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Author[s]: Ali Zamanpour

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Creatureliness and Planetary Decadence in Rawi Hage's *Carnival*

Ali Zamanpour

Rawi Hage's illustration of the creaturely interdependence of humans in his 2013 novel Carnival emphasizes the vulnerability of the city's underclass. Hage locates his postmodern subjects by imagining the figures of the displaced as urban insects/ animals, and creating an epistemological shift and a step beyond the traditional engagement with 'cosmopolitanism'. The metropolis in Carnival plays the role of an ecosphere wherein animals and insects crawl, hunt, and survive. Carnival considers the 'creatureliness' of human beings and the human-animal relations as a shared embodiedness. Hage focuses on their mutual vulnerability in the decaying world not by idealizing the appeal to nature, but by imagining an innovative perspective on the city's decadence, its socioeconomic stratifications and the precarious condition of urban marginality. Carnival's setting is a human-disturbed environment, and the story is an original narration into the relation between capitalist destruction and collaborative survival of the underlying pervasive animalistic life within the city.

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Within the context of migrant literature, planetary thinking investigates innovative epistemic forms that are derived from new enunciative positions, and suggests critical reflections on the future possibilities of human subjectivity and actions. In this sense, Rawi Hage's *Carnival* (2013) does not give a new definition to humanity; rather, Hage's third novel is more a reflection on the possibility of living without or beyond such notions when being human—as a distinct form of existence, as a pure form of being—is no longer a possible or preferable option. In the context of Anthropocene, as Neimanis, Asberg and Hedren claim, 'we no longer have the luxury of imagining humanness and culture as distinctly separate from nature, matter, and worldliness'.¹ Hage's investments in the antinomy of human and animal, civilization, and barbarism promise a fusion and re-birth that are also present in Modern Decadence.² Planetary Decadence, in such sense, indexes ironically to the In-between location of the Other in urbanized cosmopolitan spaces—only it does not react to such marginalization. Instead, it waits and prepares for a symbolic inversion to come.

¹ Astrida, Neimanis, Cecilia Asberg, and Johan Hedren. "Four Problems, Four Directions, for Environmental Humanities: Toward Critical Posthumanities for the Anthropocene", *Ethics & the Environment*, 20.1 (2015), p. 68.

² See for instance Renato Poggioli, "Modernism and Decadence", *The Poets of Russia 1890-1930* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1980), p.46-88 for the theoretical frame of reference on the avant-garde and Decadence and the connections between Decadence and modernism.

The revived interest in rhizomatic³ forms of self-representation with regard to *littérature migrante*, *autofiction*, or even the Bildungsroman, reflects on progressive forms of self-realization that is oriented from inside-out, rather than from outside-in.⁴ Nevertheless, such representation moves toward the lived experience of the subject through constant ‘stuttering’, and by avoiding distortion and calcification. Hage’s novels do not have a prescribed wholesale ideology, and do not follow the policy of emancipation through positive image, yet the characters seem real and open to question. In this narrative, the rhizomatic movements enable new mapping models with multiple non-hierarchical entry and exit points. Relevant to this, Judith Butler also addresses the crossing out of the subject’s experience in the traditional forms of knowledge production and the (im)possibility of living with the notion that one’s love is not considered love, and one’s loss is not considered loss, or living an unrecognizable life: ‘If what and how you love is already a kind of nothing or nonexistence, how can you possibly explain the loss of this non-thing, and how would it ever become publicly grievable?’⁵ The subject’s decision to negotiate and to reconcile with the ‘mourning’ experience is a clear territorial attempt to recapture sovereignty over one’s meaning. In this way, Hage’s story-telling simultaneously preserves the agency of his marginalized subjects and evaluates their modes of existence.

