Binary Trouble: Preconditions for Non-binary Gender in Works of Heidegger, Derrida and Butler

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Abstract:
Non-binary gender as an umbrella term refers to any gender beyond the male/female categories. With the progressing LGBT+ movement and future predictions referring to all persons equally „regardless of their chosen gender“ (Cave, Klein, 2015), the question of philosophical and societal limits of being non-binary is a fundamental one for understanding the patterns in the current sign system. Binary, as such, is of a philosophical nature and can be interpreted as political; as in the works of Jacques Derrida and Judith Butler who both accelerated feminist criticism by analysing how the masculine is privileged in the construction of meaning. Also, for Martin Heidegger binary is a subject of criticism as he tried to establish a new dualistic-thinking humanism in which being comes before metaphysical oppositions. However, in his attempt to define being through its difference to beings, being is dependent on the difference. There is a significant problem with Heidegger's approach to gender and sex. The neutral Dasein is neither of the two sexes but as factual it is a gendered being (Geschlechtswesen). Derrida analyses the pre-differential state as a precondition for uniqueness of each gender, which is separated by space and time of endless difference, and Butler investigates the reinterpretation of meanings of differences and the becoming of gender.

The goal of this article is to compare the approaches of these three scholars to find the possibilities, preconditions and limits of non-binary gender. Thus, I read Heidegger and compare his thoughts on sex and gender of Dasein with the perspective of Derrida and Butler, and then I discuss the limits of Butler's approach by using the perspective of Derrida and come to the conclusion on visibility of gender signs and their validity in discourses. Together with Butler, I assume that there is no gender identity but performatively constituted expressions (Butler 1990, 25), whose origin is the own desire for recognition, which is why I don't differentiate between sex/gender/desire.

In his lectures on Geschlecht, Derrida describes inter alia the way logocentrism has been genderized on the example of Dasein, a fundamental concept in the existential philosophy of Martin Heidegger which has opened novel possibilities. Although these three thinkers rarely come together in comparisons, I am of the opinion that analysing them in this sequence is optimal for the reasoning about gender and its limit within the process of structural reorganization of society in the Western culture throughout the 20th and 21st centuries. I argue that the point of clash of their arguments dwells in the interlinkage of thinking, acting and signifying of a politicized material body. All of them problematize authenticity and repetition. Heidegger provokes the idea of a neutral and bodiless Dasein which can become authentic but where no becoming of gender is possible, Derrida seeks the pre-differential state which enables becoming, and Butler seeks the way in which gender is becoming. Although Heidegger tried to establish thinking beyond dualistic terms, he defined being by using its difference from beings, i.e. he thought of being through difference and escaped the problem of identity, including the sexual or gender identity of Dasein. Derrida criticized the binary domination, reviewed the conditions for the functioning of the prime beginning, which he understands as the primordial sexual difference that existed before the binary opposition. In this context, sex is pre-differential, unsigned, naked but is being veiled by the clothes of language and culture. This pre-differential state can be understood as a positive potential for a non-binary identity, a possibility of sexual multiplicity and denotation of self as any possible sex. Similarly, as a stroke strikes validity as for example when minting the coin, the formation of gender should be understood as striking, respectively as
signification rather than construction or production. It is a violent act which is exercised from the outside on the surface which is initially reconciliatory. In the space opened by Derrida and by using his instruments of decomposition and citationality, Butler builds her concept of performativity and gender performance as a practice by which discourse produces effects that it names. She regards binary as fiction which has the regulatory function to confirm the heterosexual coherency. The materiality of sex is violently created and operates as a ritual. Such performativity as a predicate used for creating facts is based on a game of sign because whatever we think of materiality it is always embedded in a chain of signs that constitutes its concept. The possibility of subversion offered by Butler does not “mint” the validity of non-binary identity because this is being done, with Derrida's words, by a stroke which is the discourse itself. It has its power just by the sign, if it would not operate with signs, it wouldn't be visible. However, in the space of the current „we“ invisibility means recognisability, i.e. the legibility of the sign. By breaking the power of the current „we“ or „discourse“ the possibility of sexual multiplicity can be afforded, respectively of non-binary identity. But its strike, which would impede the validity of such identity, will only be possible in chaos. Until then, the signs of the non-binary identity will be assigned to the ideal created by the actual „we“, i.e. to the ideal of masculinity, respectively femininity, likewise there will be the effect of phallogocentrism.

