

# Michel Serres and Posthuman Subjectivities: *Silencing* and *Trans-lation* to Explore Co-implications

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The contribution aims to examine the co-implications between Serres' work and posthumanist ideas of body and subjectivity. This scope is pursued primarily through the methodological choice of a gerund, such as *silencing*, and the harnessing of its performative, processual, and relational value. Building on Serres' conception of silence as a dilation of the *me* the paper will follow Serresian anti-Cartesian reflections on the interchangeability of subject and object, his conception of the pre-positional body, and his thematization of the soul-body relationship. In close inter-implication with the employment of *silencing* is then the choice, again as a methodological device, of the preposition *trans*, made to act in order to explore the affinities/overlaps/assonances between Serres' theorization of the body, dimension of the human, and posthumanist conceptions of body/subjectivity.

*Keywords:* posthuman subjectivity, Michel Serres, silencing, translation, co-implications

## A Statement of Purposes

This contribution aims to examine the co-implications<sup>1</sup> between Serres' work and posthumanist ideas of body and subjectivity. This scope is pursued primarily through the methodological choice of a gerund, such as *silencing*, and the harnessing of its performative, processual, and relational value. Building on Serres' conception of silence as a dilation of the *me* the paper will follow Serresian anti-Cartesian reflections on the interchangeability of subject and object, his conception of the pre-positional body, and his thematization of the soul-body relationship in the sense of a duality and not a dualism. In close inter-implication with the employment of *silencing* is then the choice, again as a methodological device, of a preposition<sup>2</sup>, *trans*, which is significant for Serres, since around it he develops his reflection on *traduire*, *trans-ducere* (translating), and *traduction* (translation) as the *operation of translating*, which is *application* and as such allows for measuring the range of variation between the extreme limits of the traction that lies below the threshold of what is invariant. *Trans* is so made to act in order to explore the affinities/overlaps/assonances between Serres' theorization of the metamorphic, anthropo-poietic body, dimension of the human, and posthumanist conceptions of body/subjectivity in works on dimensional body, on trans-corporeality, on the body-without-organs, and on transversal, nomadic embodiment.

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<sup>1</sup> In keeping with the title, moving from Serres' interest in the topological operation of the fold (*pli*) (co-)implication is understood in the sense of enfolding into a process of continuous reciprocal transformation that creates new spaces of contiguity, affinity, distance, and overlap.

<sup>2</sup> "Placed first", prepositions have for Serres the crucial function of dynamically and inventively relating elements that are part of a multidimensional space and that are not mutually exclusive, taking in neo-Latin languages such as French or Italian the place, so to speak, of declensions. They, therefore, alone are sufficient to weave a network of spatial, temporal, and semantic meaning.

### Contingency, Silencing, and Naked Body

Given the difficulty to find a starting point in this programmatic/open exploration of assonances between the posthuman subjectivities and a nonlinear, hypertextual, and reticular fluctuating thought such as Serres' (Moser, 2016; Dolphijn, 2019; Watkin, 2020; Rignani, 2022b), and given that however a departure there must also be, it seems that it can be found in *Branches* (Serres, 2020) if only for the reflections it contains on the topic of subjectivity.

