

## Seminars

Seminars consist of a varying number of academic papers and discussions. The length of the papers is 20 minutes with an added ten minutes for discussion.

### 1. America's Pre-code Movies: The Attraction of Forbidden Hollywood

During the pre-Code era, roughly speaking from the birth of sound in 1927 to the July 1934 enforcement of the Motion Picture Production Code by W. Hays, Hollywood studios produced openly suggestive and even lurid films which directly tackled controversial and sometimes taboo subjects. Miscegenation, sex or drugs were some of the issues explored by directors who addressed a sophisticated, adult audience fascinated by the often frontal treatment of issues that were soon to be banned from public consumption.

Horror films were also used by studios to depict various forms of transgressive behavior, often verging on the sadistic. Female characters were particularly victimized by male protagonists, but they could also show resilience or empowerment as illustrated in *Attack of the Leading Ladies* (R. Berenstein, 1996). It is also interesting to focus on the vicious nature of the relationships between men and women in crime movies. Both horror and gangster movies were particularly targeted by studio censorship even before 1934.

In this seminar, we will explore this short-lived period of freedom of representation and the conventions that pre-Code Hollywood's main agents chose to recycle to attract viewers.

Convenors:

- Professor Anne-Marie Paquet-Deyris, University Paris Nanterre, France, [Apaquet-deyris@parisnanterre.fr](mailto:Apaquet-deyris@parisnanterre.fr)
- Gilles Menegaldo, University of Poitiers, France, [g.menegaldo@gmail.com](mailto:g.menegaldo@gmail.com)
- Dr Fran Pheasant-Kelly, University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom, [f.e.pheasant-kelly@wlv.ac.uk](mailto:f.e.pheasant-kelly@wlv.ac.uk)

### 2. Ancient Greeks and British Modernity

The seminar invites papers that address any aspect of the relationship between British literature of the 19th and 20th centuries and ancient Greek culture. Topic proposals may range from explorations of the literary use of mythological and historical figures and motifs, to the impact of ancient myth and philosophy on British anthropology and modern and postmodern literary and critical theory. With the Romantic poets leading the way, most notably the Shelleys and John Keats, it is in Greek antiquity that the Victorians, too, find a conduit to explaining their modernity. A line can be traced from Alfred Tennyson's Homer in *Ulysses* and *The Lotus-Eaters*, and the Brownings' investment in translating the Greeks, to a sustained conceptual apparatus, based mostly in Attic tragedy, that supports George Eliot's fiction and Matthew Arnold's poetry and criticism – not to mention an emphatic Greek frame of reference in Pre-Raphaelitism (John Ruskin, Edward Burne-Jones), that was instrumental to a protocinematic redistribution of visuality in the nineteenth century. Papers might wish to explore the cultural role of British Hellenism, including its uses as a code of homoerotic love – as in Oscar Wilde and E.M. Forster, for instance. Another possible focus may be the work of Jane Harrison and the Cambridge ritualists, and the effect of their reinterpretation of Greek antiquity on Modernist literature – including feminist

appropriations by Naomi Mitchison, Hope Mirrlees and others. We also invite papers interested in exploring literary instances of revisiting Greek mythology by contemporary authors like Timberlake Wertenbaker, Jeanette Winterson, Marina Warner, Sarah Kane, Mark Ravenhill, Pat Barker, Ali Smith, Natalie Haynes or Madeline Miller.

Convenors:

- Tamás Béneyei, University of Debrecen, Hungary ([tamasbenyei@yahoo.com](mailto:tamasbenyei@yahoo.com))
- Tatjana Jukić, University of Zagreb, Croatia ([tjukic@m.ffzg.hr](mailto:tjukic@m.ffzg.hr))

### **3. Anglophone Children's and Young Adult Fiction and Its Reception in Continental European Countries**

The global influence of Anglophone children's and young adult fiction is evidenced in overviews of the best-selling books and by the prestige of literary awards focusing on this area. Translations into foreign languages also contribute to the global significance of these works, as they not only expand the book offer for the target group of readers in another language but also enrich the national literatures with new themes and genres. The seminar thus welcomes contributions addressing the various aspect of the influence of Anglophone fiction for children and young adults on non-English language national literatures within the European context.

Convenors:

- Janka Kascakova, Catholic University in Ružomberok, Slovakia, [janka.kascakova@ku.sk](mailto:janka.kascakova@ku.sk)
- Petr Anténe, Palacký University in Olomouc, Czech Republic, [petr.antene@upol.cz](mailto:petr.antene@upol.cz)

### **4. "Beyond the Iron Curtain": Shakespeare in (Central) European Theatres between 1989-2019**

The aim of the seminar is to share research on theatrical uses of Shakespeare in the three decades following the fall of the communist regime, which paved the way for the unification of Europe and opening of political and cultural borders. We are interested to learn how Shakespeare as a theatrical lingua franca has helped to respond to the transformations. Participants are encouraged to make topical comments and account for what has happened to/with the legacy of democratic and economic changes, and the dream of a united continent on both sides of the once divided Europe.

The seminar is a follow-up to a project which gathered scholars from a variety of Central European countries – 'Shakespeare in Central Europe: Common Heritage and Regional Identity'. The seminar, however, goes beyond the scope of the project in that we expect to hear voices from outside this part of Europe as well. Also, we are hoping to cover issues which the project has not touched upon, such as theatrical Shakespeare in and on Central Europe at the time of the anti-EU turn of right-wing governments, return of 'socialist' and populist politics, idealisation of pre-1989 past, etc., as linked with the constant search for new theatrical languages and new spectating experiences.

