

Letras Hispanas

Volume 13, 2017

SPECIAL SECTION: Ecocrítica ibérica contemporánea y nuevos materialismos

TITLE: Posthumanism in Rosa Montero's *Lágrimas en la lluvia* and *El peso del corazón*

AUTHOR: Iana Konstantinova

E-MAIL: iana.konstantinova@svu.edu

AFFILIATION: Southern Virginia University; One University Hill Drive; Buena Vista, VA 24416

ABSTRACT: Rosa Montero's science fiction novels, *Lágrimas en la lluvia* and *El peso del corazón*, follow the adventures of private detective Bruna Husky, who is an android in a futuristic world in which neoliberal capitalism has brought about the almost complete destruction of the environment. This article examines Husky's interaction with humans, animals, and other androids in order to demonstrate that interspecies collaboration and an acceptance of otherness is the way to overcoming divisions and moving towards a truly posthuman existence.

KEYWORDS: Rosa Montero, Bruna Husky, Posthumanism, Otherness, Cyborgs

RESUMEN: Las novelas futuristas de Rosa Montero, *Lágrimas en la lluvia* y *El peso del corazón*, siguen las aventuras de Bruna Husky, una detective privada androide en un mundo futuro en el cual el capitalismo neoliberal ha traído la destrucción casi completa del medio ambiente. Este artículo examina la interacción entre Husky y los personajes humanos, animales y androides para demostrar que la colaboración mutua entre especies y la aceptación de la otredad son la mejor manera de superar las divisiones y progresar hacia una existencia verdaderamente posthumana.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Rosa Montero, Bruna Husky, posthumanismo, otredad, androides

BIOGRAPHY: Iana Konstantinova is an Associate Professor of Spanish at Southern Virginia University. She specializes in 20th and 21st Century Literature. While her main specialty is Argentina, she also enjoys studying contemporary Iberian authors. She is the author of 11 articles on a variety of topics including posthumanism, postmodernism, metafiction, detective fiction, and poetry.

Posthumanism in Rosa Montero's *Lágrimas en la lluvia* and *El peso del corazón*

Iana Konstantinova, Southern Virginia University

The age of globalization is upon us. The once utopian idea, however, has turned into a sort of dystopian reality. Rampant capitalism and consumerism have created multi-national powerhouses that control the majority of our planetary resources. Major corporations have taken over the globalization efforts and established themselves as powerhouses on an international scale. Meanwhile, the lack of responsibility and accountability by these powerhouses, as well as overall human apathy in regards to climate change, continue to drive our planet into an ecological crisis. Set in a futuristic global dystopia that appears to be the direct inertia of today's neoliberal capitalistic globalization, Rosa Montero's *Lágrimas en la lluvia* (2011) and its sequel, *El peso del corazón* (2015), present a world where humans and technohumans are forced into an uncomfortable co-existence filled with conflict, tension, and discrimination. The androids, who are a type of human replica, are considered second-class citizens and targeted by extremist groups. The main character, Bruna Husky, is an android who struggles with her identity and her place in society while the world around her collapses due to social and environmental disasters of various sorts. In this article, I will take a posthumanist approach to the novels, examining the way in which Montero's works call for a move beyond anthropocentric humanism and suggest that overcoming the fear of otherness and establishing mutual interspecies collaboration on a personal level is the approach that will most successfully combat

neoliberal capitalism and its destructive effects on society and the environment.

Montero's novels have already been widely studied by critics from an ecocritical perspective. Luis I. Prádanos attributes today's global crisis to unchecked neoliberalism and global capitalism ("Exploring" 50-51). Katarzyna Beilin shares this opinion and further claims that "while previous crises of capitalism were to some extent transitory, this one has a more permanent appearance" ("Alternative" 151). Given the gravity of the situation, Prádanos is especially concerned with the fact that few Spanish novels pay attention to the global ecological crisis, and among those who do, many "perpetuate the mainstream discourse of the European Union by privileging the uncritical celebration of digital culture, progress and globalization" ("Toward" 30). Thus, Prádanos joins in the call for a paradigm shift, away from capitalist consumerism, globalization, and technological celebration, towards grassroots sustainability as exemplified by the slow and de-growth movements ("Decrecimiento" 77, "Toward" 32-36). Rosa Montero's *Lágrimas en la lluvia*, is, according to Prádanos, one of the novels that represents such a shift as it manages to

extrapolar al futuro los problemas presentes—amplificados—generados por la tendencia actual del neoliberalismo global: el modo en que aumenta el severo deterioro medioambiental afectando la vida cotidiana y generando problemas sociales. ("Decrecimiento" 81)