Subversion is necessarily political because it requires a refusal of repeating the imposed sign and its replacement by a modified sign in a new context. It can take place only within the discourse because it cannot be left out. Concluding on her approach, I argue that sex/gender/desire depends on the strength of the discourse and on the strength of subversion; their essence is incidental and can be compared to the essence of throwness, which Derrida describes on the basis of Heidegger's throwness into being. The spreading of non-binary visibility can further abolish the effects of the discourse, but not the discourse itself. It is the power of the „monster“ which shifts away into a field of impossibility, excludes, respectively pathologizes. Similarly, the expressions of non-binary gender identity are excluded because they are visible and therefore unreadable. Although Derrida is considering the possibilities of a pre-differential state and Butler points out to the possibility of returning back into it, neither of them shows a way how it would be possible to overcome the power of discourse because, in my opinion, the existence outside of the discourse is not possible. Likewise, it is not possible to break the logic of positivity by destruction because we would lose communication and thus ourselves. Thus, logocentrism cannot be done away with, it is only possible to disturb it and let the act of questioning it function further.

**Keywords:**
Non-binary gender, Dasein, Authenticity, Becoming, Body, Heidegger, Derrida, Butler.

**Introduction**

Based on the reconsideration of identity and ethical justification of alterity which we have known since Jean-François Lyotard (1984, 74), postmodern authors divert from the concept of the objective world and thereby from values respected by all in society and the fundamentals of sex/gender/desire. The postmodern change of values was, according to Gilles Lipovetsky (1998, 7), enabled by the permanent revolution of everyday life and a human who strives for being totally themselves. He regards the feminist revolution to be the reason for the end of gender binary and its coded oppositions, on whose foundations can neo-feminism deal with the question of how to be self without dealing with the binary (1998, 98). Derrida would never speak about himself as of a postmodern author, he discarded all forms of „-isms“, he would also reject any connection to feminism. He would distrust terms and meaning as he distrusted all attempts to construct a coherent image of anything that has never existed, including being. He rejected an objectively existing being or nature which can be perceived, because all thought and language systems have no final logos as does nature or truth as their foundation. In his understanding, writing precedes the logos and creates it. Therefore, identity cannot be reached because it is a set of perceptions which have been designated by writing. Thus, signifying is necessary to be understood as transcendental, as a metaphysical term. Through writing it is possible only to approximate to logos. Systems which assume a final logos are logocentric and the signified within them is always already in the position of the signifying. By his approach Derrida implants each signified to the state of a
differential trace, where meaning is continually saved. The meaning is received from this reserve by the motion of signification as a trace of a past element (Derrida 1993, 157). The signified is transcendental; it is an ideal construction which does not match with the object as such. The whole work of Derrida is dedicated to the question of how terms by which we all signify a specific thing came to our mind. He doubted the existence of a centre which would have a natural place and thought instead of it as a „non-place“ where signs are being incessantly substituted. Representations are being endlessly chained and their significance cannot be present or absent, they shift continually in contexts and time. Meanings, or unambiguously considered structures of the world, must necessarily be called into question and Derrida considers every meaning to be deferred, which „brings to the frontier zone of Western metaphysics, to the boundaries of the philosophical zone of significance, whose original territory Plato has attempted to mark and form“ (Fišerová 2014, 11). Derrida also considers writing to be treacherous because we only put our thoughts into it. It can be considered as a mere supplement of true thinking that takes place only in our heads. Deferring of meaning is primarily an ethical reason. If he would replace the fixed meaning with another fixed meaning, he would establish a new logocentrism. That's why Derrida encouraged questioning each binary opposition and hierarchisation by the concept1 of diffèrence, respectively by neographism, which is a goal in itself. Just as he refused the opposition of nature and culture in the critique of Claude Lévi-Strauss (Derrida 1967, 101) stating that the nature is indistinguishable from culture; he rejects any contrapositions of a couple and inferiority, which results from the definition of the other by his negation against the former; it is the foundation of his critical text analysis and of seeking for contexts hidden beneath their surface. In particular, throughout his work he emphasized the phallocentric principle of Western culture, which is placing masculinity in leadership and at the beginning. He considered phallogocentrism to be „a system of metaphysical opposition“ (Derrida 1978, 20), which was written exclusively by men until the 20th century. Heidegger is one of the representatives of phallogocentric inheritance, as was Plato, Freud, Lacan, Kant, Hegel or Lévinas (Spire 2000).

The emergence of differences is not the difference in itself but the happening of differentiation. It is a constant shift in the structure of signifiers, a movement by which each code is historically constituted as an outline of difference (Derrida 1993, 156). Otherness is not understood on the basis of characteristics or substance but on the process of differentiation, which can be understood as an interspace that encompasses both distinct elements so that they are both equal within it but not identical. At the same time, the difference divides and establishes, gives identity to the other but also to the first. Diffèrence does neutralise and is neutral, it points to the malfunctioning of the logic of positivity and negativity as it hinders the neutrality of being. It is not possible to demarcate oneself against it in positive terms.

