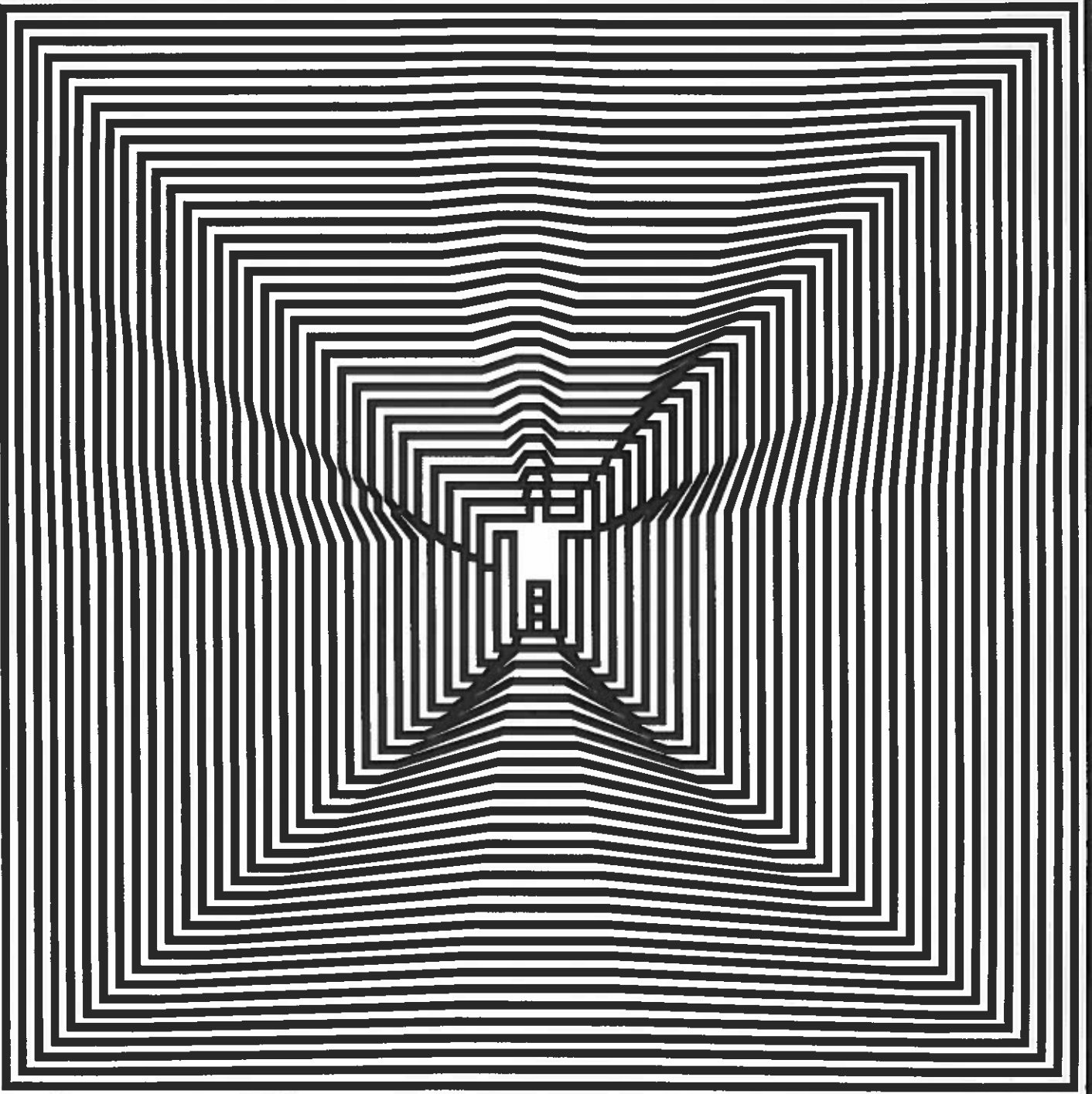


**HELLO, ROBOT.**



Vitra  
Design  
Museum

**DESIGN BETWEEN  
HUMAN AND MACHINE**

  
**MAK**



HELLO, ROBOT. has been layouted  
by an algorithm in collaboration with  
Double Standards, Berlin.

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ROSI BRAIDOTTI

# BECOMING- WORLD TOGETHER: ON THE CRISIS OF HUMAN

The posthuman turn is triggered by the convergence of anti-humanism on the one hand and anti-anthropocentrism on the other. Both these strands enjoy strong support, but they refer to different genealogies and traditions. Anti-humanism focuses on the critique of the Humanist ideal of "Man" as the universal representative of the human, while anti-anthropocentrism criticises species hierarchy and advances ecological justice.

