

# Cyborg as a Destroyer of G. Agamben's Anthropological Machine

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**Abstract.** The ambition of this paper is to reason the consistency and logical coherence of the concept of Giorgio Agamben's anthropological machine. The important puzzle is that although Agamben emphasized the importance of having this machine destroyed, he did not suggest any clear and specific way to achieve it. The concept of a cyborg, developed by Donna Haraway, has been introduced to rethink the anthropological machine through the eyes of the cyborg. So, the main question of this paper is: whether or not the destruction of the anthropological machine is possible using the concept of the cyborg? The cyborg has been chosen because it blurs the boundaries among various oppositions. Oppositions (e.g. animal / human, man / woman, public / private) are exactly what the anthropological machine establishes, moreover, it also empowers itself through the existence of those oppositions. Cyborg has material substance inside its own "body" right from the beginning, so through this understanding we can incorporate the questions about the environment (broadly understood) and the self in every cyborg. The cyborgs, paraphrasing Haraway, are very good at cat's cradle game when the interactions could be seen very clearly between our everyday acts and some global or political issues.

**Keywords:** G. Agamben, anthropological machine, biocentrism, biopolitics, naked/bare life, cyborg

## Introduction

Giorgio Agamben is very well known for the idea of rethinking and reconsidering Michel Foucault's idea of biopower. The biopower works through two main tools: anatomo-politics and biopolitics. When these two registers are merged, the control works not only on the individual level but on the population level as well. That means that biopower works on the human as a species. Foucault regarded biopower as a modern form of political power that was different from the pre-modern sovereignty, meanwhile, Agamben says that Western politics have always been influenced by both pre-modern and modern political models. The ideas postulated by Agamben

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are relevant though provocative; they confront with a strong response among actors of various kinds of anti-authoritarian political activism. In his 2002 work titled *The Open: Man and Animal*, Agamben extends the scope of the issues of biopower and politics by addressing them through the distinction between an animal and human being. His key message in this context is the following: throughout the Western history an “**Anthropological machine**” has been running, through which the distinction between the human and animal life has determined the humanity (Agamben, 2002). As a result, the humanity gets distributed among different life-forms, where certain forms become more human, and others – less (e.g. slaves, barbarians, Jews). The anthropological machine is also dangerous because it allows the existence of hierarchies in every single sphere, be it human / animal, man / woman, rich / poor etc. This allows for an easier accumulation of power for privileged groups, thus allowing them to ensure that they have an upper hand in power relationships. This is dangerous, as it creates inequalities among living beings, even though from biocentric perspective, they should be regarded as equal (it creates the possibility to put some people to the category of *homo sacer*, and then marginalise or destroy them).

There are various practical global examples of phenomena that could be regarded as having a certain connection to the concept of *homo sacer*. Refugee crisis and its linkage to *homo sacer* (which is also relevant in the Baltic States) have already been thoroughly identified by researchers in various disciplines (Turner, 2019; Iancu, 2012; Engler 2018). However, we can also see certain unique and contemporary cases of “making of *homo sacers*” in the Baltic countries such as “inclusive exclusion” of children with disabilities in Latvia (Lakševics, 2018) or the construction of the Baltic states as “internal others” of the Western civilization, stating that “these countries still find themselves in a place – both physically and mentally – between “civilizations” (Kalnačs, 2016, p. 24). It should be also noted, that historically the Baltic States have dealt with the most extreme case of ‘bare life’ during the Holocaust, when in all three countries different types of camps were established (Peters, 2017, p. 1167). Probably the most visible connection between the Baltic States and the concept of *homo sacer* can be seen during the exiles to Siberia, when people were transported there via trains intended not for human, but for animal transportation.

The ambition of this paper is to reason the consistency and logical coherence of the concept of Agamben's anthropological machine. The political goal of the author is to destroy this machine, as it would guarantee the birth of a world, where human and animal lives are not divided hierarchically either within the given category or in general. But the question is still open, what kind of politics / political entity it will be? What is more, Agamben in a way could be seen as contradicting himself: if biopolitics is the core of politics, when the anthropological machine becomes eliminated, does anything that could be regarded as politics remain? In addition, the important puzzle is that although Agamben emphasized the importance of having this machine destroyed, he did not suggest any clear and specific way of how this could be achieved. Three main ways could possibly be found in literature. One of the possible solutions is to reassess animals and animality. Killing of people on the basis of them being “just animals” is relevant only if we agree that animals deserve this or that they have to be abused or killed. Nietzsche's reassessment, i.e. the new assessment of the animal and humanity might be one of the strategies helping to put the brake on the anthropological machine (Oliver, 2007, pp. 10-11). According to Nietzsche, human as an

animal is distinguished from other animals via its culture, meaning that rationality and sociability are the central traits of this differentiation (Lemm, 2009, p. 4). However, Nietzsche also notes, that human has “raised himself above the animal” through the power of language. (Nietzsche, 1996, p. 16). Thus, Nietzsche suggests, that human must return to the origins of the animal, because only the latter can bring back to the human the freedom and creativity of interpretation lost in the process of its civilization and socialization (Lemm, 2009, p. 16). However, this method would allow only jamming, rather than destroying the machine. The reason for this is the fact that through this way, the action of the machine would be stopped only temporarily as there is no way to assure that the culture and together with it the differentiation between human beings and animals would not return. In other words, this method offers only a temporary solution to the problem, thus, it is not proper.

Another solution is Derrida’s strategy, where the concept of animal is widened. Derrida states that differences among various animals are huge; therefore, the application of a single concept of “an animal” is not correct (Derrida, 2008, pp. 159-160). This concept, also being a product of the anthropological machine, not only eliminates differences among animals, but also puts them into one pile, which is below the category of “man”. The extension of the animal conception suggested by Derrida could help to stand against the anthropological machine, though it would not guarantee its destruction, since the hierarchical separation between man and animal still persists.

