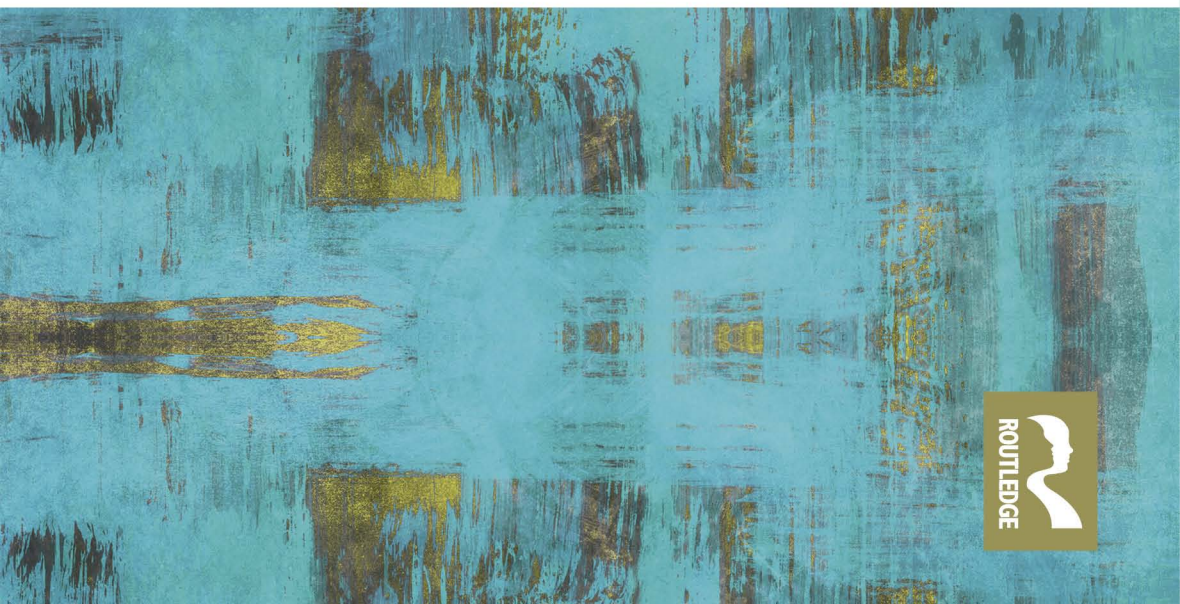
Routledge Environmental Humanities

MONSTERS, CATASTROPHES AND THE ANTHROPOCENE

A POSTCOLONIAL CRITIQUE

Gaia Giuliani



'A sense of catastrophe shapes the present. Terrorism and "war on terror", environmental collapse, pandemic and "migrant crisis" build the background of the analysis pursued in this timely and original book. Investigating Western visual culture and imaginaries, Gaia Giuliani gives us a breathtaking tour across landscapes populated by monstrous creatures that, far from simply being the "West's" Other, continue to haunt it and in a way foreshadow the possibility of its vanishing. In the time of the catastrophe racialised bodies continue to be targeted by violent measures of control to allow the reproduction of the European and Western "we", as Giuliani effectively shows. But with a classical postcolonial move she is also able to grasp and expose the cracks and fissures that destabilize that "we" and open up the space for a postcolonial and feminist political project built upon such notions as "trans-corporeality", "interactivity" and "interdependency of Life and Nonlife". Working the boundary between postcolonial, visual, and film studies, and at the same time drawing upon a number of other fields of knowledge, including philosophy and political theory, *Monsters, Catastrophes, and the Anthropocene* is a masterful academic work and a powerful contribution to a critical theory of our present predicament.'

