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Chapter 4

A BAG OF ORANGES AND A COMMUNAL LUNCH: INTRA-ACTION OF MATTER AND BECOMING

Elmarie Kotzé*
Te Oranga School of Human Development, Faculty of Education,
University of Waikato, Aotearoa New Zealand

ABSTRACT

In the chapter the author draws on new materialism and poststructuralism to write about becoming-subject. The author uses the notions of fluidity of the self, the (im)possibility of writing self and, at the same time, productive self-writing in the spaces between humans and between humans and nonhumans. She uses two encounters from her childhood to illustrate entanglements that highlight the ongoing production of becoming in the intra-relations between children and adults and between humans and the more-than-human vehicle-food-trees-snuffbox. The discursive↔material encounters fold into and diffract out of her teaching and supervision practices in a counselling program in Aotearoa, New Zealand.

* Corresponding Author Email: elmarie.kotze@waikato.ac.nz.

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INTRODUCTION

Autoethnography, as developed by Carolyn Ellis and Art Bochner (2000; Ellis 1999), invites rich development of the emotional and embodied experiences or self-stories of a researcher. Practising these skills promotes self-understanding and reflexivity as resources to make meaning of the self, others and ways of life (Ellis 1999). The work is usually written in the first person and takes on a variety of forms such as "short stories, poetry, fiction, novels, photographic essays, personal essays, journals, fragmented and layered writing, and social science prose" (Ellis and Bochner 2000, 739). The work can focus "outward on social and cultural aspects" of a person's life, as well as inward, "exposing a vulnerable self that is moved by and may move through, refract, and resist cultural interpretations" (Ellis and Bochner 2000, 739).

Gannon (2006, 475) questions whether the writing of an auto-ethnography is possible at all, as it "seems to presume that the subject can speak (for) themselves." She points out that poststructural theories disrupt such assumptions. She emphasises "the (im)possibilities of writing the self" because the self may be seen as fluid, contestable, open and multiple (Gannon 2003, 2006). In the context of the (im)possiblity of poststructural autoethnography Gannon (2006, 477) argues for a "deconstructive textual practice that represent[s] and trouble[s] the self at the same time." Gannon (2006) highlights the necessity and productive contribution of poststructural autoethnography, but simultaneously points out the (im)possibility and paradox of such writing. Tracing the history of the poststructural writing-subject, Gannon (2006) uses examples from the work of Foucault, Barthes, Derrida and Cixous to comment on writing the self from the perspective of the self as fragmented, open, fluid and multiple.

While acknowledging the (im)possibility of autoethnography, I proceed with such writing in hope – in line with a statement that Foucault (1980, 240) made about his own writing, and that resonates with my own view: "I

write in order to change myself and in order to not think the same thing as before." I also draw on Barthes (1977, 56), who, by contrast, writes about his book *Roland Barthes by Roland Barthes*: "I abondon the exhausting pursuit of an old piece of myself, I do not try to restore myself (as we say of a monument). I do not say: 'I am going to describe myself' but 'I am writing a text, and I call it R. B.' " Gannon (2006, 481) describes Barthes's writing as a "version of autoethnography [that] is discontinous, elliptical, fragmented, sparse." Barthes touches on a possible (un)becoming when he says: "... by decomposing, I agree to accompany such decomposition, to decompose myself as well, in the process: I scrape, catch and drag" (1977, 63). His argument for a decomposition of self resonates with my approach when I invite myself to grow myself smaller in humbleness, a Māori cultural practice called *whakaiti* (Swann and Crocket 2017, 37). I also borrow from the Māori practice of *ako*, which invites me to learn and teach simultaneously, with and alongside others. The kind of scraping, catching and dragging that Barthes (1977) describes became inevitable for me on a teaching-learning journey, when I engaged with the many challenges, privileges and delights of working in a particularly meaningful partnership with Māori elders, supervisors, counsellors and students. I conclude this chapter with a reference to our collaborative publication on Māori counseling journeys, which reflects an enriching (un)becoming.

