TECHNOAFFECTIONS
For politics of shared responsibility

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Technoaffections
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Broadly speaking, we can outline two historical ongoing projects on this planet, geared by divergent and incompatible notions of well-being, happiness and satisfaction: the historical project of things and the historical project of relationships. The historical project that frames things as a goal of satisfaction is functional in a capitalist sense and produces individuals that will also become things and objects. The historical project of relationships calls on reciprocity to create community. Even though we live inevitably in an amphibian manner, with one foot in each domain, a counter-pedagogy of cruelty works at an awareness level and establishes that only a world based on relationships and community can put limits to commodification.

Counter-pedagogies of Cruelty by Rita Segato
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What was your first relationship with technology? Our memories are tied to our affection. What emotions and feelings surface with the memory of our first contact with technology?

For us, technology isn’t about artifacts and objectives. Technologies are relational devices. They weave us and we weave them. They are built and integrated into the matrix of affectivity. Therefore, we want to conceive technology as inseparable from our emotions, affections, our acts of care, life in community, and life on the planet.

By assuming our emotional accountability, we want to be careful and attentive to the affections that we create in our bodies, in the bodies of others, and the corporeality we call Nature. If depoliticizing dis-affects relationships, our purpose and intention is to politicize through feelings, emotions and affection.

We put forward a way of living technology as a fabric of relations intertwined through affection and emotions. We need to reconsider the ontological nature of socio-technical systems as a continuum of embodied experience situated in the context of emotions, bodies and territory. We want to question the preconceptions embedded in our habits and small decisions.

1 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affect_(philosophy)
Based on these concerns, in July 2019, we convened the Hackfeminist Gathering of Technologies and Affections: How to sketch politics of shared responsibility?, a creative and critical collaboration inspired by experiences and social movements rooted in land defense and feminism. A space created by and for women to contribute in building ethical and fair—for us and the environment—technology.

The gathering was intended to create to conditions for collective thinking and action; a space of trust, complicity, and resistance to outline politics of shared responsibility for our bodies, territory, and technology, where emotions and affections are put at the center.

Some of the specific goals were:

- To engage in critical discussion and assess the possibilities of situated technology politics around affect and affection.

- To explore technical capacities that contribute to creating new narratives and communication content around technology, affection, and accountability.

- To build an approach of a feminist principle of the internet centered on the environmental based on a collective discussion around technology, affection, and shared accountability.

- To develop a road-map that enables us to create narratives about technology, taking into account affections and affect.

Why organize a gathering among women? Because we are fabulous when we are together. Because we want to hold a space created and re-created in transparency, intimacy, relaxation and mutual inspiration. Or as one of our participants said: “to shake and move and think together”.

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2 In the sense of post modern ideology, where knowledge should be placed in context. Source https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Feminist_epistemology

3 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affect_(philosophy)
The idea of the workshop came about in conversations throughout several years between Nadia Cortés, la_Jes and Paola Ricaurte where shared concerns amalgamated. Even though it is quite usual to hear about the intersection of technology and affection, we were lacking a debate around our individual and collective understanding. We were looking for space where we could question, from our situated bodies and contexts, our relationship with technology. We wanted to visibilize the connection between affectivity and affect as a way of contributing to politicizing the conversation around technology that doesn't usually intersect with land defense. For this reason, our intention in convening in Chiapas was to highlight the need for other ways of doing, thinking, and feeling that can't be separated from community and land.

This text is a result of reflections, conversations, and affections between diverse women of Abya Yala that, having decided to affect each other, question the ways of collective being, doing, and feel-thinking technology.

Mexico City, 19 October of 2020.

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4 Abya Yala which in the Guna language means "land in its full maturity" or "land of virial blood", is the name used by the Indigenous Guna people, who inhabit near the Darién Gap (today North West Colombia and South East Panama) to refer to their section of the American continent since Pre-Columbian times.[1] The term is used by some indigenous peoples of North and South America to describe the two continents.[2] Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abya_Yala
What is technology to you?

Part of the reason for organizing this gathering was to sit down and share what technology is and has been for us. Though apparently essential in our lives, there isn't a precise definition of technology and its ramifications. In the workshop Technology, affection and politics of accountability, facilitated by Nadia, we spent time asking ourselves what versions of technology we have been taught and what implications that knowledge has in our contexts.

Some of the shared testimonies are:

'My first approach to technology was in my birth, to come into a coded world, language... so I think that culture is technology, the common world we are in and that we can transform. It's a shared world and, in consequence, power is distributed, it's the proof of those who have been able to hold, claim and interface with the world; in effect, we are symbolic animals that use tools, we have ways of organizing, the problem is when technology becomes an artifact tied to power'.

"Vengo de un pueblo al que ya le di"I come from a village that is called a city because of transnational companies. Before I had even had a clear definition, the memory of discovering technology appears: the TV and radio make me curious, it takes me to the city. I don't know how to relate to this computer still unknown to me. To listen to the radio and watch the TV was a privilege so, for me, technology has to do with emerging new things created and produced throughout history".
Technology is a prolongation of physical, mental and affective human potential. It enhances these abilities and can be material or immaterial.

(Vero Araiza)

"Technology is a combination of tools and techniques, a process of introspection, anguish and perception that creates the way we conceive the world. It's interesting what our bodies feel when we 'interact with technology'.

The first idea of technology that came to me was a computer that arrived on my doorstep, a fascinating object. I knew I wanted to do something with it but I didn't know what. My way of seeing technology has changed as I have moved forward. My tech 'twenties' related to reminiscences and embodied memories appeared later, surpassing the applied science discourse. I start to take another path and see things differently. Feminism comes into my life, along with the sense of my body as a technology. Before that I conceived technology as a technique, as productivity. The interplay of body and technology has grounded me because I realize how disembodied I used to be.

