

# Humus and Sky Gods: Partnership and Post/Humans in Genesis 2 and the Chthulucene

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**Abstract** The relationship between humans and animals is a contentious issue in a range of disciplines. In theology, stories of creation tend to indicate a sense of human difference from animals, as humans are made in the image of God (*imago dei*) and are given ‘dominion’ over their fellow creatures. Donna Haraway has picked up on the ethical ramifications of these mythologies by critiquing them in her latest book detailing the ‘chthulucene’, which contains her proposals for responsible co-living with other species. But in Genesis 2, partnership is raised as a possibility not only between (hu)man and God, but also between man and woman, and human and animal. Focusing on the latter, this paper introduces a conversation between posthumanism and theological anthropology by way of Genesis 2 and Haraway’s chthulucene in order to explore their nuances, and to reflect critically on the resources and possibilities of non-, or post-human partnership.

**Keywords** Anthropocentrism · Donna Haraway · Human-animal relations · *Imago dei* · Posthumanism · Theological anthropology

## Introduction: Humans/Animals

The relationship between humans and animals is a contentious issue in a range of disciplines. Philosophical traditions have long debated the status of the animal, and more recently, posthumanist critical theorists have scrutinised the status of the human. Both of these themes coalesce in the stories that we tell about what it is to be human, and what it is to participate in different forms of relationalities with animals.

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Theological stories about the creation of the world are important here, not least because our compulsion to find the root cause of phenomena draws us into an infatuation with origins and accounts of origin, but also because Genesis cosmogenies (stories of creation) suggest ideas about human nature that have been influential throughout Western history (Midson 2018). Exemplifying this with relation to humans and animals, consider Genesis 1: God made different species of animals and then he made humans apparently uniquely in His image. Following this, God grants dominion to humans, and this command involves the giving over of animals and plants to them (Genesis 1:26, 28). Scriptural interpretations that highlight these points have much in common with notions of humans as dominant and controlling over other species and indeed the earth, which become embedded in assumptions about human nature.

While this suggests a hierarchical relationship between humans and animals, an alternative cosmogeny provided in Genesis 2 claims that God made Adam initially, and then afterwards He created animals, whom He intended as helpers and partners for Adam (Genesis 2:18). Adam did not find this partnership fulfilling, which then led God to form Eve from the rib of Adam as a different kind of partner (Genesis 2:20–22). In one sense, this espouses the Genesis 1 cosmogeny because animals are still found lacking and non-equal to the human; yet in another important sense, the possibility of partnership is raised between humans and animals, which invites a different perspective on human-animal relationality. For Donna Haraway, however, the story of human-animal partnership is difficult, if not impossible, to tell from Genesis-based mythology,<sup>1</sup> which deals with:

Tool, weapon, word: that is the word made flesh in the image of the sky god. In a tragic story with only one real actor, one real world-maker, the hero, this is the Man-making tale of the hunter on a quest to kill and bring back the terrible bounty. This is the cutting, sharp, combative tale of action that defers the suffering of glutinous, earth-rotted passivity beyond bearing. (Haraway 2016, p. 118)

According to Haraway, these points correspond to a humanocentric worldview that excludes and subjugates the animal, thereby occluding the possibility of partnership. But is this the only possible interpretation of Genesis material? What might an alternative reading signify?

In this paper, I shall read Genesis 2 alongside Haraway's most recent work where the legacy of Genesis-based mythologies and anthropologies is fiercely critiqued. I shall use this analysis to begin to explore how partnership functions as a way of characterising human-animal relationalities in our own times. Are animals our partners? What models of the human does any such partnership suggest? And what insights can theological perspectives offer to our understanding of the relationship between humans and animals?

<sup>1</sup> A certain degree of biblical intertextuality is needed in order to make this point, as Haraway's reference to 'word' corresponds to the beginning ( $\alpha\rho\chi\eta$ ) depicted in the Gospel of John, where the Word ( $\logos$ ;  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ ) was (with) God ( $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$ ) (John 1:1). This passage from the Gospel of John is connected to Genesis 1:1 through the repetition of the phrase 'in the beginning', and it is in Genesis 1 where God makes humans in His image. Although this image is not referenced in Genesis 2, Adam seems to hold a special place in the narrative. The convergence of these texts has led theorists such as Haraway to identify a phallogocentric tradition, which has a human and male bias. How this interacts with models of partnership is the subject of this paper.

