Corporal Fluidity and Virtual Bodies: Posthuman Disembodiment in Greg Egan's Diaspora

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Abstract

Posthumanism redefines the 'human' as a messy congeries co-evolving with other life forms and technology embodied in the environment. The idea of the disintegration of the human body or the fading importance of corporality when seamlessly interfaced with artificial machine is one the most explored themes in the cyberpunk science fiction novels. Emphasizing on the irrelevance of physical embodiment in the posthuman context, this paper will argue that the various posthuman figures of Greg Egan's cyberpunk novel Diaspora through their virtual existence have transformed themselves into Deluze and Guattari's concept of Bodies without Organs. The paper shall also refer to Katherine Hayles theory of embodiment and materiality to show that the BwO of the novel defy the traditional enclosed form of subjectivity and proposing instead a body with distributed self that is open to transversal exchange of information across borders of organic forms life as well as inorganic systems.

Keywords

Body without Organs (BwO), Cyberpunk, Posthumanism, Science fiction, Body, Embodiment

Whenever the idea of the posthuman body is discussed primarily two approaches comes into considerations— one being the biological modifications of the body such as cloning, xenotransplantation, organ transplantation or other procedures of genetic engineering; and the second being the cybernetic augmentations of the human body or the creation of artificial life. According to Hayles, "both the sites have been deeply influenced by thinking of the human/body as information: biology, through seeing DNA as a informational code; cybernetics, through envisioning systems as constituted by the flow of information through them" [1, p.241-2]. Thus, in the post human age there is no essential difference between

"bodily existence and computer simulation, cybernectic mechanism and any biological organism" [2, p.242], since their common basic unit of composition is information. The advent of informatics and cybernetics has destabilized the coherence of human bodies and humanity itself because both machines and human body are reduced to informational pattern which is common to every substrate.

Recent theories of the posthuman have questioned the uniqueness of the essential human subject by considering the human body not as a coherent whole but as a messy congeries augmented by various technological and scientific modifications. Human body is not seen as mere conglomeration of flesh, blood and organs but the body is seen as a site of informational units which is common to every substrate. This idea of the disintegration of the human body or the fading importance of corporality when seamlessly interfaced with artificial machine is one the most explored themes in the cyberpunk science fiction novels. Emphasizing on the irrelevance of physical embodiment in the posthuman context, this paper will argue that the various posthuman figures of Greg Egan's cyberpunk novel *Diaspora* through their virtual existence have transformed themselves into Deluze and Guattari's concept of Bodies without Organs. The paper shall also refer to Katherine Hayles theory of embodiment and materiality to show that the BwO of the novel defy the traditional enclosed form of subjectivity and proposing instead a body with distributed self that is open to transversal exchange of information across borders of organic forms life as well as inorganic systems.

Greg Egan's novel Diaspora is a hard Science Fiction novel that presents a posthuman society set in the future 2975 in Earth as well as in Space. The novel depicts a future where humanity is divided into three distinct races—Citizens, Gleisner and Fleshers. The Citizens are posthuman beings in the form of disembodied digital electronic entities who resides in their virtual cyberspace hidden underground beneath the deep layers of the Earth. They willingly left their physical form by taking part in the event called 'Introdus', to transform themselves into their present form as digital entities. The fleshers were the biological descendants of the Homo-Sapeins who unlike the citizens did not abandon their corporeal form but with the help of various exuberant have undergone various physical and genetic modifications. The fleshers community although very few still inhabited the surface of the Earth which was once the epitome of technologically advance civilization. But the pre-Introdus Earth was destructed with the outbreak of 'memes', called the Replicators that "Distorted whole nations' economies. It had hooks into everything: sexuality, tribalism, half a dozen art forms

and subcultures... it parasited the fleshers so thoroughly you had to be some kind of desert monk to escape it" [3 p.61]. The Gleisners are artificial intelligence-based robots with human consciousness contained inside artificial physical bodies. The tittle Diaspora refers to the fleet of interstellar spacecrafts carrying thousands of cloned Citizens to explore the space in search of any alien life forms existing in faraway planets beyond dimensions that could accommodate the remaining humanity to survive.