We are looking for contributions which would address the following issues:

- political Shakespeare on Central European stages after 1989

- the “twilight of democracy” (Anne Applebaum) and theatrical Shakespeare
- formal theatrical experiments, new ‘dialects’ of staged Shakespeares
- socially engaged theatrical Shakespeare: current issues in the theatre
- amateur productions of Shakespeare’s plays
- Shakespeare as a lens which brings together the local and the global (how Shakespeare helps present the local and specific issues to a wider and more general audience)
- the role of translation in post-1989 theatrical productions
- staging Shakespeare and educating young generations
- the (in)significance of the establishment (academic, theatrical and political) in staging Shakespeare

Convenors:

- Natália Pikli (Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary, [pikli.natalia@btk.elte.hu](mailto:pikli.natalia@btk.elte.hu))
- Jacek Fabiszak (Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza, Poznań, Poland, [fabiszak@amu.edu.pl](mailto:fabiszak@amu.edu.pl))

## 5. British and Irish Poetry after the Turn of the Millennium: Trends, Public/Counterpublic, Institutions

Despite recent work in the field (for example, Görtschacher and Malcolm, 2021), several aspects of contemporary British and Irish poetry remain underexplored. How partial is the traditional literary-historical narrative, and does it have any application to developments after 2000? How blind is the canon (or any canon) and does it still hold sway? Do celebrated poets of the late twentieth century cast a shadow on contemporary writers? What trends can be observed in the last twenty years in terms of the emergence of new writers, of their affiliations (to schools, nations, identities, languages), of topics, and of the interplay of fixed and innovative forms? Have ecological concerns (or others) assumed a central role in contemporary verse? Does translation play any role in contemporary British and Irish poetry (poets as translators, translators as poets, available translations)? Is there a public for contemporary verse, or are there publics with radically different aesthetic and thematic criteria and agendas? Do anthologies continue to shape canons and provoke discussion? What roles do institutions (publishers, prizes, festivals, creative writing courses, social media) play in configuring the contemporary poetry scene – or scenes? Do little magazines still play the important role they have always had? We invite proposals for papers on these or any related topics. The aim behind the seminar is to build a provisional overview of important aspects of contemporary British and Irish verse with a view to provoking further dialogue on the subject.

Convenors:

- Wolfgang Görtschacher (University of Salzburg, Austria), [Wolfgang.Goertschacher@sbg.ac.at](mailto:Wolfgang.Goertschacher@sbg.ac.at)
- David Malcolm (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw, Poland), [dmalcolm.pl@gmail.com](mailto:dmalcolm.pl@gmail.com)

## 6. Comic Women and Theories of Humour

The seminar organisers seek to invite scholars of Anglophone literatures and cultures who question the theoretical correlations of women and comedy as well as gender and humour. Against the ancient prejudice that there are fewer funny women in the world, because female humour has been oppressed by the male hegemony, the organisers wish to challenge such grand narratives from a feminist perspective and open the discussion on a more complex level of humour and comedy theories. There are different 'explanations' prevalent in comedy theory for the often proposed gender imbalance, for instance that "[w]omen have been systematically denied the power to be funny for a number of cultural reasons." Yet, classic theories of humour do not discuss gender. Hobbes writes in the *Leviathan* that people laugh "by the apprehension of some deformed thing in another." James Beattie theorised laughter in 1764 as arising "from the view of two or more inconsistent, unsuitable or incongruous parts or circumstances, considered as united in one complex object." The seminar is supposed to investigate the relation between gender and humour with a specific focus on comic women. Ranging from stand-up comedy via comic strips to satirical novels, humour can take many expressions and forms and fulfils a variety of purposes, be they pure entertainment, political criticism or a didactic concept. Humour provides space for a plethora of voices (orderly, critical or dissenting); it is versatile and, consequently, has been given academic attention in very diverse fields of study. Humour may have formative, constructive and destructive powers, depending on how it is used and it provides the humourist with an outlet for a wide range of implicit and explicit utterances. Research on women's humour is a widening field, so we welcome papers on literary works (poems, short stories, novels etc.) as well as cultural products such as films, TV series, sitcoms, theatrical performances, plays, stand-up comedy acts/performances, YouTube videos, various online content (e.g.: memes, blogs, vlogs etc.), paintings, comics etc.

Proposals for this seminar should address one or more of the following questions:

- Is a discussion of humour necessarily a discussion of gender?
- Is a discussion of comedy necessarily a discussion of gender?
- What is the analytical and/or the political interconnection of genre and gender?
- Why do we feel the need to talk about funny women at all?
- Is female comedy at all different from male comedy?
- How can we trace the impact of women's humour in literature and culture?
- Is there a relation between gender and comedy's sub-genres from stand-up to late night?
- Is humour necessarily subversive?
- Is women's humour necessarily feminist?
- What can women express through humour that they may not be able to express otherwise?

Convenors:

- Dr Zsófia Anna Tóth (University of Szeged, Hungary),
- Dr Franziska Quabeck (University of Münster, Germany)
- Dr Kerstin-Anja Münderlein (University of Bamberg, Germany)

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## 7. Configurations of Friday

The role of Friday is a curiously liminal one in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* as well as many other Robinsonades from the 18th century to the present: a central figure of the story, he nonetheless often finds himself relegated to the role of the hero-castaway's foil, a cultural or racial other. Regardless of whether he is admired or condescended to, discourses around Friday will frequently (if sometimes unintentionally) mirror respective ages' attitudes towards colonialism and racial identity. While the centrality of Friday is never in doubt in Robinsonade criticism, he is rarely made the focus of sustained discussion but rather seen as a natural consequence of the chosen setting.

