

# 9

## She Carries the Film on Her Naked Body

### Environment and Embodied Debt in Claire Denis's *Bastards*

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The rain is so dense that it conceals the view of the building. Inside, a man in his office, framed by a static medium shot. He walks through the room slowly, looking around as he takes in familiar features. The camera tracks up along the building façade rendered abstract by the pouring rain. On the office table a letter and a high-heeled shoe. The window is open now, the man looks outside into the night. A blurred close-up of his face complements the first shot of the rain. Looking out, his gaze is turned inward. Moving slowly back down the side of the building, the camera follows the rain until it hits the wet asphalt, standing in for the jump that takes the man to his death. Sometime later, the rain has stopped. It's dark still, but we are in a different place. A young woman steps into the frame, pulling the image into focus as she moves down the street, drawing us into her space. The wet asphalt glistens; misted yellow light envelops her exposed body like an armor. The woman walks slowly and upright, wearing nothing but a pair of high heels. Cutting to a close-up of her face, the gaze of the camera moves effortlessly along with her, emphasizing her struggle to keep going. Looking forward, her gaze is turned inward, fixated on something that remains inaccessible—to us, and maybe to herself.

Claire Denis's *Bastards* (*Les Salauds*, 2013) delves into the world of film noir, right from its chilling opening sequence. The genre's critical engagement with the pressures and brutal realities of contemporary society is palpable in the images of suicide and abuse; its melodramatic inflection shines through the rainy night. If American film noir responds to twentieth-century urban modernity, as Edward Dimendberg claims, with protagonists "cursed by an inability to dwell comfortably anywhere" (2004, 7), *Bastards* takes this tradition further, with characters struggling to survive in debt-ridden spaces where economic pressure and sexual violence intersect. Unfolding in the aftermath of a horrific event, the film takes place in a toxic environment where vulnerable bodies become currency in financial transactions and are used as leverage in familial disputes.

*Bastards* presents a feminist reworking of Akira Kurosawa's noir films from the late 1950s and early 1960s, in particular *High and Low* (1959) and *The Bad Sleep Well* (1960), to which the film owes its title and main character. In his meditation on indebtedness in *High and Low*, Kurosawa weighs financial gain against personal responsibility. The film provides Denis with two rather simple building blocks for her story: a women's shoe company executive who goes into debt and the objectification of women's bodies, expressed through the trope of high-heeled shoes. An uncomfortably comic image from *High and Low* that resonates in Denis's film shows a close-up of a row of high heels, their makers musing in the background about their role in providing women with the foundation of their self-understanding. In her interpretation, Denis foregrounds the agency of the women who are filling these shoes.

*Bastards* can be described as a family tragedy that plays out against the backdrop of the metropolitan setting of Paris. Marco Silvestri, a supertanker captain, returns to the city to help his sister Sandra. The family business is on the verge of bankruptcy, her husband Jacques has committed suicide and her daughter Justine was found in a trance-like state on the night of her father's death. Sandra implicates the financier Edouard Laporte from whom the couple had borrowed money. Marco abandons his life at sea, cashes in his life insurance to pay off his sister's debt, and fully commits himself to uncovering the truth behind the tragedy. He begins an affair with Raphaëlle, Laporte's mistress, determined to avenge his brother-in-law and bring to light the connection between Jacques's indebtedness and Justine's abuse. It turns out that Justine's body had been mortgaged to Laporte: "He made her his sex slave," Sandra acknowledges at last. While Marco proceeds to unravel the excruciating story of Justine's sexual torture—under the blind eye of her mother, at the hands of her father and brokered by Laporte—the film refuses to present the young, fragile woman solely as a victim. Instead, through the arresting images of her nocturnal walk, Denis creates an ambiguous representational space that allows Justine to take charge of her space. In "walking tall," to use Denis's words, she cuts

through the confines of power structures that are essentially beyond her control. Furthermore, the net of abusive and indebted relationships spreads beyond the link between the Sivistris and Laporte. *Bastards* emphasizes that this is not one family's story but about relations of debt and violence that are systemic within capitalist society.

