Abstract

For the 2015 PARSE conference on Time, Bruno Latour and Simon Critchley discussed shifting concepts of time and their impact on developments in art, philosophy and the social sciences in a conversation moderated by Mick Wilson. In preparation for this event, PARSE put the following questions to them:

- What is time?
- Time arguably has always been at the centre of the research initiatives of the natural sciences, of philosophy and of the many different practices of history and social criticism. However, time also occupies a central place for the curiosity and attention of artist researchers across all the arts. The intensification of the question of time has, in recent years, prompted some to speak of a "temporal turn" across the disciplines. What is your perspective on this relative interest?
- What is your understanding of the ways in which cultural practice relates to questions of time?
- What are chronopolitics for you?
- Many of the proposals we received for the conference seek to engage with the crisis of "anthropocenic". You have both engaged in different ways with this issue—could you elaborate?
- We are currently embedded in a temporality that is shaped in large part by the instantaneity of global capital. How do you see the affects of this?
- How can this be understood historically and philosophically?
- Is time gendered? What might it mean to think time in relation to the question of gender?
- Much recent theoretical discourse has focused on the "end of time". What is your view of this?

What is *the* Time?

Times

BRUNO LATOUR

Bruno Latour is a philosopher, sociologist of science and anthropologist. He is especially known for his work in the field of Science and Technology Studies and for his books *We Have Never Been Modern* (1991), *Laboratory Life* (with Steve Woolgar, 1979) and *Science in Action* (1987). In addition to work in philosophy, history, sociology and anthropology of science, he has collaborated with researchers in science policy and research management. Latour is Professor at Sciences Po, Paris, after five years (2007-2012) as the Vice-President for Research. While at Sciences Po, he created the médialab to seize the opportunity offered to social theory through the spread of digital methods, and, together with Valérie Pihet, he has created a new experimental programme in art and politics.

SIMON CRITCHLEY

Simon Critchley is Hans Jonas Professor at the New School for Social Research. He also teaches at the European Graduate School. His many books include *Very Little… Almost Nothing* (1997), *Infinitely Demanding* (2007), *The Book of Dead Philosophers* (2008), *The Faith of the Faithless* (2012), and, with Tom McCarthy, *The Mattering of Matter: Documents from the Archive of the International Necronautical Society* (2012). A book on Hamlet called *Stay, Illusion!*, co-authored with Jamieson Webster, was published in 2013 by Pantheon Books in the US and Verso in the UK. An experimental new work, *Memory Theatre*, is forthcoming. Critchley writes for *The Guardian* and is moderator of "The Stone", a philosophy column in *The New York Times*, to which he is a frequent contributor.

What is *the* Time?
Bruno Latour

I decided to solve the question "what is time?" by shifting it slightly to "what is *the* time in which we stand?"

This is actually a very famous image of *les mots historiques* that we read when we were kids. "We are dancing on a volcano", which is one way of—at that time of course—referring to a political upheaval, the one that brought Louis Philippe to the kingdom in France. Now, of course, the volcano is no longer a sort of metaphor, it's more literal. Another answer to the question of what is the time in which we are, has been given by *Nature*, the journal, which in March 2015 called, rather strangely, a period the "human age". Except the human age is not the face of humanity in a traditional way, but as an artist rendition on the page. As you can see, it's a man's face made of layers of sediment and fossil as if we were a different human.

Cartoon "Nous dansons sur un volcan"

So, if you look at this image, to define *the* time in which we are, which is also called the Anthropocene, we have to meet a fairly strange character. A character, a face of a person made of stones, which is offering a different face of a human, and, of course, a completely different time, because the human which is supposed to be a geological force is also a human with a much longer history than the history of what is called history by historians, meaning the beginning of time when we had traces. Deep history, if you want. This is a history that Dipesh Chakrabarty calls geo-history.