It is necessary to consider the act of defining a man and a woman in similar terms, as it is not possible to define a woman; as it is done by the phallogocentrism, which is based on the order of the Father, the difference and the signifying. The association of logocentrism with the phallus is essential for understanding the perception of Western metaphysics, which is dominated by male superiority. Neutrality is important for Derrida's analysis of sex, and, together with the „ability of active agency“, it is the basis for the concept of performativity introduced by Butler. According to Derrida, each structure has been neutralised by assigning to it a permanent origin, which serves for the orientation and the balancing of totality of each

1 Derrida would never talk about his approach as a concept; even so he denied in discussions that he would establish a new method when he proceeds in a similar way in his texts. It is possible to call it quasi-transcendental (Gasché 1986, 123).
of such structures. Derrida rejects this presumed constancy and in his later works he reflects on the otherness of animals and the plurality of differences among animals. As an example of an animal beyond a sexual difference and sexual duality he uses the silkworm caterpillar. In A Silkworm of One's Own, he recalls his childhood in Algeria where he bred indistinguishable silkworm caterpillars „Before I was thirteen, before ever having worn a talith and even having dreamed of possessing my own, I cultivated (what's the link?) silkworms, the caterpillars“ (Derrida 1996, 87). Linking tallit as a sign of assignment to a male community and an ambiguous or unidentified gender can be understood as a reference to belonging to a species without any identification sign. He comes back to the silkworm caterpillars parallel in The Animal That Therefore I Am (1997) where he describes his inspiration to deal with that which is not veiled, i.e. with the nakedness of animals. He thinks about nakedness in terms of pre-differential state, which is then being veiled by the clothes of language and culture. He starts with the analysis of Genesis and ask if the creation of Adam, respectively ha-adam (the human), preceded the creation of a woman. He comes back to the relationship between animals and women in The Beast and The Sovereign (2002) where he thinks about why there are no women on the island of Robinson Crusoe but only men and animals. He considers the femininity of the animal and the masculinity of the ruler as the basis for the articulation of an erotic relationship. According to Derrida, the readers of Robinson return back to their childhood and paradise where the sexual difference did not exist. All this consideration leads to the question of whether it would be possible to avoid the power which veils and assigns and if an erotic relationship would be possible if such an identification sign would be absent.

Dasein becomes, so should its gender

Derrida searches for the prerequisites of the primordial state which is in his opinion the state of the gender difference that existed before the binary opposition. In lectures Geschlecht I (1983) and Geschlecht II (1987) he analyses old meanings of words in order to open alternative possibilities for the understanding of difference. This deconstruction is not dealing only with text but also with being silent on specific issues and uncovering the intent of the silence. Silent is also the a in diffèrence which stays hidden. He understands „being silent“ as a necessary non-being which precedes being. Derrida is interested in Heidegger's being silent on the sex or gender of Dasein in Being and Time from 1927 (Derrida 1983, 65). There, Heidegger declared the essence of the human to be neutral (das Dasein) as he deals with the indifference of the average everydayness which is made of repetition without difference. Dasein can be interrupted through experience of limits and become authentic (process of individuation as an existential mode) because the neutrality is broken. That means it can be freed from domination and, although Heidegger doesn't thematise the sex or gender of Dasein, it is obvious that it can decide to be authentic and that it is dependent on the “they”. According to § 40, Dasein can be authentic or not depending on its dealing with anxiety, i.e. it can be itself in its existence or run away from itself (Heidegger 1996b, 185). Becoming authentic and acting authentically means to understand one's nature and act in line with one's

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2 The reference to tallit, the Jewish prayer coat, is common for Derrida. It is a reminder of the law of God which cannot be discarded; one is deposited in it even after his death.

3 This is based on the understanding of the possibility of authentic existence, the focus on the self as a happening (Geschehen) and revelation of the lostness in the they-self which means merely actualizing possibilities enabled by the “they”. In § 27, the “they” are characterized as those who present every judgement and decision (Heidegger 1996a, 152).

4 There is no positive determination of inauthenticity, it is thought by Heidegger as a negation to authenticity.

5 Anxiety about being-in-the-world is a mood which enables one's distinguishing from the “they”, self-awareness and its experience causes authenticity. Its origin is the finity of life.
nature as being-in-the-truth. This leads to two questions: Could this authenticity be perceived in relation with gender? And, how does the deliberate decision to act authentically relates to others and the fall back into the “they”? In §26, Heidegger focuses on „being-with“ in the world as Dasein is always with others and never alone, and refers to the essential assignment or reference to those, for whom it should be „cut to the figure“ (auf den „Leib zugeschnitten“ sein) (Heidegger 1996b, 143). Here arises the question if this with-one-another could be interpreted as a precondition of being gendered and whether this „cut to the figure“ means a necessity to understand Dasein through its body? Heidegger avoids giving answers and provides some comments on the choice to refer to the „neutrality“ of Dasein in his later lectures. In 1928, in the last lecture at the University of Marburg entitled The Metaphysical Foundations of Logic, he concludes in §10, point 2 that “the peculiar neutrality of the term “Dasein" is essential, because the interpretation of this being must be carried out prior to every factical realization. This neutrality indicates that Dasein is neither of the two sexes,” and in point 4 that „neutral Dasein is never what exists; Dasein exists in each case only in its factical realization” (Heidegger 1984, 136-137). On the other hand, in 1928/29 Freiburg lectures The Essence of Human Freedom: An Introduction to Philosophy in which he states: “However, it belongs to the essence of this neutral being that, insofar as it exists factically, it has necessarily broken its neutrality, that is, Dasein is either masculine or feminine; it is a sexual creature (Geschlechtswesen)" (Heidegger 1996b, 146).

