

Embodied Activism and New Materialisms in Hybrid Social Movement Networks: *Relationality, Interiority, and Affect*

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Abstract

Contemporary grassroots movements increasingly operate through translocal structures that combine decentralized organizations, place-based action, and hybrid practices across distances. These Translocal Networks (TLNs) form part of a broader network of socio-ecological activism, linking diverse initiatives through national and translocal-hub nodes. They constitute a field of *relational becoming*, in which collective action, affect, relationality and material-discursive exchanges co-produce forms of co-agency and meaning-making. TLNs such as the Transition Network (TN) and the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) exemplify this, promoting relationality and deep cultural change as core political⁴ mobilization strategies. This paper approaches these cases as forms of activism that challenge conventional frameworks by integrating affective-embodied practices, more-than-human ontologies, and inner transformation within hybrid repertoires.

While social movement and network-based scholarship have examined decentralized governance and prefigurative strategies in contemporary social movements⁵, less attention has been paid to the hybrid, embodied, and intersubjective practices unfolding across entangled digital-material environments. Within these spaces, ontologies of *interbeing*,

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⁴ In this paper, it is argued that TLNs such as TN and GEN can be considered to be 'political-movements' (and not apolitical): their actions, strategies, and methods shared with their members and initiatives can be regarded as 'political actions'. The establishment of an ecovillage and off-grid community, the creation of an energy community or a non-formal sustainability school, and the organization of training sessions on digital literacy (open source, non-extractivist) are all considered political actions. It is important to note that both the TN and GEN movements are not traditionally associated with contentious politics, street actions and lobbying. However, it is evident that they possess a political attitude, as evidenced by their performance of certain structural actions that have the capacity to affect the *polis* at various levels.

⁵ This paper examines socio-ecological and grassroots movements that have gained prominence since the 2010s, characterized by decentralized and networked configurations and by hybrid forms of activism that combine digital coordination with embodied, relational, and place-based practices.

cosmologies of *togetherness* and relational epistemologies challenge representational paradigms by foregrounding the mutual constitution of human, more-than-human, and technological⁶ actors. These relational dynamics necessitate methodological approaches capable of engaging visual, affective, and embodied dimensions of activism as constitutive forces.

In this paper it is argued that translocal socio-ecological movements enact new materialist collective action where affect⁷, vitality⁸ and relationality configure activism as a distributed, co-constitutive process. Their repertoires of 'inner and outer' activism mobilize affective approaches, embodied practices, and digital infrastructures technology to sustain regenerative cultural transformation and *togetherness*. Understanding these dynamics requires an approach to acknowledge the entanglement of inter-subjectivity, materiality, and discourse in shaping social learning, meaning-making and contemporary activism.

Methodologically, the research adopts a preliminary exploratory qualitative design oriented toward theory-building and visual sociology. It utilizes visual-text analysis and participant observation, examining multimodal artifacts produced by TN and GEN - including digital media and imagery - to trace how affective and relational dynamics circulate. Anchored in new materialism's transdisciplinary theory, the study conceptualizes matter as vibrant, relational, and agentic in the production of social realities. By foregrounding embodied, affective, and more-than-human dimensions of activism, this paper contributes to expanding social movement theory beyond representational approaches, offering new insights into hybrid social learning practices and regenerative transformation in post-millennial social movements.

Keywords: *New materialism hybridity; more-than-human affect; embodied relationality; interiority as agency; hybrid social learning practices; translocal networks; affective-visual sociology.*

⁶ Bruno Latour (2005) in *Reassembling the Social* views technology as an integral part of social networks, where both human and nonhuman actors interact and influence each other - technology is not just a tool but an active participant in shaping social relations and practices.

⁷ See Massumi, B. (2015). *Politics of Affect*. Polity.

⁸ See Bennett, J. (2010). *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Duke University Press Books.

1. Introduction and Context

In the context of accelerating ecological crises, socio-political polarization, and the fragmentation of public spheres, contemporary social movements organize increasingly through decentralized, translocal and hybrid forms of networks. These grassroots-led networks operate across geographic, cultural, and digital boundaries, connecting localized struggles to transnational imaginaries of change (Castells, M., 2015). These networks are frequently referred to as Translocal Networks (TLNs), and they play a key role in promoting alternatives to prevailing socio-economic models by facilitating the movement of practices, narratives, agency, affects, and material resources across various spatial and temporal dimensions (Esteves, A., 2022; Esteves et al., 2025). These networks, as described by Escobar (2020), enact what is termed 'pluriversal politics': practices that cultivate multiple ways of being, knowing, and relating that extend beyond the limitations of dominant modernist ontologies.

In the domain of grassroots-social innovation and social movement studies, networks have been recognized as fundamental infrastructures for collective action, innovation diffusion, and mobilization (Diani & McAdam, 2003; Tarrow, S., 2011; Castells, M., 2012; Smith et al., 2014, 2017; Avelino et al., 2019; Geels, F., 2024). Notable contributions by Castells (1996, 2004, 2015) have provided foundational conceptualizations of networked movements as expressions of informational capitalism, emphasizing digital communication, connective action, and decentralized governance. Subsequent scholarship has expanded these insights to address prefigurative politics (Maackelbergh, M., 2017; Brown, A., 2020; Monticelli, L., 2021), horizontalism, and experimental forms of organization within contemporary movements (Fominaya, C., 2016; Pel et al., 2020; Piteira et al., 2022; Avelino et al., 2020). While the networked character of these movements has been extensively documented, their less visible dimensions - embodied practices, affective dynamics, and relational ontologies - remain comparatively under-theorized within contemporary social movement studies. A prevailing challenge and limitation in this field is the persistent use of dominant analytical frameworks that privilege cognitive, representational, and human-centred models, which tend to prioritize discourse, strategic rationality, and institutional forms of coordination (Fox & Alfred, 2016; Clark & Szerszynski, 2020). Despite their analytical value, such approaches entail the dismissal of the affective, somatic, and more-than-human dimensions of collective action, thus providing a limited explanation of how movements mobilise, maintain engagement, and enact transformation. Despite their analytical value, such approaches entail the dismissal of the affective, somatic, and more-than-human dimensions of collective action, thus providing a limited explanation of how movements mobilise, maintain engagement, and enact transformation. The neglect of lived, sensory, and relational experience may result in

reductive interpretations of activism that overlook how embodiment, emotion, and materiality/environment actively participate in the production of political agency (Goodwin et al., 2001; Gould et al., 2009; Jasper, 2018; Fox & Alldred, 2016; Braidotti, R., 2019; Clark & Szerszynski, 2020; Johnson, R., 2023). Addressing this limitation requires methodological approaches capable of engaging the visual, embodied, and affective dimensions of activism as constitutive - rather than merely representational - elements of political and activism practices.

Consequently, less research has been directed towards the embodied, affective, and material dimensions through which TLNs sustain themselves over time, cultivate collective subjectivities, and enact profound cultural change. In particular, the growing prominence of practices oriented towards interiority⁹ as if collective action - such as deep reflection, felt expression, emotional literacy, mindfulness, ritual, and relational care - poses challenges for conventional sociological approaches that separate the psychological from the political - in other words, the inner from the outer dimensions¹⁰ of activism. Federici's (2020) critique of bodily alienation under contemporary capitalism is particularly pertinent. Her analysis emphasizes that the reclamation of the body constitutes a political act that resists the extractive logics and instrumentalization that characterize contemporary capitalism. This divergence - embodied and interiority practices - is particularly pronounced in movements that are oriented towards ecological regeneration and sustainability transitions (Power, C., 2016; Carvalho & Ferreira, 2022; Rowe & Ormond, 2023), yet where activists explicitly associate eco-societal transformation with shifts in values, worldviews and relational ontologies (Woiwode et al., 2021; Escobar, A., 2020; Chapple et al., 2023).