## Contextualising the ‘Chthulucene’: *Homo/Humus*

Amidst changes between biblical and contemporary times in attitudes to humans and animals, many critical theorists have scrutinised what it is to be human in relation to (and in relationship with) animals. Generally, such theorists challenge previously taken-for-granted assumptions about human uniqueness or difference. Notable among these is French philosopher Jacques Derrida, who contemplated and reflected on a moment of his own nakedness before his cat:

Where do the mirror and the reflecting image begin, which also refers to the identification of one’s fellow being? Can one not speak of an experience that is already specular as soon as a cat recognises a cat and begins to know, if not in the end to say, that ‘a cat is a cat’? Does not the mirror effect also begin where a living creature, whatever it be, identifies another living creature of its own species as its neighbour or fellow? (Derrida 2008, p. 59)

Derrida employs, critiques, and develops Lacanian principles such as mirroring and reflection to explore human-animal alterity and relationship. He sees identification of a member of one’s own species as a reflective work that pursues the image of the same. This is a prominent Genesis motif illustrated by the partnership between Adam and Eve: Eve, for Adam, is ‘bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh’ (Genesis 2:23). It can also be found in Genesis 1, between Adam and God via *imago dei*. Seeking to push beyond the dialectic of same and other, Derrida attempts to construct a way to recognise partnership that effaces the ‘trace’, which is Derrida’s term used to refer to the gulf between human and animal. Through Adam’s naming of the animals in Genesis 2, though, the use of language has already been applied to constitute a sense of human difference and authority. Thus, Derrida seeks to denounce ‘all the anthropo-theomorphic or anthropo-theocentric logics and axiomatics’ (Derrida 2008, p. 64). Put differently, and relating this work to Haraway’s, we need to rethink the figure of the human beyond the legacy of ‘tool, weapon, and word’.

To this end, Cary Wolfe uses Derridean critical theory to investigate posthumanism, which, in its broadest sense, ‘names a historical moment in which the decentring of the human by its imbrication in technical, medical, informatics, and economic networks is increasingly impossible to ignore’ (Wolfe 2009, p. xv). Although the technological aspects of the decentring of the human are clearly important in posthumanist theory, the question of the human-animal boundary and relationship cannot be overlooked. Indeed, as Haraway notes in her influential ‘Cyborg Manifesto’—a key text for posthumanist thought—technologies, humans, and animals are interactive and co-constitutive: ‘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’ (Haraway 1991, p. 154; Latour 1993). For Haraway, such kinship provides a way to rethink the figure and status of the human: not as separate from or hierarchically above animals, but involved in complex partnerships. Haraway’s goal is for us to ‘learn from our fusions with animals and machines how not to be a man, the embodiment of Western logos’ (1991, p. 173). This is a significant critique of certain models of theological anthropology that give priority to the status of the human made in God’s image.

Haraway's most recent work, *Staying with the Trouble*, continues her critique of Genesis motifs through her emphasis on a world—our world—that she refers to as the 'chthulucene'. 'Chthulucene' derives from two Greek words, 'khthôn' (χθων) and 'kainos' (καινος), 'that together name a kind of time place for learning to stay with the trouble of living and dying in response-ability on a damaged earth' (Haraway 2016, p. 2). Here, relationality with other species—with kin—is foregrounded, and these are refigured as 'chthonic ones', 'beings of the earth, both ancient and up-to-the-minute' (Haraway 2016, p. 2). In other words, the chthulucene places emphasis on the immanent and immediate, which 'requires learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures' (Haraway 2016, p. 1). In the chthulucene, the connections among species, and the responsibilities to one another and to the environment that they entail, are paramount. This, for Haraway, is opposed to Eden and to the longings we might have for the idealised or utopian orderings that stories of Eden allure us with, away from the complex and mortal demands of living—and dying—in the chthulucene.