(Irene Soria Guzmán)

'I want to share something they taught us: the sense of power; the idea that I have it and others don't, this used to be a sign of reputation at one point of my life. That's what they told me technology was: a very strong power. It's taken me years to deconstruct this. My first memory of technology has to do with that. I wanted to take apart something but they didn't want to teach me so I did it by myself. I learned that this was a great power and who has it can decide and who doesn't, can't'.

(Stef)

'Personally, it represents an object that can protect me, though it's difficult for me to relate technology to objects of care because I've always perceived it as something that doesn't have to do with me'.

Really, everything is technology, everything we invent to facilitate or improve something. We understand as technology something that pops up and changes something but we don't realize what is already there'.

(Mariel Zasso)
"It's a process that can be transformed, that recovers knowledge which potentially can satisfy all sorts of needs. Technology as culture makes sense to me. I don't like thinking of my body as technology, it's hard for me to picture that, it's strange... I like to imagine that what defines us as human beings is different".

"It's always the concept of technology. When thinking of my first technology, I thought of a computer but if I go back to that now, I would say Westernized science. In my opinion, there is also science in my culture, in my community, we have also created technology to improve our lives".

These testimonies help us understand that technology encompasses many issues and connections; its definition is extremely broad and, sometimes, problematic. Authors like Bernard Stiegler or Lewis Mumford have described its complexity and created definitions of technology that address some of these aspects. Stiegler defines technology as a process of exteriorization, in other words, living life by means other than life. In this light, technology implies techniques of doing, tools, machines, appliances, knowledge, as well as materials for producing, building, and creating the world. Mumford, on the other hand, conceives technology in a broader framework of social ecology where, besides defining technology, who and how technology is produced is equally important.

The fuzzy lines of conceptualizing technology pushed Leo Marx to write an article called *Technology. The Emergence of a Hazardous Concept* where Marx describes the risks of devising technology. That is to say, the dangers of framing technology in a certain way because it plays a part in building a hegemonic definition. Through this lens, technology is conceived as autonomous, neutral, centered in objects and technological development. The hegemonic perspective determines everything, without taking into account the diversity of contexts, origins, and pathways that technology transits to exist.

In consequence, it carries an idea of relating to technology where we are mere users that have to adapt. Perhaps grasping technology as a set of experiences and cycles that create, produce and shape the world is a opportunity to imagine other ways of relating beyond adaptation, consuming, or passive observation.
As Mumford points out, "there is no such thing as a specific object we can call technology. You can't objectify technology. It has to do with values and behavior in society more than machines or devices". So thinking about technology maybe has more to do with feel thinking what we are and about society, how we articulate technologically, how technology creates our bodies and contexts, and what are our ties and correspondence with these processes.

When what was being shared in the workshop resonated with all of us, we realized that some of the notions we have learned about technology have pushed us to disregard our own technology, originated in our local contexts, ancestral wisdom, and knowledge. Additionally, we discovered how some of the ways we've learned about technology relate to power, domain, and control. However, it seems that the space to think about technology connected with our bodies, contexts, affections, feelings, situated sense of justice has been seized—as is the case with most hegemonic discourse—by pervasive and, apparently, undeniable concepts of technology. But there are other perspectives, other types of technology that don't appear on certain maps but have always resisted and allow us to crack open these notions that hide the underlying values and desires of technology perhaps distant from what we want.
Are the ways we integrate technology fair for our bodies, feelings, and realities?

If we consider that the ways we are affected by technology, the ways we engage and reconnect, are a fundamental part of the worlds we embody and inhabit, we need to ask ourselves about the hows.

What does this mean? Maybe it's about questioning how technology affects us, the effect it has, not only on our human and non-human bodies but on our environment and territory. Or maybe getting involved in what we don't ask anymore: how does technology affect us and others? When is it fair and for whom? For whom is it designed? What do we seek in it? What is the purpose? Why do we need it? What types of lives, bodies, and territory does it produce?

Justice is not a universal concept; however, it tends to be important to give us space to rethink this question based on what we understand as justice in our local contexts. It seems that the heritage of Western-based scientific and technological knowledge has standardized and created a neutral concept of technology that intends to impose its values and worldview on other contexts. Yet, the resistance and consequences of developmental and progressive technological models make us see how they force a set of values on people and territory.

The starting point is this opportunity to re-think, re-politicize, and re-write our relationship with technology in different codes: based on our situated knowledge, our own definitions of local justice, and considering what is important in our communities.
To this effect, in the gathering we organized, we suggested different strategies to engage with what we call the absent but implicit aspects of our relationship with technology. In other words, an array of values imposed on us by certain types of dominant discourse, applications, methods, and technology. The consequent ramifications point to the need to reconnect with the way that our technology has been created, as well as understanding and learning new ways of producing and inhabiting technology.

Our agency for collective change and an alternative creation of technology entails unpacking technology, opening up black boxes, not only to discover how they work but also their underlying values. Active listening and other ways of feeling-thinking allow us to understand the complexity of our local and global contexts from its correlations, dependencies, and co-accountability. Not from a naive engagement that repeats the models of individuality that some of us have been taught to follow, but rethinking as a collective, learning new paths of living together and new worldviews, always situating ourselves and accepting our perspectives and position when we talk and live.

Some of the consequences of these paradigms in our lives are:

- Consumerism as a lack of connection with the process, cycle, paths that make technology possible.
- Dislocation, deterritorialization, expropriation, disconnection: disaffection with all that sustains us and allows us to be who we are in a certain moment and place.
- Careless disposal: no concerns about where materials end up.