This paper will argue how the posthuman figures in Greg Egan's cyberpunk science fiction novel *Diaspora* have eliminated the prerequisite of a physical embodiment and transcends the bodily boundaries to achieve a disembodied notion of the posthuman body —body as a messy congeries augmented by various technological and scientific modifications. The paper will demonstrate how in the posthuman world of the novel *Diaspora* the human body is not seen as mere conglomeration of flesh, blood and organs but body seen as a site of information. It will also show that in posthuman world of Egan's novel the humans have metamorphosized themselves into Gilles Dele uze and Felix Guattari [4] concept of Body without Organs, by opening up their body to whole new world of connections and networks.

The term posthuman gained prominence in cultural theory through Ihab Hassan's 1977 essay, "Prometheus as a Performer: Towards a postmodern culture". He writes, "We need to first understand that the human form [...] may be changing radically, and must be revisioned. We need to understand that five hundred years of humanism is coming to an end, as humanism transforms itself into something that we must helplessly call posthumanism [...] and the human nature itself is still evolving. Posthuman philosophy must now address artificial intelligence - which is no more a figment of science fiction – it is alive in our mind" [5, p.212].

Posthumanism as a critical discourse disrupts the dualism that forms core of the Humanist discourse. According to the praxis of modern humanist ideal, the category of 'human' is perceived as universally rational, coherent and liberal being. But this idea of 'man' as an all-knowing, self-conscious being at the center is not universal at all since it excludes all other non-human forms of life ---organic, inorganic, mechanical, artificial--- from its ambit. Moreover, this classical ideal of man is constructed through the system of differentiation where any other form was seen as the negative counterpart of the Humanist subject "These are the sexualized, racialized and naturalized others, who are reduced to the less than human

status of disposable bodies. We are all humans, but some of us are just more mortal than others" [6, p.15].

The term BwO is appropriated from Antonin Artaud's 1947 radio play [7] *To Have Done With the Judgement of God.* Where he states:

"Man is sick because he is badly constructed

We must decide to strip him in order to scratch out this animalcule

Which makes him itch to death,

God,

And with God

his organs.

For tie me down if you want to,

but there is nothing more useless than an organ.

When you will have made him a body without organs,

Then you will have delivered him from all his automatic reactions

And restored him to his true freedom

Then you will teach him again to dance wrong side out

As in frenzy of dance halls

And this wrong side will be his real place" [7]

Artaud is seen yearning for a unique kind of disorganized body which could only free him from the physical torments associated with the conventional body. Artaud concept is crucial in the formulation of Deleuze and Guattari's sense of the term. Body without Organs for D&G is the all the possibilities that an organic body can do but is restricted from achieving that state because of the pre-given structure of an organism. The basis of BwO lies in understanding how the concept of 'desiring-machines' makes an organism. Deleuze and Guattari considers the body as a machine endlessly working with other organ-machines which are forcibly assembled inside an organism to produce, gratify, and mediate the flux of desire as Matt Loder putts it "...everything is to be understood as a machine, from organs through human organs human organism and out into the 'natural' world, all conduits producing, mediating, and interrupting the flows of desire" [8 p,188). Instead of considering the body as a holistic organism, Deleuze and Guattari believes, that there lies an immense array of possibilities for each individual organ-machine parts. Each individual part desires to

produce new event without any goal or end which leads to produce the array of human experiences. Deleuze writes, "Desiring machines makes us organism [...] but at the very heart of this production, the body suffers from being organized in this way, from not having some other sort of organization at all" [8].

According to Deleuze & Guattari the problem that arises from such a biological arrangement of our body is that, with this organized way one cannot escape the mechanism of desiring machines which leads to all suffering. But if the assembling of our body somehow be changed or altered than the overarching mechanism of desiring machines can be subverted. "This is the Body without Organs" writes Lodder "If the rigidly-organized body is the at the root of our of our subjective entrapment in such circumstances, then it becomes possible to imagine that a different kind of body, or a body organized in a different way, must surely provide an escape route". [8, p.189]

Deleuze and Guattari never directly mentioned about any existing relation between their concept of Body-without-Organs and the posthuman exclusively. But since in the context of posthumanism, just like BwO bodies are infinitely malleable and capable of possibilities to be constructed, created, invented in several different ways. This view of the human body as an assemblage of various of mechanical organs and the urge for the dissection/dismantling of the body in attempt to open up to conduits and connections echoes with the posthuman thoughts of hybridity, assemblage, messy congeries: "Dismantling the organism has never meant killing yourself, but rather opening the body to connections that presupposes an entire assemblage, circuits, conjunctions, levels and thresholds, passages and distributions of intensity, and territories and deterritorialization measured with the craft of the surveyor".[4, 160]