El peso del corazón continues this trend, exposing both environmental and social problems that are a direct result of unbridled neoliberal capitalism. Carmen Flys Junquera divides ecocriticism into “nature writing” and “justicia medioambiental,” viewing the latter as more common among “grupos minoritarios, sean raciales, étnicos, sexuales o culturales” (109). Flys Junquera further notes that “cada día hay más autores españoles que se fijan en estas cuestiones [de justicia medioambiental]” (118). Montero is clearly among these authors, and the two novels in question focus heavily on environmental justice by imagining where the consequences of neoliberal capitalism’s injustice and environmental abuse will take all living beings in a not-so-distant future and offering a grass-roots solution of a posthumanist inter-species collaboration such as the one that exists between Bruna the android and her human and animal counterparts.

Beilin and Suryanarayanan convincingly point out that “Montero suggests that we still treat other forms of life, such as techno humans, in the future, somewhat similarly to the way we treat animals today” (236). In the novel, the last polar bear, called Melba, is the connection between animals and techno humans. Filming crews followed the dying Melba as she slowly lost her last footing and began to swim herself to exhaustion upon the melting of the final ice cap in her vicinity. Rather than trying to save the bear and transport her to safety at a zoo, the sensationalist money-making media filmed the animal’s tragic and painful death. In so doing, were the filming crews not guilty of animal neglect? The video of Melba’s death grotesquely plays at the bear pavilion in Madrid (the city’s new symbol), where a clone (or replica) of Melba resides for the viewing pleasure of visitors, only to be re-cloned upon her death. Thus begins an endless cycle of Melbas, which can be compared to Rosi Braidotti’s vision of the first/last dichotomy, in which she describes Dolly the sheep as:

simultaneously the last specimen of her species—descended from the lineage of

sheep that were conceived and reproduced as such—and the first specimen of a new species: the electronic and biogenetic sheep that Phillip K. Dick dreamed of. (*Nomadic* 57)

Like Dolly, Melba is the last of her species and the first of a new species. In a way, the replicated Melbas continue the legacy of the original, although they are doomed to a short and lonely existence never to encounter others of their species. The cloned animals, however, are able to live in bliss because they do not understand their predicament, as opposed to the humanoid replicas like Bruna, who are painfully aware of theirs.

Both Bruna and Melba are examples of the posthuman in Montero’s novels, and they are joined by a host of other characters that represent a move away from the binary divisions of traditional humanism into the multifaceted plurality of posthuman existence. Louise Westling divides posthumanism into two different schools of thought, the first one being “techno-posthumanism,” the studies of which

suggest a cyborg vision of the posthuman, opening the prospect of escape from bodily limitations and environmental constraints through computerised virtual reality, nanotechnology, genetic engineering, and biotic mechanisation. (29)

Although Westling seems to think that “the techno posthuman does not seem to offer much to ecocriticism” (30), Montero’s novels suggest otherwise. The second approach, as Westling goes on to state, “helps to define the human place within the ecosystem by interrogating or erasing the boundary that has been assumed to set our species apart from the rest of the living community” (30). As we continue to examine Montero’s futuristic dystopia, we shall see that both approaches can and do contribute to ecocriticism, and that cyborgs and technology should not be excluded from ecocritical studies. While the

first approach focuses on the technological posthuman and the second focuses on the posthuman as an all-encompassing inclusive category that brings all living beings together into a oneness without hierarchical divisions, both approaches do away with anthropocentric thought and one does not exclude the other. In fact, although Donna Haraway's 1985 cyborg manifesto lays the foundation for the techno-posthuman, her later works move into the second direction. In "Cyborgs to Companion Species: Reconfiguring Kinship in Technoscience" she affirms that

cyborg refigurations hardly exhaust the tropic work required for ontological choreography in technoscience. Indeed, I [Haraway] have come to see cyborgs as junior siblings in the much bigger, queer family of companion species, in which reproductive biotechno-politics are generally a surprise. (300)

Montero's protagonist, Bruna Husky, exemplifies the posthuman cyborg through her interactions with humans, aliens, animals, and other cyborgs.