What is so interesting in the face shown in the image is that it has some connection with very traditional ways of understanding what it is to be of this earth. Of course, not the earth of minerals, of fossils, of coal, but an earth nonetheless. This is a second aspect of the answer to the question what is *the* time. It is certainly not a time forwards, moving forwards. It is a time that has a strange and somewhat surprising position of situating us in a new fraternity with cultures of a past, which are no longer "of the past". Cultures, which seem simultaneously to be very close to us now, because we share their embodiment and earthliness in a way that was not visible before, when in the twentieth century we believed we were in a time moving forwards and we left behind us the other cultures. Compare

Richard Monastersky, "The Human Age", Nature, No. 519, 12 March 2015

Sydney Parkinson, "Maori ta Moko", 1769. Image from Wikimedia Commons.

The Nggwal Bunafunei Spirit House, Elaf Hamlet", 1972. From The Cassowary's Revenge (1997) by Donald F. Tuzin. Copyright of Malcolm Kirk, collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY.

tradition, while at the same time we, in Europe and in the West, were moving backwards. So the time where we are is very strange.

It is very difficult to situate oneself in time. Very few people are contemporary of one another. And now we all have to decide in which time we live. This is a problem picked up by many artists. Not necessarily artists using very elaborate media. Philippe Squarzoni, who is a graphic novelist, tried to capture the spirit of the time—the zeitgeist—by looking at what happens when you are a graphic novelist specialising in a political topic and suddenly you hear that something is happening to the earth, but you don't know how accurate it is. How you can't make sense of it because it's too big, it's too new and there are people who say that it is all disputed. The whole of Squarzoni's novel is an attempt to make sense of information about the earth. Basically, trying to make sense of information such as that in the article of *Nature*, which is trying to get at what it means having the earth coming back to you. It is a novel about the difficulty of absorbing the novelty of its time, a novel about how we cope with the disconnect between the news coming from science and the extraordinarily feeble instrument we have in our own sensibility and imagination. What is funny is that most of the book is actually about scientists

the image of the earthly man with this Maori face painted in the traditional way. Or look at this image of an architecture now destroyed of a civilisation that produced a collective representation of itself.

Here we can see a beautiful image that has been shown by Don Tuzin in his study of the Arapesh in New Guinea. It depicts a whole society building its house, called a House of Spirits during a very elaborate ritual. The very act of building such an elaborate emblem of who they are was essential for defining themselves. This culture has been totally destroyed as Tuzin tells in his book. The principle of building such a house was actually destroyed in a grand gesture of abandonment of their own cultures by the Arapesh themselves, once they had met their evangelical pastors. So they themselves moved into our time, abandoned their life, destroyed their

Stephany Ganachaud, "The Angel of Geostory", 2013, video still.

being interviewed. So you have pages after pages of talking heads in a graphic novel, which is very odd. But this is also a way of absorbing the novelty of a situation in which the author is trying to constantly compare the paraphernalia of feelings and memory we have in order to see how we can measure them up to the new situation in which we find ourselves.

I want to demonstrate a change of position vis-à-vis *the* time.

On the two sides of the screen is the same dancer. The camera is in different positions, but it is the same movement. It is the movement of what I call *The Angel of Geostory* (with allusion to Benjamin of course). She flees, she looks behind her and then she looks forwards, she stops and she looks—what has she done, why is she fleeing? Then she looks up and what she sees seems to be even more terrifying than what she had left when she was fleeing. She even begins to do little gestures of fleeing as if she was going back to the movement. This movement is very simple but it shows the difficulty of approaching the question, what is time? I have translated this to "what is *the* time in which we are" because the time that we were when we were fleeing what we used to call the future, is completely different from the one that she sees coming towards her.

Of course, what is coming to us is this word, the Anthropocene—a very disputed term that defines *the* time simultaneously as time in history, human history and the time in geology (which the two disciplines invented at the same time in the eighteenth century). Then they split; geology was one and human history was another, but now they are merging. But they have very different definitions of time. Now we have this extraordinary situation in which geologists are trying to find a date for the Anthropocene. This date is, of course, 16 July 1945: simultaneously a date of geology and in human history—the date of atomic markers triggered by the atomic bomb.

