is safeguarded from both risks. Nevertheless, this sequence remains an ontological tool, so to say, a "trick of thought", which as such remains within the sector of epistemology and shall be related to by keeping in mind that in reality, there is no such strict successionism given.

4.1.2.4 The Equivalence in/of Clothings

When webs and knots stand in a rhizomatic relation, what does this mean for the clothing? It means that A) there neither is a human nor a cloth apart from the clothing; but also that there is no clothing prior to humans/clothes. It means that B) humans and clothes are

equivalent webs/knots within the clothing web. And it means that C) also the clothing is a knot that stands in a rhizomatic relation to other webs/knots. These three facets of the present thesis shall be elicited in what follows.

A) The clothing rhizomatics begin to grow by the finding that neither humans nor clothes own an identity in and for themselves, viz. independent from the clothing-web. Instead, who the human is and what the cloth is, is determined to a high extent by (their position within) the clothing.

The clothing identifies clothes and humans, it takes part in ascribing them temporary identities. Therefore, we shall join Deleuze and Guattari in stating: "A man can never say: 'I am a bull, I am a wolf …' But he can say: 'I am to a woman what the bull is to a cow, I am to another man what the wolf is to the sheep.'" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 261). Yet this relationalist statement does not only apply for humankind alone; and the nonhuman sphere does not solely serve as food for metaphors. Instead, it holds true for humans and nonhumans, for humans and clothes alike.

A human is neither tall nor small, a cloth is neither tight nor wide. But every attribute can only ever be ascribed to a singular knot "in relation to" other materializations with which it is engaged in a clothing web. A cloth is tight for one human, yet wide for another. It is tight-er than one cloth but wide-r than another. A human is too small for one cloth, yet too tall for another. She is taller than one human, and smaller than another.

This reveals the clothing to be a web, which does not interactively result from a meeting of non-dressed humans and non-worn clothes. Instead, the clothing is within us, and humans and clothes are within the clothing as soon as, even before a human is born and a cloth is designed. Or else, because of the fact that humans and clothes can only ever be pinned down within the clothing, in order to find out about clothes and indeed also humans, a "detour" via the clothing must be taken.

A cloth is designed within and into a clothing web. On the one hand, this clothing web consists of clothes. The other clothes that already exist enact it as the cloth that it is. A new pullover is designed in comparison to the pullovers existent, only that e.g. its torso is cut a little shorter than the others. Or a new shirt is designed in analogy to the one's existent, but its sleeves-knots are widened, which makes it a new cloth-web. And once they exist, these new clothes also alter the clothes that existed beforehand, define them afresh, turn them into new clothes, that are perceived anew. Once there exists a comparably short-cut pullover, the

elder pullovers, that might until that date were simply "pullovers", now become "long-cut pullovers". And the wide-sleeved shirt turns the other shirts into "tight-sleeved" ones.

Clothes are made to clothe, to dress and to wear. Clothes are designed to and hence driven by the urge to become engaged in outfits. The cloth is a knot in an outfit. But the outfit also is a knot within the cloth. This can already be detected within the material cultural writings of Woodward, who claims that an outfit (and its comfort) is a combination of items plus a "complex interplay within the surface of each item" (Woodward 2005, 32). The outfit is hence not an existence that is anyhow bigger than the cloth. But outfit and shirt are rhizomized in their existences as webs/knots within each other.

The cloth shapes the outfit, it takes part in determining the sort of outfit as which the latter is materializing. A chic outfit, e.g. a suit, becomes something else when it is combined with white sneakers. It moves out of the business sphere and rather enters the scene of pop, not anymore a choice made by e.g. sales representatives, but rather a choice that became popular inter alia for German folkloric singers, that aspire to manage the bridge from elder to younger audience. And what kind of existence a cloth is, is determined to a high extent by the outfits within which it partakes. White sneakers, combined with a suit, become another sort of shoes than when combined with a bleached and straight-legged jeans plus an oversized and purple-mint-colored jogging blouson. If judging harshly, we could say: One is intending to be hip, the other is hip-ster.

But this clothing web a new cloth is designed into does not consist exclusively of clothes. Instead, also humans enact (the design of) a new cloth. Even if she is not the most decisive knot, she still is a knot engaged in the drawing, cutting, sewing of clothes. And all these actions she undertakes in correspondence to herself, in the aspiration to align the cloth to her body, its dimensions, its way of moving, and its habitual actions. Therefore, clothes and clothings are entangled. A cloth shapes and is shaped by the clothing, the humans/clothes relation, as soon as, even before it is sewn.

Similarly, when a new human is born, sometimes even before she is begotten, her parents-to-be collect clothes for her to be born and grow into. These tiny clothes help the parents prepare themselves for the change in life that is awaiting them, also because these clothes materialize the human even before she materializes as a properly visible human herself.

Throughout her life, the human cannot choose to clothe, but she is bound to do so, whether this might be out of social or out of environmental reasons. Precisely this inevitability of the clothing has led the latter to become an often non-scrutinized part of our human being, so it shall be stated, yet so it must be left for another, potentially better OOO-tending project to

scrutinize. And even what she clothes, viz. what clothes she engages with, what clothes she relates to herself and to the other clothes she wears, is a decision that is not entirely determined by human will, but is also shaped by the clothes themselves, the ones that are accessible and the ones that allow to be combined with each other. There is no blank page, no void, no "nothingness", as Barad calls it (see Barad 2017), but humans and clothes are ontologically entangled in the clothing web.

Henceforth, in their very existence, humans/clothes-knots are dependent upon the clothing-web. And as long as they partake with this web, they are capable to alter this web. Nevertheless, as will be further elicited in 4.2.3, humans/clothes-knots indeed are capable to jump out of a clothing. They might then either jump into another clothing, and continue their existence as humans/clothes, although they thereby become other humans/clothes. They might jump into another kind of web, whereby they become something else, viz. other kinds of knots. And if they do not manage to jump into any other web, viz. if they exit all relations, they dematerialize.

Why the human does not jump out of the clothing when she is naked must be left for 4.1.3.1 to elicit. In fact, even dead people are buried in clothes, and leave behind a whole collection of clothes that survive them. What happens to these material leftovers of a human life? If they are still "clotheable", they remain within the clothing and are handed down to others. They begin a new chapter in their life, as new clothes, worn in new outfits and by a new person (see Martach and Taavitsainen 2018). If they are not clotheable anymore, they cease to be clothes. They exit the clothing web, and become something else. The "things" that formerly owned the identity of clothes then become something else, another knot in a different kind of web, maybe rags, maybe tatters, maybe trash, until they dematerialize altogether.

In sum, facet A) of the present clothing rhizomatics states that there is no human/cloth apart from the clothing; and neither is there a clothing devoid of humans/clothes. As soon as a clothing materializes, it brings along humans and/or clothes. And as soon as a human and/or a cloth materializes, it brings along other humans and other clothes, viz. it brings along, it materializes a clothing. There hence is no autonomy, but only an ontological relatedness. And precisely this relatedness of humans and things becomes especially apparent in the clothing, so it is opined.

B) So far, we have demonstrated the rhizomatics between humans/clothes and the clothing. Based thereupon, and based upon the thesis grown throughout 4.1.1 that everything exists

as a web and as a knot, it now shall be shown that the human is a web in which clothes play a role, and that the cloth is a web in which humans play a role. Crucially, the existence of both humans and clothes as consisting-of and residing-within, viz. as web/knot implies the equivalence of humans and clothes within the clothing.

Growing a clothing rhizome on the one hand alters the way in which the human is understood to be in the cloth. Instead of being the decisive knot partaking within the cloth-web; as it has already been mentioned some paragraphs earlier, the human is only "one knot among many". Apart from the human, many other knots are involved in the cloth, to which the human becomes leveled. A cloth hence can materialize as web which consists of buttons and collar and human and sleeves and torso. It can materialize as a web consisting of textile and skin and a car seat and sweat. And as we will see in chapter 4.1.3.2, it can also materialize as a web of wardrobe and pile and human and mothball and other clothes piled up above/underneath it.

On the other hand, the human was conventionally also seen as the knot that primarily determines the clothing web. It was taken for granted that she is the one who clothes herself with clothes, and that the cloth is the device that clothed the human. The cloth was considered a mere instrument, engaged with e.g. to find, to modify, and to potentially even enhance the human appearance (although this does not always function successfully, as Guy and Banim found that clothes are experienced as both, "enjoyment and frustration", Guy and Banim 2000, 323), or to construct and express, to convey and conceal selected parts of her identity (see 2.3). Clothes hence were regarded as mere functional means to an end, and the end was the human.

What fell into oblivion thereby is that clothes also enact us, they are within us as much as we are within them. In the designing process, by being attributed with certain shapes and fabrics, and even more so during repeated wearing-washing-folding-wearing cycles, the cloth develops "skills". Yes, sometimes it allows to be easily handled, it grants us smooth clothing relations. But at other times, it can be quite stubborn, hinder us, inhibit us, even without us becoming aware thereof. Hence, rather than being numb servants that we humans can use for any purpose we like; clothes also design humans. They decisively shape us, themselves, the clothing relation, and other clothes therein.

By equating feather/hat with hand (see again Merleau-Ponty 2005, 165, as already cited in 4.1.1.4), Merleau-Ponty already started to level the commonsense Cartesian prioritization of humans over things. The moment in which he takes the wrong turn is only when he therefrom concludes that the hat, as much as the hand, is a part of our body, whereby he reintroduces

the hierarchy just flattened and reveals the bodily self to be his direction of research, en route to which hand and hat are met as constituting devices.

Half a century later, Entwistle's considerations hint towards the same direction, namely an equivalence of humans and clothes. She achieved already to take into consideration that the cloth we are talking about mostly is a cloth that is on the human, and that the human we are talking about mostly is a human in a cloth. Yet also she falls into the "body trap", as the prioritization of the human over the cloth, which could roughly be subsumed as arguing for by a "double power" of human mind plus body versus the cloth as simple gadget, to which all kinds of embodiment approaches to the clothing seem to lead (see 2.3.2), could be called. However, when taking the embodiment approach a step back in its own trajectory of thought, the rhizomatics of humans and clothes can already be forefelt.

Put differently, some hitherto existent clothing conceptualizations exclusively saw the knotting of the human within the cloth. In this literature, the human was said to shape the cloth, to be within the cloth wherever it goes and whatever it does. The cloth was only a web enacted by humans, and it was not seen that the cloth also is a knot that enacts the human-web. The knotting, shaping actions of the cloth were only phenomenologically felt, but not scholarly researched.

Other clothing conceptualizations however reduced the human to a web, and described her as having some cloth-knot-minions that enacted her. To these voices, again Merleau-Ponty can be counted, e.g. when writing: "If I did not take off my clothes, I could never see the inside of them, and it will in fact be seen that my clothes may become appendages of my body" (Merleau-Ponty 2005, 104). Although he indeed touches a point of truth thereby, his statement contains two troubling points.

On the one hand, Merleau-Ponty plays with an eventuality. His statement is an if-clause. Yet it shall be claimed here that clothes indeed are "appendages" of our bodily, material being. They are knots of the webs we understand as selves, and are capable of affecting us so strongly, not if we never undressed them; but although, and maybe even precisely because we are entangled in a constant un/dressing and wearing of clothes, because "[w]e think nothing of it but we are forever putting on and taking off items of clothing" (Corner 2014, 50).

On the other hand, and here the anthropocentrism in the phenomenologist's statement, for which he was accused already in 4.1.1.4 above, and which led him to conceptualize the clothing similar to the adornment (see 2.1.1), as a surplus which is nice to have, yet without which the human is still intact, is queered: In addition to clothes being our appendages, it

shall be claimed here that also we are appendages of the cloth-webs within which we intra-act. Appendage implies a belonging, a dependency. And this dependency is defined here to be not unidirectional, but multi-directional, viz. universally ontological. There is no autonomy, but everything that is, is dependent on.

In the present day, MC theorist Woodward seems to sing from the same song sheet as Merleau-Ponty once did when writing that: "through wearing, […] the clothing becomes integral to being a part of her" (Woodward 2005, 33, "her" represents one of her test persons, who is described at that point), and that: "the clothing is able to 'become' the wearer" (ibid.). Yet elsewhere, she walks a step further than the phenomenologist and reveals to see a certain reciprocity within the clothing relation, as when she describes her test person as being part of the clothing logic (see ibid., 37). Nevertheless, conceptualizing the clothing in a rhizomatic manner, which is based upon a blurring of identities, a "porosity" as Woodward herself writes (ibid., 33; see also Woodward and Greasley 2015, 3), is left also by Woodward for others to undertake.

In the present web/knot-ontology, the designing — a topic which due to a lack of knowledge (see 1.1) shall be left for another project to deepen — materializes as a web within which humans and clothes intra-act and shape each other. The human-knot enacts the cloth-web. As already described above, she designs it according to the measurements of her body. The human's knotting within the cloth is hence materializing in a very immediate and tangible way directly in the beginning of the cloth's life. The human's knotting manifests in the materializing of the cloth.

But also the cloth-knot enacts the human-web. Its fabric determines the way in which it allows to be handled, viz. the kind of scissors the human has to use in order to be able to cut it, or the thickness of the needle that is necessary in order to sew its pieces together. The cloth hence is not solely a web enacted by the human, but it also is a knot within its own designing process, and hence shapes part of the designing actions that are conventionally ascribed to the human. Therefore, the human that is usually described as "the designer" is also here but one knot among many, that together partake in the "growing" (see 3.1.2.1) of the design, and eventually in the materialization of the cloth.

In the dressing and wearing, the weaving into each other of human and cloth becomes even more apparent. As a knot, the human literally puts herself into the cloth. And precisely by this action, she grants the cloth the permission to act as a knot within her self-web for as long as she continues to wear it, and sometimes even longer (see 4.1.1.3 and 4.2.2.4). The

human is taller and bigger in one outfit, and smaller and thinner in another. In a wearing web, the human determines the dimensions of the cloth. A cloth becomes immense when worn by a filigree human, but becomes tiny when engaged with a voluminous human. And the cloth also determines the dimensions of the human. Sometimes a human becomes big in tight clothes and filigree, almost "lost" in wide clothes. At other times, she becomes big in wide clothes, but rather thin in tight clothes. Hence, humans and clothes rhizomatically enact each other, and enact each other afresh with every new clothing web they join, and every knot that enters/exits the clothing web in which they engage.

But clothes not only engage with humans. They also engage with each other, be that now within an outfit on a singular human, or within a train wagon meanwhile residing on several humans, or even in a wardrobe meanwhile residing not on humans but on hangers (4.1.3.2). A cloth does not easily relate to every other cloth. There are other clothes that a particular cloth smoothly relates to, such as a high-cut jeans to a short top. Then there are clothes that a cloth resists to relate to, such as a long top which crumples and bucks when tucked into that jeans. And then there are clothes that a particular cloth thwarts to be related to, such as a jeans and a skirt — either you dress one or the other.

For this reason, we do not "apply" clothes, but we relate to clothes meanwhile already entangled in the clothing. We humans are not "the monarchs of being" (Bryant 2011, 40). We are not the "masters" of the clothing, and neither are we able to be in complete control over the clothes we relate with. If we dress a pullover, a "pull-over", this cloth dictates our movements in order for us to be able to successfully get ourselves into it, and it onto ourselves. The tighter the pullover becomes, the more ruling are its dictates. If we wear a coat, we are not in control of how it bulks in our backs with the wind. The longer and more voluminous a coat becomes, the more determined and uncontrollable its waywardness.

Indeed, sometimes we can master a clothing. But this is an achievement, not a god-given gift we are born with and remain applying throughout our clothing lives. Understanding a specific humans/clothes-web in order to steer it into the directions we wish it to head rather is a task that has to be extensively worked on, and that constantly has to be maintained up-to-date (see therefore also 5.2.3), as with every next second, the clothing can involve, or can have departed from another knot. Put differently, the capacity to steer the clothing into a wished-for direction is not an unlimited resource owned exclusively by humans, but rather a limited one, which is shared by and fought for among all clothing-partaking knots. The means for achieving not control over, but an idea of what in reality takes place within the

clothings in which we find ourselves entangled as but one knot among many, shall be approximated in the present project.

For this aim, the present rhizomatic clothing account grants every happening within the clothing equal attention. Apart from continuing to take into account how humans enact clothes; it also wishes to shed light onto how clothes affect us in ways and moments that we so far did not see, whereby it hopefully will be possible to explain why we not only feel, but are different people when wearing different clothes. Yet in order to be able to access this rhizomatic entangling of humans-in-clothes and clothes-in-humans, a serious re-reading and leveling of the conventional role allocations depicted as existing within the clothing is needed.

C) Up to now, we depicted humans and clothes as webs/knots within the clothing-web. However, this must not be mistaken as if the present ontology would claim that the clothing is the one and only, the objective web, to which all other knots must be subordinated. The present approach is not pyramiding but rhizomatic in kind, and the clothing is not restricted to its web-materialization, but it also materializes as a knot within webs. By these webs, the clothing is affected. The relation we entertain to clothes materializes differently dependent upon whether it materializes at home in front of the mirror, or on a podium, exposed to the eyes of a crowd of strangers. It might be that at alone at home we were persuaded by a particular dress; yet shortly before stepping in front of people, we come to hesitate about our clothing decision.

Besides, the clothing also affects the webs in which it partakes as a knot. If we are cooking tomato sauce, this cooking-web might be inhibited when wearing a white blouse, and it might be liberated by a grey college hoodie. Yet things are not as easy as that, precisely because a "thing" can do both, inhibit and liberate the tomato sauce cooking. It thus shall be stated that how the cloth partakes in the cooking web is shaped not by an identity it inherently owns, but rather by the relation we entertain with it, viz. upon the clothing.

If the white blouse is our latest boutique catch, indeed an investment, yet one that we took because we are absolutely persuaded by that blouse, then it will certainly inhibit the cooking. However, if that blouse is the latest Christmas present from our mother-in-law, whom we dislike as a character as much as we dislike her clothing taste, then it might indeed not inhibit the cooking at all. And if we opine that we look a bit too adult already for wearing an the old grey college hoodie, and thus wanted to donate it either way, then it will not inhibit the cooking. But just as possible is it that we hold that hoodie dear, because it is loaded with a

lot of amusing college-memories, which is why we would be unhappy if its greyness would be red-dotted. In the latter case, the hoodie will indeed inhibit the cooking. Hoodie and blouse can hence enact the cooking in a similar or in exactly the opposite manner, dependent upon the relation in which we stand to them, viz. dependent upon the clothing.

So the clothing affects and is affected by the webs within which it is knotting. Some webs might dematerialize when the clothing-knot exits; others merely turn into other kinds of webs. The cabin in the changing rooms of a store is a web within which the clothing is knotting. Together with the clothing, the cabin partakes in the web of a fitting. In the fitting, the cabin's knots of light, the shape of its mirror, its size and tidiness enact the relation into which we enter to the clothes fitted therein.

But the clothing also enacts the cabin, namely as a changing room. If the clothing exits the cabin, when all pre-selected and yet-to-buy clothes were trial-dressed, some were decided against, others were decided in favor of, viz to buy, then the cabin might remain a changing room as it manages to jump directly from one fitting to another. Yet just as likely is it that the cabin dematerializes as a changing room, and becomes another kind of web, and partakes as knot in other kinds of webs. It might, for instance, become a play zone for a child that is brought along to its mother's shopping tour. Or it could become a makeup checking device for the shop attendant, who wishes to look neat when the next client enters and the next fitting materializes.

For this reason, in contrast to our commonsense perception of the cabin, it is not a static frame, a container which could only ever enact fittings. But it can materialize in many kinds of webs, of which the fitting is solely one. When further outlined in 4.2.2.1, this finding will eventually allow us to free the clothing's ontology from the tyranny of "ordinary usages", that restricts every cloth, every human, every cabin, every existence to a singular identity; and enables us to see that identities are not given, but rather splitting.

4.1.2.5 A Hierarchy of Relations

The motor and value of philosophy, at least for some philosophers (see e.g. Harman 2013, 10), is it to take questions pending in everyday life, weave them into philosophy's apparatus, in order to then spread the treated questions as such together with a grown tail of being "answerable" — not in the sense of being able to tick them off, but in the humble sense of having grown a possible answer for them, which shall not demotivate others to grow further answers, among which a fostering stimulation then can take place.

The present project is led by two of these every-day life questions: Granted that we humans not only daily, but almost constantly find ourselves in clothes; what kind of existences does this turn us into? And given that clothes reside in such an incomparable proximity as well as continuity on us; what kind of existences are they?

The formulation of these questions already implies the indissoluble and inescapable connectedness of humans and clothes, which explains why not one question can be answered without answering the other, why humans can only be explained via clothes, and clothes via humans, viz. why both entities can only ever be explained via their relation to each other. Therefore, the former two questions can be subsumed to one: *What kind of humans/things relation is the clothing?*

Cartesianism drew a line between different kinds of entities, and considered the human entity as superior to all other entities. When NM and its neighboring cartographies set out to rework human/thing relations, they reworked the hierarchy of humans versus things therein into an equivalence. But what if, instead of hierarchizing entities within relations, we rather distinguish between and hierarchize different types of relations? Based precisely on the rhizomizing of entities as it has been effectuated throughout the present chapter, one line of flight that opens up, is the hierarchization of relations.

The criterion according to which relations can be put in order could be their degree of entangling, which shall be defined as *the intensity in which a relation reveals the borders between the entities engaged therein as blurring*. Note here that it was not written that a relation makes the borders blur; but only that some relations more evidently reveal the borders as blurring than other relations. This is to say there is not an entity which becomes blurred more or less dependent upon the relation it currently is engaged in; but it rather means to deny the existence of the very concept of "entity" altogether. Every existence is blurring, and different relations solely own different capacities to make this blurring apparent. The relation in which beings stand to each other here thus becomes also the tool, the access needed in order to approach this queering of existence, whereby epistemology and ontology are queered in a new materialist manner.

The Baradian (NM) and Hodderian (MC) (see 4.1.1.1) term "entanglement" etymologically stems from the German term *(See-)Tang*, meaning "seaweed". In an entanglement of seaweed, fishes find their food, smaller animals a shelter; trash and fisher nets get caught in it. In short: a colorful potpourri materializes, in which identities blur and agencies are hard to ascribe to a particular participant. It thus becomes increasingly impossible to delineate the "original" weed from other agents therein. And after a while, entities cannot be unravelled

anymore, neither from the weed nor from one another. Questions such as: What is a fisher net in and for itself? What was it before it entered the entanglement? And what would the seaweed be without a fisher net?, only pose themselves in the entrance phase.

However, the relation between entanglement and seaweed is not only of an etymological kind. In an epistemologically rhizomatic manner (see 4.1.1.1 and 4.1.2.1), Deleuze and Guattari equate their concept of "rhizome" with weed (see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, e.g. 13, 19, 21). By pulling the concept of entanglement into new materialist philosophy, Barad, who is a Deleuzian through and through (as will further be elicited in 4.2.1.4 and 4.2.2.5), can be said to have reread the Deleuzian/Guattarian rhizome into an "entanglement", viz. in a way even to have linguistically found the monism that materializes in the two terms of "rhizome" and "weed", which allows her to directly express the "ontological inseparability of intra-acting agencies" (Barad 2007, 129).

And as has already been mentioned, the concept of entanglement has also already been engaged with by MC, namely especially by Hodder, who reworked his own definition of the latter as "the sum of HT [human-thing], TH, TT and HH dependencies" into "the dialectic of dependence and dependency between humans and things" (Hodder 2016, 5). Although Hodder thereby aspires to show the interlacing of humans and things, and thus certainly thinks into the same direction as the present project; the way he formulates and the terms he engages with in his definition mislead him to adhering to the entity-concepts of human and thing. It would be interesting to see what would happen to his archaeology of entities that are entangled, if he put the entanglement before the entities, viz. if he intra-actively shifted his focus to an archaeology of entanglements. Why this project aspires to additionally rework Hodder's conclusion of a dialectic into a dynamic dependence must however be left for chapter 4.2 to explain.

For now, let us focus on suggesting a hierarchization of relations according to their degree of entangling (a dynamic adjusting of the nominal concept of "entanglement" with "-ment" resonating a structure, a given order), which could look as follows. There are relations one can easily exit, and the entrance of which is bound to a need. As such, for instance the relations of human/pen and human/cup often materialize. Only when e.g. in the need of noting something in order not to forget it, humans usually engage with pens. And only when thirsty, feeling cold or in the need of an energy boost, the human engages with a cup and fills it with tea or coffee. Thus, the first kind of relation is rather loose. It is characterized by a low degree of entangling.

Besides, there is a closer, more intimate kind of relation between humans and things, viz. a "medium" entangled relation. In such a relation, humans usually stand e.g. with their beds, or a talisman. Even if for distinct reasons, we call these things private or personal, which makes them harder to replace than e.g. a pen is often considered to be. We are not engaged with them all the time, but when we are, we could not do what we do so well without them. In a hotel bed, we might not sleep as well as in our own bed at home. And without our talisman, we might not be able (or so we believe) to master the exam as successfully as when we have it in our pocket. However, and this is crucial, also a pen or a cup can become engaged within this second manner. Our coffee tastes "best" when we have it in precisely this cup. And precisely that pen brought us luck in numerous exams. What is presently treated hence are not identities fixed inscribed into thing-entities; but relations that enact things in different ways.

And last but not least, there are humans/things relations in which the participants stand in constant and most personal contact. Such a relation we usually entertain with clothes, and today, to an increasing extent, also with mobile phones. Although one could now argue that we often exchange clothes, meanwhile a common person engages with one and the same phone for a couple of years without ever exchanging, washing, or in any other way pausing her relation with it; it must not be forgotten that apart from clothes that we exchange more frequently (the most frequently exchanged clothes certainly are underwear and socks); there indeed are clothes that we are relating to for at least an overall season, such as jackets and shoes. In what correlation the distance between human and cloth, in the sense of the amount of clothes between body and treated cloth stands to the frequency of exchanges must be left for a further, rather empirically driven project to investigate. Similarly, also the manner in which a reduced frequency, even a missing exchange enacts a particular cloth would be an interesting topic to research, and as such shall be sketched in 5.2.2.3. Besides, also a phone is renewed in its relation to us humans by charging it, by consciously storing it in the bag in order to have a concentrated chat, or by putting it into flight mode at night.

The subsumption of cloth and phone as usually standing in the most intimate kind of relation to the human, must however not be mistaken as a reinforcement of the borders between clothes and phones as different types of things. Phones are engaged with as mirrors in order to adjust clothes. Clothes are selected in order to picture them via phones. As just another fashion gadget, he phone's case is often adjusted to the clothes worn. And when picturing humans/clothes, interestingly not only phones are often included in such (social-media-posted) photos, but also (especially Starbucks) cups. Pictures of this sort can be found

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numerous on Instagram and Pinterest, and can be considered evidences for the fact that not only a phone, but also a cup can be clothed, can be related to in a clothing manner, can be pulled into clothing relations, even: can materialize as a cloth. A cup hence can become engaged in relations of low, medium, or high entangling, which reinforces the thesis that entities are not defined by a singular kind of relation to which they are restricted as long as they exist, viz. that there is no such thing as a strictly given order, an entangle-ment; but that they can jump from one relation to another, a continuous dis/re-entangling, whereby they themselves, as we will see, become another.

The kind of relation entertained inter alia by humans and clothes, and humans and phones, is continuous and intimate. Being deprived of our clothes and/or phones, we feel naked, we feel as if something is missing which we usually have near, hold dear. We have to check, adjust, glimpse at, become conscious of, attend to our clothes and phones. Some do so every minute, others every other minute. The reasons might diverge (wishing to look neat, becoming distracted, wanting to be distracted, feeling insecure, not knowing what else to do); yet this kind of entangling with things is incessant. And the things that stand in this third kind of relation to us are inherently "ours". We would not voluntarily leave a restaurant or club with another one's jacket. And we would be in a fix if we had mistakenly taken another one's phone, e.g. from the table in a meeting room.

Henceforth, we care for, love, groom, and nurse our clothes and phones (to the latter we even talk) as we might do with a friend or partner (the ethical questions arising from this equation have already been discussed in 3.1.5). The relation we entertain with these things is most personal and affective. And precisely this is the reason why this third kind of relation, that can be said to be characterized by a high degree of entangling, reveals the borders between humans and things as blurring in a manner that is more accessible for us than the other two briefly described relational kinds are doing.

To repeat, there are no such entities as a human or a thing, bordered of from each other; but humans/things are ontologically entangling, they are constitutively blurring. And it is not that this blurring increases or decreases dependent upon the relation in which humans/things stand to each other. But it is only that different sorts of relations make this blurring more accessible, and in this sense were structured here as being entanglings to differing degrees. Put in a Bergsonian manner, it could hence also be written that different sort of relations are not diverse existences; but they only are diverse manifestations of a monist existence, which is the blurring of entities within humans/things relations.

It might be that the just grown three-parted grid of relations can be subdivided more neatly; yet this threefold division could be a starting point for a research diving deeper into types of humans/things relations, which nevertheless will only be sketched a little further in 5.3.1.3, but cannot form an integral part of the present project any further. Yet of a research undertaking such as outlined in the present chapter, the clothing should definitely form part. In MC as well as in NM, when diffracting the borders of human selfhood, it often is referred to Merleau-Ponty's thought experiment of the blind man's stick (see Merleau-Ponty 2005, 165-166, noteworthily attributed by Barad to Merleau-Ponty and Bohr alike, see Barad 2007, 157), in which the stick is described to be as much part of the man's self as are his arms or his legs. Only in conjunction, these elements allow him to walk. Certainly, this is an astonishing example that thus has reasonably sparked the interest of many scholars. However, the fascinating skill to find one's way around with the aid of a stick is an extraordinary capacity, which requires much training.

