

Non-human and More-than-Human in Literature

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The paper will be based on the idea of a “more-than-human” world, a concept introduced by the American eco-philosopher David Abram in his book *The Spell of the Sensuous* (1996) and subsequently adopted and developed by other scholars. This concept seeks to offer a way of seeing the world that would overcome the human tendency to separate humans from the natural world. The paper will attempt to demonstrate what perspectives this concept opens up for the study of artistic—and primarily literary—representations, in comparison with traditional notions of the non-human, the superhuman, and the extra-human, which structurally divide the world into the human and the other. It will ask whether these terms reflect the specific poetics of fictional worlds and their depictions, or whether it is more appropriate to understand them as conceptual tools for their description and interpretation. Through iconic works of world literature, the presentation will thus attempt to answer the question of whether the “more-than-human” is merely a new concept that allows us to interpret differently what was previously interpreted through the prism of the “non-human” (or “extra-human” or “super-human”), or whether it is a concept tied to specific literary representations and poetics.