The body is far much more than being a just a biological entity, it is treated as a network of assemblage emerging together with technology and environment, with non-human and machine where there is constant transversal flow of in formations and connections between the human (body) and the non-human. Stephen Herbrechter claims that in the contemporary society there is hardly any aspect of human lives that is untouched by technology [9 p 23]. The human species is changing as technologies grow intimately intertwined with human life and human body. Theorist and historian, Walter T. Anderson, also asserts that human society has entered a period of rapid technological change. According to Anderson, "Homo sapiens are going to exit from the 21st century as a considerably different animal from what it was

in the 20th century" [10 p.536]. Donna Haraway in her *Cyborg Manifesto* adds that with the emergence of the posthuman figure, wholly new forms of subjectivity will appear and mutated forms that never existed before will become fleshed reality [11, p.15]. Thus, it can be concluded that technology has led to a gradual metamorphosis of the human body into the posthuman body. Rossi Bardotti asserts that both machines and monsters are hybrid, "because they blur the boundaries of different ontological categories—the human/the non-human, the organic/inorganic other, flesh/metal, the born /the manufactured. She also indicates that technology is the main process or agency that recombines all these categories into a posthuman mix, transforming our conception of what we used to call "living being" [16, p.58].

Katherine N Hayles in her book How We Became Posthuman [2] discusses the effects of techno-science and its effect on the body in the age of digital technology and virtual reality. She insists that in the current era, with the technological and biological intervention there is a longing for erasure of bodily boundaries—to be precise transfigure the body into informational units. She does not consider human body or any other body for that matter only as an organic whole. Rather, she articulates that in the posthuman age, the body is nothing but a configuration of informational pattern that is common to all living as well as non-living entities. She writes: "First the posthuman view privileges informational pattern over material instantiation, so that biological substrate is seen as an accident of history rather than an evitability of life. Second, the posthuman considers consciousness, regarded as the seat of human identity [...] as the whole show when in actually it is only a minor sideshow. Third, the posthuman view thinks of the body as the original prosthesis that we learn to manipulate, so that extending or replacing the body with other prosthetics becomes a continuation of a process that began before we were born. Fourth and the most important, by these and other means, the posthuman view configures human being so that it can be seamlessly articulated with intelligent machines. In the posthuman, there is no essential differences or absolute demarcations between bodily existence and computer simulation, cybernectic mechanism and biological organism, robot teology and human goals." [2, p.2-3]

What Hayles is trying to say the in the posthuman age of informatics consciousness can be reduced to informational pattern which has nothing importantly to do with its embodiment in the human or any form of body whatsoever. This information once abstracted from its material base has the freedom to move freely in the form of a disembodied entity among

different material substrate. Disembodiment from the physical form enables the information to remain uncorrupted or unaltered in its context, hence even surpassing the constraints of time and space. If a disembodiment entity existing in the virtual world increases the chances of accuracy of any organic form, "Why do we need the body's superfluous flesh?" [2, p.13]. Her implications are based on Han Moravec's assumption for the prospect of downloading human consciousness into computers. For Hayles the idea of extraction of the consciousness from the body will be only possible in the realm of virtuality. Such an understanding of body in the context of virtual reality creates not only a scope for an unlimited 'play' with identity and embodiment but also the possibility that material body being replaced by virtual bodies, signaling the advent of disembodied entity [13, p.14]. Hayles is seen critiquing the dualism of mind and body, by asserting that it is the uninterrupted flow of information among different material substrate that erases the essential difference between human or non/human, human or machine. This "dematerialize information technology" [9, p.43] enables human to seamlessly articulate between human and machines where the function of the body is reduced to just being a mere original prosthesis or just a material substrate. Hayles by dismantling the assumption of the liberal human subject through the erasure of embodiment is seen implying for a new form of subjectivity and opens up the possibility "for the posthuman to survive in close circuit with other life forms, humans otherwise embodied and organic" [14, p.76]