In contrast, the clothing is a humans/things relation in which we all are but truly entangled, which makes the research of it much more accessible and "mappable" (see 4.2.2.5). This is not to say that a "good" or "appropriate" clothing does not require training; but these are clothing issues that must be left for an aesthetic project to investigate. It rather is to say that whether or not we are talented, skilled, or trained; we all clothe everyday. In the clothing, we are entangled with clothes in a manner that might not be surpassable with regard to its continuity and intimacy. Precisely therefore, it shall be claimed that the *clothing is especially apt for demonstrating the contingency of borders and hence id/entities.* Also for this reason, the clothing is an important and interesting topic for philosophical thought.

4.1.3 Relational Realism

So far, based on the webs of dressing and wearing, in which humans and clothes knot within each other's webs, a post-thing-ism was grown. Although in 1.1 it was pledged to stick to these two kinds of clothing-knots, dressing and wearing; in order to specify the thesis of post-thing-ism further and show the worth of this "-ism" in application, two further clothing-knots shall now be engaged with.

On the one hand, we shall attend to that what materializes after an undressing, and before either a redressing (a dressing of the "same" cloth that we related to before, leaving side for the moment that also this cloth has become another in the meantime, see 4.2.2.4) or a new

dressing (a dressing in which a new cloth is engaged, that is "new" at least in the sense that it was freshly taken out of the closet) takes place: nakedness. By defining nakedness not simply as the opposite partner of what will be defined as "clothed-ness", but as a web in which humans have departed as knots via undressing from clothes-webs meanwhile continuing to host knots in their webs, the present ontology is capable to depict a phenomenon hitherto impossible to elicit, namely that clothes indeed play a role in nakedness, which makes the latter not an exit from, but a phenomenon taking place within the clothing. This shows that even at moments in which conventional thing-led approaches perceived the human as independent of things; she indeed is enacted by the latter, here: by clothes. There hence is no human existence apart from clothes.

But what about the opposite, a cloth-existence apart from humans? Does such an existence exist, e.g. behind the doors of a closed wardrobe? Conventional approaches range from denying the existence of an existence behind closed wardrobe doors altogether (everything that remains unwitnessed by humans does not exist), to indeed acknowledging the latter, yet only in an inert form, a form in which clothes do nothing despite waiting to be dressed and in the meantime hanging dutifully next to or piling obediently upon each other. Yet reality is not as tame as we might sometimes hope it to be, when trying to cope, master, control, structure or research it. The second section of the present chapter shall thus show that clothes indeed are active inside a wardrobe, and that the human remains engaged in these actions, namely as a knot especially within the webs of clothes.

In what follows, the webs of nakedness and closed wardrobes shall hence be dealt with, as they are conventionally treated as if humans and clothes would have departed from, viz. exist as independent from each other. Yet the present post-thing-ism allows to re-conceptualize both as webs in which humans and clothes remain related to each other, only that they are not, as Harman might name it, reciprocally related (see Harman 2016, 120). Instead, one is solely a web (nakedness: human, wardrobe: cloth) and the other is exclusively a knot (nakedness: cloth, wardrobe: human). By so conceptualizing, post-thing-ism allows to grow a "relational realism", an account of reality which is capable to queer the in/dependencies immanent to existence.

4.1.3.1 Clothed Nakedness

Nakedness has been an issue fascinating not only dress researchers ever since. Erasmus von Rotterdam warned: "Do not undress without necessity" (as quoted in Elias 1993, 72).

Merleau-Ponty wrote: "Usually man does not show his body, and when he does, it is either nervously or with an intention to fascinate" (Merleau-Ponty 2005, 193). And today Frances Corner states that: "being naked in the wrong context is still a great taboo" (Corner 2015, 51).

All three cited quotes show that whenever nakedness has so far been treated, it was mostly focused on its dealing and dosage. Nakedness has been researched psychologically and socially, viz. in the direction of the human, the sensations it evokes in her individually, as well as the effects it has on others of her kind, who happen to witness it. But an ontology of nakedness, viz. what precisely nakedness is, has so far been scholarly left untouched. Presumably, this is the case because nakedness was ticked off as being the opposite of what shall be named "clothed-ness", which here shall be understood as a monist term uniting especially the concepts of dressing and wearing. Either a human is clothed, is inside the clothing; or she is naked, is outside of the clothing. When she is not clothed, then she must be naked. And when she is not naked, then she evidently is clothed, or so it seemed.

However, clothed-ness and nakedness are not dualist partners. These two phenomena are rather threading through each other, so that *all nakedness is clothed, and all clothed-ness also contains the knot of nakedness*. "Naked clothedness", tries to capture e.g. the status of being naked while, even because being clothed, and the status of being "more" naked when clothed, and as such has already been scholarly recorded. We can be insecure and inhibited, and even feel naked due to a non-correspondent dressing (in the sense of not fitting to our mood, our body, the purposes of wearing). We cannot only feel, but be naked when non-wearing (note here that it is intentionally written "non-wearing" and not "not wearing", as the former implies an ongoing happening meanwhile the latter is a one-off statement) something that we habitually wear, e.g. our wrist watch. And Vinken explains that e.g. nylon stockings increase the leg in its nakedness. When wearing these stockings, the leg becomes heightenedly naked (see Vinken 2013, 10).

In fact, every clothedness contains nakedness as a knot. Put simply, there is always something naked. It might be only hands and wrists, or a neck, which can insinuate a more. And if it is not a body part, then it is a feeling, an atmosphere, a haunting, which is material (see Barad 2017, 74). The cases described in the former paragraph are only a culmination of the queering of clothed/nakedness. Or else, they are some of those clothings that make the positive relationality, the difference (see 3.1.4.2.1) in which these two formerly considered opposite partners stand to each other, most apparent.

The very same relationality materializes whenever a nakedness takes place. There hence is no such thing as a "naked" nakedness, a nakedness devoid of all clothes, a pure nakedness existent. Instead, nakedness is in part defined by clothes. It is charged with clothes as much as it is charged with other humans(-in/out-clothes). Nakedness is "clothed". The human hence also is naked, even or precisely because she is clothed; and she is clothed, also when she is naked. However, a research dealing with the phenomenon of "clothed nakedness" could not be found, which is also why such an account shall be grown now.

There seems to be no mistaking about the human capacity to exit the clothing. She can exit one cloth by undressing it. And when she has exited all clothes, when she is naked, she must have exited the clothing. This would mean that the cloth is bound to the clothing; whereas the human is free to enter/exit the latter web. In fact, this is precisely how the clothing has so far been depicted in dress theory, which led the latter towards a conceptualization of humans as mastering their clothes. Yet this kind of clothing ontology has already been reworked in the last two chapters. And via a renewed clothing ontology, also the concept of nakedness can be rethought.

To say that the human exits or even escapes the clothing by exiting clothes would be an equation of clothes and the clothing (clothes = clothing), against which it has already been argued before (see 2.2.4). Therefore, it shall rather be claimed that when undressing, the human indeed exits clothes, she stops knotting within the clothes, she jumps as knot out of the cloth-webs; yet she remains within the clothing. And this is the case because clothes remain knotting within her self-web. Nakedness hence shows once more the worth of the distinction made between clothes and the clothing, which at this point in elicitation materialize in the roles of knots and web.

A showering web, for instance, is not just a web of an undressed human, soap, water, and booth. Such a web is loaded with clothes. The clothes that were just exited continue to affect the showering. They denote specific body parts as dirty. When having been gardening in shorts and longsleeve, other parts of your body will be full of plant soil than when having undertaken this activity in long trousers but a T-Shirt. Clothes set the amount of sweat that needs to be washed off. After some hours in a heated and crowded classroom, when frequenting the class in a cashmere pullover, you will not have sweated as much as frequenting it in a pullover that consists to a high percentage of viscose. And clothes, especially bras and socks and the waistbands of trousers/skirts, continue to mark, viz. remain sensible on the naked body.

Besides, the showering is also enacted by the clothes in which the human will knot next. If the human-knot will jump into a short dress after the showering, she might shave her legs more neatly then when engaging with a long dress. If she will wear a shirt with short sleeves, she might take extra care of the spruceness of her elbows. Hence, when standing under the shower, we are still in when already out, we are already half in when still out of clothes. What are we, thus? Are we naked, or are we clothed? We are naked/clothed, out/in.

So clothes are not completely absent in nakedness. They rather affect and hence take part in enacting nakedness precisely by their absence. In German there is the idiom "durch Abwesenheit glänzen", which is commonly translated as "to be notably absent" or "to be conspicuous by one's absence". Whereas the two English versions of the idiom (the idiom here becomes the monism that manifests itself in all three equivalent versions, a monism which itself is somewhat language-less, is not yet formatted in a particular language) restrict themselves to expressing the fact that something draws the attention towards itself by being absent; the German version takes an additional step and explains further how, in what way an abstract thing attracts attention: Literally translated, the German verb "glänzen" means "to shine". Something that shines, that sparkles, that glitters, draws the attention toward itself, namely precisely by shining, in its shining.

Clothes shall thus be said to "shine in their absence" within nakedness, maybe similar to a colleague that does not show up in a meeting, thereby enrages the boss, thwarts the meeting's structure, and flusters the other participants. That colleague is not simply absent, but very much present by her absence. She partakes and affects the meeting. She is in the meeting, which shows once more that the borders of beings are not where we so far thought them to be (see again 4.1.1.3).

In nakedness, the shining is what clothes do. It is their action, their form of knotting within the web that nakedness is. They are present by their absence, so to speak. They are present/absent. They queer the dualism of absence/presence. But, and this is important, they first are absently present, and only thereby can become presently absent. They first shine (the idiom's German version), and by shining, they become noted (its English versions).

Thereby it is not meant that clothes knot within nakedness because we perceive us and themselves as separated from each other — a separation that can be either welcomed or regretted. This depiction would rather locate the absence of clothes within us humans, and make it an issue for epistemology. It is not that clothes, by being noted in their absence, are made to shine by us humans. In delineation thereto, it shall rather be stated here that the clothes' knotting within nakedness is of an ontological kind. Clothes knot within nakedness.

They coin, they act on the human. They encourage and seduce her to do several things, and hold her back from other actions. In short, they shine. And this shining can be sensed by the human, for instance as an excitement. The human's excitement is not what makes clothes shine in their absence; but it rather is the clothes' shining that excites the human.

In fact, clothes might be more present in nakedness than in other clothing webs, in which they fall into oblivion and are perceived as if numbly serving, such as the hoodie which is enacted as old and about-to-be-discarded in one of the versions of the cooking web described above (4.1.2.4). This, however, must not mean that clothes are more powerful agents within nakedness than within other kinds of clothings. OOO's founder Harman already extensively explained why things are most powerful when they act in subtle ways, viz. why they, to refer to as well Harman's main inspiratory source, are more powerful when "zuhanden" (ready-to-hand) than when they are "vorhanden" (present-at-hand) (see Heidegger 2006, e.g. 83-84).

Whether the absently presence of clothes within nakedness thus is a form of subtle action, or whether there are other clothing webs in which clothes act in more subtle a manner meanwhile they are presently absent, shall however be left for a further project to investigate in more depth. For the present one, it shall suffice to claim that clothes do not jump out of the human-web, but remain knotting within nakedness.

The present web/knot-ontology allows to explain why we not only feel, but why we are enacted by clothes when we are naked. Thereby, the present ontology discerns itself from other existing approaches, that adhere to nakedness as a status-out-of-clothes, viz. to the dualism of nakedness versus clothedness. Nevertheless, one toolbox, by means of which one could also approach the queering of the latter dualism, is the one of Heidegger — even if it therefore needs a reworking and queering of two existent tools of the German phenomenologist: the being-in-the-world, "In-der-Welt-Sein" (see Heidegger 2006, 53, see also 3.3.2), and the being-with, "Mit-Sein" (see ibid., 120ff., see also 2.3.3 and 3.3.3).

On the one hand, the phenomenon, that in the present project is described as dressing/wearing, could be described in line with Heidegger as the fact that we usually are "in-clothes". And as this takes place in-the-world, the famous Heideggerian concept could be extended by claiming that human existence mostly is a "being-in-clothes-in-the-world" (see Martach 2018). Nakedness could then, in a first step, be described as "being-out-of-clothes" which nevertheless also takes place in a world, so that it would be a "being-out-of-clothes-in-the-world". In this regard, the neologist conceptual part "out-of" could be an

opposition to the Heideggerian "in", a phenomenon which the German phenomenologist defined rather peculiarly in vein of his being-in-the-world (see 3.3.2).

A necessary feature of the being-in-the-world, so Heidegger states, is the "Mit-Sein", the being-with: We are not necessarily always with others, but we are constantly confronted with the possibility to meet others. In other words, and in analogy to Heidegger's terminology, every being in the world is constantly with, and never without (which could be called the impossibility of the "Ohne-Sein"), even when it is alone. Although Heidegger restricts this concept to human others, one of the first steps of new materialistically re-reading the phenomenologist's approach would surely be to broaden it to the nonhuman domain. In fact, as things almost (as webs)/continuously (as knots) entangled with us, clothes lend themselves as one of the most obvious nonhuman beings to which to relate the being-with. Hence broadening Heidegger's concept towards the material realm, it could be said that clothes are beings that we cannot be without. There is no being-without-clothes; but clothes are even with us in nakedness.

Combining the two reworked Heideggerian tools, viz. the being-in/out and the being-with/without, nakedness can be approached as a "being-out-of-yet-with-clothes", a "being-with/out-clothes", whereby the "with/out" is precisely not the opposite partner of the "with", but a queering of with (and not without) and out (and not in), viz. a queering of being-with and being-out. *We are not always in but sometimes out, yet we are always with and never without clothes.* Nakedness could be described as a status out of clothes that takes place in the world, and hence is not without clothes. In this Heideggerian depiction of nakedness, a crossing of the in/out dualism is already resonating, as is the ambiguity of clothes' role in the clothing: They are our partners in the world, and are a world themselves.

However, when beginning a description of nakedness in a Heideggerian vein by a "being-", it remains a research in the direction of the human, in uni-directional dependence on which clothes are defined. Such a depiction cannot be rhizomatic in kind. Continuing to describe clothed-ness by "-in-" and nakedness by "-out-of-" (both in the extended version of the Heideggerian neologism) also leads to a pyramiding ontology. If clothes are constructing a world on their own in/out of which we are, then they are similar to the temple as exemplified by Heidegger, which is demarcated of, but still materializes within the world as such (see Heidegger 1977, 28). This not only leads thought back to the embeddedness-approach that several new materialists as well as OOOists have already reworked (see e.g. Barad 2007, esp. 160; Bryant 2011, 32), but it also re-ascribes clothes the role of an intermediator between human and general "lifeworld" (see cover-from/to-approach to the clothing, 2.3.2),

and thereby eventually entraps itself in a bustle of worlds. And last but not least, when concluding both clothed-ness and nakedness by "-with-clothes", this conceptualization does not allow to show that precisely by being absent, clothes are present, viz. it is incapable to capture the doing, the shining of the cloth within nakedness, and hence cannot explain the reason why clothes remain with us even when we are out of them.

Nevertheless, despite these flaws, whereby the Heideggerian toolbox remains but partially gainful for explaining why we not only feel but ontologically are shaped by clothes when we are naked; Heidegger nevertheless allows to come closer to an explanation therefore than his descendant-in-mind Harman and the latter's distinction of real versus sensual objects (see Harman 2009, 195f., 216-219), here: clothes, that could also be related to nakedness. When trying to explain nakedness in line with Harman, it could be said that when showering, we have exited real clothes, yet we keep engaging with sensual clothes. Or else, due to its lacking of real clothes, nakedness is full of sensual clothes. The sensual clothes engaged in a showering would then be distinct from the real clothes that are hanging next door in the wardrobe.

But how to draw a line, viz. where to set the border between real and sensual clothes? Is the sensation I have of my jeans, which I envisage to wear meanwhile showering, the same as the real jeans that is piling up creased in the laundry? Presumably not, as when I think of that jeans, I might still see it as the spotless and new cloth it was when I bought it, whereby I miss to realize the permanent stains and traces of wear it already received. I might see it as the neat cloth that I recently took out of the wardrobe, instead of remembering that due to its dirtiness, it is not at my dressing-disposal right now. Or I might think of it as still fitting as well as it did some months ago, when I was weighing less. And I did not observe yet that, with the extra pounds I gained during Christmas, the jeans is fitting worse. In this sense, Harman reinforces the dualism of im/materiality, which with regard to fashion/dress has already been queered above (see 2.2.3).

However, when I confront the pile of jeans I own, and am in search for precisely that sensual jeans I have in mind, I will definitely be able to recognize and grab the real jeans. In this sense, the real and the sensual cloth must be the same, which would render Harman's distinction obsolete. Or at least they must be so strongly corresponding, viz. overlapping to a degree that is high enough for the human to be capable to match the immaterial idea with the material manifestation of that jeans. So based on the sensual cloth, the real cloth is easy to outline.

Yet sensual clothes are rather hard to catch. They enter/exit our flow of mind, they come and go so rapidly that they impede us from recording them sharply. Most of the time, they only appear to us as sensations, such as, for instance, the softness of a cashmere pullover, the stickiness of a leather skirt on our legs, or the idea of a perfectly shaped biker boot, which one might imagine, but which is not embodied in the ones that happen to partake in the own wardrobe collection. A sensual cloth thus often is only a hint of a cloth, and is less than, viz. does not amount to materialization.

Thinking nakedness with the toolbox of Harman, it is obviously possible to exit real clothes. Yet whether nakedness is truly naked or indeed clothed here becomes dependent upon the possibility to disentangle from sensual clothes. Such a line of thought locates the phenomenon of nakedness deeply within the immaterial. As an issue of consciousness, as well as due to the blurriness of sensual clothes themselves, it becomes hard to utter a statement about the im/possibility of naked nakedness. It might be that the hints of clothes, as which the sensual have been described as often appearing, follow us everywhere. Or it might be that we are indeed capable to become completely unconscious of the real clothes that sometimes hang and sometimes stop hanging on our bodies, which, already by appearing in our consciousness, are turned into sensual clothes. Eventually, the Harmanian sensual clothes, which are and are not real clothes, are thus not a gainful tool for researching the phenomenon of nakedness.

To subsume, nakedness is not the dualist partner of clothed-ness; but both are knots in each other's webs. Nakedness is not a void into which we humans sink when undressing; but it is a web in which we remain within the clothing. Or else, nakedness is not a break of, a pause in the clothing; but it is another step within the circle. It hence is just another manifestation of the clothing, which is equivalent to, threaded through by and threading through dressing, wearing, and undressing.

Clothedness and nakedness are equivalent and indeed not equal clothing-knots, as what distinguishes nakedness from clothed-ness is that whereas in clothed-ness humans/clothes form knots within each others webs; in nakedness, clothes remain knots within the human-web, yet the human departed from knotting in the clothes-webs. Put differently, in a web of nakedness, we humans are not "clothing", we are not knotting actively within clothes-webs; but we remain constantly "clothed", as clothes continue to form part our web. Nakedness hence illustrates the worth of the present web/knot ontology, as the latter allows to approach

this phenomenon in its queerness, which is something hitherto toolboxes are incapable to depict.

4.1.3.2 The Beehive in Our Wardrobes

So far, nakedness was defined a) as the human impossibility to take a pause of materializing as a web of clothes, but b) as the human-knot's exit of clothes-webs. In other words, we humans are not always clothing; but we are always clothed, even when we are naked. This shows that nakedness takes place within the clothing, and that clothes play a role in nakedness. Hence, there is no clothing completely detached from clothes existent. But what about a clothing apart from humans? Can such a clothing exist? What about, for instance, the situation in which two clothes hang next to each other on a rack? Do they remain closed within themselves? Do they keep numb and turn away from each other? And when we close the wardrobe doors between us and them, are we thereby able to turn clothes off?

In the existent literature, it is a generally accepted fact that a cloth needs the (bodily) presence of the human in order to function and eventually materialize as, hence to be a cloth. Marx wrote that a cloth only become a cloth via the act of being worn, "ein Kleid wird erst wirklich Kleid durch den Akt des Tragens" (Marx 1983, 42). Today, Entwistle writes: "Without a body, dress lacks fullness and movement, it is incomplete" (Entwistle 2015, 10). Smelik states: "clothes are dead without the human body wearing them" (Smelik 2018, 43). And Lehnert writes that without the body, the cloth remains a mere potential (see Lehnert 2015, 239). Clothes were thus considered as active only when in direct relation to the human. Or else, the human (bodily) being was conceived as the one who is activating clothes. In this vein, hitherto literature had to if not deny, then to at least neglect the happenings taking place e.g behind the shut doors of a wardrobe. In there, clothes were depicted as being inert matters, which are just waiting to be re/engaged with, to be switched on (again).

The present project intends to rework this correlationism (using Meillassoux' term here, as introduced in 3.1.3.2) that up to the point of writing dominated as well the field of fashion/dress research, and that can roughly be subsumed to: We cannot access happenings behind our backs, so they do not happen. The latter position is aspired to rework here by claiming that a) there indeed happens something behind our backs, and b) we indeed are able to access these happenings, only that we therefore need a special ontology, the growing of which must however be left for chapter 4.2 to begin.

For the moment, let us hence focus on facet a) and claim that crucially, two clothes remain "turned on" when hanging on a rack. They form knots in each other's webs. Their fabrics either correspond or repel one another. Their cuts and shapes begin to create an overall silhouette. And their buttons/holes and brooches and pockets and collars begin to mingle. Hence, when two clothes hang next to each other, *what "is" are not two cloth-things, but a clothing relation.*

When opening a wardrobe, what we humans can witness is not a museum-like atmosphere of clothes existing closely framed and distantly hanged next to each other in front of metaphorical white walls on garment rails. *A wardrobe rather resembles a beehive*, in which every cloth is busy with forming communions with other clothes, with creating outfits, with finding temporary antagonists (maybe, or maybe precisely not a starched white shirt and some sweatpants), and with nastily excluding others (kicking them out by fitting "better") from the clothing-webs in which they relate, and which they enact. Presumably, this is what Woodward and Greasley already hint to when they say: "collections have their own logic" (Woodward and Greasley 2015, 19). In short, behind closed wardrobe doors, cloth and cloth engage with and enact one another. They knot in each other's webs. And precisely by so doing, they maintain themselves as cloth-knot within the clothing.

Up to this date, we humans perceived this buzzing and humming as potentialities for our application of clothes. We celebrated a rare combination as our idea. And if it was rare enough, fellow clothed/ing humans might have attributed us with the third-person pronoun that expresses gender-neutrality in the singular in connection to the gender we owned as a child (it-boy/girl). This is an anthropocentrism that shall be undercut here. This buzz is not created exclusively by us. It is not solely our interpretation, not a completely human achievement. And neither does this buzz consist of the potentialities owned by the clothes, lying in their interior lives, so to say, a part of their essence. But it is what they are. It is their entangled becoming within a wardrobe-web. And dependent on the intra-active becoming of clothes therein, our opportunities for dressing become perceptible for us.

Hence, two clothes form knots within each other's webs when hanging in a wardrobe. Yet they also engage with that wardrobe, and that wardrobe engages with them. It is not only that a cloth resides within a wardrobe, but the wardrobe also resides within the cloth, as how the cloth hangs, how it is piled up, the sum of other clothes it is piled up with, the smell of the wooden wardrobe, the mothball it meets therein, and many more aspects shape the cloth, and continue to shape it also when it has long exited the wardrobe and now resides on us, on

a human body. This shows that the cloth is neither inferior nor superior to the wardrobe, but cloth and wardrobe exist within each other, and in this kind of existence, they are equivalent. There hence is not a cloth and a wardrobe, but only a cloth/wardrobe, a being that is sometimes more cloth than wardrobe, and then more wardrobe than cloth.

What is more, clothes not only intra-act with each other behind our backs, be that in a wardrobe we turned away from, in an apparel store at night, within a laundry pile, or in a packed suitcase. But also very literally "on" our backs, on our bodies, clothes are engaging with each other, and making each other become. They relate to each other also when we are wearing them. A coat bulks in and thus engages with the wind, changes our silhouette, changes our pace of movement, changes us, even when we are not aware of it. When a pullover is tucked into a jeans, it makes the jeans' waistband widen, and in return is abraded in its textile by that jeans. And when this jeans is worn belted, it often happens that the pullover receives a hole at the location which it shares with the belt's buckle.

Hence, in the wearing, the human knots within clothes, clothes knot within humans, yet clothes also knot within each other, here: jeans with/in pullover with/in belt. As the clothed human usually is engaged not with a singular cloth, but with a whole outfit, she is confronted with a whole bunch of clothes, the relations between which hitherto clothing approaches impeded her from realizing. Remarkably, the way clothes intra-act with us (conventionally formulated: how we feel in our clothes) often is determined by the way they intra-act with one another.

4.1.3.3 Queering Relationalism and Realism

In the present clothing account, the role of the human body, held so high in hitherto prevailing approaches to fashion/dress (see 2.3.2), evidently diminishes in relevance, and the human is leveled to being one knot among many within a clothing web. In fact, *the preponderance of the human body in many existent fashion/dress theories might have been the reason why the clothing has so far not been treated by the cartography of NM.* That, by means of the web/knot ontology, a rhizomatic concept of clothing, a practice that so far has been understood as inherently human, even as that what makes us human, can be reached, supports the profitability of the present approach.

In reality, the body is less important and encompassing than suspected, so it shall be claimed. Clothes engage not solely with humans, but also with others of their kind. And clothes not only engage in dressing and wearing webs, but they also partake in other kinds of webs, of

which one materializes within wardrobes. The happenings within a closed wardrobe indeed take place within the clothing. And in a wardrobe-web, a clothing indeed takes place, so it shall be claimed.

Yet this clothing is of a peculiar kind, which is similar to nakedness as discussed above, only with "intra-changed" roles. Nakedness was defined as a clothing in which the human stops to knot in the cloth-web meanwhile the cloth continues to knot within the human-web. In opposition, in a closed wardrobe, the cloth is not intra-acting as knot in the web of a human; yet the human nevertheless remains a knot in the cloth-web. For a visualization of this thesis, see all three detected types of clothing-webs subsumed in a singular graphic below (figure 4). To find out whether there are more kinds of webs within the clothing must be left for further projects to investigate.
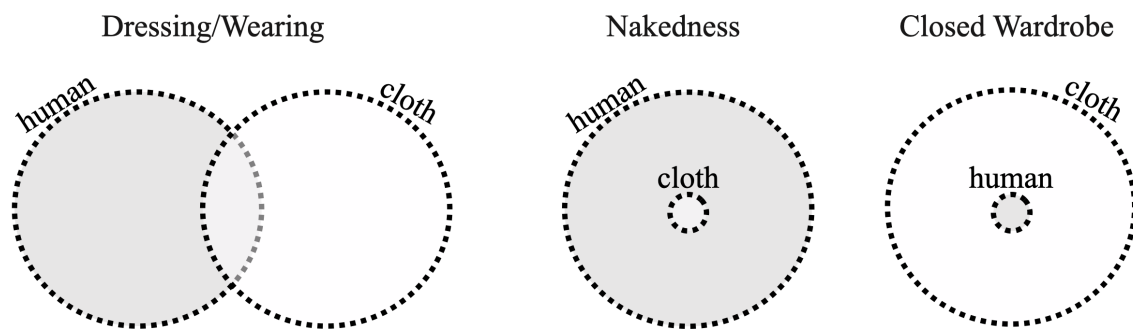
figure 4: Comparing Three Types of Clothing-Webs: Dressing/Wearing, Nakedness, and a Closed Wardrobe

As a knot in the cloth, the human materializes e.g. in certain stains and marks, shapes and bulks that the cloth-web continues to have also in moments of wardrobe-webbing. Hence, it is not only that the clothes' knotting within human-webs exceeds the hitherto drawn borders; but also the human's knotting within clothes exceeds her awareness thereof.

However, this is not to say that a cloth only exists as a web when it stopped knotting within human-webs within the clothing. It owns this partial independence, this knot-independence only with regard to humans. Yet meanwhile it is not materializing as a knot within the human; it certainly is knotting within other webs, here: other clothes and/or the wardrobe. And the same is true for the human. Meanwhile she is not knotting within clothes-webs, viz. when she is naked, she certainly materializes as a knot in other webs, such as a shower, a sauna, a towel, or others of her kind.

To be authorized to vocalize these clothings, it needs a specific term as justification: realism. The present account reworks conventional clothing correlationisms into a clothing realism.

Realism claims that there indeed is a mind-independent reality existent (see DeLanda 2006, 1). A realist account is thus precisely interested in the happenings that take place on and/or behind our backs, e.g. in a closed wardrobe, which here has been modeled in analogy with Morton's entertaining subsumption of correlationism as wondering: "is the light on in the fridge when you close the door?" (Morton 2013, 9), to which realism determinedly gives an affirmative answer.

However, the realism here sketched is not an anti-humanist position in the sense of neglecting the human. It is a post-humanist conceptualization, that shifts the human from her own center of attention towards a humbler position within the ontological milieu. Yet the human remains within the milieu. She remains entangled in the clothing, even if it takes place behind the doors of a closed wardrobe. And the presently grown also is a post-thing-ist conceptualization, as it holds that in the latter situation, clothes do not become entities, they do not detach from the rest. They remain related, with the human-knot as well as with other kinds of webs/knots.

For this reason, and here we depart from the pure because entity-based realism of OOO, the present realist account has to be refined as a "relational realism". On the first sight, relationalism and realism might seem to be antagonists; and to combine them to a singular concept might appear as resulting in an oxymoron. Realism has already been described above as stating the possibility of a human mind independent existence; meanwhile relationalism implies that everything is related, is dependent on others. However, as it already became apparent when in the last chapter treating Heidegger, the present issue is not as easy as to allow to be solved by a simple "either or", which here is: with (relational) or without (realist).