In this chapter, I draw on discursive↔material practices of becoming, diffraction and entanglement, taken from new materialism and poststructuralism, to shape my diffractive writing. I use Jackson and Mazzei's (2012, 110) practice of implementing the double arrows when they indicate the movement between and from "the discursive, with Derrida and Spivak; to the discursive↔material, with Foucault and Butler; to the material↔discursive, with Deleuze and Barad." For the purpose of this chapter, I use relevant constructs from a few of these authors's works.

From Barad (2007, ix), a quantum physicist and feminist new materialist, I adopt the assumptions that, firstly, "[e]xistence is not an individual affair... individuals emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating," and that, secondly, "[b]odies do not simply take their place in the world. They are not simply situated in, or located on particular

environments. Rather 'environments' and 'bodies' are intra-actively co-constituted" (Barad 2007, 170). Barad (2007, 185) argues that the practices of "knowing and being ... are mutually implicated. We don't obtain knowledge by standing outside the world; we know because we are of the world." Taking such a stance of "knowing in being" provides an opportunity to become different from what we were through our intra-actions with and between humans and "more-than-humans" (Alaimo 2010, 13). These intra-actions include "post-humanist conversations [that blur] the boundaries between the human and nonhuman worlds" (Taylor, Pacini-Ketchabaw, and Blaise, 2012, 82), including the boundaries between humans and technologies, and humans and objects or "things" (see Bennett, 2010). Taylor et al. (2012) argue that such a blurring of boundaries contributes to the decentring or defusing of "hyper-individualism" (81), and at the same time makes relations with the more-than-human world possible. Taylor et al. (2012) also comment on Ritchie's research in early childhood centres in Aotearoa, New Zealand. Ritchie (2012, 86-98) challenges readers to learn from Indigenous knowledges that view relationships between humans and earth others as embracing and generative.

In the examples that I discuss, I draw on my interpretation of how we come to know and become, in material↔discursive terms, as I become different *with* others, and explore how it opens up possibilities of multiplicity. I investigate how encounters effect the people-culture-nature nexus and invite shifting becomings that are woven through spacetime-matter.

BECOMING

The work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987) resonates with Barad's (2007) stance of the "knowing-in-being" when they describe a "becoming" in the in-between spaces. They define "becoming" as being "always in the middle" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 293). They explain:

> A line of becoming is not defined by points that it connects, or by points that compose it; on the contrary, it passes *between* points, it comes up through the middle… a line of becoming has neither beginning nor end, departure nor arrival, origin nor destination. A line of becoming has only a middle …. A becoming is always in the middle; one can only get it by the middle. A becoming is neither one nor two, nor the relation of the two; it is the in-between. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 293)

I have adopted Deleuze and Guattari's (1987) description of becoming as a process of continuous transforming and transformation and all becoming/s as moments or "mo(ve)ments" (Davies et al. 2006, 87) of becoming – not a destination or an end point, but a space-place of being in-between. I weave an ethical-becoming as a teacher-learner through childhood encounters with other humans and more-than-human matter because, as Barad (2014, 168) states, there is "no absolute boundary between here-now and then-there."

To demonstrate such becoming, I first relate the story of a bag of oranges, and then apply specific theoretical constructs to write about the shaping effects of the encounters involved for the in-between spaces that invite an ongoing being and becoming (Deleuze and Guattari 1987). I then move on to another memorable story of an encounter with emerging hospitality and investigate the discourses and practices at play in that narrative. In discussing this second story, I use the work of Spivak (2004) to reflect on the metaphor of suturing. I contemplate possible effects of "rights thinking into the torn cultural fabric of responsibility" (Spivak 2004, 54). These becoming-knowings fold into and diffract out of my current teaching and supervision practices in a counseling program at the University of Waikato in Aotearoa New Zealand (see Kotzé, 2017; Kotzé, Crocket, and Waititi, 2016; Crocket et al. 2017).

Diffraction as a metaphor (or as an apparatus) can interrupt and disrupt coherent narratives and explanations. Haraway (1992, 300) proposes diffraction as a metaphor, defining it as follows:

> Diffraction is a mapping of interference, not of replication, reflection, or reproduction. A diffraction pattern does not map where differences appear, but rather maps where the *effects* of differences appear.

