

**critical approaches to
continental philosophy:
intellectual community,
disciplinary identity, and the
politics of inclusion**

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This article examines what it means to produce critical continental philosophy in contexts where the label of “continental” may seem increasingly tenuous, if not entirely anachronistic. We follow Ghassan Hage in understanding “critical thought” as enabling us “to reflexively move outside of ourselves such that we can start seeing ourselves in ways we could not have possibly seen ourselves, our culture or our society before.”¹ Such thought may involve an interrogation of our own conditions of knowledge production, by giving us “access to forces that are outside of us but that are acting on us causally.”² Our argument in this article is that critical approaches within continental philosophy need to examine a multiplicity of ways that disciplines can be defined and delimited, and to understand the ways that gender, geography, and coloniality (among other forces) shape the intellectual and social worlds of continental philosophy. In doing so, we want to consider the ways that familiar debates around intellectual and institutional biases might be enhanced by a closer consideration of process-based aspects of disciplinary self-reproduction, and we take as our example the Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy (ASCP) conference at the University of Tasmania (November 29-December 1, 2017).³ We also consider Nelson Maldonado-Torres’ notion of “post-continental philosophy,” and reflect on the implications of such a venture in the Australian context. But to begin with, we want to navigate a path between two modes of criticism commonly directed toward philosophy as a discipline.

The first mode of criticism, which we label idealist (in a non-pejorative sense of the term), takes philosophy as a relatively coherent field of interlocking propositions, and seeks to identify key missteps within this field that have allowed philosophers to perpetuate biases and prejudices. This approach tends to begin by identifying one philosopher (e.g. Plato, René Descartes, Immanuel Kant) as an exemplar of Western and/or European traditions, and by identifying weaknesses in this philosopher's programme that have subsequently affected the priorities or capabilities of philosophy. In some cases, this may involve demonstrating that the kinds of thinking promoted by this philosopher systematically marginalise, or even foreclose, radical ideas that challenge the established edifices of philosophical endeavour. The most well-known version of this approach points to Descartes' mind/body dualism as evidence that philosophy prioritises mental abstractions over embodied experiences, and that the discipline is therefore unable to wrestle with social justice issues that demand acknowledgement of corporeal harms, lived memory, everyday habits and practices, and so on.⁴ In a notable variation on this approach, Ian Hunter cites Edmund Husserl as the villain of the piece, arguing that the problem with much of what gets called "theory" is its "skepticism toward empirical experience," which it often invokes to sustain petty attacks on the social and natural sciences.⁵ Hunter notes that theory has invented for itself a personage, the Theorist, to which philosophers (especially those in the continental tradition) frequently become attached, one "characterized by the desire to interrupt ordinary life and knowledge in order to rise above it, to look down on it, to be someone for whom and to whom the world declares itself in all its purity."⁶ The tendency of Theorists to distrust empirical research makes them particularly ill-equipped to respond to issues that require documentation through qualitative and quantitative methods (e.g. institutional or structural discrimination), such that a direct conflict emerges between the Theorist's system of ideas and progressive disciplinary transformation.

Nevertheless, institutionalised philosophy has proven adept at incorporating the criticisms levelled against its ideological tendencies. Indeed, the failures of philosophy have proven fruitful material for meta-critique. As a notable example, feminist philosophy has generated compelling criticisms of gender politics in philosophy, and in doing so, has breathed new life into continental philosophy itself, expanding its thematic reach and conceptual tools, and allowing philosophy to better communicate with innovations in cognate disciplines (psychoanalysis, sociology, cultural studies, politics, and so on). Continental philosophy has an enduring capacity to lurch forward through its crises, precisely because meta-critical

reflection—or at least, a certain *kind* of meta-criticism—is a preferred tool of the discipline itself. In some cases, however, the incorporation of criticism through meta-critique can contribute to an erasure of the embodied, social and institutional dynamics in play. Aileen Moreton-Robinson makes the following observation in her commentary on whiteness within Australian studies:

The writer-knower as subject is racially invisible, while the Aboriginal as object is visible. The discourse of primitivism deploys the Cartesian model to separate the racialised white body of the knower from the racialised discourse and knowledge produced by its mind. In this way the body, which is the marker of race, is erased leaving only the disembodied mind. Whiteness, as an ontological and epistemological *a priori*, is seductive in producing the assumption of a racially neutral mind and an invisible detached white body.⁷