Sandro Mezzadra, Professor of Political Theory, University of Bologna, Italy, co-author (with Brett Neilson) of Border as Method, or, the Multiplication of Labor *(Duke, 2013)*

'In geological time scale, Anthropocene is a period from WWII to current time. In Gaia Giuliani's extraordinarily erudite book, it is a time defined by "ontologies and logics" of Othering, where the Western/European "we" produces fears through mediatized narratives of monstrosity and catastrophe as its existential threats. Those fears are supposed to keep at bay resistance to extractivism of Earth's resources and neoliberal exploitation and exclusion of people deemed expendable. Racialized, gendered, sexualized and classed constructions of monsters serve to preserve and continue colonial-cum-capitalist technologies of power and their political, social, economic and cultural outcomes that privilege white bodies while simultaneously inflicts cultural, material and mortal violence on all others. Giuliani's critical feminist, postcolonial and ecological perspective offers an exceptional intersectional and genealogical analysis of plentiful examples from political theory and cultural production that links representations of contemporary migration, terrorism and natural disasters to the old colonial tales and images of slavery, apocalypse and endless forms of dehumanizing violence. Importantly, Giuliani also offers a glimpse of political practice that would link human and non-human life with non-living environment in different, non-exploitative modes of production (de-growth, non-exploitative) as well as social reproduction marked by interdependency of self-care and earth-care.'

Dubravka Zarkov, retired, Associate Professor of Gender, Conflict, Development, ISS/Erasmus University Rotterdam, The Netherlands, Research Associate, Radboud University Nijmegen, co-editor, European Journal of Women's Studies, *https://journals.sagepub.com/home/ejw*

'*Monsters, Catastrophes and the Anthropocene: A Postcolonial Critique* is an urgent and rigorous theorization of global regimes of extractive capitalism, environmental devastation, pandemics, and ongoing war and state violence. Giuliani offers fresh and insightful ways of approaching crises and reimagining what belonging could be like if *we* abandon a notion of "we" that has promulgated exclusion, suffering, and the deaths of many millions.'

Nicole R. Fleetwood, Professor of American Studies and Art History, Rutgers University, USA, author of Marking Time: Art in the Age of Mass Incarceration *(Harvard UP, Spring 2020)*

'Gaia Giuliani's work has been consistently marked by an ambitious level of engagement and impressive scope. *Monsters, Catastrophes and the Anthropocene: A Postcolonial Critique* is no exception. It takes a long, hard view of cultural history with particular reference to Europe/the West/Global North relations with its others. Giuliani places monsters as the prism through which these engagements unfold across time. But also how monsters inhabit our own ghostly crises times, culminating in the book's conclusion on COVID-19. The result is a broad-scoped analysis of "cultural texts" with particular attention to popular culture.'

Lars Jensen, Associate Professor of Intercultural studies, Department of Communication and Arts, Roskilde University, Denmark, author of Postcolonial Europe *(Routledge, 2020)*

'Giuliani's extremely rich volume offers precious keys to decipher salient features of the current "end times", murky and agitated by the spectre of planetary crises and permanent catastrophe. Leading the reader through an intense and exciting voyage in recent works of fiction, Giuliani skilfully traces the mutations of classic tropes of environmental discourse (contagion, crises, catastrophe and collapse), and their proliferation in contemporary political debates. Giuliani casts a spotlight on liminal figures such as the alien, the mutant, the monster, all situated in the in-betweens dead/undead, human/non-human. Embodied in widespread representations of the migrant, the terrorist, the victim of climate change/disaster, such figures of the monstrous are analysed by Giuliani as symptom of the reconfiguration of the boundaries between Life and Nonlife, a key site of political contestation in the face of tangled planetary crises. With a thorough and theoretically engaged exploration of visual imaginaries, Giuliani shows how apocalyptic (environmental) narratives extend into the future the postcolonial, racialised, gendered and classed relations that structure current fears and visions. Putting in conversation political theory, environmental humanities, postcolonial and critical feminist studies, Giuliani's is a thought-provoking intervention in critical debates on the Anthropocene, and a contribution to the pursuit of non-exploitative, caring and decolonized constellations of (non)human Life/Nonlife.'

