

Recognizing the Anthropocene

Queer disidentification as a narrative towards non-human agents

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ABSTRACT

In this article, the author proposes an alternative narrative opposed to those of traditional recognition in order to address the relationship between humans and the environment in the Anthropocene. With regards to current discourses around Gaia in the Anthropocene, and especially when dealing with climate change, authors such as Isabelle Stengers or Michele Serres have given a special relevance to the notion of recognition. By using Amitav Gosh's reading of recognition as a mode of pre-reflexive awareness of a non-human agential capability, the author will begin to outline new modes of understanding this narrative of recognition. The goal of this article is to propose that non-human recognition is marked by a failed interpellation, following the inquiries of Louis Althusser, and that, therefore, it should rather be understood through the queer notion of 'disidentification' by Jose Esteban Muñoz. In doing so, new stories can emerge in order to understand our relationship with non-human agents in a less anthropocentric manner and in a way that deals with the complexities of our being in the Anthropocene.

KEYWORDS

Recognition, Non-human, Gaia, Disidentification, Queer, Cognition

INTRODUCTION

In the initial moments of my academic introduction to readings on the Anthropocene, especially from the humanities and social sciences, the sense of an underlying idea that seemed to transverse different discourses struck me. I could not quite put my finger on it. Something resembling a change in expression seemed to be at stake: in the Anthropocene, the world expresses itself differently, one could say. But how? What constitutes this change of paradigm? And more importantly: is it a real change from previous conditions?

Thinkers such as Isabelle Stengers (2014; 2015; 2017), Michel Serres (1995; 2013) and Amitav Gosh (2016) have addressed the ways in which non-human forces relate to human beings in the Anthropocene in terms of an 'intrusion' (Stengers 2015; 2017), something that is 'forced upon' us (Gosh 2016, 4). The vague idea in these writings that I was perceiving at first started to materialize in the form of a forceful crack in our patterns of existence, of a sudden blow to our well-constructed discourses on how life works, how our surroundings act, and what it humans'

role on Earth. The world expresses itself differently, and in this sudden call or cry that interpellates us, a mixture of strangeness and familiarity comes to the fore.

Stengers points out that ‘The term *intrusion* specifically designates ‘us’, and ‘our’ stories, of which we humans are the only true protagonists, as the ones who are intruded on’ (2017, 386). Non-human forces in the Anthropocene are intruding from the perspective of our human understanding of development and progress, or rather, they are intruding *in* our understanding of development and progress. These forces are disrupting us, and by doing so they are also pointing at a previous awareness that was occluded for several centuries in our history: to the ability of non-human forces to be agential. As Amitav Gosh rightfully puts it, ‘these changes are not merely strange in the sense of being unknown or alien; their uncanniness lies precisely in the fact that in these encounters we recognize something we had turned away from: that is to say, the presence and proximity of nonhuman interlocutors’ (2016, 30).

A mixture of strangeness and familiarity, a disruption and a previous awareness: these are the poles in which the discourse on the Anthropocene appears to swing. In order to describe this state, some scholars, more or less explicitly, have turned to the concept of ‘recognition’. Within the relationship between human and non-human forces, however, the categories of subjects and objects of recognition start to crack: who recognizes who? What kind of perception is at play here and where can we locate the agents that take part in it? Writings on the Anthropocene by Amitav Gosh (2016), Isabelle Stengers (2014; 2015; 2017) or Michel Serres (1995; 2013) all seem to hint at this concept of non-human recognition which, in my reading of it, challenges not only our relationship towards the world but also the concept of ‘recognition’. Non-human forces, or rather the process in which human and non-human forces intersect in the Anthropocene, consequently start to unsettle, to displace and to queer how recognition works.

We could say, then, that in its strangeness and mismatched constitution, non-human recognition appears to have a queer potential within itself. The question, then, is what to do with this. Queer studies could serve as a lens to see, as the Greek root of the word ‘queer’ implies, the oddness, the cross and the oblique of life through, while trying to find ways of being in the world that do not move away from but with that strangeness. Sarah Ahmed (2006, 570), in this line of thought, asks the following: ‘For me, the important task is not so much finding a queer line but asking what our orientation toward queer moments of deviation will be. If the object slips away, if its face becomes inverted, if it looks odd, strange, out of place, what will we do?’ During the odd moments that arise in non-human recognition, a process of de-stabilization occurs, a process that brackets our assumptions of the world and challenges our previous patterns.

