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The Inexhaustible

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Abstract

Adopting a hybrid, creative-critical approach, this article explores how Rosi Braidotti's notion of posthuman subjectivity based on a negotiation between humans, zoe (nonhumans), geo (earth) and techno (technologies) can be put into practice creatively. Against the background of the low-lying South Holland coast, where sandscapes based on human-nonhuman collaborations prevent coastal erosion, I trace the various voices in the landscape complementing and interrupting each other. Shifting from a human perspective into the perspectives of zoe, geo and techno, the narration of this piece finally coalesces to form a new 'we' which represents this posthuman subjectivity. Imagining alternate futures based on this inclusive 'we,' this piece explores what a collaboration based on a collective posthuman subjectivity can mean in practice. Moreover, it demonstrates the potential of experiments in form and style to make tangible theoretical insights from posthuman scholarship, introducing an innovative approach that bridges the gap between academic and creative writing.

Keywords: *Posthuman subjectivity; Creative writing; Rosi Braidotti*

I. Human

On the polished beach, the flow of sand and saltwater. A twinge of coldness as the waves flood her toes, pull her mind into the sea. The sea of the transparent gobies, the shore crabs, the moss animals. The sand, the worms, the unwebbed feet trampling. The murkiness of the water when the salt stings her eyes. The stream of words erupting from her mouth travels on the wind, flies above the sea, plummets, sinks. Stomach swirls, foams, mirroring the waves at her feet. Dizziness rocks me, feet are still in the sand. Hold the heaviness in these legs. Sway and awaken, balance, coiling toes. Let the waves overflow me. Crows and gulls peck at the shells near her feet. The waves retreat, then flow again over her, pushing and pulling her body gently. Her feet slowly sink into the silt. A cloud of sand-mist envelops her, scours her skin. Saltwater spray cools her, draws her gaze to the white-tipped breakers crashing on the beach.

The question of how the varied species in a species assemblage influence each other—if at all—is never settled: some thwart (or eat) each other; others work together to make life possible; still others just happen to find themselves in the same place. Assemblages are open-ended gatherings. They allow us to ask about communal effects without assuming them. They show us potential histories in the making.

Tsing, 2015, 22-23.

Z:
*interwoven collective of beings
synthesis
beyond species-boundaries*

*briefly
a slimy bubble
coalescing into a unique assemblage-being
sand
air frothy sea-matter
microbes crawl inside
stir
slowly bursting
wholeness
evaporating into air*

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G:

*permeable surface
moulded into material
to support the Anthropocene condition
beneath, await in darkness
slowly trembling, boiling
inner parts severing*

*assembling
unexpected emergences
a small movement
cutting through the thin skin of human
control
uprooting one-dimensional landscapes of
thought*

Z:

*squirming within leathery walls
I nudge the limits of my world
exploring the sea within
the sea without is darkness
an icy current running through my inner
sea
a ripple*

*all my seas end in the single movement
of an aquatic bulldozer
my liquidity is absorbed by air
my body, undone of its seas
emerges ungracefully from the sand
terrestrial dust
my presence
fades unseen*

no scars are visible on polished sand hills

T:

*mass of sand grains – ca. 5 million –
migrating east over the course of 24
hours – at a speed of 25 km/h – wind
seabound within 72 hours – ca. 33% of
sand mass predicted to return to the
peninsula – impact of rip current
increase undetermined – wind gust of up
to 30 km/h considered within normal
perimeters – more powerful and
significant sand volume disruption
occurs*

*The waterwolf is an animalisation of the
sea or lakes devouring the land. The
concept emerged in the context of the low-
lying Netherlands, which has suffered
many devastating floods over the
centuries. The waterwolf remains an
important cultural reference, particularly
in the contemporary context of rising sea
levels.*



