

Posthumanism and the Posthuman Chances and Challenges in German and European Literature and Culture

23-24 March 2023

Institute of Modern Languages Research, London
Call for Papers

Confirmed keynotes: Prof. Dr. Karin Harrasser (Linz) and Dr. Stefan Herbrechter (Heidelberg).

‘Not all of us can say, with any degree of certainty, that we have always been human, or that we are only that. Some of us are not even considered fully human now, let alone at previous moments of Western social, political and scientific history.’ As the philosopher Rosi Braidotti reminds us, one of the central achievements of posthumanism and ‘the posthuman’ has been to enrich and diversify our sense of what it *could* have meant to be ‘human’, and what it might still mean.

At a time of intersecting geopolitical, economic, biomedical, and ecological crises, this two-day conference seeks to re-evaluate the categories of humanness and ‘the human’ through the lens of the posthuman. Whether through an embrace of non-human perspectives, through an engagement with accounts of bodily enhancement and disability, or through the temporal and spatial shifts of ecology and ecocriticism: we want to explore both the possibilities and the problems that this concept and discourse continue to present. How effectively can it still challenge the hierarchies that crisscross our many – human and non-human – coexistences? And as advances in genetics, prosthetics, and AI reshape those worlds, might ‘the posthuman’ simply end up perpetuating existing systems and structures by other means?

The focus will be on German-language and (in comparison) European literature and culture in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. We warmly welcome 20-minute papers (in English) that approach ‘the posthuman’ from literary perspectives (including graphic novels), as well as filmic, theoretical, or philosophical angles. Thematic areas may include (but are by no means limited to):

- Posthumanism and agency
- Posthumanism, transhumanism and AI
- The Posthuman in relation to ethnicity, gender, and sexuality
- Medical humanities and disability studies
- Critical animal and plant studies
- The environmental, ecological, and energy humanities

Please send a title and abstract of no more than **250 words**, together with your contact details and affiliation (if applicable), to imlr.posthumanism.conference@gmail.com by **31 August 2022** at the latest. We are planning to get back to those interested by the end of September.

To facilitate exchange, this conference is planned as an in-person event. However, where different access needs arise, we will aim to facilitate the hybrid participation of speakers via video stream.

Conference website: <https://posthuman-chances-challenges.com>

Conference organisers:

Robert Craig (Bamberg), Annegret Marten (KCL), Rebecca Wisweg-Kammerlander (KCL), and Amy Ainsworth (Cambridge)