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The Battlefield of the Anthropocene

Limits, Responsibilities
and the Duty of Flight

Antropocene: un campo di battaglia

Limiti, responsabilità
e il dovere di fuga

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ABSTRACTS

JAVIER COLLADO RUANO, *Learning to Co-evolve in the Anthropocene: Philosophical Considerations from Nature*

Capitalizing on the emergent debate of the Anthropocene, this paper provides an overview of the co-evolutionary processes that life has developed over billions of years on our planet. The main intention is to identify their operational principles and strategies in order to learn how to co-evolve in harmony with our environment. Humans have much to learn from Mother Earth to build sustainable futures. The philosophical considerations from nature show us that those co-evolutionary operational principles of ecosystem cooperation must be bio-mimetically copied, emulated, and improved to reduce ecological footprint. In conclusion, biomimicry emerges as a sustainable worldview that uses nature as teacher to face the complex challenges of the Anthropocene.

ANAÏS NONY, *From Dividual Power to the Ethics of Renewal in the Anthropocene*

The strategies developed by imperialist societies that colonize relations to absorb diversity have given rise to an anthropocenic museum where state-less refugees and minorities become zoological samples of soon to disappear species. In this article, the author proposes to move away from a conception of power as control to question power as that which operates to create our anthropocenic-condition. She offers an *allagmatic of power relations*, namely a theory of operations that addresses the systemic modulations of social structures and proposes the concept of *dividual power* to address the dividualizing strategies deployed in the Anthropocene. Dividual power is defined as the dismantlement cultural practices of solidarity to prevent long-term and meaningful relationalities. She advocates for an ethics of care as a locus from which to cultivate both a politics of investment and a practice of renewal in today's tragic times.

SARA BARANZONI, *Anthropocenic Times. Stratigraphy of a Passage*

This paper analyses the Anthropocene as an epoch of lost confidence in the human-world linkage, where an ‘apocalyptic reason’ is leading humanity towards a general *acosmism*. Instead of focusing on humanity’s supposed power, or guilt, it is the relations of separation and connection, subtraction and aggregation, expropriation and construction that are brought into view, entangled as they are in the narratives of the Anthropocene, so as to explore the different epochal stratifications enclosed within each of them. Along this cosmological path, the guides will be several conceptual personae, figures and philosophers, through whom the errant condition of what has been called *the inhuman*, after having overtaken several ‘ends of the world’, may enable the eventual recovery of our lost correspondence – or separation? – with the macroscopic process of world conrescence.

FEDERICO LUISETTI, *Decolonizing Gaia. Or, Why the Savages Shall Fear Bruno Latour’s Political Animism*

The essay discusses Bruno Latour’s formulation of Gaia theory, suggesting that it serves the agenda of a rewesternization of the state of nature of the Anthropocene. Following Michel Serres, Latour interprets the social contract as a ‘natural contract’ and introduces a mode of political animism that legitimizes the methods of comparative anthropology. While decolonial and indigenous thought challenge the governing ghosts of the colonial episteme, Latour mythologizes political theory through the uncanny assemblages of techno-social fetishes.

JASON W. MOORE, *Anthropocenes & the Capitalocene Alternative*

This paper is the unpublished English version of Moore’s preface to the Italian edition of his book *Antropocene o Capitalocene? Scenari di ecologia-mondo nell’era della crisi planetaria*, ed. A. Barbero and E. Leonardi, Ombre Corte, Verona, 2017. The thesis contained in the book and synthesized by the author in this preface consists in interpreting capitalism as a world-Ecology. Far from thinking the environmental crisis as caused by an abstract humanity, guilty of destroying Nature, Moore describes a civilization in which the accumulation of capital is combined with the search for territorial powers, and the co-production of nature. In this vein, and thanks to the Marxist conceptual instruments that Moore utilises, this thesis represents a strong critique of the conceptual framework generally adopted within the debate on the Anthropocene driven by humanities and social sciences.

PAOLO VIGNOLA, *Notes For a Minor Anthropocene*

In a general way, every attempt to respond to Crutzen and Stoermer’s Anthropocene ends up entangled in a major discourse, which focuses on mac-

ro-concepts and fundamental dichotomies such as nature/culture, ontology/epistemology, economics/ecology, decline/acceleration, etc. Nevertheless, something always escapes this order of discourse, waiting to be activated in a different speech. Thus the aim of this paper is to begin a process of minorization of the term Anthropocene, in Deleuze and Guattari's sense of becoming-minor. As a minor language is not the language of a minority, but the work that a minority does within the major language, so the minor Anthropocene must be understood as the project of an incessant work within the major and performative discourse around the Anthropocene itself, by the minorities and their conceptual representatives in relation to the *anthropos* understood as a universal, Eurocentric constant. The minorization of the concept of the Anthropocene will first be provided by the human groups and genders that are left out of and left behind by the majority pattern, but also by all those elements contributing to the decentralization of the *anthropos*, from animals to technologies, ancestral knowledges and the earth. As for minor languages and literatures, we can understand all these elements as *tensors* that push the discourse towards transformation, of its order as well as its contents and its form, towards a semantic space or a locus of enunciation to come.

