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# Squeezing a Juicy Archive of Sticky Objects with Hélène Cixous's *Écriture Matérialiste*

Jaishikha Nautiyal

## ABSTRACT

Hélène Cixous's ethicopoetic inflections of *writing with the body* (*écriture féminine* or women's writing) have received disciplinary attention in rhetorical studies as political disruptors of androcentric canons. However, her powerful writings remain underexplored as a *queer word/worldmaking praxis* of her posthumanist rhetoric that challenges anthropocentric and representational accounts of rhetorical agency and distributes rhetorical action across transversal sites of subjectivation in entanglement with a more-than-human materiality. In this work, I draw on Cixous's article "*Vivre l'orange*/To Live the Orange" to retrace her era-defining feminist rhetoric of *writing with the body* as a queer, juicy, deessentialized archive of sticky objects and more-than-human subjects interweaving a posthumanist rhetoric of *writing with matter* (*materialist writing* or *écriture matérialiste*). I emphasize that Cixous's envelopment with the vibrant call of quotidian objects is her sensing, her witnessing of matter as her critical-creative-vibrant peer, her more-than-human, sticky kin. In the end, without an amplified rhetorical sensing of object histories, which I consider Cixous's gesture of *queer responsiveness* to the social stratifications of matter, intensified intervention in the ongoing injustices of the world is not ethically possible in Cixousian praxis.

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## Introduction

The orange is a beginning. Starting out from the orange all the voyages are possible. All voices that go their way via her are good . . . I do not speak it or its tongue, but my heart understands it, and its silent words in all the veins of my life have translated themselves into mad blood, into joy-blood. . . . The orange is a moment.

—Hélène Cixous, *To Live the Orange*

She plays with words as one plays with fire, I would denounce her as a pyromaniac who wants to make us forget that in Sicily churches are built with the stone of lava. Pyrotechnical writing feigns abandoning everything to what goes up in smoke, leaving there only cinder that does not remain.

—Jacques Derrida, *Cinders*

No wonder, no wonder Other half, strange steps, heels turn black . . . the cinders, they splinter and light the path . . . these strange steps trace us back, trace us back.

—“Hysteric,” *Yeah Yeah Yeahs*

In blithe poetic approximations, legendary French feminist, philosopher, playwright, rhetorician, word/worldmaker, the diviner of the body's blazing alchemy, Hélène Cixous declares in her bilingual article “*Vivre l'orange*/To Live the Orange” (hereafter “To Live”) that “the orange is the nearest star.”<sup>1</sup> Out of respect for the untranslatable delicateness of this soft aster-ation, an orange is the nearest cinder-fluid to start my article's thoughts and set the rhetorical world that slips in between on fire.<sup>2</sup> After all, “To Live” puns on the slippery sign “orange” that Ioana Cosma infers as a dispersed kinship among the juicy fruit, Cixous's birth place (“Oran”), and her geonationally emplaced self (“je”—I).<sup>3</sup> In other words, Cixous's article is a “celebration and cerebration” of the iridescent immensity of “fructification” in self-styling an atmospheric attunement to a timeless world always already there and suffused with vitality.<sup>4</sup> I wish to extend and be extended by such *orange slips* into a queer archive that emerges from the fructifying encounters among Cixous, a sticky orange object, her nomadic Jewish-Algerian-French-Arabic roots, her pyrotechnical rhetoric, and her cosmic posthumanism. By posthumanist thought, I mean a scholarly orientation in the humanities and the social sciences that foregrounds a “self-organizing materiality” as always already imbued with “perceptual power, sensitivity, and proto-agency” as opposed to being an inert, inanimate thing.<sup>5</sup> Posthumanist inflections emphasize human–nonhuman–material entanglements with the discursive apparatuses of everyday life to argue for a distributed subjectivity as

opposed to confining human thought to representational oppositions of experience (subject–object, thought–matter, masculinity–femininity, human–thing etc.) prevalent in Western philosophical canons.<sup>6</sup>

In this article, I flesh out how Cixous's posthumanist rhetoric contests the reductive about-ness of representational rhetoric, that is the inefficacy of thought and/or symbolic practices in fully explaining the thing and rendering it transparent.<sup>7</sup> Cixous's contestation with rhetorical about-ness unfolds through what I call her posthumanist practice of *writing with matter* (*écriture matérialiste* or *materialist writing*) whose rhetorical with-ness can be experienced as an interwoven untranslatability of human subjectivity and nonhuman objects. The indeterminacy I locate in Cixous's materialist writing relates to “the right to opacity” that Édouard Glissant ascribes to difference.<sup>8</sup> Likewise, Cixousian posthumanism obscures rhetoric from its lucid prosaicness and makes rhetoric tingle with a ludic opacity. Before taking up her underattended posthumanist sensibilities, I find it important to recognize that Cixous is already read and received as a celebrated rhetorician on account of her era-defining retelling of Medusa and her mythic monstrosity in her polemic, *The Laugh of the Medusa*.<sup>9</sup> As Barbara Biesecker and Jay Dolmage note, Cixous exposes the antimaterialist misogyny of rhetoric, psychoanalysis, and Western philosophy in misattributing a hysterical pathology to female-identified excesses in the figure of Medusa.<sup>10</sup> Instead, Cixous invokes a sexually differentiated, “intuitive, non-rational, non-masculinist, and sensual response to the world” (writing with the body/*écriture féminine*/feminine writing/women's writing) to challenge the phallogocentric economy of rhetorical production.<sup>11</sup> However, because the historical categories of sex and gender themselves are a complex undertaking in *The Laugh* and Cixous's prolific oeuvre, my goal is to further rebut their simplistic conflation with Cixous's feminist rhetoric, a charge consistent with critiques of Cixous's affiliation with the “the anti-masculine second wave feminism.”<sup>12</sup>

This is why, *first*, I draw on “To Live” to extend Cixous's rhetorical salience by rereading her as a postanthrophallogocentric rhetorician who practices writing with matter considering that the sexed-gendered body is a socially inscribed enfoldment of matter, “only one of the elements of the immense mass of material. . . .”<sup>13</sup> Moreover, as Elizabeth Grosz notes, because the Cartesian binaries of mind–body align thought with mind, masculinity, vigor, and reason to devalue the body with feminine, feral, acultural, ahistorical, pathological, and inanimate inscriptions, to write with matter is to write with the body.<sup>14</sup> More important, I demonstrate that Cixous's *queer word/worldmaking praxis* undergirds “To Live's” rhetorical-material confluence of multispecies subjectivities. My argument hopes to further neutralize the sting of a self-indulgent bionatural essentialism levied against Cixous's incinerating feminisms.<sup>15</sup> Second, I retrace Cixous's

feminist rhetoric of *écriture féminine* as a juicy, queer, deessentialized archive of sticky objects and more-than-human subjects interweaving a posthumanist rhetoric of *écriture matérialiste*.<sup>16</sup> I ascribe the generative squeeze of juiciness to Cixous's practice of percolating slowly in an environment of "life, milieu, and writing," curating, and archiving the experientiality of such sense relations without a territorial gesture.<sup>17</sup> Sara Ahmed's notion of "stickiness" as a relational "effect of the histories of contact between bodies, objects, and signs" helps me explain why Cixous's posthumanist rhetoric approximates a tactile historicity of discursive-material sensations in favor of a representational certitude.<sup>18</sup> Cixous's juicy and sticky approach to a posthumanist rhetoric also exemplifies what I consider her orientation of queer responsiveness. The queer textures of Cixous's responsiveness, apropos of Eve Sedgwick's exposition of queerness as the slippery indeterminacy of meaning, invokes the muddled fluencies of a rhetorical with-ness in which words swerve around the "vital, energetic, lively, quivering, vibratory, evanescent, and effluents" nearby things.<sup>19</sup>