"Humanity" emerges as an object of intense debate just as it becomes a threatened or endangered category. This results in what I have defined as a reactive or negative re-composition of Humanity. A negative sort of cosmopolitan interconnection is established through a pan-human bond of vulnerability. The size of recent scholarship on the environmental crisis and climate change alone testifies to this state of emergency and to the emergence of the Earth as a political agent. Postanthropocentrism thrives especially in popular culture and has been criticised<sup>1</sup> as a negative tendency to represent the transformation of the relations between humans and technological *apparatus* or machines in the mode of neo-gothic horror.

A significant alliance between queer theorists and the science fiction horror genre constitutes a fast-growing posthuman feminist strand. Since the 1970s, feminist writers and literary theorists of science fiction<sup>2</sup> had supported the alliance between women, as the others of Man, and such other "others" as non-whites (post-colonial, black, Jewish, indigenous, and hybrid subject), and non-humans (animals, insects, plants, trees, viruses, and bacteria). This "Gothic" tradition of feminist theory, which generated some staggeringly original work, has a distinct posthumanist but also postanthropocentric slant, as evidenced by the ease with which it proposes relational bonds between different species and across classes of living entities.

<sup>1</sup> Anneke Smelik, Nina Lykke (eds.), *Bits of Life. Feminism at the Intersection of Media, Bioscience and Technology* (Seattle, WA, University of Washington Press, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Julia Kristeva, *Desire in Language* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1980); Marleen Barr, *Alien to Femininity. Speculative Fiction and Feminist Theory* (New York, Greenwood, 1987); Donna Haraway, "The promises of monsters. A regenerative politics for inappropriate/d others", in Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, Paul Treichler (eds.), *Cultural Studies* (London and New York, Routledge, 1992); Barbara Creed, *The Monstrous-Feminine. Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis* (New York, London, Routledge, 1993).

3 Donna Haraway, *Modest-Witness @Second-Millennium.FemaleMan-Meets-OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York, London, Routledge, 1997), p. 74.

4 Brian Massumi, "Requiem for Our Prospective Dead (Toward a Participatory Critique of Capitalist Power)", in Eleanor Kaufman, Kevin Jon Heller (eds.), *Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings in Politics, Philosophy and Culture* (London and Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1998), pp. 40–64, p. 60.

5 Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2000).

6 Genevieve Lloyd, *The Man of Reason. Male and Female in Western Philosophy* (London, Methuen, 1984).

7 Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, trans. Catherine Porter (New York, Cornell University Press, 1985); Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

## 1. CORPORATE PAN-HUMANISM

There is no question that the generic figure of the human is in trouble. Donna Haraway puts it as follows: "Our authenticity is warranted by a database for the human genome. The molecular database is held in an informational database as legally branded intellectual property in a national laboratory with the mandate to make the text publicly available for the progress of science and the advancement of industry. This is Man the taxonomic type become Man the brand."<sup>3</sup> Brian Massumi refers to this phenomenon as "Ex-Man": "a genetic matrix embedded in the materiality of the human"<sup>4</sup> and as such undergoing significant mutations: "Species integrity is lost in a bio-chemical mode expressing the mutability of human matter". Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri see it as a sort of "anthropological exodus" from the dominant configurations of the human as the king of creation – a colossal hybridisation of the species.<sup>5</sup>

We know by now that the standard which was posited in the universal mode of "Man" has been widely criticised<sup>6</sup> precisely because of its partiality. Universal "Man", in fact, is implicitly assumed to be masculine, white, urbanised, speaking a standard language, heterosexually inscribed in a reproductive unit, and a full citizen of a recognised polity.<sup>7</sup>

As if this line of criticism were not enough, this "Man" is also called to task and brought back to its species specificity as *Anthropos*,<sup>8</sup> that is to say as the representative of a hierarchical, hegemonic, and generally violent species whose centrality is now challenged by a combination of scientific advances and global economic concerns.

These analyses indicate in my view that the political economy of bio-genetic capitalism is post-anthropocentric in its very structures, but not necessarily or automatically posthumanistic. It also tends to be deeply inhuman(e). I partly share their concern, but as a posthumanist with distinct anti-humanist feelings, I am less prone to panic at the prospect of a displacement of the centrality of the human and can also see the advantages of such an evolution. What I want to propose instead is a critical form of posthuman theory. There are times when I feel a sort of Nietzschean tragic joy at the thought that the human is at last held accountable for its multiple acts of violence and destruction.