In view of Friday's liminal status both in the Robinsonade and in Robinsonade criticism, this seminar will discuss this fascinating character not only in terms of his cultural and social relationship with various Robinsons down the ages but as a spiritual, psychological, and not least material presence in his own right. The seminar provides an opportunity to establish Defoe's Friday as a deeply complex presence in the 1719 novel before moving on to other contexts in which Friday-like figures are characterised through their physicality as well as through their back-stories, the spaces they occupy and the language and customs they bring to their encounters with their respective Robinsons. While their overall roles in texts from the eighteenth century to the present day are doubtless characterised by their Robinsonian encounters, this seminar focuses on the presentation of Fridays as characters in their own right, and invites paper contributions from scholars interested in this type of refocalisation: from discussions of the colonial experience and how this is inscribed on various Fridays' minds and bodies to a re-evaluation of Friday's loyalty, agency, and presumed subservience. From gender discourse around a number of "Girl Fridays" to more widely expounded ideas of otherness; from ecocritical approaches regarding Friday and his space in the environment to approaches taken from animal studies and applied to adaptations in which the role of Friday is taken up by a pet or wild animal. This seminar offers plenty of scope for a long overdue discussion of one of world literature's most familiar yet also most enigmatic characters.

Possible topics in film, television, art, literature, and gaming include but are not limited to:

- Friday as physical, cultural, linguistic other
- The idealised beauty and strength of Friday in various contemporary discourses (noble savage, etc.)
- Friday as a scarred and mutilated locality of colonialism's inhumanity
- The reconfiguration of Friday into animal or inanimate subject
- The reconfiguration of Friday in terms of gender
- The perceived threat of Friday as unknowable presence in the story
- The subjugation of Friday or portrayals of his physical, moral or intellectual superiority to his "master"
- The adoption by Friday of the language and customs of the coloniser
- Ideas of Friday's agency and decision-making
- Friday in relation to his environment
- Stylistic analysis of the Friday figure's language in various Robinsonades
- Narratological shifts centring the Robinson story around Friday

Convenors:

- Dr. habil. Jakub Lipski (Kazimierz Wielki University, Bydgoszcz, Poland), [j.lipski@ukw.edu.pl](mailto:j.lipski@ukw.edu.pl)
- Dr. Patrick Gill (Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany), [patrick.gill@uni-mainz.de](mailto:patrick.gill@uni-mainz.de)

## 8. Continuity and Change in English Letter Formulae

Letter formulae belong to phraseology, an area of linguistics that can be investigated from different perspectives such as sociolinguistics, pragmatics, lexico-semantics and syntax. English address formulae have been studied mostly with respect to specific authors, in particular Shakespeare (e.g. Blake 2002: 271-283 and Mazzon 2003). With the exception of Wyld (1936: 379-386), the diachrony of address formulae was neglected until the 1990s, when the Corpus of Early English Correspondence became available. This corpus served as a database for sociolinguistic diachronic studies of address formulae by Nevala (2004 and 2007) and Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg (1995). By contrast, there are only a few studies on other English letter formulae, which are restricted to Middle English (Sánchez Roura 2000 and Häcker 2011 and in press).

This seminar widens the perspective on the study of letter formulae in two respects:

- (1) it combines a long-term perspective (1400-2000) with the established sociolinguistic one, and
- (2) it extends the range of formulae under investigation beyond those of address and subscription, including those that acknowledge the receipt or introduce the purpose of a letter.

We welcome questions that address any aspect of variation and change in letter formulae, including variation in individuals, in groups and the English-speaking language community as a whole. Papers may address questions such as the following, but are not restricted to these:

- Why are formulae sometimes relatively stable for centuries, but undergo changes more frequently at other times?
- To what extent and why do individuals vary in their use of formulae?
- How do changes in the medium of communication such as that from letters to emails affect formulae?
- What is the interrelationship between changes in society and changes in conventions of written communication, and how do they affect the use of formulae?
- How do innovations in formulae spread?

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- Sánchez Roura, Teresa. 2000. 'Convention vs. choice in securing the good-will of the reader: the Cely Letters'. *SELIM* [Journal of the Spanish Society of Middle English Language and Literature] 10: 123-143.

Convenors:

- Martina Häcker, Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz, Germany, [mhaecker@uni-mainz.de](mailto:mhaecker@uni-mainz.de)
- Minna Nevala, Helsinki University, Finland, [minna.nevala@helsinki.fi](mailto:minna.nevala@helsinki.fi)

## 9. Courage and Cowardice in British Women's Writing of the Romantic Period

'My courage always rises with every attempt to intimidate me.' (Jane Austen)

Courage and cowardice function as antagonistic principles that characterize endeavours, sentiments, and manners, their understanding traditionally gendered. In the Romantic period, these terms came to exemplify conceptual shifts in philosophical and political thought which, despite fundamentally different approaches to human nature and society, appear surprisingly likeminded in their reliance on gender conventions. They can be traced in Edmund Burke's disdain for the calculating, rationalist commercialism he believed was superseding the 'age of chivalry', whose 'ennobling' principles had 'inspired courage' and provided social cohesion by rendering men equal in spirit, whereas the new mechanistic age produced 'a mixed mob of ferocious men' and 'women lost to shame'. Contemplating the practicalities of enlightenment, Immanuel Kant proposed that the 'courage to make use of one's own understanding', which allows man to 'emerge from his self-incurred minority', would be 'troublesome' for the 'greatest part of humankind (including the entire fair sex)', more inclined to remain immature under the guardianship of others. Crucially, Mary Wollstonecraft proposed that 'intellectual cowardice' prevented the mind from 'resolutely form[ing] its principles', while the 'fear that women will acquire too much courage or fortitude' only reflected 'mistaken notions of female excellence'.