Finally, I discuss how Cixous's ambient invention, as part of *écriture matérialiste*, self-styles more-than-human subjectivities toward a more-than-human reset from "feet to blood."<sup>20</sup> In fact, Cixous's exposition of philosophical-rhetorical violences against the "feminine" body (mater) through language, poetry, and the arts can be perceived more poignantly as her ever-deferred yet hopeful ethics of multiagentic justice for her more-than-human kin.<sup>21</sup> I emphasize that Cixous's attention to the vibrant call of quotidian objects is her sensing, her witnessing of matter as her critical-creative-vibrant peer, her more-than-human sticky kin. This is also how Cixous archives as she honors the sentient histories of anti-Semitic/anti-black/anti-Muslim atrocities toward historically objectified, dehumanized, and marginalized peoples without which intensified rhetorical intervention in the current injustices of the world is not ethically possible in Cixousian thought.

In an attempt to live the orange throughout the majority of the article's penultimate section and the conclusion, my argument unfurls as what Karen Barad considers a "posthuman account . . . of performativity" to challenge my own disciplinary habits of reifying rhetoric's representational transparency to articulate an autonomous human agency separate from primordial matter whose meaning the human subject attempts to pre-determine and foreclose.<sup>22</sup> To the contrary, my hope for modeling a posthuman performativity and Cixous's queer attunement locates the sociospatial contours of my invention in an atemporal slide among historical atrocities and current civic inequities alongside an agentic materiality. C. Riley Snorton, drawing on Glissant's notion of transversality, would consider such moments "submerged forms of relationalities that need not be visible to have effects."<sup>23</sup> What transpires is the hysterical destabilization

of the thing-thought induced from mnemonic slips and slides in my article.<sup>24</sup> The argument effects “a congealing of agency” incorporating and incorporated by the materiality of an orange, its color-memories-moods-meanings-feelings-interruptions (e.g., *orange affects*, *cheeky orange*, *chattel orange*, *code orange*, *orange warning*, *orange declaration*, *orange detours*) to unsettle the anthropallogocentrism of rhetorical agency, at the least.<sup>25</sup> In sum, the discursive-material moments of my article are juicy enactments of Cixous’s queer word/worldmaking praxis that underpins her posthumanist sensibilities and my overall argument as well. Before relinquishing control to slippery oranges, I now engage the rhetorical relevance of rereading Cixous as a posthumanist rhetorician.

*Orange I: media naranja::half orange:half human.*

## Cixous’s Rhetorical Relevance as a Posthumanist Rhetorician

The present section outlines Cixous’s rhetorical relevance as a posthumanist rhetorician and a text-as-matter-as-text practitioner of what I name *écriture matérialiste*. By critiquing the utilitarian normativity of dominant rhetorical practices and their objects of curiosity through Cixous’s posthumanist rhetoric, I reevaluate the hermetic boundaries of rhetorical value, merit, and rigor. For example, in archiving the traces of breath with and around an *opaque orange*, Cixous recognizes the sheer human arrogance in scoffing at objects as inert, unimaginative, ahistorical debris—that *which could not be demonstrated*. Thus, through a *transversal orange* connecting the dispersed national roots of her literary identity, Cixous reminds us of the astronomical price we pay in forgetting the past-inflected brutalities of current time without a poetic intensification of passionate attention to both.<sup>26</sup> The past does not resound without the present as “[o]ne doesn’t resound without the other.”<sup>27</sup> And we hear the object-oriented counter-response in Cixous, seconded by Friedrich Nietzsche’s contempt toward the destructive human hubris to associate knowledge with the mere feat of naming things (as if):

Only as creators!—This has caused me the greatest trouble and still does always cause me the greatest trouble: to realize that what *things* are called is unspeakably more important than what they are. . . . What kind of fool would believe that it is enough to point to this origin and this misty shroud of delusion in order to destroy the world that counts as “real”, so-called “reality”! Only as creators we can destroy!<sup>28</sup>

From far away, from outside of my history, a voice came to collect the last tear. To save the orange. . . . She put the orange back into the deserted hands of my writing,

and with her orange-colored accents she rubbed the eyes of my writing which were arid and covered with white films. And it was childhood that came running back to pick up the live orange and immediately celebrate it. For our childhoods have the natural science of the orange. There was originally an intimacy between the orange and the little girl, almost a kinship, the exchange of essential confidences. The orange is ever young. . . . It was almost a young girl. It was an orange regained. Through the fine skin of the word, I sensed that it was a blood-orange.<sup>29</sup>

Upon extrapolation, we understand that Cixous gestures to a queer intimacy with matter that galvanizes her hypertextual multispecies crossings and intensified rhetorical sensing of the world's material injustices. For this reason, Cixous's capacious feminisms when treaded in concert with a posthumanist ethos advance a rhetorical reuptake of her poetic micropolitics beyond the narrow confines of (albeit prolific contributions to) French feminism. For instance, Biesecker has already demonstrated that rhetorical theory is enriched with Cixous's ultralyrical and embodied feminisms because the latter give feminist rhetorical theorists rich pathways into inserting the category of woman into a historically hermetic and masculinist public sphere of rhetoric.<sup>30</sup> As Biesecker notes, Cixous's rhetorical practice locates topical and inventional wellsprings of sexual difference in the unconscious to rewrite what Jacques Lacan considers the dictum of the "law-of-the-Father."<sup>31</sup> This law governs the symbolic order (grammar, for instance), shapes the rules and boundaries of legitimate subjecthood through language acquisition in children, and marks their official separation from caregiving figures.<sup>32</sup> To Biesecker's reading, I add that Cixous's rhetorical practice is provocatively underattended as a form of materialist rhetoric that fortifies the posthuman, affective, object-driven, and sensory turns in communication and rhetorical studies. My argument also joins the interdisciplinary chorale of rhetorical new materialisms (RNM) featured in a recent issue of *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*.<sup>33</sup> RNM acknowledge rhetorical studies' less than eager uptake of "unacknowledged materialities in relation to the complex political, biological, cultural, technological, and social relations of power in everyday life."<sup>34</sup>