## 2. BY NOW CLASSICAL ANTI-HUMANISM

The "death of Man", announced by Foucault,<sup>9</sup> formalised an epistemological and moral crisis that went beyond binary oppositions, cutting across different poles of the political spectrum. Poststructuralist theorists called for insubordination from received humanist ideals. They targeted the humanistic arrogance of continuing to place Man at the centre of world history and more specifically the implicit assumption that what is "human" about humanity is connected to a sovereign ideal of "reason" as Enlightenment-based rationality and science-driven progress.

8 Paul Rabinow, *Anthropos Today* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2003); Roberto Esposito, *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy*, trans. Timothy Campbell (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2008).  
10 Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, English translation (New York, Pantheon Books, 1970).

10 Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, trans. Gillian C. Gill (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1985); Luce Irigaray, *This Sex Which Is Not One*, trans. Catherine Porter (Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 1985).

11 Nancy Hartssock, "The feminist standpoint. Developing the ground for a specifically feminist historical materialism", in S. Harding (ed.), *Feminism and Methodology* (London, Open University Press, 1987).

12 Bell Hooks, *Ain't I a Woman* (Boston, MA, South End Press, 1981); Vron Ware, *Beyond the Pale. White Women, Racism and History* (London, Verso, 1992).

13 Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York, Grove Press, 1963).

14 Paul Gilroy, *Against Race. Imaging Political Culture beyond the Colour Line* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2000).

15 G. C. Spivak, *A Critique of Post-colonial Reason. Toward a History of the Vanishing Present* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1999).

Poststructuralist feminism proposed a radical form of anti-humanist thought. Feminists like Luce Irigaray<sup>10</sup> pointed out that the allegedly abstract ideal of Man as a symbol of classical Humanity is very much a male of the species: it is a he. Moreover, he is white, European, handsome, and able-bodied. Feminist critiques of patriarchal posturing through abstract masculinity<sup>11</sup> and triumphant whiteness<sup>12</sup> argued that this Humanist universalism is objectionable not only on epistemological, but also on ethical and political grounds.

Anti-colonial thinkers adopted a similar but distinct critical stance by questioning the pri-

macy of whiteness in the humanist ideal as the moral, intellectual, and aesthetic canon of perfection. Re-grounding such lofty claims in the history of colonialism, anti-racist and postcolonial thinkers explicitly questioned the relevance of the Humanistic ideal, in view of the obvious contradictions imposed by its Eurocentric assumptions, but at the same time they did not entirely cast it aside.

As Sartre astutely put it in his preface to Frantz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*,<sup>13</sup> the future of humanism lies outside the Western world, by-passing the limitations of Eurocentrism. As Paul Gilroy noted, the reduction to sub-

human status of non-Western others was a constitutive source of ignorance, falsity, and bad faith for the dominant subject who is responsible for the epistemic as well as social de-humanisation of the "others" they produced.<sup>14</sup> By extension, the claim to universality by scientific rationality was challenged on both epistemological and political grounds,<sup>15</sup> all knowledge claims were recognised as expressions of Western culture and of its drive to mastery. This position results in a critical form of neo-humanism that refers to non-Western sources and tends to strike a sceptical note in relation to posthuman theory, though it often intersects with it.

16 Rosi Braidotti, *Patterns of Dissonance* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1991).

17 See Felix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies* (London, The Athlone Press, 2000).

All these lines of enquiry embraced the concept of difference with the explicit aim of making it function differently. They advocated the need to fracture the subject so as to re-locate diversity and multiple belongings to a central position as a structural component of subjectivity.<sup>16</sup> They recast political subjectivity along a more complex line of interrogation that includes class, race, sexual orientation, and age. As a consequence, poststructuralist philosophers were anti-humanist in that they critiqued from within all the unitary identities predicated upon phallo-logocentric, Eurocentric, white supremacist and standardised views of what constitutes the humanist ideal of "Man".

### 3. CONTEMPORARY POSTHUMAN THEORY

What becomes thinkable across public discourse nowadays is the crisis of species supremacy, which also implies the rejection of any lingering notion of human nature, in favour of human enhancement via bio-genetics and neurosciences, and the end of the categorical distinction between *Anthropos* and *bios*, as strictly human prerogatives, categorically distinct from the life of animals and non-humans, or *zoe*. What comes to the fore instead is a nature-culture continuum in the very embodied structure of the extended self and the awareness of the mediated nature of this nature-culture continuum.<sup>17</sup>

These theoretical shifts do not occur in a vacuum, but rather resonate with fast-changing conditions in advanced capitalism. Foremost among them are the high degrees of technological mediation that shake up established mental habits, as Donna Haraway put it: the machines are so alive, whereas the humans are so inert.<sup>18</sup> The global economy is postanthropocentric in that it ultimately unifies all species under the imperative of the market and its excesses threaten the sustainability of our planet as a whole.

