

CALL FOR PAPERS

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POSTHUMANIST CONFIGURATIONS

Editors:

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Nearly one decade ago, in the Introduction to his study *What Is Posthumanism?*, Carry Wolfe noted the confusion that surrounded this term, as its Google search appeared to produce “different and even irreconcilable definitions” (University of Minnesota Press, 2010, p. xi). At that time, the term “posthumanism” had already been in use for more than a decade, at first tentatively, but eventually coming to encompass a constellation of meanings and viewpoints, ranging from intimations of an apocalypse of the “human” to a celebratory sense of triumph at the prospect of overcoming material, political, biological or social limitations, and also, as Wolfe put it, of discarding “the cultural repressions and fantasies, the philosophical protocols and evasions, of humanism as a historically specific phenomenon” (Wolfe 2010, p. 15). Another decade on, posthumanism seems to be here to stay, although the controversy surrounding it rages as fiercely as ever, having now drawn philosophers, scientists, theologians, anthropologists, sociologists, artists, film directors, writers and literary theorists into a debate that may have already propelled it to the status of a new cultural paradigm. Rooted in the inherent instability of humanist thought itself and its increasingly indefensible definition of the human in opposition rather than in relation to the animal, the technological and the environmental, posthumanism emerges as an attempt to configure a strand of thought that can also speak to, and of, a future whose unknowability presents itself as far more radical than our most imaginative tools can conceive of. It is the kind of future already presaged by what Jean-François Lyotard described as “postmodern melancholia” – the state of thought that avoids the traps of humanism by refusing eschatology and, therefore, lacks finality, engendered by the awareness that “man is not the centre of the world, he is not the first (but the last) among creatures, he is not the master of discourse” (Lyotard, *Postmodern Fables*, 1996, p. 101). Posthumanism is founded in the impossibility to tell its

own story and in the quest for a language that would make it possible, by transcending old binary categories such as human/nonhuman, discursive/physical, organic/inorganic, etc. With this in mind, we invite contributions that will participate in the configuration of a new kind of posthuman thought, by exploring the connections between the human as incessant arrival (never to be stabilized, but always negotiated) and its material and/or cultural contexts.

Possible topics include but are not restricted to:

- posthumanism and the anthropocene;
- posthumanism and planetarity;
- posthumanism and ecocriticism;
- posthumanism and ethics;
- posthumanism and the “poetics of DNA” (Roof 2007);
- posthumanism and prosthetic technologies;
- posthumanism and the digital;
- posthumanism and science fiction;
- posthumanism and dystopian fiction/film;
- posthumanism and transhumanism;
- posthumanism and the posthumanities;

Please follow the Echinox Journal style sheet. (available at <http://phantasma.ro/wp/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Stylesheet.pdf>)

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