Recent theoretical developments in new materialism, posthumanism, and relational ontology offer conceptual tools with which to address this research gap. Scholars such as Bennett (2010), Haraway (2016), and Braidotti (2019) have challenged the anthropocentric and representational paradigms by emphasizing the agency of matter, affect, and more-than-

⁹ See Power, C. (2016). *The integrity of process: Is inner transition sufficient?* <https://doi.org/10.23668/PSYCHARCHIVES.1780>; Carvalho, A., & Ferreira, V. (2022). Climate Crisis, Neoliberal Environmentalism and the self: The case of «inner transition». *Social Movement Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14742837.2022.2070740>; Rowe, T., & Ormond, M. (2023). Holding space for climate justice? Urgency and 'Regenerative Cultures' in Extinction Rebellion Netherlands. *Geoforum*, 146, 103868. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2023.103868>

¹⁰ See <https://archive25.transitionnetwork.org/do-transition/inner/inner-transition-framing/> and <https://www.transitiontowntotnes.org/project-groups/inner-transition> and <https://inner.transitionmovement.org/from-inner-transition-to-cultural-transformation/?lng=en>

human assemblages¹¹, including technological apparatus as actors¹² (Latour, B., 2005). From this perspective, social movements are not merely strategic actors operating within social structures, but emergent constellations of human and non-human forces co-producing political subjectivities, practices, and worlds - including within the hybrid (online and offline) realms. In short, new materialist studies conceive of agency as distributed, emergent and relational, arising through dynamic assemblages of human and non-human actors (Fox, N., 2023).

The present paper situates TLNs of social movements - particularly TN and GEN - within this broader theoretical shift by bringing new materialist and posthuman perspectives into dialogue with social movement studies and political ecology. It is argued that contemporary TLNs enact a form of embodied activism that cannot be adequately understood through conventional representational frameworks or network analysis as a standalone methodology. Instead, these movements function as hybrid social-ecological learning systems and cultural transformation, in which human and more-than-human actors, affects, technologies, shared narratives and environments co-produce political agency and collective becoming. By emphasizing relationality, interiority, and affect, the paper reinterprets TLNs not merely as organizational structures, but as living assemblages engaged in regenerative world-making.

This article contributes to the development of social movement theory in three distinct ways. Firstly, it reconceptualizes networks not primarily as informational infrastructures or communication systems, rather as affective-material assemblages in which bodies, emotions, technologies, and ecological environments co-produce collective action. Secondly, it integrates interiority and embodied transformation, thereby demonstrating that political activism is sustained not only through strategic framing or resource mobilization, but

¹¹ Buchanan (2020) in *Assemblage Theory and Method* defines an assemblage as a provisional configuration of heterogeneous elements whose unity derives from functional relations rather than shared essence, and whose components retain autonomy while forming a structured arrangement capable of producing specific effects. For the author an assemblage is not just a network, it is not a metaphor for complexity, it is not inherently fluid and can be highly structured, and more importantly, it is neither purely material nor purely discursive - *it includes both*. Particularly, assemblage theory is a *methodological orientation* - it directs attention to how heterogeneous elements are composed, stabilized, and transformed. Characteristics of assemblages are: *heterogeneity, relationality, exteriority of relations, function over essence, territorialization and deterritorialization*. It is a patterned configuration with internal organization and emergent properties, yet without organic unity or a totalizing structure.

¹² For Latour (2005), social movements can be understood as assemblages of heterogeneous actants - human and non-human - whose associations produce what is conventionally described as “the social.” In this perspective, technologies are not neutral instruments but mediators that actively shape, translate, and transform collective action.

also through affective and relational approaches. Thirdly, by emphasising the agency of non-human entities, the paper extends the theoretical framework of social movements beyond a human-centric perspective. It does so by conceptualizing activism as an ecological process of distributed agency, rather than a consequence of deliberate human coordination alone. This approach contributes to an emergent *new materialist turn* in social movement studies, which redefines political agency as relational, embodied, and ecologically situated.

2. Research Aim and Questions

The primary aim of this preliminary research is to explore how social movement TLNs enact embodied and relational forms of activism through new materialist practices. More specifically, it will explore how relationality, interiority and affect function as constitutive forces in the organization, learning processes and transformative aspirations of these networks. A preliminary, representative collection of material composed of visual and textual data from TN and GEN will be used to examine how these practices contribute to social learning and cultural transformation processes. The objective is not to evaluate movement outcomes in instrumental terms. Instead, it examines how activism is experienced, perceived and manifested through everyday practices, infrastructures and relational experiences. The following question guides the research: *How do translocal networks of social movements integrate embodied and interior practices with digital and relational forms of activism?*

This research extends social movement theory beyond representational and human-centred models, illuminating how activism is materially enacted through embodiment, technologies, environments, and shared affective orientations. The following section provides the conceptual foundation for the subsequent empirical and methodological sections, while clarifying the paper's contribution to interdisciplinary debates at the intersection of sociology, new materialism, political ecology, and regenerative studies.

3. Theoretical Framework: New Materialism and Embodied Activism

New Materialism, Relational Ontologies and More-than-Human Agency

New materialism constitutes a heterogeneous yet convergent assemblage of theories¹³ that challenge anthropocentric, representational, and dualistic understandings of social life (Coole

¹³ Emerging across feminist theory, science and technology studies, political philosophy, and political ecology, new materialism foregrounds matter, affect, and relationality as active forces in the production of social life (Bennett, J., 2010; Coole & Frost, 2010; Braidotti, R., 2019).

& Frost, 2010), emphasizing the vitality, agency, and relationality of matter¹⁴ (Bennett, 2010; Braidotti, 2019). Rather than conceiving matter as a passive substance shaped by human intention, new materialist approaches highlight how material, affective, and discursive forces co-produce social realities. This ontological shift has significant implications for the study of social movements: agency, from this perspective, is not an attribute possessed by discrete actors; rather, it is an emergent effect of relations among human and non-human entities (Coole & Frost, 2010). This perspective challenges traditional views by recognizing that agency is not solely a human trait but is distributed across various forms of matter and processes.

A central contribution of new materialism lies in its relational ontology (Barad, K., 2007; Witte & Schmitz, 2021, Delanda & Braidotti, 2021), which rejects the notion of discrete, pre-given entities acting upon one another. In contrast, social reality is understood as constituted through relations that are simultaneously material, discursive, affective, and ecological. Bennett's (2010) concept of *vibrant matter* highlights the vitality and agentic capacity of non-human materialities, including technologies, infrastructures and environments, in shaping political and social processes.

From a new materialist perspective, activism is not merely the result of rational actors mobilizing resources and articulating discontent; rather, it is regarded as a distributed, co-constitutive process. It emerges from assemblages of bodies, emotions, technologies, environments, and narratives. Haraway's (2016) concept of sympoiesis - the term used to denote the process of "*making-with*" - effectively encapsulates this distributed form of agency. In this paradigm, political action emerges from interdependent relations, co-evolution, and ethical responsibility within assemblages of action, rather than originating from autonomous subjects. Barad's (2007) concept of *intra-action* (rather than interaction) accentuates the notion that entities do not pre-exist their relations but rather emerge through them. From this standpoint, social movements are not merely collections of individuals pursuing common objectives, but rather complex ecological assemblages where agency is perpetually recalibrated and redistributed. This framing has the potential to deconstruct the conventional boundaries that delineate the mind and matter, human and non-human, emotion and reason. Agency, in this view and as stated by DeLanda & Braidotti (2021), is not exclusively human but distributed across material configurations; bodies -

¹⁴ Jane Bennett's (2010) concept of vitality in new materialism emphasizes that all matter, including nonhuman entities, possesses life and agency, challenging the traditional human-centred view of the material world. This perspective encourages a recognition of the interconnectedness and active participation of all things in shaping events and experiences. While it enriches political theory it also fosters a deeper appreciation for the interconnectedness of life. Simultaneously, this adds to the work of Bruno Latour and Donna Haraway, providing a conceptual framework for recognizing other-than-human consciousness and agency.

human and non-human - possess capacities to affect and be affected. This reframing situates subjectivity as embedded, embodied, and relational, aligning new materialism with a processual ontology in which entities emerge through material interactions rather than preceding them.