Within queer studies, the strategies defined by Esteban José Muñoz under the rubric of “queer disidentification” will be discussed, as its connection with the idea of a failed interpellation and not-belonging seems particularly relevant for the process of non-human recognition. Queer disidentification can introduce a vital mode of thinking in order to create non-anthropocentric relations. This shall prevent from simply assimilating non-human forces into a human-centered system and, instead, looks for connections in difference that try to stay with failure, the quirkiness, the unhinged. Non-human recognition could set an ideal stage for both queering the understanding of the relationship between humans and the world, and for using queer strategies for dealing with this connection.

It is my intention in this article to offer a theoretical account of a term that has not been sufficiently acknowledged in the human-nonhuman narratives in the Anthropocene: the concept of “recognition”. By revising and offering a new way of understanding this concept, I aim to show less anthropocentric approaches to consider non-human forces. I will not offer specific practices, clear-cut solutions, which, even if needed on a daily basis, are outside of the scope of this study. What I aim to offer instead is an orientation, a way of moving our thinking, to other domains that will, hopefully offer paths for developing some of those practices.

SITUATING ‘US’: GAIA IN THE ANTHROPOCENE⁹

The term ‘Anthropocene’, coined by the chemist-climatologist Paul J. Crutzen along with the International Panel on Climate Change (Stengers 2017, 383), has been contested in contemporary scientific and academic debates. The Anthropocene is generally understood as the epoch in which humans are the most important factor regarding geological change. It confirms the critique of the Modern man’s understanding of the ‘natural world’; a belief of which Michel Serres (1995; 2013) has given a compelling account in several of his works. As Serres argues, in Antiquity there was a clear distinction between things men could control and things he could not—such as climate or epidemics—whereas in the Modern era humans began to think of themselves as masters and possessors of nature. The contemporary period also marks another change: human beings now seem to depend on what before was considered a passive object (Serres 1995, 86). That is, nature, considered in the Modern era as something that could be mastered and possessed, began to be subjected to its uncontrollable forces in the contemporary period: its most exemplary case being climate change.

In modern times, the politics of dialectics (the never-ending fight between master and slave), was interrupted by the apparition of a third party: the world itself. As Serres explains, the

violence inflicted on the world as a result of this politics of dialectics was never acknowledged. Now, however, the world appears in our societal and political considerations as a pressing matter, which gives an ultimate ‘blow to human narcissism’ (Serres 2013, 32). Isabelle Stengers, among other authors, conceptualizes the apparition of this new agent as “Gaia”. This term was first used by James Lovelock and Lynn Margulis to express how the Earth could be understood as a quasi-living existence: a self-regulating system that maintains itself. Nonetheless, as Stengers points out, Gaia became a popular noun precisely when it proved not to be a stable system anymore, approximately in the eighties. As such, Gaia came to refer to an entity that, in the era of the Anthropocene, questions our dreams of mastery and control; it is a threatening and unstable entity that cannot be considered a resource to be exploited, neither a wonder to be respected (Stengers 2014, 2).

If Gaia consists of a fragile assemblage which includes human actions and that can globally affect human’s affairs, then our main goal should not be struggling against her, but learning to compose with her (Stengers 2015, 53). The question that remains is, of course: how? Several authors have been discussing the way in which non-human agents can be recognized in our human systems and are therefore granted some rights. However, their proposals are usually associated with the notion of “inclusion”: that is, they try to assimilate non-human forces into our human laws and systems of thought. Briefly put, the traditional narrative, or discourse, around human-nonhuman relationships tends to move into two directions. Firstly, an assimilatory tendency with regards to the ontological status of the non-human as well as more pragmatic issues, such as policies or rights; and secondly, a consideration of human language as the basic breach between the categories of “human” and “non-human”.

In the first trend, the work of Peter Singer, head of the Great Ape Project, serves as an example, inasmuch as granting rights to apes is based on a resemblance to a category of the human that is not contested. Another example could be the impulse to grant legal rights to trees and rivers, like the instance of New Zealand and the Te Uruwera forest in 2014 or the Whanganui river and Mount Taranaki in 2017. In this way, Western legal constructs (personhood and rights-based logic) as well as traditional narratives of what it means to be human are the means to understand, protect and assimilate non-human forces into our systems.

The second trend, as Giorgio Agamben (2003) argued when discussing the mechanisms of the anthropological machine, refers to the means by which the man-animal and human-inhuman binomials were established and connected due to an element fictionally presupposed as the identifying characteristic of the human: language. Linguistic ability thus, quickly became

associated with questions of subjectivity, consciousness and human cognition (Wolfe 2010; Coetzee 1999; 2004; Lippit 2008; Hämäläinen 2012). Through this narrative, then, non-humans can only be part of our human systems, can only be recognized if we grant them a voice, as humans are the only animals capable of language according to this strand of thought.