The seminar will discuss British women writers' take on the concepts of courage and cowardice and their cultural and philosophical implications. We invite papers on women's

poetry, fiction, and philosophical enquiries that explore the ethical potential of these principles, their political significance, and the aesthetic forms employed to address them. Contributions may address, but are not limited to, the following:

- Notions of Courage/Cowardice in Conservative and Radical Feminism
- Aesthetics of Courage and Cowardice
- Courageous Hero(in)es and Villainous Cowards? Strength of Mind in Gothic Writing
- Heroic Hymns: Visions and Enthusiasm in Women's Political Writing
- Mocking Chivalry: Humour and Courage
- Social Virtues and Vices in Women's Educational Writing
- Cowardice as Courage / Courage as Cowardice: Transgressive Gendered Concepts
- Literary Depictions of Female Sexuality – Courage or Cowardice?

Convenors:

- Katrin Berndt, Martin-Luther-University Halle-Wittenberg, Germany,  
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- Mirka Horová, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic,  
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## 10. Creoles, Créolité, and Creolisation in Postcolonial Literature

This seminar revives debates about linguistic creoles, historical creole communities, politics of créolité, and theories of creolisation as a cultural process arising out of encounter, to galvanise new modes of analysing literary responses to colonialism and its aftermath that push beyond the now-standard terms 'hybridity' and 'métissage'. Unpredictable, multi-directional exchanges of languages, foodways, memories, and heritages characterise transcultural interactions today, both digital and embodied, between differently postcolonised communities and individuals. We invite contributions that engage with literary attestations to such interactions to ask: who or what can be creolised, and where? And why should we return to these issues now?

Presentations that approach the question from linguistic as well as literary critical and comparative literary approaches are welcome, as are those that respond to creolisation as a meta-theoretical concept as well as a historical process. We also look forward to explorations of European urban spaces as sites of creolisation, and considerations of the relationship between creolisation, embodiment, orature, and performance, and between cosmopolitanism and creolisation.

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Kabir, Ananya Jahanara. "Beyond Créolité and Coolitude, the Indian on the Plantation Re-creolization in the Transoceanic Frame." *Middle Atlantic Review of Latin American Studies* 4, no. 2 (2020): 174-193

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Convenors:

- Professor Isabel Carrera Suarez, University of Oviedo, [icarrera@uniovi.es](mailto:icarrera@uniovi.es),
- Professor Ananya Jahanara Kabir, King's College London, [ananya.kabir@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:ananya.kabir@kcl.ac.uk)

## 11. 'Criminal Voice' in Literature

From Robert Browning's dramatic monologues to televisual biopics, artists have used a range of techniques and forms to explore 'criminal voice'. While classic detective fiction often privileges the perspectives of the detective or the law, historical novels such as Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* examine the narrative agency of those accused of crime, complicating notions of criminal responsibility. This seminar focuses on literary technique and form, alongside ethical and critical-theoretical contexts for understanding 'criminal voice' and its representation in literature. We are particularly interested in historical fiction's engagement with 'criminal voice' but welcome proposals dealing with other genres and historical periods.

We invite paper proposals addressing some of the following questions (although this is not an exhaustive list):

How are literary technique and genre used to explore 'criminal voice'?

How do writers negotiate ethical questions in relation to criminal responsibility?

How do writers balance the voice(s) of perpetrators with those of the victims of crime?

What role do gender, class, ethnicity, race, sexuality and other markers of identity play in these depictions?

To what extent do cultural and cross-cultural specificities in crime literature impact on the representation of 'criminal voice'?

What kinds of critical-theoretical contexts are useful for approaching our understanding of 'criminal voice' and its representation in literature and culture?

Convenors:

- Prof. Isil Bas, Istanbul Kultur University, Turkey, [isil@boun.edu.tr](mailto:isil@boun.edu.tr)
- Prof. Anne Schwan, Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland, [a.schwan@napier.ac.uk](mailto:a.schwan@napier.ac.uk)

## 12. ~~Decolonial and Post-Colonial Narratives of Mental Health~~ [SEMINAR WITHDRAWN]

### 13. Diachronic Narratology

Narratology since the turn of the millennium has increasingly considered the development of narrative both formally and functionally through the centuries. The panel welcomes new work in this line of research. We invite both literary and linguistic contributions focusing on diachronic developments from the Middle Ages to the present or between any two periods within that range. Comparisons between fiction and non-fiction would be particularly intriguing. Possible topics cover a range of areas (these are just illustrative examples to show what we have in mind), e.g.:

- development of description in fictional and nonfictional narratives
- the rise of the chapter in the early modern period and its implications for the structuring/progression of narratives
- legal narratives and how they develop
- speech act analyses of dialogue, e.g. in marriage proposals/rejections in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novels
- fictional and non-fictional formulations of documents like wills in the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries
- different forms of images/letters included in fiction in a diachronic perspective
- how discourse metalepsis ("let me tell you about the lady's unhappiness while she is praying in chapel") develops from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries
- etc.

Convenors:

- Monika Fludernik, Freiburg, Germany ([sekretariat.fludernik@anglistik.uni-freiburg.de](mailto:sekretariat.fludernik@anglistik.uni-freiburg.de))
- Irma Taavitsainen, Helsinki, Finland ([irma.taavitsainen@helsinki.fi](mailto:irma.taavitsainen@helsinki.fi))

### 14. Dickens in Colour

To celebrate its reopening after the lockdown, the Charles Dickens Museum in London hosted an exhibition entitled "Technicolour Dickens," featuring, among other things, a set of black and white portraits colourised by the artist and photographer Oliver Clyde. These views of Dickens in colour, based on historical evidence of the fashion of the time, as well as on the complexion of Dickens's descendants, produces a very different and new impression of the novelist. Visitors are invited to imagine him tanned after his walks in the metropolis or his visits to France and Italy, and wearing bright colours – a stark contrast to the austere impression conveyed by the black and white photographs we are accustomed to.

