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## Week 7: Soundings: Screams and Images

1. **How can one listen to an image in Campt's terms? What are the lower frequencies of the ‘quiet’ photographs she discusses?**

Campt (p. 18) describes that quietude is in no way absence, it is expressive and excessive: „*quietude was anything but simple*. “ (p. 18) She describes the experience from a gallery, where the exposition is dedicated to identification photos of black community, as making one surrounded by far more questions.

These faceless shots, united by absence of face cut out of the photo, are drawn attention to the removed elements, but at the same time to: „*details intended to impose uniformity jackets, poses, and backdrops—are now serialized enactments of individuality and difference.* “ (p. 20)

These images were created as serial, it was required by the structure as visual authentication for filling claims. (p. 22) When Campt raises question, whether images emit sound, she about the particular exhibiton says: “*It resonates intensely as an effect of their seriality—the seriality of turquoise ties, navy blue blazers, vividly patterned traditional dresses, and red, white, and blue backdrops*.” (p. 23) Through compulsory uniformity the sounds of everyday practices are combined, thus multiplied. Consuming these images therefore does stimulate more than merely the visual.

Following Campt suggests her ways of listening to images, looking for rhytms and patterns, looking for affective registers, further: “*on how and why such photos touch and move people both physically and affectively; and on excavating the gendered narratives of*

*diaspora captured in images of communities*.” By pointing out the haptic importance, she proves that a touch is not only physical, but psychical as well. And the feeling could be gained by their sonic qualities. What she does to embrace the feeling is using context, looking for connections based on the photo performances. For example passport photos may seem quiet, mute, but they are the example of aspiration: “*They are images that*

*transmit their sitters’ hopes and dreams prior to travel, along with the journeys these documents made possible*.“ (p. 26)

Campt, Tina (2017) ‘Quiet soundings: the grammar of black futurity’, In Listening to Images, Durham: Duke University Press.

**3. What is ‘gaga feminism’? How does noise, breakdown, resonance, rhythm and dissonance relate to Campt’s concept of the hum and practices of refusal? (Think about the scream vs. the quiet images)**

The author (p. 125) explains gaga feminism as a form of activism, that: “*expresses itself as excess, as noise, as breakdown, drama, spectacle, high femininity, low theory, masochistic refusal, and moments of musical riot*.” He associates it with chaotic yet creative performance, coming from anarchism and musical riot.

The name Gaga Feminism is drawing from the actions of “going gaga,” meaning showing how Lady Gaga is pushing the boundaries of there and now, and thus opening new possibilities for diversity and redefinitions: “*in order to mess up the landscape*

*of pop and popular femininity by both living within it and destroying it*

*all at once*..” By (Lady Gaga’s) ambivalence the feminity is open to new forms by: „*refusing to operate within the rules of popular consumption that would freeze her through complex processes of fetishization*.“ (p. 27)

To make a comparison with the quietude od Campt listening to images, going gaga is very much the opposite, it is loud, making noise (X quietly listening to understand). What it however connects is the aspiration, aiming for change, the politics to noise.

Halberstam, Jack (\_2\_0\_1\_3\_)\_ \_‘G\_o\_ \_G\_a\_g\_a\_:\_ \_A\_n\_a\_r\_c\_h\_y\_,\_ \_c\_h\_a\_o\_s\_,\_ \_a\_n\_d\_ \_t\_h\_e\_ \_w\_i\_l\_d\_’,\_ \_*Social Text* 31(3): 123-134. (TBC)

## Week 9: Necro politics: Debility, Slow Death and Dirty Dying

1. **What is the difference between disability and debility? How do Berlant and Puar understand “slow death”?**

According to Puar (p. 149, 152) current discourses are based on (neoliberal) demands for bodily capacity activating continuous structural inequality and suffering, that result in a “slow death”. The author aims to question pathologications versus normativization of sexual identity, as well as bodily capacity, debility, disability, etc. (p. 152) while considering: “…*what kinds of “slow deaths” have been ongoing that a suicide might represent an escape from*.”

Berlant look on slow death as cyclical, rather than linear: “…*slow death is not*

*about an orientation toward the death drive, nor is it morbid; rather, it is about the*

*maintenance of living, the “ordinary work of living on*”.” (p. 152)

Debility, bodily capacity, and demand to overcome it are drivers of capitalism. (p.153, 156) People are indebted:” *…neoliberal economics and the privatization of services also produce debt as* debility.” (p. 154) and thus the system makes another profit on their debilitated body.