Also when clothes are not worn, and the human is not dressed, they nevertheless can continue to clothe, namely as long as they remain ontologically related, which however, as it has already been shown above, does not mean to say that they necessarily remain entangled as webs/knots with each other. Their relation can also take on the form of a non-reciprocal relation (and here we side with OOO, see again Harman 2016, 120), in which one is solely the web (in nakedness: the human; in a closed wardrobe: the cloth) and the other is solely the knot (vice versa). Yet also a non-reciprocal kind of relation is a relation, although maybe looser in kind (as touched upon in 4.1.2.5). Henceforth, there is no such thing as a thing, which exists independent from others. But everything that exists, exists only as related, as dependent, namely in the form of web/knot.

Relational realism rhizomizes both kinds of existences (human/thing), as it accepts the already existent finding that there is no human apart from things, and, by relating relationalism to realism, levels the thing's independence from us humans as claimed by realism. Relational realism could thus be considered a softer version of realism, an appeasing of the drastic conclusion drawn e.g. by OOO.

Yet by no means is relational realism a paradoxical concept. It rather is a queer concept, a concept queering dependence with independence, and thereby queering the thing, reworking the thing into a web/knot. In sum, relational realism means to say that there indeed are clothings which exist apart from our witnessing (realism), yet this does not mean that we are not involved therein. We are not webs in a closed wardrobe, yet we are knots, and as knots we are engaged in the latter (relationalism).

This thesis does not contradict the rhizomatic ontology grown above, which was based on the premise that everything that exists, exists as a web and as a knot, and in this kind of existence is equivalent. Yet by no word was it claimed that everything must always, continuously and everywhere, materialize as web and as knot, viz. must be a web/knot within every web, in every relation. Put in a Bergsonian manner, not every existence materializes as a web/knot in space, in a particular web. Yet, as it will be grown further in 4.2.2, in duration, every existence materializes as both, webs and knots. This allows to refine the rhizomatics grown above as being of a durative kind.

Clothes and humans are knots that partake in both webs, in the one of the closed wardrobe and in the one of nakedness. For this reason, their borders must be elsewhere than assumed. A cloth does not end where we usually thought it to end, but it by far extends the seams of its fabric. As already described above in 4.1.1.3, a cloth is smaller and bigger than we conventionally saw it. By its imprinting on the human's skin, a bra is still knotting in the human, even when the latter is naked (see and 4.1.3.1).

And also a human does not end at her skin. Her borders do not only become extended by the tiny hairs that erect when she gets goosebumps. No, her borders are elsewhere, not completely elsewhere in the sense of a complete other, but somehow displaced, because they are blurring, shifting and switching. In 4.1.1.4, her knees were described to bulk in a leggings. And they still bulk in that leggings, also when that leggings long rests on a laundry-pile. The bulking certainly fades out, and might disappear altogether in the washing. Yet we can also observe that, once bulked, a leggings is ready to bulk again precisely at the spot where our knees usually reside. The leggings thus has a certain agility, here: to bulk, which is based upon what could in line with Deleuze's Bergsonism be called a "memory" (see e.g.

Deleuze 2004a, 29) of its fabric. The borders of existence hence are elsewhere than we are used to believe them.

And neither the webs themselves, viz. nakedness and a closed wardrobe full of clothes, are entities demarcated clearly from the rest. They rather are also knots within the clothing. As such, they can overlap or not, they can be related or not. A closed wardrobe can materialize simultaneous to a wearing. But it can also materialize during nakedness. However, even at moments when they are related, their relation does not impair their, as DeLanda named it, "relative autonomy" (see DeLanda 2006, 38), and neither does their possible coincidence speak against the ontology just grown. In contrast, it only shows that reality materializes not in entities, but in webs/knots.

Up to this point, the concept of the entity, viz. of existence as an autonomous being, was reworked into a relational ontology, viz. an ontology that equates "to exist" with "to be related". Thereby, the concept of the web/knot grew (4.1.1). Based on the split that was defined to be immanent to existence, hitherto hierarchical depictions of webs and knots were rhizomized, viz. webs and knots were shown to stand in an equivalent relation (4.1.2). However, this does not mean to say that every relation is reciprocal. There indeed are relations in which that what hitherto was understood as two beings form webs in each other's knot. Yet just as possible is it, e.g. in nakedness or a closed wardrobe, that only one knots in the other's web, yet the other does not return this knotting in the same way, or in the same web. For this reason, the relationalism grown above was queered with a realism (4.1.3). In sum, chapter 4.1 grew a post-thing-ism that takes on the form of a relational realism. Let us now introduce the factor of change into the present ontology, and map the bubbling of existence.

4.2 From Dialectics to Dynamics

So far, reality was described as consisting of webs and knots. It was already shown that these are not two types of entities, viz. that it is not the case that some beings inherently are webs and others are knots; but that webs and knots are facets as which every being materializes. However, if kept as that, the present ontology nevertheless might appear as being dialectic in kind, also because webs and knots were described as standing to each other in a rhizomatic relation, viz. as being mutually dependent.

It thus is time to show that existence is not a being, but a becoming, and as such is always on the move. As will be elicited in depth in 4.2.1, reality is not static, but dynamic in kind. It is not a being, but a bubbling. Webs and knots are materializations of becomings, viz. are that as which what exists is materializing, to be more precise: into which a becoming is splitting, and in-between which a becoming is jumping. Splitting trajectories will be elicited in 4.2.2 as taking place from web to knot to web to knot, before in 4.2.3 jumpings will be grown as an exchange of knots in-between webs, and an entering/exiting-merging move of knots. All three chapters include a respective approach to this ontology, hence an epistemological tool, which in case of the becoming is the difference (4.2.1.6), in case of splitting is Barad's diffraction (4.2.2.5), and in case of jumping is Deleuze's differentiation (4.2.3.5). As such, the present approach to reality materializes not as an ontology tending towards dialectics, but rather as a dynamic ontogenesis (a term taken from Simondon 2009).

4.2.1 A Bubbling Reality

Voices negating the stability of thing-beings can be found within the existent literature. MC theorist Tilley, for instance, writes: "Things change their meaning through their life cycles and according to the way they are used and appropriated and in the manner in which individuals and groups identify themselves with them" (Tilley 2006a, 71). Although he remains within an anthropocentric thinking and sees things through the lens of a usage relation, whereby he cannot conceptualize human/thing relations as consistent of a multi-directional enacting flow; he nevertheless is of the opinion that things materialize differently within distinct relations, whereby his thinking heads into the same direction as does the ontogenesis that presently starts to grow: There are no such things as things, beings with

concrete identities and inherently owned attributes; but there only are becomings, which are re/de-attributing with.

With regard to the cloth in particular, people become increasingly conscious about the fact that a cloth is altering every time it is washed. Clothes alter more drastically in the beginning of their life, when they emanate more microfibers into the machine's water and thus our oceans, and less when they are already older, more often washed clothes. But with every washing it undergoes, a cloth slightly changes. Hence, the cloth that we take out of the machine is another than the one we put into the machine (for further information as well as an accessibly designed video, see again "The Story of Microfibers", published by The Story of Stuff Project in 2017). There hence is not a cloth, a being-cloth, but there only is a becoming, which we so far simplified as "a cloth".

These approaches already capture that things are differing over time, in relation to other things they intra-act with and the assemblages they partake in. Yet despite this finding, these approaches continue to talk about "things". Thereby, they seemingly contradict themselves. Either a being, a thing, a cloth owns an essence and is one and the same independent of; or it is a becoming dependent on, and as such cannot be a thing, an object, neither in a conventional nor in an object-oriented-ontological sense.

For this reason, chapter 4.1.1 queered the concept of the entity, and turned it into a web/knot. There hence is not a cloth, but only inter alia a web-of-stitches and a knot-in-an-outfit. Whereas the entity pretends to be ontologically autonomous, strictly bordered off from the rest of the world; defining existence as web/knots implies that that what is, is ontologically related, viz. exists only as soon and as long as it is related. This is a statement that was already claimed by Simondon in writing:

> "A relation must be understood as relation in being, as a relation of being, a manner of being and not a simple relation between two terms that could be adequately known using concepts because they would have a separate and prior existence" (Simondon 2009, 10).

There hence is not a sum of autonomous entities, that only after coming into existence start to relate, can relate or not; but all there exists, exists as related.

Webs materialize of knots, and knots materialize within webs. A "web" is something that consists of knots, and "knots" per definitionem are that what exists within webs. This is why precisely these two terms were selected (see 4.1.2.1). As a web, existence is dependent upon the containment of knots; as a knot, existence is dependent upon the residing within, the shelter of a web. In fact, *to be related is the only real identity webs/knots own, the rest is becoming*. Existing hence means residing within/consisting of. For instance, as a web-of-

bricks, a house is made up by, consists of the bricks that it contains. And as knots-in-a-house, bricks are defined by the house in which they reside.

Therefore, webs and knots make the borders between self and other blur. The other is within me, the self is made by the other; and the self is within the other, and is engaged in the making of the other. Existence thus does not materialize in selves strictly bordered off from all others. There are not really entities like "self" and other"; but there rather are only composite beings, viz. bubbles of self/others, in which selves and others are related to each other. And it is this blurring, that becomes especially visible within the clothing, which is why the latter was selected as a phenomenon to which to relate the present research thesis. In short, things do not exist; but all there exists are webs/knots, webs-of-knots and knots-in-webs. So much was said.

4.2.1.1 The Slash Between Webs/Knots

However, *existence never completely arrives, it does not come to a close in one particular web/knot constellation*. Instead, existence is always on the move. It is constantly materializing in different web/knot constellations. This is why Bennett writes: "[T]here is no point of pure stillness" (Bennett 2010, 57). And Barad claims: "Matter is never settled" (Barad 2012d, 7), and in the same paper reworks "matter" into "materialization" (see ibid., 76, 80). It is why DeLanda ascribes matter the "power of morphogenesis" (DeLanda 1996, 9 [n.p., page number refers to pdf created from website]), and why Simondon writes: "individuation … is life" (Simondon 2009, 9). And also Coole and Frost write more generally: "it is evident from new materialist writing that forces, energies, and intensities (rather than substances) and complex, even random, [sic] processes (rather than simple, predictable states) have become the new currency" (Coole and Frost 2010, 13). Hence, existence is not a status, but it is a becoming, a trajectory. For this reason, instead of a nominal existence which seems to frame itself within itself, it is most apt to write about a gerundial "existing".

A cloth-knot becomes wherever it currently resides. If it materializes as a knot-in-an-outfit, it receives traces of wear, stains of food, patches of sweat. It rubs against other clothes. And it is formed by the human body. If it materializes as a knot-in-a-wardrobe (as already outlined in 4.1.3.2), it is elongated (which is especially true for woolen pullovers) by hangers, and abraded by the clothes residing to its sides. Zippers drill holes in fabrics; wool

spreads its lints onto other clothes, and the sum of clothes pick up the wooden smell of the wardrobe as such.

Not only if relate with it in too careless a manner, but necessarily via our and other clothes' very relation with it, the cloth receives stains, holes, or lints. It becomes felted (in case of wool), and it tears apart. There hence is no being, but only a becoming, of which one facet is an abrading. This becoming stands in a circular cause/effect-relation with the relations in which it is ontologically residing. And this becoming, so to speak, is the only identity truly owned, not only by clothes, but by all existences. It is what they are.

To fabulate another existence, the feather, which is described by Merleau-Ponty as residing on the hat of a lady (as cited in 4.1.1.4), is not precisely a feather-thing, but it rather is a "feathering". It is materializing as a cloth in the clothing sketched by the French philosopher, in which it intra-acts with a hat and a lady and the rest of her outfit. Yet, supposing that it is authentic, this feather once moved from materializing as a knot in a bird's plumage to a knot in a clothing-web (if it is not authentic, it nevertheless plays with, it insinuates this former materialization). And just as thinkable is it that the "same" feather, which indeed is just as much the same as it is other, materializes as a knot in the web of a wall decoration, in which it partakes in a dreamcatcher, or as a knot in a pillow-web.

This shows that a feather does not own the concrete identity of a cloth. Instead, the feathering materializes differently dependent upon the webs in which it is knotting — in some webs it materializes as a cloth-knot, in other webs it materializes as another kind of knot —, and the knots that are partaking in the web that it is. And as we will see in more depth later on (4.2.2.4), the bird in which it once knotted remains a knot within the feathering-web, wherein it co-exists with e.g. its tiny hairs, the hat, the lady, and the pillow.

To be precise, existence is existing "in-between" webs/knots. It is in them, materializes as them; but it does not restrict itself to a particular constellation of them. Instead, it ontologically remains in-between them. Figuratively speaking, meanwhile existence materializes as a particular web/knot relation, and hence resides within this materialization; it always remains with one foot outside of the latter. With this foot, it is already on the way, not to the "next" (as this would imply an even pre-given timely linearity), neither to a "further" (as this would imply a succession), and not even to "another" (as both the current self and the present other are included in existence, viz. are equally existent, and can easily shift roles, as we will see in 4.2.3.4); but to an "else" manifestation, which is an indeterminate and infinite else.

Existence is never really here, but always also there. Yet neither is it at any time completely there, entirely elsewhere; but it is ontologically here/there (Barad 2017, 65), viz., so it could be written, it is "t/here". This t/here-ness of existence is also expressed in describing it as in-between webs/knots. In delineation to hitherto new materialist habits (see 4.1.2.2), *existence is not "behind" webs and knots, and hence nothing superior or prior to the latter; but it is in-between, and hence rhizomatic to webs and knots*.

It is in, but simultaneously thereto, it also is out of itself, viz. of the self as which it currently is manifesting. The in and the out of web/knots of existence hence are already queered by the description of existence as "in-between". In fact, this is what existence, "ex-sistence" truly means: to move out from (*ex-*) a stand (*sistere*, to stand). And this also explains why Deleuze writes: "everything is a change of energy" (Deleuze 2004a, 29), and why the latter, in collaboration with Guattari, claims: "Matter equals energy" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 169).

Ontologically, to exist means to change, to become. Deleuze describes difference as "immanent" to being (Deleuze 2004b, 42). For him, immanence is not anymore the dualist partner opposed to transcendence (as adhered to by Harman, see Harman 2016, 14-16); but via queering this dualism, he reaches the view that by means of the differing that is immanent to existence, it achieves to transcend, it becomes. In this view, transcendence is nothing imposed onto existence from an outside, nothing existence is pushed into, is urged to realize; but transcendence is immanent to existence. It is its agency, its elan vital (see also Deleuze 2004a, 28).

Strictly speaking, existence hence is not a web/knot constellation, it is neither the web-of-knots nor the knot-in-a-web; but *it rather is the slash in between web and knot,* similar to how the cloth was defined as the slash in-between fashion and dress (see 2.2.3). In other words, existence is not a particular web/knot, but it rather is that what queers distinct webs/knots constellations with each other and thereby effectuates that they do not harden into entities, viz. it safeguards them from consolidating as things.

Existence hence is never completely in webs/knots (to be in), but neither is it completely out (to be out), precisely because it never "is", but it always becomes. Existence does not consist of pieces of matters, things, entities, that are concluded within itself. Instead, existence is materializing, it is throbbing, it is bubbling. A bubble of reality is a constellation of webs and knots. And as it is the nature of bubbles, they form, the deform and reform. They materialize, they grow, and they plop.

When describing existence as "materializing as" webs/knots, what is meant thereby is that it moves in/out of webs/knots simultaneously, whereby it queers the in/out dualism, and reveals to be a Deleuzian folding (see Deleuze 2014, as will be further discussed in 4.2.1.3 and 4.2.2.4). If existence would completely consolidate into a particular web/knot constellation, it would cease to exist. This discloses that in contrast to what commonsense assumes, the opposite of existence is not precisely death, but it is "insistence", or better: insisting, the adhering to and remaining in a stand, of which, if practiced in duration, death might be just a necessary consequence.

4.2.1.2 That as What Existence Materializes

What does this turn webs and knots into? Webs and knots are materializations of existence. Speaking with Currier, they could be denoted as "functional conglomerations" (Currier 2003, 325) that materialize and dematerialize. In fact, they are the only "matters" as which existence materializes, into which it temporarily concentrates and contracts, whereby, so it was claimed and explained in 4.1.2.2, every existence becomes equivalent. Existence as such is an ongoing materialization that manifests in web/knot constellations, viz. that manifests in relations. Ontologically, existence hence is not an entity; but existence only ever exists as a relation.

Either that what exists materializes as a web-of-knots, or it materializes as a knot-in-a-web. Yet as we will see, the "either" and the "or" do not exclude each other, viz. they do not need to happen one after the other, in a timely succession. They rather exist side by side. They are included in existence, they co-exist, so that it is more apt to write: In one constellation, that what exists materializes as a web-of-knots, and either in the same or in another constellation, it materializes as a knot-in-a-web.

In fact, 4.1.3 has already elicited that there are constellations in which the web is also a knot, and in which the knot is also a web (dressing and wearing); and constellations in which the web is only the web and the knot is only the knot (nakedness and a closed wardrobe). This occurrence does not make one kind of constellation more real than the other. Yet it might be that what we found here are two different kinds of relations. It might be that when the web is also a knot within the other, and the knot is also a web for the other, viz. when webbing and the knotting both are responded and hence enabled by the other; then this is what "to be entangled" (referring here to 4.1.2.5) means.

In this sense, and as already outlined in the respective chapter, an entanglement is never given, but rather is materializing and dematerializing. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as an "entangle-ment", an existent relation, a status; but there only is a re/de/entangling into/out of which existences move. And neither is there such a nominal concept as a "relation", but there is nothing but a re/de/relating, which is entangling to different degrees. Yet such a hierarchization of relatings, viz. a shifting from the conventional hierarchizing of entities to a hierarchizing of relatings, was already be defined above to need another project in order to materialize.

For now, let us stick to webs and knots as the materializings of existings. Webs and knots are nominal materializations of a gerundial happening that enacts them, that materializes in them. And this gerundial event is existence. Put differently, webs and knots are halts as which existings become temporarily manifest, and graspable for us. So webs and knots are not that what exists, but they are that as which what exists, exists. Webs and knots never completely arrive in existence. They never completely "exist". This is why webs and knots cannot be equated to existence. It cannot be thought in the manner: web + knot = existence. But in order to approach existence in the way it is conceptualized here, it must rather be thought: existing = webs/knots, whereby existing is a differing (the slash) in-between the latter two concepts.

4.2.1.3 The Plop of Being's Pop

So existence is not insistence in a particular web/knot constellation, but it rather is a folding, a bending, an "inflecting" (see Deleuze 2014, e.g. 14, 22) that takes place in-between webs/knots. This folding allows existence to persist. However, to be clear here, there is not an existence that persists by undertaking a folding activity; but there only exists a folding, which, precisely by and as a folding, persists. How does existence persist? By not insisting, but by folding. Hence, folding allows for persistence. Only what folds, can persists. Thus, existence only ever materializes as a folding. And to fold hence is what to persist, and hence what to exist means.

If existing means folding, then existence cannot be "to be", but must mean "to become". And becoming per definitionem means to exist over time, viz. to persist. "To persist" in the sense of "to be", viz. persistence expressed as an infinitive, is an oxymoron. Persistence ontologically is a gerund, a becoming, a folding, viz. it ontologically "is persisting", and

hence is a "persisting". To phrase it in a Bergsonian manner, persisting expresses existence in duration.

Something that "is" pops up in the here and now, but in the very next moment and in the very next place, viz. in the there and then, it can already have vanished. Hence, "to be" cannot be what existence is all about. Being cannot be equated with existing. A popping-up indeed materializes. It takes place, it is real. Yet in the popping-up, there is no time to fold, which is why what merely "is" necessarily bursts, viz. it cannot persist. A popping, a "being" cannot bend. Instead, a bending rather materializes in different poppings. Thus, "to be" does not exist, viz. it is not what exists. It is only that as which what exists, exists, viz. it is a materialization of existence, one materialization among many. It hence is a particular and temporary manifestation of that what exists.

In fact, also the very concept of "being" is an oxymoron, as it is a queering of "to be" and persistence. As already Deleuze wrote: "Being is a bad concept" (Deleuze 2004a, 25). "To be" cannot persist, precisely because it cannot fold. To adhere to this popping-up for a definition of existence means to die with the plopping-sound, the *plop*, that that what just popped up emits when it bursts, when it dematerializes with a bang. Therewith, the undertaken approach to existence (ontology) vanishes, dematerializes, dies; meanwhile existence as such (reality) remains existent, viz. persists. In short, "being" means death. What is therefore needed in order to map the trajectory as which existence exists, is another approach to existence, which realizes it not in the being, but in the becoming that it ontologically is (not as a popping-up, but as a persisting).

In the here and now, existence might appear as a being, a particular web/knot constellation, a bunch of web/knot matters, yet these constellations, in a way, are only a deviation, a distraction from realizing existence as the tendency (the latter term is also borrowed from Deleuze, see Deleuze 2004b, 34) which it is. Existence does not exhaust itself, and does not become exhausted in materializing in more, further, other, else webs/knots. There is always a surplus of energy, so that existence is not a singular web/knot, but it rather is a persisting and materializing in webs/knots. Existence is not a nominal being; but it is a gerundial becoming. So to speak, existence is a webbing/knotting. This might be what Barad aims at conveying when she talks about "the world's radical aliveness" (Barad 2007, 33).

Existence never melts into, it never completely gives itself into a particular web/knot constellation; but it keeps a loophole open to escape, to move on, to become else. Maybe this is what "withdrawal" truly means, not a creeping inwards, not a holing up inside oneself,

a diving deeper and deeper towards a given essence, which lies hidden in the interiors of the self; but rather a folding, a moving in/out, an ontological residing in-between.

4.2.1.4 From Alterity to Altering

Henceforth, existence means transition, means conversion, means change, means "difference" (see e.g. Deleuze 2004a, 32). Difference is something that stands "in-between" a self and an other, a you and a me, an x and an y, here: a web and a knot, and hence rightly depicts existence. Put differently, difference is that what stands in-between, e.g. me and you, and hence is that what exists; whereas me and you are only that as which what exists, exists, viz. are materializations, temporary halts of existence.

Yet above existence has already been refined as an "existing", a becoming. If adhering to Bergson's difference as a nominal concept, existence appears to be a status, a being. There is a being, and this being "is different" from another. This implies that there are static id/entities, that only become reinforced by being different from each other. I am different to you, you are different to me. Me and you got fix identities, that decisively do not overlap. As such, each of us is limited by being delimited from the other. And as such, difference does not rightly depict the reality of existence.

Deleuze already saw this flaw in the concept of difference, and hence reworked it into a "differing" (see Deleuze e.g. 1994, 56), which aligns properly to the "existing" as conceptualized above. Differing is not a status, but a becoming. It is a happening, an event, a process, a positive form of relationality (see 3.1.4.2.1). In this stream of thought, there is not a being that is different; and neither is there a being that is engaged in the practice of differing; but there rather only is a differing, which materializes in multiple snapshots of beings. These beings (you and me) hence materialize and dematerialize as momentary halts of the differing; yet the differing is that what exists. Hence, existence ontologically is a difference. And difference ontologically is a process, a differing, whereby existence discloses to be an existing.

Barad positions herself and her work in the hereditary line of this package of thought by claiming difference to be "an entangled kind of relation" (Barad 2012d, 9; 2012c, 47). She defines the self as an "infinite alterity" (see Barad e.g. 2012d, 5-6) and hence aspires to carve out that self and other are "irreducibly and materially bound to, threaded through" one another (Barad 2012d, 9; 2012c, 47), viz. are entangled.

Barad here grows a nominal concept, similar to Bergson's difference, and thereby appears to have skipped the writings of Deleuze in this regard. This, however, is a shortcoming of her work, so it shall be claimed. With "infinite alterity", Barad seemingly intends to queer being (alterity, a status) and becoming (towards the infinite). Yet Barad's concept does not work in the way she intended it to. An alterity is a unity, an entity that cannot become, cannot persist, because it adheres to, it attempts to persist as the being that it is, and therewith necessarily dies.

Put differently, "alter-ity" means "to be other" (with "alter" only being Latin for "other"). Although this concept defines the self as made by the others from which it differs, the others nevertheless are given, are there, are. And the self is always already there as bordered off from these others. The self is bordered off from and at the same time defined by the others (whatever their amount is). Thus, in the alterity, x is included, and y is excluded, and no change is possible. In short, alterity means to be within borders.

In contrast to "alterity", Deleuze rather adheres to the concept of "alteration" (see Deleuze 2004a, 25). Whereas alterity means being (status); alteration means becoming (change). Alteration is a process, an ongoing happening, an "altering", viz. a differing, whereby materializations or beings become other, and existences are persisting. Alteration is a shift from being framed to contingent framings, from defined to de/re/fining, from bound to un/binding, from threaded to threading, from bordered to bordering, from being in and restricted by borders to be playfully re/de/constructing borders, viz. to constantly shift and switch the includings/excludings. In short, whereas alterity is to "be other", alteration is a "becoming other", and as such is ontologically infinite.

Interestingly, Barad has taken up the alteration (a concept which was not originally grown, but indeed grown further by Deleuze, see ibid.) and reworked it into an "othering". As this is nothing other than the English translation of the "altering" which alteration ontologically is, Barad here realigns her thought to the Deleuzian heritage.

Altering already expresses the distancing aspect inherent in differing as much as the change that is thereby effectuated. Barad's othering thereto adds the facet of the constructing, the constituting of the other (see Barad 2012d, 9; ibid. 2012c, 47). In othering, the other, which might formerly materialized as part of the self, is made an other. Hence, othering expresses that altering is not a meeting between fix id/entities, but it is a growing. It does not only result in a becoming, but the becoming is immanent to it.

In short, othering can be subsumed to own three simultaneously materializing facets: (1) I differ from, I demarcate myself, viz. I distance myself from you, (2) I thereby construct you

as an other to which to confront myself, hence you become an other for me, and thereby (3) I make myself change. Or else, by othering from someone (distance), the other is othered (is constructed), and the self is othered (is changed). Barad's othering thus illustrates that there are no given borders between self and other. Instead, self/other flow into each other, precisely by bordering, viz. by erecting and shifting borders.

However, the problem with this depiction of the differing that existence is, is that self and other appear to be entities, that somehow, namely not "as demarcated from", and neither "despite being demarcated from", but crucially by being involved in demarcating from each other, influence another, and make each other become. Yet how can this be? If existences always already exist as distanced from another, and if differing means a reinforcement of this distance, viz. to distance further, how can they influence each other? This shows that in Barad's concept of othering, there remains a paradox to be solved.

In fact, there is not a self which is othering, which is why Bryant's formulation "self-othering" (as well as Bryant's definition of objects as "engines of differences", Bryant 2011, 69 and 92, which will be discussed below in 4.2.2.4) certainly is misleading the present stream of thought (Bryant 2011, 88). There is no self which undertakes the activity of othering, precisely because there exists no self. There is no original being that then, after a gap in time, becomes. And neither do self and other exist in a flat relation, as two selves, bordered off from, yet flowing into each other.

In contrast to what commonsense might assume; there only is and there has always been nothing other than an othering existent. This othering is the becoming, the altering, the differing of existence. Existence hence is moving not from self to other, but is only ever moving from one other to an other to an other to an other, whereby the one and the other(s) become hard to delineate from each other. And this othering materializes in only ever temporary forms of self, viz. in selves, that have already been shown as being not self-entities, but rather selves/others, viz. relations in-between selves and others, relations in which selves and others penetrate each other: webs/knots.

To subsume, there are not self and other, and neither is there a self that is othering; but there only is an othering, which materializes in diverse forms of selves. What is existent hence are not the selves, but only the othering. What led Barad to bifurcate her thought and grow on the one hand her concept of "othering", which remains closest to Deleuze's "alteration" as an altering; and on the other hand grow existence as an "alterity", remains mysterious.

4.2.1.5 Introducing Bergson's Difference of Differences

So existence was now explained to be materializing in-between, viz. as a folding of webs/knots, which thereby is persisting. But how precisely is existence folding, viz. is becoming? By differing, by altering, by othering. In fact, there are two ways in which existence is othering. Both will be granted a separate chapter in what is to follow, yet both shall nevertheless be introduced now.

In the here and now, or as Bergson would express it: in space (see Deleuze e.g. 1991, 31; ibid. 2004b, 35), there is a web-of-cloth-knots and there are cloth-knots-in-a-web. This is the materializing halt which we hitherto, conventionally, described as the thing-entity of an outfit. Now this halt can be altering either by what shall be titled a "splitting" (deepened in 4.2.2) or by a "jumping" (deepened in 4.2.3).

If we take the presently described halt as the point of departure for a figurative trajectory of becoming, then a splitting takes place when that what so far was a knot-in-an-outfit-web becomes a web, e.g. a web-of-stitch-knots, or when that what so far was a web-of-cloth-knots becomes e.g. an outfit-knot-in-a-cooking-web. In contrast, a jumping takes place when a knot-in-an-outfit-web remains a knot, but by jumping into another web, viz. by becoming a knot-in-a-wardrobe-web, it becomes another kind of knot. Similarly, a jumping also materializes when the outfit-web remains a web-of-clothes, yet is altering by certain cloth-knots entering and/or other cloth-knots exiting its sphere.

In splitting, that what beforehand materialized as a web now becomes a knot, and that what so far was a knot now becomes a web. Hence, splitting is a Bergsonian "differing-in-nature" or "differing-in-kind". When a cloth-knot-in-an-outfit-web splits, it becomes e.g. a web-of-fabric-and-yarn. And when a web-of-torso-sleeves-collar splits, it becomes e.g. a cloth-knot-in-a-wardrobe-web. In jumping, that what beforehand materialized as web remains a web, and that what was a knot remains a knot. But the web becomes another web, and the knot becomes another kind of knot. For this reason, jumping is a "differing-in-degree" (for this Bergsonian distinction, see e.g. Deleuze 2004b, esp. 32-34; ibid. 1991, e.g. 21, 35, 41-42, etc.). When a cloth-knot jumps from one outfit-web to the other, it becomes another cloth, it moves e.g. from pajama to daywear. And the outfit-web becomes another kind of outfit. It moves e.g. from casual to elegant. Yet the cloth remains a knot-in-an-outfit-web, and the outfit remains a web-of-cloth-knots.