According to Escobar (2020), pluriversal politics further extends relational ontology into political ecology, and those dominant modern ontologies - rooted in the separation between nature and culture - are inadequate for addressing planetary crises. Many contemporary movements articulate practices and imaginaries that resonate with the notion of *interbeing*¹⁵, a concept rooted in a Zen Buddhist tradition that emphasizes the radical interconnectedness and interdependence of all forms of existence, whereby no entity is understood as fully independently of its relations and everything is interwoven and mutually reliant. This perspective prioritizes the entanglement of human and more-than-human life, challenging anthropocentric assumptions and reconfiguring the ontological foundations of grassroots political action. Such orientations foreground the entanglement of human and more-than-human life and provide a conceptual basis for questioning anthropocentric assumptions in grassroots political action. As such, relationality functions as an ontological foundation rather than a mere descriptive attribute, with relations being simultaneously social, ecological, technological, and affective (Escobar et al., 2024). Within the context of TLNs, these embodied and affective dimensions intersect with digital infrastructures and cybercultural imaginaries (Turner, F., 2008; Ghasemi, M., 2024). The acquisition of knowledge and the development of agency do not occur through a unidirectional transmission of information, rather, they are shaped by processes of becoming-with across hybrid spaces. These spaces encompass digital platforms, community gatherings, landscapes, and affective environments. Technologies are not impartial instruments; rather, they function as mediators of affect, attention, and relationality, thereby reinforcing the assertion posited by the new materialist discourse that matter actively contributes to the realm of political life (Latour, B., 2005; Bennett, J., 2010; Simondon, G., 2017).

Consequently, Thorpe et al. (2020) translate these ontological relationalities into a methodological practice¹⁶ - they argue that research should account for more-than-human

¹⁵ Interbeing is a philosophical concept introduced by Thich Nhat Hanh, rooted in Zen Buddhism emphasizing the interconnectedness and interdependence of all elements of existence. See example of application in Transition Network online narratives: Grunewald, P. (2024, March 18). Transition, mycelium, and interbeing. *Cultural Transformation Circle [Inner Transition - Transition Network]*. <https://inner.transitionmovement.org/transition-mycelium-interbeing/> and Amaral et al. (2024, July 23) Last Inter-Being of the season: join on Friday 26th! *Cultural Transformation Circle [Inner Transition - Transition Network]*. <https://inner.transitionmovement.org/last-interbeing-season/?lng=en>

¹⁶ See Thorpe, H., Brice, J., & Clark, M. (2020)

agency by recognizing that knowledge production itself is an entangled process involving researchers, participants, technologies, spaces, and material conditions¹⁷. Drawing on *feminist new materialism*, they emphasize relationality, embodiment, and affect as central to inquiry. Rather than treating context as background, research settings should be acknowledged as assemblages in which matter actively participates in shaping outcomes. Agency is thus understood as emergent and distributed, and methodology becomes an ethical and ontological practice attentive to material-discursive entanglements.

While decentering of the human subject and distributed agency in the perspective of Actor-Network Theory (Latour, B., 2005) is referred to in this paper, this work more explicitly aligned with *feminist new materialist* approach. Actor–Network Theory provides an important ontological reorientation by treating social phenomena as effects of heterogeneous associations among human and nonhuman actants. However, *feminist new materialism* extends this move by foregrounding embodiment, affect, ethics, and subject formation within relational fields (Braidotti, R., 2019; Bennett, J., 2010; Fox & Alldred, 2016). The present study therefore addresses Latour’s relational sensibility while situating its analysis within a *new materialist framework* that emphasizes affective intensities, interior transformation, and ecological accountability as constitutive dimensions of political agency. By adopting this approach, it is possible to consider networks not only as socio-technical assemblages, but also as embodied and ethically significant configurations of relationality that extend beyond human boundaries.

Sympoiesis, Interbeing and Becoming

Haraway’s (2016) concept of sympoiesis, understood as “*making-with*,” provides a useful lens for examining TLNs as relational assemblages. While *autopoiesis*, as originally formulated by Maturana and Varela (1980), emphasizes the self-production and organizational autonomy of living systems while acknowledging their structural coupling with the environment, *sympoiesis* foregrounds processes of co-production and becoming through ongoing relations among heterogeneous human and more-than-human actors. This distinction is therefore not between closed and open systems in absolute terms, but between different emphases on self-production and relational co-becoming. *Sympoiesis* is particularly relevant to TLNs insofar as their practices can be understood in terms of permeable organizational boundaries, shared learning, and ongoing responsiveness across different scales and contexts. This resonates with *interbeing*¹⁸, which foregrounds the interdependence of human and more-than-human life. Here, these concepts serve as analytical lenses for examining relational understandings

¹⁷ See also Benozzo, A., Distinto, M., & Priola, V. (2024)

¹⁸ See note 15.

of social and ecological life. Additionally, in *Planetary Social Thought*, Clark & Szerszynski (2020) argue that the Anthropocene compels a fundamental reworking of social theory by situating the 'social' within planetary and Earth-system processes rather than treating nature as external backdrop. They advance a relational ontology in which human histories are entangled with geological, atmospheric, and biological forces, thereby decentering human exceptionalism and reframing agency as distributed across more-than-human dynamics. This position converges, albeit from a distinct intellectual lineage, with the concept of *interbeing*, which posits the radical interdependence and co-arising of all beings.

These perspectives reject ontological individualism and instead emphasize relational constitution as the condition of existence. Consequently, the notion of sympoiesis and 'making-with' resonates strongly with Clark and Szerszynski's insistence that humans are co-formed with planetary forces and embedded in multispecies and material assemblages. Although *Planetary Social Thought* emerges from Earth-system sociology, *interbeing* from a religious philosophy, and sympoiesis from feminist science and technology studies, all three articulate a relational, more-than-human ontology in which agency, responsibility, and social transformation are understood as emergent from entangled planetary processes rather than from autonomous human subjects. Within the context of TLNs, and particularly TN and GEN, which are oriented towards regeneration and sustainability, the concept of *interbeing* is frequently articulated through practices that link inner transformation with ecological responsibility. Such orientations present a challenge to instrumental approaches to activism by framing transformation as a process of collective becoming rather than problem-solving alone.

The posthuman ethics proposed by Braidotti (2019) serve to further reinforce this paradigm by situating political subjectivity within relational and ecological assemblages. From this perspective, political agency does not emerge from sovereign individuals, but rather from embedded subjects who are accountable to human and more-than-human others. This ethical reorientation is particularly salient in movements responding to ecological crises, where questions of responsibility, care, and futurity are central (Latour, B., 2017, 2018; Escobar, A., 2018; Carvalho & Riquito, 2022; Chapple et al., 2023).

Affect and Embodied Activism

Embodied activism draws on these insights by situating the body as a site of political knowledge, resistance, learning, and transformation, thus providing a crucial nexus between new materialist ontology and contemporary networked social movements. Rather than treating embodiment as symbolic or expressive, this perspective understands bodily practices - such as ritual, care, somatic awareness, and collective presence - as material interventions that reconfigure relations between self, others, and environments (Federici, S., 2020;

Johnson, R., 2023). New materialist and feminist perspectives foreground embodiment as a primary site of political agency, knowledge production, and relational becoming.