The third solution is described by J. M. Benyus, who explicates biomimetics as an instrument helping the man to return to such state, when it was ruled over by the nature and not vice versa (Benyus, 1997, p. 5). According to the author, biomimetics is supposed to change the way certain technology is created: to avoid situations when technology is created (with no restrictions) only for the sake of creation (capital accumulation principle). Whereas, having employed biomimetics, all technologies would be based on a clear criteria established by the nature (evolution). According to the author, everything what is human and non-human has been built through progress, thus, she suggests destroying the progress and returning to the natural state (Johnson, 2010, 183-184). In other words, this attitude is close to the ideals posited by primitivism. This is precisely why this solution is rejectable, because the complete realisation of primitivism is: a) far too difficult to achieve; b) its end-product does not eliminate the possibilities of the rise of a new anthropological machine; c) its end-product would only transform the content of the anthropological machine, however would not change its form.

Since the three above-mentioned destruction methods are not sufficient, new ones must be sought. To achieve this goal, the concept of the **cyborg** developed by Donna Haraway has been chosen. This concept may be applied as a solution to the problem implicated by Agamben. That leads us to the main question posed in this paper: **if and how the anthropological machine could be destroyed by the hands of the cyborg?** The cyborg has been chosen because it blurs the boundaries among various oppositions (Haraway, 2000, p. 291). Oppositions (e.g., animal / human, man / woman, public / private) are exactly what the anthropological establishes, moreover, it also empowers itself through the existence of those oppositions. The concept of the cyborg ensures the abolition of such oppositions, which thereby weakens the anthropological machine until it is completely destroyed. To be more accurate, the cyborg makes the search for purity to look completely irrelevant and unworthy.

The figure of the cyborg, which is half-man and half-robot, is used in the “Cyborg Manifesto” as a means of thinking, which helps to disclose hidden mechanisms of power, of our political reality and possibilities to question the present essentialist patterns of thinking (Munnik, 2001, pp. 95-96; Haraway, 2000, pp. 295-296), where human identity / nature is perceived as fixed and immutable, and to find ways to live (survive) in a modern society, which can no longer be explained by traditional patterns of thinking. Therefore, it can be stated that the main objective of this paper in terms of its added value to the contemporary philosophical discourse is **a new interpretation of the destruction of Agamben's anthropological machine**, which is based on a reconsidered and updated Haraway's concept of the cyborg. This approach is the most suitable for the destruction of the machine, because by its nature it is most effective since cyborgization is a permanent and continuous process, the cyborg is in a constant change, it is not finished, not stable. “A big misinterpretation of the cyborg takes place when people do not see its generative quality, that it is not just a negation of the old power structures <...> but an attempt to see things differently” (Goodeve, 2001, p. 128). So, the cyborg creates possibilities to establish a new, different, unknown order, which could be based on different ontology and epistemology.

It is natural that Agamben's analysis not only significantly contributed to the field of post-humanistic philosophy research and attracted many followers (namely M. Calarco, 2008, pp. 163-180, J. Derrida 2008, pp. 159-160, D. LaCapra, 2016, p. 165, M. Sharpe, 2011, pp. 40.1-40.20 and others), but also provoked the emergence of many opposing opinions. The main aspects of the criticism may be divided into four parts: 1) *criticism on the grounds of post-humanist and anti-humanist philosophical assumptions* (Decaroli, 2007, pp. 43-69). Steven Decaroli justifies his criticism of the concept of Agamben's anthropological machine by stating that post-humanist philosophers, who, although refusing to accept any standard philosophical theories of value, when criticizing humanism are still motivated by ethical or political imperatives, which are inseparable from the humanist tradition (Calarco, 2007, 167). The main aspect of this criticism is that Agamben remains in the anthropocentric, but not in the biocentric perspective, which means that the criticism of humanism expressed in *the Open* is based on humanistic evaluation criteria. 2) *Criticism related to messianism* (Sharpe, 2011, pp. 40.1-40.20). Matthew Sharpe notes that Agamben's work *The Open: Man and Animal* is a text, which mostly reveals the identification with utopian, antinomical messianism. The main problem associated with the messianism emphasized by Sharpe is that the messianism of Agamben changes the concept of politics by changing its ontological meaning. The traditional ontological meaning of politics states that *theoria* makes *praxis*, whereas Agamben's version of politics abolishes the separation between theory and practice by “compressing” *praxis* into *theoria* (Sharpe, 2011, pp. 40.9-40.10). In other words, the concept of policy changed by the messianism does not provide a clear *theoria*, which could give rise to *praxis*. Instead, Agamben presents a rather mythical version of the transition to a state where the anthropological machine is no longer in operation. 3) *Criticism on the grounds of the uncertainty of praxis* (Sharpe, 2011, pp. 40.1-40.20). The uncertainty of *praxis* and consequences stemming out from it, is a problem emphasized by supporters of critical theory. They maintain that although critical theory is reasoning of a theoretical type, its purpose is still to demonstrate the truths, which political players fail to see in the daily life (Sharpe, 2011, p. 40.14). Meanwhile, as it has been mentioned, Agamben eliminates that separation by connecting *theoria* and *praxis* into one – thinking. 4) *Criticism on the*

*grounds of a divide between man and animal* (Žukauskaitė, 2016; LaCapra, 2016; Calarco, 2008). A part of criticism that Agamben receives is focused on the fact that he analyses the consequences of the anthropological machine faced only by man, while animal life remains without consideration in his texts. Animal as such never finds its way into the horizon of Agamben's messianistic politics. (Žukauskaitė, 2016, p. 200) According to LaCapra (2016, p. 166), in Agamben's writings animals are not "described as complex, differentiated living beings, but, on the contrary, function as abstract philosophical *topos*." Calarco (2007, p. 102) maintains that "Agamben's works <...> only cover the actions of the anthropological machine on human beings, but he never examines the influence made by the machine on other forms of life." According to critics, such behaviour further enables the anthropological machine, since it does not include an analysis of conversion of life, which is not human, into bare life. Instead, the focus is only on transformation of human life into bare life (Chrulew, 2012, p. 6). However, it is important to return to the first aspect of the critique towards Agamben discussed above. As he remains in the anthropocentric perspective, it is quite natural, that he focuses on human and not animal beings. What is more, a human which has animalistic traits is viewed negatively from the anthropocentric point of view, however, as it will be discussed further, no such negative view remains when viewing life from biocentric perspective, which is advocated by Haraway.

