

Call for papers

The Human Measure

Legacy, Conflicts, and Perspectives of Humanism

International Conference

Rome, LUMSA University, 9-11 January 2019

Concept:

The category of Humanism, often accompanied by some prefix (anti-, post-, trans- ...), is more alive than ever. The last century, opened by the end of World War I (1918-2018), can be considered as the age of the crisis of Europe and the West (see Spengler 1918, Husserl 1936, Fukuyama 1992), but also as the century of Humanism and its return to the intellectual and cultural scene.

During this time, a spiritual crisis has challenged the possibility of identifying the criterion and the *proprium* of "human," both at the individual and at the social level, i.e., the human measure, in its double sense of the boundaries and the tasks of the human being.

The various 20th-century Humanisms have sought to face up to this crisis, although often in a dialectic and in conflict with each other. On their part, the various Anti-humanisms have in general challenged the primacy of free and rational creativity traditionally affirmed by Humanism (the "high measure" of the human) and underlined the role played by natural and social conditioning of human subjectivity.

In our century, however, the dialectical adversary of Humanism is mostly represented by the so-called Post- and Trans-humanism, which overcome the modern opposition between nature and culture and the concept of measure connected to them, through the possibilities opened up by techno-science and, in particular, by biotechnology. At the same time, the boundaries between man and animal are questioned, even in relation to the question of rights. Furthermore, the question of the axiological boundary between civilization and barbarism – that is, the human measure that constitutes the criterion between the two – also lacks evidence, especially in the context of an alleged clash of civilizations supposed to be antithetical and impenetrable to each other.

For a century, the "human measure" that the Italian Humanism pursued as a regulatory ideal and as the fulfillment of the "living synthesis" represented by the human being (Garin 1965) has been therefore increasingly challenged, so that it seems now difficult to be identified and pursued. This difficulty is also linked to an increasing autonomy between different fields, which makes it difficult to establish what is the *proprium* and the criterion of the human and its "high measure": the gesture is often that of recognizing the primacy of a field (self-determination, well-being...) and making it the only possible criterion of human dignity. The problem is then how to recover critically, not naively, a unity which is no longer evident.

What will remain of a century of affirmations and negations of Humanism, the latter understood as the search for, and the pursuit of, the "human measure"? How can we imagine a Humanism commensurate to the human "living synthesis" and its "high measure"? What is our time producing and exploring in this regard?

Fukuyama, F. (1992), *The End of History and the Last Man*, Free Press, New York

Garin, E. (1947), *Italian Humanism: Philosophy and Civic Life in the Renaissance* (or. ed. 1947), Blackwell, Oxford 1965

Husserl, E. (1936), *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: an Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy* (or. ed. 1936), Northwestern University Press, Evanston (IL) 1970

Spengler, O. (1918), *The decline of the West* (or. ed. 1918), New York, Knopf, 1939

Keynote speakers

Frank Haldemann (Geneva), Vittorio Hösle (Notre Dame/USA), Céline Lafontaine (Montreal), Walter Lesch (Louvain), Thierry Magnin (Lyon).

Scientific Board

The conference is organized by the international research programme “Humanism: cultures and philosophies” sponsored by LUMSA University

(https://www.lumsa.it/ricerca_strutture_culture_umanesimo), in collaboration with the

International PhD programme “Contemporary Humanism”

(https://www.lumsa.it/index.php?q=en/teaching_phd_international_contemporary_humanism).

Members of the research programme: Stefano Biancu (Rome), Christophe Carraud (Paris), Kamila Drapalo (Sydney/Rome), Onorato Grassi (Rome), Massimo Marassi (Milan), Philippe Nouzile (Rome), Andrea Robiglio (Leuven), Riccardo Saccenti (London), Francesca Simeoni (Rome), Giuseppe Tognon (Rome), Francesco Valerio Tommasi (Rome).

Call for papers details

We invite scholars to submit an abstract. Students and scholars at the doctoral and postdoctoral level are particularly encouraged to do so. The abstract should be a maximum of 500 words and accompanied by a CV and a list of publications.

Applicants will be notified about whether their paper has been selected for presentation after the selection process is completed. Oral presentations must not exceed 20 minutes, the final paper for publication must be a maximum of 4000 words.

For accepted scholars and papers, accommodation in Rome is offered (January 9-11, 2019), but travel costs are not reimbursed and participants are asked to book their own travel.

Languages accepted for papers and oral presentations: Italian, English, French.

Suggested, but not exclusive, list of topics:

- Authors of Contemporary Humanism (Foucault, Guardini, Heidegger, Jaeger, Lévy-Strauss, Maritain, Merleau-Ponty, Sartre...)
- Forms of Contemporary Humanism (Integral, Marxist, Atheistic, Existential... Humanism, Anti-humanism, Post-humanism, Trans-humanism...)
- Specific issues and concerns challenging the “human measure”: the human being and the animal; the “inhuman” in history, politics, and law; the human body; human enhancement; biopolitics; economics...).

Deadlines:

- Submission of abstracts: by September 30, 2018.
- Notification of selected papers: by October 15, 2018
- Submission of the entire paper: by December 15, 2018.
- Submission of the final version for publication: by February 15, 2019.

Please send abstract and papers and address all questions to umanesimo@lumsa.it.