Giovanni Bettini, Lecturer in Climate Politics and Development, Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, UK

'With clear insight of the fringes and structural contradictions of our time, Giuliani's analysis celebrates an investigative method developed through her long-standing research. Through a broad comparative analysis of visual apocalyptic materials, such as films and TV series, to trace protagonists of present popular imaginary, Giuliani offers original reflections and a visionary energy toward a postcolonial critical approach to contemporary fears of the End. Through a careful use of diverse disciplinary registers, Giuliani's book innovates philosophical form by building a historical and symbolic journey through the space–time geography of the world, masterfully braiding the threads of the colonial past and neocolonial present to fix its knots in the construction of figures *at the border* of social fear; from the monster to the alien, from the virus to environmental catastrophes. The inevitability of concluding on the occasion of the COVID-19 pandemic perfectly closes the circle of reflection, stigmatizing our time and future as an era of a realized (capitalistic) dystopia. The culmination of Giuliani's brilliant book, however, is nested in its luminous ability to incite ways to think and move toward "a feminist, post-developmental and ecologist epistemology and a political project that embraces a new conception of *the political*."'

Giovanni Ruocco, Associate Professor in History of Political Thought, Department of Political Science, University of Rome 'La Sapienza', Italy, author of Razze in teoria. La scienza politica di Gaetano Mosca nel discorso pubblico dell'Ottocento *(Quodlibet, 2017)*

Monsters, Catastrophes and the Anthropocene

Monsters, Catastrophes and the Anthropocene: A Postcolonial Critique explores European and Western imaginaries of natural disaster, mass migration and terrorism through a postcolonial inquiry into modern conceptions of monstrosity and catastrophe.

This book uses established icons of popular visual culture in sci-fi, doomsday and horror films and TV series, as well as in images reproduced by the news media to help trace the genealogy of modern fears to ontologies and logics of the Anthropocene. By logics of the Anthropocene, the book refers to a set of principles based on ontologies of exploitation, extermination and natural resource exhaustion processes determining who is worthy of benefiting from value extraction and being saved from the catastrophe and who is expendable. Fears for the loss of isolation from the unworthy and the expendable are investigated here as originating anxieties against migrants' invasions, terrorist attacks and planetary catastrophes, in a thread that weaves together re-emerging 'past nightmares' and future visions.

This book will be of great interest to students and academics of the Environmental Humanities, Human and Cultural Geography, Political Philosophy, Psychosocial Studies, Postcolonial Studies and Critical Race and Whiteness Studies, Gender Studies and Postcolonial Feminist Studies, Cultural Studies, Sociology, Cultural Anthropology, Cinema Studies and Visual Studies.

Gaia Giuliani is Researcher at Centro de Estudos Sociais, University of Coimbra, Portugal.

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Monsters, Catastrophes and the Anthropocene

A Postcolonial Critique

Gaia Giuliani

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To all the monsters resisting the Anthropocene

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The book also draws on research that has been published as book chapters, including: 'Afterword: life adrift in a postcolonial world', in *Life Adrift: Climate Change, Migration, Critique* (2017), edited by Andrew Baldwin and Giovanni Bettini; 'The colour(s) of Lampedusa' (2017), in *Border Lampedusa. Subjectivity, Visibility and Memory in Stories of Sea and Land*, edited by Gabriele Proglio and Laura Odasso; 'The Mediterranean as a stage: borders, memories, bodies' (2016) in *Decolonising the Mediterranean: European Colonial Heritages in North Africa and the Middle East* edited by