I draw on Barad's (2007, 381) comment that diffraction "*is a material practice for making a difference...reconfiguring connections*" (Barad's emphasis) to think and write a diffractive becoming. The diffractive steps I take are the following:

- writing in both the first person and the third person, to interrupt and disrupt a singular "I"-narrative,
- highlighting the intra-actions between humans, as well as between humans and more-than-humans,
- using a diffractive lens to introduce the concept of "desiring silence" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012),
- questioning my positioning within discursive-material educational practices,
- speculating about the work and role of oranges as material-matter,
- considering possible effects of material-matter,
- including two diffractive incidents of touching "selfother" (Heshusius 1994),
- remembering a foot being touched by a father and being gifted a resting place for adult feet on the host side of the Marae (cultural meeting place), and
- leaving some questions hanging in the spaces between sentences on the paper.

In the encounters that I describe, I attempt to show how the intra-actions co-constitute humans, culture, nature, and objects in their entanglement, and how the discursive↔material intra-relates with my becoming.

The first story plays out on a road in South Africa. A girl-child encounters a situation in which she and her father are both embedded in complex socio-political and economic structures. Within these structures, a personal encounter elicits a voluntary personal giving and giving up when they come face to face with the effects of inequality. As descendants of settlers, the girl and her father silently engage in a moment of generosity that

involves their giving up something they cannot easily replace. This becomes possible through a bag of oranges.

A Bag of Oranges

The father and his young daughter travel home after a morning of running errands. They stop at a farm stall to buy a bag of oranges for the girl and her two sisters to eat at lunch for the next week. The girl sees her father counting the last change from his pocket to pay. There is a brief, friendly exchange with the woman who works in the stall. The girl sees them laugh, and then the father and daughter continue their journey home, the father whistling softly. Then they see them – the children on the side of the road.

The children wave, and indicate they want a ride. Her father stops the truck on the side of the road for the children to get on the back. He sees the child with the white plastic bag wrapped tightly around his wrist. The boy gets on first and sits close to the cabin's back window. Her father's eyes follow the child's gaze … the child with the plastic bag of schoolbooks on the back of the truck stares at the oranges on the seat between the father and the daughter. The girl turns her head sideways, looks up at the boy, then at her father. They both follow the boy's gaze as it rests on the bag of oranges between them. In silence, father and daughter turn to face the road as the children laugh and settle down.

The orange indicator goes on and off, on and off, as he turns the truck back onto the road – the wind slowly finds its way through the open windows. She feels the sun on her left arm. Her father is not whistling a tune through his teeth now. They drive, slower than before, on the black road, dancing in the heat of the sun, the shrill sound of the cicadas ringing in the girl's ears.

After a while, a knock on the cabin window. Her father slows down and the orange indicator lights up … The truck comes to a stop on the side of the road. The children climb off on her side of the truck … the child with the plastic bag hanging from his wrist comes to the window on her side. He smiles, his eyes fixed on the bag of oranges on the seat between father and

daughter … the indicator goes on and off ... on and off. Her father reaches for the tie on the bag … he slowly opens the tie and takes one orange from the bag. He reaches across the girl. She sees the drops of sweat on his arm … the hair on his arms moist. A small hand reaches through the window and takes hold of the bright orange … another hand slowly appears through the window, another face … her father hands the small outstretched hand a bright orange … another hand appears and another orange is taken from the bag… another hand appears, another orange disappears … She looks at the children laughing with pleasure, showing each other their oranges; they do a little play-dance, laughing. The child with the plastic bag around his wrist bites a hole in his orange and spits the small piece of peel into his hand, with the plastic bag hanging from his wrist. He squeezes the bright orange with both hands, licks his fingers as the juice runs down the orange, through his fingers. Her eyes follow him and she can almost taste the sweet juice. A smile curls up the corners of her mouth. He sees her smile and he smiles. They both look at the orange in his hand. In the truck, her father nods, a pleasant smile brushes his lips.