In Montero's fictional world, Bruna and her fellow replicas come into existence as a direct result of the neoliberal capitalist striving for profit and its abuse of natural resources. Rosi Braidotti asserts that

advanced capitalism both invests and profits from the scientific and economic control and commodification of all that lives. This context produces a paradoxical and rather opportunistic form of post-anthropocentrism on the part of market forces which happily trade on life itself. (*The Posthuman* 59)

Montero's novel illustrates Braidotti's claim by having androids manufactured for slave labor in order to increase profit for the corporations that control the EUT (*Estados Unidos de la Tierra*) while at the same time exploiting natural resources on the moons of Saturn and on Mars: "Por aquel entonces no se concebía que

los [reps] tuvieran ningún control sobre sus propias vidas; en realidad eran trabajadores esclavos carentes de derechos" (*Lágrimas* 22). Standing up for their rights as a species, the androids eventually rebelled, and, after much bloodshed and negotiations, were able to earn civil rights equal to those of human citizens. Nevertheless, in Bruna's present, discrimination and anthroposupremacism are clearly rampant, and cyborgs continue to be second-class citizens of the EUT. In her famous cyborg manifesto, Donna Haraway states that cyborgs are "the illegitimate offspring of militarism and patriarchal capitalism, not to mention state socialism" (151). This seems to be precisely the case of the cyborgs in Montero's novels. A cyborg's life expectancy is about ten years. They spend the first two of those providing the for-profit service they were designed to provide (Bruna is a combat rep), and then are allowed to live out the remainder of their short lives as "free" citizens, only to die from a tumor known as TTT (*tumor total tecno*), that is currently untreatable. There are, however, rumors that TTT could be treatable were the government to invest more money into medical research. Since it is a cyborg and not a human ailment, however, the EUT does not find it necessary to fund the research. The fact that cyborgs continue to be second-class citizens becomes even more obvious in death. While humans receive lavish funerals, cyborgs are cremated in giant crematoriums called *moyanos*, and their metallic parts are sold to people who need artificial limbs. As Bruna visits a *moyano*, she leaves with the following reflection, confirming the isolation felt by herself and her kind:

Solo se escuchaba [...] el entrechocar de los tornillos de alguna androide infeliz a la que nadie acompañó en sus últimos momentos y por la que nadie lloró. Pantomimas de vidas, muertes miserables. (*Peso* 149)

Cyborgs in the novel live and die alone, but Bruna changes this tendency as she forms bonds with other cyborgs, humans, aliens,

and animals in order to create a collaborative community that can begin to undo the destructive effects of neoliberal capitalism on society and the planet.

Haraway's manifesto states that

the cyborg does not dream of community on the model of the organic family, this time without the oedipal project. The cyborg would not recognize the Garden of Eden; it is not made of mud and cannot dream of returning to dust. (151)

Family is precisely what is missing from Bruna's world until more than halfway through *El peso del corazón* when she discovers that in order to save money on production, replicas were created in series, and that there are others like her, such as Clara Husky, the next in the alphabetically-ordered sequence. In the end, although there is no genetic connection between the two, Bruna and Clara experience a form of sisterhood as Clara sacrifices her life to save Bruna's. Clara's last word is "Hermana" (356), which makes Bruna understand the connection humans experience with their offspring:

Hermana, había dicho Clara. De alguna manera Bruna se sintió vagamente confortada por la idea de que habría otras Huskys. La D, la E, la F [...]. Quizá fuera el mismo consuelo que sentían los humanos al mirar a sus hijos. El tenaz empeño de los genes. La ciega obstinación de la vida en vivir. (358)

It is ironic that the assembly line production of replicas should make Bruna feel more of a connection to humanity, but it is also the first step towards erasing the human/cyborg boundary, abandoning the loneliness, and becoming truly posthuman.

