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*Race and the Limitations of “the Human”**Mark Minch-de Leon*

Indians knew stones were the perfect beings because they were self-contained entities that had resolved their social relationships and possessed great knowledge about how every other entity, and every species, should live. Stones had mobility but they did not have to use it. Every other being had mobility and needed, in some specific manner, to use it in their relationships.¹

Summer of 1986, Oceania, East-West Center at the University of Hawaii. After listening to a Kanaka Maoli artist at a conference describe how he finds the large rocks, pōhaku, that he uses to sculpt deity figures – “I don’t find them; they find me” – Osage scholar George Tinker relates the following story about helping a medicine man gather rocks for a sweat lodge:

As we walked up an arroyo away from the pick-up . . . I began to notice some pretty nice rocks right away – just like the ones used regularly in these ceremonies. Why don’t we take these, I asked? The medicine man shook his head, said, “No, not those,” and kept on walking. All the time we were getting further up the arroyo, and I knew who was going to have to carry all those rocks back to the truck. Finally, more than a quarter mile from the truck, the medicine man nodded and pointed to some rocks that looked just like the hundreds we had passed by along the way. “These have agreed to go with us,” he said. “They will help us in our prayers.” (Tinker 107)

A fulminating British professor of American Studies remonstrates, “That’s what is wrong with you people. You are so anthropocentric. You think that everything in the world works the way that you do,” to which Tinker eloquently responds, “I am sorry Professor W., but that comment cannot go unchallenged. You see, you are the ones who are actually anthropocentric. You believe that everything in the world works differently from yourselves” (107).

1550–1551, Colonial Spain, *Collegio de San Gregorio* in Valladolid. Dominican friar and Bishop of Chiapas Bartolomé de las Casas and humanist scholar Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (with a coterie of scholars and priests) debate the moral and theological implications of the colonization of the Americas, focusing specifically on the nature of Indigenous humanity. The Junta de Valladolid, an appointed panel of learned scholars and jurists, is created to decide the outcome of the debate, asking the question: Was it lawful for the Spanish Crown to wage war against the Indigenous populations of the New World in order to first bring them under Spanish rule and then instruct them in the Christian faith? The King of Spain, Charles V, suspends all military expansion in the Americas while this question is being decided. This suspension is in part due to the efforts of Las Casas and in part a response to the papal bull, *Sublimis Deus*, Pope Paul III issued in 1537, which defends Indigenous capacity: “The Indians are truly men and . . . they are not only capable of understanding the catholic faith, but . . . they desire exceedingly to receive it.”³

Both Las Casas and Sepúlveda base their arguments on the inherent humanity of the Indians, differing primarily on the nature and capacity of Indigenous humanity and the means towards its perfection. Using Aristotle’s theory of natural slavery, Sepúlveda stretches the category of the human, with its basis in reason, to argue for a figuration of Indigenous humanity in which external conditions of slavery derive necessarily from an innate condition of enslavement to passions and impaired reason (Saldaña-Portillo E52). Physical enslavement, here, becomes a pedagogical tool of liberation from internalized slavery and towards the goal of a unified, if inherently unequal, humanity under the sign of rationality. Las Casas’ well-known apologia *En defense de los indios* also draws upon Aristotle’s theory, but includes the cruelty of European nations as evidence of inferior reason on their part and points to the sociality of Indigenous peoples as evidence of their participation in universal humanity united under “the unchangeable and uniformly rational nature of all humans, as ordained by God” (Saldaña-Portillo E56). Indians, he argues, like all other human beings, have free will and thus must come to Christian faith of their own accord, that is, through persuasion not enslavement. No decision is recorded.

These two events, distant in space and time, together chart the trajectory of a force of racialized humanization that is neither progressive nor static, neither historical nor atemporal, neither geographically specific nor

universal (though it has pretensions to both). Oceania in 1986 is connected to the Indigenous Atlantic in the sixteenth century through the question of Indigenous humanity and the so-called American project (conquest/colonization). An example of what Jodi Byrd calls the transit of empire – the reproduction and proliferation of imperial relations and forms of power through a reiterative figuration of “Indianness” as threshold and generative matrix – the processes of humanization that connect these two events rest on the vacillating valuation of Indigenous humanity and its proliferation as a matrix for the colonial order.⁴ The metric of this valuation is human capacity, both the capacity of humanness to be flexible, to change, to even become something other than human, and the capacity for becoming (more) human, as a mark of racialized distinction within the category of a perfectible humanity. These two events, remarkable and banal in their own ways, are moments where new calculations of the human were set into motion.