Michel Serres himself proposes the model of a contract as a solution to the circumstances that have arisen in the Anthropocene. According to him, in order to prevent violence, the establishment of wars as social contracts—that presupposed both parties as composed by subjects with rights and a common language—could serve as a model for a future natural agreement with the world. In this sense, he argued that ‘we must make a new pact, a new preliminary agreement with the objective enemy of the human world: the world as such. A war of everyone against everything’ (1995, 15). This idea of a contract, in a very similar way to the abovementioned narratives that consider how to include non-human forces in our systems, still did not solve a question that came back to Serres in further writings: namely, how will the earth be represented, how can it speak, and how can it become a legal subject? Under which conditions can enter into negotiations with us? (Serres 2013, 32–36).

In formulations like these ones, something crucial is already being hinted at: the necessity to recognize Gaia into our social and political frameworks. Although it seems vital to, first of all, wonder why the idea of recognition is implied in these debates, as well as in which manner we should engage with a non-human process of recognition. In the following sections I propose that my understanding of recognition can aid in creating less anthropocentric modes of relating to non-human forces, rather than the uncontested narratives that have been in place with regards to the inclusion of non-humans into our systems of thought and laws.

AGENTIAL GAIA: CAN SHE ENTER A FRAME OF RECOGNITION?

Recognition has been historically associated with both an acknowledgement of the normative status of a person (i.e., as a free and equal subject) and with a psychological process by which, through social feedback, an individual identity is formed. Hegel’s formulation (1807), who conceptualized recognition as a vital process in subjectification that consisted on a dialectical struggle between two individuals was especially relevant. In these traditional accounts, recognition deals with two human subjects that, thanks to their capability of being autonomous agents, could engage in an interplay of self-consciousness.

Such traditional accounts of recognition already point at a main problem when dealing with non-human entities: can they be subjects of recognition or are they relegated to being mere

objects of human recognition? In relation to this question, it should be first addressed whether or not entities like Gaia can generally be considered as agential, and specifically as agents capable of a process of recognition. Regarding the first inquiry, several scholars have attempted to break the binary through which humans are deemed the only ones capable of agency against the world and the rest of living beings. Contemplating agency solely as a human characteristic consequently binds this concept to a very particular understanding of autonomy, self-consciousness and will.

However, a different account on the association of agency to autonomy, specifically in the era of the Anthropocene, can be found in Bruno Latour (2014). As Latour argues, the capacity of being a subject, in a Foucauldian formulation, comes from its characteristic subjection to external forces. In this way, autonomy is paradoxically associated with dependence, inasmuch as ‘to be a subject is not to act autonomously in front of an objective background, but to *share agency with other subjects that have also lost their autonomy*’ (Latour 2014, 5). The agency of the autonomous subject is constructed precisely in its co-dependence with the rest of the world. This framework of shared agency is critical in the Anthropocene due to its ability to impede human fantasies of mastery. In our encounter with Gaia, then, we face ‘an agent which gains its name of ‘subject’ because he or she might be *subjected* to the vagaries, bad humor, emotions, reactions, and even revenge of another agent, who also gains its quality of ‘subject’ because it is *subjected* to his or her action’ (Latour 2014, 5).

With regards to the correlation between agency, self-consciousness and will, scholars such as N. Katherine Hayles (2014; 2016a; 2016b; 2017) have tried to rework the way in which we understand this link. According to her, if we see beyond consciousness, we can begin to understand cognition more broadly as a process that interprets information in contexts that connect it with meaning. Interpreting information is understood as a possibility of choice. However, in the case of non-conscious cognition this choice does not work under the parameters of free will, but as a selection between alternative courses of action. Therefore, Hayles moves away from the weight that self-consciousness has in accounts of agency towards other definitions of a decision-making process that includes more-than-human entities. However, she makes a clear distinction between cognizers and material processes. Gaia, as it does not possess the possibility of choice, would belong to the second category.

With Latour’s reworking of the concept of autonomy, we can consider Gaia an autonomous entity with agential capacity inasmuch as it is moved by external forces and it is co-dependent with us. Nonetheless, as Gaia is an assemblage of material processes incapable of making

choices or learning from its configurations, we need to wonder: is this agential entity capable of being a subject of recognition? In order to address that, it would be useful to come back to the concept of recognition in itself and its alternative, non-traditional definitions.

