

The 10th Beyond Humanism Conference



Cultures of the Posthuman

18-21st July 2018
in Wroclaw, Poland,
University of Lower Silesia
Faculty of Social Sciences
and Journalism

www.beyondhumanism.org
www.beyondhumanism2018.org

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CFP(Call for Papers)

We invite English abstracts up to 500 words, to be sent in MS Word and PDF format to: posthuman.conference@gmail.com

Files should be named and submitted in the following manner:

Submission: First Name Last name. docx (or .doc) / .pdf

Example: "Submission: MaryAndy.docx"

Deadlines:

Abstracts should be received by the 1st of April 2018.

Acceptance notifications will be sent out by the end of April 2018.

All those accepted will receive information on the venue(s), local attractions, accommodations, restaurants, and planned receptions and events for participants.

Presentations should be no longer than 20 minutes. Each presenter will be given 10 additional minutes for questions and discussions with the audience, for a total of 30 minutes.

Organising Committee/Beyond Humanism Network:

- Stefan Lorenz Sorgner, John Cabot University, Rome
- Sangkyu Shin, Ewha Woman's University, Seoul
- Evi Sampanikou, University of the Aegean
- Francesca Ferrando, NYU, New York
- Jaime del Val, Reverso-Metabody, Madrid
- Jan Stasienko, University of Lower Silesia, Wroclaw
- Maciej Czerniakowski, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

Trans- and posthuman thought—as well as its meta- version—seems to significantly undermine a definition of culture and question a traditional division into culture and nature. These divisions are difficult to defend in the context of contemporary biotechnology, gene therapy, and easy genome modification available thanks to technologies such as CRISPR-Cas9 system, technological and pharmacological expansion of human cognitive capacities, or overcoming physical and cognitive disabilities. The extent of technological interference in Stelarc's "obsolete body" is currently so large that it is difficult to talk about it in terms of nature. It is more of a cultural hybrid which temporarily emerges at a crossroads of biopolitical control, schizophrenic capitalism, algorithmic spasms of autopoietic systems, technologized affects and tissues. Bio-art appears to perfectly illustrate this mixture of nature and culture as well as conscious undermining of this division, which is part of the various beyond humanism movements.

Secondly, what is also worth noting is formation of new cultures and societies which consist of non-human subjects mingling with humans or forming their own, separate and previously unseen worlds. Contemporary reflections upon fauna and flora allow for more and more insightful investigations of plant and animal cultures and social interrelations of their representatives (bacterial cultures, swarms and colonies of insects, social life of trees, communication between intelligent animals). Material objects, in turn, are more and more often perceived as agents and actors. More questions arise here: To what extent can artificial intelligence be regarded as a cultural and social entity? On what grounds can non-human subjects be accepted in a social sphere? When and how will robots become ethical subjects, etc.?

Thirdly, the division into nature and culture is undermined by thinking about contemporary technologized ecologies. Culturation of climate (climate engineering), landscape architecture, geological approach to the media and technology (technofossils), new animism and spirituality of Gaianism are only a few trends and issues connected by questions about culture in the time of the Anthropocene which seems to head towards the algoricene or singularity. During the 10th conference of the Beyond Humanism series, we will have to summarise the achievements of previous sessions from the vantage point of places occupied by posthuman communities, historical ways followed by post-/ trans-/ metahumanist thought and its cultural manifestations. We will also discuss major indicators of post-/ trans-/ metahumanist culture and its vision for the future.

Topics:

- Cultures of trans-/post-/metahumanism (biohackers, vegetarians, nootropic users)
- Culture as post-nature
- Cultures of posthuman acceleration or deceleration
- Bio-art, AI art and robotic art
- Non-human cultures and communities (plants, animals, robots, things, AI)
- Ethics of robotics and AI
- Religious contexts of trans-/post-/metahumanism
- Culture of radical life extensions
- Ecologies of Anthropocene
- Disabilities studies and trans-/post-/metahumanism
- Cultural depictions of trans-/post-/metahumanism in art, literature, movies, games.
- A Pedagogical Culture of Posthuman Studies