You might notice that the first author of that paper is a geologist, a stratigrapher called Jan Zalasiewicz. The last author is Naomi Oreskes, a historian of science. It is amazing to have a paper of geology

The Beginning of the Anthropocene.

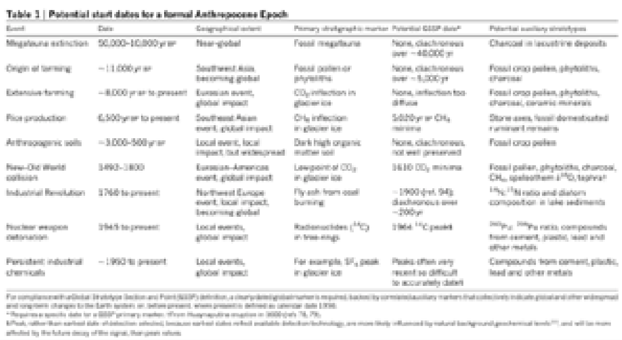


Table 1 | Potential start dates for a formal Anthropocene Epoch

Event	Date	Geographical extent	Primary stratigraphic marker	Potential GSSP date*	Potential auxiliary stratotypes
Megafauna extinction	50,000–10,000 yr BP	Near-global	Fossil megafauna	None, diachronous over ~40,000 yr	Charcoal in lacustrine deposits
Origin of farming	~11,000 yr BP	Southwest Asia, becoming global	Fossil pollen or phytoliths	None, diachronous over ~5,000 yr	Fossil crop pollen, phytoliths, charcoal
Extensive farming	~8,000 yr BP to present	Eurasian event, global impact	CO_2 inflection in glacier ice	None, inflection too diffuse	Fossil crop pollen, phytoliths, charcoal, ceramic minerals
Rice production	6,500 yr BP to present	Southeast Asian event, global impact	CH_4 inflection in glacier ice	5,020 yr BP CH_4 minima	Stone axes, fossil domesticated ruminant remains
Anthropogenic soils	~3,000–500 yr BP	Local event, local impact, but widespread	Dark high organic matter soil	None, diachronous, not well preserved	Fossil crop pollen
New–Old World collision	1492–1800	Eurasian–American event, global impact	Low point of CO_2 in glacier ice	1610 CO_2 minima	Fossil pollen, phytoliths, charcoal, CH_4, speleothem $\delta^{18}O$, tephra†
Industrial Revolution	1760 to present	Northwest Europe event, local impact, becoming global	Fly ash from coal burning	~1900 (ref. 94); diachronous over ~200 yr	^{15}N:^{14}N ratio and diatom composition in lake sediments
Nuclear weapon detonation	1945 to present	Local events, global impact	Radionuclides (^{14}C) in tree-rings	1964 ^{14}C peak	^{240}Pu:^{239}Pu ratio, compounds from cement, plastic, lead and other metals
Persistent industrial chemicals	~1950 to present	Local events, global impact	For example, SF_6 peak in glacier ice	Peaks often very recent so difficult to accurately date	Compounds from cement, plastic, lead and other metals

Simon L. Lewis, and Mark A. Maslin. "Defining the Anthropocene." Nature 519.12 March 2015 (2915): 171–80.

published with one of the authors a historian of science and the other a stratigrapher.

What is interesting and directly related to the topic of time is that there is a huge dispute on how to date this Anthropocene. There is a paper by Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin in which there are a lot of different times.[1] One of them is 1610, stated as a possible beginning of the Anthropocene.

Why 1610? Because that is the moment when CO_2 is known to have a much lower level than now. Why is this decrease of CO_2? It turns out that reforestation of a whole American continent, one century of reforestation, massively absorbed the CO_2. But why is there reforestation at such massive scale? Of course, it was the elimination of 50 million Indians due to the Colombian exchange of microbes so that whole areas which had been open had been reforested. But 1610 is disputed of course. There are several other candidates.