In an important example to which we return below, critical commentaries on “coloniality” and “decolonial” thinking may easily gain currency in meta-critiques of continental philosophy, without any concrete transformation in the relationship between embodied identities and knowledge production, or the ways that social identities shape situated understandings of settler colonial societies. Of course, ideological beliefs do shape the ways that scholars respond to criticisms of, say, Eurocentrism in their disciplines, but we remain unconvinced that this problem can be cured solely through public indictments of Platonism, Cartesianism, Kantianism, or the other *isms*. Continental philosophy has no original sin for which mere repentance would suffice; or rather, the persona of the repentant sinner-scholar can easily contribute toward new modalities of group-constitution, wherein European philosophers still play leading roles in the theatres of atonement.⁸

The second mode of criticism, which we label sociological, concerns the institutional conditions that sustain philosophy as a discipline, including patterns of enrolment and recruitment, mentorship and advocacy, promotions and progression, and so on. In *Women In Philosophy: What In Needs To Change?*, Fiona Jenkins and Katrina Hutchison note that philosophy in Australia, unlike sociology or history, has seen relatively little improvement in the participation of women since the 1960s.⁹ To this, we can add the well-documented patterns of gender bias in academic citations across both analytic and continental philosophy.¹⁰ No systematic study of philosophy in Australia has investigated inequalities around race,

nationality, class or disability, but scholarship from the United States suggests persistent biases toward white, middle-class, able-bodied masculinities.¹¹ This does not mean that there is a lack of diversity among those persons *philosophising*. Many scholars read philosophy, write philosophy and teach philosophy, while either not identifying as philosophers, or understanding their philosophical identity as precarious, especially if they are unable to imagine professional futures in the discipline.¹² Sally Haslanger argues that social inequalities in relation to gender follow from the “cultures” of philosophy departments relative to other programs: competitive, combative, judgmental, and “oriented toward individual accomplishment.”¹³ Jenkins also notes the ways that myths of meritocracy (e.g. “the best philosophers naturally rise to the top”) come to naturalise the patently skewed demographic composition of the discipline.¹⁴

By placing the emphasis on institutional cultures, practices of direct or indirect discrimination come into sharper relief. However, such approaches are less effective when examining power dynamics that exist between the Global North and the Global South; between Anglophone and non-Anglophone publishing circuits; between institutionalised philosophy and those disciplines that philosophers sometimes consider insufficiently philosophical (e.g. anthropology, studies in religion); and between universities and alternative sites of pedagogy and learning. Sociological research tools suited to the analysis of a single institution - rates of participation and promotion, social experiences within classrooms and committees, and so on - may not so easily be extrapolated when seeking to explain the broad tendencies in the shaping of disciplinary priorities and boundaries within the global formations of research in continental philosophy.

These two modes of criticism, idealist and sociological, each contribute to contemporary conversations about the historical legacies and future viability of continental philosophy. Increasing political scrutiny has been directed toward the nomenclature of “continental philosophy,” given the density of geopolitical meanings that attend continental both within and outside Europe. Definitions of continental philosophy vary wildly, from polemical indictments (often in comparisons with analytic philosophy) of continental thought as obscurantist and lacking in argumentative rigour, to culturalist accounts of continental philosophy as embedded in the national sentiments and orientations of French, German and other European thinkers, to canonical accounts of continental philosophy as inaugurated by a radical European thinker who remains unacceptable within most Anglo-American philosophy, such as G.W.F. Hegel.¹⁵ It is sometimes altogether too

easy to nominate a definition of continental philosophy to suit one's own critical purposes, depending on whether one adopts an idealist or sociological approach. Nevertheless, whatever definition one adopts, Maldonado-Torres' assessment of a fundamental tension within continental philosophy remains compelling:

[Continental] philosophy does not denote a purely contingent relation among certain philosophers, but ... involves a certain commitment with Europe as the primordial site of philosophy and critique. Commitment with Europe involves peculiar conceptions of geopolitical space and history as well as of European and non-European peoples.¹⁶

Maldonado-Torres' argument can be read in both idealist and sociological ways. It can serve both as a description of systems of ideas that contain tacit understandings of the superiority and indispensability of Europeanness in critical thought, and as an indictment of the spatial, temporal and material conditions by which a discipline reproduces itself in relation to a (real or imagined) European centre, thereby excluding vast swathes of thinking that comes to be positioned as marginal. Of course, as Maldonado-Torres has noted, it may be that ideas developed by continental philosophers have equivalents in other intellectual traditions, and that certain tools from continental thinkers can be "utilized in a radical critique of coloniality."¹⁷ Nevertheless, to the extent that continental philosophy understands itself to have monopolised certain ways of thinking, the genuine diversity of philosophical activity around the world—emerging over many millennia and extended across all continents—will continue to be evaluated in relation to the accepted canons and debates that animate continental philosophy. For this reason, before we consider the substantive claims made against particular kinds of thinking associated with continental philosophy, we want to note that disciplinary and disciplinary boundaries pose a series of difficulties that cannot be overlooked when considering the consequences of expanding or abandoning the category of the continental.