Clearly, Haraway rejects the Genesis story as she pursues alternative stories to build worlds with (Haraway 2016, pp. 101, 132). However, on a deeper level, living in the chthulucene predicates the terran partnership that Genesis 2 gestures towards. Haraway declares that the chthulucene 'is not the home world for the human as *Homo*, that ever parabolic, re- and de-tumescing, phallic self-image of the same', but rather it is a world that is 'ripe for multispecies storytelling' (Haraway 2016, p. 11). More accurately, then, Haraway rejects a certain vision of the human, and it is namely one that posits human uniqueness and discreteness, together with a swollen or tumescent ego that comes from an avid faith in one's capabilities. These traits have been associated with numerous readings of *imago dei* that features in Genesis 1, specifically 1:26–27 (Cortez 2010). Alternatively, Haraway asserts that 'the task is to make kin in lines of inventive connection as a practice of learning to live and die well with each other in a thick present' (Haraway 2016, p. 1). Via Derrida, we have seen some of the difficulties with identifying kinship or partnership between Adam and animals in Genesis 2. This task, for Haraway, necessitates the invention and inventiveness of a different anthropology, one that can accommodate for the human figure in tightly weaved relationships and partnerships as opposed to what Haraway diagnoses as the over-confident species-(hu)man created (by God) or absorbed (via Eve) in the image of the same (Genesis 1:26–27; 2:23–24 (respectively)). How does Haraway articulate this? Ironically, by subverting the power and meaning of the words that have been associated with phallogocentrism,<sup>2</sup> which Derrida and others have traced back to Genesis cosmogenies that encourage anthropocentrism as well as androcentrism:

From Proto-Germanic and Old English, *guman* later became *human*, but both come soiled with the earth and its critters, rich in humus, *humaine*, earthly beings as opposed to the gods. In Hebrew, Adam is from *adamah* or 'ground'. The historical linguistic gender tone of *guman*, like *human* and *man*, is masculine/

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1. Haraway also discusses in the 'Cyborg Manifesto' how phallogocentric origin stories are coded into technologies (1991, p. 175). Her cyborg figure does not reject but rather subverts theological tropes that underpin such ideas, similarly, to what I argue of the chthulucene here (although with more emphasis on the earthly as 'natura' at the expense of the technological). Further theological investigation can enhance our critical understanding of these tropes (Midson 2018).

universal; but in SF worlding *adam*, *guman*, *adamah* become more a microbiome of fermenting critters of many genders and kinds, i.e. companion species, at table together, eating and being eaten, messmates, compost. (Haraway 2016, p. 169)

These etymologies and their connotations clearly draw on motifs from Genesis 2, which suggests a resonance between theological cosmogeny and the chthulucene that Haraway's rejection of Eden would otherwise lead us to downplay. Adam, 'man' and 'human', is reimagined as connected more fully to its terran kin. As such, Haraway declares, 'we are humus, not Homo, not Anthropos; we are compost, not posthuman' (2016, p. 55).

On this point, it is striking that, although Haraway's 'Cyborg Manifesto' was so influential and significant for posthumanism, and the cyborg itself is considered to be a posthuman figure, Haraway now distances herself from the posthuman in the chthulucene in favour of 'humus' and 'compost'. Haraway's concern is that posthumanism pays too much lip service to the human: as Neil Badmington puts it, 'the "post-" is forever tied up with what it is "post-ing"' (2004, p. 119). Many posthumanists lack confidence in our ability to dispose of the figure of the human, which fuels Haraway's dissatisfaction with that group of critical theorists and technologists. Posthumanism though, it must be noted, is a broad term that encapsulates a wide range of attitudes; it is not a singular or uniform perspective on humanness. The posthuman can 'expand' (technologically augment) or 'deconstruct' the human; yet, the two understandings may intersect. Exemplifying this, Wolfe uses posthumanism to 'attend to the specificity of the human [...] by (paradoxically, for humanism) acknowledging that it is fundamentally a prosthetic creature that has coevolved with various forms of technicity and materiality, forms that are radically "not-human" and yet have nevertheless made the human what it is' (Wolfe 2009, p. xxv). Wolfe begins and ends with the human; contrariwise, Haraway's way of identifying the human's specificity is to displace the root of it onto a theological scapegoat (*imago dei*), which is then rejected. For Haraway, any way that the human remakes itself—including technologically—remains in the same image, which explains her wariness of cyborgian hybridity (Haraway 2016, p. 104), as it traces back to the human in an ever-anthropocentric framework.<sup>3</sup> 'Humanity', on the other hand, as a Derridean way of reconnecting 'humus' with animals, articulates for Haraway that we are not human (Homo), but that we are chthonic. This is why Haraway is sceptical of posthumanism: here, the Genesis-rooted logocentric tradition that favours the human (Homo) appears to be rejected. As such, the chthulucene is presented as distinctly acentric; it circumvents the centrality or elevation of any singular species, as all are terran kin.