If we think that technology is also a series of negotiated artifacts, in other words, created collectively and socially, affecting us at a personal level too, we can consider other political relationships in technology. However, we need to take into account, as we have already pointed out, that the agency we want and desire seeks to break with the paradigm of individual action. We want to acknowledge how we have an impact on the social fabric. Individual change is not enough. When we affirm, from a feminist standpoint, that the personal is political, we mean to say that our personal experience is connected to the social discourse, structures, and politics we live in; to a certain point, compromised.
Plunging into how these relationships weave together is, perhaps, an opportunity for collective and community agency. We need to find out how we can talk about other things from perspectives and stances that engage us with the tangles and problems of technology. Not only to imagine us in other ways but to live like this, letting ourselves be touched and taking responsibility.

Waste has been an important issue to rethink affection because our way of adapting to objects is also from a position of “I don’t care”, of rootlessness and disconnection, a disaffection with all that sustains us and allows us to be who we want to be in a certain place and time. We need to re-write, re-invent and find other possible relationships where we can become accountable for our actions. What does it mean to become accountable? Its meaning depends on specific contexts, situated places, and what each community considers important. Assuming responsibility has nothing to do with feeling guilty or judging ourselves or others for what we don’t commit to. Assuming responsibility has to do with relating and feeling differently, with restoring something that maybe can’t go back to what it was. It’s about finding your place in difficult situations and thinking about how you face your own collective and situated context. Becoming accountable also means accepting that there aren’t universal, unique, and featureless technological relationships. In response to a rigid deterministic technological framework that turns its back to users, by claiming, adapting, and re-writing technology, we present our situated stories, our resistance, our technological and cultural hacks that demystify the apparent unifying power of some technological artifacts, devices, and discourse.

Though it’s really difficult to escape the judgment mode, it’s important to try to create narratives with other ways of feeling and thinking our agency, acknowledging that stories are complex and depend on many people involved. Accountability is a situated issue and implies understanding, not intellectually but from our feelings, the places we inhabit and want to inhabit.

It’s a way of committing to new forms of personal and collective agency. We won’t always be as accountable as we would like to. Sometimes we will do it with the tools we have and those decisions weave into a more complex fabric that we must understand and value. Not to be coherent but consequent and accountable for the affectations we are involved in. Also, to conceive technology from another angle, it’s the tissue of complex affectations and relationship with affections, the paradoxical and problematic situations we get into. We need to accept that we don’t have metaphors or stories to name this vagueness, which is neither good nor bad, neither fair nor unfair, but situated, complex.
and in constant relation with a specific territory and a set of exchanges and feelings with global and local territory, as well as complex routes with diverse effects.

When re-reading and re-writing beyond a universal set of values, from situated cycles that tell us how certain territories and communities hold life, where technology is an important factor, where there are opportunities to think about other ways of relating to technology, far from adaptation and control, that allow us to open space to adopt and care, where feelings are essential.

A strategy to desire other types of relationships with technology or imagining technology that establishes other types of values is to listen to ourselves for the first time from a place of curiosity and complexity, creating ways and questions that allow us to sit with problems with an emotional and accountable understanding free of judgment. How do we re-write technology or what type of technology do we imagine to make other futures possible where affections, affect, care, and shared accountability are present? Authors like Donna Haraway invite us to sit with our problems and thread stories that nurture the complexity of situating ourselves in contradictory, ambiguous, uncertain, and questionable intersections to feel-think in the agency that we can hold. To let ourselves intra-act and intra-affect, like Karen Barad would say, with the materiality of technical and non-technical elements that allow us to sustain life and hold onto the infinite embroidery that gives way to life and death, not only to us as individuals but as the collective we are. A speculative imagination of other possible worlds to disentangle and recover lost connection.
How can we assume responsibility and share accountability in a dominant socio-technical system? What does decolonizing technology mean? How do we decolonize ourselves?

Socio-technical systems play a fundamental part in capitalism and are based on extracting natural resources from the Colony and exploiting women's bodies. This continues to happen: certain people and knowledge are placed higher up in the pyramid. The perfect articulation between knowledge production infrastructure, technological infrastructure, and colonial patriarchal capital interest has reached such a deep scale that life on this planet is at risk.

The "development", "progress", "civilization" narratives driven by Western countries contribute to a narrow one-model version of the world, imposed on our minds, behavior, and feelings. To survive, the Western/modern model feeds on dualist rational thinking based on individualism and private interest over the sense of community. This mentality promotes destroying ties and relationships and ends up diminishing our capacity to resist and re-exist.
The extractive rationale that sustains capitalism and modernity governs the dominant socio-technical systems, forcing notions of technology like the idea that technical artifacts are disconnected from our body and territory, that materiality exists at a certain distance from us and our community.

Many thinkers from the Abya Yala territory have exposed since the Colonial era how colonialism and capitalism destroy certain systems of knowledge. Decolonial feminist thinking highlights that capitalism and colonialism are fundamentally patriarchal and that this destruction of certain systems of knowledge and certain feminized bodies is particularly exerted on racialized women. The State is the main player of this forced internal colonialism and is responsible for undertaking the global capitalist mission at a local level through partnerships with economic and political elites. They use technology as a tool to plunder bodies, languages, communities, and land.

This is my starting point because disrupting dominant systems needs to translate into showing how technology is and has been used historically to reproduce these systems. We need to think about how we can reach epistemic and social justice at all levels, exposing Western-imposed predatory, racist and sexist technology.

Decolonization, from my point of view, implies becoming aware, visibilizing, and trying to undo the matrix of domination; to expose how the hegemonic single-model of the Western world wipes out other forms of living, thinking, and feeling. This world model uses systems of knowledge, technology, and narratives to establish a Western epistemic and ontological superiority. It has and continues to warrant the extermination of Otherness and enables the capitalist appropriation of natural resources that sustain life on this planet.

