

Ex-position Feature Topic Call for Papers
The Twenty-First Century: The New Contemporary?

Publication Date: June 2024 (Issue No. 51)

Submission Deadline: October 31, 2023



It's time we began to talk about the twenty-first century. Period.

Periodization is one of those topics to which academics often say there are no well-rounded approaches. We qualify our account, understate the possibility of being spot-on, and even feel apologetic.

But more often than not most of us quietly write against some sort of historical marker—even when we propose anachronism, that means there is a historical or temporal order out there that we would like to put a new spin on. As Fredric Jameson puts it in his now much-cited essay on periodizing the 60s, periodization provides “structural limits” that define not a “shared style or way of thinking and acting” but “the sharing of a common objective situation, to which a whole range of varied responses and creative innovations is then possible.”

So, quietly, we are into the third decade of the twenty-first century. In this feature topic, we invite inquiries into the paradigm-shift significance of the new century—or the lack of any, if that turns out to be the case. In addition to theoretical discussions, we welcome papers that respond to the theme by analyzing specific works produced over the past two decades or so.

Periodization may come across as a strictly historical investigation, but we also seek submissions that look anew at the concepts of contemporary and contemporaneity—be it Nietzsche's rendition or that of Ernst Bloch, Walter Benjamin, Paul de Man, Giorgio Agamben, etc.—against the backdrop of this historical juncture.

Topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Notable turns in philosophy and critical thought over the last two decades
- Shifts in literary and art practices: e.g., the boom of life writing and the documentary, the return of realism, the resurgence of kitsch
- Material conditions of possibility that shape the “common objective situation” we are

inhabiting today

- Newness of twenty-first-century media, the reality of futuristic technology
- The impact of the 2008 financial crisis
- Effects of “aftermath”: post-9/11, post-Brexit, post-truth, post-pandemic, post-Cold War, post-postmodernism
- The present progressive of war
- Contemporaneity (or synchrony, simultaneity) reconsidered
- The epistemic technicalities—or nonsense—of periodization

***In addition to themed sections, each issue of Ex-position also includes a “General Topics” section, which welcomes submissions year-round.*

***For submission guidelines, visit the journal’s website:*

<http://ex-position.org>