

A GIGANTIC PLAIN, STRETCHING AS FAR AS  
THE EYE CAN SEE IN EVERY DIRECTION

TIMOTHY MORTON  
271

13. DARKLIFE: NEGATION, NOTHINGNESS,  
AND THE WILL-TO-LIFE IN SCHOPENHAUER

EUGENE THACKER  
295

THINKING LIFE: THE PROBLEM HAS CHANGED

ISABELLE STENGERS  
325

List of Contributors 339  
Index 343

## PREFACE: POSTSCRIPT ON THE POSTHUMAN

CLAIRE COLEBROOK AND JAMI WEINSTEIN

There is a very real sense in which the posthuman should be the last question we pose for our times—a postscript to the story of the human. Given that the human species is now beginning to change the scale of thinking by reference to a framework of deep geological time—to a time and place before human beings existed and began to scar the earth permanently—and, for the first time in its brief history, starting to imagine a future in which it ceases to exist, we must wonder: What questions would a being who arrives after humans have wanted us to pose? Is it not the height of hubris, myopia, narcissism, megalomania, and denial to talk about the various senses in which the human has been surpassed (whether by way of the end of human exceptionalism or by enhancing and exceeding the limits of human life) precisely when humans have been given various prognoses regarding the sixth great extinction, the end of the human species, or at the very least the end of liberal personhood and “man’s” current age of affluence and favorable conditions (Mulgan 2011)? Let us imagine, as geologists are beginning to do, that if there were something or someone able to view the planet Earth after human extinction, it would be able to discern that a species event occurred of such magnitude that the planet ceased to be a stable living system. This thought experiment of the Anthropocene, imagining not just a world without us but also a readable geological archive that testifies to our once forceful existence, opens a new mode of historical reflection that is literally *after* humans while simultaneously