Colours play a major role in Dickens's novels, but this topic – their symbolic value, their function in relation to creating *evidentia* – has not been fully explored yet. Does it matter that "Mr. Peter Magnus took a **blue** view of Mr. Pickwick through his coloured spectacles for several minutes"? What are the implications of green in *Oliver Twist*, when it is used both literally as a colour but also to metaphorically express character features, e.g. to describe Oliver as being "jolly **green**"? Can we reinterpret *Hard Times* as "The Red and the Black," but with a Dickensian rather than Stendhalian pallet, juxtaposing the two in order to lend the representation of Coketown *energeia*? And what of the "strangers" in *Little Dorrit* described

as “star[ed] out of countenance by staring **white** houses, staring **white** walls, staring **white** streets, staring tracts of arid road, staring hills from which verdure was burnt away” for the novel as a whole? How does red add to the portrayal of revolutionary Paris in passages such as “The wine was **red** wine, and had stained the ground of the narrow street in the suburb of Saint Antoine, in Paris, where it was spilled. It had stained many hands, too, and many faces, and many naked feet, and many wooden shoes” in *A Tale of Two Cities*? And can we make general assumptions from Dickens’s economical use of colour for characterisation, for instance in *Great Expectations*: “The lady with whom Estella was placed, Mrs. Brandley by name, was a widow, with one daughter several years older than Estella. The mother looked young, and the daughter looked old; the mother’s complexion was pink, and the daughter’s was **yellow**; the mother set up for frivolity, and the daughter for theology”?

In the wake of the regular Dickensian gatherings that have taken place over the years in this major European venue, this ESSE panel accordingly purports to explore the idea of Dickensian colours a little further. This panel is also inspired by the European Research Council [ERC] project CHROMOTOPE, conducted by the French scholar Charlotte Ribeyrol, which “explores the changes that took place in attitudes to colour in the nineteenth century, and notably how the ‘chromatic turn’ of the 1850s mapped out new ways of thinking about colour in literature, art, science and technology throughout Europe.” We will explore Dickens’s life and work in relation to the “Victorian colour revolution.”

Papers are invited on topics including (but not limited to): colours in Dickens’s life and work; the rhetoric of colours (Michel); colours, psychology and social existence (Kastan and Farthing); navigating the invisibility of colour in text (Rey); chromatic lexicon (Mollard-Desfour); literary polychromy and dark material culture (Ripoll); colours, emotions and bodies (Ripoll); Dickensian palettes; the sounds of colours (Ripoll); colour symbolism; historical chromatology (Ribeyrol). Corpus linguistics and digital humanities approaches will also be welcome.

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Michel, Alain. “Les couleurs de la rhétorique et la rhétorique des couleurs”. In Pigeaud, Jackie (ed.). *La Couleur, les couleurs*. Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2007. 17-28.

Ribeyrol, Charlotte. *The Colours of the Past in Victorian England*. Peter Lang, 2016.

Ripoll, Elodie. *Penser la couleur en littérature. Explorations romanesques des Lumières au réalisme*. Classiques Garnier, 2019

#### Convenors:

- Matthias Bauer (Eberhard Karls University Tübingen, Germany), [m.bauer@uni-tuebingen.de](mailto:m.bauer@uni-tuebingen.de)
- Nathalie Vanfasse (Aix-Marseille Université, France), [nathalie.vanfasse@univ-amu.fr](mailto:nathalie.vanfasse@univ-amu.fr)

- Angelika Zirker (Eberhard Karls University Tübingen, Germany), [angelika.zirker@uni-tuebingen.de](mailto:angelika.zirker@uni-tuebingen.de)

## 15. Eco-Narratives of Gender and Age: Intergenerational Eco-Imagaries in Literature, Film, and Other Media

When Amitav Gosh identifies “a crisis of the imagination” and suggests that climate fiction creates thought experiments challenging the status quo, cultural representations are positioned as political voices of resistance. Regarding gender, age, and generations, climate discourse has highlighted asymmetrical structures of power (Sachs 2014), and often ignored intergenerational collaboration by portraying “greedy geezers” (Fairlie 1988) versus young victims. Acknowledging eco-imagaries of collaboration, this seminar seeks to provide an understanding of the intersections of gender, age, and generations in view of the superhuman scale of geological/deep time. We thus invite contributions which address fictional representations of collaborative, multi-generational voices in climate discourse.

Convenors:

- Roberta Maierhofer (University of Graz, Austria), [roberta.maierhofer@uni-graz.at](mailto:roberta.maierhofer@uni-graz.at)
- Michael Fuchs (University of Oldenburg, Germany), [michael.fuchs@uol.de](mailto:michael.fuchs@uol.de)

## 16. English as a Foreign Language for Students with Special Educational Needs – Strategies and Challenges for Teacher Training and Research

The seminar draws upon a tradition of ESSE seminars focused on teaching English to learners with special educational needs (SEN) which has been steadily attracting an increasing number of participants. The growing interest corresponds to the trend of inclusive education as well as individualization in classroom-based instruction. The specific focus of the seminar is on English language teacher training and development towards inclusive education. The contributions should particularly focus on how the existing EFL teacher training programs reflect the shift towards inclusive education and the in-service EFL teacher development with regard to supporting learners with SEN. We also want to share good practices in research on EFL and inclusive teaching training programs. The presentations can introduce research results, comparisons of training programs as well as examples of good practice. We invite proposals for contributions concerning teaching EFL to students with a wide range of SEN (e.g. sensory and physical disabilities, specific educational needs such as dyslexia, ASD and others).