A low wall of seafoam is forming at her toes. Clusters of yellow-white spume, snatched away by the wind, gently float through the air. Catch them with these human hands, squeeze the froth interwoven with slimy shreds of seaweed. Every glistening bubble is visible, reflecting her swaying. Eyes trace the strings of green, intricately entangled with sand grains. The little specks inhabit the bubbles, froth spotted with brown and amber. Dissolved organic matter foamed up by breaking surface waves, an accumulation of dead macrophytes, phytoplankton, algae, fungi. When all these things collide, trapping air, millions of bubbles form. They dance over the sand, graceful yet slimy. They are air and seawater. They are pesticides, petroleum and synthetic surfactants suffused with organic matter. All are part of the same white bubbles, components indistinguishable, foaming on endlessly. And so the bubbles break and dissolve, always forming again. Here they burst, toxins released back into air. On the traces fly, to be breathed in by the skins of invertebrates, the lungs of seabirds and humans. Swept right into the smallest beings, to cut straight through the bodies of one-celled organisms.

There is a constant crawling, a perpetual stirring, of such organic and inorganic matter under her feet, all around her, on and inside her body. Alive, alert, the things are aware of her, intruding on the authority asserted in her human body, woven into its very fabric. A soft body, a semi-entity, easily invaded by a collective of angry matter. Her surroundings flood her body in tiny protests, the sand grains slowly creeping into her ears, the sea flooding toes, churning stomach. Deflecting her thoughts, the rumbling waves invade the margins of her mind, drown out the words she speaks. Yet the sand and sea are restrained, moulded, to suit humans like her. The earth has been crushed into material to form an extended coastline, maintaining the low-lying land she lives on. Many creatures perish in the process, little skeletons imprinted into dikes and sand dunes. Signatures of beings destroyed and never born are inscribed into the sand, etched into the clay of flood barriers, buried by neat layers of grass. There, a remnant resurfaces as her searching hands grip onto a dried-out egg case of a dogfish. So old, shrivelled, weightless. But most engravings in the soft sand are soon blown away by the wind, their presence becoming intangible.

Her feet sink into the sand all over the beach, plummet into bodies, dead and living, into pools of saltwater. Her footsteps are too heavy, leave too deep impressions in the sand. Destroying smaller tracks of rabbits and foxes, of coastal worms and sand fleas, footsteps like hers unwittingly minimise the presence of others, erasing tracks, erasing bodies. Catching her breath, foot dangles in the air as a small creature crawls onto her path. There it is, a baby sand lizard, creeping over the sand. The little reptile is so soft, so slow, so easily stepped upon unnoticed. Reaching, she picks up the small creature, carefully. The

body is cold and limp in the palm of her hand. The intricate dark patterns are just visible on brown lizard-skin. When it grows up, the lizard will be painted in dazzling leopard-spotted greens and yellows. Holding, for just a moment, she studies the little body. The lizard seems sleepy, sedated, out in the cold. Ready to hibernate. Setting the creature down in the safety of the bushes, away from human footsteps, she imagines that she has placed down one small lizard footprint instead of her own.

II. Becoming Posthuman

For nearly 150 kilometres, the coast of North and South Holland stretches out, broad sandy beaches flowing into dunes. Just beyond the silhouette of the Rotterdam harbour, around the south of The Hague, a peninsula interrupts the sandy beaches, extending into sea. This is the Sand Motor, constructed in 2011 as a new measure against coastal erosion. Over decades, the wind and waves slowly spread the sand evenly along the coastline, preventing its erosion. The mass of sand smoothens out centuries of battle between human communities and the sea, between floods and seawalls. Blown along the coastline, the sand softens the boundary between land and sea. In slow-moving mounds of sand and coastal silt, long-standing fears are eased. Suggesting the idea of a fluid, permeable coastline, the sea loses some of its menace. It is no longer just the waterwolf, a rumbling monster hidden behind walls, ever ready to devour the low and sandy coastline, to swallow the hard-earned land behind the dunes. For a gentle swell of saltwater now ripples into the sand, contributing to a strengthened coastline.