### Mapping Response-Ability: Mud/Sky

Haraway's chthulucene, then, rejects the emphasis we presently give to the significance and efficacy of human actions over and above those of animals (Haraway 2016, p. 56).

<sup>3</sup> A re-reading of Haraway's 'Cyborg Manifesto' in light of the chthulucene shows that the cyborg's overall counter-anthropocentric meaning has not changed, although Haraway now seems methodologically less willing to subvert and reuse polluted inheritances as she carves out new stories for her chthulucene (Haraway 1991, p. 175; 2016, p. 12; Midson 2018).

One way that this anthropocentrism is expressed in everyday thought and practice is in our understandings of moral action, which are predicated on the ability of beings to consciously decide upon and effect their acts. In other words, there is an importance given to the moral agent ‘knowing’ its deeds. Thus, the effects that actions of different species have on humans may be recognised, but they are given far less moral significance than human actions because it is apparently only humans that can act consciously and reflexively.<sup>4</sup> Thomas Suddendorf (2013) describes this as constituting a ‘gap’ between humans and animals, and it is this ontological difference that underpins ethical frameworks such as a Kantian one, which does not recognise any duty to animals and thereby places human needs above others’. To be sure, in this view, it is not necessarily that animals are automata as Descartes considered them to be, but rather that they are not moral agents in the same ways that humans are, and thus they are the objects rather than subjects of (im)moral action.<sup>5</sup>

The ranking of humans above animals here coincides with a dominant reading of Genesis texts. In Genesis 2, the creation of Adam-as-monotheist precedes the creation of Eve and animals, which readily suggests a hierarchy of sorts.<sup>6</sup> The text moreover declares that, unlike Eve, animals make for insufficient partners: moral action theory develops this line of thought. As such, the relationship between Adam and animals is a notably disparate one: Adam names the living creatures, for example (Genesis 2:19), which connotes God’s spoken and creative authority that is reiterated throughout Genesis 1 by the phrase ‘And God said’. In this vein, Genesis 1:28–29 also suggests a sense of authority that humans have over animals by virtue of *imago dei* and the command humans were given to have ‘dominion’ over other species.<sup>7</sup> Although *imago dei* is not referred to in Genesis 2, the lack of partnership that the animals offer Adam (and interestingly, Adam seems to be the one to judge or determine this) (Genesis 2:20) continues the suggestion of humanocentric control from Genesis 1. This, for Haraway, is the mark of the ‘sky god; that is the Anthropos’, who is the sole agent against ‘all others in the prick tale [who] are props, ground, plot space, or prey’ (Haraway 2016, p.

<sup>4</sup> I want to declare here that whilst it is important to acknowledge this position as part of the history of contemplation of human-animal relationships; it is one that I strongly advocate a critique of. Scientists are beginning to realise this critique by noting conscious and reflexive processes of animals: pigs have been discovered as having emotional intelligence, for example, and fish have been found to feel pain, both of which are indicators of more complex living systems than we had previously assumed of such nonhuman species, among countless others. However, it should be noted that assessments of animals on the basis of human attributes such as human levels of cognition or humanocentric notions of consciousness are an ‘outworking’ of human criteria that are used to gauge and assess ‘right’ conduct to other species, but that concomitantly figure animals as objects of relationships steered by human subjects. This overlooks the value of animals in their own right, and is something that we should be more aware of in assessing and reflecting on our relationships, which I argue here, particularly in this and the next section.

<sup>5</sup> For example, for Kant, how we treat animals is only a significant consideration insofar as harm to an animal may reveal something about the perpetrator as able to harm a human. The moral emphasis is here clearly given to the human subject rather than the animal object. This is, furthermore, an exemplification of ethical outworking discussed in the previous section.

<sup>6</sup> In Genesis 1, however, humans are created last as the pinnacle of creation, and so the hierarchy premised on creation sequence is open to interpretation: an interesting point for debates on evolution and trans-/posthumanism. Are the creators or the created to be more elevated?

<sup>7</sup> Where dominion expresses a sense of control, it arguably becomes ‘domination’, which highlights the anthropocentrism and orderings of creatures and wider creation to the human. (This raises theological issues about the place of God in such a system: is creation ordered to God ‘through’ the human, or indeed is this a model of a deistic ‘marginalisation’ of God?) (White Jr 1967; Moltmann 1985; Wirzba 2015)

39). The destruction and suffering that humans inflict upon the passive ‘other’ of animals or nature (demonstrated, for example, by anthropogenic climate change) reveals the shortcomings of perceiving humans as made in the image of the sky god.