Convenors:

- Ewa Domagała-Zyśk PhD habil., John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland, Centre for Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, [ewadom@kul.pl](mailto:ewadom@kul.pl)
- Jitka Sedláčková PhD, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic, Department of English and American Studies, [jitkasedlackova@mail.muni.cz](mailto:jitkasedlackova@mail.muni.cz)

## 17. English in Liberia: Language and Literature

Despite a wealth of historical research on Liberia – a country founded by black U.S. settlers brought to West Africa in the 1820s, under the auspices of the American Colonization Society (ACS) – Liberian English and Anglophone Liberian literature remain under-researched. This seminar aims to provide an interdisciplinary forum for authors, linguists, and literary scholars working on Liberia (incl. the country's transnational connections).

Three key aims are:

- (a) to foster a more sustained dialogue on Liberia;
- (b) to situate Liberia within larger debates (e.g. postcolonial studies or World Englishes);
- (c) to outline future research areas.

The novelist Vamba Sherif ([www.vambasherif.com](http://www.vambasherif.com)) will deliver an opening address on English in Liberia. In addition, we are looking for scholarly contributions focusing on topics such as:

### Linguistics

- characteristic features of Liberian English;
- origin and development of Liberian English;
- multilingualism and language contact;
- Liberian English in the diaspora and the sociolinguistics of migration;
- language choice and identity;
- language attitudes and policy.

### Literature

- life writing (e.g. letters or memoirs);
- 19th-century travel narratives;
- the civil wars and trauma fiction (e.g. Elma Shaw);
- individual works and authors (e.g. Wilton Sankawulo, Bai T. Moore);
- poetry, drama, and performance (e.g. Patricia Jabbeh Wesley, Kona Khasu);
- diaspora literature (e.g. Wayétu Moore)
- Liberia, Pan-Africanism, & postcolonial theory (e.g. Edward Wilmot Blyden)

Convenors:

- Lucia Siebers (University of Duisburg-Essen), [lucia.siebers@uni-due.de](mailto:lucia.siebers@uni-due.de)
- Martin Mühlheim (University of Zurich), [m.muehlheim@es.uzh.ch](mailto:m.muehlheim@es.uzh.ch)

## 18. Gender in English Language Education: Current Trends and Future Perspectives

The aim of this seminar is to explore the link between English language teaching and learning and the topical research area of Gender Studies from a European perspective. We invite contributions addressing and interrogating the impact of Gender Studies research on curricula, materials and methodology in English language education in Europe. Contributions should focus on topics related to gender including, for example, gender(ed) identities,

sustainability, (mental) health, gender and the posthuman, as well as both traditional and innovative language learning and teaching materials (moving images, graphic novels, born-digital texts, etc.) and approaches to gender-sensitive English language education.

Convenors:

- Christian Ludwig (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany, [christian.ludwig@fu-berlin.de](mailto:christian.ludwig@fu-berlin.de))
- Polina Shvanyukova (University of Udine, Italy, [polina.shvanyukova@gmail.com](mailto:polina.shvanyukova@gmail.com))

## 19. Global Implications of News Discourse in English in the Social Media

This seminar invites scholarly driven investigations aimed at exploring the implications of discourse of various local and global news published worldwide in English in the social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.). Contributions are expected to highlight new paradigms of analytical and theoretical research of daily news published in the English language on social media and provide insights into how the discourse displays contemporary topics to global audiences (including but not limited to linguistic devices, discursive strategies, constructions and transformations, ideological polarizations, etc.), thereby influencing both ideologies and identities of the social network users consuming the news worldwide. We encourage investigations including various objects (oral and written discourse, texts, communicative events, etc.), explorations of different corpora compiled from content posted on social media in the form of opinions, responses, replies, memes, gifs and reactions as well as analyses based on theories established in journalism, media studies, linguistics, culture studies, etc.

We believe the seminar will provide an enriching experience for all participants. In addition, we are planning a joint publication of selected papers presented within the seminar. The publication would be with a prominent international publisher, the choice of which will depend on the aims and scope of the selected papers.

Convenors:

- Jasmina Đorđević, University of Niš, Serbia, [jasmina.djordjevic@filfak.ni.ac.rs](mailto:jasmina.djordjevic@filfak.ni.ac.rs)
- Bledar Toska, University of Vlora, Albania, [bledartoska@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bledartoska@yahoo.co.uk)

## 20. Hideous progeny? Reanimations of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

This seminar will examine rewritings and transmedial adaptations of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). Shelley's novel has been the subject of reworking and revision since William Godwin made substantive alterations to the text for the second edition of 1823, the same year Richard Brinsley Peake's stage adaptation, *Presumption*, premiered at the English Opera House. Since then, Frankenstein and his monster have been reanimated on page, stage and TV, in films, cartoons, comics, graphic novels, video games, and other media, as well as in many different languages.

Wikipedia lists 74 cinematic adaptations alone, ranging from the lost 1915 horror film *Life Without Soul* to Tim Burton's *Frankenweenie*. These reanimations have offered multiple (re)interpretations of the story, from transcreations that endeavour to be faithful to the pathos of the novel, to parodies, to contemplations on creation, identity and the creative nature of science and art that take Mary Shelley's work as their starting point before

diverging dramatically from it in any number of ways. We would welcome academic papers exploring any and all such reanimations and/or their implications for adaptation, translation and transcreation studies and theory, as well as for our readings of Shelley's own text. We would also be very interested in receiving proposals for more practice-focused contributions from film-makers, artists, writers, translators, actors and other practitioners in any and all media, discussing their own creative responses to the novel. By bringing together scholars and practitioners working on and in different media, cultures and languages, we hope to gain new insights into how and why Frankenstein has continued to variously animate so many of us.