But how could unacknowledged ephemeral things matter to rhetoric when human thought, "the Idea," and subjectivity are still considered the thinking, de(siring), seminal, phallic master of all things virginal matter?<sup>35</sup> How could quotidian objects weigh in on rhetoric when the white master subject of "white masculine European mappings" has historically defined the material-discursive import of geographic legitimacy as Katherine McKittrick explores in her interdisciplinary work on transatlantic slavery, blackness, and space?<sup>36</sup> Indeed, how could Black thing-thoughts matter when whiteness still activates in/animate matter of color into taking communicative-rhetorical form, as Armond Towns notes in an astute critique of whiteness-centering new materialisms—and the

*Communication Studies* discipline, in general—in his work on Black feminist new materialisms<sup>37</sup> In response to aforementioned gaps, RNM scholars engage in rhetorical work that contests humanist supremacy, affirms multiagentic materialities, and is hospitable to interdisciplinary, cultural, onto-epistemologies aspiring to engagement with the multifaceted actants of worlds deemed in/habitable.<sup>38</sup> And through my article, rereading Cixous as a practitioner of post-humanist rhetorical theory posits “To Live” an onto-epistemological exemplar of *écriture matérialiste* because it traces the rhetorical arts back to the material world as the primal space from which meaning and agentic action emerge as entangled with nonhuman objects.<sup>39</sup> To put otherwise, as opposed to locating rhetorical value solely in distant, arid, “reflective” representationalism, which “increases an individual’s agency,” Cixous aspires to transfigure rhetoric’s kinship with its ecological, multiagentic possibilities.<sup>40</sup> She does so by debunking a phallic mastermind, “the symbol-using animal” subject that imposes order and meaning on a separately racialized-gendered terrain of objects through symbolic action, something I understand as Cixous’s *queering of rhetoric* itself embedded in her praxis of what I consider *queer word/worldmaking*.<sup>41</sup> In doing so, Cixous questions the arbitrary meritcentric and humanist circulation of rhetorical rigor that delimits rhetorical invention.<sup>42</sup>

Cixous’s rereading as a posthumanist rhetorician, drawing on Casey Boyle’s work, retraces her speculative sensibility of traversing “biological, technological, and cultural registers” of which the human is only one small part.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, based on Thomas Rickert’s work on ambient rhetoric, I would read Cixous’s materialist writing as astronomically ambient in that it senses a “complex entwinement of discourse, mood, things, and environment.”<sup>44</sup> Cixous’s rhetorical practice reminds us that rhetoric is not only the first-person domain of human address, *word-world-sense-making*, archival, and judgement whose symbols are removed from experience. Objects and things (matter writ large, medium, and small), traditionally designated and devalued as third-person (it) modicums of distance, inertness, and inanimation are sticky, intersensory, countervailing relationalities that address, affect, interanimate, and proliferate rhetorical subjectivity. If objects did not affect being, what explains the transformation of a wholesome fruit such as a watermelon, offering an economy of hope and nourishment to freed former slaves, into a racist object of white ridicule?<sup>45</sup> How did this object come to embody and effect dehumanizing stereotypes of anti-blackness? In encountering the racist histories of the watermelon object as a caricatured hologram of whiteness, we come face to face with the constitutive force of whiteness in shaping what Ahmed calls the “usability” of things, “the status of the object.”<sup>46</sup> As a counterpoint to object-phobic rhetorical practices, the sensorially sticky rhetoric of “To Live,” (Cixous’s homage to Clarice Lispector, a



Brazilian writer) is more about Cixous's attempt at experiencing a "moment of grace" with and around a slippery milieu of "orange-colored accents" as opposed to acting on and reducing the orange to a determinable thing, sign, object.<sup>47</sup> The upcoming splash from Cixous's *Coming to Writing* emphasizes sensing the orange's object power to invite thinking practices as "ultrasensitive ears" that are responsive to the object's call (*the laugh of the matter*) and not just representative of the subject's voice<sup>48</sup>:

At the school of Clairce Lispector, we learn the approach. We take lessons of things. The lessons of calling, letting ourselves be called. The lessons of letting come, receiving. The two great lessons of living: *slowness* and *ugliness*. . . . The Clarice-voice gives us the ways. . . . Makes us hear things calling. The call there is in things: she gathers it back. The clarice voice gathers. And offers us the orange. Gives us back the thing. Precisely what the orange says to the call of her voice, its moon juice, gives it to us to drink.<sup>49</sup>

As a rhetorical counterstroke of Cixous's queer word/world making praxis, *écriture matérialiste* channels as it gathers the "humid voice" and sticky rhetorical particles of *orange affects* to remind "humans of the very *radical* character of the (fractious) kinship between the human and the nonhuman."<sup>50</sup> Mireille Calle-Gruber's affirmation of Cixous's posthumanist orientations echo my suggestion to read Cixous with a deessentializing inflection.<sup>51</sup> As I have argued in a previous article on a writing-induced emergent motherhood based on Cixous's *The Book of Promethea*, even when Cixous foregrounds a feminine rhythm in her texts, it is more a capacious social category in contestation of any stable givenness, any so-called castrative (i.e., Freudian and Lacanian) lack.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, the ethico-aesthetic rhythm, which informs the Cixousian heart of *écriture matérialiste*, is in tune with opaque elementariness of matter—historically devalued as passive and incapable of agentive action in alignment with rhetorical-psychoanalytic-philosophical inscriptions of femininity. Repudiating such stunted logics, Cixous writes from and within the photosynthetic pigments of life itself, confessing all the while that such experiences remain irreducible to symbolic extraction. Her materialist writing precipitates an extrasymbolic, more-than-human moment of the world's "terrestrial" voices, its animalic growls, its "vegetal" erasures, and injustices in an effort to "not lock up meaning, to give it/oneself over to the chance of linguistic and textual crossings, to work a non-form."<sup>53</sup> Thus, the multiagentic materiality of Cixous's writing is imbued with a rhetorical force, because, as Douglas Thomas reminds us in reference to Nietzsche's rhetorical style, rhetoric itself is a "matter of valuation, which is to say a matter of living."<sup>54</sup> To build my point further, Jill Marsden notes in her new materialist rereading of Nietzsche that a Nietzschean revaluation of living, as a repudiation of idealist

Judeo-Christian/Platonic philosophies, embraces the entanglement of thought with the nearest little things that philosophers have historically devalued.<sup>55</sup> Likewise, Cixous's *écriture matérialiste* queers as it reevaluates the matter of the living itself by questioning what it means to do and undo rhetoric, for, with, and without whom through her entanglements with the living body of a little orange.