Slow death is an ongoing process, that is shaped by bodily demands, whereas disability expresses defined conditions: *“all bodies are being evaluated in relation to their success or failure in terms of health, wealth, progressive productivity, upward mobility, enhanced capacity. And there is no such thing as an “adequately abled” body anymore*.” (p. 155) By drawing attention to for example depression, bodies are positioned, stratified and capitalized “*among other feedback loops into the profitability of debility.*“ (p. 156)

PUAR, J. K., 2011. Coda: The Cost of Getting Better. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*. **18**(1), 149-158. ISSN 1064-2684. Dostupné z: doi:10.1215/10642684-1422179

**4. Discuss the idea of an ‘undignified death’ in western culture and practice with respect to what Lawton terms the unbounded body.**

Understanding hospices as a (no) place: “*Setting these phenomena apart from mainstream society enables certain ideas about living, personhood and the hygienic, sanitised, somatically bounded body to be symbolically enforced and maintained*.” (p. 140) Purposely positioning disintegrating bodies away, based on: “*the way in which their disease spread and subsequent deterioration affects the boundedness of their bodies and undermines their identities as persons. “* (p. 121)

Based on this context the term undignified death could be explained as the experience of untreatable patients in hospices. This is connected to the cultural and historical-specific nature of the bounded body (p. 136), thus in western society for example in contrast to Papua New Guinea are: “*modes of production, persons, bodies, and bodily processes constructed, conceived and evaluated in very different ways.*” (p. 136) Resulting in considering bodily essences, fluids or emissions in western paradigm, waste or dirt (p. 137). Hence if a person disrupts the idea of “*the construction of the person, and the body, as self-contained, bounded entities*.” (p. 137) – becomes unbounded – they are isolated in the hospice.

Due to the bounded body being the norm, corporeal capacity loss is not just one type of death, it is firstly the social one. Activated by withdrawal from sociality and networks (p. 131) by suggesting, due to modern western understanding of the sanity, that the body is “dirty, inappropriate” (=unbounded), leads to marginalization of patients (p. 140 )

LAWTON, Julia, 1998. *Contemporary Hospice Care: the Sequestration of the Unbounded Body and ‘Dirty Dying’*. In: . s. 121-143. ISSN 0141-9889. Dostupné z: doi:10.1111/1467-9566.00094

## Week 11: Corporeal Generosity, or What a Body Can do!

1. **What is the role of music/sound in dying and grieving? Discuss the practices of music thanatology and lamentation. Why is lamentation associated with women?**

Thanatology takes care of the body and soul though the means of music; it is an administrated care by the monks that: ”…*is said to weave ‘tonal substance responsorially over, around, and above the physical body of the patient, from head to toe’*” (p. 81) While the sound waves move through the body, it make the sick person comfortable and balances their fear.

The role of music, or sound, is culturally differentiated. (p. 83) The article historically specifies, that public mourning was a female responsibility, based on the assumption it is woman who is emotional. This led me to think to Czech tradition – Masopust (perhaps translated as carnival). During this occasion takes place a fake funeral, marked by female weepers, that must be as loud as possible to showcase the endurance. Which seems to me as an interesting parallel to *praefiae* or *mekonot*. (p. 83) The Romans believed that mourning women led to enclosing circle of life.

Lamentation is marking personal lost. The sound of grief making an intimate mark, or a “formal genre intended to arouse an emotional response in the listener.” (p. 83) And as a cultural genre it could also express “a community’s cosmology, its injustices and grief” (p. 83) Further in the text we can see that loud lamentation is disturbing when confronted with other norms and customs, thus the notion about culture.

Gunaratnam, Yasmin (2013)\_ \_‘M\_u\_s\_i\_c\_’,\_ \_i\_n\_ \_Death and the Migrant: Bodies, Borders and Care, pp. 81-98, London: Bloomsbury.

**4.      Describe our entanglements with ‘chemical infrastructures’. What do white bodies share and not with indigenous people and other bodies of water?**

“*We are enmeshed in these chemical infrastructures,”* points out the author (p. 2) as she names just of few pollutants that become our everyday partner. That so though human’s skin, breath or sip. “*The chemical relations of our embodiment expand out into messy and violent histories of colonialism, racial segregation, and labor, into homemaking, heteropatriarchy, and war*.” (p. 2) The combining marker is that chemical exposures are mostly noted retroactively, when a symptom, a marker appears – then all humans are connected to past yet forecasted future. And then all humans are caught up in each other’s conditions (p. 3) while at the same time actively practicing marginalization through: “*environmental racism that concentrate chemical violence in some bodies, and security in others*.” (p. 2) For example by polluting and misusing land, humans are polluted and abused. Environmental Indigenous activism teaches the inseparability of land, water, air, human: “*What happens to the water, is a part of what happens to its relations. Violence on the Land is violence on bodies.”* (p. 11) Toxic violence is unavoidable, often racist (Indigenous X the Great Lakes), although performed on a certain group, the fall is collective. Nevertheless, it differs to whom it is a matter of life and death (p. 5) and to whom a “personal is political” matter. (p. 6)

The state that has been changed under the ecology violence is called alter-embodiment, however it is also a possibility to become and to make something else out of it.

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