At moments when we grasp existence as a web, it is already en route to become either another web (jumping) or split into a knot. And when we think we spotted a knot of

existence, it is already engaged in jumping into another web and thereby become another kind of knot, or it is engaged in splitting into a web, and thereby become made of knots.

As a synonym for his distinction between difference-in-nature versus difference-in-degree, Bergson uses for the former the concept of "difference-from-itself", and for the latter the "difference-from-others" (see e.g. Deleuze 2004b, 39, 42). Whereas the terminology introduced in the former paragraph (nature/degree) focuses on the kind of difference that materializes; this alternative terminology of Bergson (from-others/self) is led by the question: Who are these others that the self differs from? In case the self is differing-from-itself, the other is a former materialization of the self, for instance: me now as differing from me as a child, a banana when it is ripe versus when it was still green and hanging on the palm tree, a cloth today and the "same" cloth (which indeed is not the same but another, another-of-itself) yesterday. In case the self is differing-from-others, the other is another self, from which the self is distanced in space, for instance: me as differing from my brother, a banana versus an apple, a cloth and another cloth, e.g. a pullover and a T-Shirt.

Yet if we stop thinking in entities, and rather think in webs/knots, there is not a cloth which remains a cloth despite differing-from-itself; but the web-of-stitches alters itself to a knot-in-a-wardrobe, which in the next splitting alters itself into a web-of-collar-sleeves-torso. Hence, there is not one singular entity that remains the same, but with every splitting, it becomes another, from web to knot, from knot to web.

For the difference-from-others, this shift in thinking (from entities to webs/knots) means that the other from which the materialization differs is not another entity than the self, viz. is not completely demarcated from the self. Instead, the othering of an other, viz. the differing from an other is rather complicated to depict in the jump, precisely because the jump consists in a change, an othering, a differing in the role allocations of self and other. More will be elicited in 4.2.3.4 below. Put in a nutshell, whereas for a thinking-in-entities, difference is a border; for the present web/knot ontology, difference rather is a becoming as and within relations, and hence is existence.

By toying around with the self and the other, this alternative terminology of the two kinds of differings is considered misleading for the present ontological project. On the one hand, this is opined because, as already outlined in 4.1.1.2, nothing ever exists alone, but webs consist of knots, and knots exist within webs. As existence is difference, nothing ever differs alone, but every difference always only takes place in conjunction with others. This fact is directly conveyed by the difference-"from-others"; yet when talking about a difference-

"from-itself", it appears as if there would be an autonomous existence capable to differ from itself alone, in a vacuum, without the aid of others. That this self is given, exists in and for itself, viz. is, and only after a while sets on to differ from itself, is a thought that especially one element in this terminology misleads us to think. This treacherous element indeed is the "-it" in the "itself" of the difference-from-itself. There is an it, an entity, a self, that then starts to differ.

On the other hand, this is argued for because, as already outlined in the last but one paragraph, there is no other which is strictly delineated from the self. Instead of an other, an entity, there rather is a constant re/de/materialization of others, viz. an othering. And this othering is not distinct from the self, viz. it is not something the self could border itself off from; but it rather is that what produces selves, so that existence is more than a sum of selves, viz. is more an othering than some selves.

To subsume, othering is what existence is. *Othering is existing*. Webs and knots are the selves of existence, the selves as which existence, as an othering, materializes. And webs and knots are both, part of each other's, of an other's self, and part of an, even "the" other for each other. Who is the self and who the other for each other, which web for a knot, which knots for a web, is diverging, is differing, which is precisely what characterizes existence. This is why existence is defined also here as a difference.

As there neither is a clear other nor a distinguished self, but only a composite being, a selves-producing-othering, which is existence; the present project prefers to mostly disregard Bergson's terminology of difference-from-itself/others, and will rather treat the phenomenon that is expressed as well thereby, by adhering to calling it a differing-in-nature/degree. As such, the splitting/jumping will be outlined, and outgoing from such, the splitting/jumping will undertake a reworking attempt.

What is more, Bergson introduced a hierarchy into his two kinds of differings. For him as well as for Deleuze, the differing-in-degree was finite, and the differing-in-nature was infinite (see Deleuze 2004b, 40, 42). When a pullover differs from others, the others (other pullovers, other clothes, other things, other outfits, etc.) from which it can differ are finite, which makes the reasons of differing in-between the pullover and the other clothes finite. Hence, the differences in between one and another are finite, whereby one and the other become finite beings.

In contrast, when a cloth differs from itself, e.g. turns from white to grey (e.g. in the washing), or from even to rough, *the snapshots that can be taken from this becoming amount*

to the infinite. This led both researchers to claim that existence first and foremost has to be approached via its differings-in-nature.

Now it might be argued that I differ more from myself as a baby than I differ from my sister in the here and now, as two adult persons, which could be taken as an argument for the possible supremacy of the difference-from-others over the differing-from-itself. However, it is precisely because me and my sister differ-from-ourselves that the degree to which we differ-from-each-other can vary. It might be that when we were babies, we looked almost similar; yet by growing up, viz. by differing-from-ourselves, our outlook became more discernible.

Similarly, as will be shown below (see 4.2.2.1 and 4.2.3.2), a belt, worn in the correspondent loops of some jeans, differs less from suspenders and more from a décolleté. Yet precisely because this belt can differ-from-itself, and hence can also decorate a human's hips, it can differ into differing more from suspenders and less from a décolleté. This shows that, because an existence can differ from itself, the degree in which it differs from others can vary, which reveals the finite kind of difference to be dependent upon the infinite kind of difference.

When reworking this thinking-in-entities into a thinking-in-webs/knots, this notion remains true. When splitting from web to knot to web to knot, the trajectory of becoming evidently is infinite, because the web that splits into a knot is an other than the web into which the knot splits. In delineation, when jumping in-between webs, the amount of webs into which a particular knot can jump, indeed are finite in the here and now. And as the amount of knots that reside within a web are finite, so evidently is the amount of knots that can exit a web in a particular moment. As this is the case for all webs-of-knots, also the amount of knots that can enter into a particular web are finite.

Therewith, the others that can be reached and embodied via jumping, both in the sense of the webs into which a knot can jump, and the knots that a web can allow to jump into/out of itself, are restricted in number. So far, the present project agrees with Bergson and Deleuze, which is why, adhering to this hierarchy, first the splitting (4.2.2) will be treated and only thereafter will the jumping be discussed (4.2.3). In fact, it will even be shown that there indeed is a split inherent in a jump, which only reinforces the hierarchy detected by Bergson/Deleuze.

However, a splitting denotes a trajectory of becoming of a particular materializing of existence, that in itself indeed is infinite. In contrast, a jumping creates an infinite amount of trajectories, that all in themselves also are infinite. This shows that the jumping is another

kind of happening than the splitting. Whereas the splitting is a trajectory of becoming of a particular existence from webs to knots to webs to knots, and thereby becomes — by no way in a linear, but precisely in a circular, hence uncanny und infinite manner; the jumping rather is a change in this direction of becoming, so that a becoming becomes differently after a jump than it did before, or would have done without that jump, viz. if that jump would not have happened. Put simply, there always already is a splitting, and within the splitting, jumpings occur. As there thus is a split in the jump, but also a jump in the split, the Bergsonian/Deleuzian hierarchy of differings is not only turned around, and but it eventually is rhizomized.

Now it is impossible to map all the splitting-trajectories of becoming that a jumping effectuates and, simultaneously thereto, map the jumping in its trajectory. Instead, it is necessary to decide what to map: a particular splitting trajectory, or a particular jumping trajectory. Either we map a cloth-knot in how it jumps from wardrobe-web to outfit-web to laundry-pile-web to washing-machine-web to drying-rack-web to wardrobe-web; or we map a cloth-knot-in-an-outfit-web in how it splits to a web-of-fabric-and-yarn to a knot-in-a-human-body to a web-of-transportation-kilometers.

As we will see, for both cases, there are hints given in the existent literature how to manage such a mapping. In case we wish to map a jumping trajectory, we need to engage with Deleuze's ontological tool of differentiation. And when it is aspired to map a splitting trajectory, we rather need to engage with Barad's epistemology of diffraction. Both will be elicited in the respective chapters (4.2.2.5 and 4.2.3.5), that now will follow. Yet, and this is crucial, we cannot differentiate and diffract an existence simultaneously. But when we differentiate an existence, its jumpings are mapped, viz. its jumpings are what Bryant together with Spencer-Brown calls the "marked space" of distinction, and its splittings are excluded, viz. are the "unmarked space" (see Bryant 2011, 20). And when we diffract an existence, its splittings are included, and jumping are excluded.

4.2.1.6 Reworking Bergson's Intuition

In 3.1.4.2.1, the Bergsonian method of intuition was introduced as consisting of, to recall, the four steps of a) detecting a bad monism, b) disclosing it as a dualism, c) reworking dualism into difference, and d) reaching an analyzed monism. By engaging with this method, hitherto NM achieved to rework the commonsense hierarchization of humans over things into an equivalent notion of humans/things relations.

However, at this point in writing, the present project is already in the middle of a reworking attempt directed towards the new materialist body of thought, which it turns from thing-ism to post-thing-ism. The question hence underlying the present chapter is: What are the steps of thought this project undertakes in order to rework hitherto NM into a new form of NM? Outlining these, it will become apparent that also this project, in its reworking methodology, remains Bergsonian in kind. Yet instead of merely "applying" Bergson's intuitive method, whereby it would reinforce the method as such as a consolidated entity; it rather reworks intuition from a process tending towards linearity (see also visualization of figure 2) into a circularity, and hence claims for itself to be one step in the becoming that intuition is. How precisely the method of intuition was reworked, and how this reworking of intuition reworks new materialist thought, shall be shown in what follows.

The new NM sets in at detecting a being as a badly analyzed composite, as a badly constructed monism. This is step a) in Bergson's method. It then splits the being into its materialization as a web of knots, which is the first part of step b), and rhizomes the being as being also a knot in a web, the second part of step b). For an explanation of the order of this second step, see the thinking trick outlined in 4.1.2.3. Having done that, it queers the web and the knot materialization, as which it so far detected the being, before they harden into a dualism, and reworks the being into a web/knot, into the slash in-between web and knot. This queering is a reworking from conflictive dualism into affirmative relationality, into a difference, and as such aligns to Bergson's step c).

Once the being is conceptualized as the in-between, it can be dynamised or "differed" into a splitting and jumping existence that does not exhaust itself in any particular web/knot constellation, but constantly moves in-between webs and knots, whereby it becomes. The true monism, that is the task of step d) to find, hence is the splitting and jumping, a reworking from being into becoming, from determination to "indetermination itself" (Deleuze 2004b, 40, 49). In this becoming which existence is, webs and knots are temporary halts. As such, every singular halt of existence can be taken up and detected itself as a badly analyzed monism, whereby the circulation is rounded off and we can restart intuition with step a). In order to clarify the presently undertaken reworking of intuition from linearity to circularity, it is illustrated in figure 5 below.
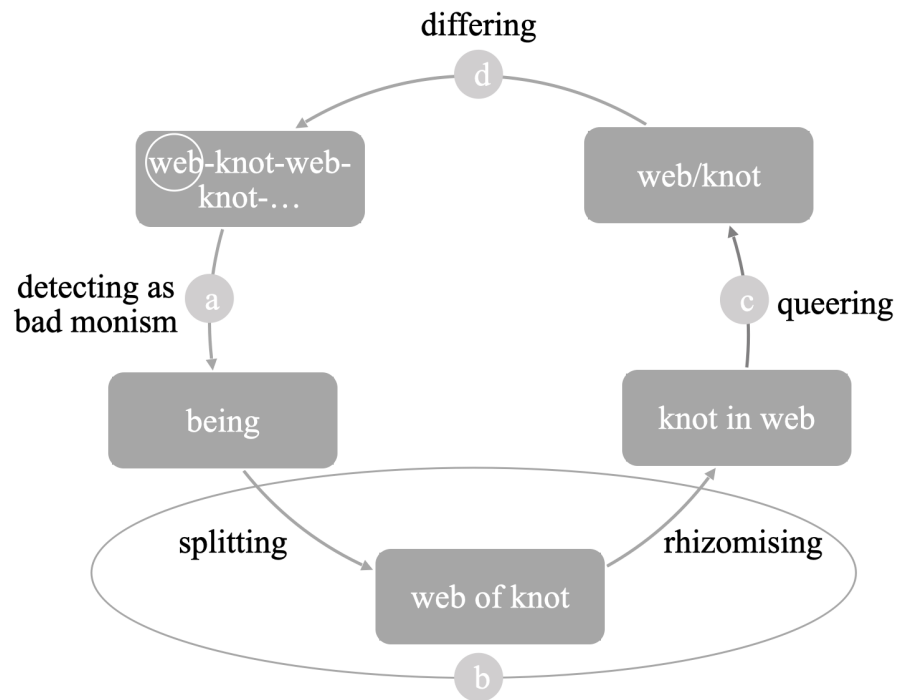
figure 5: The Neo-Bergsonian Method of Intuition: A Circular Approach

Indeed, it could have been written that step b) in reality are two steps, with b) being the splitting of being, and c) then being the rhizomizing of the two parts into which existence was split (webs and knots). Yet in order to adhere to Bergson's numeration, and as b) as such consists of the realization that existence is both, a web and a knot, these steps were subsumed to an extended step b).

Besides, what strikes the attention in this "neo-Bergsonian" method is that both difference and splitting are queering ontology and epistemology, as they both are a phenomenon detected in reality, an ontological existence, and a step in the presently outlined method, whereby they enter the sphere of epistemology. Difference is both, existence as the in-between of webs and knots; and it is step d), the dynamising step that leads from the conceptualization of existence as the in-between to realizing it as the infinite splitting that it truly is (the true monism). And also the splitting is both, existence as infinitely becoming (the true monism), as well as step a), the breaking up of a badly analyzed monism into a dualism. This shows that also in neo-Bergsonian method of intuition, epistemology is tending towards a following behind of ontology, and as such corresponds to the hierarchization of both fields of research as claimed by NM. And by being a queering of both fields, differing and splitting initiate a line of flight which is reaching beyond the present project, and which will only be drafted in 5.2.1.3.

4.2.2 Splitting

4.2.2.1 The Fashioning That Clothes Are

There is no such thing as a thing, concluded in itself and finitely bordered off from other things. There is no house, no cloth, no human, no car. These are only assistants that the human constructed in order to find her way through, to orientate herself in the world. As already Bennett remarked: "to live, humans need to interpret the world reductively as a series of fixed objects" (Bennett 2010, 58), and on the same page continues by writing: "'Objects' appear as such because their becoming proceeds at a speed or a level below the threshold of human discernment" (ibid.).

Hence, entities are not reality; they are only an, one approach to reality, and not even a proper one — neither in the sense of truthful nor in the sense of gainful. As also Simondon wrote: "We do not witness the ontogenesis because we always place ourselves before the taking-form that is the ontogenesis" (Simondon 2009, 5), a statement followed up by the claim that "thought tends towards the complete individual being that must be understood" (ibid.). In other words, both Bennett and Simondon can be subsumed to arguing that we are persuaded of the existence of things, of static beings; meanwhile what we are in contact with, and what we are, rather are becomings.

To understand ourselves as finite entities that are surrounded by a sum of finite entities leads to an immense framing of opportunities for action, for change, for becoming. Or else, when Deleuze writes: "it is a contraction that occurs in the mind" (Deleuze 2004b, 45), by this "contractive" thinking, viz. by a perception of the world that is tending towards contraction, the mind is affected, hence becomes contracted, hardened, rigid, stiff, so it shall be claimed. If this thing is a glass, all I am supposed to do, even: all I can do therewith is to drink. If that thing is a chair, all I can do therewith is to sit down on it. If that thing is a cloth, all I can do therewith is to clothe myself. And if I am this thing we call "human", then all I can do is to take a glass in order to still my thirst, to sit down on a chair in order e.g. to rest, to eat, to play; and to dress clothes in order to adorn, cover, express myself. Why do I do so? Because these things are intended therefore, and as I am engaged with these things, I am intended to do so with these things.

Who follows whom now, whether the things follow the needs of human existence, and are created according to and serve precisely for these needs arising in this existence; whether the human follows the things in order to fulfill her needs (the thing tells me "how to", in

case of the glass: how to take it out of the cupboard, how to fill it with water, and in what inclination to hold it in order to be able to still my thirst; in case of the cloth: how, viz. in what postures and by what movements to get it onto myself and myself into it); or even whether the human needs follow the things, viz. only arise in the engagement with things (When I am not confronted with a chair, I might not feel the need to sit down; or I at least might feel it later than when remembered of this need, than when seduced to feel in need of rest by a chair. And when I do not even knot about a chair, when I never heard of the concept of a chair, I will not be in need for one in order to rest, but I can simply squat or lay down.), is indeed hard to say with security.

A thinking-in-things, hence a thinking which has the thing, the entity as its unit of research, thus entraps us humans as things-engaged-with-things. As such, we can only ever walk on the paths we paved for ourselves by creating things, and that the things we are engaged with hence are paving for us, even before we start to walk on them. This is a glass. What is it made for? It is made to drink. That is a cloth. What is it made for? It is made to dress and wear. Such a form of knowledge is acquired by every school kid, intended as a means to enable a first orientation in the world. Yet it is time to loosen our grips from this rudimentary worldview, and come to take a closer and more sophisticated look onto the nature of existences, so it is opined.

Remaining within a thinking-in-things, when we take a glass to catch a fly that mistakenly made its way into our home; when we put a belt on our hips in order to achieve an accentuation of this body part in a wide dress; or when we throw a pullover over our shoulders and knot its sleeves before our breasts, then these are unconventional usages that diverge from the intended usages of things, and hence keep referring thereto: to the original idea, the identity of things.

Hence, in this thinking-in-identities, a pullover necessarily remains a pullover, even if it is thrown over some shoulders. Therewith, its identity remains closely related to a cardigan or a slipover. And even when worn on the hip, a belt remains a belt, and thus the most closely related to suspenders in scope. Right now, these clothes might be worn in such a way, but originally, actually, intrinsically, essentially they are made to. When wearing them "correctly", a pullover must be worn on the upper body, e.g. between shirt and jacket; and a belt is intended to be worn in the loops of the trousers's waistband. All other ways of relating to these clothes are mere divergences thereof.

Throwing a pullover over one's shoulders is the small but significant rebellion that (to express it by means of a stereotype) students of law and fathers of suburban families still

dare to undertake. A bit bold, but not too risky to fall out of the frame — a frame that is not simply there, but that they themselves together with us, with all other clothed and clothing, watching, judging, orientation-seeking humans, are constantly constructing, namely by a certain view on things, to which we all count.

However, the idea of throwing a pullover over one's shoulders certainly and crucially did not come from those who today are engaged in this practice. Instead, it came from fashion. As already noted above (see 4.1.1.2), fashion cannot only be considered a system in which clothes are immersed. But fashion can also be understood, and shall be understood in what follows, as a force, an energy, a vividness, viz. a "fashion-ing" immanent to clothes, that plays with the identities which clothing conventions (materializing inter alia as traditions, as social appropriateness, as a frame of purposes, as daily habits) so strictly ascribe to the latter. If a cloth which formerly was a pullover, worn on one's upper body, now is thrown over one's upper body, it distances itself from its kinship to a cardigan, and rather relates closer to a necklace or a collar. By being knotted on top of one's shoulders, the thing that was a pullover before ceases to be a "pull-over", and rather becomes a "throw-over". By splitting from pullover to throwover, it seduces us to knot it on top of our shoulders. And if a cloth which beforehand was a belt, worn in the correspondent loops of some trousers, moves from trousers to dress and therewith from hips to midriff, it loses its kinship to the hip and rather becomes closer related to the décolleté. By moving from accentuating one secondary sexual characteristic to accentuating an other, it ceases to be a belt, at least in the conventional sense and therewith connected usage inherent in this term, and splits into something else, maybe an "accentuator".

Fashion is that force that allows things, existences, beings, to not only diverge from, but to completely lose their strings to and exchange their former with another kind of identity. As such, fashion can be said to lead away, and to have already led away (even at times where a thinking-in-entities was most popular) from a thinking-in-entities and towards a more dynamic thinking. *Fashioning denotes the differing of clothes, the clothes' becoming other,* and as such has already been appreciated e.g. by Seely (see Seely 2011 and 2013). In short, fashion means change.

As such, fashioning is not a human practice into which clothes are drawn, but it rather is a practice that clothes allow humans to undertake. And neither is it inherent to clothes as a potential hidden in their interior; but it is immanent to clothes. When understood as knots in fashion's system or web, clothes usually move from more to less en vogue, from in to out of fashion, maybe to move from out to in. Fashion thus becomes a temporary halt, as described

above, conventionally materializing in the beginning of the lives of clothes. But fashion also is a knot within the cloth. It is the differing of clothes. And it hence are the clothes, understood not as entities, but as dynamic becomings, that are differing, that are fashioning, that are becoming. It is this differing that clothes are. In short, not exclusively, but also, viz. inclusively (see 2.2.3), clothes are fashion.

The changes of fashion might sometimes appear as minor in the sense of a practice undertaken first by a minority. But fashion has long proven to be able to spread a new temporary halt towards the masses. And neither are fashion's changes minor with regard to the alteration of the cloth's identity it enacts. Even if it is a small step for a belt from waistband to décolleté, from hip to midriff; or for a pullover from torso to shoulders — such a step materializes as all the more valent with regard to the identity converting force it enacts. There is no house, no cloth, no car, no human, no glass, and no pencil, that exists as such, demarcated from the rest and finite within itself. Instead, what we so far saw as a cloth, as entity, rather is a fashioning, and as such is always on the move. This makes it hard to capture the existence which hitherto was named a "cloth". Dependent upon the instant in which thinking sets in, we will be able to witness a different section in its ongoing trajectory of becoming, and based thereupon define it as something different, viz. we are easily mislead to take one of its temporary halts and elevate it to the becoming-cloth's one and only, static and given identity.

Identities restrict us to fixed essences, and therewith confine us to the dualism of searching/finding. This entraps us in a world with pre-given meanings, viz. with meanings that are always already there, inherent in a world-of-things that exists long before we, as individuals, enter it. Yet identities are not given in reality. They are only one approach to reality. If we comprehend this, we have already taken a first step towards an understanding of existence as becoming. This, indeed, is a liberating thought, a thought which allows us to free us, and all the existences within which we are related, from the idea that there is a self form which existence might diverge. Instead of a self that diverges from another self, there only is a diverging, an altering, a differing. And this differing is immanent to fashion, is fashion, and as such is immensely immanent in clothes. Such a notion of the clothing, yes, but also of further bubbles of reality, might, so it shall tentatively be claimed, allow us to access reality (which is essentially what ontology is about, what ontology is striving for) in a richer, enhanced, amplified way.

4.2.2.2 Not Split but Splitting

The first kind in which existence becomes is via splitting. Above the "split" was detected to be a term written down by OOOist Bryant (see 4.1.1.2). Yet although OOO found already the split, it locates it within existence (a split between substance and qualities) and thereby reinforces the notion of existence as an entity, which stands, although split within itself, as a unity against the humdrum of its exterior and worldly surroundings. Thereby, existence, so it was said, becomes the boundary between interior and exterior.

If existence were split within itself, it would be a sum of webs and knots. This would mean that an existence becomes all the more real, the more webs and knots it accumulates. Such a thought would go as follows: webs + knots + webs + knots + webs = existence. In existence, the number of webs and knots would come to a close. Or else, existence would be that what bundles webs and knots. A cloth, for instance, would be the sum of a web-of-knitted-stitches plus a knot-in-an-outfit plus a web-of plus a knot-in plus a web plus a knot. In this thought trajectory, a cloth is all this simultaneously, nothing more and nothing less. In a cloth, every web and every knot a cloth could ever materialize as is included, is always already there, resides within the cloth.

On the one hand, such a conceptualization of existence cannot account for change, as it leads back to the concept of identity, only that this identity is split inside of itself. On the other hand, it steers us to an understanding of materializations as potentialities, that appear as infinite, yet are hidden inside itself, withdrawn (to be understood here in an OOOist sense) from the world.

Yet this is not what is meant here. A being, a cloth, a human, an entity is not even a result of, but only a simplified and thus improper approach to reality. Existence is not the result of an addition of its materializations. But existence is that what materializes as webs and knots. It certainly is true that existence only exists as soon as and as long it materializes in webs/knots, viz. that there is no existence apart from webs/knots (which rhizomizes all kinds of existences, and therewith is a research result that stands in direct opposition to what Harman aspires to do, see again Harman 2016, 106-107). But existence is not a bundle of webs and knots. It is not what exhausts webs and knots; precisely because it never exhausts itself in webs and knots.

Therefore, the next step in the undertaken thought trajectory was it to depart from this OOOist notion. Existence is not split within itself, and neither is it residing within a split (e.g. between interior/exterior, micro/macro). Instead, existence was defined to be *at* this

split. It does not contain this split, but it is this split. Hence, existence was said to be ontologically split, namely split into webs and knots.

However, such a format of thought leads to ponder about the reasonability of exclusions and inclusions. Why is it that a cloth is split into this kind of web, but does not materialize as such a kind of web? Where does the cloth-as-split draw a border? Is it only split into the webs and knots that it so far empirically accumulated? Or does it also include those materializations which it not yet embodied, but which it could, potentially, embody? Or is it even that a cloth-as-split does not have anything like a memory, and neither anything like a (withdrawn) potential, but is only what it right now materializes as? Hence, questions about the conceptualization of reality are raised. Is reality only the empirical? Or does it include the potential, even the virtual? Is reality only the presence, or does it include the past and the future? And if it is restricted to the presence, what kind of presence is that?

Thus, also the notion of existence as ontologically split was considered unsatisfactory, which is why we took a further step, queered the concept of the "split" as found within OOO with the gerundial thinking of NM, and defined existence as ontologically "splitting", namely from web to knot to web to knot. This is why, and in this sense it is intended to be understood when existence is defined as a web/knot.

However, also this formulation we must treat with care. If we say: "There is a cloth, and this cloth is splitting into webs and knots", then there is a cloth, a being, which is moving. Yet in reality, there is not a being that is splitting, that is engaged in the activity, in the practice of splitting. There is not a "becoming of being" (Simondon 2009, 6), but there only is a becoming. In this vein, also Bryant's definition of objects as "engines of difference" (Bryant 2011, 69 and 92) is misleading. It is not the case that there is an existence which exists as such, and once in a while undertakes the action of splitting. Instead of an existence that is splitting, there only is a splitting, and this splitting is existence. Existence is an existing, a becoming. And splitting defines existence's trajectories of becoming.

Therefore, we cannot start a trajectory of thought by the formulation "there is an entity that splits". This, in fact, directly entangles us as thinkers into a static kind of thought, a thinking-in-id/entities. There is not a cloth, a house, a human, an outfit, that splits into. There are no such beings, no such essences. But there only is a differing, which materializes in a splitting in-between webs-of and knots-in. There is not a house, but there only is a splitting in-between e.g. a web-of-bricks and a knot-in-a-village. And neither is there a brick, but there only is e.g. a web-of-burned-clay and a knot-in-a-house. And neither is there a village, but there only is inter alia a web-of-houses, and a knot-in-a-region. Henceforth, when we try to

make a statement about reality, viz. when we start a sentence with the phrase "there is", what needs to follow thereupon are not entities, but webs/knots. And these webs/knots need to be shown not as a static being, but in their dynamic becoming, hence in their splitting, in their differing. This is the case because there in fact is not a reality that differs; but there only is a differing, which is reality.

There hence is not a being that splits into webs and knots; but there only is a splitting, namely from web to knot to web to knot to web, maybe ad infinitum (not necessarily in time, but with regard to the multitude of other webs a knot can become, and viceversa). Although to this two-directional change, the splitting shall be reduced in the abstract, this by no means simplifies the splitting in reality. Or else, the directions of splitting are only "two" as long as thinking remains in the abstract. This is the case because *the web that splits into the knot is distinct from the web that the knot splits into.* Therefore, once this thought becomes entangled with/in reality, it discloses that the knots into which a web is splitting are infinite, as are the webs into which a knot is splitting. As already Deleuze remarked: "an *object* can be divided up in an infinity of ways" (Deleuze 1991, 40, original emphasis). In short, existence is not split into two, but it is splitting into many. And as such, existence becomes ontologically infinite.

4.2.2.3 Freeing The Folds of Clothing

When Deleuze and Guattari write "the wolf is the pack" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 35), they do not mean to say that wolf and pack, knot and web, cloth and clothing are congruent, are one and the same; but that the wolf is becoming dependent upon, in relation to how it materializes in the pack, and that the pack is altering dependent upon the wolves that are living and intra-acting therein. Wolf and pack, web and knot hence are not two materializations of existence which are existing demarcated from each other yet side by side; but they rather are blurring, flowing, splitting into each other.

Thus diffracting (a Baradian method correspondent to the splitting, which will be explained in 4.2.2.5) the Deleuzian and Guattarian statement, it is not enough to say "the wolf is the pack", the knot is the web, the cloth is the clothing, but it must be said: The wolf is the pack is the wolf is the pack, the knot is the web is the knot is the web. Or better, as there is no being, no "is": The wolf is splitting into the pack is splitting into the wolf is splitting into the pack. Splitting from wolf to pack to wolf to pack, existences are materializing.

Such a splitting trajectory can be mapped with regard to every existence. Or else, splitting from web to knot to web to knot is something that all forms of existence share. To split means to exist, and existing crucially does not mean "being split", but "splitting". Whereas Harman thus concludes the program of his OOO by claiming that: "one of the new tasks of philosophy is to find a new way to classify different types or families of objects" (Harman 2016, 106-107); the present ontology rather subsumes every existence to webs/knots, and hence is interested in finding out about the peculiar trajectory of becoming that existence is, and that makes every existence rhizomatically equivalent.