In making debt the driving force of her film, Denis echoes Maurizio Lazzarato's claim in *The Making of Indebted Man* that debt—more than a form of economic exchange—forms the very basis of social life under neoliberalism. Lazzarato's recourse to Nietzsche who emphasizes debt's role in the production of memory, subjectivity, and conscience, in particular, resonates in Denis's attention to the interdependence of debt and guilt, guilt and blame. Debt shapes the interiority of the subject as much as it impacts its civic life. In *Bastards*, indebtedness controls social interactions, while the guilt that is smothered or still gnaws inside becomes externalized as blame. Guilt about the fate of Jacques and Justine is either denied or repressed. Laporte refuses to take responsibility, blaming instead the behavior of a "sick family," as he calls the Silvestris. Sandra initially shifts the blame to Laporte, but when she is confronted by Marco, she hands the load over to him, reminding him of the duty that comes with family ties. Justine, again, walks alone, the only character free of guilt and blame. "I love him," she tells Marco about her father. Her experience of the situation lies outside the morality that is understood as common sense in the given social order.

Lazzarato also touches upon another dimension of debt that is relevant to Denis's film—the ecological. Toward the end of his treatise, Lazzarato acknowledges that debt not only permeates social life but also concerns our relationship to the natural environment. "The figure of 'indebted man' cuts across the whole of society and calls for new solidarities and new cooperation," he writes. "We must also take into account how it pervades 'nature and culture,' since neoliberalism has run up our debt to the planet as well as to ourselves as human beings" (2012, 162). Indeed, the accumulation of ecological debt has been accelerated significantly by neoliberal deregulation, where ecological concerns are secondary to economic considerations. In view of the growing consensus on anthropogenic global climate change, scholars across the humanities and social sciences have thus raised questions as to who or what is to be regarded as part of the social collective.<sup>2</sup> This call for new solidarities and cooperation, as Lazzarato puts it, has reinvigorated a debate about the modern division of nature and culture, where nature is perceived as an Other, something "over there" that I am outside of, and the environment is seen as the stage on which human activity plays out.<sup>3</sup> Stripped of its agency, nature becomes a blank slate for gendered and cultural inscriptions. Denis's cinema consistently questions this division of nature and culture by engaging with the interconnection of bodies and environments on multiple levels. While critics and scholars

frequently emphasize the importance of environment in Denis's cinema, their writing also brings to light the fundamental ambiguity of the term, as it moves seamlessly between natural, built, sociohistorical, perceptual, affective, non-human, and indebted environments.<sup>4</sup>

In *Bastards*, Denis goes a step further and investigates how debt permeates not only environments but also gender relations. More specifically, the film examines debt through the lens of kinship and patrimony. Looking beyond debt's power to produce subjectivities under neoliberalism, *Bastards* exposes the "embodied debt" borne by gendered bodies within environments shaped by persisting patriarchal power structures.<sup>5</sup> In order to get to the bottom of the film's debt-ridden wastes, I thus complement Lazzarato's economic theory with a feminist materialist epistemology. In particular, I refer here to the embodied materialism proposed by sociologist Ariel Salleh.<sup>6</sup> By analyzing debt through not only an economic and ecological but also a feminist lens, this approach *thinks together* ecological and embodied debt. That is, embodied materialism takes into account the inequalities caused by Western exploitation of natural and human resources—across the globe and through the bodies of indigenes, farmers, and women. For more than debt owed to the planet and ourselves, as framed by Lazzarato in more general terms, ecological debt also considers the uneven global distribution of economic gains and ecological losses. Embodied debt, as Salleh explains further, "is accrued by the global North when it denies forms of value generated by ... gendered and racialized labour" (2009, 7). In other words, the concept of embodied debt seeks to account for the bodily energy extracted through unwaged reproductive labor and—most significant in this context—the human toll of sexual exploitation and domestic violence.<sup>7</sup> While the ecological costs of neoliberal politics have been widely acknowledged, *Bastards* calls our attention to the fact that ecological economics cannot be thought apart from patriarchy. Denis's investment in environment, then, cumulates in the body of Justine. The debt borne by Justine—embodied debt accrued by Laporte under the current neoliberal regime—emerges as a central theme of the film.