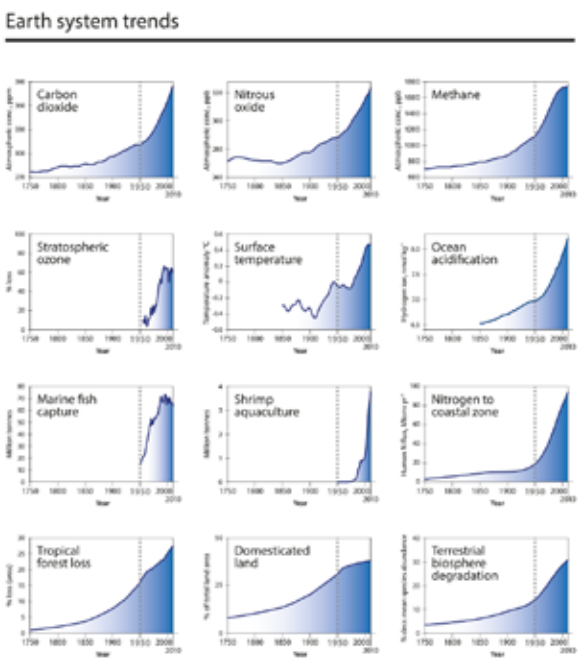
What is not very much disputed is what Crutzen and others call the Great Acceleration.[2] What is the difference between the footprint of humans taken globally today—human as *anthropos*, as a race on the earth—and the footprint of humans in 1900 and even in 1950? In 1950, the footprint was very, very small. So this is what we have occupied in terms of footprint in this very, very limited period of time between now and then. In a paper by Steffen and others, researchers try to capture as much as possible about how the great acceleration is composed.[3] What is interesting and typical of the Anthropocene at the time in which we are is that the authors mixed socio-economic variables, very classical ones like energy use and so on, with ones which are coming from past natural science.

1 Lewis, Simon L. and Maslin, Mark A. "Defining the Anthropocene". *Nature*. No. 519. March 2015.

2 Steffen, W., Crutzen, J. and McNeill, J.R. "The Anthropocene: are humans now overcoming the great forces of Nature?". *Ambio*. Vol. 36. No. 8. December 2007.

3 Ibid.

Tomás Saraceno. "On Space Time Foam", 2012. Installation view, Hangar Bicocca, Milan. Curated by Andrea Lissoni. Courtesy the artist; Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York; Andersen's Contemporary, Copenhagen; Pinksummer contemporary art, Genoa; Esther Schipper, Berlin. © Photography by Alessandro Coco and Studio Tomás Saraceno, 2012.



Earth system trends: The Great Acceleration 3, Steffen et al. (2015), The trajectory of the Anthropocene: The Great Acceleration, The Anthropocene Review.

We ourselves—humans—are becoming connected, hooked up at a scale and on the span of geological forces. That of course has a very important aspect also on space.

In Milan in 2012 Tomás Saraceno tried to capture what it is to be in this new space-time, which is as if you are suspended in the plastic foam, so to speak, and you cannot move on foot, because every time you move you have to actually crawl, in this very strange space which is under pressure. (There are three layers so you are actually separated as if you were flies glued onto this plastic foam.) It's a very, very powerful rendering of the difficulty of being in this new space-time, which, of course, some people enjoy but I found extremely distressing.

This connection between research coming from science and research coming from art doesn't have to protect the identity, freedom and integrity of artists at all. On the contrary, it is a great occasion to lose this autonomy, freedom and specificity of artists so that we try now to become more like Squarzoni, like Saraceno, like many others, exposed to the difficulty, which is a common difficulty brought to us by scientists about which time we are in. We need to find new ways of teaching and representing these issues. In May 2015, at SPEAP[4], we tried to find what I called the *Parliament of Things* many years ago, by making representative not only the nation state—not only the United States, or Canada, or England or Sweden—but the former elements of nature.[5]

Here you see women representing endangered species and others representing the soil. Of course, this is just a simulation, but I think we have to multiply the simulations to get the third meaning of aesthetics, which is representation in the political sense. There are three—the one of science, getting sensitive to what happened to the volcanoes, the climate; the one of art, which is making, building our own sensitivity to the event; and of course, the aesthetics of politics.