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The Circus in *Carnival*, the protagonist’s place of birth and upbringing, can no longer afford to feed its animals and its people. As a result, the strongman of the circus declares: ‘The world has gone mad and our way of life was bound to change’.⁶ The idea of change in the way of life starts with Hage’s revisiting human-animal relations. Agamben’s reading of Heidegger and his notion of ‘creatureliness’ or creaturely life evokes the same sentiment and focuses on ‘the peculiar proximity of the human to the

³ In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari introduce the terms ‘rhizome’ and ‘rhizomatic’ as opposed to root and ‘arborescent’. ‘A rhizome as subterranean stem is absolutely different from roots and radicals’ (6). Deleuze and Guattari use the concept of rhizome mostly to describe multiplicities that are heterogeneous and demonstrate movement, becoming, evasion, and breakout (7). Gilles, Deleuze and Felix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi, (London: Minnesota UP 1987)

⁴ The grounded Perspective in postcolonial, and migrant literature for instance in the works of V.S. Naipaul, Ravi Hage, Chris Abani, and Édouard Glissant or even indigenous writers such as Leslie Marmon Silko, and Thomas King set the tone for a new debate that does not ‘speak for’ or ‘speak about’ the Other’s experience but engages in alternative forms of ‘listening’ that as Bignall and Patton suggest capture the heterogeneity and irreducibility of the lived experience of the subject ‘on its own term’ (Bignall and Patton 3).

⁵ Judith Butler, ‘Performativity, Precarity and Sexual Politics’, *Revista de Antropologia* (Madrid : 2009), p.13.

⁶ Ravi Hage, *Carnival* (Toronto: House of Anansi. 2012), p.156.

animal at the very point of their radical difference'.⁷ Eric Santner views such decadence into creaturely life not only as 'man's thrownness into the (enigmatic) "openness of being" but as an "exposure to a traumatic dimension of political power and social bonds whose structures have undergone radical transformations in modernity".⁸ The Circus, for Hage, represents a place of refuge for the rejected; its unsustainability suggests a creaturely descent into an underprivileged life. It also exemplifies how the idea of the human/animal binary can be put into question. *Carnival* involves marginal sites in an imaginary metropolis where individuals are depleted or bored from a political existence that distinguishes their humanly existence from animality. Hage uses anthropomorphisms to metaphorize human relations: e.g., he categorizes taxi drivers into spiders who wait for their prey and flies, who are aimless wanderers in search of a passenger.⁹

The cynical first-person narration illustrates urban life from the ironic and reflective distance of an anti-hero called Fly. He is a taxi driver who drives 'the poor, drunk, and unwashables' as well as the drug dealers, and the deviants.¹⁰ He makes his 'own laws to encourage people to flee their confinements and chains'.¹¹ Such an enunciative position draws upon a framework that moves beyond epistemological monoculture and critically engages with the notion of cosmopolitanism. This particular detail about the nature of the protagonist's work reaches into the central concern of the novel, which is a larger philosophical question of being and the ethics of survival. George Buchner, in *Lenz*, depicts such an epistemic shift as a descent 'into the life of the humblest person and reproduce all the twitches, all the winks, all the subtle, barely noticed play of facial features'.¹² It also has 'the eyes and ears' to capture 'the pulse of feeling running through nearly everyone'.¹³ This narrative does not proceed through a neo-platonic transcendence between humans and gods, or an Abrahamic portrait of the human in the 'image of God', a creation ready to consume lesser creatures. Becoming-animal is a form of planetary alliance not only as an aesthetic touch but as a fall from heaven to earth, from

⁷ Eric Santner, L. *On Creaturely life: Rilke, Benjamin, Sebald* (Chicago and London: Chicago UP 2005), p. 12.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁹ It is worth noting that in this contemporary Hage is not the only writer or artist who is uncertain about the frontiers between animals and humans. In the contemporary context of the novel, there would appear to be an anxiety within artistic portrayals of distinctions between humanity and animality. For example, it is the reminiscent of Bêtes Off, the exhibition of the strange animals created by various artists in the Paris Conciergerie on March 2011. The Artists reflect upon the possibility of a harmonious coexistent of the animals and humans, or the troubling mixture of animal, human, and machine or their biological proximity. Some artists capture animalesque affects, or become animals or meet them half way.

¹⁰ Hage, *Carnival*, p. 9

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

¹² George, Buchner. *Lenz*. Translated by Richard Sieburth (Brooklyn: Archipelago Books 2004), p. 8.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.8.