## Genealogies of debt

Debt is not a new topic for Denis. A heated discussion on Third World debt that cumulated in an explicit invocation of Franz Fanon—a rather unusual gesture for Denis—erupted in *35 Shots of Rum* (*35 Rhums*, 2008). *The Intruder* (*L'Intrus*, 2004) reflects on several dimensions of indebtedness—not just economic and ecological but also authorial and personal. *Bastards* has a pronounced connection to *The Intruder*. Laporte closely echoes the character of Louis Trebor, another ruthless man (portrayed by the same actor, Michel Subor) conducting global business.

Trebor's journey across the globe is prompted by the search for a new heart and a lost Tahitian son. Driven by their desire for personal and financial gain, both men represent what Martine Beugnet has called a vampiristic figure feeding on transnational capitalism and increased deregulation.<sup>8</sup> In acquiring a heart for his transplant through shady transactions, Trebor is willing to sacrifice others for his own survival, regarding them, as Rosalind Galt puts it, "as human resources, like the globalized world, to be mined for his personal gain."<sup>9</sup> Laporte also secures his own life and progeny on the backs of others and his exploitation of the forbidden sexual attraction between Jacques and Justine can be read in terms of embodied debt. At the same time, Laporte possesses the ability to disregard the devastation unleashed in a precarious environment deeply affected by his own interests. His failure—or unwillingness—to acknowledge that "'the environment' is not located somewhere out there, but is always the very substance of ourselves," is instrumental in his neglect of others.<sup>10</sup> His experience of self is disconnected from his actions and the effect they have in the world. Maintaining this mental separation from the environments he inhabits, shares, and shapes, allows him to remain unfazed by Jacques's ruin and Justine's abuse. Whether purposefully or not, Laporte is oblivious to the embodied debt he owes.

In grappling with the human costs of debt, *Bastards* hones in on places where social ties break down but the social order is maintained, a recurring theme in Denis's oeuvre.<sup>11</sup> The film takes place in the privileged world of the Parisian bourgeoisie, and thus captures how the pressures of neoliberal politics cut across hierarchies of social stratification. In his calculated embrace of power and lack of social responsibility, Laporte represents the very economic system that leads to Jacques's demise. At its core, Lazzarato notes, debt is a person's promise to pay a future value (44). Debt thus depends on a mode of temporality that molds the subject by creating a "memory that is straining towards the future" (45). That is, the indebted person is held in limbo, arrested between what has happened and what is yet to come. Caught within a system that manufactures debt in conjunction with its subjects, Jacques is unable to live up to his future self: He fails to honor both his debt and his conscience. Unable to ever pay off his debt, he escapes the grip of his creditor by taking his own life.

Jacques's story captures how debt not only shapes people's self-understanding but also takes hold of their bodies. For the promise of honoring one's debt is not fulfilled by giving one's word alone: it requires collateral. Nietzsche describes this in plain words in his *Genealogy of Morals*: "The debtor . . . pawns something to the creditor by means of the contract in case he doesn't pay, something he still possesses and controls, for example, his body, or his wife, or his freedom, or his life" (Lazzarato, 41). For Nietzsche, it is here that the connection between debt and moral concepts such as blame, guilt, consciences, repression, and duty lies. Held accountable by an

unspoken—unspeakable—contract enforced by Laporte's position of social and financial power, Jacques not only pawns his own body but also that of his daughter. The debtor-creditor relationship between Jacques and Laporte precedes the film's diegetic time. It is Marco, Jacques's friend and brother-in-law, who takes on the figure of indebted man as a dependable, guilty, and hindered subject. Not only does Marco assume Jacques's debt—and by extension his guilt—but he is also paying off family dues. Answering not just to Sandra's blame but also his consciences, he is trying to right what's perceived as wrong—leaving his family behind by choosing a life at sea. To make up for escaping his duty and to get at Laporte, Marco, too, pawns his own life.