Returning to these events by following the path of Indianness as an element of humanization opens up a different perspective on posthumanist theorizing. The “post,” as has been argued by a number of scholars, indicates less a temporal *after* than a reflexive and critical *return* to the generative conditions and promise of humanism.⁵ As Cary Wolfe claims, it is the enlightenment without the negative constraints of anthropocentrism and eurocentrism, which define the more violent aspects of humanism. But it bears questioning what the effects are of promoting such unfettered rationality. To stay with Wolfe’s definition in order to make a broader point, the radical expansion of reason through embodiment, materiality, cognitive distribution, environmental interactivity, through such a model as the cybernetic feedback loop in a constitutively open posture via a contaminative logic of the trace, raises the question of the politics of knowledge-production. This is especially relevant in terms of the position of critique.

As will be seen, the western liberal conception of the human has been criticized in its social construction of a normative white subjectivity.⁶ If it is the case that the human historically and epistemically has been constituted as white, then attempts to overcome or suspend this construction should come from antiracist and anticolonial sources. Which raises the question of how the various discourses that come under the umbrella of posthumanism, the theoretical position arguably most invested in such a project, have approached the whiteness of the human. Have they combatted a white supremacist racialized regime or contributed to it? This question is further complicated by the fact that the human continues to be a defining feature

in the lives of many of the oppressed both as a regulative ideal, often times bound up with projects of recuperation and inclusion, and as the lived critical impulse that opens up possibilities for self-affirmation outside of racist orders. For most, to be human (and the political projects performed in its name) continues to be a desired thing.

The critical posthumanist mode that is reflected in the prefix has generally operated through denaturalization of the historical configuration of the human. But, to turn to historicity as a solution, when history is a fundamental component of western epistemology and orientation, raises a significant issue. History has been used specifically to draw temporal distinctions between a white western (unmarked) subject and racialized and culturalized others, who remain outside of history's reach. Thus to turn to history in order to dispel the effects of such an ordering of the world, and further to include those previously excluded from this order, is akin to what Marc Nichanian calls, in conversation with David Kazanjian, resorting to the executioner's logic.⁷ To assume the only tool or best tools available to combat a humanized racial regime come from within the regime itself, as an unfinished project of self-correction, is a leitmotif of what critical race scholars refer to as the self-reflexivity of the west (white western subject), a positionality through which the west continues to define itself and circumscribe what can be said.⁸

The “post” of posthumanism, then, will seem to mark a dilemma between the promotion of a reflexive mode of criticism that seeks the accomplishment of the enlightenment through the dissolution of the human figured as exceptional (and universalizingly white, European), a project that has always had investments in the historical complications of Indigeneity, and what Tiffany Lethabo King calls external pressure, which she describes as “specifically the kind of pressure that [is manifest in] ‘decolonial refusal’ and ‘abolitionist skepticism’ as forms of resistance that enact outright rejection of or view ‘posthumanist’ attempts with a ‘hermeneutics of suspicion.’” This pressure is needed “in order to truly address the recurrent problem of the violence of the human in continental theory.”⁹ From this perspective, posthumanism must be interrogated for its investments in whiteness, not to cast judgment on the viability of a posthumanist project, but to address the diminishment of and unspoken reliance upon Indigenous, antiracist, and anticolonial configurations of the human which have radical decolonial and abolitionist possibilities, and which under the current order too easily get co-opted, domesticated, and pacified. This is not to include them as perspectives in order to further the project of critical thought but rather to show how they can, as Byrd frames

it, “stop the world of signification and force a continual grinding within the systems of enlightenment that produce the subject at the site of freedom, equality, and conviviality achieved through genocidal dispossession.”¹⁰

The return to the two moments at the beginning of this chapter, then, is not just to understand their significance (or lack thereof) in the history of liberal western humanism’s culpability in the violent production and dissemination of whiteness. It is also to linger in their respective suspensions: the suspension of the colonial project in the face of Indigenous humanity and the suspension of meaning through the inversion of the term “anthropocentrism.” This is in order to find in the “post” neither a temporal after nor a reflexive return to an antecedent, but rather a politics of suspension of the western humanizing colonial project.

