

Sands, Danielle. (Ed.). (2022). *Bioethics and the Posthumanities*. Routledge.

Stavroula Anastasia Katsorchi¹

The turn of the twenty-first century and the subsequent continuous emergence of the implications of technological advancement have brought a crisis into the heart of the humanities. Its etymological origin, humanism, a philosophical stance shaped during and perpetuated by the Enlightenment, is becoming more and more redundant. An ecological emergency and advancements in science, especially biology, have created a need for a renewed understanding of subjectivity as well as of humanity's place in and relation to the rest of the world. Within this context, the introduction of this edited volume begins by highlighting the timeliness and unquestionable relevance of posthumanism in relation to the needs created by contemporary reality, both within and without the academy and the humanities. Beyond merely philosophizing, Danielle Sands seeks to explore the practical applications of posthuman theory by connecting it with the field of bioethics. The theoretical axis of this volume is critical posthumanism, a premise focused on networks, relationality, and the downfall of essentialism, as opposed to transhumanism, which aspires to enhance the human by surpassing its physical limitations; a principle which all the included authors concur is humanist at heart. An overview of bioethics as practiced so far immediately brings to light its outdated philosophical premises, which stem from the same liberal humanist ideals that posthumanism seeks to battle. Unable to move with the times, bioethics finds itself in need of a less normative and “nonsystemic” (Zyliska, 2009, p. xi) critical model that acknowledges difference and interrogates the superiority of humankind by radicalizing the concept of life itself. The ultimate goal is not simply to revolutionize health studies but to facilitate social justice and equality; now and in our posthuman future.

The chapters chosen for this volume explore a variety of ways in which critical posthumanism and bioethics can complement and reconfigure each other, opening up space for innovative and interdisciplinary future research. Each chapter adopts a unique starting point and approach, focusing on issues such as medicine, disability, life itself, ethics (including gen-ethics and textual ethics), politics, autonomy, de-extinction science, and moral responsibility. Due to the interdisciplinarity of the authors' approaches, the chapters have been grouped into three parts, drawing a sequence of examination, interrogation, and innovation.

The first part is titled “Bioethical Challenges” and begins with Michael Wee's chapter “Therapy, Enhancement, and the Social Model of Disability”. Bringing disability studies and posthumanism together, Wee's skilful argumentation targets the ostensible distinction between therapy and enhancement, questioning dysfunctionality as well as the social model of disability, namely the

¹ Stavroula Anastasia Katsorchi, Ph.D. Candidate, Faculty of English Language and Literature, Department of English Literature and Culture, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece. E-mail: linakat94@yahoo.com; linakat@enl.uoa.gr



discursive, cultural, and social conventions inherent in the conceptualization of disability as a form of exclusion, giving way to an ensuing hierarchy (20). He poses the following challenge to the transhumanist branch of posthumanism: “how do we know what lies beyond is enhancement and not disability?” (22). The novelty of his argument lies in the speculation that, in order to sustain enhanced humans and prevent them from becoming “disabled” hence oppressed within a context that is too mundane for them, the concept of enhancement and social infrastructure need to be rethought with the ideal of true equity at its centre. In a similar vein, in the next chapter, “Rethinking the Posthuman in Bioethics”, David Boden and Sarah Chan criticize the individualistic, liberal humanist notions behind enhanced posthumanity (in other words, transhumanism), and seek to reconceptualize the bioethical posthuman through the lens of critical posthumanism. Opposite to Wee, Boden and Chan speculate that current discourses of enhancement bear the risk of deeming everyone else dysfunctional hence disabled. The gist of their reasoning regards the confrontation of contemporary reality rather than questionable futures, thereby opening up space for new approaches to enhancement. The subversion of exclusionary bodily normalization gives way to entanglements, fluid identities, relationality, and the reconceptualization of humankind as a moral species, which may compose the theoretical basis for new public discourses and ethical policy-making. The last chapter of the first part strikes another blow against individualistic humanism by proposing four original ways of theorizing the implications of the human genome. Ruth Chadwick roots for an ethical turn in gen-ethics by, first, shifting the focus from an individualistic reading of the human genomic sequence towards a collective understanding of the shared nature of human populations. Then, with a rather critically posthumanist voice, she emphasizes the similarity between the human genome and that of other species as well as the unmistakable role of the environment in epigenetics, before ultimately inviting a fresh and indeed deconstructive look at gene-editing. The value of these four innovative approaches to the human genome reinforce social justice by striving towards “a more environmentally aware human” as well as “a global human community” (48).