Laporte is not impeded by the embodied debt he owes. He thrives, immune to accusations and a step ahead of those wanting to hold him accountable. His powerful position manifests itself through specific places and the social institutions they help maintain. The luxurious apartment where he ensconces his mistress and their son Joseph represents a space of privilege where patriarchy and wealth intersect. Laporte's objective is to protect his "last seed,"<sup>12</sup> as he refers to the boy: keeping patrimony intact emerges as his guiding principle. As head of the Laporte Group, he moves swiftly within the spaces of transnational capitalism. The global transactions that afford his lifestyle remain out of sight, invisible and disconnected from everyday life in the metropolis. Instead, the material side of transnational business is shown vicariously through Marco, whose tanker is moving the very resources that global commerce—brokered by men like Laporte—is first setting in motion. In an uncanny shot of the ocean that is almost white, the supertanker is barely visible on the horizon line. Unnoticed, it is passing through what Allan Sekula calls "the forgotten space" of globalized capitalism. Laporte's command over the environment, both locally and globally, is further thrown into relief through Marco, who gives up command of his ship—quite literally losing his horizon—once Laporte enters his life.

## Marco's drive

While Laporte controls his movements from the seclusion of his limousine, Marco struggles to undertake his investigation after he is forced to sell his car. However, the significance of Marco's movements as he traverses physical and familial environments lies not only in the comparison with Laporte's command of space. His drives back and forth through the metropolitan area of Paris function as transitional spaces that mark the passage from one social regime to another. The drive that stands out in particular takes Marco, accompanied by Sandra, from the city to a secluded barn in a rural area at the outskirts of Paris. A thick forest separates the two places, conjuring the idea of the city and the country as ideational spaces that take

shape in contradistinction to one another. Filmed through the windshield, the grey strip of the road is in the center of the image, penetrating the forest like a tunnel carved through thick impenetrable woods. It's raining and a monotonous beat makes the distance seem endless (Figure 9.1). Marco and Sandra are ushered to the secret location by a strong-powered Audi, a stark contrast to Sandra's modest, fuel-efficient Nissan hatchback. The matte black Audi, no doubt, is a proxy, driving in the shadow of Laporte's shiny limousine. In tow of the ghostly car, Marco and Sandra enter the space where Jacques's financial debt materialized as sexual exploitation.

On first view, the barn seems all but innocuous and the atmosphere pleasant as clouds have cleared and birds are singing. It looks much like a country farm and, if just for a fleeting moment, the image evokes a pastoral scene unscathed by labor, let alone illicit activity. But a security camera and a spotlight installed on the outside of the building signal otherwise. Access to the barn requires payment—possibly to settle outstanding debt—to Xavier, the black car's driver and Laporte's henchman who manages the property.<sup>13</sup> The French countryside has long been a place of consumption for the elite, whether it be natural resources, agricultural products, or sites for hunting, leisure, and contemplation.<sup>14</sup> Or, as is the case in *Bastards*, deviance. The barn turns out to be a sex den that reeks of voyeurism and violence: Red lights, empty bottles of champagne, a shabby round red leather bed with rips and blood stains, and USB cables to hook up a camera on the ceiling. Scattered on the floor next to the bed, are corn knobs that have been turned into torture instruments and are now crusted with blood. Far from idyllic, the countryside becomes a place where the urban bourgeoisie can hide their



FIGURE 9.1 *Marco driving* (*Bastards*, Claire Denis, 2013; Arte France Cinéma; Canal+; Ciné+; Pandora Filmproduktion; Wild Bunch; ZDF/Arte).



dirty business—from others and also from themselves. Throughout the film, *Bastards* evokes images of natural environments only to reveal them as strategically utilized, commodified spaces. By undermining the landscapes she carefully constructs—in brief images of the wide ocean, the rough sea, or the peaceful countryside—Denis brings interconnections of nature and culture to light in minimal yet precise interventions.