14.1 Humanization as Racialization

What was suspended during the Valladolid debate was not just the colonial mechanisms of war but also a certain conception of the human. For the first time the Spanish were confronted with an order so far outside their Christo-centric common sense as to shake loose the human from its place in their theological and natural orders. The very fact that Indigenous peoples had never heard the gospel meant that, unlike Muslims and Jews, they could not be considered enemies of the Church. Indigenous peoples therefore “existed in a unique category outside the history of belief that had long defined and divided humanity. . . . If the unity of humanity was necessarily established through Christ, what might be the status of humans who had never known Christ?” (Saldaña-Portillo E51, E54). Sylvia Wynter argues that this moment of uncertainty produced the conditions for the secularization of humanity and the rise of the racialized modern state. This “de-godding” consolidated the imperial state as the natural extension of the secular human through the delegitimation of Indigenous interrelations with other beings and, therefore, their sociopolitical organizations and relations to power. The political formation of the state, in this sense, could not be anything other than genocidal, echoed in the later settler-colonial refrain: kill the Indian; save the man.

At the same time, Indigenous sociality marks the capacity of/for universal human reason. “These juridical encounters with indigeneity prodigiously produced new terms for interpreting all of humanity, and by examining them with a critical eye we glean the absence/presence of the Indian at the heart of the human” (Saldaña-Portillo E45). María Josefina

Saldaña-Portillo has shown how this destabilization of the European conception of the human caused by the encounter with Indigenous humanity also created the need to re-humanize the European subject through self-reflective debates on the humanity of others, such as the Valladolid. Combining a classical notion of the human based in rationality with the medieval notion of the universality of divine grace, the discursive outcome of the debate was both to inaugurate Eurocentric reason as a metric of capacity in order to manage a secular humanity and to base this capacity on submission to centralized forms of power organized around the figure of the human. Indigenous humanity, defined through its humaneness as gentle, docile, and prepared to receive the Christian faith, evidenced by Indigenous sociality, is used to argue for an ethic of humane colonization, combining the goals of the Church with those of the imperial state.

The other side of this combination was the negotiated production of the compatibility of state violence with Christian faith. The figuration of the human as an ethical and juridical project allowed reason to become the basis for the marriage of evangelization with imperialism, structured around discursivity. Knowledge-production and "debate" became the means to facilitate a compassionate and reasoned approach to colonization in its so-called hard and soft varieties. And the state thereby claimed a monopolization of violence in the name of human reason. In other words, whether one argued for the enslavement of Indigenous peoples or their management through missionization, the result was the same: their subjugation and dispossession through a process of humanization that rendered them either salvageable or disposable, depending on their reaction to colonial dispossession.

According to Wynter, this instituted a racial regime of distinction amongst humanity according to degrees of rational perfection.¹¹ The symbolic order of life and death, which was transposed into a theological order of good and evil, became the basis of the distinction between reason and sensuality, rationality and irrationality. These are different descriptive statements of the human based on competing ontologies and yet, through the production of a new "truth-for adaptive" statement, the "plan of salvation" to unite Christ's flock gets translated into political terms as the "goals of the state" organized around distinctions in rationality which symbolically link racial distinctions to ethical ones and, ultimately, differentiate the value of lives (288). This amounts to the overrepresentation of the Christo-Euro-secular conception of "Man" as the universal human. Such is the new common sense. The discursive-material project initiated

by it is the foundation of a racial discourse composed of “the colonial question, the nonwhite/native question, the negro question” (288).