In other words, the ontological difference, the fact that we are different (at a racial, epistemic, and general level) to the Westerner (straight cis white man), positions us, according to normativity, in a narrative of the world where we are subordinated in the hierarchy of beings. Thus, our thoughts, our ways of seeing the world, the way we feel, are considered less, non-existent, or invalid. On this scale, women categorized by their race and ethnic background are at the bottom. To decolonize technology means to embrace creating and nurturing anti-racist relationships as Rita Segato talks about. To decolonize implies stripping technology from patriarchy and commodification: we resist against the forced project of things. To decolonize means to conceive technology not as objects but
as relational devices that affect us and others. To decolonize implies taking responsibility for these affectations in our bodies and the bodies of others. To decolonize is to imagine ethical and fair technology for us, in other words, a technology that doesn’t commercialize our lives, feelings, and community ties, that doesn’t develop at the expense of extracting our data and territory, that doesn’t result in ecosystem destruction and labor exploitation.

To decolonize ourselves means trying to avoid reproducing patriarchal/sexist commercial/instrumental colonial/racist violence in our lives and our relationship with others and territory. To decolonize ourselves means exposing how the Project of Things over our racialized bodies and our lands—the womb of life—has an impact and affects us. To decolonize ourselves means to develop politics of shared accountability that open up our eyes, help us accept and take responsibility together in this interdependence that holds life. To decolonize ourselves means to fight for social and epistemic justice for the dignity of our lives and communities.

Based on all we share in this text, we intend to take this space as an opportunity to ask ourselves questions and think together because, as women, we acknowledge that what we are doing is a way of embodied thinking.
What types of relationships show us the trail of technological production? How are these maps shaped?

The current pursuit of technological development doesn't intend to build a sustainable life for the planet and its inhabitants. The technological production agenda is controlled by corporate and governmental actors that define our future. The asymmetry of power, relationships of dependency and business models based on data body resource exploitation are the core elements of this web that we need to unravel if we want to transform this reality. We want to create new visions, imaginaries, and narratives that open up the possibility of conceiving technology from another perspective and design futures that ensure life in community.

With this purpose, we designed an exercise to reflect on the multiple dimensions of technological production and the complexity of actors, procedures, geographies and affectations that stem from this ecosystem. The workshop “For a technological disobedience and dissidence: mapping the trail of technological production to imagine shared futures” (Hacia tecnologías disidentes: mapeando las rutas de la producción tecnológica para imaginar futuros en común) is an initiative
that emerges as a provocation to reflect on the meaning of technological production and how we can intervene through our habits and lifestyles. We used a map developed by Gall Peters that dismantles the Eurocentric world vision most maps have. We want to highlight geographic traces that show the different phases of extractivism, production, consumption, and disposal related to technology, based on the dimensions of our bodies, work, and territory.

This exercise seeks to map the web of relations and connections involved in technological production. As well as reflecting on our understanding of technology as a relational fabric and interplay of appearances, norms, actions, territories, bodies, and subjectivities.

To this effect, we consider that our way of conceiving technology should feed on conversations with other worldviews; other ways of grasping knowledge, realities, and life in community. For example, in many non-urban and rural communities of Abya Yala, relational ontology is expressed through respecting nature, defending land and territory; as well as safeguarding memory and tradition through rituals, symbols, and oral history as a fundamental aspect of community survival. Community and territorial ties represent a sustainable lifestyle. What can we learn from these ways of conceiving reality and relating to the environment? In which ways can we allow ourselves to reshape the future of technology?

This vision of community isn't compatible with the hegemonic corporate technological rationale that uses human lives and the environment, producing narratives that dissociate people from their environment, relationships, and affections. To dis-affect is to un-tie. To dis-affect is to de-politicize.

Grasping life experience through our bodies, land, and affections, a weaving of feelings and affectations that have a deep impact on the ways we relate to sociotechnical structures. Our techno-affective proposal contrasts with the hegemonic narratives of technology that are rooted in a vision of seduction, individual desire, efficiency, productivity, task simplification, and status.
The routes of technology give insight on issues that we go back to continuously.

Tracing these routes, we realized that most technology usage happens in the Global North, while, in the South, particularly in the Asia and Mexico regions, this technology is manufactured and assembled. Interestingly enough, precisely in this area, there are higher rates of "ghost work".

In the consumerist waste producing North, planned obsolescence flourishes. But you can't throw away without reason, even this aspect presents a discourse that validates excessive technological consumerism: to reduce the digital gap, the Global North sends its leftovers to the Global South; in other words, it gets rid of its trash under the facade of charity.

We think this scenario is clearly unequal, harsh, and unfair. We want conciliating alternatives but, mostly, we want to call out what is happening. We must recover the public spirit because not working in a factory shouldn’t imply not finding out about inequalities.

Workers’ rights are constantly violated and we need to raise awareness and talk about it.

Mexico has good labor legislation on paper, but not in practice. We demand a ban on programmed obsolescence and laws that punish companies through the only language they understand: money.

We were especially impressed by three maps that really determined the trails of technology we observed. Interestingly enough, the issue of waste came up from a slightly different perspective, but I think these three concepts overlap with the routes we traced, which means that the problematic is very complex.

We observed two regions — Global North and Global South — and created a blacklist of all the Global North countries that threaten the Global South’s land and territory: the United States, Canada, and Norway are the...
main players in mining. On the other hand, the resulting waste from this extractivism ends up in China, Mexico, and Africa.

We didn’t want to spend too much time with this data because our anger and rage must help us come up with alternatives. Raising awareness on the impacts of natural resource exploitation and transnational land dispossession is fundamental.

We need to decentralize monopoly now, seeking new types of communication and regulation because the current legislation seems to be made by and for companies. Capitalism maneuvers in an increasingly sophisticated manner. We must educate ourselves to fight back.