Who is the ‘sky god’, though, that Haraway refers to? In one sense, it seems to be a figure, or, given that Haraway elsewhere discusses figures as rich and nuanced beings to think with (1997, pp. 11, 43–44), perhaps more accurately it is a symbol. The sky god functions for Haraway as a simplified version of the creator God, who is separate from His created order. As such, He is the distant God who becomes part of a story:

The story of Species Man as the agent of the Anthropocene is an almost laughable rerun of the great phallic humanising and modernising Adventure, where man, made in the image of a vanishing god, takes on superpowers in his secular-sacred ascent, only to end in tragic detumescence, once again. (Haraway 2016, pp. 47–48)

The sky god here ultimately corresponds to (dreams of) the power to create—and furthermore for the male to create alone, without animal or female partnership,<sup>8</sup> contra to that which is emphasised by Genesis 2:18–25—but it is realised in the saga of human-animal relations as destruction. When we try to image or imitate that idol, we realise that our humanocentric way of perceiving the world does not accord with the relations and processes that surpass us. The sky god, we might say, is a false idol: it is a myth that legitimises a certain understanding of the human, but this theology-turned-anthropology (Feuerbach 1989) does damage to other species and, eventually, to humans. For Haraway, such damage demonstrates our connectivity with and responsibility to other terran beings (Haraway 2016, p. 53), which is what we should focus on rather than the symbol and story of the sky god that intertwines with notions of human difference and dominance.

Instead of moral agency that distinguishes humans from animals predicated on ‘conscious’ action, then, Haraway argues more in favour of affective agency that emphasises ‘conscientious’ action. Across Haraway’s work and particularly in her later writings, she refers to this as ‘response-ability’, which draws closely upon inescapable ontological relationality: ‘Leaks and eddies are everywhere. These leaks and eddies might help open passages for a praxis of care and response—response-ability—in ongoing multispecies worlding on a wounded terra’ (Haraway 2016, p. 105). By noting the continuities of kind among chthonic ones, Haraway develops an understanding of kin, wherein all are partners are inescapably involved and invested in shaping and reshaping histories through responses and ongoing (re)actions. This is profoundly different to the separation of humans and animals that we are more typically accustomed to in thought and practice in the so-called Anthropocene, which is fashioned in the image of the sky god (Haraway 2016, pp. 47–48).

<sup>8</sup> The theme of ‘unnatural’ or ‘supernatural’ (i.e. divine) male creation of/via technology that shortcuts or circumvents ‘natural’ procreation between a man and a woman is a common one in many sci-fi narratives, and it traces back to Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*. It is notably highlighted in Danny Boyle’s stage adaptation, where the doctor is confronted by his wife for his folly with unnatural means of creation. More recently, it appears in *Blade Runner 2049*, the sequel to the original 1982 film, in which a (supposedly) human male and artificial female (i.e. mechanical, Replicant) produce an uncanny offspring, thereby questioning the dialectic of self and other as Derrida did, but here concerning technicity rather than animality.

Yet, Haraway's construal of the anthropocentric, androcentric 'sky god' is not, on closer inspection, fully theologically corroborated; pertinent to this investigation, it is not a reading of God, imaged and revealed by humans, that is necessarily espoused by Genesis 2. We have already noted the lack of direct reference there to *imago dei*, which seems to be the concept that is at the forefront of Haraway's critique of ideals of humans as 'tumescent' beings in the image of the sky god. We have also begun to note the significance of partnership for that text, denoted by *God's* recognition (not Adam's, although it is also evidently possible to read Adam as the leading actor in this text) of the need for Adam to have a helper or partner (Genesis 2:18). In theological terms, this can be aligned with a view of 'creatureliness'. This means acknowledging that humans were created, by God, among other animals. Andrew Linzey is an advocate of creatureliness, and he critiques what he regards as the dominant reading of Genesis seen through an Aristotelean lens (Linzey 1994, p. 18) by appealing to the ambiguities of the text, which Haraway seems to overlook with her references to the sky god that, given its anthropocentrism, amounts to a straw man. For Linzey, 'the common origin of all creatures is a doctrine that carries with it implications and consequences which so far only a few in the Christian tradition have fully appreciated' (1994, p. 11).