Coagulating in the title itself some of the main features of Serresian thought (precisely hyper textuality branching in all directions to form a bouquet of pre-positions), this work recognizes and celebrates the *advent* and *event* of the age of the Son (Serres, 2020, p. 44), or, as it were, the (contemporary) access of contingent singularities to the universal (Serres, 2020, pp. 26-27). An age—nowadays called, with strong approximation and ambiguity, Anthropocene (Parikka, 2018)—in which the human, its subjectivity, and its knowledge come to be exposed *to* and inter-implicated *with* the contingent processes of transformation of the (material) world, in which all centers abandon the center, and *Sapiens* loses its condition of being the source/center/trunk, to access the situation of being a branch (Serres, 2020, pp. 34-36). An age in which moreover the margin of error and risk comes to light, and the imbalance between the “format” and the “informal”, the “law” and the multiplicities that surpass it, deviation, and *ex-istence* spring up as engines of the world, the living, history, cultures, and sciences, giving rise here and there to a myriad of arborescences (Serres, 2020, p. 28). It is thus a matter of negotiating between trunk and branches, that is, between law and contingency; it is a matter of learning to “live” the disproportion and gap between cause and consequence, and to recognize the self as a bifurcation<sup>3</sup>/chiasm between format (father) and invention (son). That means overall that one must have the courage of alterity (Serres, 2020, p. 46), i.e., that identity is not reduced to belonging (Serres, 2020, p. 61), whereby the self emerges as the trembling fear between being and non-being, grounded in and formed by contingency (Serres, 2020, p. 69).

This (new) subject Serres therefore sees it as constituted in a non-essentialist dimension innervated by the specific contingency of what he calls *faith* and *hope* (Serres, 2020, p. 70): the contingent space of faith and doubt and hope to be happy in an indeterminate time, a contingency that describes the “nothingness” of the (new) subject, its delocalization, and non-being (Serres, 2020, pp. 71-72), i.e., its potentiality.

Such ontological-substantial deactivation of the subject marks a disengagement from the Cartesian “I think, therefore I am”, which Serres rephrases as follows: “I believe and cogito do not really know what I say when I say ‘I think’, but I no longer know at all what I say when I say ‘I am’” (Serres, 2020, p. 72). If belief is contingency, the *cogito* moves from the uncertain to conclude with the obscure, so that the former, effective as it were, comes to precede the latter: vague, the *cogito*, is less conclusive than the belief (Serres, 2020, p. 72).

As then for the second part of the assumption (“I don’t know who I am”), Serres understands it as a *zero* of meaning, a kind of tautological sentence in which neither the subject nor the verb means anything, other than that they do not matter to anyone. The idea is thus that of the self as nothing and as not worthy of anything: *zero* and humility (Serres, 2020, p. 73). But it is also the idea that precisely in its emptiness, *zero* is the totality of possibility, the capacity to welcome the infinite, and that humility is the being made of *humus*, of earth, and of contingent (Serres, 2020, p. 76).

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<sup>3</sup> *Bifurcation* in Serres indicates stochastic deviation from a path, which opens to the new and to invention; he employs this term/concept with reference to time, evolution, the universe, life, inventive thinking, etc.

In keeping one's attention fixed on this topic of contingent subjectivity, regardless of the context to which Serres laces it, and indulging instead in an a-chronological or at least *hysteron proteron* (the after before) excursus in Serresian work along this red thread, one happens to come across, in *Genesis*, *The Five Senses*, and *Statues*, other (analogous) reformulations of the Cartesian *cogito*.

In *Genesis* Serres in fact states that “the more I think the less I am me, that if I think something, I am something; if I simply think, I am no longer nobody and, in any case thinking me I am nothing” (Serres, 1995, p. 39). And again, always in *Genesis*, he says that the more I dance the less I am me. In *The Five Senses* he states that the “I” exists only outside the *ego* (Serres, 2008). In *Statues* he says that “language imprisons me and makes me an *ego*” (Serres, 2014b, p. 128).

What then is the process/dynamics that animates these non-essentialist assertions/reformulations of the *cogito*? It's most likely the idea of *silencing*, reducing to a silence, which, for its part, as Serres argues, expands, removes edges, leads to the world (Serres, 2014b), and, in doing so, it catalyzes recognition of the multiplicity, variety, possibility, and interactions of things and humans. Silencing in fact is a process of reduction to silence of a language, a *logos*, which, by anthropocentrically claiming to be exclusive, excludes or files differences—“we are fascinated by the unit; only a unity seems rational to us” (Serres, 1995, p. 2)—which dualistically considers reality a human production; and which, when a relatively stable phenomenon and a coherent period or era appears, works to make people forget the chaos, stretch marks, fragility, and volatility of the possible (Serres, 1995).