The girl suddenly remembers the bag of oranges. She casts her eyes as far right as she can to look at the bag and then suddenly turns her head. She looks down at the bag … the holes of the mesh bag shrink as the bag grows flatter. Her father's hand leaves the bag with another orange. She looks at another small hand reaching for an orange and her father's hand reaching out with a bright orange with the moist hair and the tiny drops of sweat on his arm. She smells the orange and his hand with the drops of sweat as it passes in front of her face toward the open window. Her eyes search for her father's, he turns his head … his eyes follow the sun dancing on the road, drops of sweat gather on his upper lip. He is not whistling now, his lips are closed in a small thin line, an orange cradled in his big hand. He passes the orange to the small hand waiting … she looks at the road dancing in the sun… the last orange from the bag disappears.

Her tongue is heavy in her mouth as she breathes the hot air. The bag that held the shiny oranges lies in a small heap between them on the seat. She closes her eyes and in her mind's eye sees his hands that carry the scars and imprint of hard labour in the burning African sun. She sees his left hand

caressing an orange and turning it slowly around and around as he peels the orange for her. The orange peel twirls down in a graceful dance around and around and down in a growing spiral. She smells the orange peel and tastes the sweet juice as he slowly and meticulously works to keep the skin intact. With a small jerk of her head she opens her eyes and looks down at the empty bag. She will not see him peel her an orange today. She looks at the children, her mouth slightly open as she breathes in the hot air.

The indicator goes on and off, on and off as they turn onto the road again … the road that dances in the sun. The empty bag sits between them. He drives off and the children wave their oranges – bright orange against their dark skin, white teeth smiling. The child with the plastic bag wrapped around his wrist lifts his hand with the bright orange, and smiles.

Her father slowly drives off. He shakes his head, left to right to left, he whistles through his teeth. Slowly he reaches out with his left hand and cradles her right foot … his hand is warm and her toes stop wriggling. He whistles through his teeth, a sound with no tune. She sits back and feels the sun on her shoulders … the seat is warm, her bare legs sticking to the seat. She turns her head to look at her father, her breathing slow and heavy. He licks his lips slowly his tongue moves left to right to left.

The sun warms her body … the sun dances on the tar road and on the empty mesh bag between them. His left hand on her right foot loosens slightly … her toes wriggle very lightly. He counted the money at the farm stall. He had just enough for the small bag of oranges. Tomorrow? She wonders. Her mouth feels dry, her tongue heavy… and he whistles a familiar tune, through his teeth. His hand cradles her foot, very gently…

Desiring Silence

I now call on particular discursive ↔ material practices that I connect to this story. Jackson and Mazzei (2012) explain that, according to Deleuze, desire is generative – seeking, and resulting in the production of power, privilege – and, in this entanglement with children and oranges, silence. Such desire arises not from a "lack of," as in the situation with the children,

but as a force that produces something. I use questions similar to those employed by Jackson and Mazzei (2012) to investigate the narrative of the father, daughter, children, and oranges:

- How does desire function in the scenario with the oranges?
- What produces desire as a force in the story?
- What interest does desire seek to produce or protect?

How does desire work to produce the silence that hangs in the space between the father and daughter? A "desiring silence" (Jackson and Mazzei 2012, 9) maintains the status quo and smooths social relationships and interactions. The silence that hangs in the air between them protects the father and daughter's economic privilege in the face of the children's lack of transport and food. When the girl turns to her father for an explanation and he looks away, she behaves like a good daughter by honouring the silence and he behaves like a good father by ignoring the uncomfortable questions.

The vehicle provides transport for products produced or acquired through economic transactions along familiar, established paths that give mobility to people to and from their daily occupations (education, employment and other economic transactions), back to their homes and families. The division between the truck's cabin and the loading space at the back of the truck for products, or (in this case, precariously perched, the children) serves as a separation, a "cutting together-apart" (Barad 2014) of the groups of people. The division can be seen as reinscribing class, the status quo, and political as well as economic differences. The silence between all participants also serves to maintain that division.

However, at the same time as the silence acts to produce and reinscribe the status quo, the children's gaze and later their outstretched hands produce the possibility for everything to become different. The man behaves like a good neighbour when he is faced by the economic inequality, arising from systemic socio-political injustice, which hangs in the silence. Building on his action of providing transport to them, he then takes up the invitation to act, and in the space between, shifting becomes possible.