The contemporary global economy has a techno-scientific structure, built on the convergence between previously differentiated branches of technology, notably nanotechnology, biotechnology, information technology, and cognitive science. This aspect involves research and intervention upon animals, seeds, cells, and plants, as well as humans. In substance, advanced capitalism both invests and profits from the scientific and economic control and the commodification of all that lives. This context produces a paradoxical and rather opportunistic form of postanthropocentrism on the part of market forces, which happily trade on Life itself. Life, as it happens, is not the exclusive prerogative of humans.

The opportunistic political economy of bio-genetic capitalism induces, if not the actual erasure, at least the blurring of the distinction between the human and other species, when it comes to profiting from them. Seeds, plants, animals, and bacteria fit into this logic of insatiable consumption alongside various specimens of humanity. The uniqueness of *Anthropos* is intrinsically and explicitly displaced by this equation.

What constitutes capital value today is the informational power of living matter itself, transposed into data banks of bio-genetic, neural, and mediatic information about individuals, as the success of Facebook demonstrates at a more banal level. These practices reduce bodies to their informational substrate in terms of energy resources or vital capacities and thereby level out other categorical differences. The focus is on the accumulation of information itself, its immanent vital qualities and self-organising capacity. "Data-mining" includes profiling practices that identify different types or characteristics and highlights them as specific strategic targets for capital investments, or as risk categories.

The capitalisation of living matter produces a new political economy, which Melinda Cooper calls "Life as surplus."<sup>19</sup> It introduces discursive and material political techniques of population control of a very different order from the administration of demographics, which preoccupied Foucault's work on bio-political governmentality.<sup>20</sup> Today, we are undertaking "risk analyses" not only of entire social and national systems, but also of whole sections of the population in the world risk society.<sup>21</sup> Informational data is the true capital today, supplementing but not eliminating classical power relations.<sup>22</sup>

Advanced capitalism is a spinning machine that actively produces differences for the sake of commodification and consumption. It is a multiplier of de-territorialised differences and a producer of quantitative options. Global consumption knows no borders, and a highly controlled flow of consumer goods, information bytes, data, and capital constitute the core of the perverse mobility of this system.<sup>23</sup> Capitalism poses as a nomadic force, while it controls the space-time of mobility in highly selective ways.

My position as a Deleuzian feminist is clear: Living "matter" is a process ontology that interacts in complex ways with social, psychic, and natural environments, producing multiple ecologies of belonging.<sup>24</sup> A change of paradigm about the human is needed to come to terms with these new insights. Human subjectivity in this complex field of forces has to be re-defined as an expanded relational self, engendered by the cumulative effect of all these factors.<sup>25</sup> The relational capacity of the post-anthropocentric subject is not confined within our species, but it includes all non-anthropomorphic elements: the non-human, vital force of Life, which is what I have coded as *zoe*.<sup>26</sup> It is the transversal force that cuts across and reconnects previously segregated species, categories, and domains. *Zoe*-centred egalitarianism is, for me, the core of the postanthropocentric feminist turn: it is a materialist, secular, grounded, and unsentimental response to the opportunistic trans-species commodification of Life that is the logic of advanced capitalism.

<sup>18</sup> Melinda Cooper, *Life As Surplus: Biotechnology and Capitalism in the Neoliberal Era* (Seattle, WA, University of Washington Press, 2008).

<sup>20</sup> Michel Foucault, "The Birth of Biopolitics", in Michel Foucault, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. by Paul Rabinow (New York, The New Press, 1997).

<sup>21</sup> Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society* (Oxford, Blackwell's, 1999).

<sup>22</sup> Julie Livingston, Jasbir K. Puar, "Interspecies", *Social Text* (no. 29, Spring 2011).

<sup>23</sup> Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming* (Cambridge Polity Press, 2002), Rosi Braidotti, *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2006).

<sup>24</sup> Felix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies* (London, The Athone Press, 2000).

<sup>25</sup> Rosi Braidotti, *Patterns of Dissonance* (see note 15); Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2011).

<sup>26</sup> This is radically different from the negative definition of *zoe* proposed by Giorgio Agamben (1998), who has been taken to task by feminist scholars (Cooper, 2009; Colebrook, 2009; Braidotti, 2013) for his erasure of feminist perspectives on the politics of natality and mortality and for his indictment of the project of modernity as a whole.