Dasein („being there“ as in German „da“ stands for „there and „sein" for „being") is a finite being (existence) which is realized in human (contrary to Sein may also pertain to a thing) in a world where others exist, i.e. it is open towards the world and other existences. According to François-David Sebbah, Dasein is a destruction of the subject as a base and self-presence (Sebbah, 369) because it doesn't dispose of „I“ and can be itself only if it is out of itself. Thus, Heidegger acts phenomenologically beyond an objectivizing differentiation of dividing a body and soul from the given primordial unity. He considers the structure of being to be characterized by thrownness (Geworfenheit) into the world, which is its mode and possibility. It is not physically present in the form of a body; it is a dynamic way of being which is responsible for understanding the world and ourselves. It seems to be never fully present to itself. Its primordial ontological base is timeness which stands for movement, sense and is simultaneously a limit.

The (material) body interchanges with the world.

If Dasein disposes of no body, then it is questionable if one can think of its sex, gender and sexuality. This is not an obstacle, however, either for Heidegger or Derrida to deal with the question of Daseins' sex. In Being and Time the phenomenon of body is no issue for Heidegger, which was criticized by Jean-Paul Sartre (1978, 429) or Maurice Merleau-Ponty (Aho 2005, 42), who consider the perception of the body as primary for the contact of a human with his world. For Merleau-Ponty, body is a cultural object. In his Heraclitus Seminar Heidegger himself recognized that the problem of the body is the „most difficult“ one (Heidegger 1993, 146). In the Zollikon Seminars (Heidegger, 2001), which took place thirty

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6 „Being-alone“ means only a lack of the others and is possible only as a opposite to „being-with“ which is default.  
7 Heidegger doesn't speak directly about a human, only in quotation marks which is a prerequisite for challenging being from the very beginning and thus his initial experience (Johannßen 2017, 97). The problem then arises automatically with grasping its corporeality and later differentiating the body into a lived and material one.  
8 He only speaks about the space which Dasein fills up: „Dasein takes space in; this is to be understood literally. It is by no means just present-at-hand in a bit of space which its body fills up” (Heidegger 1996a, 368).
three years after *Being and Time* was published, Heidegger reacts to Sartre and Merleau-Ponty's critique, despite not mentioning the latter by name. Just like Husserl, Heidegger distinguishes the unlimited lived body (*Leib*) which is a medium of all experience from the material body (*Körper*) which is a material anatomic object. For Heidegger, the material body stands for a way of existence in the world, and the lived body is a communication organ which determines itself actively towards the world in the interconnection with others. Both, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty argue that the lived body is the openness towards the world. In my opinion, if *Dasein* exists, then it is necessarily in the world and must dispose of a bodily form which reflects its otherness as a material body and thus, the question of sex and gender is a relevant one. In my opinion, the only remaining explanation would be that Heidegger would not think about *Dasein* as a factual at all, which is not the case. *Dasein* itself is exposed to effects which create categories of gender. Heidegger considers *Dasein* as a unit composed of two parts, *Da-sein as being there*, in which *Da* (there) holds a lived body. *Da* existed even before and includes norms which create categories of sex and gender. Thus, *Dasein* contains in itself history, presence and future, and in my opinion, it must necessarily be dependent on social practices, institutions and language. Even social practices do limit the possibilities of the lived body and affect directly the material body, inter alia when interpreting and representing sex, gender or sexuality. Thus, *Dasein* should be becoming also in regard to its gender just like the subject in Butler's understanding as a performative materialization of its social environment.

