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Reflections on the (Post-)Human Condition: Towards New Forms of Engagement with the World?

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this paper is to examine the validity of the contention that, over the past decades, we have been witnessing the rise of the 'posthuman condition'. To this end, the analysis draws on the work of the contemporary philosopher Rosi Braidotti. The paper is divided into four parts. The first part centres on the concept of *posthumanism*, suggesting that it reflects a systematic attempt to challenge humanist assumptions underlying the construction of 'the human'. The second part focuses on the concept of *post-anthropocentrism*, demonstrating that it articulates a desire to reject the twin ideas of 'species supremacism' and 'human exceptionalism', which it seeks to replace with 'species egalitarianism' and 'monistic vitalism'. The third part is concerned with the concept of *critical posthumanities*, positing that its advocacy is based on the cross-fertilization of posthumanism and post-anthropocentrism. The fourth part offers an *assessment* of the 'posthuman condition' thesis, evaluating the extent to which it sheds new light on the ways in which our engagements with the world are shaped by the confluence of *zoe*-, geo-, and techno-based dimensions. The paper concludes with a brief summary of the key insights gained from the preceding inquiry.

KEYWORDS

Critical posthumanities; post-anthropocentrism; posthuman condition; posthumanism

Introduction

The main purpose of this paper is to examine the validity of the contention that, over the past decades, we have been witnessing the rise of the 'posthuman condition'. To this end, the analysis draws on the work of the contemporary philosopher Rosi Braidotti – arguably, one of the most influential supporters of the 'posthuman condition' thesis. The paper is divided into four parts:

The first part centres on the concept of *posthumanism*, suggesting that it reflects a systematic attempt to challenge humanist assumptions underlying the construction of 'the human'. The second part focuses on the concept of *post-anthropocentrism*, demonstrating that it articulates a desire to reject the twin ideas of 'species supremacism' and 'human exceptionalism' which it seeks to replace with 'species egalitarianism' and 'monistic vitalism'. The third part is concerned with the concept of *critical posthumanities*, positing that its advocacy is based on the cross-fertilization of posthumanism and post-anthropocentrism – an ambitious endeavour aimed at exploring the emergence of radically transformative modes of knowledge production, circulation, and consumption. The fourth part offers an *assessment* of the 'posthuman condition' thesis, evaluating the extent to which it sheds new light on the ways in which our engagements with the world are shaped by the confluence of *zoe*-, geo-, and techno-based dimensions.

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The paper concludes with a brief summary of the key insights gained from the preceding inquiry, maintaining that the 'posthuman condition' thesis raises various theoretical and empirical questions, the importance of which is illustrated in the relevance of Braidotti's oeuvre to understanding contemporary societies. More specifically, it will be argued that Braidotti's writings provide a powerful conceptual framework for addressing fundamental socio-philosophical issues such as 'exclusion', 'engagement', and 'empathy'.

I. Posthumanism

In the humanities and social sciences, the concept of 'posthumanism' has acquired a variety of meanings. In the most general sense, it refers to a systematic attempt to challenge humanist assumptions underlying the construction of 'the human'. The question that arises, then, is how 'the human' – including any forms of existence related to, if not dependent on, it – can be defined.

i. 'The Human'

In recent decades, 'the human has become a question mark',[1] indicating that it has become an increasingly contentious task to determine who and what counts – and, by implication, who and what does not count – as 'human'. Just as one may be required to prove one's 'humanity' when accessing a particular website by confirming that one is not a robot, one may be expected to present evidence of one's 'humanity' when confronted with a number of behavioural choices by validating that one's decision-making processes are guided by cognitively sound and morally justifiable considerations. In this sense, the concept of 'the human', notwithstanding the controversial nature of both its denotative and its connotative attributes, remains a (or, perhaps, even *the*) 'basic unit of reference'[2] – not only for defining who and what 'counts as human'[3] but also, crucially, for determining the extent to which particular aspects of reality are shaped by, or even hinge on, the existence of Homo sapiens.

'[D]ualistic oppositions'[4] have been, and continue to be, constructed and invoked to define 'the human mostly by what it is *not*',[5] along the following lines: non-human *vs*. human, natural *vs*. cultural, emotional *vs*. rational, instinctual *vs*. intentional, impulsive *vs*. reflective, visceral *vs*. moral, physical *vs*. metaphysical, material *vs*. spiritual, heteronomous *vs*. autonomous. In a Cartesian sense, the human subject is '*not* an animal, *not* extended and inert matter, *not* a pre-programmed machine'.[6] Conceptualized in a non-dualistic fashion, it appears that 'to be human' means to exist as a creature whose reality is permeated by the aforementioned tensions, permitting it to seek to leave behind its animal-like nature, while – paradoxically – not being able to negate, let alone to rise above, it. Put differently, we are *at the same time* 'prehuman', 'human', and 'posthuman' primates: our genealogy is an ineluctable part of our past, present, and future as a species.

While 'the binary distinction *human/non-human* has been foundational for European thought since the Enlightenment',[7] it appears that not every human culture relies on this major theoretical and practical separation.[8] This dividing line is tantamount to a 'Great Divide',[9] by means of which it has been possible to associate the concept of 'humanity' with the imaginary of 'the West': 'the same gesture of exclusion that made the human species the biological analogue of the anthropological West, confusing all the other species and peoples in a common, privative alterity'.[10] Insofar as the human/non-human binary pervades modern discourses, it represents a widely accepted mode of distinguishing between Homo sapiens and other species. Far from being an 'objective' or 'value-free' categorization, however, it is mobilized to attach particular – that is, historically, culturally, and ideologically variable – sets of attributes to 'the human' and 'the non-human', respectively.

If this is true, then critical social science is faced with the twofold task of re-positioning 'the human after Humanism and anthropocentrism'[11] and of uncovering the degree to which these seemingly 'neutral' and 'universal' projects reflect the interests of *some*, rather than those shared by *all*, members of humanity. The principal challenge with which posthuman versions of critical thought are presented, therefore, is to succeed in describing, analysing, explaining, and assessing 'the shifting

grounds on which new, diverse, and even contradictory understandings of the human are currently being generated, from a variety of sources, cultures, and traditions'.[12] Such an undertaking obliges those committed to its critical spirit to reject 'any simplistic or self-evident appeal to a generic and undifferentiated figure of the human, let alone to traditional, Eurocentric humanist values'.[13] On this account, it is vital to perform a counterintuitive act – namely, to deconstruct the purportedly 'neutral' and 'universal' constitution of the concept of 'the human', exposing the extent to which its genealogy is based on an assemblage of context-, value-, meaning-, perspective-, interest-, power-, and tension-laden framings.[14]

ii. Humanism

Broadly speaking, the term 'humanism' designates a worldview that stresses the role and value of human agency in shaping the course of history. This supposition is crucial to the humanities, as reflected in their concern with the nature of knowledge (epistemology), the nature of being (ontology), the nature of argument (logic), the nature of morality (ethics), and the nature of expressive forms (aesthetics).[15] In recent decades, however, humanism has been criticized from multiple angles, such as the following: poststructuralism,[16] vital(ist) materialism,[17] critical neo-materialism,[18] feminist materialism,[19] anti-racist and postcolonial movements,[20] and posthumanism.[21] Far from transcending, let alone eliminating, humanism, these – and similarly inclined – approaches are inevitably influenced by its lasting legacy. Indeed, '[c]ritiques of European Humanism pertain to the very tradition of European Humanism'.[22] To put it bluntly, it is possible to *critique* humanism both *with* and *against* humanism.[23] In a paradoxical fashion, posthumanism aims to move *beyond* humanism by unfolding both *within* and *through* it. It seeks to accomplish this by challenging and, ultimately, overcoming 'the deeply engrained habits of anthropocentric thinking'.[24] Rather than throwing the baby out with the bathwater, however, it is imperative to recognize 'the undeniable strengths of Humanism',[25] notably the numerous forms of critical engagement with the world it has generated ever since it came into existence.

iii. 'The Posthuman' and Posthumanism

Over the past years, the concepts of 'the posthuman' and 'posthumanism'[26] have been gaining traction, especially in the humanities and social sciences. 'What or who is the human today can only be understood by incorporating the posthuman and non-human dimensions'.[27] In other words, the question of what it means to be human is inextricably linked to the question of what it means to be non-human and/or posthuman. For Braidotti, 'the posthuman' – which is irreducible to 'a dystopian vision of the future'[28] – is a defining feature of the present. To be exact, it constitutes 'both a *historical marker* of our condition and a *theoretical figuration*'.[29]

(1) As a *historical marker*, it designates a spatiotemporally specific constellation: arguably, we have been witnessing the rise of a new era, which may be described as 'the posthuman condition'.[30] In essence, it is characterized by the convergence of two major forces: *posthumanism*[31] and *post-anthropocentrism*.[32] The former is concerned, above all, with 'the critique of the Humanist ideal of "Man" as the allegedly universal measure of all things'.[33] The latter takes issue with the modern doxa of 'species hierarchy and anthropocentric exceptionalism'.[34] Although these two central terms overlap in many ways and are often employed interchangeably, they should be differentiated: they refer to distinct sets of conditions – both *epistemically*, in terms of their respective 'intellectual genealogies',[35] and *empirically*, in terms of their respective 'social manifestations'.[36] Braidotti's aim, then, is to carry out 'a balancing act between posthumanism and post-anthropocentrism',[37] but without establishing an opposition between humanism and anti-humanism, which has been a subject of controversy in continental philosophy for some time.[38]

Two noteworthy developments that mark 'the posthuman condition' in a fundamental sense are the *Fourth Industrial Revolution*[39] and the *Sixth Extinction*,[40] affecting both human and non-human inhabitants of the Earth. The former is based on 'the convergence of advanced technologies, such as robotics, artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, biotechnology, and the Internet of Things'.[41] In this

constellation, the boundaries between digital, physical, and biological forces have become increasingly blurred.[42] The latter is characterized by the gradual extinction of different species due to human activity,[43] taking place in an era frequently called 'the Anthropocene'.[44] The far-reaching significance of these interconnected events is aggravated by two corresponding modes of acceleration: *systemic accelerations*, generated by advanced capitalism (economic level), and *environmental accelerations*, associated with climate change (ecological level). It is in this macro-historical context that we are confronted with 'the posthuman challenge'.[45]

(2) Given the complexity of this challenge, 'the posthuman' – as a *theoretical figuration* – is, and will remain, 'work in progress'.[46] As 'a navigational tool'[47] and 'a working hypothesis',[48] it serves as a conceptual framework to flesh out 'the kind of subjects we are becoming'[49] in a period that appears to pervade all forms of planetary life with an unprecedented degree of indeterminacy.[50] Thus, our 'fast-changing posthuman times'[51] – which may also be described, optimistically, as a 'postmodern convergence'[52] or, pessimistically, as a 'posthuman predicament'[53] – are shaped by 'posthuman subjects'.[54] In order to do justice to their complexity, we need to develop 'an enlarged, distributed, and transversal concept of what a subject is and of how it deploys its relational capacities'.[55] Such a multifaceted approach has to be prepared to dislodge the ideology of 'human(ist) exceptionalism'[56] (and, by implication, that of 'Western exceptionalism'[57]), by accounting for our 'relational dependence on multiple non-humans and the planetary dimension as a whole'.[58]

The posthuman world, therefore, is constructed through the ontological intertwinement of human and non-human forces, whose spatiotemporal situatedness in the universe obliges us to explore subjects 'across multiple axes'[59] and, hence, in terms of their 'transversality'.[60] This paradigm shift is expressed in the proliferation of numerous *trans-* and *multi*-prefixed categories – such as 'trans-sex and transgender',[61] 'trans-species',[62] 'multi-species',[63] 'trans-corporeality'.[64] In this novel historical context, '[w]e need a subject position worthy of our times'[65] – that is, a subject whose subjectivity is conceptualized in such a way that its transversal constitution is understood as both a product and a producer of the posthuman condition. 'By "posthumanizing" subjectivity, it can be re-positioned as a dynamic convergence phenomenon across the contradictions of posthumanism and post-anthropocentrism'.[66] Having briefly considered the former, let us reflect on the latter.