To achieve the main aim of this article, we decided to go back to the original texts and try to be precise with their original definitions. We tried to take seriously Haraway's idea to look into the cyborg as an instrument, which helps to rethink our own state of being. The article is divided into the three parts: the first part is aimed at presenting the concept of G. Agamben's anthropological machine and why the method of its destruction suggested by him is considered insufficient, vague and unworkable; the second part presents an interpretation of D. Haraway's concept of the cyborg; and the third part is devoted to demonstrate, through the concepts of the cyborg and cyborgization, the way to destroy the anthropological machine.

## 1. Anthropological Machine

Agamben in his work *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare life* analyzes the processes of legal and political history, by which certain living beings are displaced beyond the legal and judicial context. The author calls such creatures *homo sacer* (Eng. the sacred man) (Agamben, 1998, 71-75). *Sacer* in Roman law meant something sacred, which can be killed without any legal consequences. The meaning of the term *sacer* in the ancient Roman religion had a different meaning than that gained after the rise of Christianity and now is known as sacred. In the ancient Roman religion *sacer* meant something that was "put away" from the society and / or cursed. In other words, the sacred man or *homo sacer* is an individual who has been convicted for a crime, and although the sacrifice of this person for religious purposes is unacceptable, the one who kills him will not be charged with murder. Thus, the term of sacredness in the ancient Roman religion, in contrast to the rise of the Christianity and subsequent times, means something that is impure. Going further, it can be said that the term *homo sacer* refers to an individual, whose existence is reduced to what Agamben refers as "bare life" or, in other words, a biological existence that has no other political attributes than just existence. This implies that such life can be treated in the

same way as a life of an ordinary animal. This becomes even more obvious if we accept Aristotle's concept of man and then proceed to remove politics from it (Aristotle, 1994). Thus, the main purpose of this Agamben's work is to review the history of exclusion – the ways, which the law has allowed certain people to be excluded from legal protection by turning them into bare life (Puchner, 2007, p. 24). The author defines *homo sacer* as a distinction between man and animal or, in other words, *homo sacer* is neither a human being nor an animal, but a life without political attributes, an animalistic life in a human form.

The foundations of Agamben's thinking regarding the political existence of certain individual groups were elaborated further in his later work: *The Open: Man and Animal*, where he diagnoses that the history of politics, science and philosophy is part of what he calls the anthropological machine, through which man and animal are created and confronted. According to the author, the difference between man and animal is formed precisely through the anthropological machine, which forms what is human and what is animal. This formation is implemented through "exclusion (which at the same time is capturing) and inclusion (which at the same time is excluding)" (Bell, 2011, p. 166). In other words, on the one hand, the machine takes away everything that is animal-like in humans, thus forming a person through the exclusion of the animal; on the other hand, the machine eliminates everything that is human in animal, thus creating the animal. The author distinguishes two variations of this machine: modern and prehistoric<sup>1</sup>. The modern machine is characterized by the animalization of an animal. Here, a person is created by isolating everything that is inhuman in human beings or in other words, inadequate human beings are transformed into bare life. This kind of life is created in the zone of indistinction, i.e. where it is no longer possible to find a clear difference between man and animal. It is important to add that bare life is neither a human being nor an animal, but only a gap, or, in Heidegger's terminology, the abyss that exists between man and animal (Heidegger, 1995, p. 264). Agamben provides an example of functioning of the anthropological machine – Jewish people during the Holocaust, when the elimination of their political and social status allowed to legally transform them into nothing more but bare life, thus allowing the use of violence and coercion against them. A similar idea was also developed by H. Arendt, who, in describing the totalitarianism specific to the Nazi Germany, argued that this type of totalitarianism, unlike other forms of tyranny, was characterized by oppression not only towards political opponents, but also against the population as such, by dividing it into appropriate and inappropriate groups (Arendt, 1962).

This division of man-animal is not only political, but it determines the possibility of existence of politics. What belongs to a human species and what does not is the outcome of politics (Oliver, 2007, p. 1). When analyzing the issues of human-animal differentiation, M. Calarco argues that this division can no longer be managed, but Agamben does not seek to improve this division, or, in other words, to make it more precise, more empirical or less dogmatically determined. He seeks to abolish it, as well as the anthropological machine along with it, as a mechanism producing this

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<sup>1</sup> The prehistoric variation of the machine works in the opposite direction than the modern one. Here, instead of animalization of human aspects, the humanization of animal life is carried out. Examples of such machine operation are animal shapes in human forms (barbarians, slaves). In other words, during the operation of this machine, the slave, which *a priori* is perceived as an animal, is given human qualities (for example, the ability to teach children).

division (Calarco, 2008, p. 172). The author also notices that only by understanding the logic, by which the anthropological machine creates *homo sapiens*, which is seen as something sub-human, we can expect to stop this machine (Oliver, 2007, p. 9). Even though Agamben provides a way for the destruction of the anthropological machine, this proposed answer is too abstract and does not indicate concrete actions, through which the machine could be eliminated. He states (2002, p. 92):

To render inoperative the machine that governs our conception of man will therefore mean no longer to seek new - more effective or more authentic - articulations, but rather to show the central emptiness, the hiatus that - within man - separates man and animal, and to risk ourselves in this emptiness: the suspension of the suspension, Shabbat of both animal and man.