Egan's novel primarily focuses on the existence the posthuman life on the earth and their dispersion across universe through the space Odysseus called the Diaspora. This paper will to argue how the posthuman being in the novel demonstrates a mode of existence that is not bounded by the confinements of physical or biological embodiment. The posthuman figures in the novel represents a particular and specific type of body— a disembodied form that is achieved through technological mediation and interaction, they are thus to use Deleuze & Guattari's term Bodies without Organs. According to posthumanism the body is no longer viewed as a bounded entity, but as a network growing together with technology and environment and identity itself materialize as a result of flow of information across different channels. As it is shown in the novel the Citizens surpasses the limitations of the body by residing in the infinite realm of cyberspace. They regard corporality as a restriction and something that they associate with frugality of flesh, which they left behind to be a citizen of the polis, "No wonder most fleshers had stampeded into the polises, once they had the chance: if diseases and ageing was not enough, there was gravity, friction, and inertia. The

physical world was one vast tangled obstacle course of pointless arbitrary, restrictions" [3, p.59]. Instead of having a physical form, each polis citizen identified each other with their characteristic displayed image called the icon. These icons are vital to the citizens and they act as an essential feature of their virtual existence, "the image, each icon here exuded a nongestalt *tag*— a quality like a distinctive odor for a flesher, though more localized, and much richer in possibilities.... every citizen's icon, here comes with a unique and unvarying tag" [3, p.18]. In this sense Egan is seen questioning not only the coherence of the human form but there also suggesting that such a transformation of humans into virtual space constitutes the "digital embodiment" [20]. In the polises unlike any biological reproduction the birth of the genderless posthuman Yatima takes place through a process called orphanogenesis—the creation of new genderless digital beings via non sentient software called conceptory, "In Konishi, every home-born citizen was grown from a mind seed, a string of codes like digital genome. The first mind seed have been translated from DNA nine centuries before, when the polis founders had invented the Shaper programming language to recreate the essential processes of neuroembryology in software." [3, p.5]

Throughout the novel there are various instances where the discomfort of materiality is often expressed by the virtual beings of the polises. As compared to digital space the material world lacks infinite freedom both in terms of space and embodiment as commented by Yatima: "No wonder most fleshers had stampeded into the polishes....if disease and ageing weren't enough, there was gravity, friction and inertia. The physical world was one vast, tangled obstacle course of pointless, arbitrary restrictions". [3, p.59) Such dismissal of corporeal requisite is one of the pervasive themes in science fiction narrative where the physical i.e., existence of the human body vanishes when interfaced with the machines or superfast computers. Posthuman thought considers humans as a constructed category whose identity has always been based on exclusion. Instead, it argues for an identity which manifests itself in close "assemblage and interface" [21, p.5], with animals, machines, and environment. According to Herbrechter the human species is gradually changing to become posthuman. He writes that the field of posthumanism discusses a potential transformation of the human species into something else, something posthuman [9, p.3]. While Donna Harraway [11] writes in her Cyborg Manifesto that the ways in which human lives are intertwined with technology in the twentieth century show that humans have already entered the posthuman era. She dismantles the idea of a sovereign human individual by proposing that the human is in fact a hybrid of machines and the organic body. This implies that a new

conception of what it means to be 'human' has surfaced which goes against traditional humanist definition in the present era of technological innovations. Posthumanism rejects the assumption that humans are separate from other life forms but instead treat human as an "assemblage, co-evolving in conjunction with other life forms, environment and technology" [16, p. 4] Due to such close association of humans with technology and other life forms, the uniqueness of human as a species is challenged. Thus, Herbrechter claims that with the rejection of human as exceptional, the posthuman era marks "the end of human as a biological species and the dissolution of 'human' nature" [9, p.25]. Posthumanism considers how humans live in close conjunction with machines and other organic forms. It studies cultural representation, power relations and discourses which has placed human above other life forms. It proposes a "non-anthropocentric" [16, p.29] view in which human life is enmeshed with many other life forms and technologies. A posthumanism perspective helps in identifying the tension between the human and the non-human. Further it demonstrates how the difference between the two has been strategically placed within the text in order to trouble the essential purity of the categories.