One of the more powerful accounts of the force of humanization as a racializing project is Zakiyyah Iman Jackson’s analysis of “slave humanity” as an aporia that marks the limit of what can be reckoned. In her essay on Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*, Jackson focuses on the human-animal relationship that undergirds enslaved humanity and that continues into the afterlife of emancipated black humanity.¹² This is to emphasize that the enslaved black body is not dehumanized but rather humanized in a particular way that transmogrifies the body and mind, as well as relations with domesticated animals, a biopolitical and ontological rearrangement/derangement: “the process of making the slave relied on the abjection and criminalization of the slave’s humanity rather than the denial of it” (96). Jackson argues that this experimental and brutal calculation of the limits of the human, both in form and personality, indicates the plasticization of the human in the imperial, colonial, and racializing projects of humanism. And the technologies that have been generally read as dehumanizing forces, such as the ledger system and the discipline of comparative anatomy, have instead worked to combine racialization and animalization as two complementary processes of humanization that stretch and deform limits through blackness.

This stretching of the limit is efficiently and viscerally exemplified by the bit placed in the mouth of Morrison’s character, Paul D, which deranges human-animal relations in racialized, animalized, sexualized, and therefore humanized terms. The perpetual “wildness” of the eye it causes is mirrored by the damning, humanized gaze of the rooster, Mister, who haunts Paul D’s manhood as a witness to abjection. It is across this unstable antithetical construction of the humanized-animalized gaze that Jackson will show how slavery was an experimentation in flesh that violently tested the limitations of the human. She writes,

The enslaved, in their humanity, could function as infinitely malleable lexical and biological matter, at once sub/super/human. What appear as alternating, or serialized, discrete modes of (mis)recognition – sub/super/humanization, animalization/humanization, privation/superfluity – are in fact varying dimensions of a racializing demand that the slave be all dimensions at once, a simultaneous actualization of the seemingly discontinuous and incompatible. (98)

Her response is to focus on the aporia of “slave humanity,” figured in its plastic relations to animality, to suspend this humanizing demand to be all things at once.

Instead of reinforcing the distinction between humans and animals through a critique of dehumanization, Jackson calls for a rethinking of the violence of imperialism and slavery as it applies to both humans and animals thus to focus on the ontological conditions through which they are rendered mutually exclusive, and therefore abjectly related. This is a point also made by Mel Y. Chen within the context of racialized language: the categories of linguistic animacy organized along "the great chain of being" formulated within western theories of freedom, from least to most free, allow for a paradoxical figuration of dehumanization to emerge.¹³ According to Chen, both objectifying and animalizing racial, gendered, and sexual slurs must first affirm humanity in order to conflate the category with others understood to be less free. The upshot of this is that criticisms of objectifying and dehumanizing language that do not attend to the western logic of animacy, which organizes and evaluates beings according to certain norms such as mobility, sentience, vitality, and autonomy, end up reinforcing this logic. Jackson's analyses of humanization and the aporetic figure of slave humanity, in this sense, have the effect of slowing down this critical impulse and drawing out the consequences that slavery had/has on transspecies colonial interrelationality through the racialized plasticization of bodies, in order to refigure ontological relations from the standpoint of black humanity.

Alexander Weheliye has also argued for a reconfiguration of ontological relations from the standpoint of black, and other non-western, modes of humanity. In both his critique of biopolitics – for not including colonial and racialized configurations of the human – and his centering of analyses of the human within black studies, as a product of racializing assemblages, Weheliye argues for a reassessment of semiotic-material relations produced under extreme conditions such as internment and concentration camps, colonial outposts, and plantations.¹⁴ Focusing on Wynter's schema of inflected humanity (human, not-quite-human, nonhuman) produced in these contexts through racialized hierarchization, he emphasizes the differential and relational production of diverse forms of racialized bare life at/as the limits of the human. This is to assert racialized humanity, and its various liminal perspectives, as the "demonic ground" of modern politics and thought (21). It is also to correct, following Wynter's reading of Frantz Fanon, the elision of the sociogenic conditions of humanity, "a symbolic register, consisting of discourse, language, culture, and so on," for the purely biological (25). Instead, the focus, according to Weheliye, should be on rearticulating meaning and discourse to material histories of violence and the bodies on which the violence has been inflicted, which continue to

condition the modern order, hence the need for a reformulation of the politics of knowledge-production around racialized figurations of the human. Emphasizing western liberal humanism's simultaneous production of and conditioning by racializing assemblages, Weheliye locates race as a master code for the universalization of one genre of the human, Man, which needs to be disfigured and abolished (27).

