Call for Abstracts

One-Day Conference on
Humanism and Artificial Intelligence

Center for Science and Thought
University of Bonn
May 23, 2024

Confirmed keynote speaker: **Prof. Robert Pogue Harrison (Stanford)**

Much has been said about human-centered AI in the past few years, and the expression has become omnipresent in particular since OpenAI launched ChatGPT in November 2022. Advances in generative AI have prompted governments and industry all over the world to pass privacy protection acts and engage academics in the development of an ethics of AI. In all these conversations, the word "human" seems to have made an unexpected comeback, especially considering the discursive preeminence of such topics as the Anthropocene, post- and transhumanism, planetary and interspecies ethics, ecocriticism, and animal studies. Now the question is whether we can speak of the "human" and of conceptions of the human in the age of generative AI without recourse to one of the oldest philosophical and cultural systems dealing precisely with the *anthropos*: Humanism. From the Digital Humanism initiative in Vienna and the HAI (Human-Centered AI) institute at Stanford to the NHNAI (New Humanism at the time of Neurosciences and AI) initiative in Nairobi, so-called humanist perspectives have become so dominant that even CEOs urge us "to put humanism at the center of generative AI to reap its rewards" (*Harvard Business Review,* Julien 2023). What is the nature of this new Humanism? And what connections does it have to its traditional forms? The following questions are of interest within the context of this conference:

- What is the meaning of Humanism in the age of AI?
- What working concepts from (Italian) Renaissance Humanism, Marxist Humanism, Christian Humanism, etc., can be drawn upon to better understand human-machine interactions today?
- What is the role of the human from a Humanist perspective in designing and using AI systems?
- What are some contemporary definitions of such Humanist concepts as human dignity, human self-realization, human agency, and creativity?
- What would a new Humanist approach to the study of technology and AI look like?
- What could be a Humanist method of studying narratives of technology and AI in literature, philosophy, and popular entertainment?
- What examples are there of Humanist AI in contemporary culture?
- What image of Humanism is promoted by industry, the business world, and media today?

Please submit a 250-word abstract and a 100-word bio to ilievska@uni-bonn.de **by December 1, 2023.** Given the small format of the conference, the selection process will be competitive. Abstracts will be evaluated and selected on the basis of their originality in *combining* Humanism with questions in AI and AI ethics as well in terms of the diversity of approaches. Submissions from scholars in all relevant humanistic and social sciences disciplines are welcome. **Ph.D. or Ph.D. candidacy requred.**

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