By reinterpreting these words, it can be said, that Agamben suggests realizing the meaninglessness of justifying the difference between the existence of a human being and the animal, giving way to that meaninglessness, and thereby eliminating the divide. It is also possible to note from the quotation, that the aim pursued by the author's idea is messianistic, i.e. it is said that giving in to the meaninglessness will create a better beingness, but the causal connection between these two things is not discussed.

The anthropological machine produces man and bare life only when it develops an animal that is deprived of intelligence, morality and politicality. The machine must be stopped not only because it is better for the human, but also because it will be better for the animal. It is important to note that the word "Shabbat" is often used by Agamben to show the result of stopping the anthropological machine, which would ensure loneliness of living beings as the historical purpose of hierarchization would no longer be pursued (Agamben, 2002, p. 92).

The operation of the anthropological machine can be clearly seen in the historical production of man. Some animals are separated and their group is given the name "human", and then this group is presented as an opposition to the remaining category of animal defined by the exclusion of human in the animal. Bernard Stiegler's concept of prosthesis could provide one way of thinking on what is the basis of this grouping, which is essential to this machine. According to Stiegler, human **essentially** has nothing, he even lacks consciousness, and only through technology as a prosthetic can he escape this deficiency (Stiegler, 1998). Stiegler notes, that the logic of technics, which pre-dates the human, enables him to use exteriorized prostheses (e.g. tools) in order to create a hegemonic regime dominated by him (James, 2010, p. 7). Even if we agree that the grouping of animal and human based on this logic of prosthesis could be relevant, we still need to ask how hierarchical differences inside of human group emerge? Here, it should be stated, that according to Stiegler, prosthesis, which is deeply interconnected with technology, should not be understood simply as certain tools (e.g. a hammer), which can be used by human rather than animal. Prosthesis should be understood more broadly, encompassing such systems as language or culture (Mitchell, 2017). Thus, hierarchical differences between humans can emerge based on how one person can exploit logic of technics better than the other. This controversy manifests itself clearly when it is projected into history, or in other words, when it serves to explain the appearance of the true human, i.e. what is not or no longer an animal. Thus, Agamben summarizes this process of grouping (2002, p. 37):

Insofar as the production of man through the opposition man / animal, human / inhuman, is at stake here, the machine necessarily functions by means of an exclusion (which is also always already capturing) and an inclusion (which is also always already an exclusion). Indeed, precisely because the human is already presupposed every time, the machine actually produces a kind of state of exception, a zone of indeterminacy, in which the outside is nothing but the exclusion of an inside and the inside is in turn only the inclusion of an outside.

This argument of the inclusion and exclusion arises from the Agamben's description of the uncertainty zone. In his book *State of Exception*, Agamben describes the way, through which zones of exception, whose inhabitants have no rights, are created. Agamben argues that these zones are not produced, when laws protecting human rights cease to exist, but rather they arise when modern democracies decide to suspend constitutional laws (Agamben, 2005). Although sometimes such suspensions are carried out with the aim of eliminating the very democracy and the rule of law, as we can see from the example of the National Socialists in Germany, more often, however, the restitution of such rights is carried out precisely because of the desire to preserve the very right as a whole, for example, A. Lincoln's suspension of *habeas corpus* (human right to appeal incorrect imprisonment) during the United States civil war (Puchner, 2007, p. 4).

The state of exclusion that emanates from democracies is shaped by the logic of exclusion. Law creates the zone of exception, but this zone is not just something that is behind the law, in which the latter, for one reason or another, lost its power. Rather, this zone is formed precisely by law, since it exists when the law itself carries out an act of self-suspension (Puchner, 2007, p. 5). Therefore, this zone is as much an inclusion as it is an exclusion, or in other words, its exclusion, which is internal in the law. Cooperation between the state of exclusion and human production has a significant effect: the production of a zone of exception must be implemented over and over again. This action is repetitive, or based on Agamben's terminology - a repeatable solution. Agamben (2002, p. 38) writes:

Like every space of exception, this zone is, in truth, perfectly empty, and the truly human being who should occur there is only the place of a ceaselessly updated decision in which the caesurae and their rearticulation are always dislocated and displaced anew. What would thus be obtained, however, is neither an animal life nor a human life, but only a life that is separated and excluded from itself - only a bare life.

This quote combines the three main lines of Agamben's reasoning - bare life (from *Homo Sacer*), the zone of exception (from *State of Exception*) and the animal (from *The Open*). The construction of human depends on the operation of the anthropological machine, which is based on double exclusion, and the latter is similar to the one that is produced in the state of exception. It is obvious, that all three texts deal with what can be termed as a theory of exclusivity, which explains the production of zones of legality and exception and allows us to perceive how a human is created and what was, but no longer is, a human being. The main purpose of this theory is to prove that the phenomena described here are not just accidental events, but the consequences of the logic of sequential exclusion and its continuity.

Agamben, by analyzing ways through which it is possible to resist the anthropological machine, distinguishes science as one of the methods. He argues that science can eliminate the distinction



between an animal and a human being, but by doing so, it reduces humanity solely to a biological existence that has no mysticism. In other words, science can explain human actions simply as combinations of different chemical processes in the brain and this allows to reduce a person to a creature, which acts only based on instincts. However, according to the author, this not only fails to help to destroy the anthropological machine, but rather it strengthens it, as all the scientific way does is that it completely eliminates humanity thus keeping only the animal in the machine. The author continues that by scientifically eliminating the distinction between an animal and a human being, we simultaneously abolish all that is created by a human for a human, for example: ethics, politics. Agamben (2002, p. 92) emphasizes that both human beings and animals “can be preserved precisely in their inability to be preserved”. This thesis is based on the fact that man and animal can exist as something more than a bare life or biologically determined products, created only “outside of being”, or in other words, such state is possible only after the destruction of the anthropological machine, because it shapes the essence of being. By eliminating the structure that shapes and puts the essence of being into the frame, it is possible to rise above the aforementioned frames and look at the wholeness constructed by this structure, thus finding a new way for human-animal coexistence which would prevent the emergence of bare life.