In Derrida's view, for Heidegger the sex difference stands for an existential structure of *Dasein* which would mean that it would influence the significance of existence (Derrida 1983, 70). In *Geschlecht I*, Derrida concludes that that the neutrality of sex does not use ontological negativity in relation to sex but to sexual duality. According to him neutral *Dasein* is not sexless, only its sexual binarity is neutralized. Binarity includes a positive and a negative pole, at the same time it is a determination which is negated and which determines. While the sexual duality is being removed, the sex itself is being released. By sex he means the sign belonging to one of two sexes. This release or liberation opens new possibilities for signs of sex beyond duality. However, it is not pre-dual because there is no duality. Subsequently Derrida thinks of sex as pre-differential, which does not mean that it is necessarily undivided, homogeneous or undifferentiated. Such determination of sex can be perceived as a positive potential for non-binary identity, the possibility for gender multiplicity and the possibility to denominate oneself to whichever gender. According to Derrida, this multiplicity is enabled by both thrownness (into existence) and the dispersed structure (the dispersion of *Dasein*), the combination of which creates a space for differences without oppositions. *Dasein* is not born but is thrown into a space already dominated by the male element, which multiplies by seeding.\(^9\) Pre-differential multiplicity is originary dissemination and exactly the thrownness has this originary attribute and enables it. But Heidegger speaks about not assigning *Dasein* to any of both sexes and Derrida understands this neutralisation as an effect of negativity which results from the binary difference of sex. From his point of view, neutralisation is an act of violence which is preceded by the intention to reduce the differentiation of sexes to just one sex – the masculine – and as such it is an instrument of phallogocentrism. In its neutrality *Dasein* is an originating positivity and has the power over existence. When *Dasein* is thrown into the originary dissemination, it should find itself in a space without oppositions, where it would have a positive potential for sexual multiplicity. But dissemination is allowed only to

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\(^9\) By spreading, dispersion or dissemination refers Derrida to the process of spreading of (male) element (semen) and to a state of what is dispersed, i.e. at the same to a signifying and sign („sémation“ and „sém“). In *Dissemination* (Derrida 1981, 45), he points out at the non-reducible and generative multiplicity of dissemination.
the masculine element just as the language is enabled by dissemination, which perpetually produces oppositions.

**The validity of belonging**

In *Geschlecht II* Derrida tackles the relation of a lived body (Leib) and sexual difference. He deconstructs the origin of the German term *Geschlecht* which stands for “stock, race, family, species, genus/gender, generation, sex” (Derrida 1987, 183). *Geschlecht* is a series of his lectures on philosophical belonging and nationalism which unveil 'strokes' (Schlag in German as a root word for *Geschlecht*) that bring about signification. Similarly, as a 'stroke imprints validity', for example when minting the coin, the formation of gender should be understood as striking imprinting, respectively as signification rather than as a construction or production. Also in this case it is a violent act which is exercised from the outside on the surface, which is reconciliatory in its beginning: „The primordial sexual difference is tender, gentle, peaceful, when that difference is struck down by a “curse” (’Fluch’, a original word of Trakl used and interpreted by Heidegger), the duality or the duplicity of these two becomes unleashed or even a bestial opposition.“ (Derrida 1987, 193). Then, what is this that makes sexual difference, understood as sexual diversity, a sexual opposition? What is for Derrida this „curse“ which strikes *Geschlecht* and breaks it into oppositions? Is it the Christian-Platonic morality with its metaphysics which Nietzsche began to break down? Will originary dissemination ensure the liberation from this morality, and thus enable sexual multiplicity? Or will the stroke still imprint the validity; but a shift will occur which that will broaden the space for the sexual multiplicity? Or will such liberation just bring repetition of what was already the content of *Da* and will such multiplicity be dependent on the stroke which strikes the validity? Derrida stimulates to ask such questions but he doesn't give answers. He concludes *Geschlecht I* with the question if dispersion and multiplication give the possibility to think about the sexual difference without negativity, not stroked by duality. He answers that a shift is possible when the opposition would be decomposition. In my opinion, this can be understood as a conscious rejection of the „curse“, disassembling of its structure and interchange of order and chaos only in which the sexual multiplicity is possible. Thus, it is essential to understand the order of the „curse“ and the overcoming of anxiety which *Dasein* suffers from. Derrida concludes *Geschlecht II* with a reference to Heidegger's assumption that there is one single space for metaphysics and Christianity and asks if there is such a space. Again, he leaves this question open before chute (downfall in French), by which he denominates the end of text, but at the same time he refers to the possibility of replacing chute with envoi (send out in French). Such a recommendation is certainly not accidental and I argue that envoi can be understood as Heidegger's term *Geschick* (fate, i.e. something that goes beyond what happens), which binds everyone to the primary experience of the community, on the antecedent heritage. The fate of being is „sent out“ as determined (Derrida 1982, 1). It is itself historical. For Heidegger, being is the fate of thinking. For Derrida downfall would be equal to fate. Coming out from his conviction that sign is a premonition of downfall, then fate consists in the sign and it is possible to change it only through a sign. The transition of the presence of the signified to its representation in the signifying is a downfall from the imaginary to the perceptible, and the imaginary has a greater value got by the „curse“ than the perceptible. If signs are repeated, this repetition must be disrupted to put this value straight.