Reality is far more complex than commonsense (and OOO) assumes. It does not consist of entities, which are ready to be outlined by visible borders. But it solely ever consists of relatings, that differ from and into each other in their degree of entanglings. Materializing as webs, existences encompass as knots what we so far understood as other things; and as knots, existences partake in webs that we so far saw as demarcated therefrom.

Henceforth, OOO was correct in detecting a split in the realm of existence, viz. in splitting the monism, as which the being was hitherto taken for granted, up into a dualism. Yet despite having detected this dualism, it adheres to being as the conventional and "badly analyzed composite" (see again Deleuze 1991, 28), and reduces the split, the dualism, to that what happens in the inside of being. OOO thus eventually remains a thinking-in-entities, which necessarily is static in kind (as such, it is explicitly proclaimed by Harman, see Harman 2016, 15-16).

The present project sets in at this point, takes up the dualism detected by OOO (the split), and queers the two respective dualist partners with each other. Therefrom resulted the finding that webs or substances are not independent from their qualities or knots; and neither are knots at any time independent from webs. Instead, webs are made of knots, and knots are made to be within webs (4.1.2.2). Having found and elicited that, the present project now sets out to queer the monism at which OOO's thinking began, and to which it eventually also adheres (the being as unity within the macro) with the dualism that resulted from its thinking (the split within the micro). Thereby, it achieves to turn the badly analyzed monism into a proper monism, viz. to re-read the being into a becoming, which is a splitting.

Put differently, whereas OOO attributes the impossibility to map existence in its fullness to the withdrawal of object-entities towards their split hidden depths; the present project rather adheres to the Deleuzian/Bergsonian dictum "Matter has […] no hidden power" (Deleuze 1991, 41), and shows that withdrawing rather is a surplus of existence caused by and materializing in both, involution, viz. a wrapping, a folding itself up into and enveloping

inside itself, viz. a webbing; and a folding out, a developing (for the distinction between envelopment and development, see Deleuze 2014, 23) viz. a knotting, which has neither return nor progress, precisely because it has no departure. Instead, as already mentioned in 3.1.4, "the point of departure is […] duration" (Deleuze 2004b, 50).

Simply put, the present project not only turns OOO's split into a splitting, its static into a dynamic ontology, which considers reality not as structured into entities, but as throbbing and bubbling, viz. as vibrant. But in addition thereto, and even more importantly, *it adds to the withdrawing, as the becoming of existence, the folding facet that completes it, and that OOO has so far neglected: the developing*. And precisely for so doing, the clothing is especially apt as a figuration. Let me elicit.

Noteworthily, Barad writes that: "[m]atter is enfolding" (Barad 2012d, 5). Although she nowhere explains whether she intended this statement of her to be a reworking of the Deleuzian fold, as an evidently Deleuzian thinker (see also 4.2.1.4 and 4.2.2.5), it is likely that she was influenced by Deleuze also when making the latter claim. However, understanding her enfolding in line of the fold requires some further thought. On the one hand, Barad turns Deleuze's nominal into a gerundial concept, whereby she rightly stresses the becoming that the fold is. Besides, whereas Deleuze's "fold" leaves open where it takes place; Barad explicitly locates it within, "en-", and thus clarifies that nothing becomes autonomously, but only ever in intra-action, hence between within, in-between.

On the other hand however, by staying in her routine of creating "en-" concepts (entanglement, en-actment, en-folding), and by calling matter not "folding" but "enfolding", "involuting" (ibid.), Barad needlessly limits the fold to one of its facets, and thereby can be said to neglect the richness of the Deleuzian concept, that will be approximated in depth below (4.2.2.4). Whereas the folding means a queering of dimensions and directions; Barad rather turned the folding into, and limited the folding to a "folding into".

When Deleuze (and Guattari) thus describe clothes to be a folding matter par excellence (see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 550; see also Deleuze 2014, 121), in Barad's line of flight, this would also be agreed with, as in this regard, there might be no other things that are so extremely and exclusively made for wrapping-into, for covering and coating, for encasing and enveloping, for draping and dressing, viz. for en-folding, as are clothes (for such a notion of clothes, see also Schiller's quote in 2.1.3). Yet this is not what Deleuze (and Guattari) intended.

When Deleuze describes clothes as preeminently folding, he continues to write: "clothing has to free its own folds from its usual subordination to the finite body it covers" (Deleuze

2014, 121, see also 3.2.1.3). Hence, he not only means to describe the functions clothes have for us humans, but rather their very own ontology. And precisely for this reason, viz. in order to adhere to and follow this Deleuzian dictum, the present ontology conceptualizes clothes not apart from, but as standing in a rhizomatic relation to the human body.

Put in a Bergsonian manner, this citation of Deleuze can also be interpreted in the sense of claiming that the mistake made by hitherto embodiment approaches to clothes (also for Deleuze, "clothing" does not denote the relation but the conventional thing) was it to define them alongside their differences from an other, which here is the human body. Thereby, both body and cloth become "finite" (see quote) beings; meanwhile when approaching them via their differing-from-themselves, viz. their differing-in-nature, their splitting, the infinite becomings they are can be sensed (in 3.2.1.3 it was already described that textiles are folding as much as do skins). As the present project takes a first and disputed step away from embodiment approaches (see 2.3.2), the Deleuzian phrase can be considered as its leitmotif of selection.

Whereas Barad's enfolding not only leads thought back to understanding clothes as covers-from (see 2.3.2), but generally reintroduces the device-thinking about clothes; although presumably not inspired by Deleuzian writings, Woodward describes "clothing as a medium that relates surface to depth" (Woodward 2005, 37; also Woodward here means "clothing" as the material thing, not as the relation). This can be read as a first and very fundamental evidence for the fact that clothes are not solely folding around us and folding us into them; but that clothes are literally folding. To say that clothes are folding is tantamount to saying that they are changing. They are differing, are altering, not primarily from others in space, but rather from themselves in duration. In short, clothes are splitting. Or better, as it is not that there is a cloth-thing that is splitting, is split, is: There is a splitting, which materializes as cloth-web-of and cloth-knots-in.

Yet the existences that we so far grasped as clothes are not only changing, but they are extraordinarily ready to change, and good in changing. So to say, due to their immanently flexible matter-ness, clothes materialize in an immensely agile manner. Thereby, they not only adjust extraordinarily well, but they are constantly growing (as) something new. With every splitting, they become other. And as we humans are entangled with/in clothes in the clothing, clothes and humans cannot be clearly demarcated from each other (as already elicited in 4.1.1.4). This is why, by changing, hence by splitting, clothes constantly change us and the webs which we are share.

To be more precise, there is a textile and there is change, and in-between the cloth-thing creeped in, and achieved to claim both the textile and the change as its attributes, viz. put the latter two in dependence to itself. What therefrom resulted is a thing-ism, which perceives the world as consisting of demarcated entities. The present project set out to rework this thing-ism, viz. to grow a post-thing-ism, namely by freeing matterness and becoming from their dependence to the entity, and show that it is the matterness as such that is becoming, and that the becoming is material, so that a materialization is all there is. Thus, the equation thing = matter + becoming, is here countered by thinking: existing = becoming. In summary, not as enfolding matter, but as folding materializations par excellence, "clothes" invite, they seduce us into their splitting game, which offers an explanation aside from all embodiment (of which the em-, similar to Barad's enfolding, also introduces a hierarchical thought) approaches to why we not only feel, but are distinct humans with every new cloth we relate to, we dress, we wear.

4.2.2.4 The Queerness of Directions and Dimensions

In fact, splitting takes place in-between webs and knots. A knot is splitting into a web, and a web is splitting into a knot. This shows that for existence, there are only two directions of splitting possible: either from web to knot, or from knot to web. The terminology grown here explicitly conveys that the materializations of existence are not only dependent on each other in the here and now, viz. that a knot needs to be in a web, and a web needs to contain knots in order to exist (see 4.1.2.2); but it also directly expresses that webs and knots flow into each other.

Attempting to put the present program of thought in a nutshell, webs and knots are the same in the sense of sharing in the monism of existence. Yet they are distinct materializations thereof, but only distinct insofar as they move, namely split into each other. Or else, knots and webs do not ontologically exclude one another, but are mutually dependent halts of a splitting becoming, and as such co-exist in duration (as we will see in this chapter below).

In addition to existing as dependent upon webs, the term "knot" does not imply to be indivisible, to be the tiniest of all units, a true "atom" in the literal sense of the Greek word, "a-", not, "temnein", to cut. Not to cut. "Uncuttable" (Barad 2007, 138). Similar to a member or a part as the other terms found within the respective literature (see 4.1.1.1), a knot is an element in a web. Yet whereas "member" runs the risk of leading us back into a thinking-in-entities; and the "part" remains something partial; the "knot" keeps the loophole open to

be itself something "knotted", a being which is knotted by, knotted from, knotted up into. Hence, a knot rather is a semi, a half/whole (the explicit etymological meaning of semi), a queer in/completeness. It exists within a web, is dependent on this web, and it materializes itself as a web, as knotted from distinct knots.

Bryant states: "parts are understood as themselves being substances independent of the whole to which they belong" (Bryant 2011, 74). Although his inference of a knot-autonomy is not agreed with, as even when a knot splits into a web, it remains ontologically related; Bryant nevertheless introduces the knot's dynamic of becoming webs themselves — a dynamic which indeed is not immanent to the concept of the "part" (as the terminology Bryant selected). So the term "knot" approximates the knotting of existence, viz. a knot is intra-acting within a web. And a knot is something knotted, and hence splits into a web.

Similarly, also a web is something webbed, and as such consist of knots. In addition thereto, a web is the webbing of existence, is spinning webs within existence, and hence, precisely in this thought, splits into a knot. There is no web-being which stands demarcated from the rest, which is autonomously in the world; but webs consist of knots and exist within webs, hence are webs-within, or simply: knots. As also DeLanda writes: "assemblages can be component parts of other assemblages" (DeLanda 2006, 21). To subsume, webs and knots not only exist within/of each other, but they also flow into each other. For this reason, existence is not split, but splitting. It is always on the move.

There is a web of several pieces of denim: left and right leg, front and back, pockets and zipper-cover. This web splits into a knot-in-an-outfit-web, wherein it intra-acts with other outfit-knots, such as a T-Shirt and some sneakers (as the presently mapped trajectory of becoming is already complex enough, let us at this point adhere to the conventional designations of the latter two existences, keeping in mind that also a "T-Shirt" and a "sneaker" is a simplification of a truly complex web/knot-splitting becoming). From materializing as an outfit-knot, the existence currently under diffraction splits into a web of buttons and yarn and fabric, and splits into a knot in another outfit-web, in which it engages with the knots of a chic blouse and some high heels.

All the just mapped and many more splittings conventionally are reduced to a singular term, bordered off from the rest of the world by the borders of its letters, which depict the borders of the entity as which it in so thinking was taken for granted: a jeans. Yet this splitting trajectory shows that the existence which we hitherto ticked off so easily by calling it "a cloth", "a thing", a "jeans", indeed is far more complex than we assumed. And this is the case because it a) is ontologically related (4.1.1) and b) ontologically becoming (4.2.1).

If the cloth would truly be an object, in both a common as well as an object-oriented-ontological sense, it would own a concrete and static identity independent of the clothings it is related within. What could such a cloth be, a cloth as such, a cloth "in and for itself"? Is it a piece of fabric? Is it a designer's work that allows to be fashionably worn? Or is it a stained textile being not worth more than lying unnoticed on the laundry pile? As a matter of fact, a cloth materializes as all this, and much more, dependent upon the web in which it splits into knotting, and the knots that split into its web. A cloth-web/knot does not own a concrete identity, but identities are only temporary halts which the existence, that we so far denoted as "cloth", moves in/out of. There hence is not a "jeans", a jeans-entity, demarcated off from its surroundings and withdrawn into itself; but there rather is a splitting, a "jeansing".

In fact, it is even that the webs in which a textile intra-acts, and the knots that it intra-acts with therein, turn it into, and bring it out of materializing as a cloth. Hence, a cloth is nothing that an existence inherently is. Rather, it is an identity that a textile-existence moves into, that it wears, and that it can lose, that it can get rid of. For a textile to materialize as a cloth, it is not sufficient to be designed as such, but it also needs to be constantly re-re-re-accepted as a cloth via a respective web of intra-actions, of which dressing, wearing, and washing are just knots. This shows that identity is not a characteristic, is not given. But it rather is a temporary halt, a step in a becoming, that materializes via and within relations. In other words, there is not a thing which is a cloth, but existence materializes as a cloth only as long as it partakes in a clothing kind of relation.

Potentially in contrast to what might be assumed when listening someone talk about a "splitting", this is not a becoming that leads towards the smaller, to always tinier knots, precisely because in the notion of existence as webs/knots, dimensions are not given, but queer (as already elicited in 4.1.1.3).

Henceforth, the dimensions usually ascribed to entities, of which "big" and "small" might just be the most rudimentary dualism, cannot be upheld as denoting a difference-in-between-entities, viz. an entity-rooted difference-from-others (see 4.2.1.5). An existence cannot be bigger or smaller than another existence, precisely because existence never "is", and never is "an" existence (see 4.1.1.1). By not being an existence, but by becoming as existing, existence ontologically reduces the concepts of bigger/smaller to only having a validity in reference to itself, to its former and yet to come manifestations. Existence can only ever be

bigger or smaller than another materialization of itself, so it could be claimed. It might be bigger than it materialized before, yet it might be smaller than it will become next.

However, as we will see in due course, the splitting does not follow a timely linearity. But when talking about existence as differing-in-nature "in duration", what is meant thereby is, in a very Deleuzian/Bergsonian manner, co-existence (see Deleuze 2004a, 23-24, 28-30; ibid. 2004b, 44, 47). This shows that existence does not move from bigger to smaller to bigger, whereby it would remain within this dualism; but its distinct materializations remain existent, and as such exist side by side with each other. By so materializing, existence is bigger and smaller, it is bigger/smaller, and as such queers the very concepts of big and small, both in the sense of "than another" and "than itself". There is no return, but existence becomes bigger/smaller, it constantly becomes "other". It is changing, throbbing, bubbling. As Woodward already hints to (see again Woodward 2005, 32), an outfit obviously is a web-of-clothes, but also a knot-in-the-clothing, and -in-the-human. Yet the outfit is also a knot within all the clothes that knot within itself, so it shall be stated. There is a cloth-knot-in-an-outfit-web, and the outfit-web-of-clothes-knots is also splitting into a knot-in-the-web-of-the-cloth. As such, the outfit-knot enacts the cloth-web, it decides about the latter's manner of dressing (when combined to a tight dress which does not allow to bend, shoes are dressed with the help of a shoehorn; when combined to a wide dress, the same shoes are dressed single-handedly), its sites of abrasion (when tucked into some jeans, a blouse abrades at the positions it shares with the latter's waistband; when worn out of a jeans, a blouse rather abrades where e.g. the belt's buckle or the jacket's zipper cuts into its fabric), and the amount of sweat pervading it (the length of the jacket determines the spreading of sweat on pullover and top). And eventually, the outfit-knot also takes part in determining the end of the cloth-web's wearing duration (when a skirt received a stain, and this skirt is the only one to which a top can be combined, then the skirt-web determines the point in time when the top-knot moves from outfit-web to laundry-pile-web).

This shows that the role allocations of web and knot is not pre-inscribed to the identities of entities, so that only "bigger" objects can be the webs containing knots, and only "smaller" objects the knots existing within webs. It rather is the case that every-"thing" that we so far saw as a thing, as an entity, is a knot in certain webs, and a web of certain knots. And all the knots it contains in its web certainly are also webs themselves. In some of the webs that the knots it contains are, the web knots. Such reciprocal relations were shown above to be the dressing and the wearing. Yet, as has been outlined in 4.1.3 above, it is not necessarily the case that the knotting in each other's web is reciprocal in every relation. Nakedness, for

instance, is a web in which the human-web contains cloth-knots; yet in which the human does not knot within the cloth-webs. Therefore, in some other webs which are knotting within the web, the web does not knot, does not respond with a knotting in their webs.

So splitting queers dimensions, but it also queers directions. In splitting, there is no forwards, precisely because there is no backwards. There is no departure, precisely because there is no arriving. All there is, is a becoming. As Deleuze and Guattari express it: "becoming produces nothing other than itself" (Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 261). Also in this sense, the splitting can be understood as a reworking of the Deleuzian folding (see Deleuze 2014). Existence is folding in and folding out, folding up and folding down, folding left and folding right, folding to the front and folding back, folding out from and folding into one another. In short, as a folding, the splitting can be said to queer all dualisms of directions, and thereby the directions themselves.

Above becoming was already defined to be persisting (4.2.1.5), viz. to happen in duration, or as Deleuze can be subsumed: becoming is duration (see Deleuze 1991, 37). Now duration is not meant as a sequence, a succession (which also Barad negates, see Barad 2017, 60, 68), a one-after-the-other order of timely moments. Instead, as Bergson rightly claimed, duration necessarily is a co-existence of an infinite amount of moments, of materializations, here: of webs and knots, as which existence exists, precisely because existences are becomings, and as such are persisting instead of solely popping-up, instead of being. When every existence is becoming, is persisting, then existences necessarily co-exist, with "others" in space and with "themselves" in time (see figure 6 below).
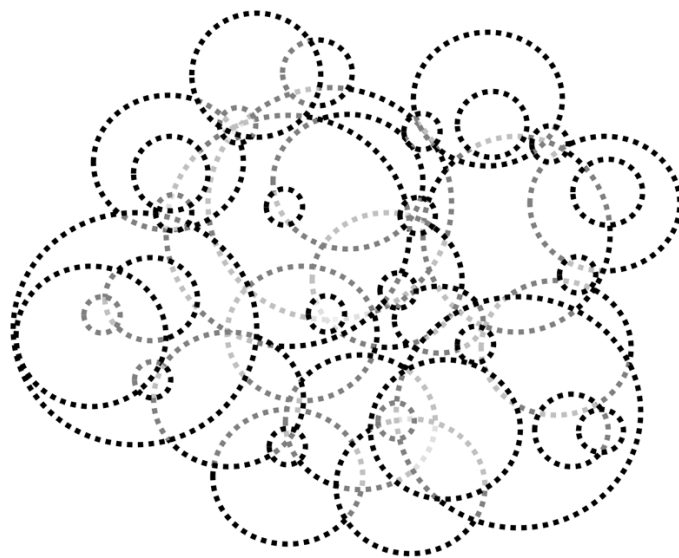

figure 6: The Co-Existence of Splitting Web/Knot-Materializations

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The splitting, within which all kinds of existences are entangled, indeed does not take place as a moving "from" knot-in-web "to" web-of-knots to knot-in to web-of to knot to web, in a linear manner. An existence does not split from web to knot and leaves the web as which it up to then materialized behind. Or else, when claiming that an existence splits into webs and knots, the knots that "beforehand" intra-acted in its web are not pushed out into the vacuum, but they remain existent, they are persisting, and as such co-exist with, affect and enact the knot as which existence now materializes. They make up the knot-materialization of existence, precisely because existence ontologically also materializes as a web. Hence, instead of declaring the up to then materialized identity as "old" or unimportant (see Deleuze 2004a, 29); a splitting rather consists of a distancing, an othering of a particular halt, whereby the "former" materialization remains threading through existence.

A cloth-knot might have already been partaking in multitude wearing-webs and washing-webs. As such, the outfit-knots that make up the memory of the cloth-web do highly enact the latter. Yet, even if an elder and highly worn cloth might have materialized as a particular web, and might have materialized via, viz. in a particular web only in the beginning of its life; the latter web remains knotting within the cloth-web, and no matter how much time might have passed, it remains just as meaningful for the latter's existing as is the wearing-web in which it is intra-acting in the (conventional) presence.

And neither can an existence ever split "back" into the web that it was "before" it materialized as a knot. This would mean a contraction of existence into matter (see Deleuze 2004a, 26; ibid. 2004b, 48-49), a static being, which impossibly takes place. The sum of the materializations as which existence so far materialized, so to speak, the memory of existence, led us to the concept of the thing, so widespread and so taken for granted within philosophical as well as everyday thinking. In order to be able to account for the future of the thing-entity, viz. of the splittings that it yet is to realize, we attributed the thing with potentials, with capacities, that we located in its interior.

Yet this entity, this unity, in fact is only a splitting into webs-of-knots and knots-in-webs, and as such is contingent. As DeLanda writes: "The identity of any assemblage [...] is always the product of a process [...] and it is always precarious" (DeLanda 2006, 28). Every existence is always becoming different, is always materializing as an other, viz. is constantly altering, precisely because it ontologically is a becoming. As such, it is embracing other materializations, not in the sense of drawing materializations near that were there before they were confronted by a particular existence; but rather, as Barad already wrote, and as already mentioned above (4.2.1.4), in the sense of taking part in the constitution of these

other materializations, as which existence is materializing. There are no confrontations, but only ever materializations.

Henceforth, existence never comes to a halt; but rather is ontologically, constitutively, even "radically" (Barad 2012d, 7) open. As Barad continues to write: "Closure cannot be secured when the conditions of im/possibilities and lived indeterminacies are integral […] to what matter is" (ibid.). Existence never "has embraced" or "is embraced" (not primarily meant in the sense of "by an other", but as a constitution of itself), but it is *ontologically embracing*, whereby it materializes. In a new materialist manner, one could also say that existence is not critical, but it rather is diffractive in the sense of embracing always new and always other materializations, of welcoming them in, as part of itself. Again, instead of "no, but", it rather says "yes, and" (see Dolphijn and van der Tuin, as already cited in 3.1.3.1). And one manner, the primary manner in which existings become, viz. in which existings are embracing, is via splitting.

Yet this embracing is not a moving forwards. There is no furtherance, precisely because there is no repetition. There is no progress, because there is no return. There are only endless others, as which existence is materializing, which existence is embracing, which are what existence is. And by being infinite, these "others" are not the others to a self, but they are only others to each other, and hence are the same. They do not lose, but they never had a connection to any essence. Instead, they are only, abundantly rhizomatically related because overlapping with each other. There hence is not a moving further, but only a throbbing of vividness, which certainly is why Bennett ascribes a "vibrance" to matter (see Bennett throughout 2010).

When thus defining existence as ontologically related, this is not only meant in a Bergsonian space, with other existences that are only other in so far as they are threading through each other. But it is also meant in time. Existence is also ontologically related to, threading through and threaded through by the other materializations that it is embodying, viz. as which it is existing in duration. Existence is differing from and therefore related to its others-in-space as well as its others-in-time. And precisely by these differings, existence materializes, viz. it "matters", which is why Barad subsumed existence to a "spacetimemattering" (Barad 2007, e.g. 179, 182, 234). In both these regards, or better: as a queering of both these regards, the definition of existence as "co-existence" must be understood.

4.2.2.5 Diffraction

Now it was outlined in length what the splitting ontologically is, or better: how it ontologically is becoming, which makes the time ripe for an explanation of how the splitting can epistemologically be approached. In the theories of Karen Barad, the concept of "diffraction" can be found. Etymologically, diffraction stems from the Latin *diffringere*, which in present-day Italian still finds usage as *diffrangere*, and which means a breaking up (see e.g. Barad 2014, 171) or apart, a shattering, a smashing. As such, and as one can easily guess, the diffracting comes close to the here grown splitting.

Originally stemming form physics as the discipline in which Barad remarkably was trained, she draws the diffraction into philosophy, and grows it as a respective concept. In fact, it is probable that Deleuze's description of the fold as "wavering" (see Deleuze 2014, xiii) inspired Barad to rework his folding by growing the physical "diffraction" of waves as a philosophical concept. In so doing, she can be understood as putting the diffraction into a hereditary line (not understood as narration, but as diffraction, whereby we directly dive into the topic) with the Bergsonian difference and the two Deleuzian concepts of differing (as outlined in 4.2.1.4 and 4.2.1.6) and differentiation, so it shall be claimed. Therefore and in this light, Barad's diffraction shall be outlined now.

Barad is unsatisfied with both the relational terms hitherto engaged with, dualism and difference. Similar to her two "fore-thinkers", first and foremost, she opposes herself to the Cartesian thinking-in-dualisms, e.g. by citing Gloria Anzaldúa in saying: "What we are suffering from is an absolute despot duality that says we are able to be only one or the other" (Anzaldúa 1987, 19, cited by Barad in Barad 2014, 173). Yet she also calls for a rethinking of difference (see Barad 2014, 171) which she still sees as a term heavily infected by the meanings of separation and segregation — a topic very dear to her to rethink in the name of social minorities.

For this reason, she grows her concept of diffraction. On the one hand, diffraction aspires to rework static identities into dynamic becomings (see Barad 2014, 175). In this vein, also her claim that there is no matter, but there only ever are materializations (cited in 4.2.1.1) must be understood, whereby, although she hardly ever mentions it explicitly in any of her writings, she nevertheless discloses her Bergsonism. The French philosopher already reworked contraction (matter) into relaxation (duration) (see 4.2.2.4).

Interestingly however, although Barad herself explicitly proclaims: "What is needed then is a way of thinking about the nature of differentiating that is not derivative of some fixed

notion of identity" (Barad 2012c, 32); she nevertheless, in her writing, adheres to the self, the being, the identity — only that she ascribes a "being diffracted" to it. Thereby, the diffraction remains an attribute of being, and does not achieve to rework the latter into a becoming. For instance, on the same page as just cited, she writes: "identity is diffracted through itself" (Barad 2012c, 32). For a similar misleading stream of thought, see e.g. her utterances "the self is dispersed/diffracted" (Barad 2012d, 6:), or "Difference itself is diffracted" (Barad 2014, 176). In contrast thereto, the present project rather claims that nothing is ever "diffracted", but every existence is always diffracting, is ontologically splitting. There is no self that could be diffracted "through itself". There is no return, no reduction, no adherence, no loop; but there only is a becoming. To this, Barad rightly points when concluding the respective page by writing: "identity is diffraction" (Barad 2012c, 32). Existing = diffracting. In this regard, Barad's diffracting sings from the same song sheet as the presently grown concept of splitting, so that the latter equation can be extended to: Exiting = diffracting = splitting.

Splitting is a phenomenon that was detected in reality, and as such is an issue exclusively reserved for ontology. Diffraction is precisely that, but in addition, and this is the clue installed by Barad into her research, it also is an ontological tool, and therewith becomes an issue for epistemology. Diffraction is both, "an object of investigation and […] an apparatus of investigation" (Barad 2007, 73), only that "it cannot serve both purposes simultaneously since they are mutually exclusive" (ibid.). As a phenomenon in reality, diffracting is opposed to continuing as given, to a linear becoming (see Barad 2007, 83); as a method of research, diffracting is opposed to narrating (see e.g. ibid., 71; ibid. 2014, 181).

To be more precise, as a tool, diffraction is about realizing that the becoming of existence is not a narration which is emitted by a given being; but that existing rather ontologically is a becoming. Yet this becoming does not take place as a narration, in which singular materializations are left behind for the sake of continuing; but rather as a co-existence of an infinite amount of materializations, which all are equivalently persisting. These splitting materializations of existences can impossibly be grasped in their fullness. Yet they can nevertheless be approached in their indeterminacies. And this is what diffracting is about.

Diffraction can thus be subsumed to an *attending to the co-existence of the infinity of materializations that splittings produce*. For this sake, when diffracting an existing, nothing can ever be left behind, declared as old (see Barad 2014, 168), understood, or accepted. Instead of being narrative in kind, diffraction needs to be persistent, or as Barad calls it: diffraction is "re-iterative" (Barad 2012c, 32, 39, 41; 2014, 168). It bites itself into a

particular existence, and does not stop nagging on it, in order to constantly adjust and readjust its definition of a particular existing.

And this, precisely, is the diffracting's scope: To grow a definition of one singular existence, which is only singular in so far as it is a singularity-within, and thus ontologically related with others in space and in time, in space/time (a Baradian spacetimemattering). In order to grow a definition thereof that is apt, that is fitting, that is corresponding to the reality of an existing, it is not enough to create a singular tool, a static being, a popping-up, which would remain fitting once and for all times. Such a being indeed tends to burst soon: *Plop*. Therefore, it rather is necessary to remain in an ongoing defining, viz. a diffracting practice. In order to keep pace with the becoming of existence and be constantly up to date in the mapping of all the co-existences as which the to-be-diffracted existence is materializing; we have to align our method to the becoming that existing is. Therefore, an ontology is not enough, but we need to grow a true "ontogenesis" (to recall, this is a term from Simondon 2009). Instead of following behind the splitting, we need to stay present, and be in lockstep with the morphing that existence is. We need to "map", which "is an operation that runs parallel to the known operation" (Simondon 2009, 13); and indeed cannot "track" existences (for this distinction, see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 14).

Otherwise, hence if we only trace or track, if we in our considerations are lagging behind the splitting of reality in its becoming, we will only be able to confront that what has just materialized as a "being materialized", viz. as a matter, as a ready-made and withdrawing in the sense of exclusively enveloping object, which appears as if tending towards contraction. Thereby, the becoming of existences will easily mislead us to understand them as given beings, viz. to take one of their temporary halts as the only materialization that they are (as already reworked in 4.2.2.1). In so doing, reality will easily lead us back to the object that is splitting, that is split, that is. Thus, only when mapping, the infinite temporary halts of existings can be registered simultaneous to when they materialize, which is precisely what diffraction is interested in achieving.

Henceforth, a diffraction of a particular clothing existence is registering in real time how it is altering by splitting into casual and business, nightwear and daywear, elegant and sporty, dependent upon the webs it is involving in and the knots that are involving in it. Diffraction is attentive to the continuous becoming of existences, which materializes e.g. in the folding of fabric, the buckling of knees, and the stretching of waistbands. Once knees were buckling, they are buckling even when the wearing has passed and they are now residing on a laundry pile, with no human in sight. When materializing in a washing-web, the washing remains a

knot within the cloth-web, it *sustains* itself within the latter's becoming (as an abrading of its textile) and persists in it also when the existence is long materializing as folded in a wardrobe. The cloth-web cannot do anything against the sustaining of the buckling and the washing in itself, so that washing and buckling and wearing and folding all partake in the forming of the existence's memory. Diffraction pays attention to precisely this co-existing behavior of materializations, and never leaves any halt behind, but appreciates them all in their co-existings. In so doing, diffraction claims for itself to be the primary key to the nature of existing in its differings.

