



UNIVERSITY
OF
CRAIOVA



The Department of British, American, and German Studies
Faculty of Letters, University of Craiova
in partnership with
The Romanian Society for English and American Studies (RSEAS)
The European Society for the Study of English (ESSE)

announces
THE 17th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

LANGUAGE, LITERATURE, AND CULTURAL POLICIES.
TEXT AVATARS IN THE POSTHUMAN AGE

to be held in Craiova, Romania between 11-13 October 2018.

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

Almost two decades into the 21st century, in an age when the effects and consequences of technology are ubiquitous, when humanity is continually augmented by breakthrough innovations, digital worlds and biotechnologies, we may consider it appropriate to take a step back and analyse how all these modify our existence. The *re-rise of the machine* has transformed the way in which we think, read, write, teach and understand the world around us. As we advance in this highly technologized era, defined by ceaseless automation, rather than the mere mechanisation, the boundaries between the natural and the artificial, the organic and the machinic, the spiritual and the material, the conceptual and the real, as well as the traditional and the postmodern, are becoming more and more unfathomable.

The term “posthuman”, now widespread in both academic and popular circles, was coined by the literary theorist Ihab Hassan in his *Prometheus as Performer: Towards a Posthumanist Culture?*, in which he announced the arrival of a posthumanist culture that would level the “inner divisions of consciousness and the external divisions of humankind”. Hassan claimed that “the human form – including human desire and all its external representations – may be changing radically, and thus must be re-visioned. We need to understand that five hundred years of humanism may be coming to an end, as humanism transforms itself into something that we must helplessly call posthumanism.” (1977: 843)

This is not exactly a new perspective, but a concern that great theorists such as Martin Heidegger have attempted to address. In his 1955 essay on the “Question Concerning Technology”, Heidegger stated that forces external to the self, such as technology, increasingly compromise the free will of the modern subject. Heidegger emphasized the technology’s *Gestell*, or *enframing*, as the process through which technology, rather than the individual, defines the purpose of, and motivations for, human existence.

Considering, also, Albert Einstein's remark that "our technology has exceeded our humanity" or Henry David Thoreau's fear that "Men have become the tools of their tools", this conference will examine the influences that develop between humanism and technology in the larger context of language, literary and cultural studies.

We invite the submission of individual abstracts, panels, and workshop/roundtable proposals that explore all aspects of this theme. Possible subthemes include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Posthumanism and transhumanism
- ✓ Self and otherness
- ✓ Identity and consciousness
- ✓ Memory and agency
- ✓ Technoscience/technophobia and literature
- ✓ Ecocriticism
- ✓ Ethnicity and technology
- ✓ Gender and technology
- ✓ Technology assisted in-depth learning
- ✓ Translation studies
- ✓ Cultural studies
- ✓ Cultural ecology
- ✓ Ecolinguistics

Submission instructions

Proposals (maximum 200 words) for 20-minute papers along with a short autobiographical note (maximum 100 words) can be sent to the organizers, Dr Sorin Cazacu, Dr Titela Vilceanu, Dr Daniela Rogobete, Dr Madalina Cerban, at craiovaconference2018@gmail.com by 1 September 2018. The languages of the conference are English and German.

Conference fees

- participants presenting papers: 250 RON / 60 EUR
- attendance without presentation: 70 RON/ 15 EUR

The fee will be paid upon arrival. A selection of papers will be published in the conference proceedings. The conference fee includes the publication of the volume, the conference folder and badge, certificate of participation, refreshments during the scheduled breaks, lunches, and cocktail reception. The fee does not include travel expenses, accommodation and the social programme (to be announced).

Further information

A second circular will be emailed to those who have returned the preliminary registration form. Accommodation details will be available on the conference website (currently under construction). If you have any queries, please contact the conference organisers at craiovaconference2018@gmail.com.