*Objects matter in living the orange and writing with matter.*

And although my argument risks attributing a totalizing gesture to Cixousian thought, Cixous herself underscores the risks and the dangers of queer word/worldmaking/dismantling with matter that gestures ultimately at its impossible humility. Such rhetorical interchanges in *écriture matérialiste* entail a political attention to the poetic entanglements and sensory enmeshments of quotidian body-matter that may not necessarily contribute to so-called serious rhetorical scholarship.<sup>56</sup> However, as José Esteban Muñoz and Ahmed would counter, we encounter Cixousian models of doing scholarship sparingly in the academy because academic accomplishment is preinvested with a discursive economy of excellence, success, and usefulness.<sup>57</sup> A Cixousian kind of responsive rhetoric with its blunt “precision and critical cogency” is ironically useful because it helps make room for the kind of scholarship considered historically useless within traditional academe.<sup>58</sup> Cixous's ethical nonconformism to boxed-in notions of humancentric disciplinarity can help communication and rhetoric scholars unlearn their own scholarly habits. Through upcoming splashes of an *orange matter-body-word-color-time-space*, I suggest that Cixous's feminist rhetoric of writing with the body be retraced as a queer, juicy, deessentialized, self-effacing archive of sticky quotidian objects and extra-rational subjects interweaving a posthumanist rhetoric of writing with matter (*écriture matérialiste*).

## Cixous's Rhetoric of Writing with Matter (*Écriture Matérialiste*): A Juicy Archive for Queer Word/Worldmaking

Patience, slowness, letting things speak to you, come to you, call you.

—Cixous, *Coming to Writing*

Before arriving queerly and patiently at a juicy archive, a definition of an archive might be in order. An archive could be a gathering of ideas, thoughts, documents, books, authors, materials, and facts. According to the *Society of American Archivists*, an archive is a collection of “permanent valuable records—such as

letters, reports, accounts, minute books, draft and final manuscripts, and photographs—of people, business, and government.”<sup>59</sup> In an institutional and spatial sense, archives and their archivists preserve and trace the “documentary inheritance of a particular group: a city, a province or state, a business, a university, or a community.”<sup>60</sup> Thus, archives are important interpretive resources for assessing historical occurrences or what Chuck Morris considers “the usable past” that also points to the rhetorical power of archives to constitute and address its audiences.<sup>61</sup> I draw on Muñoz’s contrasting “archive of queerness” whose archival use is “profoundly queer” because such an archive foregrounds a “queer impulse” to account for an object whose existence is premised on its tracelessness.<sup>62</sup> Ahmed builds on a queer archive as an ephemeral archive of “fainter trails” lingering traces, transient sillages, “glimmers, residues, and specks of things” whose archivists veer away from the academy’s “officiating structures.”<sup>63</sup> By dint of Cixousian vibrance, I want to add an extra-officiating sensation to this archival mix of queerness: *juiciness*. Cixous’s posthumanist rhetoric can be retraced as a juicy archive of queer word/worldmaking and its postanthrophallogocentric nonforms. Cixous’s succulent use of rhetorical invention approaches the lived materiality of ephemeral traces and ineffable excesses as patient acts of queer juicing. As is apparent in the following splash, this mode of queer extraction aspires to the unconquerable challenge of distilling, transcribing, and bottling but not consuming the nonrepresentational Other:

The orange is a moment. Not forgetting the orange is one thing. Recalling the orange is another thing. Rejoining it is another. At least three times are needed in order to begin to understand the infinite immensity of the moment. . . . Its bearings. . . . Its radiance. . . . Three looks around an orange, from here to Brazil go to the sources in Algeria. The fruit shines in hourless time. The juice of time flows according to the needs. I live submerged under the hour, sans souci, sans presentiment, sans peur. I work. I learn to swim underground. I do languages. I take orange courses.<sup>64</sup>

Cixous’s queer archival is a juicy ethic of what Ahmed calls “queer use: [in queer use], we linger; we do not get to the point. Queer use can be about lingering over things, attending to their qualities. To use things properly often means to paper over them.”<sup>65</sup> A juicy archive attends to and lingers with what Erin Rand considers “silly archives,” those affective excesses, movements, and slippages of sensational matter and/or those of what Sherry Turkle considers everyday, evocative objects through “queer attention.”<sup>66</sup> As opposed to an institutional archive, a juicy archive celebrates the juice of time as a sticky gathering that lingers slowly around and with slippery ephemera, refuse materials, feckless things, and worn out objects, not necessarily considered permanent valuable

records in more than one sense. Such an archive *queers as it senses* the scrapes and scratches on the records and does not paper over conversational and experiential scraps lost to time—unusable past, unsung dead bodies, ghostly cinders, and breathless specters. Poof! Attempting to document such experiences is difficult to preserve and painfully joyful to encapsulate. Despite the queer archive's geo-sensing of history's fainter trails, one also senses the unique dilemmas that inhere the queer archival process. KJ Rawson's attention to transgender archives offers an example of a queer archive whose fraught archival unfolds at the delicate tensions of forgetting and re-memembering, legitimizing and erasing the histories of trans-bodies.<sup>67</sup> And if archiving transness was not already precarious enough, Morgan Page elucidates the institutional hurdles that delimit archival access of diverse trans-peoples on account of their income status and/or the anticipated distress of incongruency from required proof of identification.<sup>68</sup> Hence, I would assert that Cixous's writing is a responsive and risky counterstatement that hopes to squeeze historical memory before it stops sticking and cools down to challenge what Ann Cvetkovich also critiques as "forms of violence that are forgotten or covered over by the amnesiac powers of national culture."<sup>69</sup>

Cvetkovich's work furthers how I imagine the ethico-politico-aesthetic commitments of a juicy archive attending to the queer "repositories" of proofless things, simultaneously impermanent and worth archiving.<sup>70</sup> Cixous is a queer archivist of what E. Cram considers "archival ambience" because of Cixous's attention to the animated (*juicy*) affectability of sense relations embedded in the histories and environments of so-called senseless objects.<sup>71</sup> As a practitioner of "queer affective invention" through her "sensual techniques of memory," Cixous embodies a strange contradiction of archiving the appearances and illusions of ephemerality in all its raw sensations (or *frisson*), colors, pleasures, flavors, feelings, fragrance accords, breath, and death through a scandalous attention to the juicy materiality of life itself.<sup>72</sup> Thus, the messy juiciness of Cixous's queer responsiveness and archival "disrupts the very notion of subsidized and substantiated institutions."<sup>73</sup> In particular, in "to live," this unanticipated, self-effacing, rhetorical act emerges in a materially intimate relation with an orange, reemphasizing what Scot Barnett and Boyle underscore as rhetorical ontology, or "the pervasive relationality of things."<sup>74</sup> Here is another splash of that multilayered invention overflowing with its syncopated, slippery, queer excesses in writing with orange matter:

. . . I dedicate the orange's existence, as it has been given to me by a woman, according to the entire and infinite bringing-together of the thing, including all that is kin of the air and the earth, including all of the sense relations that every orange keeps alive and circulates, with life, death, women, forms, volumes, movement,

matter, the ways of metamorphoses, the invisible links between fruits and bodies, the destiny of perfumes, the theory of catastrophes, all the thoughts that a woman can nourish, starting out from a given orange . . . she called this one “Laranja.”<sup>75</sup>

