Symposium

26 June 2025, 11:00 – 21:00, in English

Sylvia Wynter has produced a rich body of work synthesizing Black studies, anthropology, cybernetics, literary studies, Caribbean studies, feminist theory, and more. One pivotal concept within her theoretical apparatus is that of the human. Despite its use as a cultural weapon, empty promise, theological gambit, or justification for colonial conquest, Wynter thinks the human has yet to be properly articulated.

For Wynter, the human operates at multiple scales, ranging from individual consciousness, to its embeddedness in a specific 'genre' of being human, to the racialized distribution of humanness at the planetary scale. At the same time, in her analysis, the term 'Man' has served as an exclusionary substitute for the human. This orthogonal humanism has invited a volley of disparate readings. Wynter has been rallied, among other things, to afropessimism, posthumanism, counter-humanism, and postcolonial and decolonial thought.

This one-day symposium aims to articulate the stakes of Wynter's work and its reception by way of attending to the different scales of the human, and of how the cosmological, philosophical, theological, economic, scientific, and political narratives in her work map onto one another and generate a rethinking of 'the human project'.

11:00 Welcome and Coffee

11:30
Henrike Kohpeiss
Infinite Catastrophes:
Ecological Crisis and Scales of the Human

12:00
Jackqueline Frost
Wynter, Césaire, *poiesis*

12:30 Lunch Break

14:00
Matthew Milbourne
If it don't feel good, you ain't doing it right:
Some Notes Towards the Wynterian Itinerary

14:30
Lama El Khatib
Thinking with Wynter:
Notes on Myth, Unsettling, and the 'We'

15:00 Coffee Break

15:30
Yaniya Lee
Wynter's Toolbox:
Notes from Artists and Scholars

16:00
Ben Woodard
Missed Links:
Sylvia Wynter's Biological Thought

16:30 Coffee Break

17:00
Kirill Chepurin
Sylvia Wynter and
the Post-Copernican Construction
of the Human

17:30
Tobi Haslett
NHI Revisited: Rebellion, Politics, Time

Organized by
Kirill Chepurin, Tobi Haslett, Ben Woodard

Sylvia Wynter and the Scales of the Human

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