Forthcoming Issue – 56 (1/2028) – plastic/plasticity/plasticness
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Submission deadline: 15 March 2027

Plastic is a defining material of our age. Its properties—malleability, durability, the capacity to imitate almost any form, toxicity, and resistance to decomposition—are at the same time properties of contemporary culture. Plastic may therefore be read both as a historical substance and as a "theory machine": a tool for thinking about the materiality and mediality of culture, about artificiality and simulacra, as well as about the Anthropocene and the lasting traces modernity leaves upon the environment. One of the important points of reference for this issue is Ranjan Ghosh's project of the "plastic humanities," developed, among other places, in his monograph *The Plastic Turn* (Cornell University Press, 2022). Ghosh proposes the concept of the *material-aesthetic* as a way of thinking about literature and culture through the prism of plastic, and at the same time about plastic itself as an aesthetic, philosophical, and medial category. Understood in this way, "material mediality" allows us to approach plastic not merely as an object of representation, but also as a medium, a figure, and an organizing principle of contemporary experience.

The emergence of synthetic polymers coincided historically with a period in which modernity was intensively reshaping its cultural, medial, and aesthetic forms. Ghosh traces this convergence primarily in relation to Western literary modernism, showing that plastic and modern modes of representing the world did not develop independently of one another. They share a preoccupation with artificiality, formation, imitation, and transformation. This perspective invites us to ponder not only how plastic appears in cultural texts, but also how plastic itself becomes one of the models through which modernity is conceived.

This perspective, however, remains firmly rooted in the experience of Western modernity. The context of Central and Eastern Europe complicates it in important ways. In late twentieth-century Poland, synthetic materials functioned not only as part of the fabric of everyday life, but also as signs of modernity and of a "Western lifestyle" under conditions of an economy of scarcity. This produced an inverted ideological tension: while in the West plastic could signify consumer abundance and mass production, here it often became a substitute for that abundance, its promise, and a prosthesis of modernity. This contrast opens onto a broader question of how the meanings of plastic shift across different social, economic, and geopolitical conditions.

The title of the issue deliberately activates several meanings at once. "Plastic" refers to a specific synthetic substance and to its material presence in the world; "plasticity" to the capacity for formation, transformation, and adaptation, as explored, among other contexts, in philosophies of the subject, neuroplasticity, and reflections on embodiment; while "plasticness" evokes aesthetic, visual, and medial dimensions. Understood in this way, the term's polysemy makes it possible to think of plastic not only as a material, but also as a figure of artificiality, imitation, and formal mutability, while at the same time entering into a dialogue—critical where necessary—with Ghosh's project without simply reproducing it.

Within the broader reflection on **plastic/plasticity/plasticness**, we welcome submissions addressing, among others, the following areas:

- plastic as a promise of modernity in the cultures of Central and Eastern Europe
- synthetic materials in discourses of modernization, propaganda, and consumption
- socialist plastic and consumer plastic: East and West confronting the same material

- plastic as an aesthetic problem: artificiality, imitation, copy, simulacrum
- the mediality of plastic and plastic as a medium of representation
- poetics of plastic: material as motif, metaphor, and principle of formal organization
- plastic in literature, the visual arts, popular culture, and new media
- plastic as a substance of the Anthropocene: durability, toxicity, and resistance to decomposition
- waste, recycling, and the global circulation of plastic
- postcolonial perspectives and inequalities associated with the production, consumption, and export of waste
- plasticity as a philosophical and anthropological category
- neuroplasticity, embodiment, and posthumanism
- modified, prosthetic, and hybrid bodies
- gender, queer, and feminist approaches to the body as matter susceptible to formation

Manuscripts, together with all required metadata, should be submitted via the OJS system by **15 March 2027**, in accordance with the procedures described in the "About the Journal" https://journals.us.edu.pl/index.php/ERRGO/about and "Author's Guidelines" https://journals.us.edu.pl/index.php/ERRGO/information/authors sections of the Er(r)go website.

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2. The Author's institutional affiliation
3. The Author's ORCID number (www.orcid.org)
4. The Author's website address, if applicable
5. The Author's email address
6. If the Author wishes to receive a complimentary hard copy of the journal, the postal address to which the copy should be sent
7. The title of the article
8. An abstract of 250–350 words
9. A biographical note on the Author of 250–350 words
10. Keywords
11. The academic discipline(s) represented
12. The text of the article prepared in strict accordance with the *Chicago Manual of Style* (4,000–6,000 words)
13. A bibliography of works cited prepared in strict accordance with the *Chicago Manual of Style*
14. All illustrative materials in print-quality resolution (minimum 300 dpi)
15. In the case of copyrighted visual materials, all relevant permissions or licences obtained by the Author
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