If language functions through a double displacement of the “original sensory moment, from sensation to image, and from image to language,” as Thomas writes, then Cixous enacts the re-emplacement of the originary sense relation as a momentary matter of living her rhetorical practice.<sup>76</sup> In doing so, she debunks an absolute sense of authorial autonomy as a momentous matter of valuation. Instead, the authorial moment could emerge from an orange-accented whiff of the fruity object in childhood, an uncoded sensation of sticky fingers entangled with carotene, and/or the presymbolic, childlike babble foreign yet responsive to another fellow creature. For instance, it is an unexpected telephone call in “To Live,” that interrupts Cixous’s intensified attention to the infinite details of an orange.<sup>77</sup> Cixous’s vital energy of contemplation, hitherto directed toward an orange, is now redirected to the unjust condition of Iranian women on account of this telephonic reminder.<sup>78</sup> It does not matter if an orange or a mode of correspondence is the cause, effect, or even an abrupt reminder of attention. This is because a juicy archive’s objects are willful too. Willful objects interrupt the circuits of cognition through their animating force as provocative ends in themselves and not just matter to be molded into communicative-rhetorical form at the behest of a master subject.<sup>79</sup> The reminders from everyday objects that interrupt our most quotidian activities matter. Akin to a deep breath in the midst of a busy work day, object reminders really are synaptic jolts of memory that “are also part of the work of un-forgetting, of un-silencing, of unearthing, of unblinding oneself, and of un-deafening oneself.”<sup>80</sup>

*Interruption. Connection. Stickiness.*

To understand how the juiciness of Cixousian proportions comes to imagine the nonform of a more-than-human existence, I now offer more evidence of Cixous’s ambient invention in her juicy archive of *écriture matérialiste*. This approach self-styles capacious, more-than-human subjects irretrievably stuck with their willful objects. Through a libidinal reeducation (i.e., “orange courses”) on queer use of and responsiveness to objects as sticky reminders of historical atrocities, Cixous aspires to a more-than-human reset from feet to blood.

## More-than-Human Subjectivities in *Écriture Matérialiste*: Cixous's Queer Word/World Making Praxis

It's a matter of slipping between two oblivions, or of leaping from one memory to another memory, and the edges are hazy. I was changing milieux: one has to change from feet to blood.

—Cixous, “To Live the Orange”

Why does Cixous compose the way she does? Perhaps, as Susan Zaeske remarks on Cixous's writing in reference to *The Book of Esther*, a Jewish text in the Hebrew Bible, a radically destabilized subjectivity at the heart of Cixous's rhetorical invention is her queer responsiveness to life-long experiences of displacement, misogyny, and anti-Semitism as a Jewish feminist living in France.<sup>81</sup> Or, perhaps, attributing Cixous's inventional motivations (even though she remains untranslatable as Derrida famously observed) to her practice of *écriture matérialiste*, substantiates her “proto-performative” intensification of ethical attention to the sociomaterial injustices toward in/animate matter.<sup>82</sup> Birgit Mara Kaiser's notes on Cixous are helpful in supporting my claim: “Taking sensuality, affectivity, and corporeality as starting points necessarily means that human life and formations of subjectivity are fundamentally entangled with heterogenous otherness, and if that is the case, subjectivity will have to be otherwise than the humanist subject.”<sup>83</sup> However many the reasons, one thing is clear that Cixous's writing, as an ethical intensification of living the dying, is incomprehensible without a vibrant materiality and human subjects disentangled from objects, nonhumans, and ephemera. This compositional ethos also senses the limits of linguistic representation vis-à-vis presymbolic objects. Kaiser confirms my speculation in their observation that to engage the evolving heart of Cixous's oeuvre, we need to consider the springboard of subjectivation and its reimagined movement along “posthuman and nonhuman vectors” whose attributes “sound out the voices of the living and the dead, of human and nonhuman animal others, of ways of existing with/in ecologies. . . .”<sup>84</sup> Despite the ethical impossibility Cixous's rhetorical style, the desire, the urgency, the yearning for radical, sociomaterial change storms through Cixous's posthumanist corpus. Sometimes the yearning courses in napalm-like poetic prose intent to incinerate the very grammatical apparatus on which it rests and sometimes in the delicate sillage it leaves behind in simple gestures of writing, living, loving, archiving the orange with whom she co-emerges in “To Live.” Even outside of her orange thing-thoughts, Cixous has underscored the ethicopolitical implications of challenging what Barad critiques as the “metaphysics of individualism” when the former contemplates the meaning of her existence in *Coming to Writing*.<sup>85</sup> However, instead of asking

the famously existential question, “who am I?,” Cixous changes it to “Who am I, who are I, at this very moment?”<sup>86</sup> In such a simple inventional move (and throughout her impressive oeuvre), Cixous performs her praxis of queer word/worldmaking as overlapping entanglements of matter and meaning, thought and thing, the human subject and the extrahuman in their discursive, material, power-infused, spatial-temporal, agential multiplicities. This is Cixous writing to reroute the materiality of language toward “queer use” through *orange detours* to make room for the hitherto nonhuman object (silent, used up, out of use) in the human theater of ongoing abuse.<sup>87</sup>

Furthermore, Cixous’s queer use of grammar can also be read as her pre-scient affirmation of identity-affirming pronouns in queer cultures: “Languages pass into my tongue, understand one another, call to one another, touch and alter one another, tenderly, timidly, sensually; blend their personal pronouns together, in the effervescence of differences.”<sup>88</sup> In a pragmatic sense, Cixous’s ambient invention is an effervescent repudiation of the symbolic violence and material erasure that LGBTQIA2S+ identities have experienced historically on account of limiting discourses around sex and gender. I do not read Cixous’s queer word/worldmaking inflections as a narcissistic investment in granting objects a sense of personhood. To the contrary, she draws on “. . . forms of invention that foreground dispersals, entanglements, texture, and interface,” to become sensible to the queer possibilities of a courageous more-than-human irreducible to an animal-abusing symbol.<sup>89</sup> This is Cixous revaluating Cartesian values rooted in the moral fantasy of a fixed, unified, totalizing subject represented by the letter “I” and ever so objectively distant from the abject object, “it.”<sup>90</sup> She celebrates a sensing, deessentialized subject of *multiple I* exposed to risk, “subject to slippage” as opposed to a subject who thinks it knows its separability from the known.<sup>91</sup> Cixous is also clear that her rhetorical practice is not a matter of “making the subject disappear, but of giving it back its divisibility: attacking the ‘chez-soi’ (self-presence) and the ‘pour-soi’ (for itself). . . .”<sup>92</sup> To separate this I from the ambience it contemplates is to assume the same arrogant Cartesian order of the epistemological master, the cogito-I, preceding the always already onto-epistemological I.