At the end of *El peso del corazón* Bruna forms her own little metaphorical family with Gabi, the ten-year-old little human girl whom Bruna vilifies as a monster throughout the early part of the novel. Bruna connects to Gabi on a mother-daughter level by creating

and telling her the story of the giants and the dwarves. The story talks about an idyllic loving co-existence between giants and dwarves in a world without memory. Each dwarf lives on top of the giant's shoulders, and each pair loves each other infinitely. One day, however, a dwarf wishes he could remember the happy moments and starts recording experiences by drawing on his skin. Once memory comes into the picture, the past seems happier, and the present bliss is erased. Death comes on the scene and takes the giant. In the end, however, Bruna creates a happy ending and the dwarf is able to trick death, making it drown in a river of blood he painted, and bring back the giant so the two can go back to their love. The act of storytelling gives Bruna a motherly role. A cyborg and a human come together to form mother-daughter relationship complete with a foundational text of loss of paradise through memory. The cyborg may not recognize Eden, but s/he can create his/her own story. The cyborg may not dream of a community through family, but s/he can be a part of a heterogeneous posthuman family that, like the giants and the dwarves in Bruna's story, can live in harmony in spite of their differences.

As a human, Gabi, too, struggles with embracing the other. At the beginning of *El peso del corazón*, Bruna rescues the little girl from the polluted *Zona Cero*, which has a restricted exit policy. Bruna agrees to serve as a guardian to the child, and brings her into a clean air zone (it costs money to live in a clean air zone due to neoliberal legislation). Instead of being thankful and embracing Bruna, Gabi initially keeps her distance, and even bites the android, causing an infected wound on her arm. Nevertheless, as Maryanne L. Leone points out, "the bacterial infection that Gabi passes to Bruna pales in comparison to the toxic burden that government-supported nuclear programs have imposed on Gabi" (69). The wound takes both Bruna and Gabi to a hospital, where it is discovered that not only is Gabi slowly dying from radiation poisoning, but also that she has suffered severe sexual

abuse in her short life. As an orphan, Gabi is not entitled to healthcare, and, due to the lack of a biological relationship between the two, Bruna cannot use her own insurance to save Gabi's life. In order to help Gabi, Bruna agrees to go on a dangerous undercover mission to the misogynist, patriarchal colony of Labari (where androids are banned from entering and women are second-class citizens) under the condition that the government official asking for the mission would fund Gabi's treatment. In an act of embracing the other, Bruna puts her own life at risk so she can save Gabi's, and eventually, the two develop a kinship in spite of differences.

Bruna Husky is unique in that she is a cyborg endowed with real human memories. All replicas in Montero's novel have implanted within them memories of a childhood that they know are false, but that provide some sort of comfort. Bruna's memories, however, are special because her memory writer, Nopal, gave her his own recollections of a truly disturbing childhood defined by the murder of his father. Bruna's memories are more complex than those of other cyborgs, but also much sadder. The humanity of her memories makes Bruna feel alone like Melba. In fact, Melba's pavilion is one of Bruna's favorite places because she feels a connection to the polar bear replica who is doomed to never find another of her species. Irene Sanz points out that Bruna's "sense of uniqueness makes her feel solitary" (328). Bruna feels monstrous because she is unique: "[Nopal] la había convertido en un monstruo dentro de los monstruos" (*Peso* 70). Nevertheless, Nopal plays a sort of father/brother figure in Bruna's life. The two share memories of the same parents. Yet Nopal is the one who passed his own memories over to Bruna in a way a parent passes genetic code to their offspring. The relationship between Bruna and Nopal is strained, however, as she blames him for her monstrosity. It is such monstrosity, however, that allows Bruna to look beyond herself and form connections with other "monsters."

Monstrosity is associated with "otherness." Bruna feels monstrous because she is different from other cyborgs and different from other humans. Nevertheless, when she has a sexual encounter with Maio, an alien from a different planet, Bruna feels disgusted: "Se había acostado con un *bicho*. Sintió ganas de vomitar. Pero ¿de verdad se había acostado con un *bicho*?" (*Lágrimas* 133). It is ironic that the marginalized cyborg that many humans view with disgust would look at an alien with equal disgust. Equally ironic is the fact that the intimacy between Bruna and Maio gives the alien the ability to read Bruna's mind as their souls connect. In the end, Bruna overcomes her prejudice and invites Maio to stay with her rather than leaving him on the street: "Los monstruos unidos eran un poco menos monstruosos" (*Lágrimas* 279). Bruna is able to reach across cultures and species and form a bond with the "other," accepting her own monstrosity in the process. In fact, towards the end of *El peso del corazón*, Bruna tells Gabi that there is a three-headed dog in the giant-dwarf story "porque los monstruos son hermosos" (370). According to Nina Lykke,

a conspicuous characteristic of the great modern divide between human and non-human is that its construction is accompanied by strong hostility to monsters and hybrids in their capacity as boundary figures which will adhere to neither the human nor the non-human sphere. (76)

Lykke further suggests that "the monstrous in-between position seems to be by far the most promising site for further explorations" (81). In the case of Bruna, realizing that there is a little bit of a monster in everyone does away with differences and takes away the notion of anthropomorphic supremacy associated with humanism.