In *Geschlecht II* Derrida explains how the polysemic *Geschlecht* links the belonging with the current „we“; it is not „determined by birth, native soil, or race, has nothing to do with the

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natural or even the linguistic (…)“ (Derrida 1987, 162). This „we“ is a „monster“, in the sense of sign which points at (monter in French) and warns (la monstre). At the same time la monstre stands in French for changing of gender and une montre is a watch. i.e. one time. „We“ authorizes the current Geschlecht by pointing at it and signifying. Derrida considers „monster“ to be a power structure in specific time and also Heidegger’s hand which points at and assigns (Derrida 1987, 187). It is a hand which humans use to write signs by signature, i.e. assigns signs and thus it is itself a monstrous sign as its gestures run through language by also being silent. Indirectly, in Geschlecht II, Derrida deals with the instrumentalization and politicization of the body, in the sense of the material body (Körper) which is responsible for the manifestation of word in the handwriting (Handschrift) and handiwork (Handwerk) which is at the same time thinking and product of the hand, i.e. the physical sign of a thought and humankind (Geschlecht). In the view of Derrida, the hand only fulfils its essence in the movement of truth, „in the double movement of what hides and causes to go out of its reserve“ (Derrida 1987, 178), while only being alone which disposes of language can dispose of hand. Derrida doesn’t speak in this context about sex or gender. However, in my opinion, this is where Heidegger’s, Derrida’s and Butler’s arguments clash - in the interlinkage of thinking, acting and signifying hand of a politicized material body.

Da, i.e. here, comprehended the „monstre“ which creates categories of sex/gender. Actually, Dasein is a happening, on which basis one understands the world around and himself. Heidegger doesn’t give to Dasein a material body but the lived body is for him difficult to grasp, he speaks about the phenomena of lived body as the most difficult one and mentions it only on few lines of Being and time. It is not clear for me if he takes into account the impact of the „monster“ in the form of the material body which he understands just as a box. However, this box has the „monste“ effect, which strikes the validity and assigns. Derrida breaks the „monstre“ to liberate the women and opened hereby the possibility for emergence of sexual/gender multiplicity. By the disrupting of the binary opposition, i.e. defining a man against a woman, the man loses the control over the limit which defines his identity. The woman ceases to be the opposite of man, and so man is unable to assert the uniqueness of „his“ gender. By the opening of the space for the overwriting of the sexual difference from the traditional metaphysical determination, Derrida gives the possibility for genders at which cannot be pointed or assigned and which exceed the language. The man loses by the disruption of the Binary opposition the control over the preservation of the symbolic order whose language does signify the gender and sexuality. In my opinion, here is the space for doing one’s own gender in such an uncontrolled environment and also to assign to one’s own body arbitrary signs which will in such an environment be received without any regard to sex because of the existing multiplicity in this space. But can they exist if it is not possible to point them out and when they exceed the language? According to Butler, Jacques Lacan also considers both the possibility to gain, accept or take over gender, and symbolic positions. He understands the constitution of I as a psychical work of fiction, which originates within the limits of the symbolical order that legitimizes gender-differentiated fiction mediated by language (Butler 1993, 96). In the tradition of both, Derrida and Lacan, Butler continues in the performance which enables the sexual multiplicity.

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11 Etymologically, the verb monstrare in Latin relates to medieval spirituality and means to show or demonstrate the numinous which was believed to be the origin of everything. A monstrance stands in the Roman Catholic church, Old Catholic and Anglican churches for a vessel in which the Blessed Sacrament is exposed.

12 Acting (handeln in German) is thinking and thinking is a part of the way how body functions. The hand thinks before it is thought and therefore is for Heidegger thinking itself: “The hand designs and signs, presumably because man is a sign” (Heidegger 1976, 16).
Political subversion at the surface of the body

Butler uses Derrida’s opened space for sexual multiplicity and takes over his instruments of decomposition, repetition and citation. She understands the gender binary as a fiction which has a regulative function confirming the heterosexual coherency. Such an approach can put aside the biological sex and think instead of a socially determined gender which sex takes over in the framework of a specific culture and it realizes itself through performance. The subject constantly reacts to the „monstre“ by repeating it and confirming ideals of sex/gender/desire. It relates to them through its behaviour in order to get into a concordance accepted by the „monster“. Otherwise the power of „monster“ would move them into a space of impossibility, pathologizing the subject. That means that the materiality of sex originates violently and functions as a ritual. Such a performativity13 is based on playing with signs which is taking place at the surface of the body because everything which is claimed about materiality is always embedded in a chain of signification which make a concept out of it: „to return to matter requires that we return to matter as a sign which in it redoublings and contradictions enacts an inchoate drama of sexual difference“ (Butler 1993, 49). With regard to the non-existence of being which wouldn’t be social, there cannot be any body which could exist before a cultural signification and thus each body wrestles with the problem of assignment to a sex, gender and sexuality. Such wrestling leads to „doing“ gender which the „monstre“, i.e. in her conception discourse requires what is appropriate for the order and readable for the others. It comes to a dissimulation which reacts to the current here, respectively Da as for the concept of Dasein. The sexual and gender identity is being performatively oversigned and this re-citation constitutes the fundamental for the existence of the subject in the order of „monster“, and thus also the possibility to convert this order against itself. This subversion is necessarily political because it requires a refusal of repeating of the imposed sign and its replacement by a modified sign in a new context. Such an imitation removes the meaning of the „original“, which doesn't exist though, and thus it is an imitation of a myth of an original. Subversion can take place only within the discourse because this cannot be left. Therefore, it depends only on the stability and strength of the symbolic and the power by which it is possible through a political reaction to restrict its strength. Butler argues that a sign produces modes of its own violation and can become an imperative and thus a cultural sign which the imperative becomes readable. Concluding her approach, I argue that sex/gender/desire depends on the strength of the discourse and on the strength of subversion; their essence is incidental and can be compared to the essence of thrownness which Derrida describes on the basis of Heidegger's thrownness into being.