A Deleuzo-Guattarian view on becoming can be used to interrupt a fixed or stable identity. Deleuze and Guattari (1987, 293) use the metaphor of the movement and action between a wasp and an orchid to describe "becoming." The space, intra-action and mo(ve)ment between the wasp and the orchid opens up towards a "be-coming other than [they] were before" (Davies 2014, 9). The becoming as described between the wasp and the orchid in the natural world can also be translated to a "becoming" in the social landscape of the encounter. Such shifting-becoming turns out to be possible for all the actors in the story of the oranges, when the child's gaze provides the man with an opportunity to act. In the moment he "hands them" the oranges, and they accept the fruit, human-human-oranges intra-actions temporarily disrupt the inscribed boundaries and previously ascribed identities.

The father may be seen as reenacting the adult-child, privileged-marginalised status quo when he provides the children with transport, picking them up on the roadside and allowing them to climb on the truck. However, building on this opportunity, the children invite the man into another space and "material-discursive forms of agency" (Barad 2003, 826) become possible. He takes up the opportunity and responds by giving them the oranges. In the moments of giving and receiving the oranges, boundaries are disrupted, and at the same time re-inscribed, as he is the one to enact the "giving." However, in the actions of giving-receiving-giving, the spaces between the people involved and between the material and human overflow with the force of joy. In the experience of joy, not as an enjoyment of being with oneself, but a joy in which a force is made active or flowing, the children take the oranges, laugh, play-dance, shout and suck the juice of the oranges. The children's eyes meet the eyes of the girl and those of the man. Eyes, smiles, laughter and oranges bridge the silence, the distance, and fill the space-in-between with a becoming in relation with joy. The interactions described in this event provide an opportunity for intra-actions that create the possibility of agency for all – "agency[as] an enactment, not something someone has" (Barad 2007, 235).

Using a new materialist lens to think about material-matter (Barad 2007, 2012, 2014; Dolphijn and Van der Tuin 2012) or "thing-power" (Bennett 2010) in this story, the question arises: What work do the oranges do in the

story of the father and the girl-child? Such a question foregrounds the otherwise invisible production of matter that helps to sustain human existence. The oranges are products of both human labor and non-human production. The oranges are produced by human labour/nature: sweating bodies stretching, bending, planting, picking, packing, calculating, together with the entanglement with nutrients, soil, water, sun, wind, pollination – all these co-produce the colourful, sweet, juicy product. The agricultural space provides a labor-community-identity and "intra-action" (Barad 2007, 33) between nature and culture. The "production machine" (agriculture, production, transportation) also reinscribes the distinction between laborers and land-owners, and between rural and urban territories. Fruit produced in resource-rich landscapes are moved and re-moved, transported and distributed according to strict lines of force to urban areas for consumption. Products are distanced from their producers. Class, and rural and urban territories, are reinscribed in their familiar exchanges and distinctions. In the encounter between the children-oranges-adult, various boundaries are temporarily disrupted.

TOUCHING

I draw on Barad's (2012) work *On Touching* when thinking about the father's left hand cradling the girl's right foot. His hand reinscribes practices of parenting (as the gentle hand reinscribes the silence, and requires acceptance of the situation), and at the same time provides reassurance. The girl-child enjoys the warmth of her father's hand as he gently cradles her foot. He whistles a familiar tune. His actions steady the relationship with his daughter. He enacts care for others in responding to the gift of the children's invitation to give. The gentle cradling of her foot makes a meaningful touching (one that bridges, teaches and holds) possible as

> …[a]ll touching entails an infinite alterity, so that touching the Other is touching all Others, including the 'self,' and touching the 'self' entails touching the strangers within … Each 'individual' always already includes

> all possible intra-actions with 'itself' through all the virtual Others … (Barad 2012, 214)

The gentle touching stays with the girl-child. Years later, as a becoming-academic, she reflects on the significance of her becoming different from what she is/was with and through partnerships with others by learning *with* people and not only about them. At a welcoming ceremony (*pōwhiri*) for new staff at a university in Aotearoa New Zealand, she is particularly moved by the touching or pressing of noses (*hongi*) by the Māori hosts. This welcome later invites her onto a journey of *ako* (learning-teaching) *with* and *alongside* others. The touching of her foot by her father, and the touching of noses by Māori hosts who welcomed her to a new country, enact hospitality and care, and bridge the spaces between people, in both familiar spaces (a family vehicle) and new and unfamiliar spaces (a Māori cultural meeting place and collaborative teaching-learning partnership).