While Federici (2020) emphasizes the political significance of reclaiming the body from capitalist regimes of abstraction and exploitation, Johnson (2023) argues that engaging the body enables activists to cultivate deeper forms of connection, justice, and liberation, particularly in contexts of burnout and alienation - embodiment, in this sense, exceeds individual corporeality. Bodies are understood as both porous and relational, continuously shaped by interactions with other bodies, technologies, spaces, and more-than-human environments. This understanding aligns with Bennett's (2010) concept of *vibrant matter*, in which material forces - including bodily capacities, infrastructures, and ecological conditions - participate in political processes. Embodied activism, therefore, can be conceptualised as a form of distributed agency, whereby political action is co-produced through bodily presence, sensations, emotions and affective-relational intensities (Federici, S., 2020; Johnson, R., 2023).

Within this context, affect constitutes a fundamental element. Recent scholarship in this field posits that affect is an emotional response and experience that shapes human interactions and cultural expressions (Bachmann-Medick & Tygstrup, 2015), emphasizing the significance of feelings and emotional engagement in understanding cultural practices and aesthetics today (Akker et al., 2017). For Piredda (2020), affect refers to the emotional states that can be influenced by objects known as *affective artifacts*, which have the capacity to alter an individual's emotional state and contribute to their sense of self. These artifacts form part of a broader exploration of *situated affectivity* in understanding how emotions are experienced and expressed. In contrast, Cottingham (2024) argues that emotions¹⁹ are not an internal psychological state, but rather a relational force that circulates between bodies and across spaces. Consequently, they shape capacities for action and modes of collective attachment (Cottingham, M., 2024). In the case of TLNs, and particularly TN and GEN, affective dynamics such as hope, grief, despair, care, and belonging are not peripheral to activism; rather, they are constitutive of it. These affective forces sustain participation across distance and difference, thereby enabling solidarity in contexts characterised by ecological anxiety and political precarity. Emotions are not merely individual experiences; they circulate collectively, shaping movement identities and capacities for action (Cottingham, M., 2024). Emotions are deeply intertwined with cultural and political contexts - feelings circulate between bodies, signs, and objects, creating collective affinities, exclusions, and identities

¹⁹ 'Affect' is a broad term referring to all feelings, including emotions and moods. In contrast, 'emotions' refer to specific, intense feelings that are usually short-lived and directed at something particular. Affect can be positive or negative and encompasses a range of emotional states. In contrast, emotions are more specific and can be influenced by context and personal experiences.

rather than residing in isolated subjects - and understanding them can reveal how they shape identities, social relationships and political alignments within communities (Ahmed, S., 2014).

Interiority: Inner transformation as if collective change

Of particular significance is the fact that affective practices within these movements frequently entail purposeful engagement with *interiority* (see Carvalho & Ferreira, 2022; Rowe & Ormond, 2023; Pinto, T., 2024). Practices such as collective reflection, emotional literacy, mindfulness, ritual, and somatic awareness are increasingly integrated into movement cultures, particularly within ecological and regenerative networks. Rather than representing a retreat into individually focused self-care, these practices are presented as collectively beneficial capacities that enable resilience, conflict resolution and deep dialogue, and ethical responsiveness. According to Akker et al. (2017), interiority²⁰ refers to the inner experiences and emotional depths of individuals, often contrasting with external appearances or societal expectations, which shape today's cultural dynamics as the *return to the personal and subjective narratives*²¹. In the context of ecological and regenerative movements, such practices are frequently associated with ethical and practical (embodied) orientations towards more-than-human life and planetary wellbeing (Clark & Szerszynski, 2020; Chapple et al., 2023).

The concept of *inner transformation* has gained particular prominence within sustainability and regenerative studies (Carvalho & Ferreira, 2022). For Power (2016) *inner transition*²² is concerned with the manner in which individuals relate to themselves, to each other and to the world in the process of change. Similarly, Woiwode et al. (2021) and Goldstein et al. (2025) argues that inner transformation in social movements functions as a deep leverage point for systemic change and therefore addressing values, worldviews, and relational capacities is essential for transforming socio-ecological systems, as technical and policy interventions alone are insufficient. Within TLNs, inner transformation is not conceived as a linear process of individual enlightenment but as a relational and ongoing practice

²⁰ Interiority in this paper is explored within the context of *metamodernism*, highlighting the return to personal and subjective narratives in response to contemporary cultural dynamics (see (Akker et al., 2017)).

²¹ The personal and subjective narratives emphasize individual experiences and perspectives, often reflecting a shift from the detached irony of postmodernism to a more engaged and hopeful storytelling approach in *metamodernism*. This narrative style seeks to reconnect with emotional depth and authenticity in the face of contemporary challenges (Akker et al., 2017)

²² *Inner Transition* is grounded in Transition's whole-systems approach which acknowledges the split between inner and outer worlds that is perpetuated in the current paradigm (Transition Network, 2013)

embedded in collective learning environments. However, these *inner transition*²³ practices tended to be marginalised due to *action-oriented outcomes*²⁴ taking precedence over the often-arduous work associated with group dynamics and relational experiences associated with inner Transition, even though they can affect the carriage and outcomes of activities and projects (Power, C., 2016).

This relational understanding of interiority aligns with Demaris & Landsman's (2022) notion of *relational culture*, which emphasizes the role of shared values, affective orientations, and practices of care in sustaining alternative organizational forms. In this context, embodied activism functions as a prefigurative practice (Monticelli, 2018; 2021) that enacts desired futures in the present, not only through institutional experimentation but through lived relations and affective orientations.

The present study does not advocate for the depoliticization of social movements through the psychologization or individually and subjectivity-focused analysis. However, the cases examined in this study suggest that interiority, when situated within collective and relational frameworks, can function as a way of politicization rather than withdrawal (Szerszynski, 2002; Clark & Szerszynski, 2020; Chapple et al., 2023). By establishing an explicit correlation between inner transformation and ecological responsibility, coupled with the notion of collective action, these movements effectively subvert the conventional binary distinction between inner-outer change and internal-external approaches to support societal transformation (Wamsler et al., 2021).

Hybridity as relationally

TLNs of social movements - in particular TN and GEN - are increasingly operating through hybrid practices that combine online and offline spaces, thereby producing relational configurations that go beyond the divide between digital forms of mediation and in-person presence. From a relational sociological perspective, Witte & Schmitz (2021) argue that social phenomena must be understood as dynamic constellations of relations that re-figure space across scales; movements are thus not simply located in physical or virtual arenas but emerge through translocal relational fields. Ghasemi (2024) posits that contemporary cybercultural paradigms are distinguished by hybridity, oscillation, and affective immersion, wherein the

²³ See <https://archive25.transitionnetwork.org/do-transition/inner/inner-transition-framing/> and <https://www.transitiontowtnes.org/project-groups/inner-transition>

²⁴ According to Power (2016) the privileging of outer over inner Transition and action over process is a reflection of broader society's grappling with the human dynamics inherent in any process of change. Where such concerns are unproblematicized, this raises questions about the extent to which movements replicate existing paradigms and structures or take a prefigurative approach and challenge and re-imagine them in their practice.

digital and material spheres are no longer considered distinct domains; rather, they are mutually constitutive environments of meaning-making. Castells (2015) conceptualizes these dynamics through the lens of networked communication and connective action, emphasizing informational flows and decentralized mobilization. However, relational and new materialists regard this approach as centring communication as the primary analytic focus. Fox & Alldred (2016) posit the argument that movements should be conceptualized as assemblages in which bodies, technologies, affects, and discourses co-produce actions, thereby attributing agency to material and affective forces as well as human actors. Similarly, Bachmann-Medick (2016) situates such developments within broader 'cultural turns' that reorient analysis towards performativity, materiality, and spatiality. These perspectives reveal hybrid activism not merely as the strategic combination of online and offline tactics, rather as a relational and more-than-human assemblage in which digital infrastructures, embodied practices, affective intensities, and spatial reconfigurations coalesce to produce new forms of collective agency.