Convenors:

- Prof. Enrichetta Soccio (G. d'Annunzio University of Chieti and Pescara, Italy, [enrichetta.soccio@unich.it](mailto:enrichetta.soccio@unich.it))
- Assoc. Prof. Seda Arikan (Firat University, Elazığ, Turkey, [bulutsedaarikan@gmail.com](mailto:bulutsedaarikan@gmail.com))
- Asst Prof. Patrick Hart (Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey, [patrick.hart@bilkent.edu.tr](mailto:patrick.hart@bilkent.edu.tr))
- Res. Asst. Yeşim İpekçi (Firat University, Elazığ, Turkey, [yipekci@firat.edu.tr](mailto:yipekci@firat.edu.tr))

## 21. Interlingual and Intersemiotic Translations of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*

*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* has been designed from its first publication in 1865 as an illustrated story in which Lewis Carroll's language games and John Tenniel's drawings work together in a complementary and/or contradictory manner to create the nonsensical fantasy effect that famously renewed children's literature by celebrating the non-didactic, ludic, interactive potentials of the genre. This seminar rethinks the image-textual dynamics of the Alice books in a transnational, transmedial context: we focus on the interconnected challenges of interlingual translation and intersemiotic adaptation. Our aim is to explore the many new faces Alice gains through her verbal and visual transformations into new words and images across a variety of languages, genres, and media.

Convenors:

- Anna Kérchy, PhD Dr habil, University of Szeged, Hungary ([akerchy@ieas-szeged.hu](mailto:akerchy@ieas-szeged.hu))
- Riitta Oittinen, Prof Dr, Tampere University, Finland ([riitta.oittinen@tuni.fi](mailto:riitta.oittinen@tuni.fi))
- Bogumila Kaniewska, Prof Dr hab. Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland ([kanbo@amu.edu.pl](mailto:kanbo@amu.edu.pl))
- Aleksandra Wiczorkiewicz, PhD candidate, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poland ([wiczorkiewicz@amu.edu.pl](mailto:wiczorkiewicz@amu.edu.pl))

## 22. Interpreting Online Headlines [SEMINAR HAS MERGED WITH ROUND TABLE 5]

## 23. Language Mixing in Texts from Medieval England

This seminar brings together papers exploring language mixing in texts from medieval England, c.500-1500. Numerous texts of various genres both before and after the Norman Conquest include more than one language. The language interplay ranges from the use of individual technical terms to fully-fledged code-switching. The seminar explores the wider

implications of language mixing from various perspectives. We welcome papers focusing on language mixing in charters, inscriptions, sermons, medical texts, glossaries, narrative texts, plays, etc., and applying literary, linguistic, historical, or visual methodologies. We encourage contributions that move beyond disciplinary and period boundaries.

Convenors:

- Olga Timofeeva (University of Zurich, Switzerland), [olga.timofeeva@es.uzh.ch](mailto:olga.timofeeva@es.uzh.ch)
- Francesca Tinti (University of the Basque Country, Spain), [francesca.tinti@ehu.eus](mailto:francesca.tinti@ehu.eus)
- Annina Seiler (University of Zurich, Switzerland), [annina.seiler@es.uzh.ch](mailto:annina.seiler@es.uzh.ch)

## 24. Lockdown Literature: Past and Present Pandemic Paradigms

This seminar focuses on lockdown literature, an emerging genre owing much to the literature produced during the outbreak of COVID-19, here tentatively defined as literature that features pandemics, life and human existence under isolation and prevention measures, human anxiety, fears, uncertainties and future hopes. The seminar aims to discuss the various paradigms, cultural, social, economic, medical, or political, of past and present pandemics in literatures in English, be that fiction, poetry or essay writing.

Potential participants are invited to discuss the literary representations of any of the following:

- fear of death, human suffering, despair, sorrow, and grief;
- social transformation and cultural beliefs in the time of pandemic(s);
- social hierarchies, racial differences, human vulnerabilities, inequalities;
- effects of the pandemic on the modernization of the medical profession;
- dystopian visions of the pandemic.

Convenors:

- Armela Panajoti (University of Vlora, Albania), [armelap@assenglish.org](mailto:armelap@assenglish.org)
- Angelika Reichmann (Eszterházy Károly University, Hungary), [reichmanna@gmail.com](mailto:reichmanna@gmail.com)

## 25. Material Agency: Early Modern Perspectives

“Nature is but one united material Body” writes Margaret Cavendish in her *Grounds of Natural Philosophy*, first published in 1668, in which she makes strong materialist claims that insist on the interconnectedness of all of nature’s constituents. Eccentric at her time, such thought resonates across the intervening centuries with more recent new materialist endeavours to promote a flat ontology that rethinks both Cartesian dualities and Newtonian mechanics. Recent interventions in literary and cultural theory like new materialism, ecocriticism and actor-network-theory have made a concerted effort to rethink the role of the material world, emphasising in particular its agency. Taking their inspiration and urgency from the natural sciences and the environmental crisis, these theories appear to be firmly contemporary. Yet, the example of Cavendish demonstrates that there are historical alternatives to a Cartesian ontology which do not understand matter as passive. This seminar wishes to explore Early Modern ideas about material agency and the interaction of human and nonhuman matter aiming to bring such historical perspectives into a critical dialogue with contemporary theory. Such a dialogue not only promises to bring to



prominence forms of Early Modern material agency which may have been marginalised in critical discourse, but also offers a possible corrective to the historical bias implied by a progressivist narrative of recent materialisms as post-Cartesian. Reviewing concepts and cultural as well as literary representations of Early Modern material agency will serve to highlight continuities as well as differences and allow us to explore history as a playground and experimental laboratory for ideas which we can see taking centre stage today.