The process of silencing is thus primarily the effort to (re)gain nakedness, indeterminacy, and *zero*, that is, the null factor, the white *x* that removes fixity in one position and opens toti-potentially to everything, in the perspective of a return to the world as participation from *within*, bodily-aesthetic collaboration which emerges to take place precisely in/for/with/through the body. It is indeed the body itself that through the silencing of the human *logos* ultimately comes to light in its aesthetic-cognitive-hybrid dimensionality as the focus of the (new) contingent, relational, hybrid anti-Cartesian subjectivity.

An idea perhaps consonant with the posthumanist view of a body as a constitutive dimension of the posthuman human? We shall see...

Nakedness is then the body that passes through and is crossed by things, that is transformed into the other-with-itself, that porously mixes, remains open in the possibility, adheres plastically, *humbly* (in an etymological game, particularly dear to Serres, between *humus*, *homo*, and *humilis*), and *sensibly* (thanks to and through the senses) to the world and its metamorphoses (Serres, 2015). And in so doing, it *makes body and makes the world: within* the mixture of the world, in inter/intra-exchange with it, it constructs itself and the human-and/in-the-world.

Anything to do with the posthumanist idea of trans-corporeality? That, too, we shall see...

### Visiting the World in a Full-Bodied Way

The body-instrument/burden of the dualist anthropocentric tradition (re)emerges therefore as a constitutive dimension of the human, in a perspective that, in/by the silencing of anthropo-logo-centric instances, looks at the human itself from the point of view of the world, for its part cosmically (re)inserted/rehabilitated *within* the sphere of philosophical discourse.

Such (re)re-emergence of the anthropo-poietic dimension of the body is expressed, for Serres, first and foremost, in a re-aestheticization of the sensory universe (anesthetized by speech, scientific language, computer codes, scientific and philosophical acosmism, etc.) in the context of sensible and intellectual rebalancing.

It is specifically in *The Five Senses* (Serres, 2008) that he develops a reflection on the (re)aestheticization of the body as a recognition (through silencing) of its being traversed by and traversing things through the senses (s-veiled) in their synesthesia, of its intercepting, letting/making emerge sense of things themselves, and of its constructing the human in/for such relationality/hybrid/cognitive co-belonging. The senses in fact turn out to be channels and thresholds of passage by which the body goes out of itself and mixes with/knows things.

As then for how they function, Serres induces himself to a revisitation guided by an instance of recombination, aimed at rethinking their attributions of superiority or subalternity and especially their traditional separation.

This path leads him first both to consider as senses the skin (Serres, 2008, pp. 17-84), the auricular pavilion (Serres, 2008, pp. 85-151), the two non-chattering languages of tasting and kissing (Serres, 2008, pp. 152-235), the moving visitation (the going to see) of the world's landscapes (Serres, 2008, pp. 236-310); and to a disentanglement from the privilege traditionally accorded by philosophy to sight (equivalence between seeing, knowing, and speaking and between sight, science, and language) at the expense of hearing, touch, and smell, and from abstraction (in the original sense of dissecting the sentient body-analysis, and suppressing taste, smell, and touch).

Sight therefore as it were slips over touch and skin, which turns out to be crucial because, synesthetic, flexible, adaptive, implicating, explicating, constitutes the ground of the psycho-physical mixture. Hence the soul, not localized, emerges in contact, in the common tangency of the body with itself and the world in and through the skin.

Skin, which moreover is a sense common to all the senses, their synthesis/connection, the model according to which each, bouquet of the others, can implement this synesthesia; just as it is the approximation to the mixed state of things<sup>4</sup>.