Humanization as racialization, for Weheliye, operates through the production of a sociopolitical grammar-matter in the form of flesh, which acts as the site, material, and product of this rearticulation. Drawing on Hortense Spillers' distinction between the body – the possession of legal personhood – and flesh – a zero degree of sociality and an excess produced through “the calculated work of iron, whips, chains, knives, the canine patrol, the bullet” – Weheliye indicates the complex production and conditioning force of such a fleshy, relational substance out of which self-possessed bodies are carved (Spillers quoted in Weheliye 39). This notion describes the survival of violence in the form of a “hieroglyphics of the flesh” (40), literally lacerations on the skin in one sense and materialized meaning in another, transmitted to succeeding generations of black subjects, who have been “liberated” and granted a body in the afterlife of slavery made from this semiotic-material that seeks to forget, hide, or encode its violent conditions. Flesh is semiotic in that it functions through certain shapes, images, or forms that encode violence in a flexible and mutable material which gets translated – carries the violent lacerations – into discourses of truth based on the visual-biological space of distinction, producing a sort of cultural matter. The visual analytics of race, then, are undergirded by a hieroglyphics of the flesh and consolidated in the body, acting as both a surface manifestation and a visual cloaking of social Darwinian arguments about differential physiology. Such a visual-discursive knot marks the site of the invisible anchoring (and disappearance) of the sociogenic in(to) a naturalized physiology, to produce a singular account of racially inflected humanity.

The unraveling of this knot, for Weheliye, involves neither inclusion into humanity nor abolishment of humanism, but rather a procedure of unveiling obliterated genres of the human as the demonic ground of humanism and bringing into consciousness both the hidden semiotic-material articulations and the processes that make “liminal spaces, ensconced in and outside the world of Man, from which to construct new objects of knowledge and launch reinvention of the human at the juncture of the biology and culture feedback loop” (25). Constituting a form of autopoiesis, this procedure mobilizes flesh to disfigure Man.

Flesh, then, is not just an excess produced through racialized violence but also “an alternate instantiation of humanity” (43). This does, however, raise a number of questions about the status and location of Weheliye’s conception of flesh.

At stake in his politics of visibility is a critical theoretical position of denaturalization at both the discursive and theoretical levels. Not only does race get naturalized, according to Weheliye, as a *de facto* historical origin of biopolitics without attention to its social construction, but it also marks the naturalization of discourse and, through it, of an unrecognized ideological apparatus mistaken as pure physiology (57). The critical task, then, seems to be one of unveiling and denaturalizing invisible and rigidly fixed racial formations. Yet he is also quick to point out that his analysis is not invested in “considering racial categorizations as a mere ideological imposition,” but is rather interested in networks of “bodies, forces, velocities, intensities, institutions, interests, ideologies, and desires” (12). This is made most clearly manifest by his characterization of “the living, speaking, thinking, feeling, and imagining flesh: the ether that holds together the world of Man while at the same time forming the conditions of possibility for this world’s demise” (40). This is an immanent, vital power that is a product of human agency while also taking on a seemingly inhuman (even destructive) agency of its own. Weheliye seems to be asking for two contradictory positions.

On one hand, Weheliye is calling for a suspension of universalized provincial, western critical thought as hermetic and self-reflexive. Following Achille Mbembe, he calls for a turn away from “Parisianism”: “Perhaps, then, the time has come to bid adieu to Foucault’s metropolitan territoire d’outer-mer” (63). On the other, he explicitly calls for “recasting the human sciences” in order to “disfigure Man through the *incorporation* of the colonial and racist histories of the modern incantations of the human,” thereby centering the human as object of study to combat its naturalization in all its inflected forms” (19, 21; emphasis added). This seems to be a call for an institutionalized inquiry into unacknowledged biopolitical histories through an expansion and a proliferation of social scientific discourses around plural figurations of the human. This is done to disfigure Man by bringing to light the hidden, violent conditions of Man-making thereby to imagine the human otherwise.