The core argument of posthumanism is that there is no difference between human, machine and environment since they all have informational pattern as their basic unit. What Deleuzian thought adds to this is that beneath all forms of existence there exists a basic mechanistic functional property in all organism and hinting human beings are indistinguishable from the systems and technology they create. The idea of a tangible body is unfamiliar to Yatima and the other posthuman human digital entities of the novel, "In Konishi, the whole idea of solidity, of atavistic delusions of corporeality, was generally equated with obstruction and coercion" [3, p. 73]. The Polis Citizens associates' flesh with decay and fluctuation; and no matter how hard one tries one cannot escape the transient nature of mind and body. For them this ephemeral quality of human plunged them slowly towards their own destruction: "Any citizen with a mind broadly modeled on fleshers was vulnerable to drift: the decay over time or even the most cherished goals. Flexibility was essential part of Fleshers legacy...lest the entire species ossify into tribes of self-perpetuating mono-maniacs, parasite by a handful of memes. It was judged far safer for each citizen to be free to choose from a wide variety of outlooks: software that could run inside your exoself and reinforce the qualities you valued most" [3, p. 47].

The novel thus puts forward the idea that, "The age of the flesh is over" [3, p.132] for it shows the scope of disembodiment in the virtual space called Polises as extensive compared to bodily limitations. Speculating on this issue of elimination of natural or organic body with the advent of technological intervention, Arthur Kroker and Michael Weinstein writes that in the virtual world of computer networks, "Human flesh do not exist" where "the body becomes a passive archive to be processed, entertained, and stockpile [....] and human intelligence is reduced to circulating medium of cybernetics exchange" [17, p.74]

In Diaspora, Greg Egan can be seen juxta positioning the virtual with the physical where materiality is discarded in favor of virtual existence. Orlando Venneti, the former flesher can be considered the only surviving symbol of physical existence in 'reality' even after his transformation into a digital entity he still identifies with his former body needs like emptying his bladder, listening to music, to dream or to give up the possibility of sex. Although he was divorced from such biological imperatives the thought of not involving in this meaningless pleasure is for him still painful: "They revealed nothing, meant nothing, changed nothing. But to excise or disfigure them would have been like taking a knife to his flesh" [3, p.22]. Orlando's act of transformation underlines the relationship between the virtual and the real, materiality and disembodiment. His elimination of flesh-bound existence to revive himself into the world of immortal digital cyberspace proclaims the "bodily obsolesces" [9 p.75] of posthumanism. The bodily boundaries are breached when Orlando's entire organic body is metamorphosed into a single basic unit of information extending him into another realm: "Waves of nanoware were sweeping through Orlando's body, shutting down nerves and sealing off blood vessels to minimize the shock of invasion, leaving behind pink residue on the rumble as flesh. Within seconds, all the waves converged to form a grey mask over his face, which bored down to the skull. The shrinking core of nanoware spat fluid and steam, reading and encoding crucial synaptic properties, compressing brain into eventighter description of itself, discarding redundancies as waste. Inoshiro stood down and picked up the end product: a crystalline sphere, a molecular memory containing snapshot of everything Orlando had been. [3, p.131]

We can see that the organic body and human consciousness of the Fleshers is supplanted via information as bodies. Suggesting the possibility of a boundless, indefinite scope of expanse beyond the realms of reality, Egan's techno utopian cyberspace creates a scope for interaction with the non-human Other Bodies —be it aliens of other dimensions like the Transmuters or

shape shifting entities like Osvalds: "It was a four-legged, four-armed creature, with one arm stretched high above its head. No fingers; perhaps this was a stylized, post-Introdus version of the ancestral form. The tip of one foot was in the sixth macrosphere. The highest point of the Transmuter's raised arm was in the level just beneath them, reaching up. To the infinite number of levels above. To all the worlds it would never see, never touch, never understand" [3, p. 329]