Mapped onto the route from the urban to the rural, Marco's long, eerie drive through the woods functions on several levels. The road physically connects the urban center to the rural area around it, taking Marco and Sandra from the Silvestri's house to the country barn. The drive, however, also transports them—like Jacques and Justine before—from a space governed by the social structures of civic life to a place where these frames and rules are suspended, unmade in the face of financial duress. More importantly, though, the drive renders visible the construct of environment that thrives in the city with Laporte. Sandra and Marco are silent for the long duration of the drive, immersed in the image of the road snaking before them. Sandra's struggle to face the guilt she has been able to suppress—her own complicity in the abuse of her daughter—is palpable, as she changes her heels into boots and clasps her hands in her lap. The drive shows us a physical connection between the city and the country at the same time that it initiates the mental separation underlying the dominant understanding of environment, that is, the severing of nature from culture that allows us to see the environment as something outside ourselves. Within the structure of the film itself, Marco's drive through the thick of the forest foreshadows the one Justine will take down the same road at the end of the film. The drive becomes a liminal space for her too when she comes to terms with the fact—as her father did before her—that she cannot go on living in between the two worlds.

## Justine's walk

Justine walks into the film straight out of a news item about a young woman running naked on the street at night until she is picked up by a police patrol. Her character, Denis explains in the press kit, is inspired by disturbing news reports about victims of sexual abuse.<sup>15</sup> Justine also comes out of the realm of literary imagination, from Faulkner's novel *Sanctuary*: Temple, another inscrutable woman who is as wounded as she is poised.<sup>16</sup> Channeled into the present by recent events, her character is brought to life by Lola Créton, who carries, as Denis acknowledges, “the film on her naked body” and, with it, the weight of the story it tells.<sup>17</sup> The weight carried by Justine's naked body in the world of the film is both material and representational. Beyond the affective potency of Justine's walk through the night, her body carries us into the space of representation. More than a character, then, Justine is



a figure that negotiates gendered images and hierarchies. For news items such as the ones shown or evoked in the film, mediate larger ideological struggles by bringing the violence of patriarchal gender relations into the public sphere.<sup>18</sup> In this environment, the violent conduct of men is frequently downplayed and excused while women, in turn, are often discredited by the media and failed by legal institutions. Laporte is a case in point; Justine's parents' allegations against the financier lead nowhere. In a series of articles Marco reads in the beginning of his investigations, Laporte is attributed with success, energy, and a strong sex drive. Indeed, he represents what Muriel Rouyer calls "a masculine form of virile citizenship confining women to the private sphere."<sup>19</sup>

In *Bastards*, the character of Raphaëlle negotiates this patriarchal space of the home, where she is subjected to disrespectful, intrusive, and even violent acts. Her relationship to Laporte is purely contractual: in exchange for her privileged life, she is to provide affective and reproductive labor—manifestations of embodied debt that, at least for the most part, are borne by women across the globe. Raphaëlle's position is precarious. Upon learning about her relationship with Marco, Laporte limits her access to Joseph and uses him to blackmail her. Beyond the emotional austerity and hostility of her home, Raphaëlle experiences the kind of sexist micro-aggressions that eventually leads to the sexual violence suffered by Justine. Indeed, the *mise-en-scène* of her late-night walk to the tobacco store—on high-heeled sandals, her bare legs covered by a trench coat, nervously looking over her shoulder as Marco watches her from above—deliberately echoes Justine's walk: the asphalt glistens under yellow light, the same foreboding music sets the tone. The first sex scene between Marco and Raphaëlle resembles a rape. Yet Raphaëlle is not presented as a victim. She reveals her complicity with contemporary society's neoliberal and patriarchal order when she sides with Laporte and shoots Marco. Ultimately, she not only accepts but also defends her role in the domestic sphere. Justine, on the other hand, intervenes into public space. What's at stake in the link between Justine and Laporte, then, are ideological struggles about gender relations and representations that reassert patriarchy as society's structuring principle.