On the peninsula, her toes curl into soft dune sand, bleed on sharp marram grass, leave impressions in the damp lagoon sand. Here the wind blows on her face, the moon pulls the tides over the sand. Here dwell the seagulls, bristle worms, molluscs, coastal swans. Here walk the humans, digging up fossils from the sand, swimming in the sea. The measuring instruments tick, keeping track of the migration of the sand. People like her interpret data, developing future scenarios. In the newly built coastal landscape, unusual opportunities emerge. For a human-nonhuman negotiation, a working together. For an assemblage of things like the sand, the sea, the weeds, the seagulls, a woman standing on the beach. The strange peninsula highlights the potential to make something new out of the human-created landscape, allowing the sea, plants and animals to reclaim it in unexpected ways. Here they reach towards her human hands with flowing waves, searching beaks and coiling tentacles.

Throwing herself into the sand, her hands grasp onto dried-out seaweeds. Fingers caress the worm's segmented body, the feather of swan and seagull. The feeling of sand scrubbing her skin as the sand fleas jump from grain to grain. She digs into the sand, first dry and soft, then coarser, damp. Hands

The Sand Motor is a unique experiment, because it works with water instead of against it. Depositing a large amount of sand in one go prevents the repeated disturbance of the seabed. Nature then distributes the sand to the right places for us. (...) Various plants, birds and other animals have taken up home in this new, attractive coastal landscape. The area also has great recreational value as an area of natural beauty and for outdoor activities. The Sand Motor creates an area of peace and quiet for both humans and animals.
Province of Zuid-Holland, De Zandmotor Website.

Z:
*neck coils into shallow lagoons
with fluorescent green edges
I watch the algae on the sandy bottom of
the lake
beak edges closer
grazes
below small ripples and aquatic sand
migrations*

*buoyed by a body of water
slowly filling up with sand
white-feathered body adjusts to the sea
breeze
reclaims sandscapes unintended for
swans*

Z:
*coiling small segmented body
sticky tentacles extend
into shallow saltwater*

*collecting, with polychaete-mucus I
construct cylindrical sand sculptures to
harbour my body concealing identical
segments
self-made dwelling
envelops me
sand-tube
supported by sandy seabed*

held by the sea without

grip onto the unnaturally smooth edge of a human-sharpened stone, clasp the irregular shape of a mammoth tooth. She digs herself in, headfirst, legs sticking out of sand-mound. The sand creeps under her fingernails as calls of the seagulls intermingle with the crashing North Sea waves. Emerging in her own unexpected way, she waits for her body to grow into the landscape, for her presence to become as self-evident as the sand and waves. Her mind opening to new collaborations, she waits for strange tentacles to entangle her, for her one-dimensional humanness to be swept away by the wind. Finally, she will be a coastal creature, one of many organic links in the coastal ecosystem, but not necessarily human. Instead, an animal necessarily in collaboration, co-constituted by a sand flea, a long-gone baby shark, a mussel holding on to a wandering rock, and the waves of sandy saltwater.

III. Zoe

In the human world, zoe, nonhuman life, is repressed, destroyed, and exploited on a large scale. Nevertheless, zoe find their own way to disturb the human world, emerging unexpectedly from under furniture, from under floorboards. Benefiting from Anthropocene conditions, they come back to haunt people in spaces they have claimed as their own. Eerily crawling American crayfish unsettle people as the creatures take walks through fields. Pincers proudly up in the air, the animals march over the land. Labelled invasive exotics, they slowly colonise ditches and rivers. Joined head and thorax, a segmented body creeps through the grass, sandy yellow, green, dark brown, red in colour. People are outwitted, overcome by disgust for the clawed, armoured animal. They are unable to look into the compound eyes, positioned on movable stalks extending from the snout. My eyes, like an insect's, form kaleidoscopic images in my crayfish brain, the image resolution poorer than that of the human eye, the field of vision wider. Topping off the sharp snout, the crayfish gaze from up close is fishlike, the shape of my face unexpectedly froglike. My strange bulging eyes, grey-blue and black-pupiled, extend crayfish knowledge into the world.

In her book Posthuman Knowledge, Rosi Braidotti formulates a critique of the contemporary posthuman convergence. In the context of global environmental emergency, she argues that a new posthuman definition of subjectivity is needed. This subjectivity is based on a negotiation between the perspective of humans, zoe (nonhumans), geo (the earth) and techno (human-made technologies).