"Disciplinary decadence" is the name that Lewis Gordon gives to the calcification of disciplines that seek to subsume all other disciplines and ways of thinking under a uniform criteria for inclusion and exclusion:

Disciplinary decadence takes the form of one discipline assessing all other disciplines from its supposedly complete standpoint. It is the literary scholar who criticises work in other disciplines as not literary. It is the

sociologist who rejects other disciplines as not sociological. It is the historian who asserts history as the foundation of everything. It is the natural scientist that criticises the others for not being scientific. And it is also the philosopher who rejects all for not being properly philosophical.¹⁸

Against the tendency toward decadence that is certainly observable in some quarters of philosophy, we should recall that philosophy has a long and enduring history of interdisciplinary collegiality and cross-pollination. Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, European philosophers frequently conceived themselves as contributing to the broader project of scientific inquiry, allying itself with other enterprises searching for methodological consistency - physics, chemistry, biology, economics, and so on. Richard Rorty argues that with Immanuel Kant and the 19th century post-Kantians, this perceived purpose of philosophy as an ally of the sciences slowly changed.¹⁹ In part through pressures of institutionalisation, philosophy was re-articulated as a foundation for, rather than complement to, the natural sciences and social sciences. The philosopher would now arbitrate the legitimate conditions of knowledge production underpinning those disciplines perceived to exist “downstream,” so to speak.²⁰ Disciplinary decadence, from this viewpoint, emerged not simply from the inward-looking character of philosophy as a discipline, but from its self-appointed task in seeking to reveal the errors committed by other disciplines.

Two possible roles for the philosopher emerge from this historical transformation, as Rorty tells it. One role is that “of the cultural overseer who knows everyone’s common ground—the Platonic philosopher-king who knows what everybody else is really doing whether they know it or not, because he [sic] knows about the ultimate context (the Forms, the Mind, Language) within which they are doing it.”²¹ This role can be seen at work in the scholarly practices identified by Moreton-Robinson, Maldonado-Torres and Stephen Muecke, wherein non-European ways of knowing and theorising come to be conscripted by philosophers as “objects” of evaluation, rather than as opportunities for dialogue, interlocution, and mutual transformation.²² For Rorty, this philosopher-king role has eclipsed another possible role for philosophers, “the informed dilettante, the polypragmatic, Socratic intermediary between various discourses. In his salon, so to speak, hermetic thinkers are charmed out of their self-enclosed practices. Disagreements between disciplines and discourses are compromised or transcended in the course of the conversation.”²³ To endorse this latter conception of philosopher as intermediary does not necessarily mean fetishising interdisciplinarity. The current enthusiasm

for interdisciplinary research in Australia, often driven opportunistically by research quotas and grant funding models, can risk diverting attention from critical interrogations of the histories, purposes and limits of specific disciplinary formations.²⁴ Nevertheless, we want to build on Rorty's argument for more pragmatic and creative relationships between disciplines, including more flexibility in the vocabularies used by philosophers to support inter-disciplinary communication.

Continental philosophy in Australia occupies an interesting position in relation to disciplinarity. This is in part due to institutionalised divisions between analytic and continental philosophy (e.g. sharp demarcations between undergraduate subject-offerings, journals, conferences and so on), and in part because of the interdisciplinary vigour of continental philosophy outside of demarcated philosophy departments—albeit, often practiced in self-consciously undisciplinatory or anti-disciplinatory ways. At its best, scholarship across traditional and disciplinary boundaries can produce moments of encounter that are potentially transformative, for thinkers, communities and schools of thought. As Thomas Ford has argued, disciplinary rigour and undisciplined vagueness, far from being opposing tendencies, may be “intertwined, even mutually generative.”²⁵ Intellectual dialogues have the capacity to build enduring relationships that hold parties in responsibility to each other, and to each other's investments and commitments. In neoliberal university environments organised around competitive metrics for output and impact, humanities scholars need strong, inter-connected academic communities through which to advocate for the worth of our labor, which so often cannot be sufficiently measured in monetary value or key performance indicators.