<sup>18</sup> Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s", in Elizabeth Weed (ed.), *Coming to Terms: Feminism, Theory, Politics* (New York, Routledge 1989), pp. 174–176.

#### 4. THE INHUMAN(E)

The displacement of the centrality of human agency through massive interventions of network systems and increasingly intrusive technologies is one of the factors that make capitalism into a postanthropocentric force, in the age of Anthropocene, which J. W. Moore recently labelled “capitalocene”,<sup>27</sup> Haraway “Chthulucene”,<sup>28</sup> and Jussi Parikka “anthroscene”,<sup>29</sup> echoing Zillah Eisenstein’s “global obscenities”, and Vandana Shivas’ “Bio-piracy”.

It also accounts for its inhumane aspects<sup>30</sup> and structural injustices including increasing indebtedness,<sup>31</sup> and it engenders a “necro-political” governmentality<sup>32</sup> through technologically mediated wars and counter-terrorism.

Contemporary warfare has mutated into a professionalised and large-scale process of damaging the basic infrastructures of cities and countries, exposing the civilian populations to both technological and more archaic horrors. Technology plays a big role in contemporary warfare which is driven by drones and other postanthropocentric unmanned vehicles. New forms of inhumanity have emerged. Take for instance the classical figure of the warrior or the soldier, who has mutated into something more hybrid. On the one hand the soldier is a professional, technological figure, but on the other hand he is the more dangerous figure of the terrorist ready to strike anywhere at any time.

Technology is central to this change of warfare. By far the most effective new weapons are the UAVS (unmanned aerial vehicles) – also known as drones or remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) – which are part of a large robot army that includes land and sea as well as air and started work in Afghanistan a decade ago.

In 2005, CIA drones struck targets in Pakistan three times; in 2011, there were seventy-six strikes, one of them crucial to killing Gaddafi in Libya, by now there are hundreds. Google Earth has designed a special program to delete the drones’ flying paths from their satellite photos. Drones come in all sorts of sizes: “DelFly”, a dragonfly-shaped surveillance drone built at the technical university in Delft weighs less than a gold wedding ring, camera included. At the other end of the scale comes America’s biggest and fastest drone, Avenger (15 million US dollars), which can carry up to 2.7 tonnes of bombs, sensors, and other equipment, at more than 740 km per hour.

These technological advances create new forms of inequality and inhumanity even and especially on the war front, in the ways in which civilians are killed and their property destroyed. As a result of war, so many refugees and asylum seekers trying to enter Fortress Europe today fall into sub-human status and become bodies that do not matter. The new field of Humanitarian studies is one of the most urgent and most significant in the humanities today. Again, a new “studies” area.

#### 5. THE POST-ANTHROPOCENTRIC TURN

By the late 1990s, it begins to be possible to speak of the posthuman turn in critical theory as a strand of work that pays increasing attention to postanthropocentric perspectives. A feminist consensus is reached about the seemingly simple notion that

there is no “originary humanicity”.<sup>33</sup> This turn occurred in response to political developments, including: growing public awareness of the climate change issue; the accompanying notion that we have entered a new geological era (the “Anthropocene”) where human activities are having world-changing effects on the Earth’s ecosystem; and the limitations of economic globalisation.<sup>34</sup> The posthuman is situated at the intersection of different, and at times disconnected, strands of feminist thought.

The understanding of “Life” as a symbiotic system of co-dependence and co-production<sup>35</sup> also alters the terms of human interaction with what used to be called “matter”, which now needs to be approached as a self-organising vital system. In so far as advanced capitalism has grasped this logic of exploitation of living matter,<sup>36</sup> as well as the high degrees of

mediation humans are caught in today, it has become capable of unprecedented forms of manipulation of life.

Eco-feminists<sup>37</sup> had already pioneered geo-centred perspectives<sup>38</sup> and now this perspective takes off across a broader interdisciplinary field. Animal studies began from the mid-1990s to be a serious topic, questioning the metaphorical use and abuse of animals in literature and culture, as well as their ruthless economic and physical exploitation.<sup>39</sup> Eco-feminists also draw a structural analogy between the exploitation of human females and those of other species, calling for a trans-species process of liberation from capitalist male aggression. New studies of primatology stress the gendered nature of social virtues such as solidarity and empathy,<sup>40</sup> emphasising the positive role of females in evolutionary history.