The synesthetic system of the senses, as Serres indicates it, in addition to skin-touch, thus consists of feeling, taste and smell, and sight. Feeling (as hearing/listening) has a blended nature, is power/function of transforming hard (matter/high energies) into the soft (low energies, information), and it is openness to things and integration of them. Taste and smell, of cognitive dignity (wisdom and sagacity), are inter-connected in opening the mouth of taste (until now second precisely to that of language, which has always outclassed and anesthetized it), that opens to the world. Sight, whose negative valence, as said, is constituted by the inclination to division and separation (analysis), is however endowed with the positive counterbalance constituted by the valence of *visite* (visitation), that is, of *visitor* (moving to see), of changing sense necessary to intercept and mingle with the world from *within*.

In *The Five Senses*, Serres ultimately points to a body that, thanks to the silencing of the anesthetizing and reductionist word/logos, (re)emerges as a "subject", that is, as the bearer of intelligence and the senses, active at the origin of knowledge, the ground in which the knot of psycho-physical dualism is untied, and relationally the human is constructed, which occurs, as well as precisely through sight/visit of the world, touch/contact, taste/wisdom, and smell/sagacity, through/in metamorphism and through/in totipotency/whiteness.

How can we fail to recall here, perhaps (not too) extemporaneously, the words on smell by Anna Tsing (2015, pp. 45-47), one of the most significant voices in the field of Environmental Humanities?

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<sup>4</sup> It's a matter of the *m dange* through which Serres expresses the condition, spatial and conceptual, of the knot, arduous to (un)tie/(un)knot; the fluctuating confluence that fosters fusion, yet without the original components being annulled.

Smell is the presence of another in ourselves. Difficult to describe, but vivid, smell leads to encounter and indeterminacy... Such indeterminacy expands our concept of human life, showing us how we are transformed by the encounter.

### **The More I Think and the More I Dance, the Less I Am Me**

In *sensibly* (inter-)relating to the world, situating itself *within* its mixture, the body bends, curves, adapts, and de-trans-forms to follow the metamorphoses of the world's forms. The perspective pointed out in *The Five Senses*, Serres revives and rearticulates it in *Variations on the Body* (2011), accentuating the theme of the flexibility of bodily pre-positionality and rethinking the role of the senses. So much so that he speaks of a body that is precisely extraordinarily ductile, existing in the possible, metamorphic; always an anthropo-poietic space of a knowing, derived no longer only and so much from the senses, as above all from the imitations produced by gestural metamorphoses and mobile postures, that is, by the imitations made possible by this very plasticity, in whose dynamism the senses and sensory activity come to converge, serving as support and control of the mimetic processes (Serres, 2011, pp. 71-72).

Serres therefore grasps the body as capable and free to assume any form without fixing itself in any, metamorphic in a reversible way as it were in returning toti-potent, a-morphic, in-differentiated, de-specialized, power toward any form, differentiation, and specialization. That is, precisely pre-position, before any position, characterized by the ability to enter, as said, into that very modal dimension in which moreover psycho-physical dualism comes to dissolve.

In this specific regard, it may be interesting to briefly recall the subtle reflection—introduced by Serres already at the time of his youthful *Cahiers* (2022) and then developed in the course of his later works with different declinations without ever changing its substance—on the difference between duality and dualism.

Duality between soul and body, he asserts, should not be thought of as dualism, that is, as separation and juxtaposition, but as a kind of chiasm or better yet as a duality in the mathematical sense of the term. So much so that the soul manifests itself the depth of the body, which, conversely, reveals itself the depth of the soul. The depth of the body is therefore its transparency, just as the depth of the soul is its compactness: the deeper one goes into the soul the more one finds the body, and the deeper one goes into the body the more one sees the soul.

Indeed, mathematics, which constitutes Serres' cultural background as well as the reservoir and toolbox of his thought, teaches that “dualism has seen but two points, while duality sees their genesis and explicates there their reciprocity” (Serres, p. 614, my translation): there could be no more “solid” basis on which to base the affirmation of the inadequacy and reductionism of the dualistic conception of the psycho-physical relation! A relationship that, because of its irreducible complication, requires to be thought of in the terms of duality, is precisely capable of restoring its flexibility, inter-implication, and reciprocity.