Egan's description of the posthuman Transmuters represents a bridge between the material and the virtual world. The material world called the Microspheres that these Transmuters inhabits resembles the infinity of the cyberspace which comprises of never-ending loops of infinite space or "infinite numbers of levels, an infinite number of extra dimensions. So, every four-dimensional universe interacts with an infinite number of adjacent universes" [3, p.308]. These intelligent alien beings could transcend the material universe and transporting themselves into another dimension beyond the 3-dimensional reality unknown to the Polis citizens, Glesners or the Fleshers: "They'd seen everything they wanted to see in the outside world – they'd risen at least six universes...building abstract scapes, making art, reviewing their history. We will never decipher; we will never know for sure what went on" [3, p.328]. The posthuman entities of Egan's novel have either transcended their corporality and merged themselves into other dimensions like the Transmuters or are in the verge of merging their digital identity into infinite realm of the universe like the Polis citizens. According to Ross Ferral the depiction of a digital space which abstracts "time to space, object to reality, reality to semiosphere, social to mental" becomes a site for the posthuman with "constructivist ontologies" where there is absence of any concrete time and social, or any specific kind of bodies[18, p.78]. Towards the end of the novel Paola, Orlando's son gets the answer that they all been searching for. He delved into the ontological question of 'what makes us human' and concluded that material body is not necessarily the prerequisite for an any entity to call itself a living being. The posthuman Transmuters have in a sense surpassed 'death' as we know it by renunciation of their bodily existence: "The Transmuter didn't die; they played out every possibility within themselves. And I believe I've done the same, or maybe I'm still doing it somewhere. There's nothing more for me. That's not death. Its completion" [3, p.330].

Egan's *Diaspora* can be said to be reflection of the posthuman proposal that the human body cannot be considered as coherent and self-contained, instead the human self is seen

fragmented and fluid evolving in close conjunction with the technology, animals, machines, and environment. Bodies are seen as "messy congeries" where there is always a constant flow of linkage and exchange of information with the external world. This constant exchange establishes "deterritorialization" of subjectivity, meaning that human becoming is a continuing process where there is cross-over, connections across species boundaries, other organisms, environment and genetic identities [16, p. 70-72]. Acknowledging the new interpretations of body in the posthuman context, according to Scott Bukatman, "Human body is no longer simply a repository of soul: it has become a cyborg body", he further adds "in contemporary Sf and horror, the body is narrated as a site of exploration and transfiguration, through which an interface with an electronically-based postmodern experience is inscribed" [19, p.98]. Such a limitless interpretation of the body where it resists the finality of the organism can be anticipated in Deluze and Guattari's concept of Body without Organs. By disassembling the body, BwO is generating the possibility for the body to open itself up to innumerable interconnections and fusions. This body will be a posthuman body that will transcend all traditional concepts of a coherent self with its conventional boundaries. Yatima and the other polis citizen are sans any material repository, yet their posthuman existence proves that they don't have to succumb to totalizing system of any form of organization—they exist as Bodies without Organs. Limitations of physical body doesn't constraint the posthuman subjects of the novel from taking up different forms—they digital entities existing in a infinite realm of virtual world, they are clones dispersed across the outer space, they are machines with consciousness, they are shape shifting entities of multidimensional reality— the possibilities are limitless.

The polis citizens disembodied diffusion into the electronic space not only shows that the body is itself a site of interconnected array of network conversing with technology but also that the dissolution of their body is enroute to the world of virtual which increased their chances of survival even after the Lacerta apocalypse. By taking part in the Diaspora expedition the polis citizens can create multiple forms of themselves through cloning. Thus, there will be a never-ending number of their selves without the fear of 'death' due to age, time, or exhaustions: "When Carter-Zimmerman polish was cloned a thousand times and the clones launched towards a thousand destination, the vast majority of citizens taking part in the Diaspora had sensibly decided to keep all their snapshots frozen until they arrived, side-stepping both tedium and risk. If a snapshot was destroyed enroute without having been run since the instant cloning, that would constitute no loss, no death at all" [3, p.165].

As the novel ends the posthumans settles for a space between the bodiless and materiality by delving into realms of another dimension via cyberspace. It dismisses one of the major elements that characteristically defines being a human i.e. 'the body'. The deliberate losing of the body by the various beings impels us to imagine the dawn of the posthuman highlighting the purpose of the Odysseus journey called the Diaspora. Egan's novel *Diaspora* thus illustrates the posthuman ideal of liberation from the constraints of the conventional notions of the body as Paola comments "we're destined for fragmentation" [3, p.156]. The posthuman entities of the novel can be considered as Body without Organ because they defy any kind of habitual organization of a typical body or the traditional enclosed form of subjectivity and proposing instead a body with distributed self that is open to transversal exchange of information across borders of organic forms life as well as inorganic systems. This view that human is a complex agglomeration of various connections and interconnections with living as well as nonliving entities of the world, Deleuze and Guattari's BwO rightly anticipates Hayles claim that we have always been posthuman.

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Short Biography

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