Education is key. We have lost our ability to think critically and this shows us that using more technology doesn’t mean you learn more, on the contrary, this emerging alienation can disconnect us from our context and land.

We believe in returning to community, not leaving everything behind and fleeing from the city but something more profound, defying individualism wherever we are, even from the digital sphere. It means thinking about what type of community we are shaping when using our different technological devices.

We can create small local networks with an educational and community drive that regenerate human relationships.

**Bodies**

We agree that there are several connected routes. Ours is not an exception. The impact technology has on our bodies becomes more outstanding. Electronic means have more influence than we can imagine.

The connections between illness and technology manifest in different ways: in the Global North, illness is related to technology usage; meanwhile, in the Global South, many cases of illness stem from extractivism. Some suffer because of consumerism; others, due to production and labor conditions.
And even though it could seem that, at a bodily level, the harm is comparable, we must not be deceived; inequality continues to establish a profound difference and the hardship—though embodied in both scenarios—is not the same.

Illness in the Global North is more related to sleeping and emotional disorders originated by electromagnetic fields or cases of carpal tunnel syndrome, for example.

But in the Global South, especially in the poorest areas, we observe connections between illness and high levels of toxicity in waste production, also affecting mental health. Some people do underpaid work "cleaning" different internet platforms of undesired content and spend thousands of hours watching violent and devastating content without psychological accompaniment. There's a lot of outsourcing of invisibilized manual labor that has an impact on the body. Mineral extraction is another good example: it produces cancer, deformities, and other types of illness. That's why we call this the "corridor of death".

The situation is complex and unsettling but we must not freeze. We need to think of alternatives and directly confront capitalism as a collective. We need to regulate obsolete technology usage. We can re-use devices and share them.

We also need to join communities in resistance and visibilize their fight; we need to organize unions and impose fair labor conditions for everyone. Companies should become public. We can achieve this if we change the narrative, if we spread what is happening so we can organize and regulate changes for a more ecological usage of technology.

It's a known fact that if we don't change individually, it's very hard to transform as a society, but we forget that individual change is a neoliberal political discourse that promotes individualism. Let's be honest: we can't change without others. It's only possible through a common effort because everything that happens in the world has to do with social relationships.
Part of our collective work resides in the power of gathering, talking, and questioning our dependence on devices and our material conditions. This same collective energy helps us create space for ourselves and become better people in this world.

We have become distanced because we've been erased from knowledge and information but we can imagine and seek other types of worlds based on our awareness and exchange. If we don't see or realize the complexity of what is happening, we can't transform things. Without information we can't make decisions. This must be put into the collective pool. And despite the complex situation and pessimism, my enthusiasm and joy is resistance; our revenge is to be happy.
I will try to briefly explain the concept of territory in the mountains of Oaxaca. It’s a spiral design because we see territory as one, as unity: the air, the earth, the visible and invisible. We conceive life at different levels; life experience is a pathway and part of a cycle: coming back to something. But living in this world implies the existence of other dimensions. You can’t grasp life without these other spaces (the Underworld, for example), and those who inhabit them also intervene in this dimension we live in. We believe that the sacred dwells in the mountains and that our ancestors help us inhabit this world in a more balanced way.

We share this land with our brothers and sisters, with all living beings: plants, animals, rocks. When an outsider wants to extract water from the land, they must ask permission from the water spring. Similarly, when we want to build a house, we must ask the earth first.

For this reason, when we decided to establish a radio, our community told us that we had to ask the mountain and our ancestors for permission, not the State. We have realized our need to talk in our own language and have our own means of information. That’s why we started the radio, without imagining we needed to ask for permission first.
In our territory, geographical limits aren’t as present. We live in a big land. Language wasn’t a limiting factor either because our language mingled with nearby languages. But new legislation establishes that our land is only the ground: what lies underneath and above is State property.

So different companies arrive to extract water and minerals underground without asking permission from the mountains or our ancestors. Now we have to pay CONAGUA®, the State, to use the water from our springs. Even though we preserve and look after the environment, these situations happen. For this reason, we want to raise awareness and educate through our radio: land defense, human rights defense from a gender perspective, knowledge about our language and our culture. We are moved by the curiosity of learning new means.
Of the ten members of my family, seven of us actively participate in the Digna Ochoa Human Rights Center. That's why they call us a family organization, but it isn't really like this. We've just grown in that way. Our approach to territory is different from other stories in this compilation because we are mestizos and because, where we come from, the Coast region, people are strong and temperamental. When you hurt someone from their family or something precious to them, it's a big issue. Sexism is strong so the fact that women participate doesn't mean they are leaders.

For us, territory is life. Our context is complex and we've been unaware for a long time. It all started with the Frente Cívico Unión de Campesinos (Civic United Front of Campesinos) uprising in response to an attempt of privatizing the only road we have. People started to organize themselves driven by rage.

On the Coast, the major issue is electric energy. Rates are much higher than in San Cristobal (600 Mexican pesos on average for small households). When we started observing these anomalies, we began to organize. The Civic United Front of Campesinos started to visit communities and realized that it wasn't just about electric energy but other things. My dad started to get involved. They discovered
that there were concession projects in Arriaga, for example, wind energy projects. Also a mining (gold, silver, and other minerals) concession in Pijijiapan (with difficult access) and nearby hydroelectric projects.

They also found out that foreigners were buying land at ridiculously low prices. Women were especially concerned about this because the authorities (led by men) in charge of regulating community-owned land were accepting these transactions without consulting women. So women started to organize themselves with other villagers, angry about not being considered in decision-making procedures. They eventually created the Organización de Pescadores (Fishers Organization), a communal land regulation authority to mitigate and address sexism within the community in these aspects. Women tend to get involved when their life and family members are at risk. From the Digna Ochoa Human Rights Center, we observe that in the Coast region, even though women want to get empowered, they are still very much rooted in traditional gender roles.