The body (re)emerges, therefore, as that culmination of inventive metamorphic possibilities of which dancers (as well as athletes, manual laborers, the deaf, the mute, the frail), those who silenced as it were by the anthropo-phono-logo-centric humanistic tradition, are bearers, since they are precisely de-specialized bodies, infinitely plastic, and available to any transformation. Bodies in “first metamorphosis”, living processes of change and mimesis, which aging tends to immobilize in a specificity and to constrain in the exclusionary/exclusive belonging to a category.

It should be pointed out here that, when he speaks of aging or “second metamorphosis”, Serres has in mind the deadly process (in a literal but also metaphorical sense) of specialization, which pushes toward repetition,

consumption, and petrifying belonging. While, conversely, he considers the body of the dancers, the mute, the deaf, the lame, by its in-definition and de-specialization, a negentropic resistance, a dis-appropriation, an exodus, a total availability to metamorphosis, provided, however, that the metamorphosis itself remains reversible (Serres, 2011, pp. 53-55).

Ultimately, the “first metamorphosis” which is then the status of the dancing (body), constitutes for Serres the human net of anthropocentrism and dualisms. The dimension which, as said, is continuity/inter-implication with the universe, exodus, exits from the self as autarchic subject.

The reference to the dancers may be an interesting and useful opportunity to try to focus further on the anti-Cartesian, anti-dualist, anthro-po-eccentric, contingent, hybrid character of the body/subjectivity as Serres understands it. It’s therefore worth returning a little more deeply to that sort of *pendant* of the “the more I think, the less I am”, which is the “the more I dance, the less I am”, with its coagulation in the image of the dancer-semaphore.

But let’s leave the floor to Serres himself:

Dance is to the body proper what exercise of thought is to the subject known as I. The more I dance, the less I am me. If I dance something, I am that something or I signify it. When I dance, I am only the blank body of the sign. The sign is a transparency that tends toward its designation. The dancer, like the thinker, is an arrow pointing elsewhere. He shows something else; he makes it exist; he makes an absent world descend into presence. He must thus himself be absent. The body of the dancer is the body of the possible, blank, naked, nonexistent. This dislocation is polysemy come down into the limbs, and these far-flung limbs are an alphabet, a series of scales. The body becomes, at best, undetermined, as undifferentiated as a hand, a digit, a letter, a numeral. The dancer is a semaphore. And semaphore is nothing if it transmits no signal. Have you at times heard language beyond earshot of any specific meaning? Have you heard the noise of thinking, outside individual thoughts? Have you heard naked language, naked thoughts, as faculties?

The semaphore dancer has given himself a faculty-body, a pure possibility of doing. (Serres, 1995, pp. 39-40)

Thinking is the intentional exit from the ego-subject to enter *bodily* into the world and become what is thought, since thought itself vanishes in its determinations (Serres, 1995, p. 40). To the degree that I think therefore I am, no matter who or what (tree, river, fire, etc.), that is, I am Nobody, the homologue of the Homeric Nobody, the white as the sum of all colors, the incandescent, the possible, a pure capacity. It is also true for dance: “the more I dance, the more I am naked, absent” (Serres, 1995, p. 39); the dancer is an arrow, he makes see without making himself see, he makes exist; his body is white, possible, de-differentiated, signifies, evokes, is disjointed in the sense that each member is able to move in all directions, and therefore is capable of all senses, all signs, and all designations.