II. Post-Anthropocentrism

Similar to its epistemic counterpart (i.e. 'posthumanism'), the concept of 'post-anthropocentrism' enjoys a certain degree of interpretive elasticity. Notwithstanding the variety of meanings that may be attributed to this term, it articulates – in most cases – a desire to reject the twin ideas of 'species supremacism'[67] and 'human exceptionalism'.[68] In Braidotti's framework, it is combined with the ambition to make a case for 'species egalitarianism' and 'monistic vitalism'. As such, it aims to challenge, and to leave behind, 'the Eurocentric humanistic representational habits'[69] of the Enlightenment, whose 'philosophical anthropocentrism'[70] manifests itself in the seemingly unassailable 'centrality of the human – as Man and as Anthropos'[71] – in the universe in general and in worldly affairs in particular. Such an anthropocentric view of planetary existence portrays humanity as the crown of planetary evolution. For Braidotti, however, the construction of 'the human' has been, and continues to be, intimately interrelated with the creation of 'anthropomorphic others of "Man"'.[72] These dehumanized subjects are 'the sexualized and racialized others claiming social justice and rejecting exclusion, marginalization, and symbolic disqualification'.[73] In other words, they are the individual and collective actors who are effectively treated as 'less human', 'half-human', 'subhuman', or 'non-human' by those who set the hegemonic agenda of modern anthropocentrism.

i. Decentring Anthropocentrism

Braidotti's critique of anthropocentrism seeks to encourage the production of 'posthuman knowledge',[74] which has two important implications: first, it urges us to conceive of ourselves 'as members of a species, and not just of a culture or polity'[75]; and, second, it compels us to face up to

'the disastrous planetary consequences of our species' supremacy and the violent rule of sovereign Anthropos'.[76] In brief, we are equipped with the capacity to construct and to transform our own life conditions but also, in a more fundamental sense, the existential constellations affecting other beings.

Braidotti's 'posthuman sensibility [. . .] aims at overcoming anthropocentrism',[77] by drawing on Spinoza's 'monistic worldview',[78] according to which 'matter is one, driven by the desire for self-expression and ontologically free'.[79] Instead of relying on binary constructions, such a monistic approach insists on 'the unity of all living matter'[80] in the universe. For Braidotti, 'monistic premises are [. . .] the building blocks for a posthuman theory of subjectivity that does not rely on classical Humanism and carefully avoids anthropocentrism'.[81] The emphasis that Spinozist and neo-Spinozist frameworks place on 'the unity of all matter'[82] is corroborated by 'the self-organizing or "smart" structure of living matter'[83] – an insight that is essential to cutting-edge developments in the life sciences, biosciences, neural sciences, and cognitive sciences.

As indicated above, the terms 'posthumanism' and 'post-anthropocentrism' should not be used interchangeably. The former has influenced, and in turn been influenced by, the humanities – notably key disciplines such as philosophy, history, cultural studies, literary studies, and human geography. The latter draws its epistemic resources from, and has made valuable contributions to, numerous so-called scientific fields of investigation – above all, 'science and technology studies, new media and digital culture, environmentalism and earth-sciences, bio-genetics, neuroscience and robotics, evolutionary theory, critical legal theory, primatology, animal rights, and science fiction'.[84] As illustrated in the aforementioned list of relevant subjects, the post-anthropocentric study of the world comprises unprecedented degrees of 'trans-disciplinarity',[85] which are symptomatic of the variety and complexity of the issues at stake. Given the powerful role of expert knowledge, skills, and equipment in shaping the contemporary world, it is not surprising that science and technology studies can be regarded as a flourishing area of inquiry in the current era.[86] The same, of course, cannot be said of the humanities, which appear to be finding it increasingly difficult to justify their *raison d'être* in market-driven economies and metrics-obsessed universities.[87]

ii. 'Zoe' as Generative Vitality: Between Codifiability and Commodifiability

There is little doubt that the most striking characteristic of the global economy in the twenty-first century is its 'techno-scientific structure'.[88] More specifically, it is founded on the convergence of four key branches of techno-scientific expansion: (1) nanotechnology, (2) biotechnology, (3) information technology, and (4) cognitive science.[89] These interrelated domains are major driving forces in terms of blurring traditional boundaries between human and non-human aspects of life on Earth. An obvious example of this trend is the prevalence of the 'bio-genetic structure'[90] of contemporary economies, whose centrality is reflected in the financial and institutional resources devoted to the Human Genome project, stem cell research, and biotechnological modes of intervention into 'animals, seeds, cells, and plants'.[91] Advanced forms of capitalism have succeeded in investing in, extracting profits from, and exercising considerable control over globally interconnected processes of '*the commodification of all that lives*'.[92] Ironically, the systemic primacy of commodification, imposed by the profit-driven logic of capitalism, reinforces the ontological primacy of life, highlighted by monistic vitalism. Thus, we are confronted with 'a paradoxical and rather opportunistic form of post-anthropocentrism on the part of market forces which happily trade on Life itself'.[93] The potential to commodify everything – including life itself – represents a constitutive feature of an economic system in which all aspects of existence can be governed by the pursuit of exchange value.

A significant presuppositional facet of Braidotti's post-anthropocentrism is the tenet that 'intelligent vitality or self-organizing capacity',[94] far from being an exclusive characteristic or privilege of human beings, is 'present in *all* living matter'.[95] The question that poses itself in this context is why living matter is 'intelligent' in the first place. The mono-vitalist answer to this question is that all living matter is equipped with and driven by 'informational codes'.[96] These codes not only 'deploy their

own bars of information'[97] but also 'interact in multiple ways with the social, psychic, and ecological environments'.[98] Put differently, living matter is both codified and codifying.

Unlike social constructivism, Braidotti's monistic vitalism posits that all living matter is both 'intelligent and self-organizing'.[99] Crucially, '[t]he relational capacity of the posthuman subject'[100] – that is, the subject's ability to relate to both the external world and its internal world in a critical, cognitive, responsive, adaptive, and creative manner – is *not* an exclusive privilege of the human species; rather, it represents an empowering resource of 'all non-anthropomorphic elements'[101] in the multi-species sphere of life.[102] This 'non-human, vital force of Life'[103] may be referred to as *zoe*,[104] as opposed to *bios*[105] or *anthropos*.[106] For Braidotti, *zoe* is 'the dynamic, self-organizing structure of life itself',[107] epitomizing both the principle and the reality of 'generative vitality'.[108] As a 'transversal force',[109] *zoe* cuts across, links, and brings together 'previously segregated species, categories, and domains'.[110] On this view, post-anthropocentrism embraces 'the politics of life itself'.[111] According to this epistemic postulate, 'life' is irreducible to 'the exclusive property or the unalienable right of one species, the human, over all others or of being sacralized as a pre-established given'.[112]

Instead of being 'reserved for *anthropos*, that is to say *bios*'[113] (and, hence, for *Homo sapiens*), 'life' – in the broad sense of *zoe* – comprises the entire realm of non-human, notably animal, existence. Such a holistic conception of 'life' may be described as '*zoe*-centred egalitarianism',[114] which is integral to Braidotti's plea for a '*post-anthropocentric turn*'[115]: this paradigm shift is not only a passionate defence of 'species egalitarianism' but also 'a materialist, secular, grounded, and unsentimental response to the opportunistic trans-species commodification of Life that is the logic of advanced capitalism'.[116] It is not only a *celebration* of life, understood in terms of species diversity and transversality, but also a *critique* of the multiple ways in which life has been subjected to, and colonized by, the instrumental logic of capitalist reproduction.

Committed to scrutinizing the implications of the fact that '[t]he opportunistic political economy of bio-genetic capitalism turns Life/*zoe* – that is to say human and non-human intelligent matter – into a commodity for trade and profit',[117] Braidotti's monistic vitalism is an attempt to challenge this colonization of all living matter by the imperatives of market systems. It does so by advocating 'non-profit experimentations with intensity'[118] and transversality, whose empowering potential is reflected in the emergence of posthuman subjectivities. This is not to underestimate, let alone to deny, the integrationist power of capitalism, owing to its systemic capacity to co-opt and to re-appropriate the critical, cognitive, responsive, adaptive, and creative faculties of ordinary actors. This is to recognize, however, that 'the potential for experimentation with new subject formations',[119] capable of subverting the constraining logic of 'life as surplus'[120] under capitalism, is indispensable to individual and collective endeavours aimed at replacing systems of social domination with practices of human (and non-human) emancipation.

iii. The Post-Anthropocentricity of the Global Economy

Whether it be in relation to flora or fauna, stem cells or bacteria, or indeed any other form of life on Earth, the value-creating and market-driven framework of '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'.[121] The extension of *anthropos* and *bios* to *zoe* feeds into the 'logic of insatiable consumption alongside various specimens of humanity'.[122] Reinforced by the worldwide interconnectedness of processes of production, circulation, and consumption, '[t]he global economy is post-anthropocentric 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'.[123] Viewed in a *positive* light, this unprecedented degree of global interconnectedness points to the possibility of transnational and trans-species solidarity; viewed in a *negative* light, it reminds us of our pan-human and pan-species 'bond of vulnerability'.[124] This condition is shared by and affects all living beings on the planet, as illustrated in major environmental challenges (such as climate change) as well as significant medical challenges (such as epidemics and pandemics, particularly those caused by intra- and/or inter-species infections).

Understandably, this situation has led to a sense of collective anxiety, not only 'about the future of both our species and [. . .] our humanist legacy'[125] but also, at a more fundamental level, about the health of planetary life – in short, *zoe*. This concern is expressed by thinkers from across the political spectrum – such as Jürgen Habermas,[126] Francis Fukuyama,[127] Peter Sloterdijk,[128] and Giovanna Borradori.[129] Unlike these scholars, however, Braidotti – given her posthuman inclinations, imbued 'with distinct anti-humanist feelings'[130] – is not wary of 'the prospect of a displacement of the centrality of the human'[131] and, in fact, insists on 'the advantages of such an evolution',[132] which – in her view – reflects the emancipatory potential inherent in 'post-anthropocentric practices'[133] oriented towards *zoe*-guided 'species egalitarianism'. The new 'nature–culture continuum',[134] which lies at the heart of Braidotti's monistic vitalism, may even call the very notion of 'species integrity'[135] into question, as captured in the concept of 'Ex-"Man"',[136] which appears to shatter any illusions about species singularity, let alone 'species supremacy'.[137]

To recognize that 'the political economy of bio-genetic capitalism is *post-anthropocentric* in its very structures, but not necessarily or automatically *post-humanistic*',[138] requires acknowledging that, while it effectively promotes the ontologically grounded actualization and market-driven intensification of the 'nature–culture continuum',[139] its participants may deliberately or unwittingly continue to subscribe to an ideological framework asserting the species-constitutive distinctiveness of humanity. The holistic post-anthropocentrism endorsed by Braidotti's monistic vitalism, however, seeks to break out of the straitjacket of the opportunistic post-anthropocentrism reinforced by bio-genetic capitalism. The former, unlike the latter, is motivated by a resolutely 'deconstructive move'[140]: as such, it deconstructs – and, thus, both rejects and subverts – not only any implicit or explicit assumptions concerning the humanist vision of 'species supremacy',[141] but also 'any lingering notion of human nature, *anthropos* and *bios*, as categorically distinct from the life of animals and non-humans, or *zoe*'.[142] This paradigmatic transition entails a deep redrawing of the map of life, which, in its revised – that is, *zoe*-based – variant, gives equal weight to *all* (that is, both human *and* non-human) forms of existence. It represents 'a sort of "anthropological exodus" from the dominant configurations of the human as the king of creation'[143] and, at the same time, as the queen of codified knowledge – 'a colossal hybridization of the species'.[144] In short, we have entered the posthuman era.