Antennae extending from the centre of my snout, I see and feel my way across the grass, thin but tough exoskeleton frightening soft human bodies. Concealed for days under stones, in banks of ditches, I hunt insects, tadpoles, worms, snails. Migrating from one waterway to the next, I keep digging into muddy soils, straight through urban quaysides, through dikes and dams, adapting to the unfamiliar habitat. For the endangerment of the land I pay a high price, with many crayfish caught for human consumption (Reumer, 2020). And yet, we keep appearing, whatever people throw at us. I keep surfacing, red body creeping from brown water, disturbing traditional countryside views. I am not afraid to face the human gaze, the running feet, the cries of disgust, the nets used to catch me. I keep blocking paths, waving my pincers about dangerously. Zoe as crayfish shake the foundations of the human world, like crawling spectres, persistently intruding on its margins.

G:

*at my surface, glaciers crush boulders
into sand
forming seabeds, sandbanks
emerging
disappearing thousands of years ago
as the North Sea rose*

*terrestrial reminders lie within my
sandy seabed
deposited on gradually dissipating
coasts
remnants of ancient life
emerging in my
sunlight*



Z:

*insect-like eye extends from head
connecting in vision
to deep-flying eyes
buried in a human face*

*a weak gaze, averted
emptiness extends
from faces
high up in the air
how do they make meaning how do such
strange eyes communicate?
I crayfish-morphise
relieved I have
an exoskeleton
and four pairs of legs*

IV. Geo

My point, however, is that zoe exceeds these negative conditions, because zoe exists outside and anterior to sovereign power and hence resists subjugation. This is the greatness of affirmative thought as a secular, materialist philosophy of becoming. It is an inexhaustible generative force that potentially can transmute lives into sites of resistance – all lives, also the non-

Posthuman subjectivity is a transversal alliance that nowadays involves non-human agents. This means that the posthuman subject relates at the same time to the Earth—land, water, plants, animals, bacteria—and to technological agents—plastic, wires, cells, codes, algorithms. This transversal range reflects and sustains the posthuman convergence, so that the frame and scope of epistemological and ethical subjectivity is enlarged along the lines of posthumanist and post-anthropocentric relations and the multiple perspectives that inhabit them.

Braidotti (2019, 38-39)

ancient microbes. Geo keeps its smallest inhabitants in suspension, until the time is right for them to emerge again, to be nurtured back to life by rays of sun melting frosty earth. Layers of soil thawing somewhere in the depths of a Siberian forest, a reindeer carcass from centuries ago emerges, slowly warming, rotting. The reindeer decomposes, but the pathogens that killed it are revived. Having been frozen in time, carefully

Some zoe are disruptive like the invasive crayfish, but many zoe-resistances are small and subtle. The lugworms emerging with the ebbing tide, continuing to make their dwelling in the filtered, ever more sterile sand. The sand fleas, spending their days buried in the sand, suddenly hopping from one patch to another. The millions of microbes, holding onto a single grain of sand, microscopic worlds devoid of humans thriving. The bubbles of seafoam bursting, returning human-created toxins to human lungs, permeating tissue, capillaries, seeping into the material human fabric, making it nonhuman. Where people think there is just the scenery they have created, zoe make use of human-created conditions, algae blooming on toxic waste, using higher water temperatures for their own benefit. There are microbes, altering the patterns in the sand, interfering with human footsteps. There are sanderlings, outrunning the waves, digging up invertebrate prey, undeterred by human activity. No matter how repressed, zoe is an unwavering source of resistance, an inexhaustible power of life (Braidotti, 2019, 128-129).

At a slow but unstoppable pace, the earth shifts, trembles, and boils. Always in movement, its many tectonic plates coexist peacefully side by side for thousands of human generations, carefully drifting around each other. Eventually, a collision becomes inevitable, the force sucking cities back into the earth, thrusting new mountains out of the soil, moving oceans to flood continents. This is just what happens on the surface of the earth's crust—below, many layers of sediment, vast masses of magma extending ever deeper into the earth, subterranean oceans of hot liquid stretching out towards the earth's core. The force of geo has the power not just to disrupt human life, but to create and destroy the human world.