I read the destabilized I of Cixous’s queer word/worldmaking praxis as a reclamation of feminist hysteria and rejection of Lacan’s “hysteric’s discourse” whose symbolic practice “coincides with the refusal of the master, expressions of alienation, and a repetition of unfulfilled demands” (Lacan as cited in Jason David Myres).<sup>93</sup> In a posthumanist universe, of which Cixous is only one creative synapse, “I” does not assume a cheap, unitary lonesomeness and “it” needs no fixing and/or white saving and washing because “I” is predicated on the slippery slope of sticky desires and libidinal *re-fusion* (connection) with matter (it). Thus, “it”

takes up its *pour soi* space to amplify itself, to whisper, to communicate, to oscillate willfully with the multiple I sensing the envelopment of this sensory imbrication. The “it” that has been choked, abused, essentialized, fetishized, dehumanized, condescended to, exploited, trafficked, marauded, killed, ransacked indefinitely can finally start to reclaim its place as willful matter in this planet of *chez-soi* I's. Deessentialized, divisible I revalue the indivisibility of body-mind. Without the rhythms of the distributed I entangled with its sticky objects, Cixous cannot compose fully, ambiently and aerobically as reflects in the following excerpt from “To Live”:

Mute I fled the orange, my writing fled the secret voice of the orange, I withdrew from the shame of being unable to receive the benediction of the fruit giving itself peace-fully, for my hand was too lonely, and in such loneliness, my hand no longer had the strength to believe in the orange, I had in common with myself only the shame and discouragement, my hand had no more the goodness if knowing the orange's goodness, the fruit's fullness, my writing was separated from orange, didn't write the orange, didn't go to it, didn't call it, didn't carry the juice to my lips.<sup>94</sup>

The anemic loneliness that Cixous attributes to the afflicted hand that has forgotten to hear and hold the open secrets of the opaque orange (lonely I) and untranslate its slippery existence is the limitation of rhetoric's mediocre transparency. To contrast the lonely I, in *Readings*, Cixous invokes the poetic objects of Russian poets, Marina Tsvetayeva and Anna Akhmatova, Brazilian writer Clarice Lispector, and Etty Hillesum among others during the 1940s to highlight the writerly stakes of passionate wagers in some of the most despairing epochs of the world<sup>95</sup>:

And then there are those who were given poetry in their cradle, and who know that if there is nothing left, there still is the world of language. I take the risk of saying that these people answer nothingness, from the desert to disaster, poetically. They are people who at the very moment of struggle, of encounter with historical disasters, work on language, transform it, work it, garden it, graft it. . . . They need and transform language.<sup>96</sup>

The remainders of everyday objects (“letter-object,” ashen envelopes) emanating from epochal love and loss are suasive reminders that self-organize to have one write and answer nothingness when encountering the desert to disaster, but write one must with both “in the hope of the other, the other in us, in despair.”<sup>97</sup> What is most salient is that these vibrant object-remainders line the worldly flesh as opaque and oblique traces of what Ahmed calls “sticky” histories, adhesive, unhealed histories of open, painful, systemic wounds such as slavery, the Holocaust/Shoah, Israeli Gazanocide, and settler colonization whose effects stick to each current “it” (object) of the world.<sup>98</sup> Or, as Cram, drawing on



David Eng and Davis Kazanjian, reminds us that apprehending the remnant is a sensory site of contention that unearths histories to serve the needs of current inequities.<sup>99</sup> Given her rhetorical practice of *écriture matérialiste*, how does Cixous archive and honor the stickiness of atrocities as an effect of its intimacy with bodies, signs, and the “it”s of the world? Elizabeth Anderson locates Cixous’s queer responsiveness to mnemonic interruptions from objects as her ethical and creative imagination of cohabiting the earth in abiding fidelity with the Other and its historical “memory of atrocities.”<sup>100</sup> Derrida’s ethical exhortation to confront the ghostly atrocities of racialized genocidal pasts and mourn the future through the spectral materiality of a remnant cinder is Cixous’s incandescent interwovenness with the sticky histories of objects as interrupting reminders of political violence.<sup>101</sup>

Remainders as reminders as rejoinders from sticky objects are *blood-orange-cinders* that splinter and trace us back to the charred history of subjects. These are subjects entangled with their own violent objectification, in their expulsed flesh reeking of “sociospatial denial,” in the archives of their memories denied of humanity, in the raw attics of hope remaining from atrocities.<sup>102</sup> In other words, the histories of atrocities that adhere to a subject’s memory can also be read as object travelogues, helping us retrace an object’s journey, its historical accumulations, wear, and tear over space and time.<sup>103</sup> Through its silently spilling, sticky history, *a blood-orange-cinder interrupts and demands attention to the willful travelogues of the historically objectified*. The objectified whispers recall turning into stone, becoming the deranged incinerated objects of their own self-loathing gaze, reliving their exoticized abuse, their life, their captivity, their memory, their being as “nonbeing”/“nonpresence”/nonidentity, none of it theirs to embody and become.<sup>104</sup>

*fleur d’oranger. or anger.*

Cixous writes to archive the atemporal difference between what remains and what is in the world-“betweenus,” which is why she writes with/around and not about an orange as if it is a separate object.<sup>105</sup> This is why I also read Cixous as what Morris calls an “archival queer,” whose invention circulates as it mobilizes sticky histories of objects through the queer wanderings of a disobedient world-making praxis.<sup>106</sup> Better yet, there is an insouciance or “impertinence” to Cixousian thought that Jane Bennett attributes to the materialisms of “Lucretius, Deleuze, and Negri.”<sup>107</sup> In apprehending the infinite immensity of an orange moment, imagine a “cheeky” orange as a queer world/wordmaker flexing the *orange affects* of its “thing-power” in its *orangerie*.<sup>108</sup> An *orangerie* might be read in affinity with what McKittrick considers “black geographies” (subaltern “terrains of political struggle” deemed ungeographic) that “locate and speak back to the

geographies of modernity, transatlantic slavery, and colonialism” and reemplace “black history, selfhood, imagination, and resistance” in questions of spatial colonization.<sup>109</sup> Imagine a *cheeky orange*, the *Other half* (*media naranja*), mobilizing the historically objectified with its sticky thing-power (“force of opacity”) in their black orangeries, talking back to past-present-future imperialisms: If oranges still grow on trees, where does the matter of hatred grow (and conserved continually so)?<sup>110</sup>

One could also attribute the sticky mobilization of thing power to matter itself as a sticky surface which “incorporate[s] other elements into the surface such that the surface of a sticky object is in a dynamic process of re-surfacing.”<sup>111</sup> To become incorporated into the co-animating, matter half of a sticky, cheeky, orange surface, thus, implies the *performative resurfacing of a congealing agency* that resists a reflective impulse to foreclose on an original meaning/objective experience of the sign “orange.” The taunting laughs of an *orange mutiny* invite the deessentialized I to participate in an iterative process of co-configuring ontologically diverse materialities—an *arch-vegetal kinship*, if you will—because “stickiness involves such a chain of effects.”<sup>112</sup> To become the divisible I re-constituted by and open to the blaze of such self-organizing object-reminders is a matter of being affected slowly and sharply by the seething cinder of existence in a juicy archive of sticky objects in Cixous’s *écriture matérialiste* because one doesn’t resound without the Other.