Just as the thinking subject does not call attention to itself, so the dancing body does not draw gazes to itself, since the purpose of both is to point to a center eccentric to itself, ultimately acentric. The dancer, in fact, is nothing, in order to make one see everything possible. Like thought, dance, then, as Serres says (Serres, 1995, p. 47), leaves space and gives way; it opens to the totality of possibilities; it conveys the “signs” of the world by pointing to the human’s continuity with it; and, at the same time, it makes possible the recognition of the body’s potentialities, as a kind of *somato-phany* (manifestation of the body). The Serresian image of the semaphore-dancer suggests this: if the dancer is an arrow toward something, a bearer of signs that is, of transparencies that go toward a designation, he himself must be transparent and absent, and therefore his body is perforce white, *tabula rasa*, devoid of qualities, body of the possible, pure possibility of doing (Serres, 1995, p. 40), and support of all possible senses.

It is therefore precisely in and for dance (too) that the body emerges in this toti-potentiality, transparency, and incandescence: it unveils it and, as it were, invents it by launching it toward improbable, unexpected, and new positions, movements, twists, tensions, jumps, and gestures (Serres, 2018).

In other words, dance points to and catalyzes the capacity of the body, to be understood in the terms of de-specialization, in-definition, adaptability, metamorphosis, extendibility, displaceability, and multi-directionality (Rignani, 2023). And in doing so, it fosters the recognition of the body itself in the constellation of dynamism, virtuality, possibility, and powers the world by inserting itself into the dance of its *mélange*. After all, also Anna Tsing (2015) tells us that dance is such that lines of life are pursued through senses, movements, and orientations (Tsing, 2015, p. 241) and that the recognition of common life forms the basis of dance itself (Tsing, 2015, p. 242)...

“The more I think the less I am me” and “the more I dance the less I am me” therefore express, overall, the fluidization of substantialist, fixist, exclusivist, and dualist rational subjectivity and autarkic identity into intentional tension, possibility, processualism, exuberance, relationality, encounter, and metamorphosis. The subject (of thought) recovers the literal meaning of *sub-jectum*, which is “thrown under” everything, so much so that “to think, it is enough for me, subject, to throw myself under”, as Serres states in *Le Gaucher boiteux* (Serres, 2015, p. 20, my translation).

Any consonance with posthumanist transversal, relational, nomadic subjectivity (Braidotti, Cohen, Luisetti)? It will be seen...

### A Virgin Mother Body

It is interesting to highlight how Serres comes to point out, precisely in and for the body, the interchangeability of subject and object as well as the dynamic circularity of the process of subjectivization and objectivization. Thus: to think is to immerse oneself in the dynamism of the world; the subject of thought is that which is thrown under and which, in order to think, has precisely to do nothing more than throw itself under everything, metamorphosing into that which it thinks; subjectivization/assimilation (nourishment, inhalation, imitation, learning, etc.) is the process by which the body subjectifies things and movements that transubstantiate into the flesh; objectivization is conversely the process that Serres, using the seafaring vocabulary that by personal history is particularly dear to him, calls *appareillage* (the moment when a boat lifts its moorings, leaves the dock, and sets sail), that is, the series of operations whereby the body “loses”, the organs de-specialize, and empty themselves of forms and functions in order to pour them outward. As said, the body makes body and makes world: by assimilation, it maintains and develops life, and “in response”, it makes culture, transubstantiates object into subject and subject into object (Serres, 2011, p. 124). The limbs therefore *appareillent* (cast off), they detach from the body to constitute *appareils* (apparatus), tools that, *pareil* (similar) to them but cast off, do not prolong but objectivize them (this is true, i.e., for memory, imagination, intelligence) (Serres, 2011, pp. 118-121).

To this lightening/de-specialization/rediscovered virginity of the body Serres sees corresponding sometimes invention: for example, when writing relieved memory, geometry was invented; when printing freed man from the burden of remembering, experimental science was invented, etc.

