Anthropology is a notoriously polysemous term. Within a continental European academic context, it is usually employed in the sense of *philosophical anthropology*, and mainly concerned with exploring concepts of a universal human nature. By contrast, Anglo-American scholarship almost exclusively associates anthropology with the investigation of cultural and ethnic differences (*cultural anthropology*). How these two main traditions (and their 'derivations' such as literary anthropology, historical anthropology, ethnology, ethnography, intercultural studies) relate to each other is a matter of debate. Both, however, have their roots in the path-breaking changes that occurred within sixteenth and early seventeenth-century culture and scientific discourse. It was in fact during this period that the term anthropology first acquired the meanings on which its current usage is based.

The Renaissance did not 'invent' the human. But the period that gave rise to 'humanism' witnessed an unprecedented diversification of the concept that was at its very core. The question of what defines the human became increasingly contested as new developments like the emergence of the natural sciences, religious pluralisation, as well as colonial expansion and the resulting confrontation with non-European peoples, were undermining old certainties. The proliferation of doctrines of the human in the early modern age bears out the assumption that anthropology is a discipline of crisis, seeking to establish sets of common values and discursive norms in situations when authority finds itself under pressure.

Location:

Thursday – Friday

Carl Friedrich von Siemens Stiftung
Südliches Schloßrondell 23
80638 München

Saturday:

Internationales Begegnungszentrum der Wissenschaft
International Center for Science and the Humanities
Amalienstraße 38
80799 München

Conference Convenor:
Prof. Dr. Andreas Höfele

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Sonderforschungsbereich 573
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Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft
DFG

Humankinds:
The Renaissance and Its Anthropologies

Interdisciplinary Conference,
Munich, 16 – 18 July 2009

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Thursday, July 16

15:00
Intro: Andreas Höfele

15:30–16:30
Aleida Assmann:
"Radical Anthropology in Shakespeare's Plays"

COFFEE BREAK

17:00–18:00
Richard Wilson:
"The Golden Window of the East: Shakespeare and the Shah"

OPENING RECEPTION

Friday, July 17

09:30–10:30
Enno Ruge:
"Golding's *Metamorphoses*, Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* and Puritan Anthropology"

10:30–11:30
Tobias Döring:
"'Now they're substances and men': *The Masque of Lethe* and the Recovery of Humankind"

COFFEE BREAK

12:00–13:00
Brian Cummings:
"Among the Fairies"

LUNCH BREAK

14:30–15:30
Verena Lobsien:
"The Space of the Human and the Place of the Poet. Excursions into English Topographical Poetry"

15:30–16:30
Bettina Boecker:
"'Cony caught by walking mort': Indigenous Exoticism in the Literature of Roguery"

COFFEE BREAK

17:00–18:00
Paul Yachnin:
"Shakespeare's Public Animals"

18:00–19:00
Cornel Zwierlein:
"Caring for the self's future: Anthropologies of Insuring and Insurance-like Practices in the Renaissance"

CONFERENCE DINNER

Saturday, July 18

09:00–10:00
Gideon Stiening:
"Between God and Nature: Thomas Hobbes and Francisco Suarez on Anthropology"

10:00–11:00
Markus Wild:
"'Confreres et compaignons' / 'fellow-brethren and compeers': Montaigne's Attempt at Rapprochement between Man and Animal"

COFFEE BREAK

11:30–12:30
Ulrich Pfisterer:
"Animal art / Human art. Defining imagination and Artistic Creativity in Early Modern Europe"

LUNCH BREAK

14:00–15:00
Lara Bovilsky:
"Spenser's Robots"

15:00–16:00
Stefan Herbrechter:
"Posthumanist Shakespeares"

CONFERENCE CLOSE