So I think we can answer the question, what is the time. The time in which we are is very, very close to the time of the sixteenth century. We are actually in the sixteenth century. Not because we discovered a new land, emptied of Indians by contingencies, by assassinations and conquest, but we still discovered a new land. The new land is not an extension, it is not a new land in space exactly; it is the same old land, that is, the land which is beneath our feet. It has the name of earth (like in the film *Erth* we just saw by John Latham) and this earth strangely enough, is not very well known. So the people who actually always claim the earth to be mundane, material, matter of fact, suddenly discover that the new earth that is coming at us is completely different from traditions of materials. Materialities, territories—all of that is going to change. So it is, in a way, back to the sixteenth century.

4 See http://blogs.sciences-po.fr/speap/ (Accessed 2016-07-14.)

5 Make It Work, le théâtre des négociations, see http://www.cop21makeitwork.com/ (Accessed 2016-07-14.)

Times
Simon Critchley

Question: *What is time?*

Simon Critchley: Difficult question, for at one level we know what time means in various ways (time to get up, time to work, time to play, time to sleep, time to sleep during the conference or whatever), but the nature of the time that we know and are completely familiar with is deeply enigmatic to us (it has been like this since Augustine posed the question). The problem with the question "what is time?" is that it presupposes that time is something that has a being, firstly, and that it only has *one* being: time is x or y and is one. Maybe that presupposition is fallacious, maybe we live and move within manifold and various dimensions of time. Maybe we should say not that time *is*, but that *times are*, as a first step. The time of sleep or dreams is not the same as the time of breakfast or the time of listening to music, or the time of waiting for something or the time of this conversation. Time in Gothenburg is not the same as time in New York or Azerbaijan. Time shifts, flexes and twists. It is malleable, elastic, splendidly relative and relational.

However, this is not the way time is usually viewed. And this is where Bruno Latour and I agree, I think. The dominant way of thinking about time is in terms of an arrow, an arrow of time, pointing towards the future; it is future-oriented, progressivist, indeed revolutionary. What is characteristic of the modern is a teleological, progressivist conception of time (which borrows from and secularises theological conceptions of time that are found largely in Christian ideas of providence). This is the idea of time "that passes irreversibly and annuls the entire past in its wake".[1] It is this conception of time that has to be placed in question and placed in question fundamentally.

This concept of time finds its degree zero, a quintessential modern expression, in Kant. It is expressed early on in the *Critique of Pure Reason* in the transcendental aesthetic. In this view, time only has one dimension, which is succession: one moment succeeds another. Time is uniform: it is now (i.e. the present), no-longer-now (i.e. the past) and not-yet-now (i.e. the future), and it flows in one direction, from past to future. Time is a uniform succession of nows that are unlimited, indeed infinite; there will always be more nows. Time is constant, as it is measured by the now, now now now, and—very importantly—time is irreversible, you can't retrieve the past. The now that is gone is gone for good, but there will always be another now, anytime now.

It is this idea of time as uniform succession, as infinite, constant and irreversible, that I think Latour and I both oppose. But in the name of what? For me, in the name of a time which is reversible, intermittent, episodic, varous and variable, pluriform, relative, relational, and, importantly, finite. Rather than thinking of time as a line or an arrow, we can think of it as a loop or a series of loops, as a spiral or series of spirals. This is a time which is various, multiple. If time is anything, then it is *times*. This idea of time as a spiral, loop or series of loops is something that art

1. Latour, Bruno. *We Have Never Been Modern*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. 1993. p.47.

can show particularly well. Think for example of Chris Marker's *La Jetée* or *Sans Soleil*.

This idea of time as a loop or spiral rather than a line is something that we know, or knew, very well, in the sense of time being linked to the looping movement of the sun and sky. This is something Heidegger says very well in an odd moment in *Being and Time*: "time first shows itself in and as the sky".[2] The sky is bright, it's time to wake up, or the sky is dark and we should drink beer (or wine, if you like) and then sleep.