TOM COHEN, *Make Anthropos Great Again! – Notes on the Trumpocene*

This essay suggests that what we call the 'Anthropocene' marks less a geological period hypothesis than the last fifteen years or so of its viral entry into discourse, and that this opening phase of 'Anthropocene talk' has abruptly shifted to Phase 2: the Trumpocene. That shift corresponds roughly to a date, 2016 or so, when tipping points in the current ecocidal acceleration would essentially pass, and when the proleptic mode of warning and speculation that comprised the rhetoric of Phase 1 – an 'Anthropocene talk' that, Jedediah Purdy notes, accomplished nothing and produced no 'we' to correspond to it or act – becomes past tensed, irreversible, and accelerating mega-extractivism and extinction events. The unexpected nature of Phase 2, that takes the form of a cancellation of the 'Anthropocene' by fiat, a banning of mention of 'climate change' (Trump regime moves), suggests it must be read from the perspective of this key event. Rather than accept the dismissal of 'climate change' at face value or serving fossil-fuel interests, it must be read as a strategy fully aware of the ecocidal acceleration. The Trumpocene is about separating out winners from disposable losers as the latter unfolds in the next generations, and comprises what amounts to an imaginary 'escape' strategy. I call on Bernard Stiegler's work on 'escaping the Anthropocene', itself a break within the paralyzing spell of Anthropocene talk, to assist in situating some of the starker and transformational impasses that are emerging for Phase 2 – which corresponds to the accelerated mutations of climate chaos.

GERALD MOORE, *Phenomenotechnics and Disavowal. Climate Change and the Politics of Deferred Experience*

One of our principal short-term obstacles to tackling global warming is a basic evolutionary-biological limitation: *Homo sapiens* evolved to phenomenalise mega-fauna-sized objects in the middle distance, not nonlocal ‘hyperobjects’ like climate, whose intangibility means it cannot readily be processed as a tangible threat by our architecturally ‘stone-age minds’. Our experience of ecological depletion is accordingly illustrative of our experiential dependence on the extended perception afforded by the technical instruments of science and the media, which translate subperceptual data into notionally meaningful experience by refunctionalising the brain to respond to graphs and to grasp the causal link between far-off collapsing ice-shelves and our own toxic habits of consumption. Both in the explicit form of industrial lobbying, which actively seeks to exploit our experiential deficit, and in the equally pernicious form of greenwashed everyday disavowal, the politics of climate denial testify to the decidedly mixed success of this artefactual reinvention of our biologically enframed but constitutively exosomatic sensorium. As has been shown in comparable analyses by the diabetologist Philippe Barrier, we find ourselves in the position of a patient whose subjective experience of illness simply does not correlate with the objectivity of the scientific diagnosis, and whose reaction to suggested treatment is to act out in a way that redoubles the state of ill-health.

It’s this kind of impasse to which transhumanism might offer itself as a solution, positing all manner of genetic and technological enhancements to overcome the evolutionary cognitive constraints that underpin our inability to process climate change. Yet what good is a tongue made sensitive to atmospheric carbon, or the mega-computation of climatic variation, if they only exacerbate the suspicions of technological manipulation and exclusive expertise that have made current politics so hostile? The fundamental breakdown of political trust that vitiates our confidence in vicarious, deferred experience can only be healed by attempting to mitigate what, following Jacques Rancière, we might call a profoundly unequal ‘distribution of the sensible’. To achieve this, the sceptical, passive and often exhausted, demotivated, consumers of the Entropocene must become actively involved in the production and analysis of experiences they are presently able to disavow.

DANIEL ROSS, *Protentional Finitude and Infinitude in the Anthropocene*

In search of an understanding of the origin of today’s torrent of unpredictable events, a brief examination of the Girardian roots of Peter Thiel’s outlook exposes the foundation of mimetic duplicity on a repression of technics, while Theodore Kaczynski’s apocalyptic account of the limits of self-propagating supersystems under globalization reveals the threat of protentional finitude. If these are symptoms of a decline in the idea of progress that Georges Canguilhem refers to the second law of thermodynamics, it nevertheless remains necessary, according to

Bernard Stiegler, to elaborate a *différance* of *différance* that amounts to a differentiation of vital negentropy from noetic neganthropy: the exteriorization of memory makes possible circuits of re-interiorization that also correspond to those of desire, opening up a pharmacology and necessitating a neganthropological politics. Against claims that Stiegler's work presents an anthropocentric bias that fails to put the human radically into question, what is at stake, in this era of 'post-truth', is not the human but noetic, technical life, where the duty to renew processes of interiorization is precisely what must not be abandoned.

BERNARD STIEGLER, *On the mal-être*

This paper is the introduction to Stiegler's latest work, still unpublished, *Au-delà de l'Entropocène*, which proposes to expand some thesis presented in the *Technics and Time* series. In this introduction, the author poses a series of problems related to the debate on the Anthropocene and platform capitalism, with a political focus on the 'Trump phenomenon' and its correlates as the 'post-truth', the identitarian resentment, the exploitation of drives and the proletarianization of knowledge and sensitivity. Stiegler takes this conjunctural opportunity to deepen, through his readings of Derrida, Heidegger, Lotzka, Nietzsche, some of the key concepts of his latest theoretical production, i.e. the relationship between entropy, negentropy, macrocosmology, microcosmology, anthropos and neganthropos. He does so by using his pharmacological and organological approach, and the concept of exosomatisation as the founding principle of his philosophy of technique. According to Stiegler, a key point to understand the meaning of the term 'entropy' is the relation between *episteme*, capitalism and technology, based on Marx's analysis and on a diagnosis of social entropy as a general character of 'fully computational capitalism'.