If therefore in objectivization the limbs “disperse” into the world and technical objects are born, in the corresponding and opposite dynamic of subjectivization, learning (one of the most significant forms of this process) travels backwards along the path of inventions, which, having left the body by “strokes of genius”, return to it in familiar and scholastic formative contexts. In the dynamic circularity of subject/subjectivization and

object/objectivization, the body therefore, remaining invariant through the variations of life, emerges as a virgin mother, “producer” of culture in the objectivization of organs and at the same time de-specialized, and totipotential again to produce the new (Serres, 2011, pp. 125-126).

Perhaps a body-without-organs in the posthumanist sense? We shall see...

At this point, in the backlight of the idea that in being traversed by things in exchange with them the body, possible in possibility, constructs itself and thereby constructs the human, to speak of *ego cogito* for Serres is to speak of an *ego* in which identity is not the identical but the hybrid fruit of human and non-human factors, and to speak of a *cogito* that is *co-agere* (co-acting). This verb, as he points out, designates the shepherd’s action of pushing a herd of rams, which go everywhere and become agitated, with the difficulty of keeping them at bay, especially if another herd is added. Co-acting is precisely the strenuous dealing with multiplicity (Serres, 2014a, p. 366), and, therefore, the adherence to, immersion *within*, and collaboration with the metamorphic dynamics and teeming creative potential of the universe. So much so that the more I think/dance, the less I am me...

### The Time of *Trans*: Co-implications

After the gerund (*silencing*), comes the time for prepositions. If *within* constitutes the sub track of the entire contribution, *trans*, on the other hand, now enters its “operational” phase. As said, *trans* is very significant for Serres, since around it he develops his reflection on translating *traduire*, *trans-ducere* (translating), and *traduction* (translation) (as well as *lato sensu* its entire research aimed precisely at connecting/translating), understood in particular as the *operation of translating*, which is *application* that makes possible to *measure* the transformations of the “message”, the range of variations between the extreme limits of the *traction* that lies below the threshold of what is invariant (Serres, 1974, p. 11).

At this point one can meta-reflexively attempt to employ the operation of translation as a methodological tool, making the preposition *trans* act for the purpose of exploring the co-implications, overlaps, slippages, dynamizations (in this case, the invariant through variations) between the Serresian idea of the psycho-physical, cognitive, metamorphic body, hybridizing, anthropo-poietic dimension of the human, and the mentioned posthumanist ideas of a bodily dimension constitutive of the posthuman human (Marchesini) (which *coagulate* in trans-corporeality—Alaimo—and body-without-organs), and of a subjectivity that is not (only) human, embodied, transversal, relational (immanent to a network of non-human relations), and nomadic (Braidotti).

It is obvious that to speak of variations *within* an invariant as well as of co-implications is to point to assonances (perhaps unintentional/unconscious), mutual slippages, overlaps, knotting and unraveling, in a processualism and dynamism that is more questioning than responsive.

That said, what primarily and on the general level stands out as invariant between Serres and the posthumanities is the implication of the human in the (geophysical) processes of the universe and the exposure/implication of human subjectivity in the (material) entanglements of transformation of the world, an exposure/implication that is precisely bodily/body based. The Serresian psycho-physical-aesthetic-cognitive-hybrid-dimensional body, fulcrum/place of an anti-Cartesian, contingent and relational subjectivity, is thus inter-translatable into the “pregnant”, (over)abundant, psycho-physically flexible posthumanist body, stretched to intentional conjugation/hybridization, threshold of dissolution of inside/outside and subject/object boundaries (Rignani, 2022a).

It therefore can be said that, beyond “variations”, Serres and the posthumanities *converge* in rethinking the dualist/humanist idea of *having a body* (conception of the body as an instrument/burden) toward the idea of *being*



a body (body as an anthro-poietic relational hybrid dimension of the human) (Marchesini, 2018; 2023). But *being a body* in this sense implies potentially plastically and metamorphically adhering to *things*, *passing through and being traversed by them*, *porously blending with them*, so that *trying to translate* all this into posthumanist *trans-corporeality* is perhaps not so far-fetched...