Having disassembled the shaky foundations of the alleged centrality and primacy of *anthropos*, the symbolic and material 'boundaries between "Man" and his others'[145] collapse. The Anthropocene represents a geological age in which human activity has been, and continues to be, the dominant source of influence on the environment, including the climate.[146] To the extent that the ecological challenges with which we are faced in the twenty-first century are 'man'-made, the 'burden of responsibility'[147] falls squarely on the shoulders of the human species, which is 'the primary cause for the mess'.[148] According to Braidotti, it would be naïve, however, to contend that just as 'technological progress' has generated this global problem, it will be the key to resolving it. Such an approach would not only be based on yet another version of 'technological evolutionism',[149] if not 'technological determinism',[150] but also fall into the trap of 'species supremacism'[151] and 'human exceptionalism',[152] both of which are part of Western anthropocentrism. By contrast, Braidotti argues for the construction of a vitalist-materialist – that is, human/non-human – alliance:

> As a brand of vital materialism, posthuman theory contests the arrogance of anthropocentrism and the 'exceptionalism' of the Human as a transcendental category. It strikes instead an alliance with the productive and immanent force of *zoe*, or life in its non-human aspects.[153]

In the context of the posthuman condition, capitalizing on this alliance is both a challenge and an opportunity: as a challenge, it obliges us to transcend traditional conceptual, methodological, and empirical boundaries, notably those established between human and non-human forms of existence; as an opportunity, it generates new possibilities for confronting the large-scale contradictions and predicaments with which we are faced in the twenty-first century.

Three axes of transformation are crucial to Braidotti's post-anthropocentric account of the posthuman condition: (1) *becoming-animal*,[154] (2) *becoming-earth*,[155] and (3) *becoming-machine*.[156] (1) The *becoming-animal axis* underscores the principle of 'trans-species solidarity',[157] recognizing our symbiosis with, and dependence on, other species.[158] (2) The *becoming-earth axis* stresses issues related to 'environmental and social sustainability',[159] drawing attention to our reliance on, but also domination and exploitation of, the world around us. (3) The *becoming-machine axis* highlights the ever more profound intertwinement of humans and technology, demonstrating that we can regard 'biotechnologically mediated relations as foundational for the constitution the subject'.[160] These axes not only involve a categorical rejection of anthropocentrism but also build the tripartite foundation for post-anthropocentrism.

III. The Critical Posthumanities

Inspired by the cross-fertilization of posthumanism and post-anthropocentrism, Braidotti's 'critical posthumanities'[161] (also referred to as 'Critical PostHumanities',[162] 'Transversal Posthumanities',[163] and 'Contested Posthumanities',[164] or – more cautiously – 'Conflicting Humanities'[165] and 'Posthuman Humanities'[166]) are aimed at exploring the emergence of radically transformative modes of knowledge production, circulation, and consumption. The critical posthumanities are firmly situated in 'the fast-moving landscapes of cognitive capitalism'.[167] In essence, they can be considered a discontinuous continuation of the humanities in the posthuman era. One of the greatest challenges for the humanities in the current context has been to re-invent themselves in the face of 'the decline of the primacy of "Man" and of Anthropos'.[168] This is not to suggest that they have abandoned their humanist roots, but, rather, to maintain that they have had to revise their presuppositional underpinnings, some of which seem obsolete in the posthuman age.

i. The Multiplicity of the Humanities

In the epoch of posthuman and post-anthropocentric challenges, the critical posthumanities have been 'emerging as post-disciplinary discursive fronts, not only around the edges of the classical disciplines but also as off-shots of the more marginal, interdisciplinary critical discourses that tend to call themselves Studies'.[169] In fact, there has been an explosion of new types of humanities[170]:

- Among the *'scientifically oriented' variants* are the Ecological Humanities and Environmental Humanities, Medical Humanities (also referred to as Bio-Humanities), Neural Humanities, and Evolutionary Humanities.
- Among the *'socially and culturally oriented' variants* are the Public Humanities, Civic Humanities, Community Humanities, Translational Humanities, Global Humanities, and Greater Humanities.
- Among the *'economically oriented' (and effectively 'neoliberal') variants* are the Interactive Humanities and Entrepreneurial Humanities.
- Among the *'technologically oriented' variants* are the Digital Humanities, also known as Computational, Informational, and Data Humanities.

Some of these are sub-divided into further categories, indicating that increasingly diversified and fragmented fields are in the process of developing. This rapid expansion and transformation of the humanities is illustrated in the creation and divulgation of several neologisms – such as 'PostHumanities',[171] 'Inhuman Humanities',[172] 'Transformative Humanities',[173] 'Emerging, Adjectival, and Muscular Humanities',[174] and 'Nomadic Humanities'.[175]

ii. From the Humanities to the Critical Posthumanities

For Braidotti, the critical posthumanities rest on numerous key assumptions, two of which are particularly important:

(1) At the *epistemological* level, they are at once *posthuman(ist) and post-anthropocentric*. Thus, they posit that the knowing subject is 'neither *homo universalis* nor *Anthropos* alone'.[176] On this account, the world contains a complex ensemble of knowing entities, embedded in the dynamic web of both human and non-human agents, whose functional interconnectedness confirms the power of *zoe*/geo/techno-related forces in the construction of reality. Intelligent vitality, self-organizing capacity, and epistemic codifiability are inherent in, and indeed essential to, all *zoe*/geo/techno-based constellations in the universe.

(2) At the *ontological* level, they are *species-egalitarian*. Hence, they refuse to establish a species hierarchy, according to which some forms of life are superior (and/or inferior) to others. In this sense, scholars devoted to the posthuman project are committed to building 'a positive relationship to the diversity of *zoe* – non-human life – in a non-hierarchical manner, recognizing the respective degrees of intelligence, ability, and creativity of all organisms'.[177] Such a holistic-vitalist perspective permits us to conceive of *zoe*-, geo-, and techno-based entities not only as *cognitive agents* but also as *epistemic partners* – that is, as real-world players whose knowledge-generating and knowledge-applying capacities can, and should, be cross-fertilized. On this view, the life-enriching processes of thinking and knowing – far from being reducible to 'the prerogative of humans alone'[178] – are, in one way or another, carried out and, to different degrees and in different contexts, developed by *all* agents situated in and engaging with the world. Indeed, it is *through* 'the coexistence of multiple organic species and technological artefacts alongside each other'[179] that organic beings and computational networks are 'eco-sophically connected',[180] allowing for the continuous (re-)construction of a 'living continuum'[181] that – in its monistic totality – is simultaneously *zoe*-, geo-, and techno-based.

The notion that the posthumanities are, by definition, *critical* is important in (1) *thematic*, (2) *methodological*, (3) *conceptual*, and (4) *political* terms.[182]

(1) In *thematic* terms, they engage not only with a wider range of human subjects than the classical humanities, but also with non-human subjects and objects, including technological – notably digital – forces. This extensive thematic coverage is accomplished without erecting an artificial normative hierarchy between human and non-human agents. As a consequence, they regard 'terrestrial, planetary, cosmic concerns as serious agents and co-constructors in processes of collective thinking and knowing'.[183] To recognize the cognitive and epistemic capacities of non-anthropomorphic entities requires accepting that 'we' – that is, *all* thinking and knowing agents – 'are in this together'.[184]

(2) In *methodological* terms, one of their most significant attributes is their commitment to inter-, trans-, and even supra-disciplinary inquiry.[185] This reflects a profoundly critical attitude, motivated not by the aim of policing disciplinary boundaries, but, rather, by the ambition to dislodge – and, if possible, to transcend – the self-referential mechanisms by means of which epistemic and institutional comfort zones are maintained within the canons and curricula of mainstream academia. The critical posthumanities encourage, and depend on, processes of inter-, trans-, and supra-disciplinary 'cross-hybridization',[186] rather than the stifling mechanisms of intra-disciplinary dogmatization.

(3) In *conceptual* terms, they reject the myth of 'a de-naturalized social order'[187] – that is, of human life forms detached and abstracted from their 'environmental and organic foundations'.[188] They compel us to explore 'the multilayered interdependence between "naturecultures" today',[189] reminding us that traditional binaries – such as human/non-human, cultural/natural, social/individual, rational/emotional, learned/innate, arbitrary/determined, autonomous/heteronomous – fail to do justice to the complexity of '*zoe*/geo/techno mediations'.[190]

(4) In *political* terms, they provide 'an alternative to the neoliberal governance of academic knowledge, dominated by quantitative data and control'[191]; at the same time, they pursue 'a re-negotiation of its terms'.[192] Put differently, they move both *within* and *beyond* neoliberal forms of governance associated with advanced capitalism. On the one hand, they are able and willing 'to participate in corporate culture, in finance and industry'.[193] On the other hand, they are committed to critiquing, deconstructing, and subverting the neoliberal doxa and hegemony. They contribute to

the proliferation and cross-fertilization of cutting-edge discourses in academia, they are suspicious of the degree to which research and teaching agendas are increasingly 'over-coded by and interwoven with financial investments'.[194] Given their ambivalent position, they are simultaneously complicit in and critical of 'the profit-driven logic of advanced capitalism'.[195] In brief, they exist both *within* and *beyond* capitalism.

For Braidotti, then, the 'posthuman convergence'[196] is a profoundly ambivalent affair: it comprises both negative and positive, retrograde and progressive, repressive and emancipatory dimensions. Accepting that it is simultaneously entrapping (*potestas*) and empowering (*potentia*),[197] it should become clear that we are dealing not with a question of 'either/or' – that is, *either* complicity with the logic of capitalism *or* the assertion of individual and collective autonomy – but, rather, with a matter of 'and … and'.[198] Thus, 'the transversal discourses and practices'[199] of the critical posthumanities are, at the same time, contributing to and taking issue with 'the epistemic accelerationism that fuels cognitive capitalism'.[200] They articulate a 'counter-project',[201] in the sense that they not only draw attention to the detrimental repercussions of 'the profit-driven capitalization of advanced knowledge'[202] but also make a case for 'transversal discursive and institutional structures'[203] and practices, by means of which they seek to engage with the world in a 'transformative and compassionate manner'.[204] Instead of being 'profit-minded'[205] and controlled by hegemonic forces, such an approach is 'minorities-driven',[206] giving a voice to the voiceless and defending the interests of marginalized groups across different sectors of society.

The critical posthumanities remind us of the fact that 'we', the inhabitants of planet earth, are not only *interconnected* – across space and time, as well as across ontological boundaries defined by *zoe*/geo/techno-related forces – but also internally *fractured*. The divisions between human actors – which are intersectionally constituted by, and structurally embedded in, key sociological variables (such as class, ethnicity, gender, age, and 'ability') – extend to all *zoe*/geo/techno-related forces: our engagement with, access to, and appreciation of reality depend on our asymmetrically organized positioning in the world, which is in turn contingent on our capacity to obtain, and to draw on, socially relevant resources.[207]

The critical posthumanities are not meant to be yet another version of epistemic relativism, let alone postmodernism.[208] Building on the grassroots practices, experiences, and contributions of 'communities of thinkers, scholars, and activists',[209] their existence hinges on the daily construction and reconstruction of 'alternative collective assemblages',[210] capable of composing and representing 'a new "we", a missing people'[211] – that is, an ensemble of human *and* non-human agents, largely ignored, if not effaced, by the classical humanities. Such a shift in emphasis generates a dynamic and inclusive space for 'new eco-sophical, posthumanist, and post-anthropocentric dimensions in contemporary knowledge production',[212] enriched by the confluence of '*zoe*/geo/techno-mediated perspectives'[213] and, hence, by the multiplicity of agents shaping the development of the world in the twenty-first century.[214]

iii. Between Reproduction and Transformation

Two considerations are vital when evaluating the flourishing discourses of the critical posthumanities:

(1) The critical posthumanities can be regarded as diversified ways of 'expressing and reacting responsibly to the epistemic acceleration of cognitive capitalism'.[215] In this sense, they are capable of exposing the degree to which the governance of universities is dominated by metrics-focused agendas, designed in accordance with the pursuit of economic profit, as reductively defined by the ideology of neoliberalism, whose hegemonic position is reinforced by organizational regimes associated with neomanagerialism. Faced with this scenario, the critical posthumanities convey a 'new discursive energy',[216] encouraging knowledge-generating subjects to engage in both inter- and 'extra-disciplinary encounters',[217] both within and outside academic settings, in a way that stimulates the proliferation of constructive and creative exchanges 'across a broad spectrum of corporate, civic, public, artistic, and activist venues'.[218]

Since the critical posthumanities contribute to the – in many respects, unorthodox and experimental – production, circulation, and consumption of knowledge, they resonate with the 'new spirit of capitalism',[219] whose success story cannot be divorced from principles such as 'elasticity', 'absorbability', and 'adjustability'.[220] In this sense, they confirm, rather than undermine, the systemic capacity – enjoyed by capitalist forms of governance – to re-appropriate and to co-opt the emancipatory potential of critique and justification[221] for the purpose of stabilizing different modes of 'complex' (as opposed to 'simple') domination.[222]

(2) The critical posthumanities interpret the aforementioned trends and developments as manifestations of the growing influence of 'minor science and minoritarian assemblages'.[223] These are 'more autonomous, radical, and potentially subversive'[224]; similar to new social movements,[225] they tend to rely on 'non-institutionalized practices and discourses',[226] favouring grassroots dynamics, which are firmly situated in people's lifeworlds and take seriously their day-to-day experiences. This leads us to the distinction between '*Majoritarian, Royal sciences*' and '*minor or nomad sciences*'.[227] The former tend to follow 'an axiomatic model of scientific experimentation'[228] with the aim of developing 'universal theorems and set rules'.[229] The latter unfold 'in the problematic mode'[230] in that they are situated in 'the dynamic materiality of the phenomena themselves'[231] and operate, so to speak, 'on the ground'. The former are concerned with 'what is stable'[232] and, hence, with the mission of uncovering underlying laws and causal mechanisms. The latter are interested in 'flows of becoming',[233] whose radical indeterminacy escapes the stifling logic of the scientific obsession with 'patterns' based on regularity, causality, and functionality.