According to Louise Westling "the humanist claim of our semi-divine distinction from other creatures is absurd" (38). Rosi Braidotti furthers the argument, stating that:

in terms of the human-animal interaction, the ego-saturated familiarity of the past is replaced by the recognition of a deep bioegalitarianism, namely that ‘we’ are in this together. The bond between ‘us’ is a vital connection based on sharing this territory or environment on terms that are no longer hierarchical or self-evident. (*Nomadic* 85)

Irene Sanz establishes that “Montero’s novels show how the lens through which nonhuman animals are usually perceived can be altered through a process of identification and empathy” (324). In *Lágrimas en la lluvia*, Bruna takes in a *bubi* named Bartolo, an alien furry companion species that speaks simple sentences. Bruna’s initial inability to handle Bartolo and frustration with his chewing habits is transformed into love during the second novel when the *bubi* saves her life during an attack. A strong connection forms between the two, and Bruna begins to hold the creature and show affection, erasing the boundary of separation and forming a kinship with her companion species much like the one Haraway describes in “Cyborgs to Companion Species.” Bartolo, on the other hand, becomes Bruna’s companion from the beginning, ignoring her initial rejection and showing unconditional love and acceptance at all times. In a way, the companion species has an advantage in that he is not subject to societal norms, does not know otherness, and therefore does not experience it. Bartolo, who is both animal and alien (non-human in two instances), like Haraway’s “companion species,” is a role model for the perfect posthuman existence where boundaries between species are completely unknown and all exist as equal on every possible level.

Another posthuman connection Bruna makes at the end of *El peso del corazón* is one with her friend Mirari. Having lost her arm in a teleportation accident, Mirari participates in illegal activities in an attempt to save enough money to purchase a high-quality artificial

arm that would allow her to resume her violin performance as she is unable to afford one under the neoliberal capitalist healthcare system which benefits the rich and offers marginal healthcare for the poor. Mirari is also one of the first characters in *Lágrimas* truly to embrace posthumanism and form a connection with other species as she agrees to take in Maio for safekeeping, and the two soon begin a human-alien love affair. At the conclusion of *El peso del corazón*, Bruna calls her friend and tells her “te llamo para comunicarte que dentro de poco heredarás el mejor brazo biónico en el mundo [...] en tres años, ocho meses y treinta días” (371). More than just an emotional connection, Bruna and Mirari will have a physical one when Bruna dies from her TTT and Mirari inherits her friend’s bionic arm (which Bruna receives after losing her own while uncovering a secret government conspiracy to trade nuclear waste with the off-Earth colonies). The human will literally become part android, moving beyond species into a truly posthuman state. Meanwhile, the android, for the first time since the beginning of the first novel, feels light and happy in spite of her fast-approaching death. Leaving a part of herself to Mirari allows Bruna to learn “lo poco que pesaba un corazón feliz” (371). A future life replaces death, rapidly approaching though it may be, performing a function similar to the one that Braidotti describes when she insists “on rethinking posthuman life beyond the boundaries of death” (*Posthuman* 133). What Braidotti would have is an elimination of the life/death dichotomy as part of embracing the posthuman rather than seeing life as a path towards death. In Bruna’s case, the countdown to death does not go away, but it becomes one of transformation. When her body part gives life to someone else and allows them to live their dream, her existence will continue metaphorically. The collaboration between Mirari, Maio, and Bruna is significant in suggesting what Leone calls a “citizenship of agency and interdependence that centralizes the sustainability of life” (76).

Nevertheless, Leone goes on to conclude that “marginalized beings are more open to overcoming prejudices and caring for one another than those in positions of power” (76).