Heidegger to Aristotle,¹⁴ human to animal, and from Language to the affective mapping of the body that acknowledges planetary ‘contradictions, variances, and necessary open-endedness’.¹⁵

Through his particularly jaded perspective, Fly describes another scene in ‘the Dungeon of love’: ‘It was dark inside, but at the entrance there was a large cage with a few men, half-naked, with collars around their necks. They were all behaving like dogs’.¹⁶ There, Fly meets another taxi driver, who describes the people inside in distinctly negative terms: ‘Il sont pourris, mon ami. Une société de chiens. Comme des chiens.’¹⁷ By contrast, Fly sees beyond the surface of the scenes of debauchery, and writes a letter wherein he thanks the establishment for the moving experience, ‘for the opportunity to witness it through this communal tunnel of the senses’, describing it in critically analytical terms:

[...] the necessity of the symbolic and if one so chooses, the experiential as well in the enactment of this lesser existence, the degeneration of all that is tangible, the howl of dogs, the chain of entrapment, the need to personify the fate of men in this inferior world.¹⁸

Through such imagery, Hage brings his readers to what Agamben calls ‘a zone of irreducible indistinction’ where ‘borders begin to be blurred’.¹⁹ For Hage, the carnival as an event creates the moment when the bare lives, or creatures that dwelt in the city, free themselves and ‘[become] both subject and object of the conflicts of the political order, the one place for both the organization of state power and emancipation from it’.²⁰ Certainly, there are differing critical perspectives on accounts of the ‘carnavalesque’, and that multiplicity is present in Hage’s portrayal of carnival. *Carnival’s* open-endedness bears similarities to Kristeva’s apocalyptic seeingness and the literature of abjection.²¹ At the same time, for Hage, ‘becoming animal’ also has a Bakhtinian side, and the Carnavalesque affect is sometimes a revolutionary one.²² Such a mosaic quality, even of its embedded

¹⁴ Agamben refers the Aristotelian definition of the polis as the opposition between life (*Zem*) and good life (*eu zen*) and revisits Foucault’s reading of Aristotle’s definition of man as a “living animal with the additional capacity for political existence (*la volonté* 188)”. Giorgio Agamben. *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Trans. by Daniel-Rozen (Stanford: Stanford UP 1998), p.10.

¹⁵ Neimanis, p. 68.

¹⁶ Hage, *Carnival*, p.69.

¹⁷ (“They are corrupt, my friend. A society of dogs. Like dogs”). Translation mine. *Ibid.*, p.71.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.72.

¹⁹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p.9.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.9.

²¹ In ‘Beneath Lowry’s Carnival: The Abject in *Under the Volcano*’ Andrew McLeod differentiates Bakhtin from Kristeva ‘by understanding Bakhtin’s Carnavalesque to be anchored in the paternal-symbolic, whereas Kristeva’s abject is more concerned with the maternal-semiotic. Andrew McLeod, ‘Beneath Lowry’s The Abject in *Under Volcano*’ *COLLOQUY text theory critique*, 28 (Monash University 2014) p.66

²² In *Rabelais and His World*, Bakhtin reflects on carnival as ‘a kind of safety valve for passions the common people might otherwise direct to revolution’. Mikhail Bakhtin. *Rabelais and His World*. Trans. by Helene Iswolsky (Bloomington: Indiana UP 1984). (Holquist ‘Prologue’ p. xviii)

critical discourse, serves to underpin the novel's central concern with the difficulty of pinning down strict categories, and emphasises the changeable liminality of a writhing urban landscape.

Through its vivid, visceral imagery and emphasis on physicality, *Carnival* makes concretises and makes visible the ideologies, state biopolitics, and 'where power penetrates subject's very bodies and forms of life'.²³ Hage illustrates the fluctuation of his characters between polarized sensations that accumulate their sense of self in the form of *Jouissance* within the economy of pain and pleasure, between pleasure and pain, between liberty and loss, and between the fact that they either consume or will be consumed.²⁴ In one instance, Fly reflects on the meaning of pain and admits that he 'take[s] pleasure in beating men with big inflated muscles'.²⁵ Even if one does not confront the pain directly, Fly acknowledges the idea that 'the suffering of others is enjoyable to watch' and particularly when 'the winner gets to see the loser suffer'.²⁶ He is also concerned that 'there must be some convictions and pleasures involved' when a man 'willingly consents to pain'.²⁷ Fly observes people as 'products and the victims of our upbringing, until we reflect, refuse, and rebel'.²⁸ Through these interludes of self-reflection, Hage suggests a move beyond self-hood entrapped in binaries, like such simultaneous sensations as 'pain and ecstasy'.²⁹ In this sense, the city for Fly is a theatre of *Jouissance* where nothing is 'personal' and everyone seeks a moment of transcendence:

Here, there is nothing personal. But let me assure you, many of the ruling elites of our time can be found here. There is nothing like seeing a judge asking for forgiveness, an evangelist screaming Oh Mercy, or a doctor opening wide.