Amitav Gosh, in his book *The Great Derangement* (2016), tries to think how to conceptualize, represent and relate to the natural forces that are taking place in the Anthropocene in relation to climate change. For that, one of the main tools that he uses is the concept of ‘recognition’. The author creatively moves away from ideas of recognition as associated with rights and normativity, and instead focuses on the iterative prefix of the word. Recognition for him entails a relationship with cognition and with temporality: it is something that comes back—which establishes a basic difference with discovering something anew—as well as something that signals a passage from ignorance to knowledge (2016, 4). However, this knowledge does not equal understanding, as ‘comprehension need play no part in a moment of recognition’ (2016, 4). It is, on the contrary, a previous awareness that, in the case of the encounter with the forces of Gaia, points at the forgotten knowledge of the Earth’s unpredictability.

Finally, a comment made by Gosh gives an interesting insight on this matter. As the writer points out, when caught in a non-human interchange of gazes with a tornado, he realized how this recognition, this swinging between ‘beholding and being beheld’ (2016, 14) was not a quality of the thing in itself but of the way in which it intersected with him. This displacement of recognition, from an ability of the agents involved (being a subject of recognition) to the process of it, can offer a new perspective in the topic of non-human recognition. This new type of recognition, that is based on a pre-reflexive awareness that differentiates itself from an intellectual mechanism (understanding), is created in the process of relation between human and non-human agents, whereby both are being mutually affected. Gaia is an assemblage of material processes, an agential one, yet one that is not able to decide, to select or to learn and that, consequently, would not qualify for being a cognizer or a subject. However, as it can be inferred from Gosh’s comment, the question in itself needs to be modified. It is not appropriate in this case to respond whether or not Gaia can be a subject of recognition, but in what ways human beings and Gaia together can enter into a process of non-human recognition. For that, I analyze in the next section the peculiar form of recognition that takes place in the Anthropocene, which, I will argue, is marked by a failed interpellation and a queer mode of not-belonging.

FAILED INTERPELLATIONS IN A NON-HUMAN RECOGNITION

Louis Althusser's introduction of the concept of interpellation within theories of recognition and its emphasis on the interrelated fields of interpellation, recognition and identity, will prove essential to understand the process of recognition between humans and Gaia in the Anthropocene. According to Althusser (2014), the law in itself, while being repressive, is not able to guarantee the reproduction of the dominant social relations. Hence, there is a need for other mechanisms that would subject subjects to that system and would make them reproduce it all by themselves. Althusser found this missing link in the Ideological State Apparatuses (ISAs), whose main function would be to transform individuals into subjects. Repression through norms, then, is not enough: in order to maintain a system, the state needs to make use of ideology, which manifests itself in the form of an interpellation, of a public voice that addresses individuals.

Exemplifying this performative call with the figure of a policeman, Althusser affirms: 'The hailed individual turns around. With this simple 180-degree physical conversion, he becomes a subject. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail 'really' was addressed to him and that 'it really was he who was hailed' (not someone else) (2014, 191). The 'becoming subject' of the performative interpellation, however, has a retroactive effect, with the consequence that everyone is always-already a subject, constantly participating in rituals of ideological recognition (2014, 189). The practices of interpellation are varied, contradictory and constant, having the subject constantly accommodate to this internalized public voice. However, for this interpellation to fully function, and this is a key aspect, the existence of a 'unique and central other Subject' (2014, 195) is presupposed. In this way, interpellation, recognition, and identification become fundamentally interlinked: 'the structure of all ideology, interpellating individuals as subjects in the name of a Unique and Absolute Subject, is *specular*, in other words, a mirror-structure, a *doubly specular*' (2014, 196). Through interpellation, a process of recognition between subjects and the Subject, among subjects themselves, and of the subject by themselves creates the guarantee that 'everything really is so' (2014, 197) and that, as such, it should stay if they wish to receive a reward, which would be the ability of considering themselves free and equal subjects.

As Donna Haraway (2007) points out, the word 'interpellation' had been rescued from obsolescence in the 20th-century France to refer to the calling on a minister in a chamber to explain something. Interpellation, therefore, came to mean not only a calling but also an expectation, its functioning, therefore, being performative as well as perlocutionary¹. This expectation in the framework of Althusser's theory relates to the acts that the subject needs to

perform in order to perpetuate the system. In the interpellation that Gaia produces, however, there is no possible expectation: what we encounter in this process of non-human recognition is a failed interpellation. This point is clearly expressed by Isabelle Stengers when she describes Gaia as ‘the one who is ‘intruding’’ (2017, 386). For Stengers, this implies that Gaia is ‘blind to the damage she causes, in the manner of everything that intrudes’ (2015, 44). Gaia, by intruding, poses a question but asks nothings of us. She asks, but is not interested in the answer.