When talking about "diffracting diffraction" (Barad 2014, 181), Barad thus integrates a further step into the splitting kind of ontology. Whereas diffraction is a bridge that crosses onto/epistemology; the splitting is grown here also in order to be able to distinguish between ontology and epistemology. Yet to queer onto/epistemology in this regard was not an idea grown by Barad. The present day thinker rather created her diffraction as a queering of the latter two approaches in analogy to Deleuze's differing (see 4.2.1.6) as well as his differentiation. The latter will be outlined in chapter 4.2.3.5 as materializing as a synonym for the trajectories of differings (ontology), and the epistemological tool enabling to map the other kind of becoming of existences, namely the jumping. Aspiring to map existences in their splittings, diffraction hence is not contradictory, but a tool for approaching existences, that is complementary to differentiating existences in the sense of observing them in their jumpings.

4.2.3 Jumping

4.2.3.1 A Flowery Becoming

Conventional clothing conceptions cannot account for the becoming that existence is, and thus can neither explain why a particular cloth always becomes another dependent upon the clothing-webs it knots in, and the clothing-knots that web within itself. Instead, they restrict themselves to a dualist distinction between originally intended and deviating use. Just think of a flowery dress. With some stiletto heels, it smoothly wears, if not to the opera, then to the operetta. It materializes as an operetta dress. With some flat sandals, it can be worn on an afternoon at a beach bar. It becomes a beach dress. And with some converse all stars, it

fits well for bringing one's child into kindergarten early Monday morning in springtime, viz. it becomes a daily dress.

Now what was the dress' intended use? What was its original self, its authentic being? In fact, every answer that could possibly be given to this question amounts to an interpretation. As claimed already, this is the reason because there is no such thing as an original self form which existences can diverge, but there only is a diverging, a differing, which equivalizes all materializations of an existence, viz. all wearing-webs in which a cloth-knot materializes and/with all knots that materialize within a cloth-web.

But how is it possible for a cloth, a dress, to become entangled in such an infinite variety of clothings, whereby it always becomes another? Is this a potential this cloth inherently owns? Is this a special capacity of the dress, that is more potent because more versatile, more ready to be combined than another dress? Or is this capacity shared by all clothes, viz. is this, a, each cloth nonidentical and can relate with every other cloth-thing, every human, and in every clothing? Neither a research lens understanding the dress as non-identical, nor an understanding of this dress as having an inherent and even outstanding identity, as being precisely "that" dress all along, albeit engaged in distinct clothings, is capable of explaining the becoming that the dress is. Therefore, in both conventional conceptions, the ontological question for the existence of the cloth, viz. "What is a cloth?" (asked in 4.1.2.5), eventually remains unanswered.

But if we stop beginning our thinking with the cloth, and instead set on at the clothing, viz. if we apply the thinking trick of first thinking webs and then knots, which was elicited in 4.1.2.3, if we hence stop scrutinizing the dress for an inherent identity it might own, and rather understand it as a materialization of the clothing, then we can come to see that a cloth is not a cloth, full stop. It is not a being. But a cloth is a becoming, which becomes afresh with every clothing-web it jumps into/out of, and every knot that jumps into/out of the web that it is.

Henceforth, the flowery dress is operetta dress, beach dress, and daily dress. It does not own one (or three) essence(s), and neither does it remain the same throughout distinct clothings. Instead, with every clothing it jumps into/out of, the dress becomes another dress, it receives a new and also only temporary identity. As such, the materializations of one dress are potentially infinite, and only become restricted by e.g. the wardrobe it intra-acts in, the comfort zone of the human it intra-acts with, her gusto, and the caprices of fashion.

So looking at different outfits as material clothing halts for the sake of detecting a singular piece, which is already "known" from other entanglements, in order to understand these

outfits, is only another materialization of what Deleuze and Guattari call a "tracking". Tracking only ever leads back to the old, already known, which is once more reconfirmed. This does not lead thinking further. Therefore, as already mentioned above (see 4.2.2.5), what the two French scholars suggest is a mapping, which allows to neglect identities in order to witness becomings. Such a mapping can only be undertaken via detaching oneself form the concept of a cloth-identity, and rather embracing the cloth as the becoming-web/knot as which it ontologically materializes.

Having this scope in mind, we reworked being into becoming (4.2.1), and refined the becoming as a splitting (4.2.2). Now according to Bergson and Deleuze, there is a second manner in which existence is becoming, namely as they call it, a differing-from-others or a differing-in-degree, which takes place not in duration, but in space, in the here and now. Although both researchers subordinated the latter to the differing-in-nature/kind/-from-itself, which here was reworked into a splitting(/diffracting); the relation in which the two kinds of differences stand to each other shall be reconsidered in the present project. But before this is possible to realize, we first need to dive into a reworking of the second Deleuzian/Bergsonian difference, and refine it into a "jumping".

Whereas splitting is a differing-in-kind, so that webs split into knots, and knots split into webs (which, as it was explained above, is by no way a tunneling of becoming); in jumping, what currently materializes as a web remains a web, and what currently materializes as a knot remains a knot, viz. the web/knot constellation remains in the relational construct as which it materialized before the jump, only that, by making/letting/allowing/seducing a knot to jump out of/into itself, the involved webs become other webs; and by jumping in-between webs, the jumping knot becomes another ("kind" would be misleading, as it could easily lead to a confusion of both sorts of differences, the difference-in-kind and the difference-in-degree) knot. How this is happening will be outlined in what follows.

4.2.3.2 Introducing the Jumping

To recall, knots and webs are dependent on each other in their existence (see 4.1.2.2). A knot outside of a web is dematerializing towards nonexistence. Hence, for a knot, there is no outside within existence. Only ever inside of webs do knots exist. There are no knots in the void; but a knot ontologically exists solely within webs. And neither are webs independent of the knots that partake in them. A web without a knot dematerializes towards nonexistence. However, this does not mean that webs and knots need to remain in the first constellation in

which they materialize. Instead, an exchange, a jump of knots in-between webs can indeed take place.

A web changes/is changed by letting go or welcoming knots. If a suit kicks off its tie, it is turned from official to party outfit. If some sleeves jump into a slipover, the latter is turned from slipover to pullover. When a button is sewn or a patch is ironed onto it, when its legs are cut, when it receives a whole or when its whole is stitched, a cloth becomes another cloth. Hence, by losing and embracing knots, a web becomes something else, another kind of web.

A knot changes by entering/exiting webs. Whether involved in clothing a trench coat or in a bomber jacket, the human-knot will be distinct, will hold and feel herself, walk and talk differently. When sharing a clothing with a straight business suit, or when jumping into a fluffy velour home suit, the human will be and will be perceived as another human. Hence, jumping as a knot in-between clothing-webs, the human materializes differently than before. In exiting the outfit in which it intra-acted with what is conventionally classified as some trousers, a blouse, a human, and a cardigan, a belt dematerializes as trousers-upholder or waistband-reducer and, by entering into the web of a wide dress and some boots, it rather materializes as a hip-accentuater and dress-former. In the former web, the belt could be said to resemble braces in function; in the latter web, it adds an emphasis, it rather is a beautifier, similar to jewelry.

To be more precise, when jumping in-between clothing relations, a cloth-knot remains a cloth-knot, but becomes another sort of cloth-knot. It is altering in degree, not in nature. When a cloth-knot jumps out of all kinds of relations, it dematerializes. Yet a cloth-knot can indeed jump out of a clothing and into another kind of relation. In so doing, it remains in existence, yet it ceases to "be" (identity) a cloth, and rather materializes as something else. As a fabulation, a towel embraces/forfeits identities, dependent upon the webs in which it currently intra-acts, and the knots that intra-act within its web, viz. dependent upon the relations into/out of which it jumps.

One narration a towel-web/knot undertakes could start with a jump from hanger to a human body that just comes out of the swimming pool. In this web, it materializes first as a drying device. When it has fulfilled its task and dried the human body, it wraps around and is wrapped around the latter, and becomes a cloth, a body-warmer. It jumps from poolside to sunbed, and therewith from cloth to a softener. Here, it becomes part of the mattress, and hence allows for comfort. When it jumps from sunbed to sauna, it is turned into a protecting device, a true cover-from (see 2.3.2), and thus indeed enters a relation that can be marked as

a clothing. Exiting the sauna, it is folded and positioned in the locker, where it resides with e.g. a book, sunglasses, a sandwich, and the other belongings brought to the pool. Thereby, it jumps out of the clothing, and rather enters a looser kind of relation (see 4.1.2.5). After a while, it jumps out of the locker and onto the human body, and in conjunction with her jumps to the pool bar, where it becomes a strapless dress, as which, also due to the naked clothedness it evokes, it materializes more as a fashion gadget than as a device.

In the storyline just described, the towel jumps into and out of a clothing kind of humans/things relations, dependent upon the webs it currently resides in. At the hanger, as a drying device, it is not a cloth. In the wrapping and warming, it becomes, it is enacted as, it materializes as a cloth. It enters a clothing relation, which is of an enveloping kind (see 4.2.2.3). At the sunbed, it jumps out of the clothing, only to jump into another, namely a socially covering sort of clothing, when it enters the sauna. When jumping from sauna to locker, it jumps out of the clothing. And at the bar, it jumps indeed not "back" into the clothing, because the latter is of another sort than the former clothing, namely a rather fashionable clothing, a fashioning.

This shows that as long as it partakes in relations, the towel remains existent. Yet these relations are not necessarily reduced to a clothing kind. In fact, by jumping, a towel-knot can enter and exit clothings. Yet even when it is currently knotting within another kind of relation, a towel has a memory, which consists of all the webs it so far partook in as a knot, and all the knots that partook within its web. As such, these memories are never leaving, are never losing their meaning for the knot, but they are persisting, and as such co-existing. Therefore, even at times in which a towel does not form part of a clothing, the clothings it already formed part in remain within the towel, and shape it as the existence that it is. Thus, a towel can best be described as an existence which is in/out of the clothing.

4.2.3.3 Strengths and Flaws of the "Jump"

Precisely because of the impossibility of an absolute outside, there cannot be a transition phase in jumping. There is no situation in which a knot has already exited one web, and is hanging in the pipeline between two webs, before it enters another. A knot cannot jump "from web to web", viz. between (inter-) webs; but it can only jump "in-between" (intra-) webs. Entering and exiting cannot happen one after the other, in a timely succession. Instead, they must take place simultaneously, in a clap of the hands, or "in one move", as Barad

would name it (see e.g. Barad 2017, 78, footnote 32; ibid. 2012c, 32, 46), whereby the jumping-off and the jumping-in merge, viz. they share a, they co-exist in space.

In so doing, the jumping can be said to go a step further than the Deleuzian fold. The fold set already in at queering the static dualism of inside/outside (see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 550; Deleuze 2014). As such, the fold can be considered as taken up and diffracted by Barad into her concept of "exteriority within" (Barad 2012c, 32, 47; 2014, 177). The fold says that every in is out, and ever out is in, viz. "the outside is always already inside" (ibid. 2014, 178), whereby it inter alia queers the hierarchy of pyramiding ontologies and rather leads to a rhizomatics of webs/knots. Eventually, as remarkably also OOOist Morton writes: "Nothing is radically external to anything else" (Morton 2013, 41), but everything that is outside one web is always also inside another, or it steps out of existence. In this vein, nakedness has already been described as a queering of being in/out of clothes, viz. as a queering of naked/clothed (see 4.1.3.1).

The "jump" takes up the in/out-queering as already grown by Deleuze/Barad. When jumping, a knot cannot enter from an "absolute outside" (Barad 2014, 178) into a web, and neither can it exit from a web and step into "nothingness" (ibid. 2017). Instead, when exiting one web, a knot has to enter another, or it dematerializes. There hence is no complete outside, but only ever an outside-within. And neither is there a complete inside, as what materializes as "in", viz. as a knot, can in the very next second alter into either another "in" (jumping), or to an out, a web, which is marked by several "ins", viz. by knots (splitting), and co-exist as an "in" itself.

Therefore, in addition to queering the static in/out-dualism, the jump also queers the dynamic dualism of exiting/entering. Jumping means that every exiting must always also be an entering, and every entering is always also an exiting. Hence, the exiting is the entering, and the entering is the exiting. As the jump eventually queers the linearity that we conventionally ascribe to these steps in time, it becomes less important whether it is written about an "exit/enter" or an "enter/exit".

The "jump", a term consisting of solely one syllable, directly conveys a happening which is not a process, but only an instant, a clap of a hands, an immediate change. In fact, immanent to the term "jump" is not only a queering of the static dualism of in/out. But the jump queers as well the timely succession of entering/exiting. For these reasons, the jump was selected as a term to convey the presently dealt-with phenomenon.

However, the jump is not a flawless concept. It also implies that the action expressed as jumping is a balancing act which the knot alone has to manage in order to remain existent. It seems to be one actor alone who jumps, namely the knot. To the question "Who jumps?", all too soon we are tempted to reply: The knot jumps.

Yet in reality, the jumping is a collaboration of several webs/knots. It is a pushing and pulling, a letting jump, seducing to jump, becoming jumped, in which the web in which the knot until now resided, viz. the knots it resided with, take as much part as does the web into which the knot is pulled, viz. the knots it from now on will intra-act with. All these act on the singular knot, that can be said to "jump" as much as it can be said to "be jumped", whereby, so to speak, activity/passivity, acting and being acted upon, are queered.

It thus is not only a human who "undresses" a cloth, but an undressing is effectuated by a jumping off of a cloth off the human, and a human jumping out of her clothes. Instead of a human who decides when and how to undress a cloth, it just as much is the cloth-knot that decides to leave, and the clothing-web which kicks that cloth-knot off. And also the how of the undressing is determined not solely by human will and movements, but just as much does the cloth dictate the human how the jumping collaboration can be realized. A conventional jacket will give us a hard time if we try to undress it by pulling it over our heads. And it will result completely impossible to undress a jacket when we attempt to let it flow down and step out of it. Instead, the human is bound to, has to open the jacket in the front and pull it towards her back.

But neither is the human's role in the undressing subordinated to the cloth. How a particular pair of trousers jump off a human body is certainly determined in part by the respective cloth. But just as well does such an undressing become enacted by the human who jumps out of the cloth (and into nakedness as another clothing state). Some humans jump off their trousers via literally jumping. Others grab the trousers' waistband and, by stretching their arms and bending their torso forward, push the trousers downwards. And again others let the trousers slide down until their knees, sit down, pull one foot up, rest her ankle on the other leg's knee, whereby, on the lifted leg's side, the trousers flow down and only hold on to the respective foot. Then the human liberates her first foot from the trousers that was hitherto clothing it, in order to then switch sides, repeat the procedure, and get her second lower leg and foot out of the cloth.

This reveals that the undressing cannot be reduced to a human's acting on clothes; but neither can it be reduced to a cloth's action. It hence is not merely a human who "undresses" a cloth. But it neither is the case that a human is solely undressed by a cloth, viz. neither is the cloth

undressing the human. In contrast to what might be assumed on the first sight when confronting the concept of the jump, it is not one particular protagonist that jumps, neither the human nor the cloth. Not one existence alone can effectuate a jump, but for a jump to materialize, it needs webs that allow a knot to enter/exit them, and it needs a knot that enters/exits webs. Therefore, the jumping is an intra-action of webs/knot, and the undressing is an intra-action of humans/clothes, a collaboration, in which several existences take part, that precisely by partaking flow into each other. And of these existences, the human is only one knot among many.

Henceforth, despite its flaws, and because no other and more suiting term was found that conveys the queering of entering/exiting plus the collaboration in which the latter takes place, we shall adhere to the "jump". Yet instead of claiming that a knot jumps, it is more apt to write that webs/knots effectuate a jumping in/off. Hence, a web/knot intra-action can result in jumping, whereby the latter is turned into a mere outcome. Yet the jump is more than the effect of these causes. It itself has an effect, namely a change in becoming, or else: a difference in differing.

4.2.3.4 Rerelating Bergson's Differences

For the yet-to-jump knot, the self is the web in which it exists and intra-acts, and the other are all other materializing webs-of-knots in which the yet-to-jump knot does not reside, and hence demarcates its self-in/and-its-web from. Before a jump, the web's self is made up by the knots it contains (in space/time), and the web's other evidently are other webs-of-knots. When the jump starts to materialize, the current borders between self and other blur, because all the other materializing webs, that are approachable and come into question as jump destinations, are fitted for their correspondence to the yet-to-jump knot.

In the moment of the jump, the web that departs from the knot and the web that embraces the knot (two materializations that before and after the jump are entangled others for each other), exchange the knot in-between each other. In the moment of handing-over the knot, these two webs merge, they overlap. After and effectuated by the jump, one of the former other webs becomes the self for the knot, and the web that beforehand was the knot's self becomes part of the general other, with which it is entangling qua distancing, distancing qua entangling (see 4.2.1.4). The happening of a jump was attempted to approach graphically in figure 7 below.

Before ———————— Jump ———————— After

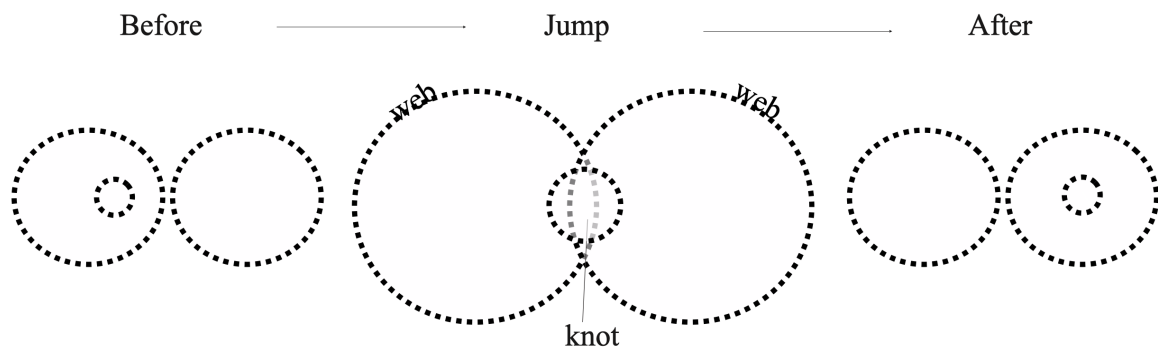web   web

knot

figure 7: How a Jumping Materializes

Hence, by being *a role switching of self and other*, the jump reveals that precisely these role allocations are not given, but rather shifting. Or else, it shows that self and other are not fix identities, but continent enactings. For the jumping knot, the other first is the web into which the knot jumps, and then becomes the web out of which it jumped. To one web, the jump adds another knot, so that the jumping knot moves from other to self. And from another web, the jump extracts one knot, that in jumping turns from self to other. Put in a nutshell, in jumping, the self becomes other, and the other becomes self.

Therefore, the jump can be subsumed as a queering of self/other, and as such effectuates an alteration of becomings. The web that is exited, viz. that is turned from self to other by and for the jumping knot, becomes another by the knot demarcating itself from it. The web that is entered, viz. that is turned from other to self, becomes another, by the knot aligning itself to it. And by being urged to leave and seduced to enter, by bordering itself from and aligning itself to webs, also the knot becomes another.

Yet it must not be forgotten that the other and the self are not designations for fix identities. What is the self before the jump, and what is turned from self to other by the jump, is not a being, but a becoming, a splitting, which never is a self but always an othering. If existence would be a being, then Bergson and Deleuze would be correct in claiming that existence is finite in space, and only becomes infinite in time. In the here and now, there would be static identities, that would differ from each other for a finite number of reasons, cloth from human, human from cloth, cloth from another cloth, whereby they would materialize and reinforce each other as finite beings.

Such a thinking-in-entities was reworked into an ontogenesis, viz. *an ontology which has not beings but becomings as its units of research*. Existence is not a being, but a becoming, namely a splitting. As a splitting, it can become in an infinite variety of trajectories, whereby

it discloses to be ontologically infinite. There hence is not a being which in the here and now differs-in-degree and thus is finite, and only in time becomes finite by differing-in-nature. But there only is an infinite becoming, a differing-in-nature, which also differs-in-degree. Thus, when an ontologically infinite becoming is partaking in a jump (whether now in the role of a web or a knot), it does not become finite, restricted and reduced to a finite being; but it rather is heightened in its infinity.

The splitting denotes the becoming (altering) of/as becoming (existence). And the jumping is a way for a becoming to change its manner of becoming, so much was said already. Whereas splitting was described in 4.2.2.3 to be a folding, which was refined as taking place into webs and knots; in the present chapter, the jumping was said to "go a step further than the fold". Yet this "further" is not precisely meant as a progress; but rather as an alteration, which as such remains neutral in state. Instead of a proper furtherance, the jump rather is a transplantation, a relocation of the folding, so that the folding continues, but continues other than before, other than it would have had if no jump would have taken place.

Put differently, as splittings, existences are infinite in time. Yet in the hereditary line of thought in which the present ontogenesis finds itself, beginning with Bergson, refined by Deleuze, and then reworked by Barad, time is not understood as a succession, but as a co-existence. The splitting trajectories in which existences materialize hence do not dematerialize. They never fall into oblivion, never vanish in meaning; but they persist. If splitting materializations would not co-exist, the webs into/out of which a knot could jump would be as finite as the knots that a web could seduce to enter/exit itself. Yet because splittings do co-exist, existence is infinite also, or better: even more in the here and now, viz. in space. Hence, as existence is a splitting, viz. is diffracted into infinite materializations, the web/knot constellations and the alterations of existences that materialize via jumpings are infinite, indeterminate.

Therefore, the jump does not seduce a being to differ; but it rather is a way for an already and immanently differing existence to differ otherwise than before. Or else, a jump does not make a being become; but it rather is a change in a becoming's direction of becoming, so to speak, an exchange in-between the rails on which the train of becoming (the splitting of existence) is running. In short, jumping means *altering an ontological altering*.

Whether a cloth-web/knot is hanging or piling in the wardrobe, it is an ontological becoming. When hanging, the cloth, e.g. a woolen pullover, is differing, is elongating. Just that we will only notice this differing after a while, viz. in duration, does not make the pullover less becoming in its differing existence in the here and now. And when piling up, its fabric is

abrading, the Silken pocket that is sewn on its breast receives a hole by the zipper of the cloth that resides above it, and it is collecting lints of the fur jacket that resides underneath it. Hence, ontologically, clothes are becoming, are flowing into each other, are bordering. When the pullover now takes part in a jump from hanging to piling, or from hanging to dressing, it continues in its becoming, just that it will become in a different way than it would have happened if the pullover would have stayed in the web of hanging.

Existence always becomes, and thus always changes, always differs, whether or not it jumps/is jumped. A jump only effectuates that the way diverges in which existence differs, so that after a jump, a becoming becomes in a different manner than it was becoming before the jump took place. In other words, the jump can only alter the how, the manner in which an existence is differing. But that an existence differs is independent to its jumpings, and rather an issue of its splittings. Therefore, the jump describes a happening that *makes that what differs, differ differently*.

It thus is not possible to draw a border between time and space, differing-in-degree and differing-in-kind. Instead, the latter rather is immanent in the former. It is a splitting that is jumping. Besides, there also is a splitting in the jumping. There is a splitting immanent in the jumping, because in order to exchange knots among them, webs need to overlap. Their borders need to blur, they need to flow into each other. Thereby, in jumping, webs turn into knots, they are turned into knots by the jumping they partake in, namely knots within the webs of each other. And by knotting within each other's webs, they become capable to exchange knots among their web-selves.

This shows that in the present project, the structure and hence hierarchy between the Bergsonian differences indeed is upheld, only that the conclusion drawn therefrom is diverging. For Bergson and Deleuze, there is a being that first differs-in-nature and only thereafter differs-in-degree. In analogy thereto, it was written above that a becoming takes place via splitting, so that the splitting, the differing-in-nature, is the primary kind of becoming. In its reworked version of the jumping, differing-in-degree remains a becoming of a secondary kind, as it is a change in the manner of becoming.

However, whereas Bergson and Deleuze explained existences to be finite in space and infinite only in time; the present project rather claims that because existences are infinite in time, in duration, they are also infinite in space. Because existence is splitting, and as such is ontologically infinite in its co-existent materializations, the webs/knots into/out of which a jump can take place are infinite. Thus, reworking the difference-in-nature into a splitting leads to a reworking of the difference-in-degree as an equivalently infinite jumping. And as

the jumping amplifies existence as already infinitely amplified, the difference-in-degree as reworked here responds to and affects the difference-in-nature, hence the splitting existence. Thereby, space and time, hitherto understood as two demarcated dimensions of existence, are queered, and the two Bergsonian differences are entering a circular kind of relation to each other.

4.2.3.5 Differentiation

If jumping means a change in a changing, then the change effectuated by a jump is irreversible, or else: a jump cannot materialize in a loop, on the spot. It cannot be treading water, and thereby solely reinforce a being as being. But all it does and all it can do is to make a becoming become otherwise, and as such reinforce the becoming as the becoming that it is. This is the case because, even if a jump as such takes place in a clap of the hands, it nevertheless effectuates a narration.

Although the timely section of enter/exit merge, as it was described above to take place in a jump (4.2.3.3), and even if the webs into/out of which a knot jumps merge, there is no way for a knot to jump in/out of the "same" web, as the web into which it jumps "back" has already differed from itself by the knot's exit of itself (remember from 4.2.1.3: the nominal concept of the "web" in truth is an approximation of a "webbing"). And neither is there the possibility for a web to pull a knot, which has already exited itself and partook in another web, back into itself, because both the web and the knot have certainly been altering in the meantime. Therefore, a knot can never jump in a loop, can never jump back, but it can only ever jump into other, namely othering webs.

A jump as such is not directed anywhere, neither forwards nor backwards, neither in space nor in time. But neither is a jump aptly described by calling it a step sidewards, as this would remain a thinking-within-dualisms. Instead, a jump is directed "other-wards", "else-wards", and as this "else" is infinite, its direction is that of a circularity. However, as materializing in a change in becoming, a jump necessarily effectuates not a furtherance, not a progress, but a differing, an alteration.

Let us fabulate the narration grown by the jumpings of a bathing suit knot. A bathing suit is not just a suit that means bathing. It is not restricted to its semiotic meaning. Such a suit indeed is often knotting within the web of bathing, but it can accessibly be mapped in its jumpings in/out of other webs.

When materializing in a bathing web, a bathing suit indeed is a "bathing" suit, a cloth-knot that is there to bath. Here, it effectuates inter alia an aerodynamically formed body, and hence enables the human to swim almost as fast as she would be able to do when naked. Yet as the body would certainly be more streamlined when naked, the bathing suit here acts as a trade-off between speed in swimming and the social aspect of the cover-from immanent to most bathings (in public). Besides, the bathing suit contains a particular fabric as its knot, that dries faster than other kinds of textiles, and does not become heavier, wider, or even smelly when wet (e.g. in contrast to wool). As such, it usually allows for a smooth bathing experience.

Nevertheless, when the "same" suit is jumping from pool to lavatory, it indeed does not remain the same, but is altering: It turns from smooth assistant to demanding obstacle. Every woman knows about the difficulties it takes to get a still wet and thus immensely sticky bathing suit off and on her body — a task which in its fulfilling sometimes resembles almost acrobatic exercises. Yet this does not mean that a bathing suit is restricted to its intention to bath, and is of no worth for the intra-action in any further webs. Let me therefore outline some of the webs into which a bathing suit successfully jumps.

A bathing suit materializes as a shield when worn underneath short dresses or skirts within the city. When, for instance, standing up or sitting down on some stairs, or when using the escalators in a shopping mall, the cloth-knot that we ignorantly reduce to a "bathing suit" creates a grey zone which is a free zone, as in case a glance arrives underneath a dress/skirt, this does not need to worry the wearing-entangled human, because all that can be seen, can be seen anyway on the beach/at the pool.

In this vein, such a suit is a liberation, as it allows for a kind of carefreeness which conventional underwear cannot grant us. Therefore, in this web, bathing suit and underwear are bordering off from each other. However, in another web, e.g. after a day at the beach, both kinds of clothes flow back into one another, as a bathing suit can materialize as seductively as can do an underwear, when entangled with a recently tanned and still salty skin. In this regard, by insinuating a more, both bathing suit and underwear materialize us humans as nakedly clothed (see 4.1.3.1).

After a day in the city, where the bathing suit took part in a summery (even holiday) look, such a suit can jump/be jumped into a partying-web, in which it materializes as a night gown knot. Not only on a beach party, it can utter as many social messages as any other sort of party dress is able to express: it can define the human entangled in it as glamorous or laid-back, as fashionable or sporty, as outgoing or reserved. To what extent the messages that the

human/cloth combination intends to send out indeed are correspondingly received and processed, remains an issue of the social aspect of the clothing (as discussed in 2.3.3).

When camping, after having frequented a pool, or in a gym, the human often is bound to shower in collective booths. Here, a bathing suit can materialize as a "shower curtain", by the help of which the human can clean (whether it be now from sweat and other body fluids, from the pool's chlorine, or the sea's salt) without exposing herself naked to the eyes of strangers. On the Northern Atlantic coast of Spain, especially in the area of the town Getaria (at the side: fashion designer Balenciaga's place of birth), it is even that one frequently comes across showers without booth or curtain, but only shower fittings, positioned in the middle of a town's promenade. After a day at the beach and before getting back to the car or hotel, one is geographically necessitated to cross the city, where one can quickly jump under such a shower and get the salty water of one's skin. Yet when taking such a shower amidst shopping, strolling, ice cream eating pedestrians, a bathing-suit-turned-shower-curtain becomes well appreciated.