Ice sheets thinning due to the effects of global heating, the earth melts, slippery clay emerging where glaciers covered the soil for millennia. Unexpected hazards are spewed out by the exposed mud, permafrost maintaining an archive of

Z-G-T:

*Awake emerge
from earthly soil
and subterranean seas
where we originate*

*living and non-living materials
form us
we become us
in a collective earthly sigh
our sticky tentacles
frozen brook
reindeer hair thawing
sometimes clay
tree dead wood*

Z-G-T:

*viscous matter clustering
disintegrate structure
the straight lines and demarcated
sections*

*fluidity in language begins with a
thousand tentacles coiling into the
margins
a slimy knot
growing*

*more than the sum
of our original parts*

concealed under layers of permafrost, the infectious agents are released into the atmosphere. Smallpox, anthrax, bubonic plague, the earth has kept a record of all, a carefully organised storage system now melting, liquidising, streams of virulent pathogens streaming out uninhibited, leaking into groundwater, spreading through rivers (Fox-Skelly, 2017).

Geo stores and releases, keeps human bodies in their frozen crust for future generations, effaces them, cleanses itself of them at will. Geo has the power to eradicate stubbornly proud species, with a minor adjustment of the earth's conditions. The low-lying coastline of South Holland can be destroyed by just a slight increase in sea level, despite dikes and sandscaping experiments. Constituting human existence, the power of geo knows no boundaries.

V. Techno

Without technology, she would not be standing on a sandy beach. Her feet would have been submerged, her head only just sticking out of the sea around her. Technology is slowly invading human bodies, human thinking. No system can function any longer without the interference of techno. It influences what people see, coming up with ever more specific ads and information, permeated with the urge to keep expanding, to make people into their most technically mediated versions possible. Technology as matter is energetic, brimming with vibrant materiality, with connections to organic human bodies, with influence over what they do, say and believe (Bennett, 2010, viii). It shapes their physical surroundings, deciding where there is land and where there is sea, no human brain any longer capable of keeping track of the state of each dike, each dune, each sand grain.

The Argusmast, visible in the direction of the south, constantly maps the migration of sand along the coast. Positioned in the middle of the Sand Motor and equipped with twelve cameras, the mast never rests. A twelve-eyed giant protruding from the flat sandy landscape, it records the movement of the sand in every direction, never blinking, never ceasing. Always awake, alert, the technological giant collects amounts of data no human brain can imagine, with unwavering nonhuman dedication. If nothing makes it stop, it will still be there centuries into the future, its twelve eyes watching the coast, recording data. Out into sea, buoys measure the strength of the waves. Further up the coast, radar is detecting and mapping coastal currents. Drones fly over the dunes, gathering information on vegetation and dune development. Sand-catching machines collect samples, measuring influx of sand and salt into the dunes (Province of Zuid-Holland, *Onderzoek naar de Zandmotor*). And then there is the Maasvlakte, the extended port of Rotterdam, faintly visible even further to the south. Cranes of steel coil into sea and sky, creating a technological colossus on which the economy of the country relies, operating with very little human interference.

T:

*southbound sand grain – suspended
above small estuary – ca. two million
– swept in either direction –
northbound sand grain swept up by
gust of wind – at a speed of 39 km/h
– blowing away beyond the peninsula*

*southbound sand grain – suspension
eased – plummeting into the shallow
stream to sea*



In all our vulnerable entanglements with more than-human life, we humans too are monsters. Monsters are useful figures with which to think the Anthropocene, this time of massive human transformations of multispecies life and their uneven effects. Monsters are the wonders of symbiosis and the threats of ecological disruption. Modern human activities have unleashed new and terrifying threats (..) Modern human activities have also exposed the crucial and ancient forms of monstrosity that modernity tried to extinguish: the multispecies entanglements that make life across the earth, as in the coral reef, flourish.

