

## [CFP GSA 2023 Panel Stream: “The Implicated Subject in Contemporary German-Language Literature”](#)

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Call for Papers

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German History / Studies, Humanities, Literature, Modern European History / Studies, Teaching and Learning

### CALL FOR PAPERS

German Studies Association (GSA) Annual Conference

October 5-8, 2023 in Montréal, Québec, Canada

Panel Stream: “The Implicated Subject in Contemporary German-Language Literature”

Drawing on Michael Rothberg's notion of the implicated subject, this panel series explores how literary texts of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries negotiate victimhood, perpetration, complicity, and solidarity, or memories thereof.

In his 2019 study, Rothberg argues that the triadic conception of victim, perpetrator, and bystander does not adequately account for indirect forms of agency that enable and perpetuate violence and exploitation. Implicated subjects play indirect roles in the histories of harm and domination and may also include those who belatedly benefit from structural inequities rooted in historical violence and exploitation, raising questions about the kinds of debt or responsibility incurred by these second-generation beneficiaries. In contrast to perpetrators and accomplices, who are legally and criminally liable, and to passive bystanders, who abnegate all culpability, implicated subjects are agents who must--from an ethical point of view--reckon with the political and moral responsibility of their entanglement in systems of domination. Rothberg suggests that confronting implication and responsibility may lead to new forms of solidarity across geographical, experiential, and identitarian divides.

We invite papers that examine texts by German-language authors that critically reflect on and contest notions of victimhood, innocuous complicity, and passive bystanding. Papers might pursue questions such as the following:

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<https://networks.h-net.org/node/73374/announcements/12209926/cfp-gsa-2023-panel-stream-%E2%80%9Cimplicated-subject-contemporary>

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- How do literary texts narrate the entanglements of 'ordinary' citizens in systems of oppression and injustice?
- How does the recognition of implication impact individuals and reshape communities?
- How might the reckoning with this entanglement lead to new forms of aesthetic expression and, possibly, acts of solidarity?
- What are the consequences of recognizing implication and what does taking responsibility mean to individuals and groups?
- What kinds of insights and solidarities may arise from memories and the narrative reflection of implication?
- Does the reckoning with questions of agency and implication motivate recognizable acts of kindness and solidarity?
- Does solidarity extend to transnational, transcultural solidarity and if so, how?

We welcome papers that address these questions in their examination of the Holocaust, World War II, Communism, colonialism, racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, anti-immigrant discrimination, and other forms of violence.

Please send a brief abstract (approximately 350 words) and a short bio to Karin Bauer ([karin.bauer@mcgill.ca](mailto:karin.bauer@mcgill.ca)) and Anke Biendarra ([anke.biendarra@uci.edu](mailto:anke.biendarra@uci.edu)) by March 6, 2023. We are aiming to organize a panel stream of 2 – 3 panels and have room for up to six papers.

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