



Box 1 — As a candidate pedagogical framework, the reader is invited to consider the relation between the speaker, the hall, the projection and the audience in the scope of university discourse (Lacan) as architecturally akin to church architecture, with the pulpit (matter of speech), the icon (matter of gaze), and the audience (matter of virtual bounce).

In Karen Barad's rendition *quantum field theory delivers* a kind of cosmic portrait: featuring touch as the anti-magnetic field of electrons, and their dynamic relation to the quantum void (which is not entirely empty). The quantum void is key to the field-properties that emerge from the entanglement, interaction and superposition of electrons in which fission/fusion—or, in David Bohm's terms unfolding and enfolding—telescopes into and out from virtual entities. In other words, Karen Barad gives us a record and replay from the quantum field as the frontier between the actual and virtual.

She doesn't mention Bohm but does refer to Richard Feynman: the Nobel Prize in physics he was awarded in 1965 together with Julian Schwinger and Shin'Ichirō Tomonaga; and also his contribution to the atomic bomb. The void after the bomb-drop in Hiroshima/Nagasaki was not just any void but rather a foot-/fingerprint: the point being that in quantum field-theory particles live and die. A different footprint we find in physics comes from mathematics. In Karen Barad's rendition of how the infinites beget the finite, reverberates the set theory of Georg Cantor (hierarchy of infinites).

More generally, it is difficult listening to Karen Barad talk of the other within, without thinking about Spinoza's *Ethica*. The world according to the infinite. The theory of the innumerable attributes of which humans have access to but two of them: thought and extension. Or, thought by extension in Barad's theories of matter and meaning. But at this point, her bringing perversion into the equation—or the perversion of perversion as a double negation, of sorts—brings up more questions than answers, to my mind. It happens through the intermedium of self-touch, in which intimacy somehow combines with remoteness. What I have not seen contained by their equation is proximity, the meantime, possibility. Or, the heterostructural in challenge of categorisation.

I am also impressed with the extent that names and glory connect with matter and meaning, in Barad's intellectually cosmology, and also that of their entourage; in which the desire for



Box 2. Karen Barad as they delivered the lecture on *touching: alterity within* at the conference *Hold me now—feel and touch in an unreal world*. Rietveld Academy 2018.

recognition comes pretty high up in the hierarchy. In this connection, I am tempted to transpose some of the discussions that I have referred to above, in some terms from Lacan (£). Particularly, the idea of how that signifiers S_1 (as names) link up with signifiers of signifiers S_2 (language): and, of course, their errands originating from being void... his apologue on the mustard pot. The importance being *that* it holds rather *than what* it holds, although its history of holding certainly involves mustard, in a specific way (the different levels mustards that passed through it).

If the signifiers holds a void through which messages may pass—that are also signifiers—then the subject S is divided between being the orbital centre of messages, or simply being a messenger. If the signifier (name) is content being a unique void it's *self-touch* will be reduced to acting as a messenger. It will not be self-touching in the mode of being concerned with its being the origin of the message (given that the name is a

signifier S_1 and language is the signifier of the signifier S_2). To my sense, lucidity on the void is quite different from the identification with the void. Identification begets compartmentalisation.

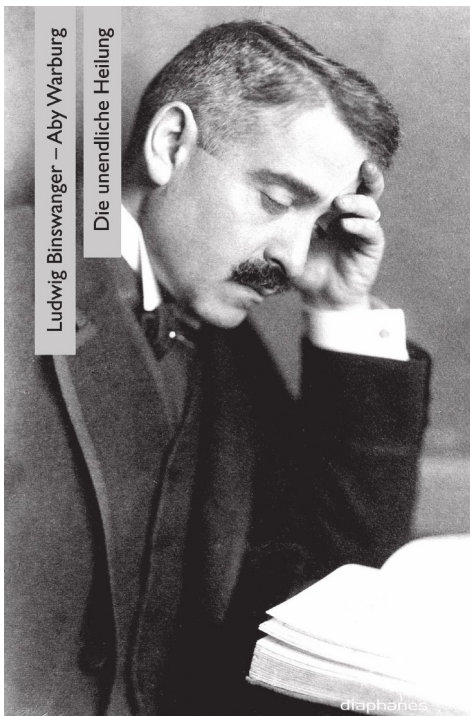
Or, the whole idea that void would tangle with the tango of identity, which I take to be important to Barad's project. That is, who the entity that grows, develops from engaging with and understanding the quantum void. But why is that important? During a gathering with dance-performers in StErme at PAF we talked about trauma in the presence of trauma. Its nature of being passed on. The violence of violence. Being a messenger could be the only option: being present to trauma, while realising that the sadness and shame from violence is otherwise relevant *than* being owned by me.

The trauma of war, is being touched by war. When confined to self-touch by others who have not experienced violence/murder—or, received the testimonial of these in their proximity—it has the impact of a dismissal. I have seen this many times: the testimonial of bodies that have been shamed by violence, need to be received and passed on. When isolated in the confines of self-affection (or, self touch) it affects the witness is a form of rejection. It is the body speaking. And in the proximity of the testimonial we can only be bodies listening. We void to their presence.

To leave quotidian habit to void before the testimonial, is therefore highly active. And, as we know, the void of the signifier S_1 is highly active, as it begets the signifiers of the signifier S_2 . Being void to what is passed on—a void of the void—is the trope of the *messenger*: the active self. Being concerned with the significance that it is me (name) that is passing on the testimonial (language) is the dead end of the passive ego. It is perversity and perversion. But as we have seen it is not the only option. The connectivity of truth and impact is the name of the game in the [contact zone](#).

And, in this regard, also the *quarter turns* by which the split subject is differently involved (and accordingly reconfigured): the the quarter turns from mastery via hysteria to analysis, and via the university discourse back to mastery. Or, alternatively, we can start and end with analysis (and proceed to mastery via the university discourse, and back to analysis via hysteria). That is, the meandering turns by which the split subject $\$$ indeed acquires a track record; based on its life-cycle of quarter turns. It should be underscored that analysis is the only trope pledged to listening.

Hence, one could assume that the adequate mode when working on the *quantum void* is analysis, research on it to mastery, university discourse to publication, and hysteria reacting to the mismatch between the scale of human life and the matters it gets involved in. Of course, it is an extremely bold assertion to claim that there can be no theory of the quantum void—only experiment based analysis—and that field theory is as close as you get. However, the virtue of analysis is that it is *proximal* by nature. It is neither remote nor intimate. So, the notion of the stranger/other within, comes with field-theory, not likely from analysis.



Ludwig Binswanger – Aby Warburg
Die unendliche Heilung

Which is rather the point of analysis in psychology. It is neither remote nor intimate, it is proximal. It relates to trauma through feedback: sticking to what is still working, asking for clarity from given perspectives, taking notes, engaging in correspondence. Facilitating the traumatised in gaining clarity on their needs. Designing and executing needs. In sum, making other positions available than the hysteric mode: mastery, analysis, university discourse. A mesh of positions that we recognise from Aby Warburg's healing path from his psychotic condition, at the Bellevue asylum in Kreuzlingen. The lecture he gave on the Hopi snake-ritual at Bellevue, was part of a broader spectrum of conditions for his discharge from the asylum. From the hospital journal one can follow the track record of quarter turns, and from this categorise these materials into a map of the split subject $\$$. To me it is not clear whether Barad is concerned with categorisation or compartmentalisation. I am *not* convinced by that it can be both.

Box 3—In Aby Warburg's sick journal from his time at the Bellevue Asylum in Kreuzlingen, can be read as a document of Lacan's full cycle of quarter turns.