The generosity of seasonal workers lies at the heart of the second story in this chapter. The slightly older girl learns more lessons about generosity and care, enacted by a group she wants to become part of.

Seasonal Workers and Communal Food

The girl-child fulfils a long-held desire to participate in a lunch prepared and eaten by the seasonal workers – a lunch that is very different from what she is used to at home. She has saved her pocket money for a year to purchase the pot that she needs for the occasion.

The fruit harvesting has begun. The first mangoes push the trees' leaves away to show off their growth of the season. This year she can join the fruit pickers for a communal lunch during their lunch break. The day arrives and the workers put the bundles that they carry on their heads into the shade under the big wild fig tree. This year the child can join the group during their lunch hour and learn to eat with the workers.

After a morning's harvesting of mangoes, Thandi leads the group of workers to the communal eating place. They all wash their hands, and

Thandi looks out towards the tops of the mango trees's... she moves her body to sit up straight with her legs stretched out in front of her on the hand-woven grass mat. The young girl looks down at her bare legs. It is the first time she has joined the fruit pickers, and she is the only one with bare legs. Thandi touches her snuffbox, which is tucked into the cloth wrapped around her head, and looks out to the tops of the trees. Maybe she does not mind the bare legs?

When the food is opened, the girl watches Thandi carefully. Thandi bends forward and takes a small piece of the main dish, a stiff maize porridge, with three fingers of her right hand. Quickly but gently, she rolls it into a small ball, bends over her stretched-out legs to dip the little ball slowly into the stew – scooping up some of the stew onto the white ball. She waits for two drops of the sauce to fall back into the stew, lifts her hand and brings it to her mouth – she has not spilled a drop. The girl carefully watches her eat this, her eyes fixed on every movement. Thandi indicates with a tilt of her head that the girl should do the same, but the girl indicates that she would like to be shown again how to do this. With her left hand, Thandi touches her snuffbox tucked into the cloth wrapped around her head, bends over and reaches out to roll another ball of porridge.

The girl reaches out and follows Thandi's example. She slowly lifts the white ball out of her small pot – prepared especially for her – and moves her arm slowly with great control to the pot of stew. She feels the eyes of group on her. They stop talking and follow her hand. She holds her breath as she carefully dips the white ball in the stew. She slowly scoops up the juices and a small piece of meat. Her fingers warm from the stew, she bends forward and brings her hand to her mouth ... For a second she looks up to see if Thandi nods. However, Thandi looks out to the mango trees and only watches the girl out of the corner of her eye. The girl opens her mouth, but her fingers lose their grip and the food falls into the sand. The girl knows that food cannot be wasted, but she cannot pick it up from the sand.

When the girl succeeds after another failure, the ringing in her ears stops, she feels a cool breeze playing on her hot cheeks and forehead. She starts breathing again. She hears the laughter and talk return to the group. She hears the laughter. She has become part of the group. She closes her eyelids

and sees red dots dancing. She is part of the group. She tilts her head back and gives a short laugh.

The previous year, the girl observed the picking of the fruit. She witnessed the communal sharing of food, of talk and laughter, in a circle. The space was exclusive to the seasonal fruit pickers. She witnessed the preparation of the circle, the fire, the food and the rituals. The girl yearned to be part of the circle and enquired about ways to participate. Once she had the knowledge she needed, she called on economic means to save her pocket money to buy the pot she needed. The girl had knowledge of the changes of seasons and of the time when fruit can be picked. She waited patiently for the fruit to show itself, turned towards and in step with nature-time-mattering. She waited for the group of seasonal workers to arrive. The girl called on her mother's help to bridge the cultural and generational distance to request permission to join the group. Thandi responded to the request with generosity and hospitality. Thandi and the girl each took up response-ability when the other provided an invitation to respond. Observing-learning-sharing became the pedagogy of the event.