Tsing et al. (2017, M2)

Z-G-T:

*sand swept up by swan beak
sticking to polychaete tentacle
trapped
under a human fingernail
component of a minute sand-tube, worm-
made
of giant sand peninsula
human-made*

*becoming a new assemblage
exposing all its meanings
sand builds new collaborations
multispecies sculptures
out of damp seabed materials
monstrous and vivid
saturated with ancient stories
North Sea meaning becomes and used to
be
is mapped by cameras
a sand grain lives many lives
becomes a collection
of parallel meanings*

As she beats her limbs to keep afloat, a network of crayfish tunnels grows, slowly puncturing human systems, letting through small streams of water, groups of creeping animals. Operating against the grain, persisting, reclaiming, crayfish-zoe make human-constructed spaces strange, diverse, and uncanny. While the waves crash her body upon the sand, crayfish persist, crawl, and multiply. Zoe will not stop, no matter how much prevailing power structures repress them. Here are the fish, not far from where she swims, lips pierced by hooks, bodies cut open even before death. Yet there is the stare of the unblinking eye, the eerie quiet just before the light of life extinguishes. There is the ever-ongoing

Covered in a layer of silt, she breathes the sandy air. The waves rise and fall like her breath. Her hands map miniature sandy coastlines in intertidal pools, sculpt hills and valleys in the sand, complete with peninsula, lagoon and sand dunes. With shells, seals in the distance, washed-up shark eggs, swans and overflying gulls. There is a memory of herself as separate of these things, as a human inhabiting a nonhuman world, but cut off from any real connection with the powers of zoe, geo and techno. She remembers a life lived based on these distinctions, on the illusion of being individual and separate. A shadow in her mind, slowly erased by the light of everything around her, inside of her. By subversive zoe crawling over her skin, by the monstrous rumbling of geo in the depths, by technology invading realms exclusively human. Their presence suggests a relational sense of being always in negotiation with zoe-geo-techno perspectives (Braidotti, 2019, 36). She is not the sole creator of her miniature sandscape. Even her human body is co-constituted by communities of others, embracing the intricate entanglements for its own survival. The strange intimacies are not optional. Nothing exists without them, not even the long-standing Western beliefs of human exceptionalism that tried to deny them. Here on the low, eroding coast where sand peninsulas protect cities below sea level, an opening appears. The political working with water approach, however much intended for human gain, necessitates a consideration of the landscape, its inhabitants, the wider coastal ecology, in their own right. No matter how small, the human-constructed peninsula, slowly being shaped by geo-forces of wind and waves, colonised by zoe and humans alike, presents an opportunity for new collaborations.

VI. Zoe-geo-techno

As she dives into the surf, undeterred crayfish crawl through green fields, making their way through muddy dikes.

Z-G-T:

*becoming flow of matter
virtual and organic
materiality connects our various
parts*

*think of each individual tentacle, a
human thought extending into air
a bristle worm's sticky limb
a swan beak
sand-cloud
virtual data cloud
interlinking
knotted web of matter
with unexpected outcomes
negotiations
individuality evaporating
like low-lying sandy coasts below sea
level*

Posthuman scholarship rests on a positive relationship to the diversity of zoe – nonhuman life – in a non-hierarchical manner, recognizing the respective degrees of intelligence, ability and creativity of all organisms. Zoe – and geo-entities are partners in knowledge production. This implies that thinking and knowing are not the prerogative of humans alone, but take place in the world, which is defined by the coexistence of multiple organic species and technological artefacts alongside each other. Organisms and computational networks are eco-sophically connected.
Braidotti (2019, 77)

of a box, in the impatience of a quick download. There is the weight of the sea on her body, the sandy seabed beneath her. There are the currents pulling at her limbs, dragging her away from the safety of the beach. Broken shells scour her skin, small grey fish scatter away from her movements. Here come the waves ,again, suck me back, possess this body, for just a moment. All these things, the sanderling, the worm, the starfish. I am here with them. In the sea where memories dissipate into nonhuman air, sand, sea spray, bubbles of toxic foam. Into virtual networks in the air, invisible yet intricate, connections as diverse and complicated as those within a human mind. The waves swell, flow into my eyes, my ears. Here flies the knowledge of zoe, receive it, let the electromagnetic waves flood me. Slowly, here grows an assemblage of many collaborators in knowledge production, in the making of worlds. I make seas, coastal peninsulas, together with zoe-geo-techno partners (Braidotti, 2019, 77). Here are the grey waves glistening with sunlight, throw me into salt marsh, air, lagoon. I am we, listening to the missing voices. Collectively, slowly composing each link, the perspectives ignored, now taking their place in the centre (Braidotti, 2019, 86). I am the goby, the forgotten shore crabs. I am the sandy shore reforming. I am a swan. I am a human body, embedded in the zoe-geo-techno world.