The second part of the volume, “Bioethics and Posthumanism in Dialogue”, begins with Thomas Hobson and Anna Roessing’s chapter “Questioning the Politics of Human Enhancement Technologies”, which seeks to unearth the political undertones behind current enhancement discourses and technological imaginaries. Using the creation of twins immune to HIV in China as their starting point, the authors subtly criticize the lack of effort put into uncovering the politics behind technoscience so far. Rather than emanating from rationality and necessity, Hobson and Roessing daringly assert that technoscientific projects are standardized and publicized as desirable futures by political institutions whose intentions must be examined, lest they covertly reproduce existing injustices. Stefan Herbrechter’s ensuing chapter, laconically titled “Biohumanities”, celebrates the advantages of incorporating critical posthumanism into bioethics, while deeming transhumanism exceptionalist and “biophobic”. Building on Rosi Braidotti (2013), Herbrechter identifies a need a non-humanist ethics that simultaneously reinforces human agency within a time of climate change. The road to achieving this is paved by the establishment of a microbial view of the self and the world, as well as by prioritizing symbiogenesis or what Donna Haraway (2016) calls “becoming-with” others. Herbrechter’s biohumanist analysis conceives ecology as both external (environmental) and internal (microbial), thereby opening up space for new possibilities for care, with attention to the multiplicity of life. Part two ends with Megen de Bruin-Molé’s chapter “Autonomous: Bioethics and/as Intellectual Property”. Contemporary concerns, like ownership and bodily autonomy, arise within this profoundly creative chapter, informed by textual politics and medical ethics. Bruin-Molé draws parallels between physical and textual bodies to frame their conceptualization as already posthuman, inasmuch as they are constituted relationally through



networks rather than being stable, self-contained, and fixed. Textual politics thus emerges as a useful tool in creating an ethical biopolitical paradigm that stresses interconnectedness and entanglement.

The third part, “Exploring Posthuman Futures”, provides another cluster of chapters that implement critical posthumanism in diverse and original ways. The seventh chapter of the volume, Sarah Bezan’s “A Posthumanist Critique of De-Extinction Science”, touches upon the controversial issue of resurrecting extinct species (or creating hybrids, to be exact), and what this practice could mean for all forms of life on the planet. Bezan’s analysis begins by exposing, similarly to other chapters in this volume, the anthropocentrism underlying current theorizations of the de-extinction debate. Then, through a comparison of deep and shallow extinctions (mammoths and passenger pigeons respectively), she identifies a troubling human need for “macroevolutionary authority” (94). Finally, after the daring declaration that homo sapiens is itself a hybrid form of life, evolved from a currently extinct hominid, Bezan invites her readers to “think beyond the human”, especially when the planet’s overall life is at stake. Next is Matt Hayler’s “Posthumanism and the Bioethics of Moral Responsibility”, which uses the example of a road accident to let the cat out of the bag; the cat once again is humanism. Building on Francesca Ferrando and Rosi Braidotti’s respective outlines of the posthuman subject as a relational assemblage, he challenges current practices of administering blame and invites a new approach to moral responsibility. Historical luck and the interactions between species and organisms, which deconstruct subject autonomy, are uncontrollable factors that must be considered by a new posthumanist system of justice. The volume ends with possibly the most complex chapter, which is, however, vital in order to advance posthumanism in general. David Roden’s “The Filter Problem for Posthuman Bioethics: The Case for Hyperagency” constitutes a celebration of the countless possibilities for posthumanity. By comparing critical and speculative posthumanism, and anthropologically bounded and unbounded posthumanism, Roden exposes theoretical (and yet again anthropocentric) limitations imposed on imagined posthuman agency. Hyperagency, as he calls it, would be a state that surpasses standard human thinking, hence it cannot be known to one that does not inhabit such a state. To be a posthumanist theorist thus means to be content in doubt and to never presume to know what modes of life and agency could come to be. Ending on this note underscores that this volume does not belong to those who seek to restore an obsolete and restricted past, but rather to those who desire to create an open and better future for all.

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