Weheliye marks out a dialectical position that seeks liberation through the continued disalienation of naturalized forms. But as has been shown by scholars such as Jodi Byrd, David Lloyd, and Christopher Bracken, such a notion of disalienation always begins in critical narratives of human social origins with figurations of primitivism (nature as an alien

force) which are demonstrably false (no Indigenous epistemology includes a concept of nature – it is entirely a fiction of the west).¹⁵ So, what does this mean for critique? Does reliance upon a mode of critique invested in revealing and proliferating vitality and discourse to combat naturalization risk falling into the trap of biopolitical governance otherwise, producing new forms of value that can be too easily co-opted? That is, how do we read Weheliye's call for refusal when it seems to be articulated as a methodological injunction to produce more knowledge about disenfranchised peoples in a critical theoretical mode that continues to pit nature vs. the social/cultural and death vs. life, even while he eschews these distinctions? What if, rather than seeking a dialectical and semiotic-material movement as critical operation, the emphasis is instead on the inhuman conditions of humanity that Weheliye analyzes with his conception of flesh, the excess of a humanizing process and its infrastructure, and thereby a site for suspension of the contradictions of the humanizing project and its discursive injunction to make knowledge: halting the demand, as Jackson describes, to be all dimensions at once? This opens up a conversation with an Indigenous inhumanity founded on a mode of a-vitalism and even, perhaps, anti-critique as methodological and formalized refusal.

14.2 Towards an Indigenous Inhumanities: A Sketch as Open Conclusion

Returning to Tinker's clever turn of phrase, recounted in his reminiscence of telling a story about discerning rocks, it can now be read as antiproduction of discourse. To see this, though, requires not analyzing the event as a moment of rational debate towards a resolution. Hinged on inverted meanings of "anthropocentrism," it is in the antithetical structure that the vacillation of the old noble/violent savage dichotomy, set into semiotic motion by early colonial discourses, is shown to rear its ugly head again in the Americanist's statement. It is also evidenced in and momentarily stalled out by Tinker's rebuttal. Rather than a positive statement leading to more knowledge, with an ear for suspension, Tinker's inversion can be heard as sabotaging the conversation. The rhetorical construction participates in strategies of inversion, incommensurability, and refusal. It is an acknowledgement of Indigenous interrelationality, amongst humans and other beings, as well as the rendering nonsensical of such relationships by a humanizing, racialized colonial regime. It is also acknowledgement of the multivalent desires for indigeneity, made pathological and salvational

and disarticulated from the human, as colonial excess in the figure of a mobile Indianness.

Holding open without reconciling or deciding between the ambivalence of anthropocentrism renders Tinker's statement neither ontological nor epistemological but – like the stones that have resolved their social relations which Deloria describes in the epigraph – asocial. Later in his essay, Tinker inverts "the great chain of being" that in theological and secular western humanisms places rocks at the bottom as inanimate, insensate, and geological matter. He instead places them at the top as the wisest and oldest of beings to which humans must aspire. Rocks choose not to move and decide, on their own terms, with whom they communicate. And not all rocks are alive. These conceptions challenge the emphasis on Indigenous sociality, a colonial tactic, and the assertion of vitality that organizes critical modes from denaturalization to various new materialisms.

Due to space limitations, I can only sketch out some of the attributes and concepts, and reference only some of the significant scholars, that contribute to the notion of an Indigenous inhumanities that arise out of Tinker's story. As mentioned, Jodi Byrd traces the intellectual and material production of a figuration of Indianness as both colonial/imperial matrix and the movement of the critical itself as the "crease" or threshold through which self-reflexivity is made possible.¹⁶ This figuration is made possible by racialized humanization which renders Indigenous sociopolitical interrelations nonsensical or, at best, a matter of belief, as described by Kim Tallbear and Marisol de la Cadena.¹⁷ These interrelations form the matter of an Indianness in transit. They also render Indigenous sociality both pathologically and salvationally, as described by Dian Million. In her discussion of biosocialities; Million shows how Indigenous socialities are filtered through traumatic and therapeutic discourses to expand biopolitics into the spiritual realm through the governance of Native spiritual and social life towards reconciliation with the humanist state through healing.¹⁸ And finally, Elizabeth Povinelli makes clear that underlying western epistemic and critical projects lies a form of power invested in governing the relations not just between life and death but between Life and Nonlife, a "biontological enclosure" that determines the evaluation of being according to one form of existence, life (bios and zoe).¹⁹