Diversifying the themes, methods, and perceived canons of continental philosophy may be an important way to transform the meanings attached to the “continental.” Nevertheless, we cannot escape the histories of colonial violence and epistemological injustice that have shaped imagined geographies of philosophical competence, including the prestige still accorded to “European thinkers” and Western European languages (especially English, French, and German). Nelson Maldonado-Torres' articulation of *post-continental philosophy* may be useful for thinking through these issues:

Post-continentiality is an expression of the idea that continents are not natural spaces, but projects that rely on specific notions of spatiality. Instead of seeking a dialectic between Europe and other continents, post-continental philosophy suggests that the possibilities for generating and

grounding theory and philosophy are multiple and include a variety of spatial and bodily references: the boat of the middle passage and the plantation, the black and the Chicana body, the island and the archipelago, the reservation and the boarding school, the prison and the camp.²⁶

Post-continental philosophy does not involve abandoning European philosophical works, but it does involve showing that “normative subjectivities or communities” embedded within European works do affect the priorities and limitations of this scholarship.²⁷ Just as importantly, though, Maldonado-Torres argues for an entirely different way of situating philosophy in time and space, one that allows for the “lived experience of dehumanization” to be acknowledged as a site *from* which thought is produced, rather than simply an object *of* thinking as it takes place in the academy.²⁸ In this way, post-continental philosophy demands an alternative conception of the space of thinking. Rather than national cultures and national canon, Maldonado-Torres invites an engagement with “borderlands” (borrowing from Gloria Anzaldúa). These can be borders between “two people, between the people and those regarded nonpeople, and, between the non-people themselves—not in the continent or the nation.”²⁹ By its very nature, post-continental philosophy cannot be a privatised intellectual pursuit: it demands thinking about philosophy as a public, institutional practice, wherein the “post” becomes immanent to the communities that emerge across radically disparate spaces of thinking and being.

One problem with the concept of the otherwise generative concept of the “post-continental” is that, like many of the neologisms that already circulate within continental philosophy, it may produce what Sara Ahmed calls “non-performatives,”³⁰ or speech acts that do not perform the action that they promise.³¹ There is a significant gap between what we often *say* about philosophy in aspirational terms, and what actually happens in the institutional and organisational formations of the discipline. In parallel discussions around “decolonisation” in academic research, Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang note “the ease with which the language of decolonization has been superficially adopted into education and other social sciences, supplanting prior ways of talking about social justice, critical methodologies, or approaches which decenter settler perspectives.”³² Familiar initiatives underpinned by rights-based anti-discrimination frameworks may be expediently re-branded as “decolonial,” without eroding the constitutive relations between the colonial State (as the arbiter rights) and colonised peoples. We therefore need to acknowledge that, even if “post-continental philosophy” acquired greater

currency in Australian universities, this may not greatly transform the relationship between Anglo-American and European-focused philosophy departments and publications, on the one hand, and research projects that are led by and centre Australian Indigenous voices and communities, on the other. As three non-Indigenous scholars trained both in continental philosophy and in humanities disciplines (e.g. literary studies, cultural studies) that continue to centre Anglo-American and European scholarship, we are conscious that our capacities to read postcolonial and decolonial scholarship does not rectify this asymmetry between those positioned as researchers and those commonly cast as objects of research.³³ This hierarchical relationship between those who research and those discursively positioned as objects of research is rarely reversed within humanities research in Australia, although steps towards this have been taken. As Moreton-Robinson points out, “it is rarely considered that Indigenous people are extremely knowledgeable about whites and whiteness. It is white scholars who have long been positioned as the leading investigators of the lives, values and abilities of Indigenous people.”³⁴ In this context, we need to treat seriously the politico-economic dynamics that reward the modes of inhabiting whiteness that Moreton-Robinson describes. For example, there is no shortage of examples where non-European paradigms and political projects have simply been used to value-add whiteness, expanding its portfolios of inquiry without disturbing the institutional stratification of knowledges and segregation of knowers. The problems faced by one community become the research outputs enjoyed by another. Further inquiry to these issues might investigate the under-citation of scholars in the Global South by scholars in the Global North both as an ideological issue, insofar as some regions are perceived by those in the Global North as less philosophically salient than others, and as an economic issue, insofar as scholars seek to capitalise on existing institutional privileges and social networks through collective self-citation (and for editors, exclusionist curatorial practices).³⁵