In concluding this section, it is imperative to emphasize that in order to comprehend activism in its true complexity, it is essential to adopt research methodologies that are capable of incorporating lived experience, situated meaning, and more-than-human entanglements into the research process. Such approaches should avoid reducing these elements to purely discursive or instrumental variables, thereby ensuring a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of activism as a multifaceted, embodied, affective, and relational phenomenon. Consequently, the study employs qualitative, interpretive, and reflexive methods attentive to affective atmospheres, embodied practices, and relational processes as they unfold across digital and physical spaces. Rather than seeking causal explanations or representational completeness, the methodological approach prioritizes analytical sensitivity to processes of becoming, co-presence, and relational learning. This alignment is indicative of a broader commitment within a new materialist approach to methodological openness and pluralism, with the understanding that relational phenomena demand methods that are themselves responsive, situated, and reflexive (Braidotti, R., 2019; Haraway, D., 2016).

4. Research Methodology

The research adopts an exploratory and preliminary qualitative research design oriented toward theory-building based on visual-text analysis and participant observation. Given the paper's focus on relational, affective, and more-than-human dimensions of activism, the research adopts an interpretive, post-representational epistemology consistent with new materialist methodologies (Fox & Alldred, 2016), focusing not on causal explanation but on tracing relational configurations and affective-material dynamics.

A qualitative interpretive research design, informed by systematic visual analysis, informs this study. It reflects the premise that contemporary social movements communicate, mobilize, and enact meaning not only through discourse or organizational structures, rather through visual, affective, and aesthetic practices. This methodological orientation is situated within the field of visual sociology, which conceptualizes the role of images and visual practices in the construction and circulation of social meaning, relations, and cultural practices (Harper, D., 2012; Pauwels, L., 2015; Rose, G., 2016, Crilley et al., 2020). From this perspective, visual materials are not approached as illustrative supplements to textual analysis; they are recognised as sociologically significant artefacts through which collective imaginaries, identities, and forms of political engagement are constructed, mediated, and circulated. The integration of visual sociology with an interpretive and post-representational epistemology enables analysis to attend to how visual and multimodal artefacts participate in the enactment of activism and in shaping collective action within hybrid translocal networks.

Visual analysis has become increasingly relevant in social movement research, particularly as movements rely on images, symbols, and digital artefacts to articulate political claims, mobilize participation, and construct collective identities across hybrid and transnational contexts. Research has demonstrated that visual materials, including protest signs, campaign imagery, digital media, and memes, do not merely represent movement discourse but actively shape processes of meaning-making, emotional engagement, and political framing (Doerr & Milman, 2014; Doerr & Teune, 2022). Visual artefacts function as mediators of collective action, thereby enabling movements to construct solidarities, communicate across linguistic and cultural boundaries, and translate locally situated struggles into broader narratives and transformative imaginaries. In digital environments, the rapid circulation of such content further amplifies its role in shaping political communication and mobilization, particularly within climate and ecological justice movements (Doerr, N.M., 2024).

Within this context, the analysis examines the composition, symbolism, visual framing, and circulation of images, as well as their integration within broader communicative and relational practices (Doerr & Milman, 2014). This enables a more nuanced understanding of how visual-affective artefacts contribute to the production of collective meaning, the mobilization of participation, and the articulation of regenerative and relational imaginaries within translocal social movement networks.

This methodological orientation is consistent with new materialist approaches that understand meaning, affect, and agency as distributed across human and non-human elements (Fox & Alldred, 2016). Consequently, visual artefacts are approached not as passive

representations but as active participants in socio-material assemblages, shaping perception, affective orientation, and relational dynamics within contemporary activism.

New materialism is employed here as a conceptual and analytical lens, rather than being implemented as a methodology²⁵. The objective is not to assert ontological exhaustiveness or methodological rigour. Instead, the aim is to investigate how new materialist concepts can illuminate dimensions of social movements that remain under-theorized within dominant approaches.

4.1 The Case-Studies: TN and GEN

The research examines two established TLNs - GEN and TN - as illustrative case studies of embodied and relational activism. Both networks operate across local, regional, and global scales while maintaining strong commitments to place-based practice. They also explicitly integrate ecological regeneration with interior and relational dimensions of social change. These networks operate across local initiatives, regional hubs, and transnational alliances, often combining grassroots hybrid organizing with reflective and embodied practices.

GEN connects ecovillages, intentional communities, and educational initiatives worldwide, focusing on regenerative living, ecological design, and community resilience. Its activities encompass physical settlements, digital platforms, training programs, and transnational gatherings, forming a hybrid infrastructure that enables peer learning and collective experimentation. Practices of embodiment, ritual, and relational governance are central to GEN's organizational culture.

The TN emerged from community-based responses to climate change, peak oil, and resource depletion, emphasizing local resilience, relocalization, and cultural transformation. Over time, TN has increasingly foregrounded "inner transition" as a necessary complement to structural and technical solutions. This includes practices aimed at emotional resilience, collective reflection, and relational capacity-building.

In both networks and across cases, activists engage in regenerative practices as well as collective sense-making, inner transformation workshops, ritualized gatherings and inner

²⁵ New materialism research methods involve qualitative approaches that emphasize the interconnectedness of material and immaterial aspects of reality, focusing on how entities and processes interact. These methods may include: (a) ethnographic studies (involves immersive observation and participation in communities to understand the entanglements of human and non-human agencies.); (b) visual and artistic methods (utilizes creative expressions to explore and represent complex relationships and experiences.); (c) interdisciplinarity (integration of disciplines and collaborative research); agential realism (focus on intra-action and differential materializations) and other techniques that explore the relational dynamics between human and non-human agencies.

transition embodied events. These practices cultivate affective bonds and shared imaginaries, enabling what Woiwode et al. (2021) identify as inner transformation to sustainability - a deep leverage point for systemic change. Material settings, from community spaces to online platforms, play an active role in shaping these practices. Technologies are not neutral tools but mediators of affect, attention, and relationality, reinforcing the new materialist claim that matter participates in political life (Bennett, J., 2010).

While differing in origin and emphasis, both networks exemplify translocal assemblages that blend digital communication, embodied encounters, and affective orientations. They function less as centralized organizations and more as distributed ecologies of practice, sustained through shared values, narratives, and relational commitments.

Rather than seeking causal explanations or broad generalizations, the methodology prioritises analytical sensitivity to relational processes, affective dynamics, and embodied practices. The selection of cases was guided by theoretical relevance rather than representativeness, with a focus on movements that explicitly integrate ecological politics with interior and relational transformation.

4.2 Data Sources and methods

The research basis for this preliminary research comprises two main components:

1. **Critical literature review**, triangulating new materialism theory, social movement studies, political ecology, regenerative approach and affect theory.
2. **Qualitative content analysis** of textual and visual materials produced by the case study networks, including websites, newsletters reports, online platforms, training materials, imagery, and narratives.

The present study was predicated on preliminary research comprising a sample of a representative dataset, consisting of publicly available visual and textual materials produced by TN and GEN, including campaign visuals, social media posts, videos, and symbolic materials. The preliminary sample of representative visual-text data was subjected to analysis - in order to observe their hybrid realms and their more-than-human, regenerative, deep (culture) and systemic change visual-text narratives - yielding preliminary findings and theorization. In a subsequent stage, prior to the present paper, a subsequent study will analyse a comprehensive visual-text dataset and primary and secondary empirical data from 2022 to 2026, including participant observation²⁶ and semi-structured interviews with

²⁶ In a subsequent in-depth research, participant observation of hundreds of online gatherings and a smaller number of face-to-face events between 2022 and 2026 and complemented by semi-structured interviews conducted during the same period, will be analysed to strengthen the theory-building.

members of TN and GEN. This will consolidate and contribute to the development of new materialism theory applied to hybrid and contemporary networked social movements.