Gabriele Proglio, and the forthcoming 'Monstrous beauties: bodies in motion between colonial archives and the migrant and refugee crisis' in the *Palgrave Handbook on Race and Gender*, edited by Shirley A. Tate. The first Section of the book draws on findings published as an article, 'Il mostro che viene dal sud del mondo', in *Jacobin Italia* 6 (2020). Findings from the Conclusions appeared on the Italian blog 'Studi sulla questione criminale', which in March 2020 launched a call for critical reflection on bio- and necropolitics in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Many events I was expected to attend in the near future have now been cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the April 2020 'Humanity/Humanities on the Move Conference' at the University of Minho in Braga, Portugal; the 'Feminists Care for the Political Conference' scheduled for May 2020 at Sabanci University Gender and Women's Studies Centre of Excellence in Istanbul; the conference 'Toward a History of Modern Colour' scheduled to take place at the end of May 2020 at the University of Cambridge; and the 'Border Criminologies' Seminar at the Faculty of Law, University of Oxford, where I was supposed to present my work in June 2020.

My heartfelt thanks and appreciation go to all the organisers, staff and colleagues.

Lisbon, 15 April 2020

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Introduction

1 The Time we are living in

'We' are living in a time of monsters and catastrophes, as if propelled into a never-ending dystopian loop. The finis mundi *is getting closer and closer and gradually becoming the only lens through which Europe and the West give meaning to 'our' time. 'We' fear invasions, a permanent state of terror and the ultimate environmental catastrophe – 'our world' overflowing with chaos threatening the order that guarantees our safety, well-being, sustainability and progress. As in Saint John's apocalypse, the end of the world as 'we' know it will erase Time and Space and irremediably harm the human body, bringing back the unbounded violence that had been expelled from the space of reason. What is in danger is the very essence of* humans, *who are left unprotected and exposed to barbarity, epidemics and natural disasters against which borders, walls, colonies, segregated spaces, thicker identities and martial laws need putting in place: we will do all it takes to stop the spread of chaos and keep it 'outside', even if it means sacrificing some for the good of the many. Some are already paying the highest price, but it cannot be helped – their own lack of knowledge makes them vulnerable to disaster. If we manage to keep at a safe distance from toxic waste, viruses, environmental pollution, wars and other harmful effects of the same neoliberal capitalism we benefit from, the best of humanity will be safe.*

Unruly mobility from the Global South to the Global North, post-9/11 organised terrorism and the ever-evolving environmental crisis have unleashed a complex assemblage of anxieties, fears and apocalyptic discourses that are today as pervasive and, more or less, implicitly deployed in mainstream media narratives as in popular culture – and differentially reproduced by national and international actors involved in border control, counterterrorism and climate-change adaptation. The news media, for instance, have been instrumental in 'naming an enemy' in the coronavirus pandemic that began in China at the end of 2019, transforming anxiety into fears that fuelled worldwide hostility against the Chinese 'virus spreaders'. In a time of crisis, political parties and other organisations exploit widespread anxieties over an uncertain future for partisan advantage, and far-right movements have been particularly adept at using fear and apocalyptic

narratives to draw in followers and resources (Giuliani et al. 2020a; Giuliani et al. 2020b).

When threats experienced by the 'we' are depicted as *global* and solutions are peddled as *universal*, they are more likely to be seen as coming from an objective, neutral source standpoint and as generalisable to humankind as a whole, despite the 'we' being the expression a specific positionality in the Global North. The impact of catastrophes, however, is not as colour-blind and gender-neutral as the 'we' would like to think, overlooking the fact that not only race and gender but also poverty, sexuality and nationality are key factors in determining who gets to be saved and who is left behind. Casualties are and will be inevitable, but the 'we' is not willing be held accountable for sacrificing the lives of those who are, in fact, the most vulnerable, the wretched of the Earth.