The Coast region tends to be forgotten and only receives attention from the government when it comes to land concessions, privatization of beaches and highways, and mining projects. The authorities send people to the communities to create ruptures within our communities, to fragment our resistance consolidated over years of work with a discourse that the current president is from the left wing and that things will change. They even try to intervene through women.

We defend lives and territories in the Coast region. They say there’s nothing here, that we are not organized. When they attack us, nothing happens because we are forgotten.

In our struggle, we take as a reference the case of Acacoyagua where they were tricked by companies that began to intervene in the area. Now the river is contaminated and it has an impact on people’s health. They organized themselves and have managed to stop the mining project by blocking the entrance of miners and workers—they established a fixed booth to guard the entrance.
As a resistance, we need to find alternatives, different paths to build and walk together. In the Coast region, we are inspired by the Zapatistas, we know they have managed to create new ways and that encourages us to go on. Currently, we have a health clinic and soon we will train women so they can give first aid in the clinic.

The discourse of Obrador (current Mexican president) claims that resistance is pointless because everything is going to be fixed now. That’s why people have left the movement. But we are inspired by women who start to realize that their needs go beyond those of men and that’s why our fight and resistance continues.

Another very serious issue is that our region has become a highway for drug trafficking. Big boats unload tons of cocaine and hire people to work for them. If they are successful in moving the drugs, they earn between 10,000 and 20,000 Mexican pesos (approx. 500-1000 USD). Drug trafficking affects our communities in many ways, including femicides (not recognized by the authorities). That’s why our resistance isn’t just against companies but also corrupt and dirty systems. We defend lives. The Digna Ochoa Human Rights Center attends to community needs in the Arriaga and Mapastepec region. Since we are only four people, it has been complicated but we try our best.

Thinking in terms of shared responsibility, we have to keep in mind that there are people of flesh and blood that suffer because of our way of conceiving progress. This system likes to fragment campesino rural communities and the modern world. That’s why it’s important to identify how we give meaning to territory, to understand the internet as another type of territory.
Territories are spaces we commit to, where we connect with other beings, human and non-human. It means belonging, inhabiting, relating. To defend this territory, we create mindful, deliberate, and critical sociability. Inhabiting the internet as a feminist territory is about giving new meanings, getting involved, building resistance. Acknowledging this complex space where we want to hold desirable, loving, shared relationships of care for ourselves and for others. It helps us make decisions.

The internet, as we know it today, has developed following an unrestricted economic paradigm and a specific political system. Its infrastructure resides fundamentally in the Global North and follows a client/server architecture, which means, in general, that the programs or applications we use on our devices —"clients"— request services from other (more sophisticated and specialized) devices —"servers"— that host information. From the beginning, it wasn't conceived as a free autonomous network of people "all over the world" or a set of established permanent connections but a very centralized network of computers that share remote information (belonging to a series of institutions, especially North American universities).

Over time, this network has become more and more commercial. Connectivity quickly became a rocketing demand and nowadays the market is interested in all types of objects communicating with each other. As the demand grows, "quick solutions" for infrastructure and protocols are developed to cover the new market "needs".
The increase in data exchange also implies a higher infrastructure demand. Each message we share puts in action various aspects of infrastructure: devices we have access to like computers, mobile phones, or modems; but also others that we can't see like antennae, optical fiber, submarine cables (most of them set up in the Global North), servers, data centers, and the list goes on.

Many of the actions required for communication to happen on the internet are distant. The underlying ideas, behavior, infrastructure, formats are imposed and encourage dependency.

It is often said that the "cloud" doesn't exist, that it's actually someone else's computer running 24/7 responding to our requests. These computers drain a large amount of water and energy to work. Also to cool down. The internet becomes more material and tangible when we understand that, for it to work day and night, it needs huge fans or lots of clean water to cool down.

It's still very difficult to understand how much energy is required to maintain a data center, let's say one of those big corporate ones that provide services we use every day. However, we know that, to fulfill the "demand" as quickly as possible, data needs to be stored, replicated many times in different servers and spread all over the world. Commercial platform success is partially due to constant immediacy and availability. These 'clouds' that store our information invisibilize many aspects, among others, extractivism and energy usage.

Do we need all this information all the time? By design, everything is “stored”. This responds to a business model that enables consumer profiling (of products, services, ideologies).

We need to start asking ourselves what we share, with whom, and where we communicate. If we need to store or send information through this infrastructure all the time or if we prefer to choose what we share at a global level and what we keep at a more local or regional level. In this way, we can start finding ways of using technology in smaller and closer spaces, aligned with our understanding and sense of dignity, aware of other options, understanding how it works.
This led us to think about the relevance of organizing a workshop to set up a local server on a Raspberry Pi during this gathering: we want to find different communication options that fit our needs, in tune with a sense of care for ourselves and others that opens new possibilities of creating things from a place we choose and trust.

The narratives that underlie dominant tech tell us that we can’t think beyond mainstream consumerism. We want to dismantle, through curiosity and experimentation, the idea that expertise is the only way of approaching knowledge.

In our context, “men” not only have time but also permission to experiment, permission to break while they learn. Us women don’t “have” this license. That’s why we create and develop rooms for ourselves where we can lovingly make mistakes as part of our learning process. Setting up a local Raspberry Pi server is a way, not of feeding expertise, but understanding what is possible, what can be done, and expand our limitations.

We also wanted to do this because we know that those who design, produce and build the technology we use every day decide what "world" we can see. They also choose what part of reality the technology we "have access to" reveals. When relating up close with the technology we want to use, we can share our desires... or at least start to understand how they work.