The shift from the former to the latter modes of inquiry has profound epistemological implications, in that it indicates a move away from 'the passive application of pre-set technical skills'[234] towards 'the relational and open approach'[235] of the travelling gaze. The possibility of 'generative cross-pollination'[236] permits minor and nomadic researchers to release 'hybrid off-springs and new heterogeneous assemblages',[237] whose emancipatory potential exists because of, rather than despite, their constitutive indeterminacy. Such a post-disciplinary outlook is motivated by 'the active desire to actualize unprecedented modes of epistemic relations',[238] built by nomadic subjects able to generate nomadic humanities.[239]

IV. Limitations

Let us turn to examining some of the main limitations of Braidotti's 'posthuman condition' thesis, notably with regard to the extent to which it sheds new light on the ways in which both human and non-human actors' engagements with the world are shaped by the confluence of *zoe*-, geo-, and techno-based dimensions.

i. 'The Subject' and 'Subjectivity'?

Given that Braidotti remains firmly embedded in a poststructuralist framework, it is far from clear why she wishes to hold on to the concept of 'the subject'. Granted, owing to the Foucauldian presuppositions underpinning her approach, it makes sense for her to advocate a posthumanist and post-anthropocentric conception of 'subjectivity'. Indeed, as she affirms, '[b]y "posthumanizing" subjectivity, it can be re-positioned as a dynamic convergence phenomenon across the contradictions of posthumanism and post-anthropocentrism'.[240] Thus, subjectivity exists within a spatiotemporally contingent field of tensions. More specifically, 'posthuman subjectivity'[241] can be conceived of as 'a process of becoming in its own immanence and not in binary oppositional terms'.[242] It is in a permanent state of flux, and its multilayered constitution does not follow a binary, let alone monolithic, logic of functioning. At the same time, it is irreducible to the '*Homo Universalis* of Humanism'[243] and the '*Anthropos* of anthropocentrism',[244] since it is 'a structural *relational* capacity'[245] that defies the rigid logic of a fixed sense of 'human nature' or 'human essence'. For Braidotti, subjectivity is 'both post-personal and pre-individual',[246] in that it

finds itself situated in a dynamic, and largely unpredictable, process of 'constant negotiation with multiple others and immersed in the conditions that it is trying to understand and modify, if not overturn'.[247] On this view, among the key features of human subjectivity are malleability, negotiability, unpredictability, multiplicity, contingency, and – above all – relationality.

A noteworthy problem with this account of subjectivity, however, is that, despite its advocate's *nominally* anti-essentialist stance, it relies on *effectively* essentialist – or at least quasi-essentialist – assumptions about the very *nature* of what it means to be 'human'. For the aforementioned characteristics are constitutive elements of *any* human creature – that is, they are traits that are inherent in *our* species-specific condition.

This reflection takes us to Braidotti's conception of 'the subject' in general and her conception of 'the posthuman subject' in particular. She maintains that '[p]osthuman subjects are a work-in-progress'[248] and that, furthermore, 'they emerge as both a critical and a creative project within the posthuman convergence along posthumanist and post-anthropocentric axes of interrogation'.[249] One may legitimately object, however, that at least the first part of this statement applies not only to (post-)human but also to non-human subjects. By definition, *all* living beings are 'a work-in-progress', in the sense that they are constantly developing and, as spatiotemporally situated beings, responding to different, and incessantly evolving, environments and historical circumstances.

This leads us to another issue, namely the question of 'we'. Who are 'we'?[250] Braidotti claims that posthuman subjects 'explore the multifaceted and differential nature of the collective "we"'.[251] In other words, the 'we' to which she is referring cannot be reduced to a monolithic, let alone transcendental, entity; rather, given its relational constitution, we are dealing with a multilayered and highly differentiated form of 'we', whose posthuman constitution is indicative of the posthuman era. According to Braidotti, '"[w]e" are in the process of becoming posthumanist and post-anthropocentric'.[252] We do so as *embodied and embedded* selves, since 'we are deeply steeped in the material world'[253]; and we do so as *transversal* selves, since 'we connect [with] but also differ from each other'.[254] Bonded by our 'ontological relationality',[255] we are – in vitalist terms – 'variations on a common matter'.[256] Yet, paradoxically, 'we differ from each other all the more as we co-define ourselves within the same living matter – environmentally, socially, and relationally'.[257] Just as we share our ontological relationality with all other living beings, we differ from each other due to our context-dependent specificities.

One of the main problems with this approach, however, is that the notion of 'we' that lies at its core is both vague and presumptuous: it is vague because it is not clear whether it comprises *all* or only *some* living beings; at the same time, it is presumptuous because the contention that we are *all* in the process of becoming posthumanist and post-anthropocentric is far-fetched. If we include non-human agents in our definition of 'the subject', then the question arises whether all *zoe*-based beings (including animals, seeds, cells, and plants) – and, indeed, all geo- and techno-based forms of existence – can be included in this category. If the answer is 'yes', then we are faced with an inflationary conception of 'the subject', which, owing to its denotative elasticity, fails to do justice to the species-constitutive distinctiveness of human life.

Of course, one may come to Braidotti's defence by insisting that one of the principal aims of her project is to undo the boundaries between different kinds of 'subject' and 'subjectivity' (notably 'human', 'inhuman', 'posthuman', and 'non-human') and that, in some instances, the 'we' she envisages is more or less clearly defined.[258] After all, she urges us to 'think of ourselves as *planetary subjects*, rather than as global agents'.[259] Crucially, the types of subject she has in mind include *both* 'the human *and* [the] inhuman inhabitants of this planet'.[260] If, however, we – effectively – include *every* form of existence (that is, 'human', 'inhuman', 'posthuman', and 'non-human') in our definition of 'subject' and 'subjectivity', then these terms lose conceptual force, since, in an omni-onto-epistemological fashion, they refer to everything and nothing.

Even if, in a narrow sense, we reserve the concept of 'the subject' for members of our species, it seems erroneous to assume that *all* human beings are going through the process of being converted

into posthuman(ist) and/or post-anthropocentric actors. Ironically, the intersectional divisions to which Braidotti rightly draws her readers' attention are the very reason that – to use a modified version of an Orwellian aphorism – some human actors are more (or less) posthuman(ist) and/or post-anthropocentric than others. Human actors are divided by key sociological variables (such as class, ethnicity, gender, age, and 'ability'). Our position in the world, including our access to socially relevant resources, is shaped by these variables. Braidotti's critical theory of society needs to emphasize the fact that the degree to which actors have (or have not) become posthuman(ist) and/or post-anthropocentric depends on the *social* positions they occupy and the *social* dispositions they acquire within the *social* universe. Otherwise, the bold proposition that we have been witnessing the rise of 'a new collective subject, a "we-are-(all)-in-this-together-but-we-are-not-one-and-the-same" kind of subject',[261] is of merely rhetorical, rather than substantive, relevance.

ii. Egalitarianism?

Braidotti's framework makes a case for 'species egalitarianism', which is embedded in her 'monistic vitalism'. Her belief in justice as a normative ideal that is defined in 'social, trans-species, and transnational'[262] terms is summarized in the concept of '*zoe*-centred justice',[263] which is fundamental to her plea for a 'relational ethics',[264] a 'nomadic ethics',[265] and an 'affirmative ethics'.[266] The bottom-line justification for this framework, which ties in with 'the posthuman agenda',[267] is the view that 'we are in this together'.[268] Braidotti's 'species egalitarianism' is inextricably linked to her 'monistic vitalism', according to which, in the posthuman era, all living beings are situated in, and interconnected through, a '*zoe*/geo/techno assemblage'.[269] On this interpretation, our existence is composed of a set of living (*zoe*), geological (geo), and technological (techno) dimensions. She rightly insists that we must resist the temptation to present this assemblage in 'an oversimplified manner'.[270] Indeed, it would be reductive to portray this historical shift towards the gradual consolidation of the posthuman condition in terms of 'a sort of evolutionary destiny or socially inevitable goal',[271] which would be tantamount to teleological determinism.[272] While Braidotti's defence of both 'species egalitarianism' and 'monistic vitalism' is convincing in that it draws attention to the structural and processual complexity of planetary existence, it is problematic in other respects:

(1) Teleological accounts of history have long been out of fashion.[273] The notion that the rise of the posthuman condition does *not* follow an evolutionary pattern, let alone a teleological logic of determinism, is based on a straw-man argument, since hardly any contemporary scholars in the humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences would seriously make such a claim. Braidotti has a tendency to ground her principal contentions in antithetical statements – that is, in assertions that are constructed in opposition to rival positions. In many instances, however, these allegedly competing stances are hardly defended by anyone in contemporary academia, which makes some of her propositions appear somewhat pointless. Her anti-teleological remarks are a case in point.

(2) The concept of 'relational ethics' is pleonastic, since there is no such thing as a 'non-relational ethics'.[274] By definition, the business of ethics is a relational affair, which requires systematizing, defending, and recommending moral assumptions and principles that can – or indeed should – be drawn upon when making behavioural decisions *in relation to* objective, normative, and subjective realms of existence. Any attempt to establish a 'non-relational ethics' would be not only absurd but also futile.

As indicated above, at the heart of Braidotti's 'relational ethics' lies a 'social, trans-species, and transnational'[275] understanding of justice. This idea is captured in the concept of '*zoe*-centred justice'.[276] On this view, her outline of 'relational ethics' is intimately intertwined with 'nomadic ethics'[277] and 'affirmative ethics',[278] because 'we' – that is, *all* living beings – 'are in this together'.[279] Such an ethics is – in Braidotti's words – 'not just the application of moral protocols, norms, and values, but rather the force that contributes to conditions of affirmative becoming'.[280] As such, it represents a vitalist project, which, by definition, rejects the anthropocentric assertion of 'the

sovereign individual' à la Kant.[281] Braidotti's emphasis on 'radical relationality'[282] is an attempt to account for the deep connectedness of all human *and* non-human agencies. These agencies – far from being 'sedentary and protocol-bound',[283] let alone guided by 'Categorical Imperatives'[284] – are mobile, contingent, and nomadic. In short, they are *relational*. In light of the ontological condition of 'radical relationality',[285] the posthuman subject 'cannot afford to restrict the ethical instance within the limits of human otherness, but has to open it up to inter-relations with non-human, post human [*sic*], and in-human [*sic*] forces'.[286] Even if, however, one accepts that this concern with 'radical relationality'[287] is an essential ingredient of Braidotti's approach, the concept of 'relational ethics' remains a pleonasm, since the very idea of a 'non-relational ethics' is an oxymoron.