Concepts of chaos and order are a reflection of Western understandings of both *the political* and what is *beyond* politics. They interact with concepts of enmity and war, as well as with the figures of barbarian/infidel and monster that are foundational to the ancient notion of polis, medieval conceptions of the city of God, and early and late modern ideas of society, state and international relations. While the specific concepts may have changed across time and space, as Foucault (1999) argues for the monster, they have always been attached to an idea of *the political* as the arena in which the 'we' and 'they' engage but also negotiate conflict (Portinaro 1992): unlike barbarians and infidels within and outside the citadel, enemies are seen as *symmetric* entities (regular armies of mutually acknowledged states). Building on Carl Schmitt (1962), Reinhart Koselleck (1979) distinguished not only between internal and external conflicts but also between external 'regular' wars involving regular armies and external 'irregular' wars – such as colonial wars against barbarians. *Securitisation* and *normalisation* processes are implemented (Foucault 1976b) in *asymmetrical* internal conflicts against that which is criminalised as the internal enemy (e.g. partisan and insurgent warfare). Standards of international protection are disregarded in external irregular wars. In both cases, the *asymmetrical* conflict is based on the monstrification of the enemy, as there is a mutual recognition of status among *symmetric* entities from which the barbarian and the monster are excluded. Monsters are, by definition, expendable, because it is against them that the order is built and maintained lest they challenge social and political assumptions, eventually undermining the endurance of the body politic. In fact, they are:

> at the same time the effect and the bodily manifestation, and therefore the visible aspect of the crisis. In other words the monster reveals a character that is contingent and therefore arbitrary of social, political, and cultural distinctions through which identities are constituted. It puts them in doubt and interrogates them on their presumed naturalness.
>
> (Nuzzo 2013, p. 58)

Monsters as well as nature are differentially acknowledged within the space of *the political:* they are not subjects, let alone subjects of rights. As such, monsters in Western imagination seem to elude all classifications and rules. They are perceived as embodying their transgression, and their unruly mobility is troubling (Neocleous 2005, p. 28). For these reasons, they become the object of bio- and necropolitics. Nature, instead, is 'beyond politics': it is included in the body politic only inasmuch as it provides a habitat or the resources that support life.

Therefore, monsters and nature challenge the order in quite different ways: while monsters undermine the *naturalness* of arbitrary distinctions that sustain the 'imagined community' (*bios*, or social organisation), nature is 'the exact opposite of freedom' (or *zoe*, the biological structure of life) (Kant 1756, cited in Clark 2011, p. 90). Nature as *zoe*, if not mastered by humankind, can harm *bios* too. And according to the Cartesian dichotomy that opposes it to reason, nature delimits the boundaries of the subject's autonomy within *bios* (Esposito 2008; Braidotti 2013).

In Western modern political thought, these are generally conceived as *universal* concepts. Yet as Asad (2007) and Butler (2009) have argued in the context of the so-called global war on terror (Galli 2010), it is precisely this *universality* that is being questioned (Bhambra 2015): the September 11 attacks on the safe space of the 'we' clearly involved different dynamics from *symmetric* warfare, and the 'war on terror' that followed brought into international relations modes of warfare that had been typical of colonial wars. A new kind of enemy emerged, a *monstrified* personification of Otherness produced by the conflation of enemy and monster in the figure of the terrorist, to whom, as in colonial wars, no protection nor legal status was granted. What is more, the conflation of war and securitisation enabled the warfare apparatus to borrow from ontologies, technologies and techniques traditionally used against the internal monster: as Judith Butler reminds us, 'the humans who are imprisoned in Guantanamo do not count as human; they are not subjects protected by international law' (Butler 2004, pp. xv–xvi). In blowing up the distinctions between war and colonial war as well as between enemy and criminal, and erasing the spatial and symbolic distance between civilised and uncivilised, Here and Out there, the attacks revealed the limited and biased scope of that universality.