*Orange affects orange on orange detours, off-course.*

With an object-affected, sticky chain of atemporal slips and slides activated, a *cheeky orange* witnesses the “wall work” of sore oranges butting their used up matter against the annulling intimidations of cold, callous, calculating, unresponsive orangeries.<sup>113</sup> A *dissenting orange* testifies that it is not enough to declare Juneteenth as a federal holiday marking the historical end of slavery in the United States.<sup>114</sup> A *burnt orange* taunts its beholder with a sticky outrage: How do you celebrate Juneteenth when twenty-two U.S. states actively prohibit the pedagogical exposé of the very racist logics that upheld the sovereignty of an exclusive white human citizen-subject?<sup>115</sup> An *orange bitters* scoffs at the hyperfetishization of queer pride and Juneteenth as economic comm(oddities) with wall-gram-worthy and socially mediated rounds of sparkling mimosas overflowing with their own juice.<sup>116</sup> An *orange hysteria* issues a scathing counterruling: So now your self-righteousness bestows constitutional rights to “fetal life” to deem it a legitimate subject of the state while delegitimizing abortion access and other reproductive rights for millions of American persons.<sup>117</sup> Excellent! Where was this sanctimonious regard for life when the gun-toting white plantation master defigured the rest to things (three fifth humans), unconstitutional objects to be

objectively analyzed from a philosophical distance, cash crops to be harvested, *oranges and lemons to be sold for a penny*, chattel to be traded and circulated as dispossessed property? Surely it is an overdetermined precedent of *fetal life* that sticks up for a privileged few while relegating undetermined others to *fatal life* with no regard for their historical, present, and potential lives.

*Zero. None.*

The hysterical matter of history resounds the repressed breath of “code orange” calling upon the air-sensitive category of the human to examine itself, its climate of prejudice, bigotry, and collective grief unto death with every breath, not avoid it, refusing this excruciatingly present labor as the work of a future generation (pa, are you listening?).<sup>118</sup> The escalating threat of our *orange inheritance*, the *Hindu Rashtra* (Hindu Nation), nudges an attention to a self-sanctimonious *saffron-clad* (*bhagwa*) Hindu Brahmanical supremacist India’s hand-picked, caste-iron stigmas embossing its Muslim, Dalit, Adivasi, and other caste-subjugated objects with white-hot bigotry. A *safety orange* reminds us to become resensitized to living with the disorienting, object travelogues, which evict us from ourselves, because we feel the violent pain of losing objects ethically and frightfully in each act of bereavement.<sup>119</sup> Snorton reads the transitive relation between the circulatory objectification of melanin with transness and how both signs have been “constituted as fungible, thingified, and interchangeable within the logics of transatlantic exchange.”<sup>120</sup> An *orange warning*, in consequence, dares us to reckon with history’s hidden orangeries to retrace the intra-uterine-wall work of hyperracialized-sexualized-gendered-Black-trans matter objects shedding their bloodlines in white supremacy’s demonic grounds.<sup>121</sup> A *chattel orange* confronts us to change our milieus and quicken them with marching feet to boiling blood to become better posthuman subjects with terrestrial lungs. Such relationalities register that each historically asphyxiating breath passing this earth with its fragrance-name matters and not only when breath is subsumed under the reproductive propensity of compulsory cis-white-hetero-sexuality and leveraged necropolitically to sustain assembly-line kinship economies. To lose nameless and countless human lives as objects subject to inhumane cruelty and seeing their infant-tendrils transform into fatal life—lifeless, squeezed out objects sans vibrancy says that the historically invisible, orange Black trans matter lives as it dies in the world-betweenus.<sup>122</sup> And perhaps, an *orange verse* indicts myopic rhetorical perversity not only toward historically objectified identities as glorified props articulated outside of the public sphere, but also to objects themselves.<sup>123</sup>

## Conclusion

The following reverberations of a Cixousian posthumanist rhetoric challenge anaerobic, disembodied, and lucrative forms of rhetoric, which are ultimately devoid of the radical alterity of matter:

In these violent and lazy times . . . there is almost nothing left of the sea but a word without water: for we have also translated the words, we have emptied them of their speech, dried, reduced, and embalmed them, and they can no longer recall to us the way they used to rise up from the things as the burst of their essential laughter, when, out of joy, they called each other, they rejoiced in their fragrance-name; and “sea,” “sea” smelled of seaweed, sounded salt, and we tasted the infinite loved one, we licked the stranger, the salt of her word on our lips.<sup>124</sup>

To receive an *orange benediction* upon rhetoric's denigration of materiality is to negate the “serious thinking” man-over-mind-over-matter apotheosis of Western philosophical canons and their delusional, self-serving, and prejudiced values.<sup>125</sup> To rewrite a *joyful orange* is to re-value the “gay science” of the *orange-over-man*, the gift of queer word/worldmaking and a playful incorporation of Nietzsche's overman to best the serious thinking beast into a transpersonal reckoning of matter.<sup>126</sup> To live the *orange-over-man* is to unburden the scales of breath and carry their juice to the lips in the fragrance-name of neroli's essence that can only be distilled from the freshest blossom bursts of the most bitter orange matter. For whom do we affirm and archive such a bitter life and fragrant breath that can entangle one in the wild weeds of strangeness, capsize one to jubilate up to the heavenly, moon juice of love, and throw one into the indefinite salt of loss?<sup>127</sup> Perhaps, for a *willful orange* that might reclaim the essential “laughter and gaiety” of all the fragrance-names of all the wretched, “deformed,” “corrosive” oranges of the earth.<sup>128</sup> Perchance, an *unwritten orange's* opacity, “. . . considerate of all the threatened and delicious things joining one another . . .” might revive the little things used up, dehydrated, embalmed, dispossessed of their elements, tempest tossed, despatialized from their sea, their weeds, their earth, their home, their breath, their constitution for self-determination.<sup>129</sup>

What might read as a vague declaration when Cixous writes, “an orange is a moment,” with an *écriture matérialiste* inflection, one might say that an orange is a primal sensory moment, a nonunitary detour, and a rhetorical attunement to a world-betweenus that can sing a perceiver feet-to-blood in myriad ways.<sup>130</sup> An *orange declaration*: Oranges hold themselves to be self-evident, that all things are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are juice, vibrancy, and the power of sappiness. Yet all

things will only be able to claim thought as the skin color of their self-evident, pigment power when the white gaze no longer turns native breaths of color into petrified stones within structural, juridical, disciplinary, and cultural “geographies of domination.”<sup>131</sup> An *orange amendment*: Trans/skin power will become a native thing—a fundamental birth right—when “it” no longer “bears the [trace] of the master signifier” that has historically subsumed blackness and transness under “an androcentric European ethnoclass of Man as the pinnacle of being.”<sup>132</sup> When “it” no longer is conditioned to brown-nose the white sensation police, “it” is no longer the petrified object of a tertiary consciousness.<sup>133</sup> When “it” no longer is dispossessed from its own bodily emplacement, “it” is no longer on hypervisualized “tenterhooks in his presence.”<sup>134</sup> In-between bigoted histories’ “yellow peril” and “red scare,” a *rainbow orange* “no longer gives a damn.”<sup>135</sup>