27 Kirby Vicky, *Quantum Anthropologies. Life at Large* (Durham, Duke University Press, 2011), p. 233.

28 Inderpal Grewal and Caren Kaplan (eds.), *Scattered Hegemonies: Postmodernity and Transnational Feminist Practices* (Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 1994).

29 Lynn Margulis, Dorion Sagan, *What is Life* (Berkeley, CA, University of California Press, 1995).

30 Nicholas Rose, *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power and Subjectivity in the Twentieth-first Century* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2007).

31 Val Plumwood, *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (London and New York, Routledge, 1993); Val Plumwood, *Environmental Culture* (London, Routledge, PMLA, 2009).

32 Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, *Ecofeminism* (London, Zed Books, 1993).

33 Mary Midgley, *Utopias, Dolphins and Computers. Problems of Philosophical Plumbing* (London and New York, Routledge, 1996).

34 Frans De Waal, *Good Natured: The Origins of Right and Wrong in Humans and Other Animals* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1996); Frans De Waal, *Evolutionary Ethics, Aggression, and Violence: Lessons from Primate Research*, first published 2004.

35

27 Jason W. Moore (ed.), *Anthropocene or Capitalocene? Nature, History, and the Crisis of Capitalism* (Oakland, CA, PM Press, 2016).

28 Donna Haraway, “Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin”, in *Environmental Humanities* (no. 6, 2015), pp. 159–165, <http://environmentalhumanities.org/arch/vol6/6.7.pdf>, accessed on 17 November 2011, pp. 11–40.

29 Jussi Parikka, *The Anthroscene* (Minneapolis, Minnesota UP, 2014).

30 Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life* (Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1998).

31 Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (New York, Viking Press/Richard Seaver, 1977).

32 Achille Mbembe, “Necropolitics”, in *Public Culture*, (vol. 15, no.1, 2003), pp. 11–40.



The “affective turn” emerges in a series of feminist critical variations: first in conjunction with Derridian deconstruction<sup>41</sup>; then within phenomenology<sup>42</sup> and psychoanalysis,<sup>43</sup> but also with Deleuzian monism.<sup>44</sup> These perspectives converge on the notion that it is now both possible and desirable to expand the relational capacity of humans to all other species, in a planetary embrace that allows feminist theorists to address global issues like climate change while pursuing the struggle for equality and social justice. The politics of the affective turn are debated as a crucial issue, and special emphasis is placed on the specific materiality of race and ethnicity within feminist neo-materialism.<sup>45</sup> The next and somehow obvious step in this discursive expansion is “Anthropocene feminism”<sup>46</sup> that becomes more prominent as posthumanism comes into its own.

Disloyalty to our species, moreover, is no easy matter. The real difficulty in releasing our bond to *Anthropos* and developing critical postanthropocentric forms of identification is affective. How one reacts to taking distance from our species depends to a large extent on the terms of one’s engagement with it, as well as one’s assessment of and relationship to contemporary technological developments. In my work, I have always stressed the technophilic dimension<sup>47</sup> and the liberating and even transgressive potential of these technologies, in contrast to those who attempt to index them to either a predictable conservative profile, or to a profit-oriented system that fosters and inflates hyper-consumeristic possessive individualism.<sup>48</sup> But loyalty to one’s species has some deeper and more complex affective roots that cannot be shaken off at will. It involves an anthropological exodus that is particularly difficult emotionally and it can entail a sense of loss and pain. Yet this effort cannot be dissociated from an ethics and politics of inquiry that demands respect for the complexities of the physical world.

The crucial question remains, however: What can be the political stand in relation to the productive paradoxes engendered by the posthuman condition? To what extent does the convergence of posthumanistic and postanthropocentric perspectives complicate the issues of human agency and feminist political subjectivity?

41 Cary Wolfe (ed.), *Zoologies. The Question of the Animal* (Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 2003); Vicki Kirby, *Quantum Anthropologies. Life as Large* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press 2011).

42 Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2006).

43 Patricia Clough, *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2007).

44 Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses. Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2002); Brian Massumi, *Parables for the Virtual. Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2002); John Protevi, *Political Affect* (Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 2009); Elizabeth Grosz, *Becoming Undone* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2011).

45 Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (Edinburgh University Press and Routledge, 2004); Clare Hemmings, “Collective powers: rupture and displacement in feminist pedagogic practice”, in *European Journal of Women’s Studies*, 18 (3), 2011, pp. 297–303.