SELFOTHER AND THRESHOLD

Barad's (2007) position on performativity relates the discursive to the non-discursive, and provides an alternative to the separation between the "domains of words and things" (Barad 2007, 137). This allows for one reading of what was produced during the lunch with the seasonal workers. The open fire, pots, mats, sunshine, breeze, the snuffbox and mango trees, worker-bodies and child-body, food, language and non-language shape the space for a community of learning and connection. The group, but especially Thandi and the girl, find potential movement in their becoming at the meeting place, as they share food and what is learned and taught.

The event of communal eating, the openness of the workers toward accepting her, toward practising care, and the girl's desire to step into the group, provide the affective assemblage, a multiplicity of flows that just flow, and flow together. Each "... multiplicity is continually transforming

itself into a string of other multiplicities, according to its thresholds and doors … the self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 249). Thandi and the girl both cross thresholds. But "a threshold does not become a passageway until it is attached to other things different from itself. Thresholds contain both entries and exits" (Jackson 2013, 116).

Girl-child, adult knowledge(s), anticipation, gaze, "success" – the girl enters the circle of the group. She is enfolded into and out of the laughter. Has she become the snuffbox snuggled in Thandi's headgear, the food dropped in the sand, has she become "part-of" because she followed the protocol of the group, or was she at the same time "part-of" and "distant-from" the group? In Heshusius's (1994) terms, have the group and the girl become "selfother" – where there is a temporary letting go of a "self" and a turning towards a "participatory consciousness" (Heshusius 1994, 16) to bridge the divide produced by the material conditions for the fruit pickers, as well as the multiple conditions that produce cultural, racial, class identities present for all participants as they share food in the shade of the wild fig tree? Thandi's knowledge, skills and practices, well-rehearsed and established, offer opportunities for new experimentation, for the girl-child and the workers to meet.

SUTURING

Years later, the girl becomes a teacher in what Spivak (1993) calls a teaching machine. She read Spivak's (1988) seminal work "Can the subaltern speak?" and reflects on the speaking spaces available for Thandi at the time when the girl-child received the gift of the communal food. She contemplates whether or not Thandi became a faceless worker in the desiring machine of production and profit, while the girl-now-woman became an educated person in the teaching machine? How has Thandi been marginalised outside of the teaching machine? The woman wonders what the practice would look like if Spivak's (2004, 54) stance of "suturing rights thinking into the torn cultural fabric of responsibility" were applied. She also

reflects on the practices of "suturing" in the way Macdonald (2011) describes Spivak's use of suturing, namely as a

> ...metaphor that helps us to understand not only the broader necessity of the Humanities but also the way in which teaching and learning can bind us to the other. An education in the Humanities can arm us with the tools to both understand this binding and to allow ourselves to be bound. (Macdonald 2011, 46)

At the same time as participating in a practice to "undo-reweave" (Spivak 2004, 574, n44) the fabric, the process of binding to the other is not

> ... a one way dispensing of knowledge ...[but] one where both the teacher and the student learn from each other and where the seeds for epistemic change are planted and cultivated on both sides of the pair of student-teacher dialectic. Both are bound to each other in the pedagogical process. If education is to be the suture, then the figure of the teacher is seen by Spivak to be in an apprenticeship, with the student, to become a 'suturer or invisible mender.' (Macdonald 2011, 49)

If the woman-academic were able to take up such an apprenticeship in Thandi's community, would the fabric of the community be mended from an internal place of the culture itself? What mending is required after a colonizing education has inscribed itself onto the community? The woman-academic carries these questions with her into her teaching and learning.

TEACHING COUNSELING IN AOTEAROA

Taking time to pause and think about becoming an ethical subject, I remember the rich memories from my childhood and the people in my life who shaped my ideas, practices, skills, values and dreams, in my being/becoming.

Sitting in front of the words on the screen for this chapter in 2017, I turn my head to look out of the window, but my eyes fall on a recent co-authored publication on the desk – *Moemoeā: Māori counselling journeys* (Crocket et al. 2017). The book represents a rich partnership between two lecturers –

one Pākeha (descendant of colonisers) and one Tauiwi (immigrant), and senior Māori practitioners and Māori students. This work depended on a particular intra-action partnership. I mention here only two of the practices that we wove into the space between us. *Ako* is a Māori stance-concept that speaks of learning and teaching simultaneously present in a moment. In our partnership, all the participants were invited into a practice of *ako* (learning-teaching) in each intra-action, but more importantly in our being and becoming in the world.