Everyone loves a comedy, my dear. It is divine.³⁰

Through this perspective, the 'personal' within an urban context is always communal; individual borders do not exist. This can be interpreted on a larger political scale, with Hage depicting urban life within the context of global environmental issues, and reframing it as interpersonal, social, and human challenges that include the bare life that

²³ Ibid., p.10.

²⁴ Braunstein in 'Desire and Jouissance in the Teachings of Lacan' explains that '[I]f desire is fundamentally lack, lack in being, jouissance is positivity, it is 'something' lived by a body when pleasures stops being pleasure. It is a plus, a sensation that is beyond pleasure'. Néstor A. Braunstein. 'Desire and Jouissance in Teachings of Lacan'. *The Cambridge Companion to Lacan*. Edited by Jean-Michel, Rabaté (Cambridge: Cambridge UP 2003), 102- 115 (p.104).

²⁵ Hage, *Carnival*, p.67.

²⁶ Ibid., p.67.

²⁷ Ibid., p.68.

²⁸ Ibid., p.68.

²⁹ Ibid., p.69.

³⁰ Ibid., p.71.

Agamben in *Homo Sacer* locates ‘at the margins of the political order’.³¹ However, it is important to note that the creatureliness in *Carnival* is not merely an attribute of the underclass; the rich also experience another form of transgression, this time through boredom. Kari Løvaas in ‘The Ambiguities of Creatureliness’ investigates the Heideggerian *mood* that comes closest to this muted lamenting of the creature, as profound boredom. In Agamben’s words, ‘the man who becomes bored finds himself in the “closest proximity” — even if it is only apparent — to animal captivity’.³² In a particular example within the novel, a client responds to Fly’s excitement and surprise when he finds a pinball machine in an underground sado-masochistic sex club: ‘That is for the bored, the rejected, those who have become immune to life’s joys.’³³ Hage implies that ‘the bored’, ‘the rejected’, and the marginalized subjects and rebels (including Fly and the other previously mentioned taxi driver) all fail to take the signifier in its liberating function. They move beyond human existence, and therefore find their way beyond the symbolic.

* * *

In an important distinction from the border-blurring cityscape to which Fly belongs, human beings in *Carnival* are world-forming, but always in malicious ways. Fly encounters the CEO of a large mining company, a man who pillages the world, and pollutes villages and rivers with poisonous liquids. His brush with the CEO is permeated with species and class tensions. The CEO sues another taxi driver (a spider) for reckless driving and endangering his spoiled children; Fly attempts and fails to negotiate a deal for his fellow taxi driver. One of the CEO’s guards, a gorilla, escorts Fly out of the building. In this series of events, Fly describes his moment of viewing behind ‘the ruthless gates’, ‘those glass citadels and towering dungeons’, which home the corrupt rulers of the world, and their ‘meek creatures, hunchbacked servants, and diabolic yes-men’ who are conspiring against the planet and ‘carrying out orders to steal the sugar cane from the land and the water from the underground, a murderous waltz that will never stop until they dig out the last meal from the bellies of the poor’.³⁴ In this invective, Fly positions himself in opposition to powerful, monumental capitalist machinery. However, his reactions are

³¹ Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, p.9.

³² Giorgio Agamben. *The Open: Man and Animal*. Trans. by the Board of Trustees. (Stanford: Stanford UP 2004), p. 65.

³³ Hage, *Carnival*, p. 70.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.197.

isolated movements and ‘minor gestures’.³⁵ He remains in a state of observation and viewership, presenting images to the reader; larger movements toward a symbolic deterritorialization are slow-going, and contrast with the active body of the impulsive revolutionaries who also populate *Carnival’s* landscape.