4.3 Analytical Approach

In contrast to the conventional approach of assigning data to predefined categories, the analysis draws on relational and new materialist sensibilities, attending to how human and more-than-human actors, affects, and material conditions co-constitute activist practices. The analysis focuses on how interior practices, relational infrastructures, embodied and hybrid-material settings are articulated as integral to activism - and on identifying recurring patterns of practice, narrative, and affective orientation.

4.4 Positionality and Reflexivity

The researcher occupies an entangled position within the field under study, engaging with TLNs both as an observer and as a participant in their activities. This positionality reflects a broader methodological challenge inherent in researching relational, affective, and embodied forms of activism, where access to experiential and intersubjective dimensions often depends on proximity rather than distance. Rather than treating involvement as a source of bias to be eliminated, this study approaches positionality as an epistemic condition that shapes what can be known and how it can be known.

A reflexive stance is therefore central to the research design. The interpretations presented in this paper are understood as situated, partial and co-produced through ongoing interactions with movement actors, texts, technologies and environments. The researcher's theoretical commitments to new materialist and relational ontologies inevitably inform the analytical lens, foregrounding certain dimensions of activism – such as affect, interiority, and more-than-human agency – while potentially backgrounding others. Reflexivity is employed not to claim transparency or neutrality, rather, it is used to acknowledge co-implication and responsibility in knowledge production.

This approach aligns with feminist, posthuman, and political ecology traditions that emphasize accountability, situated knowledge, and the ethics of relational research (Haraway, D., 2016; Braidotti, R., 2019). In the context of TLNs that explicitly value reflexivity, care, and inner transformation, methodological alignment between research practice and movement ethos becomes both an analytical strength and a source of critical tension.

4.5 Methodological Limits of Interpretive and Post-Representational Approaches

The interpretive and post-representational orientation adopted in this study entails several limitations that warrant explicit acknowledgment. Firstly, affective and embodied processes are inherently difficult to capture empirically without reducing them to discourse or metaphor. While qualitative engagement facilitates partial access to these dimensions, affect often circulates through atmospheres, sensations, and relational intensities that resist textual representation.

Secondly, the focus on relational becoming and situated experience imposes limitations on the generalisability of findings. The case studies examined here are not intended to represent all translocal networks or contemporary social movements, but rather to illuminate patterns and dynamics that may resonate across similar contexts. From this perspective, analytical depth is prioritized over breadth.

Third, new materialist concepts such as *vitality*, *intra-action*, and *distributed agency* pose challenges of operationalization and analytical precision. Without careful grounding, these concepts risk abstraction or theoretical overreach. This study mitigates such risks by anchoring analysis in empirical material and by positioning new materialism as a complementary lens rather than a totalizing framework.

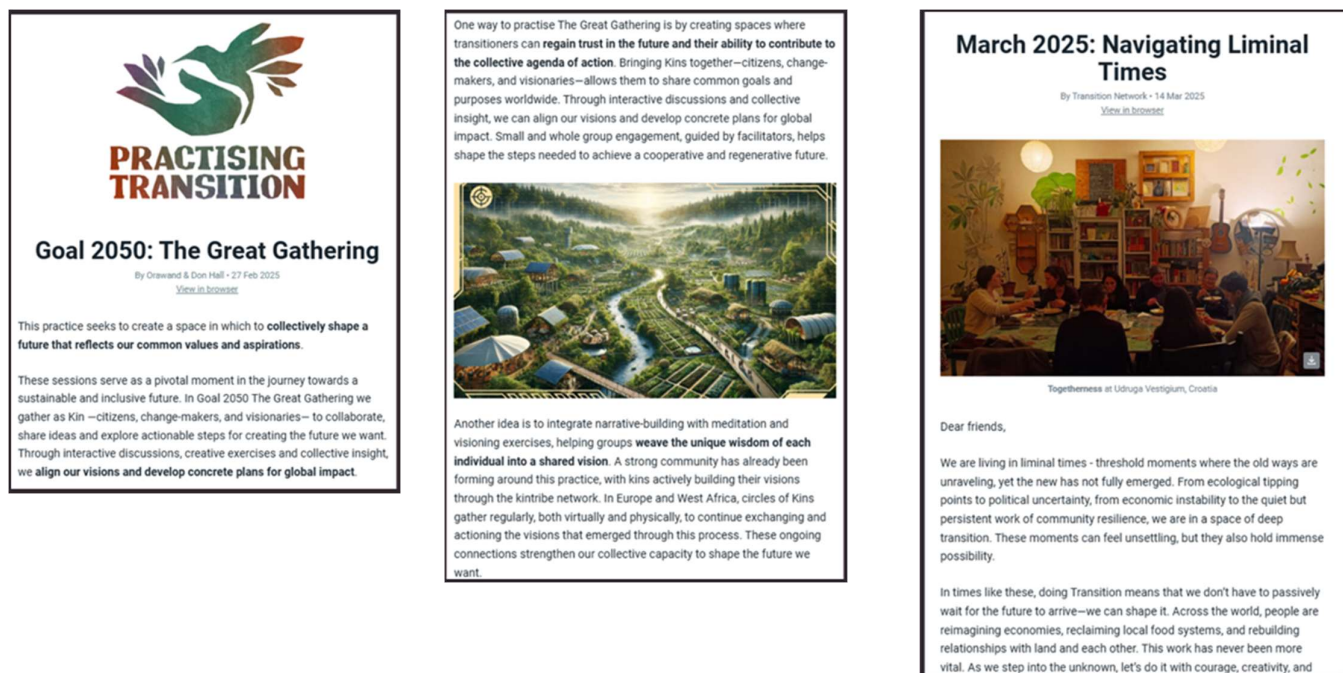
Finally, post-representational approaches may underplay structural inequalities, power asymmetries, and exclusions within movements if not combined with critical sociological perspectives. While this paper foregrounds relational and affective dimensions, it recognizes the need for future research to integrate analyses of race, class, gender, geopolitics, and coloniality more explicitly into new materialist social movement scholarship.

5. Preliminary Findings

5.1 Samples of the visual-text data analysed

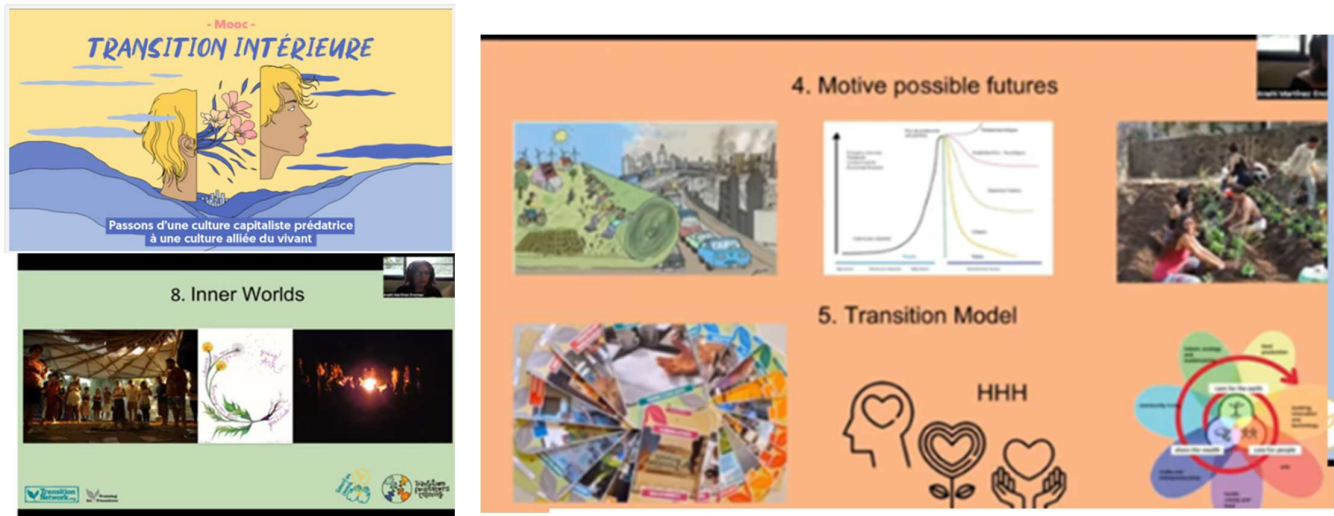


Figures 1 - Visual-text samples of online TN events promoting the relationship between Technology, Spirit and the Earth, where facilitators also shared embodied and non-human ontologies with participants (source: see footnotes²⁷).