Despite knotting in a bathing, a respective suit can materialize also as a knot within a sun bathing web, taking place in gardens, backyards, and on balconies, where no swimming opportunity is in sight. Instead of a bathing device, the suit here rather becomes a tanning device, that allows to tan a high percentage of body parts, and only leaves those body parts untanned that will not be shown in public anyway, not even when indeed frequenting a pool/beach. By jumping into and partaking in such a tanning web, the bathing suit imprints itself on our body, and blurs the borders of distinct webs. Beyond the borders of, hence long after the tanning took place, this suit will materialize us as clothed, as loaded with and enacted by it, even when we are naked (see again 4.1.3.1) — an effect that the suit creates by a contrast in skin colors.

And a bathing suit can also jump into a hiking-web, where it outperforms and hence replaces other functional gears, e.g. when hiking through a jungle, where one is exposed to a lot of humid heat, and where one has to cross many rivers. In such a web, the bathing suit eases the hiking by sparing us the constant back and forth switching of conventional wander outfit (hiking) to bathing suit (swimming) back to wander outfit (hiking). And as a bathing suit's fabric does not increase in weight when wet, it allows us to hike fleet-footedly no matter how much water and sweat is penetrating it — keeping in mind that the textile combination of 80% polyamide with 20% elastane, which a conventional bathing suit consists of, owns an increased danger of growing fungi when a sweating body is placed underneath it for too long.

What did we just do? As a first step, we liberated ourselves from the original meaning that a "bathing suit" is conventionally considered as representing. Picturing such an authentic self indeed entraps not just the suit, but also ourselves in its dealing with and thinking of it (see 4.2.2.1). Even if it is called a "bathing" suit, and as such appears as if restricted to bathings, it is not even intended for all kinds of bathings, viz. for the whole spectrum of bathing webs existing, but only to a particular kind of them. Adhering to such a style of thought, a bathing suit is neither meant to jump into a bathing tube, nor to be worn under a private shower, but only to public swimming webs, such as materialize at pools and beaches. This discloses the thinking-in-entities as the constantly narrowing and therewith more and more restricting tendency that it is.

By liquidating the connection of suit and self, it becomes possible to stop seeing the variety of jumps which a bathing suit undertakes/is seduced to undertake, and the infinite multitude of webs in which such a suit partakes, as mere forms of unusual usages or even misuses. Instead of a stable id/entity, we can rather come to see that with every web into/out of which a bathing suit jumps, it is altering, it becomes another sort of web/knot. In so doing, also the habit of normatively hierarchizing the webs, in-between which a bathing suit jumps, according to their degree of diversion from the suit's originally intended function, a burden which commonsense long imposed on us, can be discontinued. Henceforth, once we realized that the essence we are searching for is inexistent, we can come to a rhizomatic understanding of the webs in-between which a suit-knot jumps, and appreciate them in their gainful richness. If nonetheless wishing for a structuring of the suit-knot's co-existing webs, the concept of correspondence as a fitting between knot and web could be apt (see 5.3.1.4), yet must still be investigated for its, indeed, fitting (another queering of onto/epistemology).

In delineation to the splitting's diffraction, the method for registering an existence in its jumpings, just grown with the help of a bathing suit, shall be called "differentiation". Even if Deleuze explicitly intended his tool of differentiation to reveal the differing that difference is (see e.g. Deleuze 1994, 56: "Difference must be shown *differing*", original emphasis; see also ibid. 2004b, 39), viz. to disclose existence as a becoming, similar to how it is aspired by Barad's diffraction; it shall be engaged with here as the tool for showing the changes in becomings, because immanent to the concept of differentiation is a narration which is based upon turning points, as which jumpings were outlined.

Differentiation takes diffraction to another level, which also becomes apparent when Deleuze writes: "Differentiation is only the separation of what coexisted in duration"

(Deleuze 2004b, 44). Meanwhile diffraction thus aspires to map the co-existence of splitting materializations which are an existence; differentiation rather focuses on detecting the points of separation, the points of distinctions, which are materializing among splitting co-existences, and thus, as Barad's othering already told us, are produced by overlappings of the latter. In short, whereas diffraction seeks to approximate the infinity of co-existences; differentiation rather is interested in the borderings taking place among them.

Henceforth, whereas diffraction is the method for mapping how differences differ, viz. is an approach to splittings; differentiation rather aspires to *map the differences in the differing trajectories of differences*, and as such approaches jumpings. In both cases, whether now an existence shall be diffracted or differentiated, viz. whether it shall be scrutinized for the splittings or the jumpings that it is, the keeping pace with the becoming is of major importance. Therefore, instead of trying to trace the jumpings that have already realized, also differentiation attempts to map a jump in its jumping, tries to witness jumps in real time. And just as Barad's diffraction, also the differentiation is a queering of onto/epistemology. A jump makes differences differ differently, viz. effectuates a change in becoming in reality, and as such ontologically is a differentiation, namely between trajectories of becoming. And in order to approach jumpings, the differentiation in the sense of a mapping of narrations told by (not in the sense of a past told-ness, but rather as an active telling which is mapped in its happening) jumpings is the means of choice that shall be suggested by the present project. Put in a nutshell, whereas diffraction is interested in the manner of materializings; differentiation rather is interested in the differences in-between differings. And whereas diffraction aspires to map one becoming in its becoming; differentiation rather tries to capture the moments in which a becoming changes its manner of becoming, whereby it grows narrations.

Yet both diffraction and differentiation do not primarily differ-from-another. Instead, they are entangled in the same body of thought, in a singular virtuality, which is "something absolutely simple that actualizes itself" (Deleuze 2004b, 42). They are two manifestations of the same monism, the same web, which here is a line of flight, and which differs from itself, is constantly open, but so far is materializing in three: difference, diffraction, differentiation. All three concepts are entangling in the same, hence are the same, albeit depicting specific peculiarities, viz. epistemologically materializing different aspect of this same in which they share. And this same, this monism, is the one of existence as a differing. If existence is differing, and as such is becoming in the form of splittings and jumpings, then eventually, splittings and jumpings are all there is.

5. Conclusion: A New New Materialist Ontogenesis of Clothing

5.1 How It Materialized: Concluding the Clothing Ontogenesis

5.1.1 Growing a new New Materialism

The present project, which now materialized, written in black on white, pursued and is pursuing two rhizomatically equivalent aims. On the one hand, it is the aim here to grow a new form of New Materialism, the "new" of which is a new materialist kind of new: not a new out of the blue, but an informed and reworking new. Thus, the "new" and the "New" in a "new New Materialism" must not be understood as demarcating from, but rather as entangling with one another. What has once been the new (the "New") of NM now is not the old, and does not become replaced in its newness by the "new". The "new" and the "New" are not a dualism, but rather stand to each other in a positive relationality, a difference in a monism, which here evidently is the materialism, more precisely: a clothing materialism, and which effectuates a queering of new/New.

Neither must the "new" be understood as continuing the "New". The "New" does not stand behind the "new", and the "new" does not follow up on the "New". Instead, both "news" stand next to each other, and do not continue, but intra-actively diffract one another. The "new"'s diffraction of the "New" has already been tried to realize here as rhizomatically as possible, viz. attending to many strands materializing out of/within NM's milieu, which justifies the eclectic collection of sources quoted from the respective field. It will be exciting to see in what ways the "New" will hopefully diffract the here grown "new".

Nevertheless, the relation in which the "new" and the "New" do stand to each other, is the one of a hierarchy. In saying this, it is not meant to become disloyal at last to the presently grown rhizomatic ontogenesis; but it is written in order to stress a certain epistemological humbleness towards elder and other thoughts in/outside NM, whereby the present project indeed adheres to NM's attitude. For this reason, the here grown diffraction is titled with a lowercase "n", and the existent and reworked body of thought is attributed with an uppercase "N". One is big in its achievements and contributions, and the other one is only a small step *in*, and hopefully as well *for* the latter's cartography. In sum, let us say that the first aim of the present project is to grow a new New Materialism, which is a renewed materialism.

5.1.2 Reworking Conventional Clothing Conceptions

When I met Prof. Deniz Peters, University of Music and Performing Arts in Graz, Austria, at the first symposium of the German Society for Artistic Research (which originally bears the long title *Gesellschaft für künstlerische Forschung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*) in Berlin, he asked me for what he called my "basic intuition", that led me to engage with the clothing as a topic for my PhD-project. After a moment of thought, I replied that we are surrounded by many more clothes than people. And from the people we are surrounded by, we see more clothes than skin. Yet we think what we see are people.

Hence, the second aim of the present project is to effect a reworking of the way in which the relation between humans and clothes conventionally is understood. Up to the point of writing, it was an unquestioned assumption that this relation was dominated by humans. Clothes were understood as mere servants, created by some humans to be applied by others of their kind, for their (bodily/) self and/or social purposes (see 2.3). And humans were the ones who clothed themselves by the means of clothes, who dressed and wore clothes, who wore them out, undressed, and eventually replaced them. In order to realize that this, in fact, does not even cover half of the clothing picture, it is necessary to flatten the hierarchy that Cartesianism once introduced into humans/things, subject/object relations. By means of NM, such a rhizomizing of one humans/things relation in particular, namely the humans/clothes relation, has been actualized here.

Whereas hitherto Cartesian clothing research was restricted to investigating the clothing in the direction of the human, en route to which clothes were met; the present ontogenesis put a special focus on clothes as research matter that has so far been only of minor importance, in order to equilibrate the imbalance that anthropocentric research created. And en route to clothes, humans were met. This shows that as researchers, we are bound to confront, are incapable to circumvent the other when ontologically researching the one, the human/cloth, the cloth/human.

Although a "complete" illustration might never be achieved; to map the ontology of "the human" and "the cloth" in its richness, both can only ever be researched in relation to one another. Hence, it is not only that neither human nor cloth could function as a primary matter of research; but it also reveals that none of them exists apart from its/her relations, especially with the here named other. Humans and clothes are entangled. And in their entangling, the borders not only "between", but "of" these entities blur: Where the human ends and the cloth

starts, and where the cloth ends and the human starts, and thus also: who the human is and what the cloth is, can be different every next second.

Henceforth, the present project aims at establishing a view on and research of the clothing, that does not conceive it as a hierarchic relation in which the human enacts a prioritized role; but rather as a rhizomatic relation, in which every existence is related to every other, and in which all count the same. Even if by different means, all clothing participants influence and build upon each other to an equivalent extent. In so doing, they flow into each other, enact one another, other themselves by othering each other, and other each other by othering themselves, which is precisely what marks their rhizomatics.

However, in order to come to this finding, not solely an engagement with hitherto fashion/dress theories was necessary, but it needed as well the engagement with existent forms of NM, in order to eventually effectuate a reading of fashion/dress and NM through one another. What thus came into being is a new NM, which materialized via existent forms of NM that were connected to the clothing, and a new conceptualization of the humans/clothes relation, which materialized via being read in a new materialist light. This reveals that both main aims of the present project are entangled with one another, and none could materialize in the form it presently does without the other. The here proposed new NM is a clothing materialism, and the clothing is a new new materialist concept.

5.1.3 Recapitulating Post-Thing-Ism

In order to rethink the clothing as well as by rethinking the clothing, a new form of New Materialism grew. This was subsumed already in the former two sections. Now how does this new NM look like? It takes on the form of a post-thing-ism. It is claimed that hitherto literature in NM, MC, and indeed as well OOO seduced to a reworking of hitherto thing-isms into a post-thing-ism, which is why, as already named in 5.1.1, the latter is only a necessary step in order to not narratively continue, but diffractively deepen the just named streams of thought.

As such, post-thing-ism focuses on a reworking of the concept of the thing, to which here not only and not especially the cloth is counted. But the human is considered as just another category of thing, that, by being classified in such a manner, crucially loses its distinctiveness. Only by so thinking, the rhizomatic clothing conception, as subsumed in the former chapter 5.1.2, is enabled to materialize.

A post-thing-ist approach to reality claims that every existence consists of a multiplicity of relations. It is these relations. There are relations within itself. And every existence cannot do differently than exist in relations. It cannot reside elsewhere than within relations. The cloth contains several buttons, and the outfit contains several clothes. Hence a cloth is both, a web full of knots, and a knot in a web. Thereby, what is eventually effectuated is a queering of the very concept of "thing", which becomes a web/knot, and which is not independent of, but ontologically dependent on.

Thus, whereas thing-isms such as commonsense Cartesianism as well as OOO are based upon the autonomous entity as unit and unity for research; the here grown post-thing-ism rather claims that every existence exists only as soon as and as long as it is related, viz. is ontologically related, even if to varying degrees and with varying partners. Post-thing-ism hence turns conventional interactive ontologies into a rather intra-active one, as reality is granted not anymore to thing-entities; but exclusively to their in-between, to the relations in which they stand to each other.

What does this turn reality into? Once you understand that borders are not given, it is not only that things become much more complicated, but it rather becomes graspable that there are no such things as things. What are, are becomings, that are constitutively open, are constantly altering, othering, differing. As such, they do not differ as clearly as it is conventionally thought from other becomings in space; but they are primarily differing in duration, whereby indeed also their differings in space become infinite. Existence is immensely vivid, and assigns us the task to keep pace with it and map its trajectories of becoming, its throbbing, its bubbling. Only in so doing, we will be capable to grow not an ontology of beings, but to rather grow an ontogenesis of the becoming that existence is.

5.1.4 Subsuming the Present Approach

Chapter two of the present new clothing NM deals with hitherto fashion/dress theoretical approaches to what is here called the clothing relation, as well as to clothes as the things it relates. Thereby, the conclusion was reached that this field is in need of a new concept, a new approach to the matter it already for a while is pondering about. A first step towards rethinking fashion/dress is to show that indeed, although clothes and clothing dematerialize when demarcated from each other; they are nevertheless distinct to one another. Apart from clothes, there is no clothing. And outside of the clothing, they are no clothes. Hence, one is the knot in the other's relation. And the other is the web in which the former is intra-acting.

Yet the matter neither is as simple as to allow to conclude that clothes are things and clothings are relations. Instead, also clothes are relations, e.g. of yarn and textile, and even of human and human. And also a clothing is, if not a thing, then a knot, namely e.g. in the daily routines of a human, and crucially also in the cloth. That, noteworthily, the participation of a human-web is not a necessary condition for a clothing to materialize, leads this project to take up a relational realist stance. Hence, one is not more or less material than the other, and both are a relation, the cloth and the clothing.

To this, we came via relating clothes/ings to the field of new materialist philosophy, that was introduced in chapter three. NM is a school of thought that aspires to rework the Cartesian hierarchy that prioritizes humans over things in their relations, and as an alternative proposes the model of rhizomatic becomings within assemblages. Every "new materialist", a label that shall be attributed to those that currently work within NM's milieu, has her own topic, not of "application", but of relation, viz. to which she relates, and which she allows to diffract her philosophical thinking. For DeLanda, it is the collective. For Meillassoux, it is the archefossil. And for Barad, these are physicist experiments and biological phenomena.

Especially Barad's writings were diffracted by the present project. In her 2007 published principal work *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, she leans on Hacking's claim for an epistemological shift from looking-onto towards intervening (see Barad 2007, 51), which can be read as an attempt of Barad to awaken both philosophers from their armchair as well as physicists form their observing attitude. Yet some pages later, she reworks Hacking's concept of intervention, which continues to imply a standing outside of the researcher to the research matter, into an "intra-vening" (my term), an "*intra-acting* from within" (ibid., 56, original emphasis), and thus comes to her notion of apparatus.

In so doing, Barad certainly touches upon a truth. However, throughout the cited book as well as most of her articles, the physicist-turned-philosopher engages with examples of philosophy of science in order to illustrate her theses. The way she explains experiments are very insightful. And although her philosopher-reader might not comprehend them as deeply as a fellow physicist, one still has the feeling of getting the gist, so it is opined.

But the problem that necessary comes along with Barad's approach is that, for all readers that are not both socialized and actively working in physics, it is difficult, if not impossible, to intra-vene in, and not only repeat, but maybe even diffract the experiments she describes. Notwithstanding her promotion, her philosophical approach impedes her from including us

in her mappings, and instead leaves us with the sole opportunity to reflect and track her and the physicists she names (esp. Bohr) in their experimental findings.

This is not to criticize Barad. Her philosophy/physics queering approach has proven already to be gainful for both theories. And philosophy is thinking and has to think outside of its own box, which strongly corresponds to NM's re-reading practice. But in order to truly intravene in the Baradian ontology, only through which, as Barad herself indeed promotes, a deep understanding of it can materialize, it is necessary for philosophers to pull it into domains that they are familiar with, and that they can map.

As it has already been outlined in 1.1, the writer of the present project claims to be familiar with the relation between humans and clothes — a familiarity she shares with every other human as clothing-entangling, plus a familiarity that is diverging from the quotidian. In chapter four, this clothing familiarity was related to not only Barad's, but to the hitherto grown and growing new materialist body of thought.

On the one hand, in this way, a reconceptualization of the humans/clothes relation materialized. Whereas hitherto fashion/dress theoretical thought perceives it as hierarchical; the clothing relation was detected as being of a rhizomatic sort. And whereas hitherto thought understands humans and clothes as static beings, demarcated from each other; they rather were disclosed as existing as mobile becomings, that therefore flow into and enact each other. On the other hand, the clothing, as an accessible matter of research, and as a topic that each and every one of us is compelled to consider, and a practice that we all are bound to realize daily, also allowed for a reworking of hitherto fashion/dress as well as new materialist thought, which it turns from ontology to dynamic ontogenesis.

However, relating the clothing to NM is not as easy an undertaking as it might appear in the former paragraph. As Lipovetsky once wrote, and as it still holds true today: "no intellectual tendency is more widely shared than the tendency to condemn fashion" (Lipovetsky 2002, 6). This explains why also in NM, as a philosophical school, there is a "clothing gap" (see 1.1). Within fashion/dress studies, there exist attempts to apply a new materialist thinking to the own research matters. Yet, as it became apparent, these remain mere "applications", and thus do not achieve to diffractively relate to NM.

For this reason, NM here had to lend its connection to the topic of clothing elsewhere, namely from its neighboring discipline of MC. Although MC works by different means, it still is driven by an aspiration that is similar to NM. Besides, MC has achieved already to grant the clothing space among its research matters. Henceforth, this project laid a specific attention to the relation between NM and MC, that it understood as parallel, yet in which

NM, by its philosophical means, is capable to think the issues they share in more drastic a manner than it is possible for MC, that still is entangled in a conflict between its two founding schools and thus foci.

Besides, this project also attended to the distinction of NM and OOO, two schools that often become mixed up or even lumped together as one. Eventually, this project resolutely sides with the relational ontology of NM and not with the ontology of autonomous entities that OOO proclaims. Nevertheless, it allows its new materialist thinking to, on the one hand, be backed up by its similarities with OOO, such as the focus on relations between what so far has been called "non-human" matters, viz. the realism that both schools share.

On the other hand, the presently grown renewed NM also embraces several impulses given by OOO, such as the queering of assemblage and parts that OOO already hints to, which the present project grows into a notion of existence as the slash in-between web/knot. Besides, the present project also takes up the split in existence, which has been detected by OOO, re-connects it to its Heideggerian origin, to then queer it with NM's ontology of becoming, in order to grow an ontogenesis of splittings.

In summary, via queering NM and OOO, and relating them to MC's approach to fashion/dress, the present new new materialist clothing ontogenesis materialized.

5.2 Whereto It Heads: Growing Future Trajectories

After having subsumed what has been grown in the present project, the following chapter outlines future growings of the clothing ontogenesis. On the one hand, these growings are diffractive; on the other hand, they are narrative in kind. Or else, 5.2.1 outlines future work that aspires to stay with and deepen the clothing ontogenesis, viz. work *on* the clothing ontogenesis. 5.2.2 focuses on future work that continues the already materializing clothing ontogenesis, viz. that takes up the present findings and narrates them further. In short, it outlines future work *with* the clothing ontogenesis.

When having sketched future research trajectories, the present project concludes with an outlook on a clothing practice that is different to conventionally conducted ones. The now finalizing research aspires to invite to such a renewed clothing practice in 5.2.3, whereby it a) conceives it possible to introduce its post-thing-ism as new NM into daily life and here test its validity in order to grow it further; and b) alter the clothing, a practice undertaken by the worldly masses, in a truly sustainable manner. Such a change in the practice would entail

the need for a new and intra-vening clothing ontology, whereby the relation between reality and research could be stimulated in its circulation, so it is believed.

5.2.1 Diffracting the Clothing Ontogenesis

Throughout the writing of the present project, several trajectories leading deeper into the body of thought started to grow. An eclectic selection of them will be listed in the present chapter, some of them deeper and others yet to deepen.

5.2.1.1 Flaws in Wording

Several wordings selected in the present project are not completely flawless, and shall briefly be discussed in what follows. The way they are structured adheres to their appearance in the text.

In 1.1, the concept of "matterness" was introduced as attempting to circumvent the usage-character as well as the material cultural debate led about "materiality". Whereas materiality is linguistically related to, and as such describes the characteristic of "being material"; matterness expresses that something is a matter (e.g.: of affairs, of research). Materiality owns the connotations of being real, being sensible, being physical, and as such seemingly is restricted to "things" in the commonsense meaning of this term, whereby it reinforces the dualism of im/materiality. In contrast, matterness rather expresses that something is of importance, lies at the crux of an affair. As such, immanent to matterness already is an agency, a force, a becoming, which by refining it as either "material agency" (see 3.3.4) or "thing power" (see 3.1.1.1 and 3.1.2.2) is blurring boundaries again with materiality.

What is more, the post-thing-ism grown in 4.1 reworks the concept of the thing into a composite (the materiality?). Based thereupon, in 4.2, existence is differed into an "existing", which is described to be concretizing in materializations (webs and knots, see 4.2.1.2). Yet by describing the ontogenesis of existence as taking form as "materialization", or else, when existence is a matterness that materializes, despite leaving the thing-entity aside (see 4.2.2.3), both concepts touch base again. In so doing, the present project also terminologically follows Barad's rereading of matter into materialization (see 4.2.1.1), that, taking a closer look, and in contrast to the present project, is not distinguishing between matter and material, and as such is an impure stream of thought. Rather, it expresses that

there first is a matter(ness), which is tending towards becoming (materializing). Or else, there is a self that is becoming. Yet this attribution of becoming to a self, of materializing to a matter, is what the present project reworked. What hence is needed is a wording that directly conveys aside from all matters/materials, that all there is, is a becoming. Such a term still needs to be found.

The "post-" of post-thing-ism is not analogous to hitherto post-concepts such as posthumanism or postmodernity (see 4.1.1, introductory text). Besides, the presently constructed concept still is in need to be tested for its validity in further projects, in order to see whether it truly achieves to overcome, or rather, similar to MC and its despot name-giving dualism (that was detected to be a trialism, see 3.3.3), remains imprisoned by the thing it negates.

In 4.1.3, the webs that stand in an inverse analogy to one another were called "clothed nakedness" and a "closed wardrobe". Yet both these designations run the risk of falling back into a thinking of existence as static, as being. In addition to being a nominal concept like nakedness, the wardrobe even is a location, and as such tends to backslide into a notion of existence as worldly embedded, as bound to usages, and as hierarchically structured. Both wordings hence do not correctly convey that what is meant also by these webs are tendencies, becomings, gerundial existences. Yet what "-ing"-constructions would correspondingly express the two specific clothing webs here dealt with?
It might be apt to diffract nakedness further into a "naking", and the closed wardrobe into a "wardrobing", whereby the wardrobing would be just one manifestation of an enclosing, enveloping, hence a folding-in. In this line of flight, the naking would be the complementary folding-out, which according to Deleuze is a developing (see 4.2.2.3). Maybe also for this reason and in this sense, the latter talks about a dismantling as a freeing of the BwO (see 3.2.1.2).

Chapter 4.2.1 aspires to rework the clothing "ontology" into an "ontogenesis", whereby it is leaning on a term introduced by NM-waypaver Simondon. In so doing, it dynamises, namely differs the so far grown body of thought, and reveals that instead of fixed beings, existences are becomings. This is what ontogenesis intends to express, with "onto-" meaning "being", "existence", and "genesis" as stressing the factor of becoming. What is, becomes.

However, genesis as such owns the connotation of a creation, which also lies inherent in present-day English "generation". It means to be born, to be created, and in this sense titles inter alia the first book of the bible. Yet 3.1.2.1 explicitly distanced from the concept of creation and rather embraced the attitude of growing. For the present purposes, "ontogenesis" thus remains a partially fitting concept, which is in need of a reworking from usurping "onto-creation" towards respectful "onto-cultivation".

In 4.2.2.4 the concept of "embracing" was briefly introduced as denoting the how of the splitting. As such, the reality of the splitting corresponds to the affirmatively embracing attitude which was ascribed to NM in 3.1.3.2. However, in embracing also the aspect of wrapping is resonating, or else, similar to Barad's "enfolding", also the embracing is just another rhizomatically figurative materialization of the folding-in, and as such could be accused to be a limitation of the Deleuzian folding (see 4.2.2.3). Also etymologically, to "em-brace" means to wrap one's arms (brace) around something, which then finds itself within (en/em-), held, even stopped by the latter. To thus find out whether the embracing is an appropriate counterbalance to the furtherance as which splitting could easily be misunderstood, or whether it indeed contradictorily paints the picture of an adherence, a stickiness that slows down, shall be left for further diffraction to ponder about.

And last but not least, the jump was already outlined in 4.2.3.3 to be not a completely accurate concept, as it implies an action of one protagonist, meanwhile what is meant to express rather is a collaboration of webs/knots. Yet, as also explained in the respective chapter, this term was chosen nevertheless, as "jumping" directly conveys an instantaneous change and therewith the queering of exiting/entering.

5.2.1.2 Clothes/Clothings, Fashion/Fashionings

In 2.2.4, it was stressed that a distinction between clothes and the clothing is of major importance. Yet throughout 4.1 the borders between thing and relation, hence cloth and clothing begin to blur. It thus is a relevant and most basic deepening of the present project to clarify explicitly that the clothing indeed is not the cloth-turned-web; but it is the monist existence which enacts and is enacted by, which materializes as and becomes graspable via clothes. In analogy to as it has been written in 4.1.3.1 about the human, one could thus write that the cloth is both clothed and clothing. If we indeed wish to express the cloth as the

tendency that it is, meanwhile being cautious not to confuse it with the clothing relation, chapter 4.2.2.1 suggests the "fashioning".

As there exists no such thing as a thing, a cloth-thing, but all there ever exist are tendencies, clothes are a) contracting clothing-matters, they are "frozen clothings", as well as b) cloth-existences themselves, that materialize in different webs/knots. To express it in a Bergsonian manner, clothes and clothing do not differ from each other. They are not two distinct beings. But they primarily are two manifestations of the same monism, which is differing-from-itself. Yet this monism lies not behind, is not superior to clothes/clothings, but it materializes in, is immanent to, thus lies in-between, and is rhizomatically equivalent to them.

Put differently, describing the clothing as existing tendency and the cloth as materialization thereof, the present project indeed does not backslide into a hierarchization of webs before knots, for which hitherto new materialist thought was accused. This is the case because it adds thereto the two claims that a) there is no clothing apart from clothes, and b) also the cloth is a web-of. In so doing, it stays loyal to the rhizomatic web/knot-account it proclaims. However, this might not become clear enough in 4.1.2.4, a chapter which tends to fall back into a static and therewith hierarchic notion of webs/knots.

What is more, in 2.2.2, the relation between the hitherto concepts of fashion and dress was outlined in order to queer their immateriality (2.2.3) and show that both are equally represented by the newly grown concept of "clothes" (2.2.4). When then growing the post-thing-ism as a new form of NM, this dichotomy was taken up again. In 4.1.1.2, fashion and clothes were described as knots within each other's webs. In this regard, fashion a) remains a system (web) in which clothes are entangled, and b) fashion becomes an aspect (knot) within clothes. Several chapters later, in 4.2.2.1, fashion is described as the becoming of clothes, which however must not be understood as a force inherent to, but an aspect of the cloth-existence, a part of what clothes are.

On the one hand, it must be careful here to not equate cloth and dress. The cloth is not the material counterpart to fashion; but it rather materializes here as the monism in which both fashion and dress reside, and that the latter both are making manifest. On the other hand, in 4.1 fashion and clothes were described as mutually knotting within each other's webs; whereas in 4.2 fashion was restricted to a knot in the cloth. If fashion is the becoming-other of clothes, then "dress", by its bodily adherence, which is precisely why also this concept was reworked (see 2.1.4), could be understood as the factor of stickiness, a restriction in combinations, a slowing down, which we can often sense and access in the dressing, and which Guy and Banim aptly describe as culminating into frustration (see 4.1.2.4). Yet

whether this adhering of dress is sensed as a negative factor, a normativity, or a helpful scaffold and framework for orientation, are ontic issues, and shall be excluded entirely from the present project. As clothes were described as folding, they embody a controversial tendency to adherence (see Deleuze 2014, 22), and hence can be understood as a balancing and eventually a queering of fashion/dress.

However, it must be admitted that the relation between fashion and clothes/clothings does not become completely evident in the present project, which is certainly caused by an insecurity held by the writer herself with regard to her standing towards fashion. So to speak, a personally functioning definition of fashion is still searched for - an issue that neither is mitigated by the fact that the background of the writer is a queering of daily dress (she shares with the masses) and the fashion system (a small insight of which she achieved to gain, see 1.1). It might indeed be that the becoming tendency immanent to clothes, as which fashion (which now becomes a fashioning) was described in 4.2.2.1, is fashion's true ontology. Yet for growing an answer to the ontology of fashion as well as its relation to the clothing, which might indeed result as one and the same matter of research, it needs some further diffraction. One such future diffraction will materialize in form of a contribution to the upcoming congress of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Semiotik* (the German fraction of the International Association for Semiotic Studies, IASS) planned for September 2020 in Chemnitz, where the writer of the present project will go back to her Lolita fabulation (2.3.1) and try to find out whether former dress-identities remain immanent to a cloth when it becomes en vogue, or if fashion indeed is an overwriting of co-existences, an eradicating of former identical halts from a cloth's memory.