One may favour *deontological ethics* (emphasizing the civilizational role of 'principles' and 'reason'), *utilitarian ethics* (stressing the socio-ontological benefits derived from focusing on 'consequences' and 'outcomes'), *virtue ethics* (highlighting the species-constitutive significance of 'virtues' and 'good traits'), *sentimentalist ethics* (underscoring the importance of 'emotions' and 'feelings'), *nomadic, affirmative, or vitalist ethics* (underlining the species-transcendent force of 'radical relationality'), or alternative approaches in moral philosophy.[288] Given the preponderance of relationality[289] in the confluence of objectivity, normativity, and subjectivity, there is no way one will be able to make a convincing case for a 'non-relational ethics', let alone a non-relational conception of reality.

(3) Braidotti's posthuman narrative suffers from a lack of engagement with species-constitutive elements – that is, with those qualities that distinguish us from other species and, in this sense, make us 'human'. Arguably, among these species-constitutive facets are the following: culture, language, consciousness, self-awareness, selfhood, personhood, identity, subjectivity, agency, morality, aesthetic judgement, and reason – to mention only a few.[290] Even if we broadly accept Braidotti's tripartite framework, which is expressed in the notion of a '*zoe*/geo/techno assemblage', we are confronted with the challenging task of having to identify the attributes by which different forms of existence – including different species – can be distinguished from one another. We run the risk of endorsing a kind of 'vitalist relativism' in general and 'species relativism' in particular, if we fail to shed light on the features that make us 'human'.[291]

To be clear, this is not to negate that humans share numerous important characteristics with other living beings, all of which, in their ontological totality, are an expression of *zoe*. Nor is this to deny that humans may share multiple traits, including key cognitive and epistemic capacities, with forms of existence that fall into the 'geo' or 'techno' realms, respectively. Rather, this is to accept that, if we shy away from exploring the species-constitutive specificity of the human condition, we may end up not only misrepresenting the uniqueness of particular forms of being but also, crucially, ascribing the same level of agency – including moral agency – to each of them. The result, of course, would be *ontological relativism* – that is, in Braidotti's case, 'vitalist relativism' and/or 'species relativism' – which would put 'human rights' on the same level as the purported rights of any other living beings, regardless of whether their existence is *zoe*-, geo-, or techno-based (or founded on a combination of these components). The point is not to advocate an anthropocentric version of 'species supremacy', as a way of justifying almost anything that members of humanity, through the domination of nature by 'men', may wish to inflict upon their environment. Rather, the point is to acknowledge that there is no ultimately defensible conception of *moral* agency without a critical understanding of distinctively *human* faculties.

iii. Critical Posthumanities?

Braidotti makes a strong case for the rise of the critical posthumanities. Yet, her narrative is also problematic on several counts.

(1) Braidotti insists on the *extra-*, *supra-*, and *post*-disciplinary constitution of the critical posthumanities. When doing so, however, she appears to ignore the fact that academic disciplines – in all three key branches of knowledge (that is, in the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences) – are still in full swing. Granted, *multi-*, *inter-*, and *trans*-disciplinary research agendas and

teaching curricula are increasingly common; indeed, they are widely promoted by funding bodies, research councils, governments, audit committees, and assessment panels. This does not mean, however, that academic disciplines are being transcended, let alone eliminated, or that they are less important in the current era than they used to be in the past.

(2) Just as prevalent academic practices and structures remain intellectually and institutionally embedded in disciplinary comfort zones, so does Braidotti's own oeuvre. Most of her writings fall into the areas of philosophy and sociology, but also, admittedly, into neighbouring (disciplinary and sub-disciplinary) realms of inquiry, notably science and technology studies. This is ironic, to say the least, given her emphasis on the extent to which the critical posthumanities are meant to be a sphere of 'extra-disciplinary encounters'[292] and experimental 'supra-disciplinary hybridization'.[293] If anything, her own work – notwithstanding its considerable qualities and valuable contributions – at once transcends *and* reinforces disciplinary boundaries. Most empirical or 'hard' scientists, for instance, will be suspicious of the – at times – obscure, long-winded, and convoluted style in which parts of her ideas are presented, not to mention the poststructuralist tenets on which they are based and the failure to substantiate them with solid empirical evidence.

(3) Braidotti warns against 'the quest for disciplinary purity'[294] and the obsession with 'the policing of disciplinary purity'.[295] She fails to concede, however, that almost no twenty-first-century scholar would seriously pursue such a dubious enterprise. In other words, this is another straw-man argument, since the putative ideal of 'disciplinary purity', if it has ever been earnestly chased by anyone, is *not* a major concern articulated by contemporary researchers. Straw-man constructions of this kind make Braidotti's line of argument weaker, not stronger. Who would seriously deny that most, if not all, forms of erudite analysis, in order to be truly authoritative, draw – explicitly or implicitly, consciously or unconsciously, deliberately or unwittingly, directly or indirectly – on knowledge generated within *different* disciplinary realms of inquiry?

(4) As indicated above, the contention that we have been witnessing 'a tendency towards the nomadic abandoning of disciplines'[296] – and, by implication, 'a nomadic shift towards the critical posthumanities'[297] – is, at best, an exaggeration or, at worst, an outright misrepresentation of an academic landscape that continues to be deeply rooted in, and to function within intellectually cultivated and institutionally reinforced parameters of, disciplinary and sub-disciplinary modes of investigation. By contrast, the assertion that one can observe a tendency 'towards the generation of "grand challenge" style problems that provide the appropriate *mise en scène* for the disciplines to array themselves within unchanged but interlocking corrals'[298] is appropriate, in the sense that 'big-issue challenges' – such as economic crisis, poverty, nuclear rearmament, climate change, global pandemics, etc. – have far from disappeared. Indeed, they affect the critical posthumanities no less than their predecessors. Yet, this trend has led not to 'a spasming of disciplines'[299] but, rather, to their strengthening – not only because most researchers continue to be firmly situated within their epistemic comfort zones, but also due to the neomanagerialist imposition of 'a culture of audit and performance review',[300] which produce a somewhat deceptive 'sense of the reliable tractability of brains and ideas'.[301] If anything, however, these managerialized mechanisms of audit culture, performance assessment, and steering capacity boost, rather than undermine, the presence of disciplinary types of functioning.

(5) Throughout her work, Braidotti insists on the importance of overcoming dichotomies and binaries, but it is far from obvious whether or not she succeeds in accomplishing this task herself. On many levels, it appears that – to put it crudely – she wants to have it both ways. To illustrate this point, let us consider the following examples: (a) her belief in the Deleuzian idea of 'the "*empirical transcendental*"'[302]; (b) her distinction between *Majoritarian-Royal* and *minor-nomad sciences*; (c) her attempt to reconcile the *complicit* with the *critical* aspects of the posthumanities' relationship to capitalism in general and neoliberalism in particular; and (d) her ambition to combine *humanist* and *anti-humanist* positions in her posthumanist project.

(a) With regard to the *empirical/transcendental* dichotomy, it is ironic that, while Braidotti is strongly opposed to any kind of transcendental accounts of the subject à la Kant,[303] she puts forward a transcendental (or at least quasi-transcendental) framework herself. For her own approach *is* based on a number of *universal(ist)* assumptions about the main features of 'the posthuman subject' and 'posthuman subjectivity'. Among these features are malleability, negotiability, unpredictability, multiplicity, contingency, and – above all – relationality. These features are *not* arbitrary, as they belong to the very *nature* of 'posthuman human creatures'.

(b) With regard to the *Majoritarian-Royal/minor-nomad sciences* dichotomy, it is surprising, to say the least, that Braidotti defends this distinction with such great enthusiasm, while expressing her fundamental objections to 'binaries' in central parts of her work. In her view, these broad types of science stand for two central axes of the knowledge economy, driving epistemic developments in the context of the posthuman convergence[304]:

- The former is 'contiguous with the epistemic accelerationism of advanced capitalism in the service of dominant or "Major science"'.[305] The latter builds on a strong engagement with minorities, 'involving an affirmative diversity of knowledge traditions or "minor nomad sciences"'.[306]
- The former is concerned with 'what is stable',[307] pursuing the goal of identifying patterns by uncovering underlying laws and causal mechanisms. The latter focuses on 'flows of becoming',[308] facing up to the different degrees of indeterminacy that we encounter when navigating particular spheres of reality.

Interestingly, Braidotti affirms that '[t]he relationship between these qualitatively distinct practices is neither binary nor dialectical, but [. . .] constituted by constant negotiations and contestations'.[309] On closer examination, however, it becomes evident that she – following Deleuze and Guattari – unwittingly presents these two modes of scientific inquiry in a way that follows a *binary logic*.

Moreover, this distinction is problematic insofar as it is based on the reduction of scientific activities to two ideal types,[310] which, at best, fail to do justice to the complexity of research practices or, at worst, create a simplistic normative binary of 'bad' *vs*. 'good':

- on the one hand, a demonized caricature of reactionary (i.e. mainstream, conventional, and conservative) research mechanisms;
- on the other hand, a romanticized ideal of emancipatory (i.e. alternative, grassroots, and subversive) research practices.

A critical theory of scientific research needs to provide a nuanced, rather than dichotomous, account of the tension-laden and multilayered intellectual and institutional processes shaping different forms of knowledge production, circulation, and consumption in the twenty-first century.

(c) With regard to the *complicit/critical* dichotomy, it is far from obvious whether or not – and, if so, to what degree – these two parts of the equation can be reconciled. In essence, Braidotti suggests that the critical posthumanities can exist both *within* and *beyond* neoliberal forms of governance associated with advanced capitalism. On the one hand, they are able and willing to follow the systemic logic of corporate structures and practices, which not only prevail in key – notably industrial and financial – sectors of the economy but, in a more fundamental sense, permeate almost every sphere of life on earth. On the other hand, they are committed to critiquing, deconstructing, and subverting the neoliberal doxa and hegemony, especially with respect to its detrimental, disempowering, destructive, and exploitative consequences. Surely, one may concede that the commodification of everything – encompassing the commodification of life itself – represents a constitutive feature of the *ubiquitous* systemic logic emanating from capitalism. Insofar as critiques of capitalism – including their most radical versions – are, in one way or another, absorbed and re-appropriated, if not colonized, by its systemic logic, it remains an open question to what extent it is possible to step

outside the constraining horizon of instrumental rationality, sustained by the interplay of states and markets. If *Systemimmanenz* is sufficiently systemic to force us to remain trapped in its immanence, then *Systemtranszendenz* will be nothing but a futile attempt to transcend what is always already immanent in our life forms. A genuinely critical theory of society, while having to deal with its own contradictions, needs to explore the conditions under which emancipatory constellations can emerge within structurally confined spaces that are colonized by systemic imperatives of domination.

(d) With regard to the *humanist/anti-humanist* dichotomy, it is striking that Braidotti seeks to combine these two – diametrically opposed – positions. On the one hand, she declares that she is 'inclined towards anti-humanism'.[311] On the other hand, she affirms that she has 'no difficulty in recognizing that these ideals are perfectly compatible with the best humanist values'.[312] This tension-laden stance illustrates that Braidotti has been strongly influenced by both 'anti-humanist' and 'humanist' figures (such as Michel Foucault and Immanuel Kant, respectively), as well as by scholars who have sought to cross-fertilize these two intellectual traditions (such as Edward Said). Once again, however, it is far from clear whether or not these two positions are logically compatible. One may conceive of Braidotti's paradigm shift in Hegelian terms:

$$\textit{Humanism}\ (\text{thesis}) + \textit{Anti-Humanism}\ (\text{antithesis}) \rightarrow \textit{Posthumanism}\ (\text{synthesis}).$$

Granted, none of these intellectual movements can, or should, be portrayed as entirely homogeneous, since each of them is internally fragmented and marked by multiple currents of thought. Nonetheless, their respective advocates are united by common sets of beliefs, assumptions, and principles. The question, therefore, is whether or not humanist and anti-humanist approaches can be combined, cross-fertilized, or even integrated – and, if so, what the payoff of such an endeavour would be.