Both Derrida and Butler consider the conscious rejection of the „curse“ as a precondition for enabling non-binary. In the situation as described by Derrida as ‘silkworm caterpillar’, it is possible to work through with a political rejection and modification of signs through which the „monstre“ constructs artificially ideals of sex/gender/desire. This will disrupt the readability, the distinguishability of sign and will discontinue the effect of the order. The perceptible gains greater value than the imaginary, and the „curse“ will be cancelled. The new conditions for such a political act loosens the originally acknowledged values, and postmodernity has become an appropriate time to articulate such an approach. Such subversion is, for example, gender blending which involves mixing of signs on one body, or the disjunction of looks and behaviour. Although the „monster“ allows the subject to be beside the ideal, it will still try to assign it to the ideal. It remains problematic that the subversion of a subject itself doesn't strike the validity which is caused by the stroke which is

13 i.e. the ability of discourse to create phenomena, including the creation of a notion of what is beside performance.
the „monster“ itself, i.e. the current „we“, respectively individual discourses. To reach the goal of subversion, a subject can approach in subcultures in which a certain disruption of the order has been caused but also here it is just a mere shift of the ideal which has to be validated and not its cancellation; respectively a discontinuation of the „curse“ within this subculture. Butler demonstrates this in the example of homosexual communities in which there is a continuous differentiation of masculine and feminine individuals. Thus, is the abolishment of the „curse“ and a return to the pre-differential state possible?

Although Derrida encourages the decomposition, he doesn't speak in its context about chaos which in my opinion would necessarily occur if the „curse“ would be discontinued. I assume that chaos is such a situation in which signs don't underlie any hierarchy and therefore, it is not possible to assign them. In such a chaos, the sign ceases to exist and there is an end of the language. However, such chaos would not be possible in a society and would isolate the subject on a desert island. But as Fišerová points out, it is Derrida's strategy: „Derrida doesn't want to get out of metaphysics: Just when he reveals the metaphysical patterns of thinking in the analyzed texts, he leaves them exposed to function further because he realizes that every critique of metaphysics uses metaphysical terms whereby he keeps the movement of his thoughts in a vicious circle“ (Fišerová 2014, 20). He overturns the hierarchy of metaphysical binary opposition and casts doubt on the „natural“ supremacy, he opens up new possibilities for signs beyond the duality of the sex but he ends up with this proposal because he knows that it is a vicious circle. Butler paves the way from this vicious circle through a political activity which would necessarily have to encompass the whole „us“ to reach the goal. Derrida doesn't have such an ambition; his policy of deconstruction aims to think differently, to thematize, to draw attention and remains coming. Butler follows Derrida's approach but moves it to where Derrida himself wouldn't go. I am of the opinion that the pre-differential gender is an ideal as well as the „monster“ repeated and confirmed by the ideals of sex/gender/desire.

Conclusion

In my view, the limit of such an ideal dwells in the current „we“, in the „monster“ which keeps the „curse“ alive. Heidegger says in this context that “Dasein's everyday possibilities of Being are for the Others to dispose of as they please. (...) What is decisive is just that inconspicuous domination by Others which has already been taken over unaware of Dasein as Being-with. One belongs to the Others oneself and enhances their power” (Heidegger 1996a, 152). He might be thinking about the problem of the current “we” also when thinking about the genderized being (Geschlechtlichkeit) and its relation to “they”. The same applies to love which is not mentioned in Being and Time, maybe because he would be pressed into constitution of self through a “you”, including the question of sex. Therefore I deduce that these aspects necessarily relating to Dasein and necessarily to a body have been avoided by Heidegger for his own purpose. “We” is dependent on throwness into being and thus on place which one couldn't choose and thus must learn to exist in as a part of the process of individuation. Heidegger's approach which is based on becoming as the existence is a possibility of being and a possibility to be authentic could have been a suitable precondition for non-binary gender or trans-gender if Heidegger would not think in a binary way about sex or gender of Dasein. In authenticity, Dasein would be not limited by the domination of the “they” and would allow becoming of an existence in-between. Such a precondition would also find backing in Heidegger's assumption that the authenticity can be lost which causes a fall