By depicting the ineffectiveness of individual action, Hage highlights the embedded nihilism of the world that Fly inhabits. Hage uses the liminality of a professional clown dressed as a giraffe as an enunciative point to express the ‘sadness of being’. The clown acknowledges that ‘it doesn’t fit into low-ceilinged houses or basements. Always bowing its head, always feeling big and small’.³⁶ The metaphoric ‘unfitting’ existence of the marginalized precarious subject in giraffe’s costume illustrates its ambivalent relation with consumption and biopolitics. What follows is a kind of bestialization of man achieved through the symbolic metamorphosis during the city’s carnival. Hage does not divide society into categories of life; he depicts his dystopia as a jungle where the metaphorical consumption of the weaker animals by the strong ones will end up in actual cannibalism. It is also a moment of rebirth with an open-endedness metaphorized in the protagonist’s flying carpet and moments of unchaining and liberation.

For Hage, the acts of cannibalism are not necessarily the end of civilization as we know it—‘[a]ll empires are hungry cannibals’³⁷—, maintaining that ‘cannibalism was an undeniable part of our past’.³⁸ Instead, Hage creates moments of primal fear and invests in his reader’s bodily affect toward moments of escape, moments of refusal, and moments of rebellion. In Kristeva’s terms, he is assuming a double stance between the affects of disgust and laughter, and apocalypse and carnival. Within the novel, the rebellious action of Otto (one of the aforementioned ‘impulsive revolutionaries’ who stands in contrast with Fly) is just futile violence rather than a legitimate means of escape. The problem with impulsive, sudden action is depicted in his angry, animalistic lapse in self-control: Otto accidentally kills a French journalist over a minor dispute regarding Camus and Algeria, while forcing him to repeat: ‘My country is not civilized, my country is not civilized, I am not civilized, I am not civilized, Camus was not civilized’.³⁹ *Carnival* takes an ironic turn and constructs an uncanny enunciative position in an echo of the cold-blooded murder

³⁵ A minor gesture ‘activates the collectivity at the heart of thought effects change. It affects not only what the text can become: it alters to the core what thinking can do. It gives value to the processual uncertainty of thoughts as yet unformed and gives that thought the space to develop collectively’. Erin Manning, *The Minor Gesture* (London: Duke UP 2016), p. x.

³⁶ Hage, *Carnival*, p.143-144.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.208.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.276.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 213.

that takes place in Camus' *The Stranger*. The two extremes of 'primitivism' and modernism create a line of escape from the collapse of a former cultural order and the ruins of capitalism. In this moment, Hage follows 'the task of Decadence' firstly in its 'denial of culture', and secondly, in what Zurbrugg calls 'a kind of re-cultivation of – or from – such ruins'.⁴⁰ As a result, the 'new' emerges from both minoritarian and cosmopolitan limits.

To draw upon Homi Bhabha's terminology, in Fly's world of flux and unclear boundaries, he seems to seek a 'Third Space' for the production of meaning, a space that inhabits 'the hybrid moment of political change'. It is crucial that he seeks it outside the collective experience of nationness and 'ethnic' or religious community interest.⁴¹

The wider significance of the postmodern condition lies in the awareness that the epistemological 'limits' of those ethnocentric ideas are also the enunciative boundaries of a range of other dissonant, minority discourses, even dissident histories and voice–women, the colonized, minority groups, the bearers of policed sexualities...⁴²

For Bhabha, 'vernacular cosmopolitanism' or, as Kristeva puts it, 'wounded cosmopolitanism', involves 'conditions of duress or distress', and activities 'driven by survival—economic, political, cultural—not sovereignty'. It represents 'a subaltern agency of translation'⁴³ that 'measures global progress from the minoritarian perspective'.⁴⁴

Ironically (and somewhat cynically), Fly's desire for escape and movement toward 'the hybrid moment of political change' manifests on a personal level through the self-contained act of masturbation. The image of a flying carpet and masturbation are entangled, and suggest a departure from social descent into moments of euphoria by imagining mobility: '[E]very morning I open my palm towards the sun, lie down on my father's carpet, and happily masturbate'.⁴⁵ Fly's flying carpet, Hage's metaphorical cultural construct, has its own enunciative possibilities and limits. The fictive side of Hage's stories only offers an image of what can be imagined. Fly also masturbates to the thought of his 'father on his camel crossing the world'⁴⁶ on one of his 'non-flying carpets'.⁴⁷

⁴⁰ Nicholas, Zurbrugg. 'Beyond Decadence: Huysmans, Wilde, Baudrillard and Postmodern Culture', *Romancing Decay: Ideas of Decadence in European Culture*. Ed. by Michael, John St. (New York: Ashgate 1999), p. 212.