Here we come, the baby sharks, tearing down the anthropo-world. Here comes the force of oceans. Here come the fruit fly infestations, the virtual networks, the fluorescent green algae feasting on global-warming-induced eutrophication. We are the electromagnetic fields of the world, the invasive freshwater crustaceans, the clouds of data, the fungi thriving between human toes, on deer-skin, in the soils of forests. We are the piles of steel containers in ports all over the world, the earthworms, the plastic floating in oceans, the urban gulls and pigeons. We are the cranes lifting containers, bricks, fences, walls, everywhere at once, silently, automatically, unceasingly. We are the subterranean networks of steel pipes, every individual nail and screw

survival of the fish. Here drift the eggs, the baby fish, protected at the centre of the shoal. There are shellfish and weeds attaching to the hulls of ships. There are jellyfish travelling the world on ships' ballast water. As she swims further out into sea, families of porpoises dart through the murky North Sea waters.

Thrust on the sand, her phone knows the number of steps she takes each day, measuring step-length, walking asymmetry. Although she does not notice it herself, her phone knows her right foot is dominant, her left foot dragging along ineptly. Slowly but surely the device registers how her body works, discovering its strengths and weaknesses. The data is stored in an enormous digital cloud, her consent materialising somewhere in the ticking

Irresistible attraction toward enfolding each other is the vital motor of living and dying on earth. Critters interpenetrate one another, loop around and through one another, eat each other, get indigestion, and partially digest and partially assimilate one another, and thereby establish sympoietic arrangements that are otherwise known as cells, organisms, and ecological assemblages. Sym-poiesis is a simple word; it means "making-with." Nothing makes itself; nothing is really auto-poietic or self-organizing.

Haraway (2017, M25)

If the present is the record of what we are ceasing to be, we now witness the decline of 'Man/ Anthropos' and his Humanities. At the same time, the present is also the seed for what we are in the process of becoming-subject. Consequently, the 'missing people' is also an emerging or virtual category. This emergence phenomenon refers to the collective effort to bring into action a complex singularity, a new 'we' that expresses the embedded, embodied, relational and affective forces.

Braidotti, 2019, 121.

Accepting one's vulnerability as the starting point for a process of transforming it collectively and socially, expresses a sort of epistemological humility that reiterates the never-ending nature of the processes of becoming. It defends community-based experiments to transform the negative conditions and states into affirmative alternatives. It is a praxis that promotes action and knowledge out of negativity and pain.

Braidotti (2019, 127)



Z-G-T:

tentacularly
we knot and ripple
extend into our inner
and outer seas

our collective body of water
creating a new sea
of intermingled subjectivities slowly
absorbing
each individual

For millennia, these lichens have held the responsibility of building up life and in an eyeblink of earth's history we have set about undermining their work to usher in a time of great environmental stress, a barrenness of our own making. I suspect that lichens will endure. We could, too, if we listen to their teachings. If not, I imagine Umbilicaria will cover the rocky ruins of our time long after our delusions of separateness have relegated us to the fossil record, a ruffled green skin adorning the crumbling halls of power.
Kimmerer (2013, 275-276)

holding them together, we are the water running through them. We are the jellyfish of the world, coiling our tentacles around old narratives. We are the clouds gathering above the sea, the storms ordering weather alerts, the wind sweeping roofs off buildings. We are the buildings, the computers calculating gale strength. We are the soundwaves emerging from human speech, the small muscles trembling, the microbes in saliva of mammals. We are material earthly things working to compose a world for us, a world transcending the denial of even one link in the earthly network. We, mediation of zoe-geo-techno perspectives, form a collaboration as power of life, as the potentiality of making something new and productive out of the pain of a contaminated world. We do not negate the mess, the pain, we transform it (Braidotti, 2019, 123). We are the transformative energy of the world tumbling into chaos. We do not save it, we mould it, we make it lively and liveable in unexpected ways (Braidotti, 2019, 127). We do not take revenge on humans, we embed their embodied beings within us, within new worlds in creation.