As is well known, when the feminist new materialist Stacey Alaimo (2010; 2018) speaks of trans-corporeality in reference to the human, she has in mind, upstream of all curvatures and implications, the human bodily subject as generated by and intertwined with biological, technological systems, processes, and events, that is, *lato sensu*, traversed by substantial material interchanges. The underlying idea is thus that of an imbrication of the human and other-than-human, whereby the human body is traversed, inter-penetrated/inter-implicated with the more-than-human world. In the co-implication between Serres and Alaimo therefore overhangs an idea of the human after the Human, emancipated from dualisms, hierarchies, and exceptionalism, and horizontally crossed by agencies and forces and *bodily* immersed *within* entangled relationships.

This slippage/translation/overlap between Serres' hybrid metamorphic corporeity and trans-corporeality goes to slip then on the idea of trans-versal and nomadic subjectivity as expressed by Rosi Braidotti and other posthumanists; as well as, at the same time, this Serresian, metamorphic, naked, toti-potent corporeality itself goes to be *translated* into the body-without-organs, as posthumanistically understood (i.e., as extensions of the body, below organs and beyond human corporeality in the more-than-human world)<sup>5</sup>.

Relying on the *pontificating force*<sup>6</sup> of the preposition *trans*, which precisely makes Serresian corporeity and trans-corporeality mutually overlap, one in fact comes to inter-face with posthumanist trans-versal subjectivity. Rosi Braidotti (2013; 2019), for example, from a feminist new materialist perspective, brings forward the idea of a complex, nomadic, embodied, becoming posthuman subjectivity, situated in relational flux with multiple others, polymorphous. A mobile assemblage in a shared living space does not control but occupies and traverses, always networked; in short, a transversal entity that encompasses human, animals, and the earth as a whole (including stones and a-biotic life, considered by posthumanist reflection as references important for its own proposal of transversal and inclusive subjectivity) (Cohen, 2015; Luisetti, 2023).

At the extreme limit of "traction" one then finds the Serresian *sub-jectum* again: thrown-under things, metamorphosed into them, less and less *me*, and therefore *naked*. The operation of translating also seems to give as a result, superimposed and intertwined with the previous ones, the body-without-organs. In the sense of "the sub-personal, not-yet-organized level of affective qualities that allows for new perceptions, new connections and new affects" (Pisters, 2018, p. 75), casting itself as such under categories and codes, can create cross-cutting connections between human and non-human. In other words, what the Serresian *sub-jectum/naked* body is co-implicated with is the posthuman concept of the body without organs, intended as in-human and inhuman (*within* the human) (Cohen, 2015) extensions of the body below organs and beyond human corporeality in the (material) world, non-self-contained subjectivity transversely connected with all other entities.

<sup>5</sup> As is well known, the idea of the body-without-organs was introduced in 1947 by Antonin Artaud in the radio play broadcast *To Have Done with the Judgement of God* (1976) to mean a body that would be free from the imprisoning confinements of automatic reactions and habitual patterns. In their four-handed works, *Anti-Oedipus* (1983) and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari re-propose Artaud's concept of the body-without-organs as a critique of Western Enlightenment forms of autonomous subjectivity. What is of interest here, however, is the posthumanist re-interpretation of this concept in the basic sense of extensions of the body, below organs and beyond human corporeality in the more-than-human world.

<sup>6</sup> Bridge-building (*pons facere*) between contexts that ignore or oppose each other is what Serres' entire reflection aims at. See, among other works, *L'art des Ponts: Homo pontifex* (2006).

In *silencing* and *trans-lation*, the Serresian idea of prepositional relational psychophysical subjectivity ultimately turns out to be seriously co-implicated with posthuman subjectivities, in the cone of the need/cogency, strongly expressed and pursued by the vibrant field of research in the Environmental Humanities, to rethink the human animal *within* a mixture of beings and forces in which it is only one of multiple agents capable of determining the common present and future.

The program of work is dense...

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