## 2. Haraway's Concept of the Cyborg

„The cyborg is a matter of fiction and lived experience that changes what counts as women's experience in the 20th century. This is a struggle over life and death but the boundary between science fiction and social reality is an optical illusion.“ (Haraway, 2000, p. 291)

The idea of the destruction of the anthropological machine could be engaged from different perspectives. Various contemporary challenges brought back the question of matter and a lot of different versions of the new materialism found their way to ongoing discussions. The main idea is to question whether the matter is only a neutral object, which can be used for various reasons without even thinking about it. Certain authors' (e.g. Latour, 1993, Latour, 2004, Barad 2007, Morton, 2013) goal was to make us see the matter as something much more active, vibrant (Bennet, 2010) and more important for political (Coole, Frost, 2010) or ecological (Tuana, 2008) problems to understand. One of the main authors - Bruno Latour - in various books questions the notion of the Great divide and suggests the actor-network theory (Latour, 1993) which helps us to question hierarchical order and, to be more precise, understand that the divide between culture and nature is very vague and not helpful anymore. In this paper we decided to look at the question of the anthropological machine through the feminist perspective of Haraway, because she had suggested the cyborg as the instrument to merge the questions coming from biological, political, animal and technological studies. The cyborg has material substance inside its own “body” right from the beginning, so, through this understanding we can incorporate the questions about the environment (broadly understood) and the self in every cyborg. “Characterized by partial connections, the parts do not add up to any whole; but they do add up to worlds of nonoptional, stratified, webbed, and unfinished living and dying, appearing and disappearing. Cyborgs are constitutively full of multiscalar, multitemporal, multiterial critters of both living and nonliving persuasions.” (Haraway, 2016, 104-105). The cyborgs, paraphrasing Haraway, are very good at cat's cradle game

when the interactions could be seen very clearly between our everyday acts and some global or political issues<sup>2</sup> (Haraway, 2016).

To start with the cyborg, it could be seen as cybernetic organism, a creature of science fiction and, at the same time, of social reality. The cyborg is a creature in a post-gender world; it has nothing to do with bisexuality, pre-oedipal symbiosis, unalienated labour, or other seductions to organic wholeness. In a sense, the origin of the cyborg has nothing to do with the culture or philosophy of the Western world. It is not structured by privacy and publicity, nor does it dream of a society built on a model of an organic family. It does not acknowledge the Garden of Eden, it is not created from dirt and it cannot return to dust (Haraway, 2000, 292-293). In other words, Haraway is talking about an absolutely post-humanist figure, deviated in all possible ways from the humanistic model of thinking.

The main goal that Haraway sought to achieve was the destruction of binary opposition or in other words – the barriers that had shaped and dominated human thinking. The author herself calls binary oppositions – or, more precisely, the existence of them – „the greatest story ever told“ (Rae, 2014, p. 505). An analysis of the disadvantages of the binary opposition can be seen in Haraway's early works, which have had a particularly significant impact on post-humanist and feminist thinking. According to Haraway, the binary opposition creates an unjustified privilege for one group, which by itself forms repression against non-privileged groups such as animals, women, or non-western people. In other words, the existence of the binary opposition forms hierarchical relationships among individuals, as they differentiate individuals into different types, which are separated from each other by qualities that are imposed externally, but not from the immanence of the individuals themselves. These are the types of the binary opposition constructed by the product of the anthropological machine described by Agamben. Critiquing binary opposition means rethinking the political privileges that come from these oppositions.

The purpose of the author's reflections was: 1) to focus on those entities that were historically belittled by binary oppositions and demonstrate the unfoundedness of this belittlement; 2) to show that the humanist (or monadic) ontology, in which two different entities define themselves separately, cannot explain the relative nature of the subjects; 3) to find practical ways to change the situation. According to the author, monadic ontology must be replaced by relativistic or relational ontology, i.e. the one in which each defined entity exists only because of its relationship with another entity (Rae, 2014, p. 505). Although this does not mean the abolition of privilege, this ontology eliminates priory hierarchical relationships (e.g. human primacy over animals, the primacy of pure over mixed). It allows rethinking the relationship itself or its nature, and at the same time to change that relationship. Karen Barad's theory of agential realism and concept of intra-action could also be of use (Barad, 2007). According to this theory, interactions are the ones that precede objects (Barad, 2007, p. 394), not vice versa as it is typical to monadic ontology. Such object-preceding interactions are regarded as intra-actions. Now ontology built on the basis of such intra-actions does not only shift ontology itself, but also the way our epistemology and ethics work (Barad, 2007, p. 185). If we accept Barad's theory, we must also accept that objects from now on have to be regarded not as something of essentialist nature, but rather as something

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<sup>2</sup> For an example: the chapter „Awash in Urine“ 104-116 p. *Staying With the Trouble*, Haraway, 2016.

based solely on interactions, thus meaning that a relationship among objects (from the point of view of monadic ontology) is actually a relationship among interactions (from the point of view of agential realism). Such elimination of essentialism invokes possibility of re-evaluation of dominating interactions between objects. Haraway (1994, pp. 19-39) said:

I find myself compelled by the way we repeatedly rehistoricize ourselves by telling a story; we relocate ourselves in the present historical moment by re-configuring our identities relationally, understanding that identity is always a relational category and that there is no such thing as a subject who pre-exists the encounters that constrict that subjects <...> Identity is an effect of those encounters.