Today, the monster is feared to have returned in the guise of masses of migrants, refugees and terrorist cells striking back from both within and outside the *bios*. At the same time, nature is striking back, too, and making issues of climate change, ocean acidification, air pollution, toxic waste and devastated land invade the space of the 'we', threatening its *zoe*. The omen of planetary catastrophe reveals the impossible task of keeping the environment out of *the political*, since human supremacy over nature is no longer a given. The effects of both glocal wars and environmental catastrophes translate into masses of migrants heading towards the Here, trespassing the borders of the polis and blurring arbitrary 'social, political and cultural

distinctions through which identities are constituted' (Nuzzo 2013, p. 58). Thousands of migrants and refugees have trespassed borders and walls 'protecting' the Here and the 'we' in the 20 years since 9/11, proving that their 'will to escape' – a source of profit for neoliberal surplus-value extraction – can be controlled and channelled but not stopped. *Monstrosity* gains a renewed signification in this troubled scenario, signalling a 'catastrophic time' (Stengers 2015) that is both *global* and *planetary*.

2 About this book

Monsters, Catastrophes and the Anthropocene: A Postcolonial Critique explores European and Western imaginaries of natural disaster, mass migration and terrorism through a postcolonial inquiry into modern conceptions of monstrosity and catastrophe. Established icons of popular visual culture in sci-fi, doomsday and horror films and TV series as well as in images reproduced by the news media help trace the genealogy of modern fears to ontologies and logics of the Anthropocene. Yet the book does not stop at unveiling the inherent violence of the Anthropocene but goes on to propose a feminist, post-developmental and ecologist epistemology and a political project that embraces a new conception of *the political*.

Figure I.1 Gaia Giuliani, 'Colonial lighthouse in Cape Verde', 3 March 2019, Island of São Vicente.

Ideas and constructions of monstrosity have been widely investigated in many fields, including art, literature, philosophy, history, cultural studies, and feminist and queer studies. My analysis conceives of monstrosity as a historically produced discursive process of *monstrification* that may reveal the relation between the operation of ontologies and logics of the Anthropocene and their legitimation across time and space.

My critique of monstrosity and catastrophe predominantly focuses on Europe and the West, whose imaginary of crisis – though differently articulated in scientific, political and popular culture within and across national boundaries – is shared by a transnational 'we' that, akin to an 'imagined community' (on my take on Benedict Anderson's concept [1983], see Giuliani 2019), is grounded in common experiences of *history*, *geography* and *humanness*. The 'we's' perspective and worldview instantiate the belief systems of white hegemonic culture based on a hierarchical reading of bodies, cultures, social dynamics and historical processes that posits whiteness, hegemonic masculinity, bourgeois values and lifestyle, heteronormativity, Christianity and Western secularism (although with many internal differences) as standards.

At the core of this book are the (pluralistic) positionality of the 'we' and its cultural roots, incorporating diverse political dynamics, social processes and geographies from Europe and its national states as well as from transatlantic ties to the rest of the West and the broader Global North. As such, the roots of the 'we' lie in a vast realm of converging and diverging cultural elements, narratives and self-narratives, which I nevertheless see as crystallising into a single voice at certain historical moments – as when homogeneous narratives and policies on migration, the war on terror and environmental catastrophes are deployed to structure the way the 'we' conceives of and responds to the threat. It is at times like those that the 'we' is made into a consolidated 'imagined community'. Just as in the wake of 9/11, a shared history and a common future are invoked to legitimise emergency measures: on the basis of a certain political and international acknowledgement of its 'common destiny', the 'we' can operate as a semiotic *dispositif* capable of developing converging strategies and common actions against *monsters* and *catastrophes*.

It is my hope that this book will contribute to understanding when and how variously assembled cultural materials feed into the discursive practices around which the identity of the 'we' solidifies. Besides *re-centring Europe and the West in the postcolonial imaginary*, the dominant narratives of our time *relieve them of all responsibility for establishing their supremacy through violence*. Present European and Western constructions of the 'we' and ideas of monstrosity and disaster will help me unpack how *white anxieties* and *moral panic* over the migrant 'invasion', 'terrorism' and the ultimate catastrophe once again reinscribe the supreme value of whiteness as the ideal standard.

