

Introduction

Non-human Storytelling in Science Fiction

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We live in anxious times, driven by changes of such a scale that we struggle to take them in – mutating hyperobjects of sorts, to borrow Timothy Morton’s term (2013). War and political upheaval feature daily on the national and international news. Deadly viruses spread globally. The consequences of climate change are perceived worldwide. As humans, we cannot avoid considering the impact of such tremendous upheavals on our species. Yet, we are not the only inhabitants of planet Earth. The great metamorphoses caused by the Anthropocene have a devastating impact on the ecosystem: on animal and vegetal species becoming extinct at the highest rate in history, and on non-living entities, bearing the brunt of erosion, deforestation and reckless exploitation of resources. In the 1970s, James Lovelock formulated the Gaia hypothesis, which construes the earth as a complex selfregulating system: the theory “proposes that the responses of living organisms to environmental conditions ultimately bring about changes that make the earth better adapted to support life; the system would rid itself of any species that adversely affects the environment” (Martin and Hine 2016). Lovelock’s view of a holistic self-preserving mechanism for our planet is a beacon of hope in the darkness of our times.