These broad considerations around the political dimensions of disciplinary identity were present in the planning for the Australasian Society for Continental Philosophy conference at the University of Tasmania in 2017. Hosting a conference in Sandy Bay in Hobart locates on the country of the Mouheneener people. This country bares a long history of European settler colonial violence in which sovereignty was never ceded. As members of the conference organising committee, we were motivated by the questions: how do we engage feminist, ecological, and decolonial thought to critique the historical legacies of philosophy and to produce new concepts? What does it mean to work within and through these frameworks

in an Australasian context, especially given the awkward colonial imaginaries that sustain both “continental philosophy” and “Australasia”?³⁶ Perhaps more acutely, if continental philosophy in this region has failed to sufficiently centre and attend to vital questions of gender, colonialism, and ecology, what is to be learned from this failure? What is worth bringing forward and what is better left behind? What does it mean to speak up, and when is it time to simply listen?

The multimodal capacities of the academic conference seem to promise alternatives to outputs fetish of the research university, even if this promise often feels unfulfilled. Despite the high levels of institutional scrutiny to which they can be subject, conferences are noticeably under-theorised as academic activities.³⁷ They have the potential to cultivate what Tanja Dreher calls “political listening,” which involves not only the promotion of previously underrepresented voices (something that publishing may do, too), but the development of improved capacities for receptivity and responsiveness.³⁸ These capacities are developed at the intersections of textual and interpersonal practices. As Neil Gross and Crystal Fleming note, “conferences can be key sites for the social orchestration of academic knowledge and for the intrusion of sociality into forms of social knowledge production ... that might at first glance seem to take place entirely within practitioners’ heads.”³⁹ Against the masculinist mythos of the critical theorist who summons wisdom *sui generis*,⁴⁰ conferences can make visible the collective conditions of creativity and erudition, and open onto those seemingly mundane problems that, in practical terms, may be more consequential than any singular piece of research: how much will the registration fees, and which variables are taken into account in the scaling of fees? How many bursaries are allocated for disadvantaged delegates, and under what criteria? How are disciplinary and sub-disciplinary alignments reinforced or challenged by the choice of keynotes and the organisation of plenaries and panels? How does the allocation of spaces and the organisation of the program determine which papers will receive an audience? To what extent do communicative protocols - around question and answer sessions, the contributions of session chairs, or in the Australian contexts, Welcomes to Country and Acknowledgements of Country - shape the social connections and collisions that conferences can (or cannot) make possible?⁴¹

These questions may seem banal from the viewpoint of continental philosophy. But the experience of banality can be instructive, because intellectual divisions between the spectacular and the banal, the compelling and the pedestrian, are the effect of social processes. Logistical questions feel banal because the domi-

nant concepts and traditions in continental philosophy have not been designed to answer them.⁴² As Achille Mbembe reminds us, in the context of the decolonial project in South Africa, shifting the institutional conditions for the production of knowledge require that we develop a greater awareness of the ways that specific infrastructures, such as the naming of institutional buildings and memorials, shapes the norms and priorities knowledge production.⁴³ Nevertheless, knowledge emerging from material practices and struggles is commonly dismissed as unstudied, while knowledge emerging from engagement with familiar textual canons is more readily accepted as rigorous. Put in Heideggerian terms, the quotidian business of organisation comes to be regarded as “ontic,” while concept invention and critique are accorded status as “ontological.”⁴⁴ A critical approach to continental philosophy might begin by re-mapping the diversity of skills and knowledges required to sustain a discipline, including those considered banal, pedestrian, or otherwise removed from the habituated objects of philosophical contemplation.

The prioritisation of equitable processes for hosting academic conference is not, of course, a panacea for the warts and worries of the neoliberal university. Conferences can consecrate and naturalise existing social hierarchies, and further extend social capital for those most easily able to travel, to pay fees, to be invited, and so on.⁴⁵ There is no template for the perfectly transformative academic conference, although initiatives outside university institutions - such as the Brisbane Free University in Australia - suggest that it may not be salaried academics who are best equipped to envisage the future forms that continental philosophy events should take.⁴⁶ We do maintain, nevertheless, that there is value in working through and foregrounding the often fraught political considerations that shape how conferences come into being and to hold out hope that, in bringing a scholarly community together, this work is not done in vain.