But why limit it to the sky? In Swedish, time is *tid*, time as period, span, term, but also space (the relations between time and space is essential and beautifully interesting). But what is buried in *tid* is the idea of time as tide, as the movement not just of sky but tide, of the sea, of the repeated, looping, shifting, but never identical motion of maritime (of the mari-time) tides, rising and falling, ebbing and flowing. Here time is physical, the movement of sun and moon and sea; it is not in our heads, or the form of inner sense as Kant says, but this time is also not objective in the sense of something existent and measureable independently of us in digital clocks. But to say that time is not objective is not to conclude that time is subjective. Time, the time of a world or of worlds, is more objective than any object and more subjective than any subject. You cannot reduce the sky or sea to an object and our psychical sense of time is prior to any account of subjectivity. Time is a question of what Latour calls the Middle Kingdom, between subjects and objects, the times of quasi-objects and quasi-subjects.[3] But it is here that we happen to live.

Time is physical in the sense that it first shows itself in the sky, and we can link this, I think, to ideas of time as *physis* and *gaia*, and this time is also us in the most primary way. We are time and this sense of time is linked to world, to the network of entities that make up a world and an earth. I think we have here some of the elements for an earthly idea of time which I take it Latour is trying to get us to think and live.

Q: *Time arguably has always been at the centre of the research initiatives of the natural sciences, of philosophy and of the many different practices of history and social criticism. However, time also occupies a central place for the curiosity and attention of artist researchers across all the arts. The intensification of the question of time has, in recent years, prompted some to speak of a "temporal turn" across the disciplines. What is your perspective on this relative interest?*

SC: I'm suspicious of all talk of turns, because they tend to presuppose the idea of time as an arrow that both Latour and I want to criticise. Turn-talk can be an aspect of the culture industry or ideological production that I want to place in question. It's like when people talked of the postmodern turn a generation ago. I'm dubious about it. I'm also dubious about when some artists say "I'm working on time". It's as if they know what time is and they are working with it. This risks being vague and trendy or vaguely trendy, a *façon de parler*, little more. At that point, I want to ask: which conception of time are you working on, if one can indeed work on time (maybe times work

2. Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*. Oxford: Blackwell. 1962. p.471.

3. Latour, op. cit.

on us). I want to know what that artist is doing with time. Namely, what is their story, what is their fiction, what is their mythology of time and how does it subvert this ideology of the arrow of time? At that point, I think matters can get more interesting. I think this idea of story, fiction or myth is what artists really mean when they say "I am working on time".

Q: *What is your understanding of the ways in which cultural practice relates to questions of time?*

SC: Cultural practice relates to and always has to relate to questions of time, but again it is a question of which thought or thoughts of time one employs. If one is using or assuming the standard, progressivist conception of time then we risk getting nowhere. With the kind of pluriform, finite, intermittent idea of time that I recommend to you, time or rather *times* do not come in succession: the future is no later than the past and the present is something inherently unstable. Times are happening at the same time, disturbing our usual idea of time.

Q: *What are chronopolitics for you?*

SC: If chronopolitics is the name for the way in which time relates to politics and political decision-making, then nothing is more important than the politics of time. I would suggest that we begin with Hamlet, when he says early in the play that the time is out of joint. This is a political statement made during a time of war (and it is during a time of war that ghosts appear on the battlements of the castle, of Elsinore and our various castles). There is a disjuncture of time and, for me, because of my aesthetic prejudices, this is what theatre best enacts. The idea of the disjunture of time throws any teleological conception of time suddenly and massively into reverse. We could express this in a formula: *to say the time is out of joint is to say that the past is not past, the future folds back upon itself and the present is shot through with the fluxions of past and future that destabilise it.* Future, past and present are simultaneously "present", as it were. The three ecstases of time are at work on us and in us at the same time, which breaks open how we think about time. This is what takes place in *Hamlet*, in Sopocles' *Oedipus*, in Ibsen's *Ghosts*, and everywhere theatre happens.