It’s important to start asking ourselves questions to identify the ways we use the internet: what do we share? With whom do we communicate? Why? How can we relate to technology with more dignity for ourselves? These questions allow us to think of other forms of connection, to choose them and not the other way around. They also help us understand how much time we want to invest in making other connections possible.

We know that the internet as a feminist territory wants to acknowledge other types of ideas, thoughts, actions; politicizing care, questioning what we mean by all this terminology that isn't universal but subjective.
Comment: After the demonstration, we rolled up our sleeves and got hands-on setting up some Raspberry Pi servers, testing out the services that the workshop facilitators had installed. Among other things, we realized that when someone has control over an infrastructure (in this case, microcomputers), they decide what we can and cannot see. La jes and Lucía, as workshop facilitators, suggested installing FreedomBox servers. This type of microcomputer (and any other type of infrastructure) is not just designed to host one type of software but leaves the decision open to the administrators.
A territorial feminist internet has to do with means of production that point towards other ways of thinking and taking action. We all say and insist that we have a feminist discourse on care and affection but, little by little, it has lost its political essence. The *Imagine a Feminist Internet* workshop facilitated by la_jes became a space where these terms, far from being universal or conceived from one angle, could be questioned. We hold these conversations because we believe in the need to talk about this in a way that we can all feel emotionally protected.

**Group reflection**

"With all the courses and discourses around the internet, we're missing the focus on the people (the users); we think that an autonomous process of infrastructure must be transversal and opposed to the exploitation of living beings where the concept of 'living' in itself gains new meaning. For us, it's important to respect natural resource cycles, in other words, that nature doesn't adapt to our needs but we can adapt our needs to her without exploiting the earth".

"This adaptation implies conceiving ourselves as part of the cycle of nature, re-establishing natural restoration mechanisms and applying them to our social relationships, creating imaginaries and narratives that give new meaning to life. To achieve this, we need basic capacity building and a learning process where we can consolidate our ideas and, from then on, head in another direction".
"This basic capacity building and learning process should focus on several aspects. On one hand, opposing itself to the adult-centrism, child-phobia, and ageism that impede us from having a common place and action. On the other, highlighting the importance of self-care (not of everyone's interest) because the ideas that we have can be inserted in capitalist discourse that promotes individualism when we are trying to think from a collective self care ethics.

"We are very aware of how important creating our own feminist code is, using keywords that enable developing our language differently: finding other ways of understanding and communicating with each other; evolving our instinct, senses, memory, and observation. This code should be encrypted and we should recover basic technology like orality and communication".

"Hence our attempt in finding how to stop talking about including people in a centralized imposed model and start to question how we shift from centralization to distribution and equality, from the idea of power and control to a sense of network. Federated redistributed networks can help us go against the idea of governance and find a redistribution that doesn't depend on a central node but interconnected peripheral nodes".

'We frame shared accountability as a collective effort to preserve and sustain life beyond hierarchies, based on our immediate realities and creating experiences that can be iterated. Giving new meaning to labor closer to the notion of tequio® (community work) implies creating shared accountability that can transform the sense of community".

"We believe we can recover internet autonomy in a transversal way, not only through shared infrastructure, software, networks, etc. but also by slowing down, understanding the importance of not sharing information carelessly or not always having access to everything because this demands a lot of energy. We also come back to the idea of domestic technology, returning to the roots, to the way we think of home, collective care, and family, rest as an essential part of life. If we think that way, we start to understand that machines also need to take a break".

'technoaffections is an indigenous word for traditions, communal work among the Mixtec indigenous peoples of Mexico.'
“Now we know there are certain technologies that are increasingly connected to nature. In this mapping exercise, we imagine, in a very speculative way, self-sustainable technologies inspired by plants.”

“Actually, we admit it’s a complex ideal and that comfort can challenge it and even put it at risk. However, at least in principle, we can start by supporting those communities that are already involved in this type of process, that already redistribute leadership; and, at the same time, we can continue to boycott big companies.

“We tend to think about changing our lifestyles and that means thinking about what we’ve been addressing in the last days; we want networks to be programmed based on a principle of slowing down because we know that everything doesn’t have to be right now and urgent, that the impact on the environment is growing.”

“One solution we came up with is to use wastewater (gray water) instead of clean water in data-center cooling systems. If there’s already a design for using clean water, surely there can be one for using gray water.”

“This vision includes a strategic approach to decentralization based on our realities; for this, we think it’s important to have and share information to make deliberate decisions because choosing implies prioritizing the information we share and how we do it.”

“We imagine federated networks, local networks where each small community can have their own network without established geographical limits. This is a collective idea where we talked about community (not just ‘indigenous’) servers.”

“That’s how we got to this idea of a distributed design where nodes exchange and serve in a spiral, allowing us to understand that territories don’t have established limits but many possible connections. The idea of a spiral is about going from the smallest to the biggest part, scaleable according to what information needs to be shared and what impact we want to have. This approach goes beyond uniformity and seeks diversity as an opportunity to open conversation with other territories.”

[Imagine]
“This is why we’re talking about an issue of sharing accountability and responsibility in our communication. We conceive it as a weaving of different flows where we talk if we feel the need, potentially shifting the idea of individualized communication to a community perspective”.

“We suggest an ongoing exercise of acknowledging other types of spatiality and time that aren’t universal. That’s why we have to change the ways we understand communication, because not all of them work in our context and reality. When suggesting other types of communication, we also take into account the importance of reassessing human contact as a starting point, to create together and observe other possible relationships between us. That’s why we insist on building on diversity”.

“The conversation we consider worth having has to do with dignity and the conditions that we choose to live our lives; and though we are aware that some of us might share this perspective, we don’t want it to become hegemonic. Despite the risk of over-relativizing, we put forward the value of understanding each person’s context and reassessing human contact. If we don’t talk from a place of dignity, there won’t be a change”.