For the sake of thematic focus, let us consider the concept of 'humanity', which, for obvious reasons, is crucial to Braidotti's 'humanism + anti-humanism → posthumanism' dialectic. Although, admittedly, different humanist thinkers endorse different conceptions of humanity, most – if not all – of them subscribe to the view that *all* members of the human species (that is, *notwithstanding* the stratifying impact of class, ethnicity, gender, age, 'ability', and/or other sociological variables) *share* a number of anthropological – that is, species-*constitutive* – features. Among the most common 'candidates' for these defining elements are the following: culture, language, consciousness, self-awareness, selfhood, personhood, identity, subjectivity, agency, morality, aesthetic judgement, and reason – to mention only a few.[313]

Surely, one may regard this list as incomplete, one may favour some of the attributes it contains over others, and one may insist that some of them are – albeit in different forms and to different degrees – possessed by non-human agents that are part of the '*zoe*/geo/techno assemblage'.[314] Still, it is hard to see how the *humanist* notion that humanity possesses species-constitutive traits that distinguish its members from other entities can be reconciled with the *anti-humanist*, let alone *posthumanist*, assertion that the belief in their existence, never mind their world-historical significance, is little more than a transcendental illusion promulgated by anthropocentric ideologies.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this paper has been to examine the validity of the contention that, over the past decades, we have been witnessing the rise of the 'posthuman condition'. Drawing on the work of Rosi Braidotti, the preceding investigation has covered several key issues arising from the in-depth analysis of her principal contributions.

The first part has centred on the concept of *posthumanism*, suggesting that it reflects a systematic attempt to challenge humanist assumptions underlying the construction of 'the human'. As a historical marker, 'the posthuman' signals the rise of a new era, defined primarily by the Fourth

Industrial Revolution and the Sixth Extinction. As a theoretical figuration, 'the posthuman' compels us to account for the profound interdependence of human and non-human forces.

The second part has focused on the concept of *post-anthropocentrism*, demonstrating that it articulates a desire to reject the twin ideas of 'species supremacism' and 'human exceptionalism', which it seeks to replace with 'species egalitarianism' and 'monistic vitalism'. Braidotti's post-anthropocentric approach indicates that the posthuman condition is based on three axes of transformation (that is, 'becoming-animal', 'becoming-earth', and 'becoming-machine'), which – owing to their intertwinement – cut across traditional epistemological and ontological boundaries.

The third part has been concerned with the concept of *critical posthumanities*, positing that its advocacy hinges on the cross-fertilization of posthumanism and post-anthropocentrism – an ambitious endeavour aimed at exploring the emergence of radically transformative modes of knowledge production, circulation, and consumption. As an inter-, trans-, and supra-disciplinary venture, the critical posthumanities intend to equip us with the epistemological, methodological, and conceptual resources necessary to study the confluence of *zoe*-, geo-, and techno-based forces.

The fourth part has offered an *assessment* of the 'posthuman condition' thesis, evaluating the extent to which it sheds new light on the ways in which our engagements with the world are shaped by the confluence of *zoe*-, geo-, and techno-based dimensions. As elucidated above, the 'posthuman condition' thesis – irrespective of its significant limitations and internal contradictions – raises various theoretical and empirical questions, the importance of which is illustrated in the relevance of Braidotti's oeuvre to understanding contemporary societies.

Finally, one may legitimately ask to what degree Braidotti's inquiries make valuable contributions to recent and ongoing debates on socio-philosophical issues such as 'exclusion', 'engagement', and 'empathy'. In light of the previous analysis, there can be little doubt that, notwithstanding some noteworthy shortcomings, Braidotti's writings provide a powerful conceptual framework for addressing these matters.

With regard to the first theme, Braidotti's approach reminds us that it is far from obvious who (and what) should be *included* in, and who (and what) should be *excluded* from, normative agendas of fundamental *rights*.[315] It is one thing to recognize that planetary forms of existence, including human societies, are characterized by practices and structures of inclusion and exclusion. It is quite another to maintain that, in principle, *all* living beings have not only exactly the same right to assert their 'will to live' but also the capacity to create a vitalist space of planetary existence devoid of (both intra- and inter-species) mechanisms of exclusion, let alone discrimination, domination, and exploitation.

With regard to the second theme, Braidotti's approach reminds us that our *engagements* with the world are shaped by the confluence of *zoe*-, geo-, and techno-based dimensions. It is relatively uncontroversial to assert that these engagements are intersectionally constituted by, and structurally embedded in, key sociological variables (such as class, ethnicity, gender, age, and 'ability'). It is unclear, however, to what extent a more equitable distribution of socially relevant resources will make it possible to ensure that our multifaceted engagements with the world enable us to realize the emancipatory potential of humanity in a way that benefits not only 'the few' but also 'the many', *including* the countless non-human forms of existence. As physical beings, we are immersed in objectivity; as social beings, we are immersed in normativity; as self-aware beings, we are immersed in subjectivity.[316] It remains an open question whether or not (and, if so, which) non-human forms of existence *also* engage both with their environments and with themselves *through* the ontological trinity of objectivity, normativity, and subjectivity.

With regard to the third theme, Braidotti's approach reminds us that our capacity to feel, to build, and to develop *empathy* with others is not limited to the relationships we establish with our fellow human beings. In fact, this central faculty is *also* nourished by the perspective-taking processes we may perform when relating to other – that is, non-human – living beings. Arguably,

this vitalist propensity expresses our need to search for sources of resonance in the plenitude of life forms that have emerged, and continue to emerge, in the world by which we are surrounded.[317] As members of a sentient species, we cannot feel good about ourselves in a morally valuable way unless we feel *with* and *for* others. Of course, the question of the degree to which our capacity for empathy can, and should, extend to non-human life forms is a contentious one. In its most radical version, this view is based on a sort of vitalist universalism, according to which, in principle, *all* living beings can develop varying levels of empathy with one another. Granted, we may do so when taking on different, often conflicting, roles in the theatre of existence – notably as individuals, members of social groups, members of humanity, inhabitants of the earth, and/or inhabitants of the universe or multiverse. Crucially, however, our ability to understand and/or to feel what another person or being is experiencing from within *their* frame of reference – that is, our capacity to place ourselves in the position of someone or something *else* – is a manifestation of cognitive, affective, and/or somatic empathy. If intra- and inter-species empathy is a reality, then we have a will to live (and to appreciate) life because, as ontological vitalists, we want others to live (and to appreciate) life as much as we do. This does not mean, however, that we can, or should, put all species on an equal footing, let alone pretend that other species are equipped with the same critical, reflexive, and moral capacities as human beings.

Notes

1. Braidotti (2019a, 1).
2. Ibid., 6.
3. Ibid., 6.
4. Ibid., 6.
5. Ibid., 6 (italics in original).
6. Ibid., 6 (italics in original).
7. Ibid., 7 (italics added).
8. On this point, see, for instance: Descola (2009); Descola (2013 [2005]).
9. Braidotti (2019a, 7).
10. Viveiros de Castro (2014 [2009], 44). Cf. Braidotti (2019a, 7).
11. Braidotti (2019a, 11).
12. Ibid., 11 (punctuation modified).
13. Ibid., 11.
14. Cf. Susen (2014a, 23, esp. point 10).
15. Cf. Susen (2015a, 51).
16. See Foucault (2002 [1966/1970]).
17. See Deleuze (1983 [1962]) as well as Deleuze and Guattari (1988 [1980]).
18. See Dolphijn and van der Tuin (2012).
19. See Alaimo and Hekman (2008) as well as Coole and Frost (2010).
20. See Said (2004) and Gilroy (2000).
21. See Badmington (2000), Badmington (2004), Braidotti (2013a), Braidotti (2019b), Braidotti (2019a), Braidotti and Fuller (2019), Fukuyama (2002), Hayles (1999), Herbrechter (2013 [2009]), Mahon (2017), Nayar (2014), Peterson (2018), and Wolfe (2010).
22. Braidotti (2019a, 9).
23. Cf. Said (1993).
24. Braidotti (2019a, 10–11).
25. Ibid., 10.
26. On the concepts of 'the posthuman' and 'posthumanism', see, for example: Alaimo (2016); Badmington (2000); Badmington (2003); Badmington (2004); Banerji and Paranjape (2016); Braidotti (2013a); Braidotti (2015); Braidotti (2019a); Braidotti (2019b); Braidotti and Bignall (2019); Braidotti and Fuller (2019); Braidotti and Hlavajova (2018); Clarke (2008); Clarke and Rossini (2017); Ferrando (2013a); Ferrando (2013b); Fukuyama (2002); Halberstam and Livingston (1995); Hayles (1999); Herbrechter (2013 [2009]); Käll (2019); Kroker (2014); Mahon (2017); Nayar (2014); Papadopoulos (2010); Pepperell (2003 [1995]); Peterson (2018); Roden (2015); Thomsen (2013); Wamberg and Thomsen (2016); Watson and Huntington (2008); Wennemann (2013); Wolfe (2010).

27. Braidotti (2019a, 1).
28. Ibid., 1–2.
29. Ibid., 1 (italics added).
30. On 'the posthuman condition', see, for instance: Braidotti (2013a, 1–5, 8, 12, 30, 39, 41, 42, 46*n*8, 52–54, 74, 110, 111, 119, 124, 138–139, 143, 159, 172–173, and 187); Braidotti (2019a, esp. 1–4, 6–39 [Chapter 1], 58–59, 67, 72, 73, 75, 82, and 120); Braidotti (2019b, 36, 40, and 42); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 3, 7, 9, and 23). See also, for example: Hauskeller (2014); Lippert-Rasmussen, Rosendahl Thomsen, and Wamberg (2012); Pepperell (2003 [1995]).
31. See, for instance: Braidotti (2013a, esp. 1–2, 5–6, 11–12, 13–54 [Chapter 1], 188–190, and 194–197); Braidotti (2019a, 2, 8, 11, 41, 55–61, 62, 63, 67, 71, 81, 98, 105, 120, 147, and 161); Braidotti (2019b, 31, 36, and 53*n*1); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 5, 15, and 24*n*1). See also previous note on the concepts of 'the posthuman' and 'posthumanism'.
32. See, for instance: Braidotti (2013a, esp. 43, 55–104 [Chapter 2], 109, 121–122, 141, 145, 160, and 180); Braidotti (2019a, 2, 4, 8, 11, 41, 44, 46, 71, 77, 85, 96, 118, and 146); Braidotti (2019b, 31, 36, 39, 41, 46, 50, and 54*n*6); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 15). See also, for example: Ferrando (2016); Hoppe (2020); Kopnina et al. (2018); Marchesini (2018); Yigitcanlar, Foth, and Kamruzzaman (2019).
33. Braidotti (2019a, 2).
34. Ibid., 2.
35. Ibid., 2.
36. Ibid., 2.
37. Ibid., 11.
38. See, for example: Heidegger (1949 [1946]); Nietzsche (1999 [1886]); Nietzsche (1992 [1887]); Stirner (1968 [1844]). See also, for instance: Braidotti (2013a, esp. 16–30, but also 6, 11, 32, 35–39, 46, 64, 75, 102, 106, 143, 145, 158); Deleuze (1983 [1962]); Ferrando (2013b); Habermas (1987 [1985]); Saar (2007); Sloterdijk (2009); Soper (1986); Tallis (1997); Yack (1986).
39. On the concept of 'the Fourth Industrial Revolution', see, for example: Braidotti (2019a, 2, 31–32, 37, 44, 60–61, 71, 84, 93, 131, 160, and 174). See also, for instance: Atanasoski and Vora (2019); Koh, Orzes, and Jia (2019); Schäfer (2018); Schwab (2015); Schwab (2017 [2016]); Xu, David, and Hi Kim (2018).
40. On the concept of 'the Sixth Extinction', see, for example: Braidotti (2019a, 2, 37, 44, 49, 60–61, 71, 84, 97, 131, 160, and 174); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 19). See also Kolbert (2014). On Braidotti's conception of 'extinction', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 6–7, 9, 64, 83, 84, 96, 103, 111, 113–114, 115, 116, 119, 120, 121, 130, 133, 151, 160, 161, 185, and 187).
41. Braidotti (2019a, 2, punctuation modified).
42. See Schwab (2015).
43. See Kolbert (2014).
44. On the concept of 'the Anthropocene', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 5, 66, 78–79, 81, 85, 100, 111, and 186); Braidotti (2013b, 8, 13, and 15); Braidotti (2019a, 3, 28, 37, 40, 60, 61, 70, 71, 76–77, 78, 82–86, 98, 104–105, and 116); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 15, 22, 23, and 24*n*1); Braidotti (2019b, 32, 35, 36, 44, and 53*n*4). See also, for instance: Bignall, Hemming, and Rigney (2016); Chakrabarty (2017); Chernilo (2017b); Clark and Gunaratnam (2016); Clark and Yusoff (2017); Cohen, Colebrook, and Miller Hillis (2016); Davis and Turpin (2015); Delanty and Mota (2017); Ferrando (2016); Grusin (2017); Hann (2017); Hoppe (2020); Hornborg (2016); Kirksey (2019); Last (2015); Luke (2017); Nordblad (2016); Scranton (2015); Strydom (2017); Szerszynski (2017a); Szerszynski (2017b); Turner (2016); Wamberg and Thomsen (2016); Whyte (2017).
45. On the concept of 'the posthuman challenge', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 37–45); Braidotti (2019a, 3, 19, and 28–29).
46. Braidotti (2019a, 2).
47. Ibid., 2.
48. Ibid., 2.
49. Ibid., 2.
50. Cf. Susen (2015a).
51. Braidotti (2019a, 5). On the concept of 'posthuman times', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 3, 150, 157, and 187); Braidotti (2019a, 1, 5, 11–12, 17, 19, 23, 34, 39, 61, 79, 87, 89, 142, 147, 169, and 182); Braidotti (2019b). See also, for instance: Alaimo (2016).
52. On the concept of 'posthuman convergence', see, for example: Braidotti (2019a, 3, 4–5, 6–13, 24, 27–29, 40, 41, 46, 48, 54–55, 66, 71, 72, 73, 76, 87, 95, 97, 100, 103, 113, 118, 119, 128, 130–131, 133–135, 137, 145, 146, 149, 153, 156–158, 160, 162, 171, and 176); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 3, 15, 23, and 24).
53. On the concept of 'posthuman predicament', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 3, 4, 7, 9, 12, 40, 42, 46, 51, 54, 66, 89, 93, 94, 104, 111, 115, 116, 120, 138–139, 144, 146, 163, 178–179, 183, and 192); Braidotti (2019a, 8, 11–13, 41, 50, 57, 70–73, 76, 82, 91–92, 142, and 156); Braidotti (2019b, 32, 35, and 43).