This passage is interesting, as Haraway herself says that she – along with everybody else – is already a cyborg as well. This can be seen more clearly by examining the origin of the concept of the cyborg and the different conceptions of the cyborg that are quite contradictory to each other: 1) Cyborgs are „self-regulating man-machine systems“<sup>3</sup>. As an example of such a system, we can imagine any living creature that has a built-in artificial technology (heart stimulator, prosthesis and etc.) (Clynes, 1960, pp. 26-27; Munnik, 2001, p. 101). 2) A cyborg is a construct of technological expectations. The cyborg is seen as a salvation from the present painful chaos, helping to manage the natural selection by replacing it with genetic engineering, controlling what kind of people are allowed live on Earth. According to this conception, the cyborg is still a fiction/aspiration, but at the same time already a reality since so much money and effort is being dedicated to its implementation (Munnik, 2001, p. 102)<sup>4</sup>. 3) The cyborg as a war instrument. This interpretation is similar to the previous one, however here, the vision for the future is pessimistic. Here, the cyborg is seen as a military creature, the possession of which guarantees power. Haraway criticizes the aforementioned conception of a cyborg as a war instrument because in this case the cyborg, as Haraway (2000, p. 292) states, is “the awful apocalyptic telos of the West’s escalating dominations of abstract individualisation, an ultimate self-untied at last from dependency, a man in space”. It is important to note that the author clearly demonstrates that such an approach is / may become predominant because of political projects such as Reagan’s “Star Wars”, and much effort is needed to change that. It is precisely in this transformation of metaphors and concepts that she sees the main arena of political struggle: the humanity’s attitude towards both technological innovations and other states that exist beyond traditional humanity will depend on what the story of the cyborg will finally comes to be ( Haraway, 2000, p. 295):

From one perspective, a cyborg world is about the final imposition of a grid of control on the planet, about the final abstraction embodied in a Star Wars apocalypse waged in the name of defense, <...>. From another perspective, a cyborg world might be about lived social and bodily realities in which people are not afraid of their joint kinship with animals and machines, not afraid of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints. The political struggle is to see from both perspectives at once because each reveals both dominations and possibilities

<sup>3</sup> The term cyborg was suggested by Clynes and Kline; they understood it as necessity in space travel, when merged systems of human-techno, helps to survive in long space travel: Munnik, 101.

<sup>4</sup> To this understanding, mostly all discussions and authors from transhumanism, could be referred. The wish to make the better man, the new step of evolution, by the technological innovations.

unimaginable from the other vantage point. Single vision produces worse illusions than double vision or many-headed monsters.

By contradicting and simultaneously integrating all earlier and competing concepts, Haraway offers a new way of seeing and understanding the cyborg. The cyborg is understood as an entity, the context, social relationships and self-interpretation of which are overpowered by modern technology. In this sense, all humans are cyborgs (Munnik, 2001, p. 102). The cyborg becomes not only an instrument for reflection, but also for learning to not be afraid of being different, scary, ugly, it helps to come to terms with it. Thus, it becomes the mirror reflecting people's own monstrosity through impurity, through inhumanity. The main political ambition is to find the ways to normalize the "other", the *homo sacer* through the cyborg, and to bring it back into the society, to show that what we fear of is not necessarily that scary. It could be understood as an opportunity to discover within oneself the ability to learn to live with other beings that do not conform to current norms, which were formulated by the anthropological machine. The cyborg makes traditional cartaic dualisms meaningless, indistinguishable; for instance, when analysing the cyborg, it is no longer possible to distinguish between the beginning of culture and the end of the nature. Especially when we think of modern cyborgic creatures, such as a baby created via *in vitro* fertilisation and given birth by a surrogate mother, while the baby's biological parents had been dead for several years. It would seem that the baby is still natural and still carnal yet he is also absolutely "cultivated" and manufactured, even though he was born in the same way as all babies. When we adapt such way of thinking (if we give in to Haraway's provocation), we can see that there are no more boundaries, they have lost their meaning and should be replaced by a different understanding.

Cyborgs are kin, whelped in the litter of post–World War II information technologies and globalized digital bodies, politics, and cultures of human and not-human sorts. Cyborgs are not machines in just any sense, nor are they machine-organism hybrids. In fact, they are not hybrids at all. They are, rather, imploded entities, dense material semiotic "things"—articulated string figures of ontologically heterogeneous, historically situated, materially rich, virally proliferating relatings of particular sorts, not all the time everywhere, but here, there, and in between, with consequences (Haraway, 2016, p. 104).

Thus, as a challenge to the simplistic representation of the traditional concepts of a Cyborg, Haraway tries to show that the cyborg can now be seen not only as breaking the boundaries between reality and fiction, but also as the one opening up much wider possibilities. But why is this kind of the cyborg emerging precisely now, and what makes it possible for such a different, alternative, political, as Haraway would say, (re)historization of the cyborg? The way for this to happen is opened by three endangered divisions: a) between human and animal (from the moment when the Darwinian conception of evolution takes root, the distinction between human and animal disappears, an indisputable hierarchical connection no longer exists); b) between animal-human and machine. Haraway (2000, pp. 293-295) says that "when we sit at a computer, in comparison with the movement that takes place around us, we become more stone-like, and everything else seems incredibly lively and active". Nowadays machines are much more lively

and becoming more and more independent from the human action, e.g. the internet of things. Lastly, c) the boundary between physical and non-physical, that is modern technology is becoming increasingly invisible, small, imperceptible, transferred to other spheres, incomprehensible and at the same time out of control – here, we can think of “data clouds”, wireless devices and nano-creams. When all these boundaries are doubted, it becomes impossible to tell where something begins and where something else ends - in this way we can only see many different, unformed forms, one of which is the cyborg. It is important to stress that the showing that the boundaries are doubtful prevents the ability to create and maintain the hierarchies, which are made by the anthropological machine.