This special issue draws together a variety of papers presented at the 2017 ASCP conference. It begins with Michelle Boulous Walker’s meditation on the importance collegiality as a space of political resistance to the neoliberal university. This piece was delivered at the inaugural ASCP postgraduate development day, which focussed on pathways to academic futures, institutional and professional wellbeing, and building intellectual communities beyond the academy. Walker advocates for the importance of collegiality within the modern university a site for social change. She describes this type of collegiality as “fragile and precarious” and implores us, in her contribution to this special issue, “to think more about

our relations *with others* within the university, than with *our selves*.”⁴⁷ At the same time, Walker cautions us that any call to collegiality needs to be cognisant of the potentiality for exclusion and marginalisation, an issue that runs across the papers gathered for the ASCP plenary.

In the tradition of the ASCP, the 2017 conference hosted a plenary honouring the work of a significant Australasian philosopher, and on this occasion, the focus was on the extensive and diverse feminist philosophy of Professor Moira Gatens. The three articles celebrating Gatens’ work reflect the depth of her contribution across social and political philosophy, feminist philosophy, early modern philosophy, and philosophy and literature. Louise Richardson-Self starts with Gatens’ ground-breaking 1983 publication “A Critique of the Sex/Gender Distinction,” and reads the central themes of this article, embodiment and social imaginaries, in relation to Gatens’ subsequent work. Timothy Laurie examines the ways that Gatens situates knowledge claims and speech acts within specific conditions of community formation, focusing on the way that “monstrous” ideologies and beliefs might be subject to contextualisation, without resorting to the static models of group consensus. In the final commentary on Gatens, Simone Bignall examines the contribution that Gatens makes to Spinoza studies. Bignall examines how Gatens works through Spinoza to articulate her concept of “imaginary bodies” in order to think about power, freedom and the right, and then examines the ways that Gatens uses this foundation to consider institutional arrangements of power. Finally, Bignall shows that Gatens is not only an exemplary feminist thinker but also “an *imaginative* philosopher whose associative methodology creates new possibilities for thought,” and who “presents a reconception of philosophy as a genre and a practice that strives to exert an imaginative power capable of changing and reshaping reality itself.”⁴⁸

The plenary on Moira Gatens opens onto the broader questions around the status of “European” thought in philosophy. The relationship between continental philosophy and other intellectual traditions are pursued in different ways through the special issue contributions from Elese Dowden, Anisha Sankar, Adrian Moore, and Briohny Walker. Adrian Moore’s “Dissolving the Conscious in *Satori*: Merleau-Ponty and the Phenomenology of Suzuki’s Embodied Buddhism,” which maps complex associations between the *flesh* in Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology, Gestalt psychology, the concept of *Māya* in Indian philosophical traditions, and the diverse bodies of work concerned with *Satori* in Buddhism (with a focus on Daisetsu Teitaro Suzuki). While Moore’s piece uncovers unexpected resonanc-

es between geographically disparate traditions, the remaining three articles place a greater emphasis on tensions between culturally-specific ways of knowing, especially those shaped by European colonialism. Dowden's 'Colonial Mind, Colonised Body: Structural Violence and Incarceration in Aotearoa' draws on research in settler colonial studies to identify ways that the "coloniality of being" shapes the lives of Māori communities, focusing on the normalisation of Pākehā (non-Māori) identities through practices of governance and incarceration. Throughout, Dowden considers the way that the historical problem of settler colonial violence is displaced on Māori communities, who are in turned positioned as a "problem" to be managed by a State that elsewhere purports to endorse the virtues of multiculturalism. Extending these themes, Anisha Sankar places in dialogue the work on Frantz Fanon and Walter Benjamin, focusing on the status of "ruptures" in relation to anti-colonial and revolutionary struggles. In doing so, questions emerge around the value of Hegelian dialectics in both Fanon's and Benjamin's work, and Sankar draws on Lewis Gordon and Glen Coulthard to consider critique of recognition-based politics in contemporary decolonial scholarship. Finally, Briohny Walker's essay "Precarious Time: Queer Anthropocene Futures" (awarded the ASCP prize for Postgraduate Essay) brings together queer theory and decolonial thought in order to explore what is left when the future promised by capitalism is no longer guaranteed or even desirable. Walker looks for alternative ways to navigate the future that rely neither on the reproductive futurism of hetero-patriarchal thought, nor on colonial modes of thinking about futures and about the earth. Working with queer ecology and Indigenous knowledges, she finds potential for the production of precarious Anthropocene subjectivities that emerge from the failures of capitalism, and that may promise alternative futures to those currently imagined within market-driven societies.