This position better accords with Genesis 2, which describes how Adam was made 'from the dust of the ground' (Genesis 2:7), and animals were too (Genesis 2:19).<sup>9</sup> Commonality is highlighted here over difference, and it suggests a different kind of theological anthropology, one of connectivity rather than separation. One way of articulating this is, as Jurgen Moltmann puts it, to see humans as made not only in the image of God but additionally in the image of the world (*imago mundi*) (Moltmann 1985). Here, the earthly is foregrounded over the godly, similar to Haraway's search for a 'hardy, soiled kind of wisdom' (2016, p. 117) that, like her chthonic figures, comes from the mud rather than the sky (2016, p. 11). Earth, as we have seen, is a crucial part of Haraway's terran chthulucene, and it is also, in spite of Haraway's resistance to theological doctrines, important in theological appeals to creatureliness. Keeping feet, paws, and claws on the ground is a strong leveller, and this demands a focus not on human ability or power, but on response to chthonic ones: in sum, chthulucene responsibility.

## Rethinking Posthuman Partnership: Kin(d)

What can we learn about human-animal relationality and partnership from a comparative reading of Genesis 2 and the chthulucene? Rather than being prescriptive, the following suggestive reflections are intended to open new lines of enquiry to sustain the fruitful and emerging dialogue between theology (specifically theological anthropology) and posthumanism (or even, as Haraway would have it, 'compost' and 'humusities' (2016, p. 32)). To be sure, I want to argue in favour of partnership, whilst recognising

<sup>9</sup> To be sure, Adam was additionally given the 'breath of life' to become a 'living being' (Genesis 2:7), but given that animals are also referred to as 'living creatures' (Genesis 2:19), one can deduce that they were also imbued with the breath of life (Genesis 1:30). Otherwise, it would be tempting to conclude with Descartes that animals are machinelike automata, although this would open up a further conversation about the inertness and liveliness of machines, which Haraway is certainly unafraid of doing (1991, p. 152), noting that machines are even livelier than humans; hence, the border crossings of her hybrid and cyborg world.



the difficult and ongoing work that is conceptually and pragmatically required. Full partnership with animals is not a given; neither, however, is power over them, and so our best practices should involve tracing the contours of traditions that steer our sense of relationality.

The legacy of Genesis 2 that manifests in our times and in the chthulucene demonstrates the importance of that text alongside other theological and mythical narratives and traditions. It shows that both sky god thinking and muddy connections are possible, but both can have a tendency to be too utopian (Haraway 2016, p. 114), in spite of Haraway's calls to reject the allure of distant or blissful utopian thinking (2016, p. 1). Thus, we need to reconnect horizontal lines of kinship with new models and understandings of 'vertical' relationality in order to develop a more fruitful attitude to partnership in our own times. Haraway's chthulucene is an excellent tool for grappling with horizontal relationality, but theological perspectives are necessitated in order to rethink so-called sky gods and creatureliness, in order to avoid problematic hierarchical models or categorical separations of kind that are detrimental to acknowledgements of kin. In other words, if Haraway is right that a problematic theology is behind a problematic anthropocentrism, then efforts must be made to explore that theological position.

By reading Genesis 2, a theological text, alongside the chthulucene, a secular text,<sup>10</sup> new connections can be made. Namely, by observing how Adam can be interpreted as human, posthuman, and compost, we can appreciate the nuances of the text and its sensitivity to our interpretations. Each of these interpretations suggests different models of partnership with God, humans, and animals. In order to make sense of these models, though, we require theological resources alongside critical theory. While Haraway is selective in her interpretation of Genesis motifs by highlighting the earthly yet disposing of the sky god, theologians call attention to the figure of God behind human, animal, world, and indeed all of creation. Alternative theological positions here may generate ongoing stories that resist anthropocentrism, but that teach us how to—responsibly (response-ably)—‘stay with the trouble’.

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<sup>10</sup> The theological overtones of the chthulucene have been noted here, making its secularity debatable. Overall, Haraway's worldly and terran emphasis at the expense of any transcendence renders it justifiably 'secular', and indeed Haraway relegates 'belief' outside of the chthulucene (2016: 88)—erroneously, in my view. This point should not detract from more nuanced statements such as reference to Adam as humus, which serves as an important 'grounding' for compost and partnership among chthonic ones.

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NB. All biblical citations and references are taken from NRSV, with the exception of reference to Koine Greek, which is taken from SBLGNT.