*Bastards* takes on the impossible task of representing a victim of abuse without making her a victim. Justine steps into the frame, bringing violence against women into focus, transporting us into a familiar space. She exposes, to use Galt's words, "contemporary capitalism's gendered hostility" (2015, 275) as it plays out across the bodies and through the images of women. The figure of Justine anchors the story in an unspeakable event. With her embrace of transgression, Denis clearly takes representational risks. The controversial ending, where the scene of Justine's abuse is revealed in a low-quality video shot in the country barn, unrelentingly puts the viewer in a voyeuristic position. The sequence of Justine's nocturnal walk, too, is both explicit and highly aestheticized. The attractive woman walking naked

in stilettos is thrown into relief against the dark gritty street by mysterious glowing light. In the final sequence of the walk, the camera slowly moves from Justine's impenetrable face down her body, revealing thick dark blood running from her vagina down her thighs. By giving her a body that uneasily balances between self-control and collapse, *Bastards* transforms the image of the victim without downplaying the terror that precedes it. Though each step is a struggle, she retains her dignity (Figure 9.2). Justine is not degraded but elevated by her sexy high heels, turning a commodity commonly associated with the objectification of women into a means to maintain self-determination in the face of utter despair. Justine walks a fine line between conscious and unconscious. Similarly, the film's affective staging of the scene straddles the border between poignant and sensational. The haunting images cut through the film's fabric, while holding it together at the same time. Spaced out over the length of the film, the sequence of Justine's walk, then, creates a representational space that thwarts the notion of women as victims. Like Marco's drive, the walk functions on several levels. On the one hand, the flashbacks visualize the horrific scenario that Marco slowly pieces together as he is sitting at her hospital bed or trying to find her while she hides in the back of Xavier's car. In stark contrast to these representations of Justine's character in the film's present, which highlight the vulnerability of her body—she is lying down in both cases—the flashbacks present a rupture that puts Justine in charge of her space. That is, the images of the walk transcend their narrative function, negotiating a space at the intersection of representation and physical or embodied space, all of which make up



FIGURE 9.2 *Justine walks the streets of Paris at night, wearing only her high heels* (*Bastards*, Claire Denis, 2013; Arte France Cinéma; Canal+; Ciné+; Pandora Filmproduktion; Wild Bunch; ZDF/Arte).

Justine's environment. In the affective sequence of the nightly walk, her body enacts the interconnection of material world and representational space. "The body," Lise Nelson and Joni Seager write, "does not have a single location of scale; rather is a concept that disrupts naturalized dichotomies and embraces a multiplicity of material and symbolic sites, one located at the interstices of power under various guises" (2005, 2). Yet, while Justine is a figure, her body is more than a concept. Her transgressive power stems from embodying rather than signifying material and symbolic sites.