²⁷ <https://practise.transitionmovement.org/tech-in-transition-series/> and <https://practise.transitionmovement.org/relationship-technonology/>

Figures 2 - Visual-text samples of online TN blog posts promoting the narrative of the great change - or the great gathering - and liminal times (source: see footnote²⁸)



Figures 3 - Visual-text samples of slides used during an online training programme for teachers exploring and refining the participants' skills with the Inner Transition approach (source: collected data).



Why this transformation?

For many years there has been a **perceived split between the 'inner' and the 'outer' transition**, and while that has enabled a fertile conversation and exploration into what is needed to make deep and lasting change, it has also sometimes felt frustrating.

There has sometimes been a tendency to think of 'inner' - as the name might suggest - to be solely about what happens inside each of us and it has been too easy to imagine that as something we can leave to the councillors and wellbeing people.

But we have increasingly seen that **this 'inner' change is actually also a 'in-between' and 'throughout' change**. In fact, it needs to be a **radical re-imagining** of how we understand our movement: it's not just about having a place to process the fear, frustration, hopelessness and be kinder to one another, it's about understanding that unless we confront the many ways in which our **western(ised) culture** has caused the crises we are facing - and understand and heal the ways in which it lives in and between us -, unless we come together to find ways to **unlearn** and deprogramme ourselves from it, then we will never be able to make the changes we need, no matter how many community gardens and other amazing local initiatives we create.

The Cultural Transformation name is talking about all of us **coming to terms with how deadly the system we live in is, and getting support to co-create the internal and external revolutions that are needed to transform it**.

²⁸ <https://practise.transitionmovement.org/tech-in-transition-series/> and <https://practise.transitionmovement.org/relationship-technonology/>

Figures 4 - Visual-text samples of online Inner Transition blog posts and events (source: see footnote²⁹)

Transition, mycelium, and interbeing

Philipp Grunewald
 Mar 18, 2024 • 3 min read



Today, I felt drawn to a question. I yearned for some clarity, connecting threads and ideas in my mind.

Gatherings

Inter-Beingness virtual circles

Many of us have a longing for sustained inner peace, harmony, and equilibrium between being and becoming, stillness and doing, silence and sound, heart and mind.

Andrea Giraldo
 Dec 21, 2022 • 3 min read



Many of us have a longing for sustained inner peace, harmony, and equilibrium between being and becoming, stillness and doing, silence and sound, heart and mind: how through committed practices and inner actions we allow our souls to gather beyond ideas, places and identities; beyond body, emotions and thought.

In the heart of every being, lies the potential of infinite wisdom, of what is eternal and most sacred – that which is important for the evolution of the Whole. In these circles we make space to connect with who we are at the depth of our existence and allow a strengthened sense of collective purpose and a real experience of inter-beingness to emerge.



Inter-beingness is a regenerative space with an invitation to meet as equals in the richness of our diversity; to resonate with others, to feel nature's presence through us and so connecting with our true nature; with the common vision and purpose that unites everyone within the wider movement of life caring activism.

Figures 5 - Visual-text samples of online TN blog posts and events exploring Interbeing as if collective action (source: see footnote³⁰)

²⁹ collected data, events at <https://inner.transitionmovement.org/> and <https://inner.transitionmovement.org/from-inner-transition-to-cultural-transformation/?lng=en>

³⁰ <https://inner.transitionmovement.org/transition-mycelium-interbeing/?lng=en> and <https://news.transitionnetwork.org/inter-beingness-virtual-circles/?lng=en>

Conference proceedings & Publications

Social Solidarity Economy & The Commons International Conference

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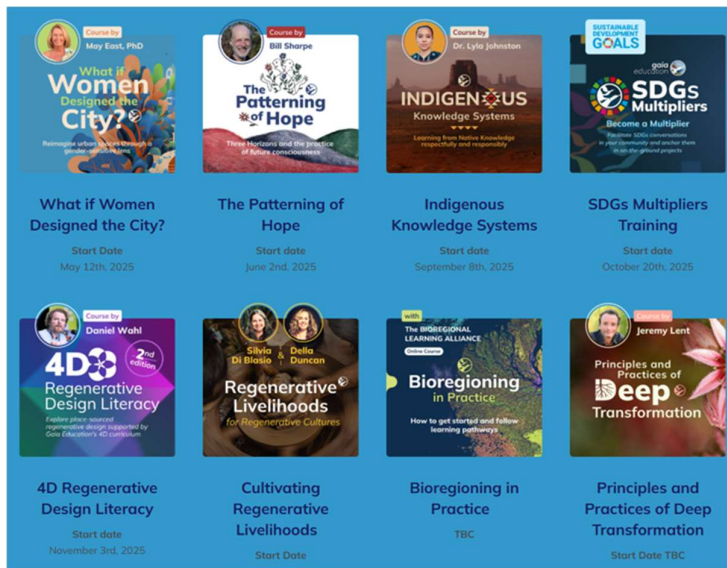
Manuscript presented in November 2025

Manuscript submitted for revision in February 2026

Final Publication 1 October 2026

<https://ssecommons.cei.iscte-iul.pt/manuscripts-2025/>

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.23135911



Principles and Practices of Deep Transformation

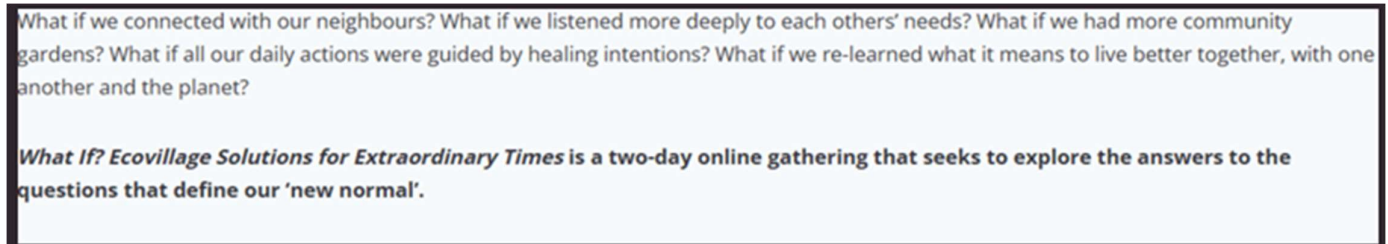
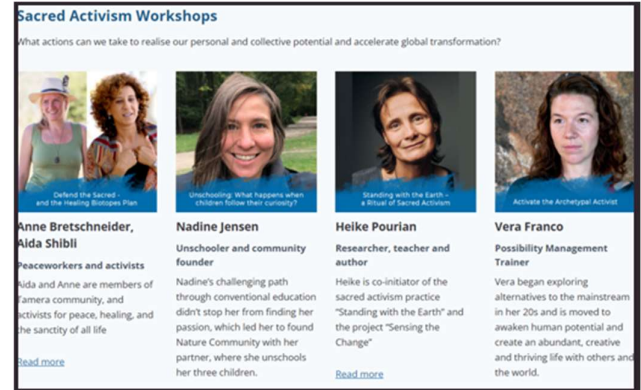
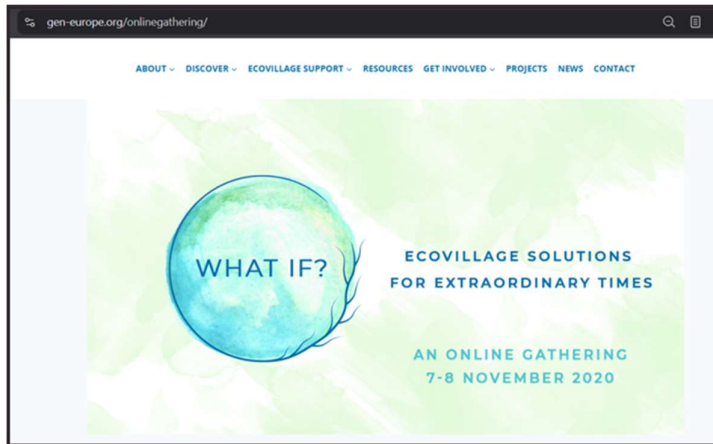
Laying the groundwork for an ecological civilisation



