

Viewpoint: ‘Instead of science and technology leading to post-humanism, perhaps it will lead to a slightly more human condition’

What it means to be human... is not a constant, but continually constituted, altered and re-constituted through the recursive interface with an open and evolving world.

This is the view, at least, of Benjamin Bratton, a philosopher of technology who directs the Berggruen Institute’s [Antikythera](#) project to investigate the impact and potential of planetary-scale computation.

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“I can’t accept the essentially reactionary claim that modern science erases ‘the Human.’ Demystification is not erasure. It may destabilize some ideas that humans have about what humans are, yes. But I see it more as a *disclosure* of what ‘humans’ always have been but could not perceive as such. It’s not that some essence of the Human goes away, but that humans are now a bit less wrong about what humans are,” he argues.

Bratton goes on: “Instead of science and technology leading to some ‘post-human’ condition, perhaps it will lead to a *slightly more* human condition? The figure we associate with modern European Humanism may be a fragile, if also a productive, philosophical concept. But dismantling the concept does not make the reality go away. Rather, it redefines it in the broader context of new understanding. In fact, that reality is more perceivable *because* the concept is made to dissolve.”

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