The next significant practice that we called on was *whakaiti* (Swann and Crocket 1997, 37). This stance invites one to grow oneself smaller in humbleness in such a partnership. This practice of inviting self into growing oneself smaller with humbleness may resonate with Barthes's (1977, 63) construct of "decomposition," which I mentioned earlier in this chapter, as a way to deconstruct the ~~self~~, and may even be described as an (un)becoming. To take up such a practice was especially important, and at times challenging, for the teachers in the program – one Pākeha and one Tauiwi.

The partnership was the culmination of years of shaping, learning, relearning and reshaping, of misunderstandings and understanding with each other, speaking, listening, and spending time to hear and research the painful effects of ongoing colonisation trauma (Reid, Tylor-Moore, and Varona 2014; Jones and Jenkins 2008; Jones and Hoskins 2016). This was a rich, painful, joyful journey working towards developing robust, ethical and culturally appropriate counseling practices through a partnership that keeps on becoming.

Introducing myself briefly in the book *Moemoeā* (the dream), I recalled my welcome onto Aotearoa New Zealand:

> As manuhiri [person from afar], I was welcomed onto this land, Aotearoa, by Ngāi Tahu in Ôtepoti (Dunedin). After an extended hongi [pressing noses in greetings] with the kuia [elderly woman leader], she asked me when my feet will find a resting place. Unfamiliar with the procedure of pōwhiri [welcome ceremony] and hongi, I was not sure what meaning to give to her words. However, I treasured the words and from time to time I revisited them and stayed in conversation with them ….

> It was at the Taiaroa Heads on the Otago Peninsula that I witnessed the wind supporting the take-off of the tōroa chicks. In Ôtepoti my feet walked the streets built by the hard labour of Māori men who were wrongfully imprisioned as they participated in the passive resistance at Parihaka, Taranaki.
>
> My feet have now touched the waters of the Waikato awa [river]. After many years and many travels, I have been welcomed to Kirikiriroa [Hamilton] and onto the land of Tainui [tribe] … my feet have found a resting place as I sit on the host side at Te Kohinga Mārama Marae [cultural meeting place] to welcome new M Couns students to the University of Waikato. (Taylor, Crocket, and Kotzé 2017, 194; reprinted with permission of *Moemoeā: Māori Counselling Journeys*, edited by Kathie Crocket, Eugene Davies, Elmarie Kotzé, Brent Swann, and Huia Swann, 192–203. Auckland, New Zealand: Dunmore. Copyright: Dunmore)

How did I get to the significant place-space of which the words above capture only brief moments? I wonder. My hand stretches out to caress the cover of *Moemoeā*, which features a photo of some unfinished weaving. Maybe a fragment of my answer is captured by the weaver-artist Anna Bowen (Rongomaiwāhine, Rongo whakaata, Kahungunu), who deliberately left the weaving for the cover of the book unfinished and thus open for multiple possibilities. She explains the weaving pattern as follows:

> Individual whenu (strands) are brought together, one by one and are completely changed into something new through the process of weaving …. This piece on the cover of this book is a work in progress. The rau kumara (leaf of the sweet potato) pattern represents the concept of manaakitanga – caring, respect, hospitality, nurturing and support for one another. Like a life being lived, there are infinite possibilities available for a weaver about how to weave a work. (Bowen 2017, 2)

I look at the pattern, the colors that fill the page and the strands woven into the pattern. I notice the spaces inbetween the strands. These form part of the pattern that Anna wove. I reflect on the encounters I discuss in this chapter as a reciprocal process of giving and gifting and gifted hospitality, care, learning-teaching in the spaces between a girl-child and an empty bag, a father caressing a foot, between a father and a girl-child and children, the touching of a snuffbox, sharing communal food, laughter and joy, as well a road dancing in the sun, a wild fig tree in Africa and the pattern for

Moemoeā, a dream. All these provided the strands of an unfinished weaving of diffractive becomings.

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