46 Richard Grusin, *Anthropocene Feminism* (Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 2016).

47 Braidotti, 2002.

48 C. B. MacPherson, *The Theory of Possessive Individualism* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1962).

My argument is that it actually enhances it by offering an expanded relational vision of the self. Moreover, it recasts a posthuman theory of the subject as an empirical project that aims to experiment with what contemporary, bio-technologically mediated bodies are capable of doing. Mindful of the structural injustices and massive power differentials at work in the globalised world, I rely on the feminist method of the politics of locations as the preferred form of radical immanence to produce more accurate accounts of the multiple political economies of subject-formation at work in our world. These cartographies enable non-profit accounts of contemporary subjectivity and actualise the virtual possibilities

of an expanded, relational self that functions in a nature-culture continuum, which is technologically mediated and opposed to the spirit of contemporary capitalism. They refuse to turn *Life/zoe* – that is to say human and non-human intelligent matter – into a commodity for trade and profit. The strength of posthuman thought is in developing affirmative ethical and political perspectives. In my work, I have proposed cross-species alliances with the productive and immanent force of *zoe*, or life in its non-human aspects.<sup>49</sup> This relational ontology is *zoe*-centred and hence non-anthropocentric, but it does not deny the anthropologically bound structure of the human.

49 Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses. Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming* (Cambridge Polity Press, 2002); Rosi Braidotti, *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 2006).

This shift of perspective towards a *zoe*- or geo-centred approach requires a mutation of our shared understanding of what it means to be human, which, however, needs to be qualified by grounded analyses of power relations and structural inequalities in the past and present.

Starting from philosophies of radical immanence, vital materialism, and the feminist politics of locations, I have also argued against taking a

flight into an abstract idea of a “new” pan-humanity, bonded in shared vulnerability or in species supremacy. What we need instead is embedded and embodied, relational and affective cartographies of the new power relations that are emerging from the current geo-political and post-anthropocentric order. Class, race, gender, and sexual orientations, age and able-bodiedness are more than ever significant markers of human “normality”. They are

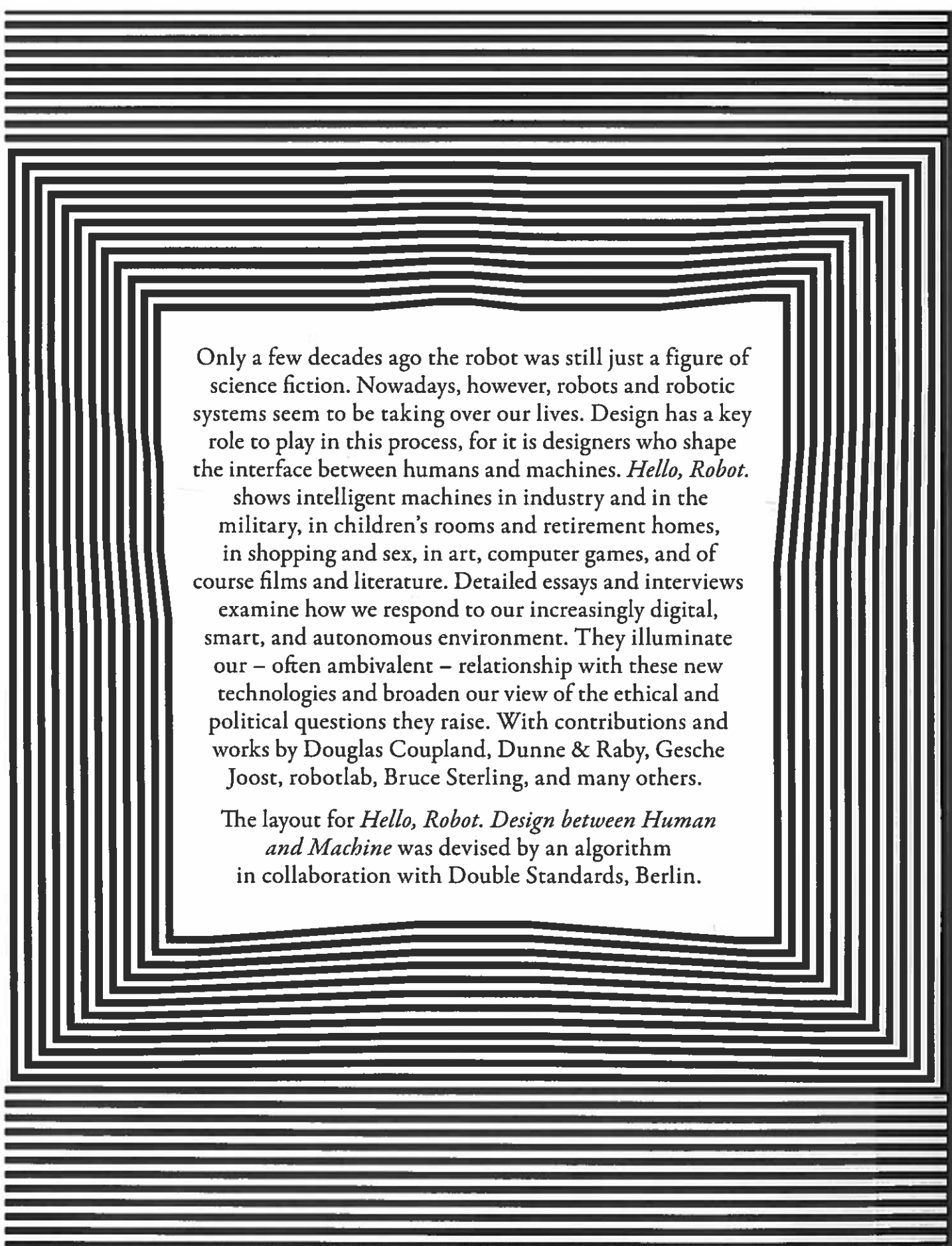
key factors in framing the notion of and policing access to something we may call “humanity”. Yet, considering the global reach of the problems we are facing today, in the era of the “Anthropocene”, it is nonetheless the case that “we” are in *this* together. Such awareness must not, however, obscure or flatten out the power differentials that sustain the collective subject (“we”) and its endeavour (*this*). There may well be multiple and potentially contra-