For all such *orange courses* and *detours*, the bacchanalian I’s of my transversal voices aver that Cixous’s performative refrain of writing with the body would reverberate and amplify in rhetorical impact if it is read in concert with post-humanist thought. In fact, the Cixousian praxis of writing with the body is better reinscribed as her queering of rhetoric, through what I have called *écriture matérialiste/queer word/worldmaking with matter*, that interweaves a juicy archive of sticky objects and posthuman subjects. The rhetorical-materialist-historical tactility of a juicy archive sounds out a textured tensor caught up in the primordial sensations of everyday objects, bodies, and language. As an amplification of choral and elementally fortified bodies, a tensor texturizes rhetoric to “make language stammer, or make it ‘wail,’ stretch tensors through all of language, even written language, and draw from it cries, shouts, pitches, durations, timbres, accents, [and] intensities.”<sup>136</sup> *Other-friendly, otherwise*. As evident in the following final splash from “To Live,” this rhetorical-material orientation co-participates humbly with agential matter:

Senses flow, circulate, messages as divinely complicated as the strange microphonic signals, conveyed to the ears from the blood, tumults, calls, inaudible answers vibrate, mysterious connections are established. It is not impossible in the unrestrained conversing that among disjunct, remote, disproportionate ensembles, at moments, harmonies of incalculable resonance occur.<sup>137</sup>

*Orange is the new black*: an ashen reminder that this sanguine breath is still a luxury for the systematically disenfranchised within the memory of atrocities. A *juicy orange* is a momentary gift of erupting wakefulness, a just reminder of the more-than-human-vivacious remainders of disproportionate ensembles, of transportive and transformational freedom in moment to moment. A *momentary orange* is not the latest and eventually disposable squeeze. It is the momentous pulp of all beating, laughing matter, an eternally recurring, irretrievably

near pearl of the sea in an ocean of alterity, a capsizing wave of love, a howling cinder and surviving flame of silent, ancient mountains. For as Cixous herself writes: "The orange is a beginning. Starting out from the orange all the voyages are possible. All voices that go their way via her are good."<sup>138</sup> To start out from an *opaque orange* is to risk writing outside the disciplinary optics with that which could not be demonstrated. An *orange letter* (de)composes a deessentialized human into the very terrain of struggle, *worldmaking* on the very heels of despair that envelops the always-already deferred gift of justice, *wordmaking* while working on language, sensing it, queering it, tensoring it, gardening it, grafting it. Here begins an *orange jouissance* regained and recindere with the hysterical resonance of laughter, tenderness, and a sticky attention toward its buzzy kin of the air and the earth.

*Sans souci. Sans presentiment. Sans peur.*

## Notes

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1. Hélène Cixous, "To Live the Orange," *The Hélène Cixous Reader*, ed. Susan Sellers (New York: Routledge, 1994), 87.
2. Cixous, "To Live," 84.
3. Ioana Cosma, "The Voracious Text—Hélène Cixous's *Vivre L'Orange/Le Texte Vorace. Vivre L'Orange D'Hélène Cixous/A Trăi Portocala De Helene Cixous*," *Studii și Cercetări Filologice. Seria Limbi Străine Aplicate* (2019): 182, <http://scf-lsa.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/23-Ioana-Cosma-182-186.pdf>.
4. Cixous, "To Live," 88; Mireille Calle-Gruber, "Portrait of the Writing," *Hélène Cixous, Rootprints: Memory and Life Writing*, trans. Etic Prenowitz (New York: Routledge, 1997), 166.
5. Rosi Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2013), 82; William E. Connolly, "The 'New Materialism' and the Fragility of Things," *Millennium* 41, no. 3 (2013): 400–401.
6. Liedeke Plate, "New Materialisms," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), <https://oxfordre.com/literature/display/10>

- .1093/acrefore/9780190201098.001.0001/acrefore-9780190201098-e-1013; Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010), 111.
7. Édouard Glissant, *Poetics of Relation*, trans. Betsy Wing (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 2010), 192–193.
  8. Glissant, *Poetics*, 62–189.
  9. Hélène Cixous, “The Laugh of the Medusa,” trans. Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen, *Signs* 1, no. 4 (1976): 880; Barbara A. Biesecker, “Towards a Transactional View of Rhetorical and Feminist Theory: Rereading Helene Cixous’s the Laugh of the Medusa,” *Southern Journal of Communication* 57, no. 2 (1996): 93; Jay Dolmage, “Metis, Mêtis, Metisa, Medusa: Rhetorical Bodies Across Rhetorical Traditions,” *Rhetoric Review* 28, no. 1 (2009): 1–28.
  10. Biesecker, “Towards,” 93; Dolmage, “Metis,” 1–28.
  11. Kelly Ives, *Cixous, Irigaray, Kristeva: The Jouissance of French Feminism* (Kent, UK: Crescent Moon Publishing, 2013), 76–78.
  12. Ives, *Cixous*, 76–78.
  13. Hélène Cixous, “Extreme Fidelity,” *The Hélène Cixous Reader*, ed. Susan Sellers (New York: Routledge, 1994), 136.
  14. Elizabeth Grosz, *Sexual Subversions: Three French Feminists* (St. Leonards, NSW, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1989), xiv–xv.
  15. Verena Andermatt Conley, “Cixous, Hélène (1937–),” *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2018), <https://www.rep.routledge.com/articles/biographical/cixous-helene-1937/v-2>; Elizabeth Grosz, “Sexual Difference and the Problem of Essentialism,” *Center for Cultural Studies* (University of California-Santa Cruz), <https://culturalstudies.ucsc.edu/inscriptions/volume-5/elizabeth-grosz/>; Ives, *Cixous*, 76–78.
  16. I credit Sara Ahmed’s term “sticky objects” in my approach to Cixous’s rhetorical practice. I extend the term in my work with Cixousian inflections and draw more extensively on how Ahmed outlines the effect of stickiness as pertaining to the histories of objects, bodies, and signs.
  17. A play on Eve Sedgwick’s “generative twist”; Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Tendencies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1993); Verena Andermatt Conley, ed., “Introduction,” *Readings: The Poetics of Blanchot, Joyce, Kafka, Kleist, Lispector, and Tsvetayeva* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), xi–xii; Conley, “Introduction,” xi–xii.
  18. Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotions*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Edinburgh, Scotland: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 90–91; Casey Boyle, “Writing and Rhetoric and/as Posthuman Practice,” *College English* 78, no. 6 (2016): 538.
  19. Bennett, *Vibrant*, 112; Sedgwick, *Tendencies*, 8–9.
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