“We suggest living with other types of communication which open conversation between different struggles, where we can all assume responsibility; this comes from a place of observing how some movements fracture, in our opinion due to lack of communication that impedes us from truly understanding and feeling interest in others”.

Lastly, we want to highlight that we don’t intend to force other people or sectors to adapt to what we are suggesting, but invite them to, from their own context, think of helpful strategies. In this sense, we think it's worth placing attention on a type of design rooted in local value, which requires letting go of the economy ethos.
We were interested in concrete action, in doing, in putting this substance and content in motion in contexts where some issues remain unaddressed. That's why we seek strategies to communicate them in circumstances where people don't want to work at a theoretical level. This pursuit has led us to ask ourselves how to express this conversation and explore strategies to share these issues from a decolonial non-paternalistic perspective that offers opportunities for exchange.

In this spirit, Nadia facilitated a workshop inspired by the Wonder Ponder philosophy series for children, inviting participants to question differently: questions beyond the academic realm, questions with other shapes, angles, and languages; without dictating agendas, analyzing our everyday relationships and experience with technology; from a non-judgmental place, plunging into complexity.

Our approach is to open up participation to collective feedback and analysis. We invited people to write, illustrate and share their questions through cards. We also came up with collective and personal road maps and strategies.
Ideas and thoughts that came up in the session

The whole point of philosophy is to ask questions and think why and from which angle we articulate them. Together we realized that most of our questions came from a place of knowledge (in other words, assuming and wanting to control the answer beforehand). Not a genuine question but a value judgment we hide instead of openly asking the other person about their experience in their own words and concepts. This activity was challenging for us.

One of the strategies we came up with to go beyond judgments when making questions was to focus on the action, on what we see in the landscape, instead of asking about if it's good or bad, beautiful or ugly. To connect with a sense of curiosity and wonder for what people see and experiment so they can give meaning to their own experience. Words hold meaning and ways of understanding the world. Our language is not neutral but when we focus on the action, the doing, going back to the basic questions, we can see what's there and how each person sees the world and gives meaning to what they see.

So we first talk about what is actually happening and then, the people who are going to answer start to give meaning and create values in their own words. Judgment starts when we directly go to values before understanding what/how/when the other person is experiencing.

I'm intrigued by how shared accountability unravels. If we articulate questions that entail judgment, we will also receive a judgmental answer. I find going back to listening to ourselves really interesting. It's an opportunity to not take anything for granted, though it's a complicated task because it requires trust. Even when the question isn't judgmental, it can make someone else uncomfortable and implies further explanation. So it's about asking ourselves when and what we ask about.
Remember that how we frame questions shapes how we frame answers. We must trust in collective intelligence. Even though we all have genuine curiosity when facing novelty and sometimes even biases emerge, what's worthwhile is realizing that we have preconceptions when we think we don't.

There are ways of asking ourselves, out of curiosity, about other people's worlds, beyond knowledge.

The debate is how we articulate these questions. This is an opportunity to inquire of ourselves how we ask questions, why, and how. What do we really want to know? Are we trying to solve what it means for us? What stands out in this exercise is realizing that we are only beginning to ask ourselves this because there's a giant social construct that establishes how and what we ask.

*Do I have a family?*

by Paola Ricaurte
Hackfeminist Manifesto

Technology isn't neutral;
historically, we women haven't been included in the political debate,
but now we are;
as women we ask how we can take on ethical positions facing the
consequences of technological development that affects people,
other species, and nature;
we summon
to explore and live other narrative perspectives
to feel-think technologies that create spaces of trust where we can
talk about these issues that affect us personally and collectively
and question the structures of sexual and technological normativity.
**Cadáver exquisito I**

Why are we gathering?

The tenderness of our chest with the pulsing earth.
The wind's smile in loose free hair.
We want to leave out the structures of steel.
We want the tenderness of water to flow from other rivers, nurture the energy to feel each other; think in community, the technology to share our experiences intimately, that's why we can't share unfiltered what we have lived.
We discuss a lot to know what to say.
When I face my privileges and benefits and how they relate to the impact that I have.
We want to gather despite the differences, to listen to each other and create new possibilities.

**Cadáver exquisito II**

What do we mean by feel-thinking technology?

How do we inhabit technology?
Our body-territory is immersed in an infinite web of reactions where, with empathy, we listen differently, actually giving our attention.
We know it isn't simple.
To embody emotions and feelings when we've been programmed to not feel.
To feel-think with technology is to assume that we are body-machine-earth, to pierce the positivist patriarchal paradigm.
I feel invasion-freedom when I think of technology, invasion-freedom in diverse imagined-conceived territories from different contexts, I feel power-freedom to imagine the world in a way where we are together, in constant contradiction, sharing our sadness and joy, connected with ourselves.
Asking ourselves about our situated experiences with technology and listening to each other from our differences so we can find collective paths of action, still unknown and beyond the single-story narratives and solutions is vital. To seek answers from local initiatives that respect people's and communities' own anti-patriarchal, anti-colonial and anti-capitalist ways of thinking.

We believe in synergy and the power of hope. There are many of us here questioning and presenting new ways that honor ourselves and others, from the territories that we inhabit. We believe that talking from our own situated experience, within community, enables us to build worlds and pluriverse technology where we fit in.

We feel-think ourselves around the opportunity of integrating these other aspects of technology that allow us to choose when and how we want to use this "network of networks" that transits our lives and transforms into spaces of "tenderness, trust, and resistance", spaces of care and accountability, spaces where we are aware and stimulated to continue creating together.

As one of the participants said: this is a place where we nurture each other to face the capitalist apocalypse, where we act in community and can put on the table other dreams and intentions for this work we live in. This is another dynamic where, above all, we can have fun.
A special thanks to all the powerful and fierce women that made this gathering come to life.

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