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The presence of religious symbols such as the cross or the headscarf in public spaces, the question of the religious or secular nature of a state's constitution, or religiously motivated violence by Christian, Buddhist or Islamist militias – contrary to the predictions and aspirations of the tradition of enlightenment, religion did not lose any of its relevance in the 21st century in numerous regions from North and South America to Europe, Africa, to the Middle East or Asia. (Bayat 1996; Roy 2001; Woodhead 2016; Svensson and Nilsson 2018; Lakitsch 2021) At the same time, we find ourselves in the geological era of the Anthropocene and its complex materialist ontology, where the dissolution of human sovereignty within a complex web of human and non-human relations seems to contradict the existence of absolute truths and therefore religion and spirituality. (Ferrando 2020: 1-2) Second and maybe more important, this post-anthropocentric turn into a posthuman world is at the same time a turn towards a materialist world. There, the ideas of ideality and transcendence seem to be difficult to uphold. (Jones 2016) If we want to maintain both accounts about religion and the Anthropocene, the idea of god or other divine entities should at least correspond with some kind of material foundation.

The depiction of earth's current era as Anthropocene is based on the acknowledgement of humankind as a geological force. Accordingly, humans at some point in history have gained the ability to indelibly alter the materiality of earth and affect fundamental physical processes. That did not only happen through deforestation, urbanization, overfishing and human-caused mass extinction of life, but most extensively through the enormous rise in carbon dioxide emissions. (Crutzen & Stoermer 2000) As a consequence, rather than affirming humanity's claim as a sovereign actor, these alterations threaten its survival and therefore unveil that nature has never been an empty stage for any species to act at will. Instead, humans have always been entwined within an infinitely complex web of human and non-human materialities. As a result, contrary to the convictions of humanism and the tradition of enlightenment, humankind is not sovereign in its thinking and doing and shares agency with the non-human world. (Chakrabarty 2009; Stengers 2015; Haraway 2016; Braidotti 2013)

So, how does the idea of a divine entity make sense within the relational material ontology of the Anthropocene – whether we understand this divine entity personal or impersonal and abstract? Can we describe a materialist foundation for the belief in an entity with powers and characteristics that transcend and exceed the capabilities of the human and non-human world and have thus been dubbed supernatural and omnipotent? In other words, are there ways to depict a divine entity not as super-material but as inner-material?

In some ways, the idea of a divine entity and a posthuman ontology do indeed converge. If we have never been modern (Latour 1993), then we have never been human and secular either. (Graham 2016) After all, various forms of belief in divine entities obviously never fell victim to the process of secularization and even gained influence in social and political life beyond their traditional institutions – we live in a post-secular world. (Habermas, 2008; Taylor 2007) Accordingly, post-secularism does not declare the revival or triumphalism of religion, but emphasizes its permanence which had only been hidden underneath the veil of secularity and modernity. (Serres 1995: 36) As an excluded other, the divine strikes back against the supposedly secular state and its public sphere – it keeps unveiling its presence over and over again (Braidotti 2013: 37) and seriously questions the fixed categories of the secular and the religious. (Asad 2003) In essence, the rise of the religious amongst further non-human others to the stage of history contributes to exposing the cracks and fissure on the once shiny and glittering surface of modernity. (Graham 2016: 58)

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A divine entity as an underlying foundation of all existing matter introduces an all-encompassing signification which is genuinely post-dualistic and posthuman. As such, the posthuman and the divine date back to the beginning of civilizations and have been more relevant in world regions beyond the epicenters of modernity. Relating to an all-encompassing and unifying entity, the divine binds all that exists and therefore corresponds with a posthuman ontology and its infinitely complex web of human and non-human entities. (Ferrando 2016)

Still, the accommodation of religion with the Anthropocene raises questions about the ontological status of a divine entity. Does the divine have to be a human projection like in Feuerbach's very influential materialist critique of faith? After all, excluding the divine dimension from the realm of the existing does contradict religious experiences and their significance. (Jones 2016) Rudolph Otto (2014) described the significance of someone's experience of the holy as indication for its existence; not only for its experienced, but for its actual existence. In the end, the significance of religion in our era of the Anthropocene seems to justify at least an attempt to describe a material foundation for god or any other divine entity.

In order to do so, the divine entity shall not be regarded as something idealistic beyond this world. Rather, it shall be understood as something within this world, which is independent from humankind and its imagination. Materiality as such genuinely relates to a certain understanding of transcendence: It transcends everyone's context and encompasses all human and non-human matter. This understanding of transcendence resonates with a depiction of the absolute as absolved (ab-solutus) from a certain context. (Bennett 2010: 1-3) That corresponds with Spinoza's monistic ontological conception of god as all material substance: *deus sive natura sive substantia*. (Spinoza, Eth. IV Praef) Matter is all that is and therefore the foundation of everything – that which everything stands on (sub-stantia). (Spinoza, Eth. I P1-15) Accordingly, transcendence refers to the continuity of the world beyond oneself – like the beauty of the world as something that is experienced within a certain context but that to refers to the whole material world or universe. (Calhoun 2012) Transcendence builds on the transcending character of the particular material context towards an all-encompassing materiality.

Another possibility to understand transcendence in a materialist ontology lies in the poietic aspect of matter. In this regard, the focus is not on the real and the actually existing materiality, but on the becoming. (Calhoun 2012: 355) Transcendence relates to materiality that transcends the existing towards the becoming and thereby towards unrealized possibilities. (Graham 2016) It is thus located in between the various materialities – as a sympoietic inter-materiality that "redistributes [materiality's] qualities and powers among a plurality of self-creative earth subjects [and] suggests a divine-world relationship characterized by co-creativity and radical mutuality." (Roberts 2018) An inter-material understanding of transcendence with an emphasis on the poietic aspect corresponds with Martin Riesebrodt's definition of religious powers as having the ability to influence what is beyond human control, whether that concerns the natural or the social life. (Riesebrodt 2010: 2-20; 71-75)

Most certainly, those elaborations like any other theoretical attempt to make sense of the divine can only grasp the "god of the philosophers" and not the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Jesus, as Blaise Pascal (1966: 309-310) put it. The divine experience of an inner fire – "[c]ertainty, certainty, heartfelt, joy, peace" (Ibid.) – necessarily remains beyond the reach of the word. Nevertheless, elaborations on materialist interpretations of transcendence and the absolute indicate ways towards possible understandings god and the divine within a complex ontology of the Anthropocene. They pave the way to not only elaborate on an ontological counter-part for the vitality of religion, but also to describe it in its irreducibility exceeding human capabilities to grasp it. That allows for a divine astonishment to remain with the "irreducibly strange dimension of matter" (Bennett 2010: 1-3) and thereby to echo Otto's *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*. (Otto 2014: 13-37)

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