

them, which is often in clear contrast to how gamers view them. In other words, video games should be researched through the cross-fertilisation of theory and practice. In accordance with this, we can reformulate the statement made by the character Joshua in the well-known movie *War Games* (“*A strange game. The only winning move is not to play*”) and say that *the only winning move to successfully continue to travel is precisely to play*.

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Nanopolitics group

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Nanopolitics handbook

Minor compositions:

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Nanopolitics is a compendium of texts about embodied experiences in neoliberal cities. The book is distributed by Autonomedia and released as *Minor Compositions*, a series of texts inclusive of “autonomous politics, avant-garde aesthetics and revolutions of everyday life”. The book draws from the 20 workshops the collaborators organised between 2010 and 2012. It is a book of tools, strategies and practices aiming at transcending the rigid ways of doing

politics, such as voting, making statements or protesting. The question asked is: how does one think politics with and through the body?

Nanopolitics’ authors and activists understand their bodies’ potential as inherently political and they are closely connected to academic institutions, giving them the expertise to successfully combine theoretical insights with practice. They propose working together, engaging our physical potential and realising new collective subjectivations. Using creative and artistic approaches, nanopoliticians tend to “make sense with one’s senses” (p. 22) and not through finding objective truths or formulas. The micropolitical practices they mention might seem depoliticised, but they lend new emancipatory meanings. “Nano” in the book title is therefore not the “nano” from nanoscience, but “nano” as in small operations connecting people as “bodies in movement, struggle, love, work” (p. 24) etc. The authors of the book propose experimenting with feeling, acting and escaping the normal(ised) ways of inhabiting public and private space(s).

The handbook is divided into five sections which can be read in any order: collective processes, methods and methodology, experiments and experiences, reflections and theorisations and metabolisms and ecologies; the latter proposing how to bake “polenta cakes for friends and comrades”. Nanopolitics’ insistence on the importance of bodies is theoretically inspired and supported mostly

by Felix Guattari and Gilles Deleuze. The former theorist is known for his sensitivity regarding assemblages that produce novelties rather than insisting on pre-given rationalities. Nanopoliticians are therefore occupied with new ways of caring for each other and new modalities of moving through neoliberal cities, contaminated with precarity, professionalisation, migrancy, competition and individualisation. The 'original' nanopolitical group was formed in London, "a city of quick transfers and individualised multi-cultural political correctness" (p. 23). Its initiators came together in order to escape common physical dynamics such as burnout, fatigue, hyperstimulation, racing hearts, insomnia etc. They are doing this by producing and inhabiting a common and experimental space, reclaiming other ways of inhabiting and trying to distinguish work from leisure and productive time from "life worth living". Their (sometimes) contradictory practices, supported by Hegelian dialecticism, are shown in the stories about their formation, ways of working together, exercises, applying for public funds and defining their production in economic terms etc. Nanopolitical practices of self-care are, however, not inclined to new age solipsism or neoliberal views of self-help and self-management. The practices they promote are concerned with current modes of political activism, rendered hyper-active because they mirror the state of neoliberal working practices. Political activism in a neoliberal city becomes one's

second or third job: a chore, not a passion. Nanopoliticians, on the contrary, "make revolutions happen out of desire and not out of duty" (p. 58). As such, they resent the workers' movements distancing from and forgetting micropolitical practice, more known for their emphasis on intimacies and affections. Nanopolitics appreciates performative radical practices. For example, it recognises and uses the performative value of audio-visual recordings. The latter are connected to surveillance and control technologies in neoliberal cities. The use of audio-visual recordings in different contexts can subvert hegemonic media and their way of generating testimonies.

The bodies of neoliberal capitalism have to be incessantly creative, productive and flexible. Nanopoliticians are trying to undo their subjectivities through touch, words and silences, trying to become useless and creating immeasurable effects. The production of knowledge is immeasurable, too: the "assumption of knowing" is replacing the figures of "supposed knowing" as the effect of different encounters. At meetings, people produce collective intelligence: one of the 'products' is the present book which was written by more than 15 and thought by even more people. The use of learning as an emancipatory tool in nanopolitical practices also encompasses problematising the profession of a teacher as such. Her body is constantly damaged by restrictions that, from the moment she enters the classroom,

represent an established system of power. From here, nanopoliticians problematise and propose various ideas for how to deproletarianise one's body. Deproletarianisation through radical bodily practices is inherent in the evolution of nanopolitical sensitivities.

One of the most important chapters in *Nanopolitics* is dedicated to methods and methodologies. Technoshamanism, a performance ritual, combines previously separated notions of knowledge: witch vs. scientist, healer vs. doctor, sorcerer vs. robot. As such, it is an interesting proposal for new ethics, "an activism of matter" (p. 76); activism, prepared for an era of cohabitation of robots and humans. Put differently, it is a playful way of dealing with a disaster-to-come. This micropolitical practice sets as its goal the production of subjectivity, knowledge and aesthetics using electronic tools and costumes. It is composed of four stages: immersive ritual, transvestism and photonovel, offering and ritual (on the street) and celebration. In addition to technoshamanism, the second method is Theatre of the Oppressed; restaging current political and oppressive situations and invoking participants' fears in order to make them stronger. The third and fourth methods are Roberto Freire's Soma (embodied subjectivity), a practice inspired by anarchism and psychology, and Pedagogy of the Oppressed, a revolutionary way of being educated. Soma is an experimental therapy or a radical participatory, collaborative

practice. It cures neoliberal ways of hindering collaboration by emphasising sensuality and the 'pleasure principle' as the main factors of our decision making.

Nanopolitics' main objective is to transform people's notions that micropolitical practices, such as our everyday behaviour, cannot have an impact on our environment. Nevertheless, nanopolitical practices such as street trainings put forward, for example, children's impossibility of playing football on the streets of Venice. Enunciations are important activist practices completed by, on the other hand, the power of silence. In a neoliberal hyper-productive and over-symbolised world, silence is a refusal "to participate, to work or to engage" (p. 243). Nanopolitics is about transcending the distinction of political practice as private and public, using fear and other affections as bodily force and not a revolutionary's weakness. What is characteristic of the book is the authors' sincerity and grasping of (political) theory in a simple and comprehensible way. Moreover, nanopoliticians understand their own weaknesses. Their networks do not have the ability for intense connectivity, are inconsistent over time and show an increased possibility of non-commitment. The authors' sincerity is shown by not hesitating to declare the "sad passions" that blocked their activist movements and the ways that nanopolitics helped them realise depression's affirmative power for the body's evolution. The handbook can

be positioned somewhere between biographical 'fiction' and theoretical writing. As such, it is a pure invitation to activism for those unfamiliar with political theory and its applications in practice.