54. On the concept of 'posthuman subject(s)', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 45, 49, 51, 57, 60, 75, 79, 80, 87, 89, 92, 94–96, 100, 103, 136–138, 140, 169, 181, 187, 188–190, 192, 194, and 196); Braidotti (2019a, esp. 40–74 [Chapter 2]); Braidotti (2019b, 31, 33, 34, and 52).
55. Braidotti (2019a, 40, punctuation modified).
56. On the concepts of 'human exceptionalism' and 'humanist exceptionalism', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 66, 86, and 147); Braidotti (2019a, 2, 40, 50, 62, and 164); Braidotti (2019b, 31 and, 32); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 22).
57. On the concept of 'Western exceptionalism', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 36).
58. Braidotti (2019a, 40).
59. Ibid., 40.
60. On the concepts of 'the transversal' and 'transversality', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 45, 47, 60, 82, 93, 95, 103–104, 159, and 172); Braidotti (2019a, 17–19, 54, 63–73, 78, 83, 91, 95, 102–119, 121, 124–125, 127–128, 132, 135, and 137); Braidotti (2019b, 31–34, 36, 41, 42, 46, 49, and 50–52); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 3, 5, 10–13, 15, 16–19, and 23). See also, for instance: Buckley (2013); Cole and Bradley (2018); Goffey (2016); Guattari (2015 [1972]); Guattari (2015).
61. See, for example, Stryker and Aizura (2013) as well as Stryker and Whittle (2006).
62. See, for example, Tsing (2015).
63. See, for example, Kirksey and Helmreich (2010).
64. See, for example, Alaimo (2010).
65. Braidotti (2019a, 41).
66. Ibid., 41.
67. On the concept of 'species supremacism', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 36, 65, 78, 80, and 144); Braidotti (2013b, 2–3 and, 8); Braidotti (2019a, 10, 35, 43, 86, 111, and 142); Braidotti (2019b, 38, 43, and 52).
68. On the concept of 'human exceptionalism', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 36, 66, 86, and 147); Braidotti (2019a, 2, 30, 40, 50, 62, 77, 84, 101, 129, 151, and 215); Braidotti (2019b, 31–32); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 22).
69. Braidotti (2019a, 1).
70. Ibid., 1.
71. Ibid., 1.
72. Ibid., 9.
73. Ibid., 9 (punctuation modified).
74. Ibid., 10.
75. Ibid., 10.
76. Ibid., 10.
77. Braidotti (2013a, 56).
78. Ibid., 56.
79. Ibid., 56.
80. Ibid., 57.
81. Ibid., 57.
82. Ibid., 57.
83. Ibid., 57.
84. Ibid., 57–58 (punctuation modified).
85. On 'trans-disciplinarity', see, for example: ibid., 58, 146, 163, 169, and 183; Braidotti (2019b, 31–32, 38–40, 45, 47, and 52); Braidotti (2019a, 163, 169, and 183); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 4, 6, 19, and 24*n*4). Cf. Guattari (2015).
86. Braidotti (2013a, 58). Cf., for example: Feenberg (2017a, esp. Chapters 2 and 3); Feenberg (2017b); Susen (2020d).
87. Cf., for example: Loick (2018); Susen (2020a, esp. Chapters 9–12 and Epilogue); Welsh (2020). Cf. also, for instance: Braidotti (2019a, esp. Chapters 4 and 5); Braidotti (2019b, esp. 43–49 and 53); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, esp. 23).
88. Braidotti (2013a, 59).
89. See ibid., 59.
90. Ibid., 59.
91. Ibid., 59 (punctuation modified).
92. Ibid., 59 (italics added).
93. Ibid., 59.
94. Ibid., 60.
95. Ibid., 60 (italics added).
96. Ibid., 60. Cf. Guattari (2000 [1989]).
97. Braidotti (2013a, 60).
98. Ibid., 60 (punctuation modified).
99. Ibid., 60.
100. Ibid., 60.
101. Ibid., 60.
102. Cf. Braidotti (2011 [1994]) and Braidotti (1991).

103. Braidotti (2013a, 60).
104. On the concept of '*zoe*', see, for example: Braidotti (2006); Braidotti (2013a, 50, 60–61, 65, 66, 71, 80, 86, 88, 94, 95, 97, 102, 103, 104, 110–112, 115, 117, 118, 120–122, 131, 132–133, 134–139, 140–141, 146, 159, 168, and 193–194); Braidotti (2016b); Braidotti (2019a, 9–10, 12, 44, 45–46, 47, 50–51, 52, 61, 63, 76–77, 79, 81, 91, 98, 101–102, 111–112, 125, 126, 127, 128–129, 134, 135, 141, 144, 145, 156, 158, 166–169, 171, and 177); Braidotti (2019b, 33, 35, 40, 42, 43, and 48).
105. On the concept of '*bios*', see, for example: Braidotti (2006); Braidotti (2013a, 60, 65, 115, 137, and 195); Braidotti (2016b); Braidotti (2019a, 10, 12, 45, and 50); Braidotti (2019b, 33–35). See also, for instance, Esposito (2008).
106. On the concept of '*anthropos*', see, for example: Braidotti (2006); Braidotti (2013a, 60, 65–66, 68–69, 75, 80, 82, 88, 108, 151, and 156); Braidotti (2019a, 45, 46, 54–55, 86, 96, 100, 101, 109, 111, 131, 156, and 164); Braidotti (2019b, 33, 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 51, and 52). See also, for instance, Chakrabarty (2009) and Rabinow (2003).
107. Braidotti (2013a, 60). See also Braidotti (2006) and Braidotti (2011 [1994]).
108. Braidotti (2013a, 60).
109. Ibid., 60.
110. Ibid., 60 (punctuation modified).
111. Rose (2007).
112. Braidotti (2013a, 60).
113. Ibid., 60 (italics in original).
114. See ibid., 60.
115. On the concept of 'the post-anthropocentric turn', see, for example: ibid., 38, 43, 57, 60, and 75; Braidotti (2013b). See also, for instance: Ferrando (2016, 159 and 170–171); Ferrando (2020).
116. Braidotti (2013a, 60, punctuation modified).
117. Ibid., 61.
118. Ibid., 61.
119. Ibid., 61.
120. See Cooper (2008). See also Braidotti (2013a, 61).
121. Braidotti (2013a, 63).
122. Ibid., 63.
123. Ibid., 63.
124. Ibid., 63. On the concept of 'vulnerability', see, for example: Butler (2004); Butler, Gambetti, and Sabsay (2016); Campbell and Hall (2017); Fineman and Grear (2013); Mackenzie, Rogers, and Dodds (2014); McLennan (2019); Misztal (2011); Stanghellini and Rosfort (2013); Turner (2006).
125. Braidotti (2013a, 63). See also Braidotti (2016a).
126. Habermas (2003 [2001]).
127. Fukuyama (2002).
128. Sloterdijk (2009).
129. Borradori (2003).
130. Braidotti (2013a, 64).
131. Ibid., 64.
132. Ibid., 64.
133. Ibid., 64.
134. On the concept of 'the nature–culture continuum', see, for example: ibid., 2, 3, 61, 62, 65, 78, 82, 85, 92, 103, 112, and 136; Braidotti (2013b); Braidotti (2019a, 10, 12, 47–48, 76, 77, 80, 95, 113, 125, 126, and 134); Braidotti (2019b).
135. Massumi (1998).
136. Ibid., 59 and 60.
137. On the concept of 'species supremacy', see, for instance: Braidotti (2013a, 65 and, 80); Braidotti (2013b); Braidotti (2019a, 10); Braidotti (2019b, 8).
138. Braidotti (2013a, 65, italics added).
139. See note on the concept of 'the nature–culture continuum'.
140. Braidotti (2013a, 65).
141. See previous note on the concept of 'species supremacy'.
142. Braidotti (2013a, 65, italics in original).
143. Ibid., 65. On this point, see also Hardt and Negri (2000, 215).
144. Braidotti (2013a, 65). On this point, see also Hardt and Negri (2000, 215).
145. Braidotti (2013a, 65).
146. See previous note on the concept of 'the Anthropocene'.
147. Braidotti (2013a, 66).
148. Ibid., 66.
149. On this problem, see Susen (2020d, esp. 745, 752, 753–754, 757, and 758). See also, for instance, Feenberg (2017a, esp. 187–204).

