

The Posthuman, the Human, and the Non-Human: New Narratives and Critical Perspectives in Korean Studies

2023 Korean Literature Association Annual Meeting

University of Southern California, Los Angeles
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The posthuman, the human, and the non-human have become frequently debated categories in recent decades in response to an intensifying global environmental crisis, the rapid development of artificial intelligence and biotechnology, and the rise of new ways of thinking about gender, race, society, and justice. While these stances are not always mutually cohesive or even compatible, posthumanism as a general field seeks to both define and reconfigure the relationship between the human and the non-human in all of its forms, which are understood as including the mechanical, the computational, the cybernetic, the biological, animals, plants, the geological realm, the environment, and more. Within such a broad framework, posthumanist researchers are nowadays producing useful and exciting critiques of the anthropocentric assumptions of traditional humanism; they are probing into the socially inclusive as well as exclusive functions of the concept of humanity; and they are critically contributing to the transhumanist project of developing technologies that improve our lives through the enhancement of human intellectual, physical, and psychological capacities.

The Korean Literature Association calls for proposals that engage Korean studies in (re)thinking the human and the non-human through the lens of the posthuman. The conference aims at creating an opportunity for thinking about some of the most pressing intellectual challenges of our era from within the fields of Korean literary and cultural studies. We welcome both individual papers and team panels across the periods, the media, and disciplinary and geographical boundaries, as long as they are relevant to the study of Korean literatures and cultures. Possible thematic areas include but are not limited to the following:

- The historical construction as well as contestation of traditional notions of the human;
- Representations of subhuman, inhuman, and posthuman bodies and their racial, gender, and social implications;
- Interrelations between the human and the non-human;
- Environmental activism and popular culture;
- Posthumanism and decolonization;
- Imaginations of the Anthropocene and other ends of the human civilization;
- Artificial intelligence, bioengineering, and other futuristic technologies in literature and visual media;
- Posthuman approaches to literature and arts;
- The possible problems and pitfalls of posthumanism as an analytical framework.

For this conference, the KLA (<http://korlit.org/wp/>) seeks submissions from researchers at any stage of their careers. While the official conference language is English, we will also be open to Korean-language presentations of innovative researches. We are currently planning an in-person

conference at the University of Southern California, with possible optional hybrid presentations in cases where travel poses difficulties. To apply, please send your CV and a 300-word abstract to korlitorg@gmail.com. A team proposal should include the individual abstracts along with a 300-word panel abstract. Those selected to present will be required submit a presentation paper in advance.

This year's conference will also coincide with the KLA's biannual Book Manuscript Workshop, which is primarily dedicated to researchers whose manuscript is near completion. One or two manuscripts will be chosen, and feedback will be provided by senior scholars in the field as well as by select conference participants. Those interested should submit a brief summary or proposal for the project (including a timeline for completion), a sample chapter, and a short CV to korlitorg@gmail.com. The manuscript for review will be due for submission about six weeks ahead of the workshop.

All participants in the conference and the workshop will be required to register as KLA members and will receive hotel accommodation. All efforts will be made to defray the cost of travel especially for junior scholars. The deadline for submissions is April 10, 2023. If you have any questions, please contact the local organizer, Sunyoung Park, at sunyoungp@usc.edu.