

International Conference

Call for Application

Dehumanization

New approaches to understanding the politics of human nature

Apr 6-9, 2016

Budapest

The international and interdisciplinary conference *Dehumanization: New approaches to understanding the politics of human nature* brings historians, scientists, philosophers and artists together in order to discuss the phenomenon of dehumanization. The need for such an interdisciplinary setting arises since scientific literature on dehumanization ignores by and large philosophical debates on human nature and essences; at the same time, philosophical literature on the concept of human nature (and the underpinning essentialism) by and large ignores scientific dehumanization studies (even if dehumanization is mentioned as an issue). If the two are brought together, tensions become visible. Both areas rarely consult historical literature on 'human nature,' 'essence' and actual historical cases of dehumanization in science, society and art. Finally, artists often address the issue in their works and try to rehumanize people through art.

The conference is meant as a first step to bring the four perspectives – the historical, the scientific, the philosophical and the artistic – into a constructive dialogue. Historically the conference will concentrate on the modern era. At issue will be whether and how one guiding categorical divide – animal/human – has been conceptually and socially traversed and used to dehumanize or rehumanize people in science, society and art from roughly the 18th century onwards.

The time structure – each slot 45 min (30 min talk, 15 min discussion), comments by locals, long breaks – will allow for ample discussion and interdisciplinary interaction. A special issue or edited volume is tentatively planned and conference papers will be invited for inclusion. The conference is thus also meant as an occasion for in-depth peer-review.

Interested scholars from history, psychology, cognitive science, philosophy and other relevant disciplines are invited to **submit abstracts of 500 to 750 words** by **Oct 30, 2015**. Please send them to **Zsofia Jeney-Domingues** <Jeney-DominguesZs@ceu.edu> for triple blind review.

The conference is organized by Maria Kronfeldner (Philosophy, Central European University), hosted by the *Open Society Archive* and financed by the *CEU Humanities Initiative* and the *CEU Conference and Academic Event Fund*.

More information will be available via: <http://philosophy.ceu.edu/tophss>.

The event is part of the project ToPHSS, which aims to establish the philosophy of humanities and social sciences as a research and teaching focus at CEU. The focus is on methodological and ontological issues, in particular on those concerned with contested categories of the humanities and social sciences, and of those primarily the categories of human, individual and person. The project will start in the academic year 2015-16 with a lecture series, in the framework of a new annual winter term seminar. ToPHSS will host the dehumanization conference, a film series (in cooperation with the OSA) and possibly an exhibition (in cooperation with the CAC).