While marginalized beings such as Bruna, Maio, Gabi, Mirari, and Bartolo struggle with the difficulty of existence and learn to embrace each other’s otherness in order to move into a posthuman existence of mutual acceptance and collaboration, many of the privileged human beings on the planet are involved in hate groups and anti-android activism. There is a “Partido Supremacista Humano” that accuses the main government of being “*chuparreps*” (*Lágrimas* 99). According to the party’s leader, “[los reps] son unos monstruos que hemos creado los humanos” (100). Once again, the idea of the monstrous goes to the “other,” the non-human in the binary division of human/non-human that posthumanism seeks to eradicate. Braidotti calls for a “co-presence, that is to say the simultaneity of being in this world together” (*Posthuman* 169), while some of the radicalized humans in Montero’s novel call for internment camps for the androids and an immediate cessation of their production. This is the negativity and lack of acceptance of other that needs to be overcome by society in order to move into a posthuman existence of mutual collaboration and acceptance.

Ironically, the same humans who consider themselves superior to their technologically-produced counterparts, lose some of their own humanity by attempting to slow down the ageing process through plastic surgery. While androids like Bruna would do anything to experience old age and live longer than ten years, humans try to escape their age by artificially altering their bodies. The same people who would discriminate against cyborgs due to their semi-artificial nature take on implants and alterations to their own skin, erasing their uniqueness and becoming as assembly-line as the androids they detest:

“De repente se habían puesto de moda los arreglos faciales y había media docena de caras que se repetían hasta la saciedad en miles de personas” (*Lágrimas* 31).

Not all humans, however, undergo plastic surgery. In the novels, Bruna’s close friend, Yiannis, chooses to age naturally. Leone sees Yiannis’s choice as “a rejection of the neoliberal status quo and a closer affinity with nature” (74). Yiannis does not conform to the status quo, and he accepts all who might be considered others. Yiannis and Bruna’s friendship is the perfect example of posthuman coexistence. Yiannis helps Bruna in times of need, and Bruna does likewise. Each is prepared to risk their life for the other. Yiannis takes in Bartolo the *bubi* and cares for him while Bruna is on a mission. He also looks after and ultimately legally adopts little Gabi. After Bruna and Gabi form a mother-daughter connection through storytelling, Yiannis becomes Gabi’s legal father, truly forming a posthuman family. Leone sees the relationship between the three as an example of “reciprocal care crucial to a sustainable society and ecology” (74).

The final member of Bruna’s posthuman family is her love interest, detective Paul Lizard. Lizard’s family name metaphorically begins to erase the human/animal dichotomy. Furthermore, Lizard has been raised in a posthuman family by a rep named Maitena, who took care of him when he was orphaned. His on-again, off-again relationship with Bruna is initially purely sexual and defined by mutual mistrust fueled by Nopal’s fatherly insistence that Bruna beware of the detective. Nevertheless, the two end up together when Lizard tricks Bruna into accepting a tracking device, follows her into the depths of radiation-infested Onkalo, and saves her from bleeding to death after Clara dies. The sexual attraction turns into love and Bruna feels a sort of dependence: “Lizard la había traído a Madrid. Y la había abrazado, la había

acariciado, le había dicho lindezas. La rep se fingió más enferma de lo que estaba para seguir recibiendo sus muestras de afecto” (*Peso* 364). Leone sees this relationship as problematic and significant of a return to male-female dichotomy and traditional gender roles:

In the character of police inspector Paul Lizard and in Husky’s relationship with him, Montero warns that an ethics of care might reinforce traditional male-female roles despite emphasizing a growth-focused market society. (74)

Serra-Renobales, on the other hand, sees this romance as one in which “nuevamente encontramos la ideología de inclusión, de un nuevo orden a todos los niveles: literario, político, social y científico” (78). Perhaps Bruna does exhibit some dependency on Lizard following her recovery, but overall I would tend to agree with Serra-Renobales and place Husky-Lizard among the posthuman characters who overcome dichotomies in order to establish a new, posthuman order of togetherness and collaboration.