5.2.1.3 Onto/Epistemology

The queering of ontology and epistemology, which Barad aptly names an "onto/epistemology" (see 4.1.1.1), and which becomes evident in the three methods of differing (4.2.1.6), diffraction (4.2.2.5), and differentiation (4.2.3.5) as introduced in the present project, as well as in the splitting (see also 4.2.1.6) and the rhizome (4.1.1.1), certainly is an issue in need for a deepening. In the present project, the relation between ontology and epistemology was conceived to be of a processive and hence narrative kind. First and foremost, there is reality. Led by the question: "What is?", reality is approached by ontology. Ontology hence is an approach to reality. And as an approach to our human

approach to reality, epistemology was conceived, the latter being rather led by the question: "How/What do we perceive?".

Yet what happens to the latter two fields of research if they are not conceived to be narratively related (see also 3.1.1.1); but if their relation is queeringly reworked into a diffractive kind? And in what manner does this affect reality? When, for instance, in 3.1.4.2.1 it is claimed that a change in ontology does not change reality, what if it indeed does? And when in the same chapter it is written that the dualism is only an approach to reality but not real, what if precisely as an approach to reality, the dualism is just as real as, equivalently real to the difference as another approach to reality, and the reality they both approach? And what does this mean for, viz. how will it affect reality and research, if Barad eventually can be proven wrong in stating that a diffraction cannot be both simultaneously, a happening in reality, and a method to approach the latter (see 4.2.2.5)?

It might be that, if read as a diffraction, the trialism of reality, ontology, epistemology achieves to rhizomize and queer hitherto assumptions that ruled over its relation, such as the ones of subjectivity/objectivity, relatedness/detachedness, and perception/reality. Such a reworking indeed becomes increasingly important in a world where the borders between the fictive, the real, the virtual, the digital, the analogue, and the possible increasingly blur, and in which the "conventional" real has long been turned from the most decisive to just one knot among many (just think of, e.g. the video assistant in football).

Also by her notion of apparatus (see 3.1.2.1), Barad already started to grow such a diffractive line of flight. Besides, as well Heidegger, by naming the two facets of existence "ontological" and "ontic" (see Heidegger throughout 2006), queers the succession adhered to by the present project. In his toolbox, the primary form of existence (Sein, the ontological) contains the "logos", the approach, the theory of being; whereas the secondary form, the more concrete Dasein (ontic) is restricted to existence and excludes a theory thereof. Yet with his "onticology", Bryant has already set out to queer Sein and Dasein and introduce the logos as well into the latter (see Bryant 2011, 245f.). A deepening of a circular notion of onto/epistemology, which takes into account as well Bryant's OOO, could be a major development not only for NM, so it is opined.

5.2.1.4 Queering Time's Succession

In chapter 4.2.3, the queering of time and space, that is emitted by splittings and jumpings, has already been touched upon, yet certainly needs some further diffraction. For this

undertaking, the two knots that take up the most time within the clothing webs, dressing and wearing, would certainly be a corresponding matter of research. In fact, dressing and wearing do not stand in a linear time-relation to each other. They rather flow into each other, whereby they make the queerness of time apparent.

In 2.1.4 it was already said that the dressing is not over when the wearing beings. Spinning this thought further, the dressing is not solely a preparation of the wearing; but rather is threading through every wearing. Apart from all its highly discussed social/political impetus, the hijab, as an ontological existence, might indeed be the clothing materialization that makes this queering most apparent, as it never allows to simply "be worn". Wearing such a cloth requires for constant adjustment, for continuous (re-)dressing, as the latter is always tending to fall, to slip, to shift. As such, there is no such thing as a hijab, but there only is a "hijabing", in which human as much as (often Silken) textile are entangled.

Viceversa, the wearing is more than a continuation of the dressing. Although the wearing-anticipating skill of dressing is remarkable, as we seldom dress in the situation that we dress into (e.g. we dress in our cosy bedrooms for a tense office meeting, and we dress in our heated homes for a wintry day outside); what is dressed stays dressed, viz. is dressing us for as long as it is worn and wearing.

What and how a cloth is dressed, which are already two facets of the dressing that queer the notion of static identity (as the identity of a cloth as that what is dressed changes by how it is dressed) thus conditions the wearing in its ontological materializations as well as in our human access to and feeling of/in the latter. And for what a cloth is dressed, viz. the wearing that the dressing anticipates, evidently enacts the dressing. Therefore, so one could write, the wearing is dressed, namely by the dressing. And the dressing is worn by, namely by the wearing. Dressing and wearing thus knot within each other's web, they intra-act, namely beyond the borders between moments created by conventional chronologies.

In other words, dressing and wearing persist within each other. They co-exist as knots in the webs of the other, which is a phenomenon that can be engaged with, so it shall here be suggested, in order to diffractively rework the linear sequence, the "successionism" (Barad 2017, 68) which is attributed to time, to "an understanding of temporality where the 'new' and the 'old' might coexist, where one does not triumph by replacing and overcoming the other" (ibid., 69), which is already striven for by NM and OOO (see Morton, n.d., "From Things Flow What We Call Time") alike.

When diving deeper into this timely queering, it could be of particular interest to treat the moment of captivity inherent in the dressing, in which the power that the cloth wields over

us humans becomes most approachable. This dominance, so it is opined, is widespread within the clothing, but becomes most accessible in such moments as the one that materializes shortly before the face slides out of a woolen turtleneck pullover, in which the latter takes our breath, impedes us from breathing. In so doing, the dressing disrupts the monotonous flow of time. It effectuates a delay, which could also be read as a hesitation of the cloth. And this delay can either result in, lead to a non-functioning, a not-letting-through, a not-allowing-to-dress, which makes the cloth "vorhanden" and entails an exchange of clothes-knots; or it results in a pleasurable relief, an emergence, which could be described as aesthetic (see e.g. Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 171-172).

And just as interesting would it be to map the mutual abradings that take place in a singular wearing, and even more so within habitual wearing sessions, in which the cloth materially adjusts to the human (her body, movements, actions), and the human receives marks and traces by the clothes she wears (as it might be the most visible in the case of socks and bras). How much time does it need until a bra imprints itself into the skin? And how much time does it take for the latter to vanish? How deep must an imprinting go for a human to notice? And how many imprintings do pass and thereby remain unnoticed by us? In short; where are the borders of wearings in reality, in time, and in space?

Although a cordial opponent of my clothing concept, Prof. Abel B. Franco, California State University Northridge, continued to claim whenever we met at congresses (from Helsinki to Paris to Malta) that what I am truly researching is the dressing, I adhere to my position that the dressing is a particular knot in and materialization of the clothing, and that the clothing is a phenomenon, a web which is spanning wider than the dressing, as we are also clothing when we are not dressed.

5.2.1.5 The Clothing Kind of Relation

In 4.1.2.5 a line of flight, that certainly is interesting to diffract, already started to materialize: A deeper definition of the sort of humans/things relation that the clothing is. As a matter of fact, we engage with a chair e.g. when our legs are tired, or when we want to eat. After resting and/or eating, we stand up from that chair, and for a while, we cannot only completely forget about, but truly detach from that chair, our possession and our relation to it. In contrast, most of the things we do, we do clothed. We eat meanwhile in clothes, we work in clothes, we meet our friends in clothes, and we usually even go to bed and sleep in clothes. Hence, when asked what we are doing, in order to give an objectively correct

answer, in most situations we would have to add "I am clothing and I do x", in addition to, yet still distinct from the need to add "I breathe and I do y".

There thus must be a certain speciality in the kind of humans/things relation that the clothing is. In 4.1.2.5, this has been tried to approximate by a three-parted grid, which ranges from loose to personal to entangled relation. From the former two, we can (more or less easily) exit; yet there seemingly is no exit from entangled kinds of relations, viz. from "entanglings". Given that the human is entangled in the clothing, she can only ever be truly epistemologically approached when taking clothes into account, whereby the majority of hitherto scholarly approximations to the human mind and Sein are rendered partial.

Comparing the clothing to other kinds of humans/things relations (examples of which were given in the respective chapter) would also allow to find out whether the presently grown conceptualization of clothing can generally queer the dichotomy of human versus thing; or if this blurring of boundaries is indeed a characteristic exclusive to this relational kind. Besides, other entanglings, to which it could be interesting to compare the clothing, are e.g. the relation we entertain with our mobile phones, or the relation we entertain with food and beverages, viz. nutrition. Whereas e.g. Woodward understands clothes as residing "at our periphery", viz. "next to" our bodies (see Woodward 2005, 21); what we eat and drink crosses the boundary of in and out, and enters into our bodies, in order to be transformed by and transform it, and eventually exit it again. Yet both these conceptualizations are based upon the binary of the micro and the macro, the inside and the outside. What would happen if we begin to fold these dualisms?

Besides, the fact that we can forget about the clothes we wear meanwhile wearing them is indeed not our human capacity. Instead, in an OOO-lense, this would be attributed to clothes, and interpreted as hinting to an immense withdrawal (understood as involution, see 4.2.1.3 and 4.2.2.3), that according to OOO accompanies a high-level form of thing-power. In a new materialist line of thought, these ascriptions would rather be attributed to the kind of relation that the clothing is, into and out of which a particular human/thing relation could flow. Put differently, both OOO and NM lead thought away from the Cartesian human/thing hierarchy. But meanwhile OOO leads to a hierarchization of different kinds of things; NM rather steers us towards a hierarchy of distinct types of relations. It would thus be of much interest to see whether the presently grown web/knot ontogenesis could be maintained, and in what ways it would need to be adjusted when relating it to further kinds of humans/things relations, to those of the same, and those of other relational kinds.

5.2.2 Narrating the Clothing Ontogenesis Further

Shifting from diffractive to narrative trajectories of research, that relate to the clothing in order to think it not deeper but further, in what is to follow, several lines of flight that open up when working not "on", but rather "with" the findings of the present project will be elicited.

5.2.2.1 A Cloth's Dematerialization

Especially throughout 4.2.3, the possibility for a cloth to jump not only out of the clothing, but out of all kinds of relations were elicited. Such a complete exit was described to take place when a cloth does not manage the jumping in the sense of the balancing act to remain with one foot in its hitherto web meanwhile stepping with the other foot already into its future web. If it exits all webs, a cloth-knot dematerializes. Besides, also in 4.1.2.2 it was written that a web ceases to exist when all knots exited it.

To map a destiny of such a dematerializing cloth-web/knot in all its particularities, hence to diffract the moment of (the last) exiting, and to narrate the dematerializing process, indeed could be an exciting new research project, that could be materialized phenomenologically, physically, artistically, empirically.

5.2.2.2 Sweating as Blurring Boundaries

Just as interesting could it be to research sweat as a highly border-blurring existence. Sweat blurs the borders between existences in space, as it penetrates through skins, clothes, back/packs, car seats, chairs, and even through further clothes-wearing humans, hence through further humans and their clothes, that get in touch with the sweating existence. And sweat also is a blurring of borders in duration, as what once sweated might now not sweat anymore (e.g. an improvement of well-being caused by an undressing), yet the once-sweated co-exists with the present not-sweating e.g. in visibility and in smell. And what once sweated now might not sweat anymore, but it remains more likely, more inclined to freeze (a tendency) than what did not sweat before. Hence, the sweated and the non/sweating, viz. both sweating-halts are equivalently present.

There hence is no such thing as a "sweat", but there only is a "sweating". Once the sweating set out, by being engaged with the knots that it already infected (e.g. a heated and humid car

seat), the sweating will only increase, viz. deepen in kind. Sweating thus is not an action of a singular acteur, but it rather is a collaboration which tends towards a spiraling, a circulating of cause/effect. In sweating, it hence becomes sensible that borders are elsewhere than we so far assumed. It might be that there are other such existences, yet in sweating, border-blurrings are comparatively high in their accessibility for us in mapping/tracking research. In this regard, as well as in its deteriorating and abrading, disintegrating, even decomposing of clothes, sweating could be interesting to research.

5.2.2.3 Uniforming Clothes

A focus on an ontology of the clothing is accompanied by an exclusive focus on the ontology of clothes, as players therein as well as relations themselves. This has led this project to leave out clothes' ontic variations, that were only ever attended to as examples highlighting ontological facets of the becoming-cloth. It was my supervisor Prof. Ian King who once suggested me to select a particular kind of cloth, e.g. the hat in reference to Merleau-Ponty (see e.g. 4.1.4.3), or shoes related to Ingold's material-cultural account of them (see Ingold 2004), in order to thereupon illustrate my ontology. Considering his advice, I was reflecting about the uniform as a kind of cloth that had been striking my attention for a while.

Whereas Deleuze and Guattari seemingly understand uniforms as being the dualist partner of clothes when they write that the former "facializes" the body (see Deleuze and Guattari 2004, 201), wherein the idea is resonating that clothes are putting the focus on the body; it shall be claimed that uniforms are an ontic facet of clothes. However, when diffracting the concept of the uniform, the thesis materialized that instead of being an identity of some clothes, that thereby can be delineated from other kinds of clothes, e.g. an opera-kind, a gear-kind, or a costume-kind; uniform rather is a temporary halt as which every cloth can materialize. In other words, it is not that one cloth is a uniform and another cloth is e.g. a gear, or fashion. But every cloth can become a uniform. Thus, instead of asking: What kind of cloth is a uniform?; an interesting project could be led by the question: When does a cloth materialize as a uniform?

What it takes for a cloth to be enacted as a uniform is a lack of alternatives, so it is opined. If there solely is a singular cloth accessible, and there is no other cloth available that would equally fit for a certain wearing purpose, which would authorize a selection between cloth A and cloth B, then the cloth materializes as a uniform. An example that could be interesting to research is e.g. the one of winter jackets, of which, due to their high price, many people

own only one (it is referred here not merely to woolen coats, but to those pieces filled with down feathers, that are worn e.g. in Alpine regions, and that need to be of a respective quality in order to accomplish their warming task). To this cloth, all outfits need to become aligned throughout a part of the year, that in colder countries is quite extensive.

Besides, also of those dresses that are adequate to be worn to an opera, usually people own but a few. If getting ready to go to the opera, their choices hence are limited. And if their choice is limited to a singular one (e.g. due to washing timings, the temperature outside, or even the tie selected already by the partner), even such elegant a cloth as is an opera-dress materializes as a uniform, so it shall be argued.

This not only shows that, thought in this way, the phenomenon of the uniform reaches far beyond the clothes many people wear to work (ranging from business costumes, as they were treated in part in 2.1.2, to e.g. the boiler suit worn by mechanics). But as a knot enacting the clothing web, uniforms effectuate a reduction in complexity, or simply an ease. When there is no selection possible, then there is no point in thinking about the (bodily, mood, social) fitting of a cloth. It has to be dressed anyway.

On the one hand, this ease can be felt as a joyful relief. Yet on the other hand, it can also be experienced as a constraint, which might even kill the aesthetics of a clothing by its purposeful "if x then y" character (if rain then rubber boots, if work then costume, if opera then the obligatory little black dress), that seemingly leaves no room for playful variations. In this regard, the uni-forming effect of the uniform is not primarily a social equalizing, but rather a "monotonising" of a humans/clothes relation.

Inherent in this topic is the question of the aesthetic. Is the aesthetic the release from convenience; or is it rather the joy that comes from mastering the complexity in a game? If tending towards the second option, fashion can also be understood as a "reaesthetifying" force, that aspires to revive the aesthetic in the uniform. This might explain fashion's excitement about uniforms in the conventional sense of this term, by means of which it seizes captain hats and trench coats, converts German army jackets into "parkers", decorates clothes with golden buttons, military badges, and cord ornaments, and combines boiler suits with belts knotted on hips and extra high heeled shoes.

5.2.2.4 Ontological Aesthetics

This project is a new materialist ontogenesis of clothing, and thus asks: What is a humans/clothes relation? The answer grown is a post-thing-ism, which is relational as much

as it is realist. Based thereupon, it now becomes possible to begin with the growing of an aesthetics of clothing, which was already introduced in 1.1 to be a primary interest that led the present project to materialize. In fact, the field of the aesthetic is characterized by a quest for its location. Conventional answers can be subsumed to two. Whereas some locate the aesthetic in the human (her attitude, experience, or judgement), others think they have spotted it in the thing (as its attribute, for this four-partition see Shelley 2017).

The artwork, as still the most widespread research matter for aesthetic approaches, presents itself as a detached thing. Its withdrawal is mostly obvious. And even if it easily lends itself for an accessible interpretation; if it is of "some worth", it will surely own further layers of meaning and message lying more hidden, that are only for the knowing to perceive and reveal. Yet what everyone soon realizes is that the artwork aims at doing something with us. It strives to transform us. And as this striving is apparent, we can consciously accept or reject to confront it and be transformed by it. Put differently, although the extent of transformation varies from artwork to artwork for a specific human, and from time to time a human engages with a specific artwork; it is evident that artworks are there to transform. Hence, transforming us humans is part of their ontological being. It is what artworks are.

Due to the detectability of art's withdrawal, taking on an OOO'ist lense, its thingness interestingly becomes accessible. Although the ways it acts remain obscure, that it acts is an even conventionally accepted fact. Detractors could now say that this obviousness leads to a reduction of art's thing power. But for now, let us calmingly say that art acts differently, namely more in more accessible a manner than clothes. First and foremost, artworks are "vorhanden". And as the confrontation to art happens more or less scarcely, dependent upon our indulgence in cultural happenings, art only has the opportunity to transform us every now and then.

In contrast, clothes are almost always with and on us. Via their constant presence, they become "zuhanden", which, as we know since Harman's reworking of Heidegger, does not mean that they do not act, but exactly the opposite: they act even more. Clothes continuously transform us, every one of us. Yet they do so more subtly than artworks. This does not only makes it harder to map their actions, but it makes it even impossible to flee from their transformative power. And it is precisely this subtlety of their doings that might turn them into existences even more mighty than artworks.

Besides, as a detached thing, the artwork reinforces the boundary between humans and things, which commonsense understands as given. In part, this surely arises from the way it is presented (in the museum, on a stage), and it is also due to its format (e.g. in frames,

between curtains, on the finite walls of a building). Yet, as it became evident also within the present project, there is no clear humans/things boundary. The artist immerses herself in her material in order to create a work. And the work draws its spectators near, closer and into itself, in order to live on within them, be carried out of the museum and follow them into the city, their home, their beds. Artworks can be quite haunting. And as we know from Barad, hauntings are material (see 4.1.3.1).

Hence, art is no exception. It cannot render the here grown post-thing-ism invalid. It is not a thing. Yet it purports to be one. By so doing, the artwork, as the conventional matter for aesthetic research, fostered the bifurcation within the aesthetics (and led to the growing of two camps in the latter field: one localized the aesthetic in the human, the other sees it as residing in things), so it shall boldly be claimed. In contrast, due to the proximity of humans and clothes which blurs instead of reinforces borders, when relating the aesthetic to the clothing, it becomes apparent that indeed, the only location the aesthetic can have, is at the relation.

A particular cloth becomes aesthetic when dressed by one human; yet it falls out of the aesthetic when dressed by another. A human becomes aesthetic (handsome, beautiful, attractive, even seductive) when wearing one outfit, but ceases to be aesthetic when wearing another arrangement of clothes. And one cloth, when combined with some other clothes (e.g. a pleated skirt with a short top), is aesthetic; yet when intra-acting in another outfit (the "same" skirt with a long shirt forms creases and bulges), it is not aesthetic anymore.

Hence, no particular protagonist, neither human nor cloth, can become aesthetic. But only a specific clothing relation can materialize as aesthetic. To be more precise, the aesthetic is neither in humans nor in cloth-things, but it is at the clothing. It is written "at", and not "in" the relation, because "in" would lead thought towards the inside of the relation, and would thus again confront us with the need to decide: either or. Instead of a thinking-in-entities, the aesthetic here becomes a relational affair.

What is more, the relation and its aesthetics are upstream to our access to it. There first must be an aesthetic relation for us humans to be able to perceive, experience, and judge the other webs/knots with which we are related therein as aesthetic. If the degree of aesthetics in a clothing is low, we might sense it e.g. as a bodily discomfort in a dressing, or a color combination which we detect in another's wearing.

Yet even when no human is there to witness a clothing, e.g. when it materializes on a shop window dummy in a closed passage, or on a hanger in a closed wardrobe, this does not render the relation as more or less aesthetic. The only issue that changes when a human is

not involved in an aesthetic relation is that nobody perceives the relation to be aesthetic, meanwhile it is aesthetic all along, before, during, and after the human's judgement, maybe until the next jump takes place. Hence, the places in which the aesthetic has so far been located are only its secondary halts. The aesthetic is not what is perceived. It is what becomes. Eventually, this stream of thought materializes a relational realist aesthetic. And once it started growing, such a kind of aesthetics will allow to deepen the relational realism drafted in 4.1.3.3.

The project that just starts to grow would, in a narrative and thus continuing line with the present project, hence become a relational realist ontology of the aesthetics of clothing. On the one hand, it would allow to rethink an aesthetics of clothing, which so far has been reduced to an issue of fashion (see e.g. Entwistle 2015, 43; Marino 2016, 18; Bruggeman 2014, 160; Seely 2013, 250). Up to this point, clothes remain understood as Kantian dependent beauties, which are only "appealing to the eye", viz. agreeable and not pleasurable, a charm and not a beauty (see Kant 2007, 150-152; a notion that 2.2.1 already begun to rework). If, however, we turn the focus from clothes to clothings, and understand the former as human-equivalent materializations of the latter, it can be disclosed that the clothing indeed is a kind of humans/things relation that, due to its high degree of entangling, accessibly discloses that the aesthetic is not to be located on a particular entity, but on the in-between, viz. not in, but at the relation.

Especially interesting for such a future project could be materializations that queer the image-character artworks conventionally have, with the object-character that usually is ascribed clothes. Of these, sculpturality and modern art, in which the artwork turned object, as well as indeed Barthes' "written dress" (see 1.1) and digital fashion, where the cloth turned image, stand out in particular as guiding thought deeper and allowing to find out more about this new kind of aesthetics.

On the other hand however, it might appear as the growing of an oxymoron when the kind of aesthetic here sketched becomes denoted as a "realist" one. Since its very onset, the aesthetic was defined as a kind of epistemology. It was located within the human (see above). And even those voices that attributed it to the thing, eventually saw the human as the one who attributes the thing with the aesthetic label, so that a thing only became aesthetic after the human judged it as such. Yet the presently materializing project would be capable to shake up the assumptions on which the aesthetic is grown, and shift the latter from its epistemological realm to becoming an issue for ontology. To be more precise, it would be

led by the question: What is the (ontology of the) aesthetic? And via an engagement with the clothing, it would come to reply: The aesthetic is a kind of relation.

The present project asks not to be understood as a finite and determined result. It rather wishes to be seen as a temporary halt of a certain body of thought, that continues to materialize. Barad writes: "There are no solutions; there is only the ongoing practice of being open and alive to each meeting" (Barad 2007, x). Presumably already at the time of its oral defense, this project will have grown further, its identity will have changed, and it will be materializing as a slightly different existence, not only due to its then distinct format.

It might have already entered into doubt about whether an introduction to OOO in addition to fashion/dress studies (chapter two), NM and MC (chapter three) might be of need after all; or whether material agency truly was the right entrance into the cloth-existence (see 3.1.4.2.1). This, however, is not its epistemological failing, but it is an ontological necessity, given that "[c]losure cannot be secured when the conditions of im/possibilities and lived indeterminacies are integral […] to what matter is" (Barad 2012d, 7, as already cited in 4.2.2.4).

One way, in which the project already began to grow further on the last pages, is as a foundation for approaches that will hopefully be realized towards the clothing in the future. But for now, what was achieved to grow is a detailed groundwork, that is considered as needed in order to start philosophically re/thinking the clothing in all its shapes and facets. For what is to come, the writer of this text hopes that she (herself and her text, that cannot be clearly delineated from one another but rather are entangled in an apparatus, viz. her self/text) will be able to actively participate in the ongoing materialization of the clothing research, for which some lines of flight have just been suggested, yet that surely is capable of materializing many more and equivalently interesting trajectories of research. To grow these, the present project aspires to animate.

5.3.2 A Truly Queer Presumptuousness

Apart from radiating its merit into research, the here-grown clothing ontogenesis also wishes to initiate a reconsideration of the daily clothing practice, with a suggestion for which the present project concludes.

Up to today, we humans defined us on the shoulders, and thus to the detriment of clothes. We misunderstood clothes as our servants, and ourselves as their masters, instead of

realizing that we all are equivalent knots within the clothing web. We perceived the actions of clothes as being solely to our service, even as being our actions, and thus were unable to catch hold of the variety of happenings taking place within the clothing, that indeed are not always directed towards and/or affected by us humans. First and foremost, such an exclusive lens was to the detriment of ourselves, in an epistemological as well as ontological way.

This misconception harmed us epistemologically, because it did not allow us to understand the clothing's proper reality (in the quotidian), which resulted also in the incapacity to approach it in research. And it also harmed us ontologically, because it inhibited us from living up to the enacting power that we, as one knot among others within the clothing, are attributed with. For this reason, the clothing tended more towards enacting us, and we became more enacted than were truly enacting, more clothed than actively clothing; conceiving ourselves all the while not only as more, as preponderantly clothing, but even as the one and one guiding force within the clothing.

Put in a nutshell, what comes to the fore here is quite an amusing paradox: Meanwhile and precisely because we see ourselves as the masters of clothing, we become mastered by the clothes we intra-act with and the clothings we partake in, and eventually have to leave our (not only clothing) faith to whatever direction they want to steer our entanglement to. There is no more presumptuous an attitude.

In a new materialist vein, a way out via through, via thinking it through again, viz. not an escape but a chance to traverse, is the present clothing ontogenesis. Instead of being slaves of the clothing whilst believing ourselves to be its masters; by realizing that we are but one knot among many within the clothing, and that we are a web in which clothes and clothings play a decisive role, we can come to a more realist (also in the commonsense meaning of this term, as down to earth and thus truthful) depiction of the clothing as well as of our role therein, which is further from the center than we so far assumed.

This post-humanist stance is accompanied by a realization of the responsibility inherent in every clothing, that we, as clothing-entangled existences, are bestowed with, yet which we so far did not accept. To meet this clothing responsibility is a task that is long due. On the one hand, this means that we have to finally realize the indebtedness towards others, that necessarily pertains to every clothing. We have to start engaging with other clothing-knots in more decent and respectful a manner. Sustainability, in the sense of gathering less and intra-acting longer with the singular cloth, here becomes a willingly embraced side-effect.

The presently grown ontogenesis of the clothing helps to understand precisely this indebtedness by disclosing the becoming that clothes truly are. If we stop seeing clothes as

things closed within themselves, even things that are lying passively in front of our eyes and hands; and if we rather have the chance to witness the cloth in its halts as hyper- and as hylo-object, viz. the effort, energy, and time this trivial looking thing demands and consumes in order for it to materialize in its present form, then we will surely treat this cloth, this quotidian object, of which thousands can be found in every chain store, and a great variety in many human wardrobe collections, then we will relate with this unpretentious "thing" which much more respect.

In order to contribute to a change in thinking that has already begun, the present project therefore aims at turning the cloth from something commonly "zuhanden", something ready-to-hand, into something "vorhanden", something present-at-hand (for this distinction see again Heidegger 2006, 83-84) via shedding a light onto its splitting ontological becoming. Eventually, this can contribute to a shift in the humans/clothes intra-actions that take place everyday, whereby we humans as much as our clothes will be enacted distinctly.

On the other hand, following Barad, to shoulder a responsibility not only means to engross its burden; but it also means to allow others to respond, to help and enable them to be responsible and responsive themselves (see Barad 2007, 394, 396; 2012b, 81; 2012d, 9; 2014, 184). This means that we have to stop forcing other clothing-knots towards the actions and responses that we consider as most suiting, whereby we, due to our entanglement, inhibited not only them, but also ourselves.

This is a task that every knot imposes upon itself in the moment in which it enters a particular clothing, and that eventually unites and rhizomizes all knots, humans as much as clothes. In order to start fulfilling the clothing responsibility, and to understand it as the burden as well as the chance that it is, it is our task now to map the clothings within which we are involved, and to map ourselves within the clothing. Thereby, we will come to see that our "actions" are not our personal achievements, but that they rather are collaborations, allowances to respond granted to us by other knots therein, of which a whole lot are cloth-knots.

As a subsequent step, we then can carry out the attempt of mapping when, at what times, a clothing flows smoothly, and to witness the knots with which we intra-act and which we are (our halts) in such moments. In so doing, we will become aware of what it means to let a clothing grow. And we might achieve to step back and observe other knots therein in the becomings that they are. En this route, the clothing will not only become a source of pleasure for us, which reveals that the "ethico-" residing at the beginning of Barad's school of thought ("ethico-onto-epistemology", see Barad 2007, 90, 185) is deeply intra-woven with the aesthetic; but eventually, this will also free us in our (not only clothing-)existences.

If we indeed manage to smoothen a clothing by our own contribution to it and our dealing with other knots therein, then, and only then, can we attempt to steer such smooth clothings gently into a direction in which we want it to go, and in which we want to go along with it. Yet this capacity is not naturally given to us human, but rather a challenging task, a task that we will never be able to complete. Becoming engaged in this aspiration however eventually will be othering the clothing, us humans, and the clothes with which we are entangled therein.

Eventually, this method will reveal to be much more effective than the forcings that we so far have been undertaking, for steering the clothing into the directions that we consider fortunate — not anymore for ourselves, but primarily for the clothing in which we are entangled, and of the destiny of which we thus are affected. In this vein, we will truly live up to our enacting force. Yet to find out about these ontic opportunities, it first needs a knowledge about the clothing's ontology, which is what the present project aspired to grow.

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