Yet the focus of this work is on Europe for at least four reasons. First and more important, my politics of location compels me to read issues and

events from the geographical and historical position I occupy. Second, because the Mediterranean crisis is one of the frames shaping the discursive construction of the 'we' and new humanitarian and securitarian discourses grounded in risk management measures concerned with border control and terrorism prevention. Third, because of Europe's unique geo-political proximity to areas from where both mass migration and terrorism seemingly originate – this especially applies to the southern regions along the migrant routes, owing to their geographical position on the Mediterranean. Last, because Europe is the cradle of beliefs about *history*, *geography* and *humanness* that in the last five centuries have shaped logics and ontologies of the Anthropocenic 'we'.

In contrast to traditional definitions that trace the start of the Anthropocene to European and Western Modernity, I argue that the Renaissance and Cartesianism provided the breeding ground for logics and processes that spanned the colonial endeavour, the enclosure movement, capitalist surplus-value extraction, mass enslavement and the modern patriarchal 'social contract' (Pateman 1988).

By logics of the Anthropocene, I refer to a set of principles based on ontologies of exploitation, extermination and natural resource exhaustion processes. Such principles are indiscriminately applied to organic and inorganic life through a panoply of 'technologies of power' serving the Anthropocenic order of things and determining who is worthy of benefiting from value extraction and being saved from the catastrophe (the 'we') and who is expendable. Logics and ontologies of the Anthropocene have provided a foundation for the violence of Western *history* – with its conceptions of time and progress – and *geography*, with its naturalised borders and identities, as well as for notions of *humanness* aimed at differentially including or excluding. Since colonial Modernity, the Anthropocene has been grounded in ontologies discriminating human Life from non-human (animal and vegetal) Life and Nonlife (inorganic) (Povinelli 2016) as well as in the differential attribution of humanness (Yusoff 2018). Different status and value have been assigned on the basis of those constructions of gender, race, sexuality and class that I have called 'figures of race' (Giuliani 2015a, p. 1; 2020a) – that is, intersectional constructions of race serving global and local power relations that, although unfixed and versatile, sedimented across Modernity. *Geography*, *history* and *humanness* participate in the 'common European heritage' (Mehta 1999; Lindqvist 1997) comprising 'the exterminating and genocidal colonial policies that are seen to have provided the "precursors", "incubators" and "models" for the technologies and visions that have been the cornerstones' (Stoler 2016, p. 73) of the 'we's' nation-states.

A number of voices critical of the Anthropocene narrative have been raised from within material feminist and Marxist environmental history circles, ecology movements in the Global North and the Global South, indigenous struggles and other forms of resistance at the racialised global

margins. Their experiences and reflections allow me to *reveal* not only the violence integral to the workings of the Anthropocene but also the *partiality* and *situatedness* of constructions of monstrosity and catastrophe. A different take on the Anthropocene narrative is also provided by the discourses of the Capitalocene and Plantationocene. Donna J. Haraway (2015) and Jason A. Moore (2016, 2017, 2018) have argued that capitalism rather than the mere presence of human hunters, gatherers and farmers has had a massive impact on the planet through CO_2 emissions, extractivism, inhuman exploitation, genocide, air and water pollution, and land devastation. Françoise Vergès (2017), in particular, has suggested using

> the term 'racial Capitalocene' in order to emphasize the ways in which colonialism, slavery, and 'the global use of the colour line' have led to a contemporary devaluation of both human life and the nonhuman world. In understanding contemporary environmental crises, it is crucial to remain attuned to the ways in which 'destruction in the colonial era becomes visible in the postcolonial era'.
>
> (p. 77) (see Davis et al. 2019, p. 3)