In his extensive study *Cyborgs in Latin America* J. Andrew Brown concludes that

the scarred cyborgs, the confused posthumans, the ungendered and regendered motherless bodies, the products of neoliberalism, and even the normal folk just trying to remember their individual lives are all cybernetic organisms of one sort or another. What the literature and other expressions of culture [...] suggest is the power of these figures to enunciate contemporary realities. (174-75)

The reality Montero enunciates is a global one. Although the novels are set in the future, many of the problems have their roots in the present. We are already headed in a direction of environmental collapse caused

by neoliberal capitalistic tendencies to place profit above safety. Montero is clearly among the Spanish novelists who are involved in the environmental justice movement, and whose plots and characters demonstrate both a posthuman and ecocritical stance against neoliberal capitalism. Melting ice caps, replicated polar bears, cyborgs who struggle with their humanity, aliens and animals that become important as their own ontological beings not different from humans are among the issues that concern *Lágrimas en la lluvia* and *El peso del corazón*. In the novels, it is the interspecies collaboration and acceptance of each other’s similarities and differences, the erasure of all divisive boundaries on the personal level that leads to mutual collaboration and success. Rather than calling for political action and mobilization, Montero calls for personal change both in the way we accept ourselves and the way we treat others, be they of a different race or species. One can only hope that Montero’s literary endeavors lead to some type of action that would make people stop thinking in terms of otherness, and accept all life on this planet as a companion species forming part of the extended posthuman family.

Works Cited

- Beilin, Katarzyna Olga. “Alternative Economies for the Anthropocene: Change, Happiness and Future Scenarios.” *Ecozon@* 7.2 (2016): 149-64.
- . with Sainath Suryanarayanan. “Debates on GMOs in Spain and Rosa Montero’s *Lágrimas en la lluvia*.” *In Search of an Alternative Biopolitics: Anti-Bullfighting, Animality, and the Environment in Contemporary Spain*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2015. 235-61.
- Braidotti, Rosi. *Nomadic Theory: The Portable Rosi Braidotti*. New York: Columbia UP, 2011.
- . *The Posthuman*. Cambridge/Malden: Polity, 2013.

- Brown, J. Andrew. *Cyborgs in Latin America*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010.
- Flys Junquera, Carmen. "Literatura, crítica y justicia medioambiental." *Ecocríticas: literatura y medio ambiente*. Ed. Carmen Flys Junquera et al. Madrid: Iberoamericana, 2010. 85-119.
- Haraway, Donna. "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century." *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*. New York: Routledge, 1991. 149-81.
- . "Cyborgs to Companion Species: Reconfiguring Kinship in Technoscience." *The Haraway Reader*. New York: Routledge, 2004. 295-320.
- Lykke, Nina. "Between Monsters, Goddesses, and Cyborgs: Feminist Confrontations with Science." *The Gendered Cyborg: A Reader*. Ed. Gill Kirkup et. al. New York: Routledge, 2000. 74-87.
- Leone, Maryanne L. "Tans-species Collaborations in Response to Social, Economic, and Environmental Violence in Rosa Montero's *Lágrimas en la lluvia* and *El peso del corazón*." *Ecozon@* 8.1 (2017): 61-78.
- Montero, Rosa. *El peso del corazón*. Barcelona: Seix Barral, 2015.
- . *Lágrimas en la lluvia*. Barcelona: Seix Barral, 2011.
- Prádanos, Luis I. "Exploring the Political Ecology of Iberian Studies." *Hispanic Issues On Line. Debates* 7 (2016): 49-54.
- . "Decrecimiento o barbarie: ecocrítica y capitalismo global en la novela futurista española reciente." *Ecozon@* 3.1 (2012): 74-92.
- . "Toward a Euro-Mediterranean Socioenvironmental Perspective: The Case for a Spanish Ecocriticism." *Ecozon@* 4.2 (2013): 30-48.
- Sanz, Irene. "Human and Nonhuman Interactions in Rosa Montero's Bruna Husky Novels." *Science Fiction Studies* 44.2 (2017): 323-30. *JSTOR*.
- Serra-Renobales, Fátima. "La ciencia para salvar el mundo: Una propuesta de Rosa Montero." *La incógnita desvelada: ensayos sobre la obra de Rosa Montero*. Ed. Alicia Ramos Mesonero. New York: Peter Lang, 2012. 71-81.
- Westling, Louise. "Literature, environment, and the posthuman." *Nature in Literary and Cultural Studies: Transatlantic Conversations on Ecocriticism*. Ed. Catrin Gersdorf and Sylvia Mayer. Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi, 2006. 25-47.