In relation to the intrusive characteristic of Gaia, Amitav Gosh argues that even if the forces of the Earth were always there and affecting us – hence the previous awareness of their agential capacity and unpredictability – what makes Gaia stand out in the era of the Anthropocene is both the fact that these forces are in part created by humans and their especial directness. The intrusive forces of Gaia, in their directness and particular nature of being co-created by us, provoke a feeling of strangeness, a disjuncture, a failed interpellation that gives us an awareness of the underlying of a forgotten knowledge (i.e. the earth as an agential, quasi-living entity that is our interlocutor), as well as forcing us to reconsider our relation with it in this process of recognition. This strangeness, I propose, can be read as a queer feeling.

QUEER DISIDENTIFICATION AS A NARRATIVE FOR NON-HUMAN RECOGNITION

Before getting into queer disidentification, I shall come back to Althusser’s theory of interpellation and make a distinction between the failed interpellation that happens in the Anthropocene and his concept of “miscognition”. For Althusser, ideology, through the interplay between interpellation-recognition-identity, is able to present things as self-evident facts, therefore showing the ideological construction of these specular resemblances as a truth and as a guarantee. In this sense, recognition always implies a miscognition of the humans’ relations to their conditions of existence. Nonetheless, as Michel Pêcheux (1982) explains, this miscognition is based on a recognition of subjects with the Subject, subjects between themselves and subjects with themselves; that is, the miscognition proper to human recognition in Althusser’s account necessarily implies a successful identification with the current social and cultural frameworks. Here, an essential difference with the previous explanation of failed interpellation arises. Whereas miscognition relies on the maintenance of the interpellation-recognition-identity link, a failed interpellation as it has been conceptualized in the section above dismantles such an association, which impedes successful identifications to be formed.

Several theorists have explored this mismatched encounter between recognition and identity as it appears in queer experiences. Judith Butler (1990; 1993), for example, claims that the parodic

effect of drag performance shows not only the resistance of these subjects to identify with the gender roles that they were interpellated into, but also the possibilities of escaping a repressive form of recognition and the assimilation into a system. Through this example, Butler could point at the excess that is always present in the performative interpellation, the ‘slippage between discursive command and its appropriated effect’ (1993, 122) that leaves a ground for disobedience. However, the most extensive and convincing account on queer strategies for dealing with this disjuncture in recognition and identification was created by Jose Esteban Muñoz in his book *Disidentifications* (1999). Muñoz also places an emphasis on how interpellation, identity and ideology are interlinked. According to him, this triad works by creating a majoritarian phobic sphere where images are coded, consequently leaving aside minoritarian experiences. Ideological restrictions prevent a successful interpellation from happening, thus stopping the process of identification for certain subjects. Muñoz explains how the disjunction that queer subjects experience in the public sphere can lead to a positioning within and outside that which interpellates. As he asserts, queer subjects, when faced with a public sphere that does not offer modes of belonging that call for similarity and successful identification, may opt for certain strategies, among which disidentification stands out.

Disidentification is defined in Muñoz’s work as a process of reading ‘oneself and one’s own life narrative in a moment, object, or subject that is not culturally coded to ‘connect’ with the disidentifying subject’ (1999, 12). This does not elide the harmful components of that interjection but tries to rework them in order to create opposing and changing relations towards that with which the subject disidentifies. The minoritarian subject (Muñoz, 1999) then can opt for interfacing this public sphere to which it cannot connect. In this way, as Muñoz asserts, ‘identities-in-difference emerge from a failed interpellation within the dominant public sphere. Their emergence is predicated on their ability to disidentify with the mass public and instead, through this disidentification, contribute to the function of a counterpublic sphere’ (1999, 7).