The discourse of Plantationocene emphasises the role of the plantation as a system of Anthropocenic power relations and racialised bio- and necropolitics along with specific geological, ecological and biological transformations caused by colonisation, intensive plantations and enslaved labour (Tsing 2015; Haraway et al. 2015; Mitman, Haraway and Tsing 2019; Yusoff 2018; Davis et al. 2019; see also Davis and Todd 2017; Mirzoeff 2018; Moore 2015; Lewis and Maslin 2015). It is this theoretical apparatus that allows me to connect the dots between environmental catastrophes, the so-called migrant crisis, terrorism and the 'war on terror'. All are the result of what is described in scientific literature as the (neoliberal) 'acceleration', which has also led to land grabbing, mass impoverishment, devastating fossil fuel extraction, pollution, epidemics and extreme climate-change effects and, for the same reasons, to global conflicts triggered by the fossil crisis. The hegemonic view, however, is that these issues are not related. Not only the real causes are hidden and go unaddressed but also the apparatuses of governance set up by the 'we' to manage the crisis. What is needed, then, is an environmental humanities approach that looks at the relation between social, economic, political and geological dimensions of the Anthropocene. A 'more integrated and conceptually sensitive approach to environmental issues' (Bird Rose et al. 2012, p. 2) can help identify the complexly intricate causes behind the displacement of peoples and the choice to migrate that Sandro Mezzadra (2001; 2004, p. 270) calls 'objective': gender-, sexuality-, class- and race-based violence, scarcity of freedom and discrimination typical of authoritarian regimes. I also see scarcity of freedom, discrimination and structural violence as consequences of Anthropocenic logics and ontologies that distinguish between who has the 'right to have rights'

(Arendt 1951) and who does not. Not only do these 'objective causes', together with counter-terrorism measures and neoliberal practices of securitisation and differential inclusion that Europe and the West implement to mitigate the 'threat', fall within the purview of bio- and necropolitics, but they also feed economies based on and reproducing the violence of the Anthropocene.

Finally, this book sets forth *a political epistemology of care, self-care and earth-care* framed within eco-feminism, feminist 'natureculture' and social reproduction theory. Central to this epistemology is a political project capable of embracing the global crises posed by climate change, environmental disasters, migration and terrorism as well as *suturing* the historical wounds that generate monsters and catastrophes. Drawing on the anti-capitalist perspectives of degrowth and post-development movements (Kothari et al. 2019), both my feminist critique of the Anthropocene and my political epistemology challenge the neoliberal logic of acceleration, claiming the need for new concepts of 'reproduction' and care based on the necessary interdependency of *care, self-care and earth-care*. In line with Western queer (Seymour 2013), African American and African feminist theory (see Lorde 1988, p. 227; Ahmed 2014; McFadden 2020) and moving away from patriarchal and heteronormative concepts of 'care', I hypostatise self-care as limiting and substantiating care. The next step towards an understanding that self-care and earth-care are complementary and inseparable because of the interconnected materiality of the earth and the self draws on the concepts of *trans-corporeality* (Alaimo 2010) and *intra-activity* (Barad 1995, 2007, 2008) developed by material feminism to *reveal* the extreme proximity and interdependency of human Life, non-human Life and Nonlife. As human agency comes into being from intra-acting matter, *trans-corporeality* and *intra-activity* become then *political values* that, in line with feminist 'natureculture' and indigenous cosmogonies, inform new definitions of *subjectivity* and *the political*, encompassing human and non-human life, Earth and the environmental catastrophe.

3 Situating the 'we'

At the core of this work is the epistemological assumption that all knowledge production is situated, as it reflects not only the socio-historical, geographical and cultural context in which it is produced but also and more importantly the social 'location' of the producer. My epistemology is grounded in a 'politics of location' (Rich 1987; Haraway 1988) that determines 'o lugar de fala' (Kilomba 2018; Ribeiro 2019), that is, the racialised, gendered and classed position of privilege from which a particular knowledge is produced. In this case, it is the position of the 'we' as well as my own location that are under scrutiny. Both are the product of a complex set of syntactic elements and dynamics (making up their situated frames) that converge to produce both the subject of knowledge and their knowledge.