Q: *Many of the proposals we received for this conference seek to engage with the crisis of "anthropocenic" time. You and Latour have engaged in different ways with this issue—could you elaborate?*

SC: I think that the crisis of anthropocenic time is that of the Kantian, modernist idea of time. This conception of time is not benign in its effects. It leads to the crazy idea that the West is ahead of the rest, has a different temporal structure to the rest—captured in the idea of modernity and somehow physically located in Western Europe—and to the even crazier idea that we can solve the crisis of climate change by not changing the conception of time that got us into this mess in the first place. The first thing we need to do is to rethink our conception of time, which will also lead us to question the privilege that we give to concepts like crisis. I'm sceptical about crisis talk, because it uses exactly this traditional, modernist, and I think degraded, idea of time. We could also link this to Latour's critique of the idea of revolution and revolutionary change, which is the only way in which modernity could account for change. We're better off without it.

Q: *We are currently embedded in a temporality that is shaped in large part by the instantaneity of global capital. How do you see the affects of this? How can this be understood historically and philosophically?*

SC: The problem with capital talk is that it uses or piggybacks on exactly the linear, progressivist conception of time that we need to place in question. Indeed, one of the problems with Marx, but more so with Marxists, is their fidelity to a theology of progress, revolution and the rest. I think that talk of capital is something wonderfully reassuring to

people on the Left. Ah, it's capital. It is like God talk or Nature talk or Providence talk. It is as if capital has a divine agency, which it clearly doesn't. It is a consequence of political decisions and it is these that we need to question with a fresh and vital new series of political decisions. It has multiple and complex political agencies which we need to understand and challenge. We need much more complex, situated and local forms of explanation in order to resist or rethink ideas of "global capital". The question of the global is also reached too quickly, as if we know what the globe is. In other words, talk of global capital is too monistic or totalising. Here, I agree with Latour; what we need is a notion of earthliness which is not totalising or monistic, more of a flat, open network than a seamless quasi-divine force. I think, in all humility, that another conception of time could lead us to think differently about capitalism and to political responses to it, which would be perhaps more anarchistic, at least for me. This is, as Latour always insists, a question of *composition*, a word I very much like in his vocabularly. We need to compose an earthly politics rather than presuppose a conception of the global, even global capital.

Q: *Is time gendered? What might it mean to think time in relation to the question of gender?*

SC: Yes, it is. It is different for men and women. Obviously, a previous generation thought about the question of gender and time in terms of what was called "women's time" (for example, the time of birth rather than the male obsession with death). There is nothing wrong with that. But it seems to me that we need to compose a more complex account of the relation between time and gender. What is the question of gender? How many genders are there? I think this becomes less and less clear in a way that is more and more interesting. Think about the way in which questions (plural) of gender have become more nuanced in relation to questions of intersex identity or trans categories. One place to start would be listening to Gothenburg's The Knife:

"Let's talk about gender baby. Let's talk about you and me". (I had to get one reference to The Knife in this event. As they said in their last concert in Reyjavik, postcolonial gender politics comes first, music comes second.)[4]

Q: *Much recent theoretical discourse has focused on the "end of time". What is your view of this?*

SC: I wish we could put an end to the talk of the end of time, but that is just as teleological and apocalyptic a claim as that which it is seeking to oppose. The idea of the end of time is theological, linked to the idea of end times, the last days etc. etc. I see this kind of talk as a form of crypto-theological reassurance that wants to avoid the hard task that we are facing, which is how to compose a politics that responds to the complex context of the anthropocene. There are two things I really hate and which I think are wrong: firstly, the idea that we can address the anthropocene and save ourselves and the globe with exactly the kind of linear, modernist conception of time that got us into this problem in the first place. And secondly, more controversially, the idea that we are fucked, that there is nothing to do and we're living in the end times. We get off on this sense of pessimistic doom far too much (why do we like doom so much?) and fall back into a neo-Schopenhauerian pessimism. We seem to delight in wallowing in our own powerlessness. We are not powerless. We seem to like feeling fucked in this way. Maybe we shouldn't like it so much.

4. See http://pitchfork.com/features/interview/9092-the-knife/ (Accessed 2016-07-13.)