14 His approach is purely ethical, not political, and not intended for application.
back into inauthenticity in which *Dasein* dissolves in the everydayness of the “they”, i.e. the domination of norms causing a fall back onto the limits of binary gender in the case of trans-gender inauthenticity.\footnote{Forgetting of the self, i.e. resigning on authentic gender for a specific period of time as a result of the societal pressure is common characteristic feature of trans-gender people.} It is obvious that Heidegger was thinking about the aspect of gender and the relation of *Dasein* and body for a long time as he developed his thoughts on the *Geschlechtswesen* two years after *Being and Time* in *The Essence of Human Freedom: An Introduction to Philosophy*. It might be the current “we” which kept him back from the reflections on authentic gender. Probably such a step would have been controversial in the first half of the 20th century. However, it makes Heidegger's attempt to go beyond binary questionable. Such a step is in the second half of 20th century already possible after the accelerating of the process of individuation by societal change, feminism and LGBT+ movement. However, for Butler the relevant example of gendering is limited to drag and homosexual communities. Performativity and subversion enable the effect of authenticity by continuous citing but they will not cause the validity if norms of the “they” are not cited. Subversion has its power just by the sign, if it would not operate with signs, it wouldn't be visible. However, invisibility means in the space of the current „we“ recognisability, i.e. the legibility of the sign. In my opinion, the possibility of sexual multiplicity, respectively of non-binary identity, can be afforded by breaking the power of the current „we“ or „discourse“ but its strike, which would impede the validity of such identity, will only be possible in chaos. Until then, the signs of the non-binary identity will be assigned to the ideal created by the actual „we“, i.e. to the ideal of masculinity, and respectively femininity, likewise there will be the effect of phallogocentrism. However, there is no single discourse but several discourses. Derrida states in one of his last lectures that „between my world, the “my world,” what I call “my world,” and there is no other for me, every other world making up part of it, between my world and every other world, there is initially the space and the time of an infinite difference, of an interruption incommensurable with all the attempts at passage, of bridge, isthmus, communication, translation, trope, and transfer that the desire for a world and the sickness of the world [mal du monde], the being in sickness of the world [l'être en mal de monde] will attempt to pose, to impose, to propose, to stabilize. There is no world, there are only islands“ (Derrida 2011, 31). Thus, everyone's gender can be understood as unique, separated by space and time of endless difference, which makes out of it necessarily a social and political construct. Returning to the silkworm caterpillar which is wrapped in fibre when curled, Derrida compares it to a person who is wrapping himself from the pre-differential state with the fibre of the language and weaves from it a substance of „truth“. He comes to this statement by considering *ver* (catterpillar in French) and *verité* (truth in French). Sex difference is, from this point of view, a means of preventing *shatnez*, mixed wool and linen, which *halacha*, Jewish religious law, forbids wearing.\footnote{Permitted is to wear wool and linen cloth but never mixed cloth (Leviticus 19:19 a Deuteronomy 22:9–11). *Kilayim*, (mixture, clutter, heterogeneity in Hebrew) is a general ban on mixing species.} The one who violates this rule by his actions is *“naluḥ“* (perverse in Hebrew) and *“turns God against himself“* (Sifra Kedoshim 2:4). *Shatnez* is *chok* (order in Hebrew)\footnote{Derived from *chakak*, „engrave“ in Hebrew, is meant as to engrave the law into stone as it was customary. Simultaneously, *chok* means also „border“ in the sense of a limit. Unlike other commands (*mitzvah*) that have reasonably justifiable reason (e.g. do not kill because someone dies), the absence of rational explanation should be an impulse for developing a relationship with God.} which the King pointed out to his people and the commentators of the Talmud agree that there is no rational explanation for its origins.\footnote{One of the many interpretations is that God has created different species to live in accordance with their creation, and our task is to respect his purpose and to maintain the established order.} It is a „monster“, it shifts away into a field of impossibility, excludes, respectively pathologizes.
Similarly, the expressions of non-binary gender identity are excluded because they are visible and therefore unreadable. Although Derrida is considering the possibilities of a pre-differential state and Butler points out the possibility of returning back into it, neither of them shows a way how it would be possible to overcome the power of discourse because, in my opinion, the existence outside the discourse is not possible. Likewise, it is not possible to break the logic of positivity by destruction because we would lose communication and thus ourselves. Thus, logocentrism cannot be discarded, it is only possible to disturb it and leave it questioned to continue to function further. Deconstruction does not offer a way out but allows realizing the risks from inside. Non-binary gender identity must necessarily remain under the "curse" of discourse which despite the effects of subversion will perform its power questioned further.
Binary Trouble: Preconditions for Non-binary Gender in Works of Heidegger, Derrida and Butler

References:


