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TOMORROW'S KIN: INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY AFTER THE GENOME

I am not fundamentally one with the Earth, its people, or its multitudes of life;
I do not view myself as a beholden spawn or child of the universe.
I am alone and distinct.
(Istvan, *The Transhumanist Wager*)

Introduction

In her recent publications, Donna Haraway attempts to conceptualize the posthuman¹ – or, as she calls it, chthuluized – future and repetitively uses the phrase “making kin,” which underlines the intimate character of the bond connecting today’s “parents” with future “children”. The very same word – “kin” – appears in the first volume of Nancy Kress’s trilogy, published in 2017, in relation to the possible contact with extra-terrestrials. It is apparent that in both speculative fiction and speculative philosophy the cognitive category of familial relationship with the unknown is promoted via an easy catchphrase imbued with implied etymologically-backed optimism as to the shared nature, enabling solidarity and defying dystopian technophobic and ecoskeptical scenarios.

And yet, the frameworks proposed by the ideologies driving the technological progress, extolled by the hopeful OTHER IS BROTHER categorization, seem to defy utopian solidarity. The epigraph from Istvan’s belligerent novel (69) encapsulates the transhuman ideal of individual autonomy. Although the word “child” is frequently a label slapped on the enhanced posterity (to mention Moravec’s *Mind’s Children*, 1988), their emancipation from their creators leaves little room for bonding. Lilley (2013: 14) reminds us that Kurzweil has openly preached the disconnection of the posthuman from the human (*The Singularity Is Near*, 2005), and Labreque (2014) and Roduit (2016) take this disconnection for granted, voicing concerns over intergenerational relationships and solidarity. As succinctly put by McKibben (2003, qtd. in Lilley 2013: 37): “the first enhanced child will ‘see a gap between himself and human history’ (64) and ‘[h]e’ll be marooned forever on his own small island, as will all who follow him.’ (65)”.

Creating ALife does not usually equal “making kin,” and doubts arise if the kinship based on shared nature is not undermined by tampering with the genome with the use of such tools as CRISPR-Cas9, by Teilhardian raising bots and rivers to the level of personhood, or by communicating with animals (*Zoolingua*) and meditating upon the internal life of rocks (the object-oriented ontology framework). This is why, in fact, we are “staying with the trouble”. The profound question if solidarity – intergenerational solidarity included – is a solely human privilege, still needs consideration. One of the facets of this question is the viability of the rhetoric adopted by the posthuman theorists:

¹Transhumanism and posthumanism are often used interchangeably, as their areas of interest largely overlap, although the foundational mindsets of both of them are diverse. In the following pages, posthumanism will be understood as an umbrella term for many concepts that arise in connection with the technological and scientific advancements (e.g. cloning, chimeras, but also androgyny, prosthetic body or protean personality). It entails the general question of what it means to be human (as posed by Francis Fukuyama in his seminal *Our Posthuman Future*, 2002). Transhumanism would be seen as a philosophy promoting breaching the boundaries of the “natural” in search of perfection and immortality. (More 2013: 21, Waters 2006: 50)

poising the weighty doubt on the shared nature scales, we arrive at a disturbed balance disabling valid judgements as to the choice of words, because the ALife status as human progeny is debatable. It seems, though, that posthuman beings are inevitably imagined as children in the speculative discourse, from *Frankenstein* to *Battlestar Galactica*. The images of vengeful Cylons and addled “rewounds” become foundational memes for the discussion of intergenerational solidarity between human and posthuman.

I would like to explore the prolific output of young adult science fiction of the recent years and see how popular writers -- Neal Shusterman, Bernard Beckett, Dan Wells and James Patterson--attempt to tackle the complexity of the existential questions limned above. Despite being marketed at young adult audiences, they reach out far beyond the traditionally perceived age boundaries², shaping the future attitudes of mass audiences and revealing the literary resonance with the present bioethical issues. I am especially interested in three areas that appear as exigent both in fiction and in the overarching discussion of the fate of family in the posthuman world. The most basic dimension to consider is the genetic continuity and its possible influence on the formation of intergenerational relations. For the discussion of this dimension, I am going to refer back to Dawkins’s influential “selfish gene” theory. Another area which is subject to heated debate is the existence of subjective continuity, i.e. the common “human” nature or soul, shared by humanity and altered/enhanced humanity (such as hybrids, chimeras, clones etc.). The philosophers that most famously contest the existence of such continuity are Hans Jonas, Francis Fukuyama and Jürgen Habermas. Finally, the newest cycle by Neal Shusterman, *The Arc of a Scythe* (2016-), unavoidably brings to attention postgenerationality in a fully transhuman world where death has been abolished. It builds upon such social issues as alternative models of family and overpopulation/depopulation debate. In this way the discussion of the intergenerational solidarity with the posthuman will be placed within three main perspectives – biological, psychic and social – which should yield a fairly representative overview of the problems and invite further research.

Biological Continuity

The “transgenerational moral imperative” (Gardner 2003: 212-213 qtd. in Douglas 2013: 129), invoked by the proponents of human enhancement, is a challenge thrown in the imaginary face of the “fickle tinkerer” – evolution (Buchanan 2011: 29), one of the chief forces transhumanism fights against. While they accept the idea of progression over time and embrace the notion of Darwinian “survival of the fittest,” they wish to seize control over the process or even to attain the highest possible rung in the evolutionary ladder. According to Gardner’s imperative, the ethical side of the debate is as well as settled: we have a moral obligation to enhance the life of future generations. If we withhold any good from our children, we, as a species, cannot talk about solidarity.

Obviously, such an approach generates multiple objections, not the least of which is the problem of agency of future children, doomed to become “puppet people” of the interests geared by parental investment. Richard Dawkins’s “selfish gene” theory (1976) emphasizes the egoistic, instinctual nature of parental care. The motivation to reproduce stems, according to Dawkins, from the drive to perpetuate ourselves. Seemingly, then, it would provide supportive arguments for the “transgenerational moral imperative” – *le souci d’autrui* would in fact equal *le souci de soi*. This is the foundation for the confidence with which many transhumanists, notably James Hughes, dismiss the possibility of

²In compliance with Rose’s “impossibility of children’s fiction” principle (1984) and 2015 Nielsen’s report on young adult literature readership (80% of YA literature readers are over 25).

inflicting harm on the coming generations: “Few parents intend to make their children less intelligent or less capable of autonomy and communication. If anything, parents’ choices will generally expand children’s ability to communicate, make decisions, and control their own lives...” (2004: 149, in Lilley 2013: 1). However, the selfish basis of this fully materialistic framework sets the limits for the intergenerational solidarity and makes fairly clear that any tampering with the genome would instantaneously destroy the basis for any accord or unity. Of course, we can imagine reverse solidarity, obligating the enhanced children to elevate the parents, but it is not seriously considered within the forward-thinking futurism, which ignores the issue of postgenerationality, as will be discussed below.

The tug of war between genetic “altruism” and “selfishness” largely shapes the interactions of humans and posthumans portrayed in juvenile science-fiction. The most forward treatment of the topic comes from James Patterson, whose multi-volume *Maximum Ride* cycle (2005-15) is hinged upon the idea of creating recombinants: the children subjected to germline engineering to transform them into Avians (a merger with the avian DNA) and Erasers (human-lupine hybrids). The main heroine, Maximum, is cheated into thinking that her mother is Dr Janssen, the Director of Itex, a global company that has embarked on a transhuman mission to save the Earth by depopulation and enhancing the remaining people. This device enables the author to simulate an actual intergenerational conflict. In the confrontation that comes in volume three, *Saving the World and Other Extreme Sports*, the poignant issues of solidarity are brought to the forefront, as Max faces the realization that humanity created posthumans not as an actual improvement on humanity, but as test subjects, objectified from their inception.

“I’m making the ultimate sacrifice to create a new world. I gave my only child to the cause”.

“That’s not the ultimate sacrifice!” I said, outraged. “Giving yourself would be the ultimate! Giving me up is like the second-to-ultimate! See the difference?” ...

She turned away and sat at her desk. “I blame Jeb for letting you be such a smart aleck”.

I stared at her. “I blame you for altering my DNA! I mean, I have wings, lady! What were you thinking?”

“I was thinking that the world’s population is destroying itself,” she said in a steely tone I recognized. (I have one just like it.) “I was thinking that someone had to stand up and take drastic action before this entire planet is incapable of supporting human life. Yes, you’re my daughter, but you’re still just part of the big picture, part of the equation. I was thinking I’d do anything to make sure the human race survives. Even if it seems awful in the short term. In future history books, I’ll be heralded as the savior of humanity” (Patterson 2008: 282-283).

What transpires from the above exchange is that transhumanist thought calls for the reformulation of altruism in the face of rendering natural evolution null.³ Selfishness in the transhuman context acquires a whole new dimension in comparison to the Darwinian theories, which assume the replacement of one generation with another. Transhumanism, which actively seeks to abolish death, challenges the egoistic-altruistic relation embedded in the “selfish gene” theory: the perpetuation of oneself may not need to require any investment in the offspring.

Despite his visible enthusiasm for enhancement practices (e.g. the portrayal of the dog Total), Patterson’s answer to the posthuman solidarity conundrum is deeply bioconservative. It is later revealed that in fact Max’s real mother is Dr. Martinez, with whom the girl feels immediate connection. The solidarity with humanity professed by Dr

³ This is currently a subject of great interest both practical and theoretical, v. M. Hauskeller, *Moral Enhancement* (2018); S. Matthew Liao, *Moral Brains* (2016); J. Hughes’s Cyborg Buddha project; J. Savulescu, *Unfit for the Future* (2012), as well as of research on non-invasive brain stimulation.

Janssen, which makes genetic experimentation imperative, works to the exclusion of both groups: unenhanced humans and enhanced Avians, and so she is cast as a villain of the story. As observable in the whole cycle, and rather expected, the solidarity forms mostly on the basis of genetic similarity. Besides the alienation of the hybrids from the unenhanced human population, there exists deadly rivalry between Erasers and Avians, to the degree of fratricide. Both “species” are vying for the attention of Jeb Batchelder, an ambiguous father-figure, and are modified to fight with each other in a cruel survival game. Jeb can be blamed for the tragedy of Max and her brother, Ari, as well as for many other atrocities within the cycle – he objectifies his own children and is duly punished.

The motif of genetic continuity and interdependency is also the fulcrum of Dan Wells’s *Partials* sequence (2012-14). The ParaGen company is tasked with the creation of supersoldiers, BioSynths (Partials), extremely efficient thanks to multiple enhancements and, most importantly, the link, a pheromone-based communication system styled after animal world. By transmitting their feelings and observations, it forms a semi-telepathic connection, which allows them to work in sync.

Despite being genetically different, Partials tried to overcome their initial purpose as live weapons and fit into the human society. The discrimination they faced from those who created them led to a disastrous war and destroyed any possibility of building solidarity. Notwithstanding “humane” conditions of work, they were impoverished, ghettoized and denied the right to upward mobility and their posthuman pursuit of happiness, which led to their rebellion. As Samm, one of the Biosynth protagonists, underlines:

“We hated you,” he said. “I hated you”. He turned his head to catch her eye. “But I didn’t want genocide. None of us did”.

“Somebody did,” said Kira. Her voice was thick with held-back tears.

“And you lost every connection to the past,” said Samm. “I know exactly how you feel”.

“No, you don’t,” Kira hissed. “You say whatever you want, but don’t you dare say that. We lost our world, we lost our future, we lost our families —”

“Your parents were taken from you,” said Samm simply. “We killed ours when we killed you. Whatever pain you feel, you don’t have that guilt stacked on top of it” (Wells 2014: 3585-3597).

Thus, both the genetic divide between Partials and humans and the sense of connection among Partials themselves are shown as a fundamental gap making posthuman communication neigh impossible, and as enforcing species solidarity rather than encouraging the inter-species one. However, these “natural” tendencies clash with ironic conflicts, introduced by the author. For instance, a new type of BioSynth, Kira, is brought up with human children in a human society, which underscores the intergenerational conflict overwritten on the human-posthuman relations. On a more global scale, only by parabiosis can both races evade imminent and horrible death: humans are dying of RM-infection, a biological weapon used during the Partial War, and BioSynths rot alive when they get past their expiration date. The mutual dependency, slyly imprinted in the genetic makeup of the supersoldiers, requires both races⁴ to live in close proximity to be able to breathe in one another’s pheromones and thus neutralize the deadly Failsafes of the scientific design.

Overall, the above-mentioned juvenile science-fictional texts seem to perpetuate the belief that seizing control of the evolutionary process, which entails and thwarting

⁴ Wells actually perceives the human/posthuman relation as a problem of race that generates similar problems, subject to similar metaphORIZATION and – implicitly – to the same critical approaches that are used in the study of race issues. (e.g. Wells 2014: 19502-19503).

natural selection is going against the grain of the communal interest. The conviction that intergenerational solidarity is gene-dependent prevails and results in alarmist imaginations of tampering with the genome. The strained, to say the least, relations with biological parents lead to the death of the makers and to the indelible patricidal sign stigmatizing the lives of their progeny.

Subjective Continuity

As could be noticed in the previous section, the biological continuity is not a prerequisite to form a bond conditioning intergenerational solidarity. Granted, Max is appalled to find out that Jeb Batchelder allowed his own children to be modified, but she is not so much horrified by the very genetic difference as by the apparent lack of parental instinct, which should be biologically programmed. Similarly, in the *Partials* sequence, Kira's pursuit of her father, Armin Dhurvasula, ends up with the discovery of a scheming Blood Man, "gene-modded" to the degree of losing all connection to either humans or Partials. He was a scientist who initially designed the supersoldiers, but his plan to build a eupsychian world according to the ethics of biologically enforced cooperation failed. His diagnosis as to the reasons of the failure is surprising: "It was human nature that made it impossible, human and Partial" (Wells 2014: 19496).

Armin's behaviour upholds the argument about the shared nature between the human and the genetically-modified superhuman. However, it also brings up other aspects for discussion. First, the fact that Armin transforms into the Blood Man may be the result of his crossing the line when enhancing himself and losing what Fukuyama called "factor X," the inherent, elusive quality that defines humanity – and, as it appears, Partials. He preaches:

"Human and Partial will be no more ... There will only be one species, one perfect species. I've done it before. I've unlocked the human genome and arranged it in perfect order, like notes in a symphony. ... You," he said, "my daughter, built on the model of my own DNA, polished and refined through countless drafts until I had eliminated all trace of flaw or imperfection" (Wells 2014: 19528-19533).

In the end Kira does not accept Armin as her father: he turned into a homicidal monster, altered enough for her to seek connection with her adoptive mother, humans and Partials rather than with her biological progenitor and biotechnological creator.

The debate over the shared nature of humans and posthumans is passionate, becoming a fault line between ethicists considering the problems of human enhancement. The 1979 publication of Hans Jonas's *The Imperative of Responsibility: In Search of an Ethics for the Technological Age* enjoined the powerful heuristic of fear and precautionary principle when it comes to the introduction of new technologies, firmly based on the belief in anthropocentric chosenness and uniqueness of human beings. In this view, people's inherent nature entails special dignity they enjoy among other beings in the world, and thus it is to be protected at all costs. The very word "nature" suggests the purity from enhancement and lack of control over this unidentified spiritual-corporeal quality which might be damaged by modifying any part of the body. The contemporary contestation of the anthropocentric paradigm necessitates, though, the redefinition of the notion of human nature and rethinking the possibilities of forming the bonds of solidarity on the basis of shared subjective qualities.

This shared subjectivity⁵ problem is boldly faced by Neal Shusterman in his *Unwind Dystology* (2007-15). The basis for his dystopian version of the future is the

⁵ Subjectivity here encompasses identity, memory, emotionality, soul.

institutionalized exchange of body parts between different people, which results in problems occasioned by the phenomenon of muscle memory⁶ and body image issues. The creation of a fully “rewound” Camus Comprix, a prototype of a superhuman made of choicest parts, raises multiple questions as to his derivativeness and the lack of individual identity. Although Cam partakes both in human genetic makeup as well as in some parts of subjectivity, he is not recognized as a continuation and legitimate progeny of mankind; rather, he is seen as a product and/or a Frankenstein⁷. This reflects the stance of ethicists like Habermas (2003), who – concerned especially with PGD and germline engineering – point out the unavoidable objectification of post-people as goods pre-designed for consumption. The questions of reporters at a disastrous press conference – “Do you dream their dreams? Do you feel their unwinding’s? Is he even alive?” (Shusterman 2013: 143) – testify to the confusion as to the approach we should take towards the ALife.

Shusterman deftly walks the wire hovering between according human nature to the posthuman being (as in: “I am more than the parts I’m made of!” and “I’m a hundred percent organic. Human... I’ll continue to grow as a human being” (Shusterman 2013: 144, 142).) and pointing to the uniqueness of Cam in the boy’s confession in a Catholic church.

“Why are you here, son?”

“Because I’m afraid. I’m afraid that I might not... be...”

“Your presence here proves you exist”.

“But as what? I need you to tell me that I’m not a spoon! That I’m not a teapot!”

“You make no sense. Please, there are people waiting”.

“No! This is important! I need you to tell me... I need to know... if I qualify as a human being”...

“I confess that I am humbled by your question. How can I speak to whether or not you carry a divine spark?”

“A simple yes or no will do”.

“No one on earth can answer that question, Mr. Comprix—and you should run from anyone who claims they can” (Shusterman 2014: 217-218).

Shusterman finishes his *Dystology* on an optimistic note, praising collective values and emphasizing the reunification on the individual, family and social levels. His tentative glance into the possibility of the actual posthuman subjective Otherness is fleeting; and the words of the priest are to be read rather as criticism of institutionalized religion than the affirmation of the incomprehensible. In the end Cam joins the human society and has a human girlfriend, which seems proof enough that he is considered by the author as “human”, and that his humanity is perceived as a positive value, effacing and sacrificing his otherness to enable solidarity – apparently defunct if one is not absorbed into the sameness of the community.

Nonetheless, human nature is sometimes portrayed in juvenile fiction as a disease, as in Beckett’s *Genesis*. In the posthuman society the individuals displaying a human spark are singled out and killed, on the principle stated by cyborg Art before he killed human Adam: “You were right, Adam...We are different. And difference is all that matters” (Beckett 2006: 177). The maintenance of this subjective discrepancy, conditioning the individuation and survival of species, requires severing the bonds with

⁶ Muscle memory phenomenon involves the involuntary acquisition of certain behaviours or skills possessed by the donor. In Shusterman’s dystopia the brain transplants result not only in knowledge and IQ acquisition, but also in inherited conditions (CyFy’s kleptomania).

⁷In accordance with the understanding of the name in the common parlance, and the use in Shusterman’s book.

the “parents” which, in extreme cases, leads to patricide – a frequent solution of the posthuman solidarity problem in YA dystopias. Yet again, the (post) anthropofagic scenario ends with an emetic gesture, proper for pubertal initiations. However, the pubertal pattern is coupled with the one taken from the heroic rites of passage: the posthuman children are digested and transformed within the belly of an anthropocentric monster, but on their way to be spat out, they cut their way through, replaying the killing of Uranus and displaying no solidarity whatsoever with their human tormentor.

Evidently, the complexities of subjectivity leave even less room for the intergenerational solidarity than the grounds of genetic makeup. The eupsychian visions of Shusterman, e.g. the rewinding of Cam, are counterbalanced and destabilized by transhuman individualism and patricidal emplotments of Wells and Beckett. It follows from the common contemporary belief in *psyche* being *soma*-dependent, which finds expression in the fear of breaking even the biological continuity. At the same time it professes a very transhuman tenet of the corruption of humanity, subscribing to the modern gnosis (Herrick 2003: 250-251).

Postgenerationality

It needs to be remarked that the posthuman characters that I presented in the previous sections envision the speculative or emergent models of reproduction, which are bound to redefine the conceptualization of family and generation. The Avians and most Erasers are – quite conservatively – carried by human mothers, and are genetically modified from their inception. The Biosynths are grown in vats. Art is built in a lab. Cam is pieced together from body parts harvested from others. Although the relationship with their “more human” parents reflects the struggles of ephebophobic society and is saturated with violence, it is still a relationship of succession and struggle for survival. In his newest *Arc of a Scythe* series, Shusterman builds upon transhuman immortalism, painting the picture of the utopian society no longer bound by the stiff categorizations of age and liberated from deadly effects of transience. In the world governed by A.I., the Thunderhead, people may choose their biological age at will, and it is fully subject to their individual flights of fancy: age can be reversed or pushed forward multiple times. Death is non-existent thanks to the constant surveillance and care of the A.I., and advanced nanotechnology. This variation on morphological freedom, which could be called aeterological⁸ freedom, creates an unprecedented situation of mingled⁹ generations.

The society Shusterman imagines reflects the problems of today’s extended families and alternative family models. People remarry multiple times at various age, creating ambiguous relations, visible in the cases of Rowan, Greyson and Tyger. All of them experience parental neglect and indifference. It is best encapsulated by Rowan’s observation that they are “lettuce-kids”: “sandwiched somewhere in the middle of large families... I got a couple of brothers that are meat, a few sisters that are cheese and tomatoes, so I guess I’m the lettuce” (Shusterman 2016: 18). Their being “alone together” (Turkle 2011) pushes them to such behaviours as developing relationship with the A.I. or to splatting (multiple suicide attempts). The destruction of traditionally-conceived bonds between generations, which immortality apparently entails, seems to force humans to seek solidarity with other beings.

⁸From Latin *aevum* (age, generation, time), which obviously entails the abolition of history.

⁹After Serres’ “mingled bodies”.

Immortal posthuman subjectivity differs from the one of Mortal Age, which is underlined multiple times especially in the first volume. Scythe Curie, one of the people charged with “gleaning” a statistical quota of people to avoid overpopulation, writes in her journal:

We are not the same beings we once were.

Consider our inability to grasp literature and most entertainment from the mortal age. To us, the things that stirred mortal human emotions are incomprehensible. Only stories of love pass through our post-mortal filter, yet even then, we are baffled by the intensity of longing and loss that threatens those mortal tales of love.

We could blame it on our emo-nanites limiting our despair, but it runs far deeper than that. Mortals fantasized that love was eternal and its loss unimaginable. Now we know neither is true. Love remained mortal, while we became eternal. Only scythes can equalize that, but everyone knows the chance of being gleaned in this, or even the next millennium is so low as to be ignored.

We are not the same beings we once were.

So then, if we are no longer human, what are we? (Shusterman 2016: 110)

As can be seen, the society has been enhanced not only physically, but also according to the precepts of emotional and moral enhancement, propagated e.g. by John Hughes, Julian Savulescu, David Pearce and S. Matthew Liao. The mood adjustment and the praise for empathy, together with “sustainability” of feelings and the abolition of extremes, such as love and pain, result in a perfect fictional society. Solidarity, liberated from the genetic and subjective bonds, which in a way force people into evolutionarily designed alliances, is still present, albeit on different plateaus (e.g. the master-apprentice relation). The intergenerational solidarity with vestiges of familial imagination is visible in people’s relations with the A.I.: an extremely individualized society praising limitless freedom, with no responsibility for the world, accepts the mercy of the paternalistic Thunderhead.

This type of utopianism is severely criticized by Brent Waters, a Christian ethicist. In his “Flesh Made Data: The Posthuman Project in the Light of Incarnation” (2014), he states:

If one is endeavoring to live for as long as possible, and perhaps for forever, then future generations are not only unnecessary, but may prove to be another external constraint imposed on the will or, even worse, unwanted competition.

This disdain for generational interdependency discloses both the lynchpin of the posthuman project and the reason why it is a perilous enterprise (297).

Shusterman in *The Arc of a Scythe* shows awareness of the influence of radical human enhancement on generationality, and yet, in accordance with his techno-friendly attitude (Biedenharn 2016, Shusterman 2018: 510, 528), shows the drawbacks of his utopia – controlled depopulation, the collapse of legal and linguistic structures for the description of extended relations, individual identity crises – as unavoidable dark lining of the silver singularitarian cloud, inherent in and conditioning any utopian project (v. L.T. Sargent’s critical utopia). The contingency of generationality with the view to contemporary struggle to abolish ageing paints a vivid question mark by the notion of intergenerationality and solidarity between different age groups.

Conclusions

The evidence from the speculative examples denies the possibility of human-posthuman solidarity, at least one envisioned within intergenerational framework, running along Jonas's precautionary principle and introducing a dystopian dissonance in the utopian projects of harmonious solidarity. While the analyzed texts reinforce the ideas of the selfish gene theory, the problem of human subjectivity is not so transparent. The posthuman seems to be always subsumed under the notion of "human" and validated by it. The issue of postgenerationality is raised only by Shusterman, perhaps due to the experimental character of immortalist research. Building real solidarity between generations that are biologically and subjectively different seems inconceivable. The enhancement philosophy is fundamentally egoistical, which leads to forming alliances only between those who partake in the sameness of the majority, and to the butchering of those who do not fit in. In fact, even the optimistic vision of us-topia, edified on the scaffolding of the communal spirit between I and the Other (as in the *Unwind Dystology*), ends up in Atwoodian utopia (Frank 2013: 152): both utopia and dystopia, wherein the relationship is ever troubled.

This trouble partially stems from the fact that the analyzed narratives and their assorted ideologies and philosophies are heavily dependent on the socio-cultural systems that produced them and on the literary tradition they derive from. "Tomorrow's kin" is inscribed into the ready-made categories designed for the racial and ethnic Other, as well as encapsulate religious and postcolonial dilemmas. The presentation of the posthumans as children, "unsouled" pagans, animal cyborgs, mixed-race people, etc., does limit and direct the discussion of intergenerational solidarity to the varieties of justice and rights accorded to these groups. What is more, the proposed solutions are still the ones of white Western Christians, which brings about a necessary slant: "these Western habits of epistemological immodesty and ethical hubris, referring to the superimposing of one's own definition of benevolence (or love) on others (including future children) who may have different ideas in different context" (Kim 2014: 107). The lack of the answers to the questions arising in connection with the imminent results of technological advancements leaves one with multiple issues to consider. The notion of intergenerational solidarity for the posthuman era and the possibility of aetiological freedom are perhaps those most troubling and salient. At the same time, the imaginative categories and language used in fiction to deal with them bare the inherent biases inscribed in the discussion of otherness. The humanicidal scenarios appear as a valid danger which should prompt humanity to look for the ways of possible ways of forming bonds with "tomorrow's kin".

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TOMORROW'S KIN: INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY AFTER THE

One of the issues that emerges with regard to radical human enhancement is the destruction of the intergenerational connections. It is variously envisioned in science fiction, and we can speak of many possible plateaus on which the human continuity, which entails solidarity, can be contested. Contemporary young adult dystopias, such as Shusterman's *Unwind Dystology* (2007-15) and *The Arc of a Scythe* (2016-) cycles, Beckett's *Genesis* (2010), Patterson's *Maximum Ride* (2005-15) or Wells's *Partials* (2009-14), very often conjoin the intergenerational issues typical of juvenile fiction with bioethical concerns in the posthuman and transhuman world. I look at the speculative futures of intergenerational solidarity from the point of view of the biological continuity, the subjective continuity and postgenerationality in an immortal society. In the majority of cases it may be observed how the child-adult dichotomy, with the superimposed adult normativity prejudice, threatens the coexistence of trans- and posthumans with their "parents," leading to the redefinition of altruism in the wake of the homicidal ALife apocalypse. The relatively broad spectrum of the cases and perspectives I have selected yields a fairly comprehensive picture of contemporary projections of intergenerational solidarity "after the genome" (Herrick 2013).