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NOTES

1. Ghassan Hage, "Critical Anthropological Thought and the Radical Political Imaginary Today," *Critique of Anthropology* 32:3 (2012), 287.
2. Hage, 289.
3. URL: <http://www.utas.edu.au/humanities/events/australasian-society-for-continental-philosophy-conference-2017>
4. Problems attending the citation of Descartes' mind/body dualism as metonymic for Western philosophy are discussed in Christine Battersby, *The Phenomenal Woman: Feminist Metaphysics and the Patterns of Identity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 190-191.
5. Ian Hunter, "The History of Theory," *Critical Inquiry* 33:1 (2006), 81.
6. Hunter, 87.
7. Moreton-Robinson, 81. A parallel argument can be found in the work of Achille Mbembe, with specific references to colonial knowledge production across the African continent: "Western epistemic traditions are traditions that claim detachment of the known from the knower. They rest on a division between mind and world, or between reason and nature as an ontological a priori. They are traditions in which the knowing subject is enclosed in itself and peeks out at a world of objects and produces supposedly objective knowledge of those objects. The knowing subject is thus able to know the world without being part of that world and he or she is by all accounts able to produce knowledge that is supposed to be universal and independent of context." Achille Mbembe, "Decolonizing the University: New Directions," *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 15:1 (2016), 29-45, 32-33.
8. On group-constitution through recuperative re-interpretations of canonical works, see Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "The Politics of Interpretations," in *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Criticism* (New York and London: Methuen, 1987), 118-33.
9. Katrina Hutchison and Fiona Jenkins, "Searching for Sofia: Gender and Philosophy in the 21st Century," in *Women in Philosophy: What Needs to Change?*, eds. Katrina Hutchison and Fiona Jenkins (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 7. See also Eliza Goddard, *Improving the Participation of Women in the Philosophy Profession: Executive Summary May 2008* (Hobart: Australian Association of Philosophy). Gender has also been identified as a barrier to philosophy in both the US and UK. In 2001, women in the UK held 24% of tenured positions in philosophy. See Helen Beebee and Jenny Saul, *Women in Philosophy in the UK: A Report by the British Philosophical Association and the Society for Women in Philosophy UK* (London: BPA/SWIPUK, 2001). In 2000, 21% of faculty positions in philosophy in the United States were held by women. See Molly Paxton, Carrie Figdor and Valerie Tiberius, "Quantifying the Gender Gap: An Empirical Study of the Underrepresentation of Women in Philosophy," *Hypatia* 27:4 (2012), 949-957.
10. See Fiona Jenkins, "Discriminating Well: On Excellence in Philosophy and Ways of Seeing Disciplinary Space," *Rivista di Estetica* 16 (2017), 103-18.
11. See Sally Haslanger, "Changing the Ideology and Culture of Philosophy: Not by Reason (Alone)," *Hypatia* 23:2 (2008), 210-23.
12. Hutchison and Jenkins.
13. Haslanger, 217.
14. Jenkins.
15. See Kevin Mulligan, "Introduction: On the History of Continental Philosophy," *Topoi* 10:2 (1991), 115-20. On Hegel as the historical touchstone for continental philosophy, see Nelson

