

Editor's Note

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I am delighted to write this editorial introduction to the inaugural issue of *Entanglements: Journal of Posthumanities*. The inaugural issue initiates a transdisciplinary forum for interrogating the complex web of tangled relations that bind humans, non-humans, climate, and technology. In an era of unprecedented climate change, damaged ecosystems, technological prowess, AI takeover, mass species extinction, growth of synthetic biology, biotechnology, and genetic modifications at an accelerating pace, the need for realigning critical frameworks and methodologies that transcend the overarching anthropocentric paradigms has never been more pressing.

Bruno Latour is the reason I am deeply committed to posthumanist philosophy. Reading Latour was, in my case, a profoundly unsettling experience or having a state of 'dis-ease' (to use Antipas's expression). But staying with the dis-ease is potentially generative, as it changes the way I look at and think about the world around me. Latour's groundbreaking study *We Have Never Been Modern* (1991/93) turns the constitution of Western modernity and its 'great divide' upside down. Rejecting modernity's fence-building practice, Latour alternatively claims how networks of actors co-produce reality. Latour had sent shock waves of incredibility towards western modernity across academic disciplines over the past few decades. Potentiality of Latour's scepticism has been recognised by many posthumanist thinkers, as it influenced them to develop new frameworks for understanding entangled nature of existence.

Why *Entanglements*?

The title of this journal is inspired by Karen Barad's groundbreaking book *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (2007). She radicalises the way we understand reality, knowledge, agency and ethics. Rejecting classical dualistic ontology, she introduces a radical ethico-onto-epistemology that entails intra-action, entanglements, ethical responsibility and accountability. One of the chief goals of this journal is to understand the present planetary crises through the optics curated by Barad.

Over the past few decades, human activities have drastically affected and altered the trajectory of the Earth System. Humans are no longer the biological agents of this planet. They have become geological agents in the wake of unprecedented planetary crises, as Dipesh Chakrabarty suggests. This agentic transformation of humans destabilises the fundamental pillars of Enlightenment modernity – human freedom, autonomy, agency, and ethics. Humanities and Social Sciences have reached at a crossroads, as their founding principles, conceptual apparatuses, and methods are being relentlessly critiqued, interrogated and found less tenable.

Contributors to this issue have critically examined the entangled nature of existence on this planet. Articles included in this volume weave together wide range of issues and diverse methodological approaches, ranging from ‘non-relationist relationality’ to transhumanist ideals, from ethics of coexistence to social complementarity, from the material politics of species extinction and climate derangement to autoethnographic vignettes. In this issue, you are going to encounter:

- **Niki Young’s** article “Non-Anthropocentric Posthumanism and the Stakes of Relationality” critiques relational ontologies found in posthumanist thought of Bennett and Braidotti. Young argues that relational holism subordinates individual entities to interconnected relations. Drawing on Harman’s OOO and Derrida’s idea of ‘Leibnizianism without God’, Young introduces a ‘non-relationist relationality’ that preserves radical alterity and autonomy while allowing contingent interactions. This framework, as Young conclusively argues, offers a genuine non-anthropocentric posthumanism. Young’s argument is certainly an original contribution to posthumanist thinking.
- **Márk Horváth and Dr. Ádám Lovász’s** article "Getting Over the Human with Friedrich Nietzsche: Twilight of the Transhuman Idols" makes a significant contribution to ongoing debates on transhumanism and calls for a careful reconceptualization of Nietzschean transhumanist ideals. Horváth and Lovász engage in Nietzsche’s entrenched critique of humanism and oppose the claim that Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* (the Overman) prefigures transhumanism. The authors argue that transhumanism, while seeking to overcome human limitations, often ends up reproducing the same anthropocentric values. While transhumanism is preoccupied with bio-technological enhancement (which is ‘all-too-human’), Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* prioritises existential self-overcoming.
- **Nils Patrik Svensson’s** article “Social Complementarity – the Duality of Individual Objectivity and Group Uncertainty” reconfigures social ontology and introduces a novel framework for understanding social structures. Drawing on Niels Bohr’s complementarity and agential theory, Svensson argues that individuals and groups exist in dual and non-reducible states, exhibiting fluidity and uncertainty. Critiquing reductionist and fixed perspectives of classical sociological models, Svensson advocates a dynamic understanding of identity, agency, and collective decision-making.
- **Paul Sharrad’s** article “Human and Posthuman in Tales of Extinction” examines Australian literary engagement with and response to mass species extinction. Through the posthumanist optics of Braidotti, Ranciére, and others, Sharrad traces the perspectival shift from anthropocentric worldviews and melancholic complacency toward entangled planetary

existence. Sharrad argues how fictions instrumentalise eco-activism and promote multispecies justice.

- **Lovelyn Pinto's** article "'Retro-Futuristic' Expedition of Howard Leed's *Small Wonder*" examines the 1980s sitcom *Small Wonder* through the intersectional optics of feminism and posthumanism. The show which features a humanoid robot girl prefigures reinforced stereotypes about AI and gendered servitude in a 'retro-futuristic' fashion. Pinto frames her analysis within broader cultural discourses on embodied subjectivity and bio-technological enhancement. Pinto critiques transhumanist optimism and advocates the need for embracing ethics of coexistence, eschewing anthropocentric dominance.
- **Sk Amimon Islam and Banani Chakraborty's** article on "Waste and Women: A Posthumanist Reading of Prayag Akbar's *Leila*" analyses Prayaag Akbar's dystopian novel *Leila*, exploring entanglements of environmental degradation, social segregation, and biopolitics. Drawing on theoretical framework of posthumanist theory, the authors critique neoliberal urbanization, biopolitical control, surveillance, and waste management. The authors argue that *Leila* calls for rethinking agency, social hierarchies, human identity, and ethical responsibilities in an era of unprecedented technological growth and environmental degradation.
- **Philippa Nicoll Antipas's** reflection piece "Dis-ease: The Affective Experience of Being Hospital-adjacent" explores "heebie-jeebies" as an affective response employing autoethnographic vignettes. The author's personal experience of working at a medical school adjacent to hospital led her to rethink and reconsider certain institutional norms. She critically engages with Bennett's 'Thing-Power', Barad's agential realism and Haraway's 'tentacular thinking' to frame dis-ease as a generative way of being and thinking about the material and ethico-epistemological dimensions of being hospital-adjacent. Staying with dis-ease, as the author suggests, may foster ethical engagement and critical awareness in medical education and practice.
- **Srijita Talukdar** reviews Philip K. Dick's classic novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968) focusing the novel's engagement with contemporary posthuman debates about AI, empathy, and the porous boundaries between humans and machines, simulation and authenticity, cruelty and empathy. Talukdar underscores the novel's critique of human exceptionalism in a mechanized world. The novel's depiction of post-apocalyptic world prefigures contemporary posthuman condition, marked by environmental degradation, social stratification, and transhumanist aspirations.

Together, these contributions justify the journal's goal: to foster critical, reflective and creative engagement with the pressing issues that define contemporary posthumanities.

I am grateful to my beloved teacher, Professor Deb Narayan Bandyopadhyay, for providing me with his inspiration and invaluable advice since the journal's inception. My wife, Suparna, stood by me with unwavering encouragement, lifting me up whenever I felt low or demotivated. Without her support, this journal might have remained an unrealized mission. I am very thankful to Baloram Balo for his unflinching commitment to our journal. He instilled in me a love of editing and publishing. I

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I look forward to entanglements that will emerge in forthcoming issues of our journal.

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