Figures 6 - Visual-text samples of online GEN-Gaia Education blog posts and events exploring Deep Transformation, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Cultivating Regenerative Livelihoods and Regenerative approach and narratives (source: collected data)



Figures 7 - Visual-text samples of online GEN blog posts and events exploring the regenerative and systemic/holistic approach with hybridity (source: collected data)



Figures 8 - Visual-text samples of online GEN blog posts and events exploring online affective online gatherings and sacred activism (source: collected data)

5.2 Preliminary analysis and findings

First, relationality emerges as a central organizing principle. TN and GEN prioritize processes of connection, practices of care and mutual attunement over hierarchical coordination, resonating with relational culture frameworks (see Demaris & Landsman, 2022). Relationships themselves become a form of infrastructure that enables continuity, trust, and adaptability.

Secondly, interiority and inner transformation, is not regarded as separate from activism or political action but as an integral component of it. Practices of mindfulness, embodied awareness, collective reflection and deep dialogue, emotional literacy and affective regulation are mobilized to sustain collective knowledge, resilience and long-term engagement and to prefigure alternative cultural norms (see Esteves, A., 2022; Carvalho & Ferreira, 2022; Rowe & Ormond, 2023). In this sense, interiority functions as a site of political intervention rather than depoliticization.

Thirdly, affect functions as a connective force within TN and GEN, linking embodied practices, movement narratives, and shared-place technologies. Shared emotional experiences, such as hope, grief, belonging, and despair, appear to be relevant to the

formation of collective identity and the sustaining of participation. In this preliminary analysis, affective resonance emerges as a potential mechanism through which participants may develop and experience forms of solidarity across geographical and cultural boundaries.

Fourth, learning unfolds through hybrid assemblages of humans, technologies, environments, and narratives. Knowledge is not transmitted linearly but emerges through situated practice, experimentation, and relational feedback across digital and embodied spaces. These processes resemble social-ecological learning systems rather than conventional organizational learning models.

6. Discussion

These preliminary findings and initial research results challenge conventional dichotomies between structure and agency, inner and outer change narratives, and the relationship between human and non-human actors and technology or hybridity as an important mediator for contemporary activism, ontology and meaning-making. By placing emphasis on the embodied and affective dimensions, TN and GEN exemplify a *politics of vitality*³¹ that aligns with new materialist and pluriversal perspectives (Escobar et al., 2024).

This paper provides a significant contribution to the field of social movement research by moving beyond prefigurative politics and network analysis, which have been instrumental in explaining how contemporary movements organise through digital communication and decentralized structures (Castells, M., 2015), thereby including materiality/embodiment, affect, and interiority as co-productive forces within hybrid places in TLNs of social movements. While network theory elucidates patterns of connectivity, information flow, and governance, it offers limited insight into how networks are sustained affectively, how they transform participants, and how they engage with more-than-human, regenerative and deep change culture ontologies.

By contrast, a new materialist perspective foregrounds relational vitality, embodied practice, and distributed agency as constitutive dimensions of collective action. From this perspective, TN and GEN are not merely channels for mobilisation but living assemblages in which activism is enacted through affective, material, and ecological relations. This shift facilitates a more profound comprehension of the processes by which movements endure over time, cultivate collective subjectivities, and engage in alternative forms of practices and co-building, meaning-making and becoming.

The paper also contributes to new materialist social movement theory by situating activism within a social-ecological framework. Rather than perceiving ecological concerns as external issues to be addressed politically, the case studies reveal movements that enact

³¹ See note 14.

alternative human-nature relations through everyday practices. In this sense, TLNs - particularly TN and GEN - function as pluriversal laboratories of world-making, where the fields of political ecology, cultural transformation and embodied learning converge (see Escobar, A., 2020).

Methodologically, the study demonstrates both the potential and the limits of post-representational approaches. New materialism does not replace existing sociological tools; rather, it complements them by making visible dimensions of activism - such as affect, embodiment, interiority, and more-than-human agency - that are often marginalized. Simultaneously, critical engagement with power, inequality, and exclusion remains essential for a comprehensive understanding of TLN movements, albeit the use of new materialism lenses.

7. Conclusion and Limitations

This paper argues that TN and GEN, as TLNs of social movements, embody a distinctive form of activism characterized by relationality, interiority, and affective engagement. Through the integration of digital-hybrid infrastructures, embodied practices, and more-than-human relations, these networks are able to enact a politics of regeneration that is oriented towards deep cultural and systemic change. From a new materialist perspective, activism is not regarded as a purely strategic or representational activity, but rather as a distributed process of co-becoming among humans, technologies, environments, and affects. Within hybrid spaces, emerging ontologies of interbeing, cosmologies of togetherness, and epistemologies of deep change challenge representational approaches by foregrounding the mutual constitution of human, more-than-human and technology actors.

We argue that nowadays TLNs of social movements - particularly TN and GEN - enact new materialist *politics of vitality*³² and affect through practices that challenge the human/nonhuman and mind/matter dichotomies, redefining activism as a distributed, affective, and a co-constitutive process. Their hybrid repertoires of 'inner and outer' activism mobilize affect, embodiment, technology, and collective consciousness toward regenerative cultural practices. Thus, understanding these new social movement phenomena requires acknowledging inter-subjectivity, materiality, and discourse as co-productive forces shaping social learning, imagination, and activism.

The limitations of the preliminary study are closely associated with its exploratory and interpretive orientation. The analysis remains primarily illustrative and conceptual, and the empirical material does not substantiate broad generalisations. Moreover, it is posited that new materialist concepts are susceptible to abstraction if they are not meticulously grounded

³² See note 14.

in empirical detail and critical analysis. Therefore, it is proposed that this rigorous process of critical analysis be applied during the in-depth stage of this research. New materialism, when employed as a methodological framework rather than a conceptual lens, can facilitate the comprehensive capture of the affective dimensions inherent within the hybrid assemblages under consideration. It is recommended that future research also adopts a methodological approach that is pluralistic, integrating relational and posthuman perspectives whilst concurrently and explicitly attending to the concepts of power, inequality and geopolitics.

Further empirical work could deepen engagement with TLNs through longitudinal studies, comparative research across different movement ecologies, and methodological innovation capable of tracing affective and material processes without reducing their complexity. Despite these limitations, the paper demonstrates that integrating new materialist perspectives into social movement studies opens valuable analytical and ethical horizons for understanding embodied and hybrid activism, challenging the persistent binaries between personal-inner and collective change and offering a conceptual tool for analysing activism in conditions of socio-ecological crisis.

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