- Maldonado-Torres, "Post-Continental Philosophy: Its Definition, Contours, and Fundamental Sources," *Review of Contemporary Philosophy* 9 (2010).
16. Maldonado-Torres, "Post-Continental Philosophy: Its Definition, Contours, and Fundamental Sources," 53.
 17. Maldonado-Torres, "Post-Continental Philosophy: Its Definition, Contours, and Fundamental Sources," 53.
 18. Lewis R. Gordon, "Disciplinary Decadence and the Decolonisation of Knowledge," *Africa Development* 39:1 (2014), 86.
 19. Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979). For an alternative history of this transformation of the (perceived) role of philosophy in relation to other disciplines, see Hunter, "The History of Theory."
 20. Rorty, 131-134.
 21. Rorty, 317.
 22. See Moreton-Robinson; Maldonado-Torres, "Post-Continental Philosophy: Its Definition, Contours, and Fundamental Sources"; Stephen Muecke, *Ancient and Modern: Time, Culture, and Indigenous Philosophy* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2004).
 23. Rorty, 317.
 24. Despite his own reservations about disciplinary insularity, Gordon is also critical of interdisciplinarity, because "the presumed disciplinary completeness of each discipline is compatible with disciplinary decadence. Disciplines could simply work alongside each other like ships passing in the night." Gordon, 87.
 25. Thomas H. Ford, *Wordsworth and the Poetics of Air* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 98.
 26. Nelson Maldonado-Torres, "Thinking through the Decolonial Turn: Post-Continental Interventions in Theory, Philosophy, and Critique—an Introduction," *Transmodernity: Journal of Peripheral Cultural Production of the Luso-Hispanic World* 1: 2 (2011), 4-5.
 27. Maldonado-Torres, "Post-Continental Philosophy: Its Definition, Contours, and Fundamental Sources," 56.
 28. Maldonado-Torres, "Post-Continental Philosophy: Its Definition, Contours, and Fundamental Sources," 56.
 29. Maldonado-Torres, "Post-Continental Philosophy: Its Definition, Contours, and Fundamental Sources," 54.
 30. Sara Ahmed, *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012), 117.
 31. Ahmed, 117.
 32. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1:1 (2012), 2.
 33. One formative effort to re-articulate this relationship between the "researcher" and the "researched" is a co-authored (and illustrated) philosophical project between Paddy Roe (an elder of the Goolarabooloo people of the Nyigina in Western Australia), Moroccan-born artist Krim Benterrak, and non-Indigenous Australian anthropologist Stephen Muecke, entitled *Reading the Country: Introduction to Nomadology* (Melbourne: re.press, 2014 [1984]).
 34. Aileen Moreton-Robinson, "Whiteness, Epistemology and Indigenous Representation," in *Whitening Race*, ed. Aileen Moreton-Robinson (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2004), 85.
 35. Raewyn Connell, "Southern Theory and World Universities," *Higher Education Research & Development* 36:1 (2017), 4-15. On rates of publishing around issues of race and racism in major

- philosophy journals, see Haslanger, 220. On practices of self-citation within closed academic networks, see Jo Ann Oravec, "The Moral Imagination in an Era of 'Gaming Academia': Implications of Emerging Reputational Issues in Scholarly Activities for Knowledge Organization Practices," *Knowledge Organization* 42:5 (2015): n.p.
36. On "Australasia," see Katrina Gulliver, "Finding the Pacific World," *Journal of World History* 22: 1 (2011), 86.
37. On the intense scrutiny attending conferences focused on the Israel-Palestine conflict, see Mazen Masri, "A Tale of Two Conferences: On Power, Identity, and Academic Freedom," *AAUP Journal of Academic Freedom* 2 (2011), 1-28.
38. Tanja Dreher, "Social/Participation/Listening: Keywords for the Social Impact of Community Media." *Communication Research and Practice* 3:1 (2017), 26.
39. Neil Gross and Crystal Fleming, "Academic Conferences and the Making of Philosophical Knowledge," in *Social Knowledge in the Making*, eds. Charles Camic, Neil Gross and Michèle Lamont (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 152.
40. See Jane Flax, "Critical Theory as a Vocation," *Politics & Society* 8:2 (1978), 201-23.
41. On Acknowledgements of Country and Welcomes to Country in the Australian context, see Alison Whittaker, "Acknowledgement," *Overland* (January 13, 2017).
42. On this contextual understanding of banality as instructive for critical thinking, see Meaghan Morris, "Banality in Cultural Studies," in *The Cultural Studies Reader*, ed. Simon During (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).
43. Mbembe, 29-45, 32-33.
44. We owe this observation to generous reflections from Remy Low. On this particular adaptation of Martin Heidegger's distinction between the ontic and ontological, see Tony Fry, "Design for/by 'the Global South,'" *Design Philosophy Papers* 15:1 (2017), 21.
45. Gross and Fleming, 156.
46. See Anna Carlson and Briohny Walker, "Free Universities and Radical Reading Groups: Learning to Care in the Here and Now," *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* 32:6 (2018), 782-94.
47. Michelle Boulous Walker, "The Fragility of Collegiality: 'What Remains of me in the University, Within the University?'" *Parrhesia*, this issue. Emphasis in original.
48. Simone Bignall, "Re-visioning Benedict Spinoza and George Eliot through the work of George Eliot" *Parrhesia*, this issue.