I propose that it is fruitful to establish a heuristic analogy between the disidentificatory practices analyzed by Muñoz in the context of queer subjects, and the process of non-human recognition. In the course of a non-human recognition of Gaia, a failed interpellation happens, and a process of identification cannot successfully take place due to Gaia being an assemblage of material process and not what we consider a traditional subject. Recognizing Gaia then, as Stengers posed, is not a matter of conceptualizing belonging, but of conceptualizing intrusion (2015, 45). Similarities between these two cases, therefore, can be found in the disjunction of the triad interpellation-recognition-identification, which could also point at akin modes of addressing this situation. Nonetheless, I want to make clear that my intention is not to equate queer subjects and

non-human agents. Even if I believe that the process of non-human recognition with Gaia holds a queer potential in its strangeness, I wish to move the discussion about queer disidentification away from individual or collective experience to a more abstract level where it can function as a narrative, as a mode of thinking within these circumstances, as a mode of telling.

Like Butler, Muñoz also found a creative locus for analyzing practices of disidentification in parody and trans identities. This is, however, one possible example of a concept that encompasses a broader meaning, and therefore a more extensive potential. As Muñoz himself says: ‘I refer to disidentification as a hermeneutic, a process of production, and a mode of performance’ (2013, 25). In here, queer disidentification is understood not so much as a specific practice, but as a mode of storytelling through which we can begin to think other ways of relating in the Anthropocene. I would like to tentatively propose that in the case of the non-human process of recognition between Gaia and humans, queer disidentification could point at places that do not aim at the assimilation of Gaia into our current system but try to look for other manners of relating in difference.

Parody is a facet of disidentificatory practices for queer people of color. The more appropriate practice for our non-human recognition with Gaia is still to be discovered. However, by introducing queer disidentification as a framework to think these modes of interfacing, we can redirect our aims. The goal would not be then to re-establish the broken link between interpellation-recognition-identity, nor trying to accommodate Gaia into our current political systems. Instead, the path opened by queer disidentification tells us that there are ways of working within and against a system, ways of creating a counter public sphere where other modes of expression and of relation can begin to emerge in difference. The goal, all in all, would not be to amend this failed interpellation but to find in failure a generative moment of alternative connections among human and non-human agents.

CONCLUSION

When I started to think about non-human recognition, several cases instantly came to mind. Moments of awe, of turmoil, but also of a certain type of excitement. The accounts of some authors on how they felt intersected by non-human gazes felt all the more familiar. It is an odd idea, but one that, in its oddness, does not completely feel out of place. As we have seen throughout this article, even if Gaia is an assemblage of material processes, the mode in which it is co-dependent with us gives her a particular form of agency that could open the possibility for a process of recognition. My aim in this article has been to make use of this potential and

propose an alternative narrative to that of traditional recognition. This proposed narrative considers recognition in a more cognitive way, through a pre-reflexive awareness, which has made it possible to move away from an anthropocentric realm towards an understanding of its non-human functioning.

What I have demonstrated in this article is that acknowledging that this encounter can be, and indeed is, a type of recognition is not enough. As Serres or Stengers point out, we are in need of new codes, new modes of thinking that do not go back to a humanistic or anthropocentric way of relating to those non-human agents. We need new stories, new ways of conceptualizing our relationship with the world in the Anthropocene. The path explored in this article takes up the challenge of creating alternative narratives by means of queer disidentification, and how an understanding of it within the framework of recognition could offer other types of connection with those non-human agents. From queer disidentification practices, we could learn to avoid including or assimilating Gaia into our cultural frameworks, and instead try to find ways of coupling that are not based on similarity and successful identification.

As I have analyzed in this article, the process of recognition between humans and Gaia is marked by a failed interpellation which prevents us from successfully identifying (with) those non-human agents. Queer disidentification has shown how these moments are not to be overcome. A mismatched interpellation does not need to be in itself a revolutionary act, as misrecognition can happen on several fronts and it can be a condition of conformity or internalized self-loathing (Bunch 2013, 41). However, queer disidentification exposes how another path is possible: to read oneself with and against something that is not coded to relate to you might offer more generative solutions. In non-human recognition, that would imply relating to Gaia without aiming at anthropomorphizing her or including her in human modes of dealing with politics. Instead, queer disidentification points at the possibility of neither opposing nor assimilating but keeping both entities in difference, trying to find a point of contact in the strangeness. The goal would then be to maintain the oddity, the de-stabilization that makes us wonder what we can make of these non-human agents. In terms of how we could do this, I guess we just need to keep trying: engage with images that startle us, with experiences that move us, with stories that come and go in the form of an intrusive flash from the memory. Because if we do, we might discover something new and, hopefully, we will be able to rework what it means to be human in the process.

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¹ A perlocutionary speech act is that which it is considered at the level of its consequences, such as persuading, convincing or inspiring. Hence, its function consists of provoking an act in the listener (Austin 1962).