The cyborg is characterized by possible constant change (sometimes it seems not only possible, but also compulsory, inevitable); it does not have a steady state (Goodeve, 2000, p. 128). Opposing the cyborg and essentialist thinking, Haraway wants to show that such a Cyborgian being is alien to all that is related to any relationship with the foundations, nature, and the like. The cyborg is never fully born, it is created, and therefore it has no stable, original or unique nature. This is very important for Haraway, as it no longer has any claims to the story of creation, and in general becomes completely ahistorical, and that is problematic for the anthropological machine, because it works through historical hierarchisation. The cyborg’s story about itself and about the world - in other words, his identity - is characterized by instability and constant change. Haraway understands the identity as a construct (Munnik, 2001, pp. 95-116) created through life, through life’s history. The ability to respect and avoid comparing (i.e. not trying to arrange hierarchically by the anthropological machine) each other’s authentic experiences and life itself becomes the essence of coexistence. When you see yourself as a cyborg then you are no longer afraid of others monstrous mixture of identities and personal experience and so on.

The very concept of the cyborg itself, as a theoretical premise, shows that the old humanistic distinction between man and machine is no longer valid, since man and machine are becoming one. In other words, the functioning of the anthropological machine would be abolished if the aforementioned hybrid would exist – and if it was the only one that existed – because this kind of man-machine is ahistorical, meaning that it has no influence of both the hierarchical and binary opposition that came from history and the former anthropological machine. In other words, such a machine was never formed, as if it is *tabula rasa*.

Thus, by combining the shift of ontology from monadic to relational and only allowing a subject that has the above-mentioned cyborgian attributes to exist; it could be argued that the anthropological machine has been stopped. Although the recipe for the destruction of the anthropological machine described here is quite clear, it does seem very utopian at the same time. However, Haraway points out that in order to eliminate the established system, or, in Agamben’s words, the anthropological machine-generated system, first, it is necessary to change the ontology that allows this machine to function. However, it is obvious that this alone will not eliminate the machine, since the existence of a relationship between two entities, which has long been shaped by humanism, will not necessarily change even after the change in ontological thinking. In other words, the established hierarchical thinking will not change simply because we eliminate the assumptions that allowed this type of thinking to be created. Therefore, we should seek for a different solution.

### 3. Cyborg Against the Anthropological Machine

If, according to Haraway, all people are already cyborgs, why the anthropological machine, that shaped and continues to shape our history, politics, philosophy and culture is still operating? Why do we continue to act according to the established dogmas, why humanist tradition is still vivid in our daily lives if the cyborg is completely detached from it or in other words, if the cyborg is a post-humanistic subject? A short answer to this question might be that we are still in the initial state of cyborgization. This can be clearly seen from the fact that most of our contemporary culture is still a continuation of traditional humanism, but, unlike in the past, the current situation is becoming more and more distant from the traditional humanistic point of view. Most of post-modernist philosophy is moving towards the opposite direction than the direction in which anthropological machine has moved cultures before. This can be clearly seen from the rise of biocentric approach to life in contemporary philosophical discourse, which is radically different from the anthropocentric one that dominated philosophical discourse for centuries. It should be added, that the loss of absolutes and the emergence of relativism also contradict humanistic canon. What is more, the crisis of human identification is explicitly clear in today's Western society and this crisis is absolutely incompatible with traditional division between a man and a woman in both social and biological gender senses.

The transition from society that was constructed by the anthropological machine (humanistic) towards the one in which such machine could not exist is impossible without consequences which, from a humanistic perspective, could be termed as negative. The loss of culture and values, which would be brought by destruction of the anthropological machine can not be seen as a positive consequence. However, the increasingly dominating pluralism together with the elimination of objective criteria justifies this problem of negative consequences, as, after reaching the goal of eliminating the machine, these aspects (loss of traditions, elimination of binary oppositions, elimination of culture etc.) would not be understood as negative. Yet a question remains on what happens to politics as such when we eliminate the anthropological machine. The anthropological machine creates biopolitics, which according to Agamben is a basis for politics (Agamben, 1998), thus the elimination of the anthropological machine would also completely disrupt the way biopolitics function and together with it, it would shift the way politics work. Here, it is important to note, that after the termination of the anthropological machine, biopolitics would be not eliminated, but its contents would be completely transformed, meaning that the contents of politics would also be changed. The scope of this change is solely based on the way the new political subjects (i.e. cyborgs) act. According to Haraway's position that people already are cyborgs, only one question remains here – when such level of the cyborgization will be achieved, that aspects of humanism, which were constructed by the anthropological machine and which are ensuring the maintenance of it, will be completely eliminated? Currently, it is only possible to draw scenarios, which could help us to construct answers to this question.

One such scenario of the destruction of the anthropological machine is via political praxis, the main purpose of which is to create a world in which it is suitable-possible to live for the current outsiders. How such praxis can be achieved? Firstly, we have to deconstruct and explicate to the wide public the power relationships and mechanisms of exclusion. By spreading negative

experiences of the anthropological machine that we possess to others, we can show that the previous norms are no longer needed, that they can and need to be changed. It should be done through political writing that aims to change well-established metaphors and narratives. Haraway believes that man can change discourse by suggesting and telling a new story, a new narrative. In her book "Staying with the Trouble" she explores a lot of perspectives of how these stories could be told and explored further. "I look for real stories that are also speculative fabulations and speculative realisms. These are stories in which multispecies players, who are enmeshed in partial and flawed translations across difference, redo ways of living and dying attuned to still possible finite flourishing, still possible recuperation. <...> Telling stories together with historically situated critters is fraught with the risks and joys of composing a more livable cosmopolitics" (Haraway, 2016, pp. 10 -15).

At the same time, the cyborgization is also a way to survive in a new state of information domination. In order for it not to become another form of enslavement, we need to learn a new language, learn how the new power network works (we have to understand how to read and rewrite both virtual programming text and DNA). Recognizing and engaging in a cyborg state can help us to survive in new conditions, and by surviving we can change our thinking.

However, it is important to emphasize, that all the things mentioned in this scenario, i.e. political writings, through which we are seeking emancipation from grasps of the anthropological machine, have been happening for a long time and yet only a small gap between the connection of our daily lives and the works of anthropological machine has been achieved. So how can this process of widening the gap be enhanced?