Together, these adumbrate a methodology that begins from Indigenous inhumanity as a refusal of vitalist knowledge production and critique. Moving past the life and death divide, as Kim Tallbear describes, also opens new possibilities of conversation with posthumanist discourses that center non-western positions and modes of being. It also extends the

conception of race beyond a human attribute to the foreclosure and destruction of worlds outside of the western theologico-secular vitalist order created by and enforced through humanization. It asks the question, what does non-vital anticolonial work look like outside of the bounds of and in contradistinction to a humanizing process?

Notes

1. Vine Deloria Jr., "Relativity, Relatedness, and Reality," in Barbara Deloria, et al. (eds.), *Spirit and Reason: The Vine Deloria, Jr. Reader* (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 1999), 34.
2. George Tinker, "The Stones Shall Cry Out: Consciousness, Rocks, and Indians," *Wicazo Sa Review*, 19, (2) (Fall 2004), 107.
3. María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo, *Indian Given: Racial Geographies across Mexico and the United States* (Duke University Press, 2016), E46.
4. Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011).
5. Cary Wolfe, *What is Posthumanism?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); N. Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999); Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. C. Porter (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1993).
6. Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).
7. Marc Nichanian and David Kazanjian, "Between Genocide and Catastrophe," in David Eng and David Kazanjian (eds.), *Loss: The Politics of Mourning* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 127.
8. Denise Ferreira da Silva, *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Andrea Smith, "Native Studies at the Horizon of Death: Theorizing Ethnographic Entrapment and Settler Self-Reflexivity," in Audra Simpson and Andrea Smith (eds.), *Theorizing Native Studies* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014); David Lloyd, *Under Representation: The Racial Regime of Aesthetics* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2019). See also Lowe, *Intimacies*.
9. Tiffany Lethabo King, "Humans Involved: Lurking in the Lines of Posthumanist Flight," *Critical Ethnic Studies*, 3, (1) (Spring 2017), 164–5.
10. Jodi Byrd, "Still Waiting for the 'Post' to Arrive: Elizabeth Cook-Lynn and the Imponderables of American Indian Postcoloniality," *Wicazo Sa Review*, 31, (1), Special Issue: Essentializing (Spring 2016), 78.
11. Sylvia Wynter, "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, Its Overrepresentation – An Argument," *The New Centennial Review*, 3, (3) (2003), 257–337.
12. Zakiyyah Iman Jackson, "Losing Manhood: Animality and Plasticity in the (Neo)Slave Narrative," *qui parle*, 25, (1–2) (Fall/Winter 2016), 95–136.

13. Mel Y. Chen, *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 37–8.
14. Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 37.
15. Byrd, *Transit*; Lloyd, *Under Representation*; Christopher Bracken, *Magical Criticism: The Recourse of Savage Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
16. This is supported by scholars such as Christopher Bracken, Denise Ferreira da Silva, David Lloyd, all cited above, and Severin Fowles, “The Perfect Subject (Postcolonial Object Studies),” *Journal of Material Culture*, 21 (2016), 9–27.
17. Kim Tallbear, “Beyond the Life/Not-Life Binary: A Feminist-Indigenous Reading of Cryopreservation, Interspecies Thinking, and the New Materialisms,” in Joanna Radin and Emma Kowal (eds.), *Cryopolitics: Frozen Life in a Melting World* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2017), 179–202. Marisol de la Cadena, “Indigenous Cosmopolitics in the Andes: Conceptual Reflections beyond ‘Politics,’” *Cultural Anthropology*, 25, (2) (2010), 334–70.
18. Dian Million, *Therapeutic Nations: Healing in an Age of Indigenous Human Rights* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2014).
19. Elizabeth A. Povinelli, *Geontologies: A Requiem to Late Liberalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016), 5.