dictory projects at stake in the re-composition of “humanity” right now. Posthuman feminist and other critical theorists need to resist hasty and reactive re-compositions of cosmopolitan bonds, especially those made of fear. It may be more useful to work towards multiple actualisations of new transversal alliances, communities, and planes of composition of the human: many ways of becoming-world together.

I have argued forcefully that the posthuman is not post-political. The posthuman condition does not mark the end of political agency, but a re-casting of it in the direction of relational ontology. This is all the more important as the political economy of bio-genetic capitalism is postanthropocentric in its very structures, but not necessarily or automatically more humane, or more prone to justice.

Finally, posthuman feminists advocate a vision of the body as a dynamic and sexed bundle of relations and rest on it to explore the transformative potential of a different concept of the political. They state the primacy of sexuality as ontological force, in opposition to a majoritarian or dominant line of territorialisation – the gender system – that privileges heterosexual, familial, reproductive sex. Sexuality beyond gender is the epistemological but also political side of contemporary vitalist neo-materialism. It consolidates a feminist genealogy that includes creative de-territorialisations, intensive and hybrid cross-fertilisations, and generative encounters with multiple human and non-human others. The counter-actualisation of the virtual sexualities – of bodies without organs that we have not been able to sustain as yet – is a posthuman feminist political praxis.

Philosophy becomes science fiction in Rosi Braidotti's writings. Since the 1990s, Braidotti (born 1954 in Latisana, Italy), a philosopher and feminist theorist, has made a major contribution to the discourse on the “equality of all life” – both human and non-human – with her theses on Posthumanism. Her book *The Posthuman* (2013) asks what the future role of humans will be in view of the possibilities offered by modern technology and what will characterise these humans of the future. She takes a critical look at the essence of Humanism from a postfeminist and postcolonialist perspective and introduces us to the theory of the “posthuman subject”, who is no longer simply an individual but lives in a networked collective of other subjects and objects – consisting of humans, robots, non-human things, smart environments, artificial nature, and artificial intelligence. This collective generates new social relationships and produces changes of global relevance. The text published in this catalogue is based on the manuscript of a lecture that Rosi Braidotti gave at the CCCB – Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, Spain – on 30 November 2015.



Only a few decades ago the robot was still just a figure of science fiction. Nowadays, however, robots and robotic systems seem to be taking over our lives. Design has a key role to play in this process, for it is designers who shape the interface between humans and machines. *Hello, Robot.*

shows intelligent machines in industry and in the military, in children's rooms and retirement homes, in shopping and sex, in art, computer games, and of course films and literature. Detailed essays and interviews examine how we respond to our increasingly digital, smart, and autonomous environment. They illuminate our – often ambivalent – relationship with these new technologies and broaden our view of the ethical and political questions they raise. With contributions and works by Douglas Coupland, Dunne & Raby, Gesche Joost, robotlab, Bruce Sterling, and many others.

The layout for *Hello, Robot. Design between Human and Machine* was devised by an algorithm in collaboration with Double Standards, Berlin.