At this point, it is worthwhile to pay attention to the concept of deterritorialization, which was postulated by G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, as it can be applied in the fight against the anthropological machine (Deleuze, 1988). The deterritorialization can be understood as a process to free up the fixed relations (which in this case are created by the anthropological machine) that contain a body all the while exposing it to new organisations (in this case post-anthropocentrism) (Parr, 2010, p. 69). By accepting the legitimacy of the above-mentioned political *praxis* as a way of destroying the anthropological machine and by defining it as a process, which creates the deterritorialization, we can radically change the constructed content of the anthropological machine and its principles of operation, while still remaining within the operating range of this machine. To paraphrase it, here, we can use the anthropological machine as a tool for the cyborgization. By deterritorializing humanistic foundations towards those that can be regarded as characteristics of the cyborg (e.g. absence of distinctions) it is possible to create a system that is logically incompatible with the anthropological machine; however, this system would still exist in the area driven by the anthropological machine. It would automatically destroy the anthropological machine from the inside, thus it would accomplish the aforementioned goal. However, there are two aspects that this political *praxis* is currently lacking: a) having a clear goal, i.e. abolition of the anthropological machine (as currently political *praxis* mostly performs in order to strengthen humanistic approach); b) something that could speed it up. Both these aspects can be taken care of by following *praxis* that is proposed by left-wing accelerationists. They attribute a kind of teleology to the anthropological machine, which states that neoliberalism (i.e. the most perfect achievement of the anthropological machine) has its end, but the pursuit of this end is constantly limited by slow

techno-industrial and financial-commercial development. According to the left-wing accelerationists, the accelerationism is a strategic process, in which new macro-political strategies are formed via socio-political *praxis* and technological experimentation (Wilson, 2015, pp. 33-45). The goal of these macro-political strategies can be regarded as reaching some new types of post-capitalistic political systems such as anarcho-primitivism, technological singularity etc. However, in order to reach such goals, a new type of political subject is needed, which could successfully commit to creation of a political coalition needed to abolish the anthropological machine and which would possess collective self-mastery that is needed to avoid collaboration with the anthropological machine. Precisely, Haraway's cyborg could be regarded as such subject (Wilson, 2015, p. 44). Thus, accelerationists who are seeking to reach a post-capitalistic society, need to enhance the cyborgization of society, thus creating a new subject of the accelerationism – a cyborg – which lacks any opposition, on which capitalistic system and anthropological machine is based. Only such subject is capable to perform the deterritorialization as the cyborg's basis, a way of thinking and goals are completely alien to those that the anthropological machine has been building up for ages. To paraphrase the contents of this scenario, firstly, the political *praxis* needs to be targeted towards the political writing, so that the problems and risks of the anthropological machine could be reflected. Secondly, a new political subject based on the aforementioned political writings needs to be created. A candidate for such subject is Haraway's cyborg. Lastly, this new subject, being the only one who is fully detached from the anthropological machine, can start performing the process of the deterritorialization, thus retracting him and society away from the narrative that is based on the workings of the anthropological machine.

## Conclusions

G. Agamben defines the anthropological machine as a constructor and as a driver of the Western civilization. However, he notes that hierarchical differentiation performed by this machine is dangerous, as it not only enforces the anthropocentrism thus disregarding other species, but it also allows the emergence of "bare life". Bare life is a biological existence without any political or juridical attributes, which can be prescribed to any person or animal. The exclusion of those attributes allows to perform completely brutal biopolitical actions with a human or animal without any moral or juridical consequences. Even though Agamben develops this concept, he does not provide clear or tangible way to deal with such machine. Few propositions of destroying this machine can be drawn from ideas of other thinkers such as Nietzsche or Derrida; however, in this paper those propositions are regarded as insufficient to reach the goal. Thus, a new solution, based on D. Haraway's cyborg concept, was provided. Haraway's biocentric approach towards life allows for emergence of the cyborg, thus eliminating the anthropocentrism created by the anthropological machine. A scenario, which shows the materialization of the cyborg and the elimination of the anthropological machine via left-wing accelerationism was also provided. Three main conclusions can be drawn:

- Operationality of the anthropological machine is based on its ability to differentiate (from human to bare life, from bare life to animal, from human straight to animal and vice versa). The cyborg concept has a different basis, as its main aspect is exactly that there are no



boundaries, which could allow the differentiation to appear. The cyborg decentralizes the subject; therefore, it eliminates any possible hierarchies, which are essential for the operation of the anthropological machine.

- The main boundary between human and animal is consciousness. Human is a conscious being, meanwhile animal operates according to its instincts. However, as technology progresses, new subjects that could also possess consciousness are being created (e.g. artificial intelligence). This could completely shift the basis, on which the anthropological machine operates, as it would not be that clear based on what it should differentiate subjects. For centuries, the basis of the operability of the anthropological machine was the aforementioned three groups of subjects (human, bare life, animal), however a new group – The AI, could shift the established model and maybe even move us closer to the elimination of the machine.
- The elimination of the anthropological machine could also be possible by creating a goal for the machine, a goal which would eliminate the machine itself. For example, if we held the aforementioned cyborg concept as a way to eliminate the anthropological machine and if we agreed on Haraway's statement that "each of us is already a cyborg", the question arises how come the anthropological machine is still functioning? The reason for this is that the cyborgization still lacks in its development, thus we should seek for a way to speed up this process of development. The political *praxis* based on left-wing accelerationists approach is regarded as a way to enhance this development thus it, if followed, should lead towards the elimination of the anthropological machine.

But would this way of destroying the anthropological machine satisfy Agamben? Hardly so, as he wants to have the machine destroyed but somehow still leave the rules of the anthropocentric view of the world. Is it possible to have both? By analysing the discussions ongoing in the philosophy of technology, science and other fields, it is obvious that the choice is between the Anthropological machine with all the problems or the unknown future with the new political order and all the known and unknown risks.

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