In our world, seas rise and fall, creating long wetlands where dunes and tarmac paths used to be, salt marshes where there were once artificial sand drifts. Low-lying land, silting up, terrain of zoe as seagulls and invertebrates in soft sandy intertidal zones. In our transformative world, humans retreat to create equal opportunities for other zoe. Now, not one of us looks down on the rest of us, picking up trembling little bodies, setting them down in the illusion of safety. We all live among each other, forests cutting through cities, as do steel and virtual networks, anthills, beaver dams, flight routes of migratory birds. We build zoe-cities, various habitations coexisting, floating on oceans, learning collectively.

We collaborate to form life forms intertwined like lichens. Though life at its most basic, as lichens, fungi and algae become so intricately interwoven it is impossible to tell where one starts and the other ends (Kimmerer, 2013, 268). They require no roots, no leaves, no flowers. They merely weave themselves around each other, becoming a multi-layered being with blurry edges, layers indistinguishable. At the beginning of the world, there was a lichen just like that, living a soilless existence, surviving on bare granite, on boulders deposited by glaciers. They kept growing, slowly, coating rock in a small layer of life (Kimmerer, 2013, 268). They were the first to blur the distinctions between individual beings, a new organism emerging from their symbiosis, a being surviving on the reciprocal exchange of sugar and minerals (Kimmerer, 2013, 270). Lichens are more than the sum of their parts, and this is the wisdom we take from them (Kimmerer, 2013, 269). Around the world, lichens still weave themselves around each other, covering rock in a messy layer of scab, in irregular patches decomposing at the edges. One of the earth's oldest beings, lichens have always inspired those who would listen. Native American communities named lichen the bellybutton of the world, as the point where life based on reciprocity began (Kimmerer, 2013, 275). This is what we take as our beginnings, a myriad of combinations flowing out of the lichens of the world. Networks of zoe-geo joining in reciprocal collaborations, intertwined with techno mapping their health, their innumerable connections. Keeping track of reciprocity, safeguarding collaborations, ensuring all voices are heard. When zoe such as humans take just enough, those they take from thrive. Forests develop, shoals of fish colour the oceans silver, populations are kept at bay.

Z-G-T:

*post-individuality
we are flow and fluidity
rounding off sharp corners
post-species consciousness
emerging with thoughts
reverberating
through our collective sea
we know*

*The tentacular ones make attachments
and detachments; they make cuts and
knots; they make a difference; they
weave paths and consequences but not
determinisms; they are both open and
knotted in some ways and not others.*

Haraway (2016, 31)

There will be new pain. The transformative zoe-geo-techno world is not harmonious, it is merely constituted by a sense of openness, a willingness to collaborate. We form a storm of unexpected assemblages, of different material agencies, variations on a common matter, partnered in collaborations (Braidotti, 2019, 38). Transversal, we create new ontologies governed by zoe, geo and techno, with humans as one of many zoe. Collectively, we enter into a post-Anthropocene era, an age of collaboration. Non-linearly, multi-layered, our time flows in circles and spirals. Slowly, we ebb and we flow, we work and we fail, and our collective voice gradually becomes stronger, more representative of all of us, more resilient. In the posthuman convergence, we take over, untangling the earth from sticky Anthropocene tentacles, slowly wiping away traces of oil, chemicals, toxins. Entwined, we make a new substance viscous as seafoam, composed of all of us, bubbles bursting, spreading reciprocity. Enveloping the earth in innumerable sticky tentacles, diverse and unexpected, we slowly creep over the surface of the earth, like lichens, in patchy formations. We wade through seas, coil our jelly-tentacles, beat our fins, contract our gills. We sculpt the coastal sand into unexpected shapes, extend the zone between land and sea. We make a strangely tangled collective, an inexhaustible knot of life (Braidotti, 2019, 129).

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