150. On this problem, see Susen (2020d, esp. 736, 738, 741, 752–753, and 761). See also, for instance, Feenberg (2017a, esp. 38, 43, 48, 69, 77, and 137–138).
151. On the concept of 'species supremacism', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 36, 65, 78, 80, and 144); Braidotti (2013b, 2–3 and, 8); Braidotti (2019a, 10, 35, 43, 86, 111, and 142); Braidotti (2019b, 38, 43, and 52).
152. On the concept of 'human exceptionalism', see, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 36, 66, 86, and 147); Braidotti (2019a, 2, 30, 40, 50, 62, 77, 84, 101, 129, 151, and 215); Braidotti (2019b, 31–32); Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 22).
153. Braidotti (2013a, 66; in the original version, the term 'non-human' is not hyphenated). Cf. Haraway (2016).
154. See Braidotti (2013a, 67–76).
155. See ibid., 81–89.
156. See ibid., 89–95.
157. See ibid., 67.
158. Cf. Margulis and Sagan (2000).
159. See Braidotti (2013a, 67).
160. See ibid., 67.
161. On the concept of 'critical posthumanities', see, for example: ibid., 163*n*8 and 168; Braidotti (2016b); Braidotti (2019b).
162. On the concept of 'Critical PostHumanities', see, for instance: Braidotti (2019a, Chapter 4).
163. On the concept of 'Transversal Posthumanities', see, for instance: Braidotti and Fuller (2019) (Special Issue: 'Transversal Posthumanities').
164. On the concept of 'Contested Posthumanities', see, for instance: Braidotti (2016a).
165. On the concept of 'Conflicting Humanities', see, for instance: Braidotti and Gilroy (2016b) as well as Braidotti and Gilroy (2016a).
166. On the concept of 'Posthuman Humanities', see, for instance: Braidotti (2013a, Chapter 4); Braidotti (2013b).
167. Braidotti (2019a, 5).
168. Ibid., 100.
169. Ibid., 100.
170. See ibid., 100–101.
171. Wolfe (2010).
172. Grosz (2011).
173. Epstein (2012).
174. de Graef (2016).
175. Stimpson (2016).
176. Braidotti (2019a, 101, italics in original).
177. Ibid., 101 (punctuation modified).
178. Ibid., 101.
179. Ibid., 101.
180. Ibid., 101.
181. Ibid., 102.
182. See ibid., 102–104.
183. Ibid., 102.
184. See ibid., 2, 9, 49, 85, and 156–158; see also Braidotti (2019b, 36 and, 37).
185. See Braidotti (2019a, 102).
186. Ibid., 102.
187. Ibid., 102.
188. Ibid., 102.
189. Ibid., 102 (quotation modified).
190. Ibid., 102.
191. Ibid., 102 (quotation modified).
192. Ibid., 102.
193. Ibid., 103.
194. Ibid., 103.
195. Ibid., 103.
196. See previous note on the concept of 'the posthuman convergence'.
197. On this point, see for instance: Braidotti (2013a, 26, 141, and 164); Braidotti (2019a, 50, 52, 53, 92, 103, 113, 136, 138, 174, 180); Braidotti (2019b, 33, 34, 43, and 53). For a tentative outline of a typology of power, see, for example: Susen (2014 [2015], esp. 14 and 20); Susen (2015a, esp. 117); Susen (2018b). In addition, see Susen (2008a) and Susen (2008b).
198. See Braidotti (2019a, 103).
199. Ibid., 103.
200. Ibid., 103.
201. Ibid., 103.

202. Ibid., 103.
203. Ibid., 104.
204. Ibid., 104.
205. Ibid., 104.
206. Ibid., 104.
207. See ibid., 114. For a Bourdieusian account of social resources, see for instance: Susen (2007, Chapters 5–8); Susen (2011a); Susen (2013a); Susen (2013b); Susen (2016a); Susen (2018a, 61 [point 4] and 67–68 [point 11]); Susen and Turner (2011a); Susen and Turner (2011b).
208. See Braidotti (2019a, 114–115). Cf. Susen (2015a).
209. Braidotti (2019a, 115, punctuation modified).
210. Ibid., 115 (punctuation modified).
211. Ibid., 115.
212. Ibid., 114 (punctuation modified).
213. Ibid., 114.
214. On these points, see also Braidotti (2019b, esp. 49–52). See also Braidotti and Fuller (2019).
215. Braidotti (2019a, 115).
216. Ibid., 115.
217. Ibid., 115.
218. Ibid., 115 (punctuation modified).
219. See Boltanski and Chiapello (2005 [1999]). See also, for instance: Bidet (2002); Boltanski, Rennes, and Susen (2010); Chiapello and Fairclough (2002); Fairclough (2002); Gadrey et al. (2001); Susen (2012); Susen (2015a, 201); Susen (2018a, 46 and, 62); Turner (2007).
220. On this point, see, for example: Browne and Susen (2014); Susen (2012, esp. 287); Susen (2014 [2012], 194–196); Susen (2018a, 25–26). See also Holloway (2010, esp. 6–7, 17, 51, 65, and 180). Cf. Holloway and Susen (2013).
221. Cf. Forst (2012 [2007]) and Forst (2013 [2011]).
222. On the concept of 'simple domination', see, for example: Boltanski (2008, esp. 149–158); Boltanski (2009, 186–190); Boltanski (2011 [2009], 124–126). See also, for instance: Susen (2012, 707–710); Boltanski, Rennes, and Susen (2014 [2010], 188–190); Susen (2014b, 652–656); Susen (2016b, 212–215). On the concept of 'complex domination', see, for example: Boltanski (2008, esp. 149–158); Boltanski (2009, 190–193); Boltanski (2011 [2009], 127–129). See also, for instance: Susen (2012, 707–710); Boltanski, Rennes, and Susen (2014 [2010], 188–190); Susen (2014b, 652–656); Susen (2016b, 212–215).
223. Braidotti (2019a, 115).
224. Ibid., 115 (punctuation modified).
225. See, for example: Susen (2010a); Susen (2010b, 268–274); Susen (2015a, 127, 129, 134, 135, 176, 177, 186, 187, 188, 189, and 272).
226. Braidotti (2019a, 115).
227. Cf. DeLanda (2016).
228. Braidotti (2019a, 115).
229. Ibid., 115.
230. Ibid., 115.
231. Ibid., 115.
232. Ibid., 115.
233. Ibid., 115.
234. Ibid., 115.
235. Ibid., 115.
236. Ibid., 115.
237. Ibid., 115. Cf. Deleuze and Guattari (1994 [1991]).
238. Braidotti (2019a, 115). Cf. Lykke (2011).
239. Braidotti (2019a, 115). Cf. Stimpson (2016).
240. Braidotti (2019a, 41).
241. On the concept of 'posthuman subjectivity', see, for example: ibid., 4, 29, 30, 32, 38, 40–74, 89, 90, 95, 103–104, 134, 138, 153–154, 155, 158, 160, 166, 169–171, and 172. On 'subjectivity and posthumanism', see, for instance: Braidotti (2013a, 49, 103, 145, 188–190).
242. Braidotti (2019a, 54).
243. Ibid., 54 (italics in original).
244. Ibid., 54–55 (italics in original).
245. Ibid., 42 (italics in original).
246. Ibid., 42.
247. Ibid., 42.
248. Ibid., 41.
249. Ibid., 41.

250. On this question, see, for example, ibid., 42–44.
251. Ibid., 41.
252. Ibid., 44.
253. Ibid., 45.
254. Ibid., 45.
255. Ibid., 45.
256. Ibid., 45.
257. Ibid., 45 (punctuation modified).
258. See ibid., esp. 42–44.
259. Ibid., 43 (italics added, punctuation modified). On this point, see also Spivak (1999) and Spivak (2003).
260. Braidotti (2019a, 43, italics added).
261. Ibid., 54. See also ibid., 52–55, 157, and 161.
262. Ibid., 9 (punctuation modified).
263. Ibid., 9. Cf. Braidotti (2006).
264. Braidotti (2019a, 9).
265. See Braidotti (2006).
266. See Braidotti (2019a, Chapter 6 [153–173]). See also, for instance, ibid., 4, 5, 19, 36, 121, and 151–152.
267. Ibid., 9.
268. See ibid., 2, 9, 49, 85, and 156–158; see also Braidotti (2019b, 36 and, 37).
269. See Braidotti (2019a, 44–45, 98, and 164). See also, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 45, 103, 159, and 193); Braidotti (2019b, 36, 42, 43, 44, 45, and 49–52).
270. Braidotti (2019a, 44).
271. Ibid., 44.
272. Cf. Susen (2015a, Chapter 4).
273. Cf. ibid., Chapter 4.
274. One may add that many readers, especially those who are not familiar with Braidotti's work, may find her deconstructivist terminology rather challenging. In her defence, it may be argued that her choice of words may be part of a specific political and aesthetic strategy aimed at questioning, if not subverting, mainstream approaches (including canonized vocabularies) in the humanities and social sciences.
275. Braidotti (2019a, 9, punctuation modified).
276. Ibid., 9.
277. See Braidotti (2006).
278. See Braidotti (2019a, Chapter 6 [153–173]). See also, for instance, ibid., 4, 5, 19, 36, 121, and 151–152.
279. See ibid., 2, 9, 49, 85, and 156–158; see also Braidotti (2019b, 36 and, 37).
280. Braidotti (2019a, 168, punctuation modified).
281. See Kant (1995 [1781]), Kant (1995 [1788]), and Kant (1995 [1790]). See also, for instance, Kant (2009 [1784]) and Kant (2003 [1785]).
282. See, for instance, Braidotti (2019a, 166 and 167).
283. Braidotti (2019b).
284. See Kant (2003 [1785]). On this point, see also, for example: Susen (2007, 48); Susen (2011a, 190 and 197); Susen (2011b); Susen (2014 [2012], 174 and 177); Susen (2015a, 95, 115, 119, 215, and 260); Susen (2015b, 1027–1028); Susen (2020a, 219); Susen (2020b, 130 and 147).
285. See, for instance, Braidotti (2019a, 166 and 167).
286. Braidotti (2019a, 166, punctuation modified).
287. See, for instance, ibid., 166 and 167.
288. Cf. Susen (2020a, 199–200).
289. Cf. Susen (2007, 192–198).
290. Cf. Susen (2020b, esp. 125, 131, 137, 138, 142, 144, and 147).
291. On this point, see, for example: Arendt (1998 [1958]); Chernilo (2014); Chernilo (2017a); Habermas (1987 [1965/1968]); Habermas (2003 [2001]); Honneth and Joas (1988 [1980]); Marx (2000/1977 [1844]); Marx and Engels (2000/1977 [1846]); Pinker (2002); Scheler (2009 [1928]); Susen (2007, Chapter 10); Susen (2010c); Susen (2015b); Susen (2015a, 110–123 and 212–219); Susen (2016c); Susen (2016d); Susen (2020c); Susen (2020b); Wilson (2004 [1978]).
292. Braidotti (2019b).
293. Ibid., 48.
294. Ibid., 44.
295. Braidotti (2019a, 102).
296. Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 7).
297. Braidotti (2019b).
298. Braidotti and Fuller (2019, 7, italics in original, spelling of '*mise en scène*' modified).
299. Ibid., 7.

300. Ibid., 7.
301. Ibid., 7.
302. Braidotti (2019a, 48, italics added). Cf. Deleuze (1984 [1963]).
303. See Kant (1995 [1781]), Kant (1995 [1788]), and Kant (1995 [1790]). See also, for instance, Kant (2009 [1784]) and Kant (2003 [1785]).
304. See Braidotti (2019a, 118).
305. Ibid., 118. Cf. Deleuze and Guattari (1994 [1991]).
306. Braidotti (2019a, 118). Cf. Deleuze and Guattari (1994 [1991]).
307. Braidotti (2019a, 115).
308. Ibid., 115.
309. Ibid., 118.
310. On the concept of 'ideal type', see, for example: Bhambra (2014, 142 and 146); Haug, Haug, and Küttler (2004); Rosenberg (2016); Susen (2015a, 57, 100, 204, 205, 207, and 217); Susen (2020a, 57–58, 83–85, 89, 156, 292–294, and 317); Swedberg (2018).
311. Braidotti (2013a, 11).
312. Ibid., 11.
313. Cf. Susen (2020b, esp. 125, 131, 137, 138, 142, 144, and 147).
314. See Braidotti (2019a, 44–45, 98, and 164). See also, for example: Braidotti (2013a, 45, 103, 159, and 193); Braidotti (2019b, 36, 42, 43, 44, 45, and 49–52).
315. On the concept of 'animal rights', see, for instance: Regan and Singer (1989 [1976]); Singer (2015 [1975]). On the concept of 'human rights', see, for example: Benhabib (2004); Benhabib (2011); Morris (2013); Nash (2015); Turner (1993); Turner (2006). On 'the right to justification', see Forst (2012 [2007]) and Forst (2013 [2011]).
316. See Susen (2016c).
317. See Rosa (2019 [2016]). See also Susen (2020c).

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