The images of the walk reveal a connection between body—the female body—and environment that begs further unpacking. Justine's body is entangled in economic relations and mediated through gendered images—as are environments. Material sites endangered by human activity, environments are shaped by political, economic, and cultural forces as they are mediated through social institutions, discursive spaces, and collective imaginaries. However, environment is in flux, neither its material properties nor its meanings are fixed. Environment, then, is both material and a space of representation: It disrupts the binary of nature/culture, in what can be described as "an entangled process of knowing and becoming" (Willey 2017, 132). Just like the body's ability to exceed normalized categories, it is the fluidity of environment that allows it to challenge the notion that renders nature—just like women—as passive. And while environment is always enmeshed within forms of power and subject to physical domination, it is also a space of resistance and contestation. At the same time, environment captures the affective qualities of materialities and textures. In the sequence of the walk, Justine's body becomes the nexus where different material and discursive, affective and symbolic environments mesh. By connecting body and environment, Justine's walk realizes the film's transgressive dimension. In walking, Justine refigures the gendered image of power, control, and victimhood that is set off between her and Laporte.

Crucially, though, refiguring one's image is not the same as being able to survive. *Bastards* doesn't offer an easy model for women's empowerment within gendered environments. When Justine takes matters into her own hands later in the film, it is to end her life. She steers Xavier's car into the dark, slowly turning off the lights one by one, until it crashes into a tree. Her final drive echoes Marco's earlier drive between the city and the country, which made clear the dominant construct of environment associated with Laporte (and, implicitly, the ways in which this notion allows the environment to be subjugated). Like the image of her walk, Justine's final drive brings together physical and representational space in an ambivalent negotiation of image and environment. In "Engendering New Materializations," Angela Willey underlines the importance of being accountable to the actuality of material life. "We are responsible," she writes, "not just for how we represent nature—as static, non-dynamic slate for the imposition for gendered/cultural meaning—but also for what exists" (2017, 146). In *Bastards*, Denis takes

on this responsibility. Beyond its attention to questions of representation, the film embraces an embodied materialism. Through Justine, *Bastards* confronts the viewer unapologetically with the material effects that are engendered in spaces where women's bodies become currency.

Furthermore, in highlighting that sexual violence as economically motivated, the film foregrounds embodied debt as a material foundation of contemporary neoliberalism. An underlying concern of Denis's cinema is how to live and act in environments shaped by economic and patriarchal hierarchies, where relationships are undone and bodily integrity is violated. Through the figure of Justine, *Bastards* not only contests the gendered notion of nature but also holds us accountable for the extent of its material, bodily effects. In thinking together environment and embodied debt, *Bastards* offers a perspective on what a feminist materialist cinema might look like.

## Notes

- 1 I would like to thank the editors for their generous feedback. Many thanks also to Tim Ridlen and Lesley Stern for their helpful comments.
- 2 See for instance, Latour (1993) and Bennett (2009).
- 3 See for instance, Haraway (1989); Morton (2007); and Braidotti (2013).
- 4 See for instance, Beugnet (2008), Nancy (2014), Martin (2006), Gustafsson (2014), McMahon (2014) as well as my own text Pesch (2014), to name just a few.
- 5 Salleh (2009), 1–40.
- 6 Salleh (2017).
- 7 For a comprehensive definition of the notion of reproductive labor, see Federici (2012).
- 8 See Beugnet (2007), 77–88.
- 9 See Galt (2015), 275–93, 278.
- 10 Alaimo (2010), 1–25, 4.
- 11 *J'ai Pas Sommeil/I Can't Sleep* (1995), in particular, comes to mind.
- 12 Claire Denis, *Bastards*, France/Germany, 2013, DVD distributed by Wild Bunch.
- 13 Class relations become part of the picture here as Xavier's girlfriend's cheap look clearly stands out in comparison to Sandra's manicured appearance.
- 14 See for instance, Clark (1994); Thomas (2000).
- 15 Denis, *Bastards Press Kit*, 8.
- 16 Rosalind Galt also points out the connection to de Sade's *Justine, or the Misfortunes of Virtue*. See Galt (2015), 288.

- 17 Adams, Available online: <https://thedissolve.com/features/interview/235-claire-denis-on-bastards-and-tough-women/>
- 18 See, Reisinger (2007), 1–20.
- 19 See Rouyer (2013), 187–96, 187. Rosalind Galt’s article on *Bastards* brought this text to my attention.

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