⁴¹ Homi K. Bhabha. *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 6.

⁴² Ibid., p.6.

⁴³ Anthony K. Appiah and Homi Bhabha. 'Cosmopolitanism and Convergence'. *New Literary History*. 49.2. (Spring 2018), p. 188.

⁴⁴ Homi, K. Bhabha. *The Location of Culture*. p. xvi.

⁴⁵ Hage, *Carnival*, p. 16.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 28.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 27.

Fly's imagination is another example of what Bryden, Deleuze, and Forster all refer to as '*le mouvement immobile*'.⁴⁸ This distinction between movement and mobility is significant; Fly's father riding a camel (and simultaneously *becoming* camel) suggests that he would never '[survive] his journey back' as 'a camel is a highly visible animal'. Fly observes that 'Camels can't hide, camels are too sluggish to fly, and too patient, too curious, too opinionated, and too stubborn a creature to kneel for robbers, fall to dictators, or flee the cold'.⁴⁹ By contrast, Fly would rather take 'refuge between the monkeys and the dogs'; he immerses himself in masturbatory ideas and refuses to be saved.⁵⁰

The desire for motion and mobility in *Carnival* can be identified in Hage's metaphorical usage of the term 'planemo'.⁵¹ Hage introduces not an imaginary planet, but a rogue and wandering one. He foresees dark biopolitics in every 'imaginary' utopian picture. The professor Alberto Manuel, one of Fly's mentors in *Carnival*, describes the idea of wandering planets. They are exiled bundles of matter that wander the universe. These objects have no orbits and no host stars to orbit around; they are aimless, wandering and lost. One might envision the planemo as the vision of a decadent planet, confusing and chaotic. But most crucially, Hage maintains that freedom (and freedom to wander) is the planet's most essential feature.⁵² Returning to his tendency toward motion and transport, Fly believes that he is here now and that one day he will leave 'just like the butterfly leaves, never demanding anything more than the air it has touched with its own wings'.⁵³ With the juxtaposition of physicality and metaphysical moments that Fly describes, *Carnival* depicts a re-embodiment of the transcendental ego into an other-than-human self.

Ultimately, Hage's liminal world of organisms in a fluctuating, changeable cityscape questions the generic figure of the human and identifies a crisis in conceptualizing a universalized human mode. The importance of questioning such a concept is articulated in Rosi Braidotti's *Nomadic Theory*. Braidotti claims that the idea of universal man is based on the urbanized, heterosexual, European male body who is still

⁴⁸ As Deleuze points out in his essay on T. E. Lawrence, Lawrence's writing itself unfolds like a camel ride, with unpredictable speeds, slownesses, spurts, and stoppages.[...] Citing the reactions of E. M. Forster to the spasmodic dynamic of Lawrence's text, expressed in a 1924 letter, Deleuze observes: 'Forster remarque qu'on n'a jamais rendu le mouvement avec si peu de mobilité, par une succession de positions immobiles' ('La honte et la gloire' 149) Forster remarks that never has movement been rendered with so little mobility, by a succession of immobile positions]. French translated by Bryden. Bryden, Mary. *Gilles Deleuze: Travels in Literature*. (Hampshire: Palgrave 2007), p. 11.

⁴⁹ Hage, *Carnival*, p. 28.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁵¹ The term 'planemo' is short for 'planetary-mass object', and was introduced by astrophysicist Gibor Basri.

⁵² Hage, *Carnival*, p. 223.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.175.

the centre of the humanities, and, therefore, the racialized, sexualized, and naturalized others were never fully human in the eyes of the state.⁵⁴ For Hage, the unchaining from this universal mode of ‘man’⁵⁵ happens not in the search of an hyper-individual subject, but in connecting with forms of vulnerability. Hage articulates a voice from dark corners of the city, a voice that finds escape from the material dynamism of the body and its accompanying creatureliness, toward an unimagined future—a creaturely descent that perforates the human-animal binary, and moves toward non-human, and other-than-human epistemologies.

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⁵⁴ Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Theory: The Portable Rosi Braidotti* (New York: Columbia UP 2011), p. 133.

⁵⁵ Brian Massumi makes a very similar argument regarding the Deleuzian ‘Molar man’. Brian, Massumi. *A Users Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Deviation from Deleuze and Guattari* (Cambridge: The MIT Press 1992), p.121-122.

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