This seminar will welcome abstracts on any topic exploring Early Modern material agency and its representation in literature and culture, including, but not restricted to:

Early Modern versions of material agency and flat ontologies, like monism and atomism  
the agency of matter, objects, and things (for instance, cultic or religious objects, fetishes, etc.)  
medical theory, especially ideas about the interaction of body, mind, and substances like food, medicine or poison; plants; humour theory  
agency of abject matter, like waste, excrement, corpses

Convenors:

- Dr. Irmtraud Huber, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Germany, [irmtraud.huber@anglistik.uni-muenchen.de](mailto:irmtraud.huber@anglistik.uni-muenchen.de)
- Dr. Ursula Kluwick, Universität Bern, Switzerland, [ursula.kluwick@ens.unibe.ch](mailto:ursula.kluwick@ens.unibe.ch)

## 26. Modernism in Motion

The seminar proposes to explore the ideas of motion and mobility in modernism from the interrelated perspective of literary and cultural studies. Increased and not always voluntary mobility as well as social and political movements, and reconfigured gender and sexual identities contributed both to more fluid life styles and to an aesthetic motion in the sense of new formal departures and a redrawing of the canon. We invite contributions that address the physical, conceptual, and aesthetic mobility of modernist authors and works, and the impact this has had on recent (re-)conceptualisations of modernism.

Aspects to be investigated in the seminar presentations include but are not limited to:

- travel, holidays, a new leisure culture
- technological developments allowing greater physical mobility (e.g. automobiles, airplanes, ocean liners)
- forced displacement and exile
- social mobility, class conflict, social and political movements
- experimental life styles, new forms of communities, new sexualities and genders
- aesthetic experimentation, new languages, challenges to the canon
- and the interrelatedness of the topics above.

Convenors:

- Virginia Richter, University of Bern, Switzerland, [virginia.richter@unibe.ch](mailto:virginia.richter@unibe.ch)
- Nóra Séllei, University of Debrecen, Hungary, [sellei.nora@arts.unideb.hu](mailto:sellei.nora@arts.unideb.hu)

## 27. Narratives of Ageing and Old Age in the Fantastic Mode

Literature in non-realist modes such as the fantastic offers rich explorations of the anxieties and desires related to the experience of life in time. In their ambiguous relationship to the real, fantastic modes of literature open up epistemological and aesthetic alternatives for thinking about ageing across the lifecourse. In addition, in its dystopian and gothic variations, the fantastic also engages with fears about old age and ageing, directing the speculative question 'what if' into both the past and the future. Thus, the fantastic mode provides an entry point for analyses of age representation which may open up new conceptualisations, on the one hand, and, on the other, serve to critique existing social and cultural stereotypes of old age.

In this seminar, we address the question how fantastic genres address conceptions of age, ageing and the lifecourse. We employ genre loosely in the form of speculative modes of the fantastic that enable readings of alternative worlds and times. This allows us to consider texts which may be variously categorised as fantasy, gothic, science fiction and dystopia, recognising what such modes have in common rather than what might separate them. We invite contributions analysing different genres of the fantastic such as vampire fiction, ghost stories, science fiction, utopian/dystopian fiction and fantasy. We invite case studies that investigate key fantastic tropes in thinking about ageing and time such as longevity, immortality and rejuvenescence. We also invite contributions that explore 'fantastic' age representations from different periods across literary history, recognising that fantasy changes along with the changing nature of reality. We particularly welcome papers that address texts from the Global South.

Contributions may address some of the following questions:

- How do literary visions of alternative worlds and times intersect with, reinforce, but also critique what it means to live a human life in time?
- What might it mean to age in a posthuman context?
- How does the fantastic shape epistemological and ontological possibilities of life in time?
- How do age narratives shape fantastic genres?
- What cultural fears do figures of the fantastic like the vampire, zombie or the witch address and how are these related to longevity/eternal life?
- How is ageing represented in its relationship to death, dying and the end of life in fantastic modes?
- What are the functions of the life course, of childhood/youth and old age in particular, in the fantasy genre?
- What is the relationship between fantastic narratives, 'queer' time and ageing?
- How are embodied experiences of age, gender and race constructed and defamiliarised in fantasy and science fiction?
- How do age and ageing intersect with wider cultural and scientific narratives of demographic and climate change? What does this tell us about contemporary discourses of ageing and 'lateness'?

Convenors:

- Sarah Falcus, University of Huddersfield, United Kingdom ([S.J.Falcus@hud.ac.uk](mailto:S.J.Falcus@hud.ac.uk))
- Heike Hartung, University of Potsdam, Germany ([hhartung@uni-potsdam.de](mailto:hhartung@uni-potsdam.de))
- Maricel Oró Piqueras, Universitat de Lleida, Catalonia ([maricel.oro@udl.cat](mailto:maricel.oro@udl.cat))

## 28. Notre Père Walter Scott: Revisiting Scott at 250

To mark the 250th anniversary of Walter Scott's birth, we would like to provide an opportunity to revisit his work, its legacy, its relationship to European literature, and its relevance for today. In his own lifetime Scott was by far the bestselling writer of the day and his work was translated and read across Europe. This panel will showcase some of the work being undertaken on Scott by scholars across Europe today and will explore why they still find his work interesting and relevant.

Convenors:

- Professor Alison Lumsden Regius Professor of English Literature, Co-director of the Walter Scott Research Centre and Honorary Librarian Abbotsford, LLMVC, University of Aberdeen, Scotland, [a.lumsden@abdn.ac.uk](mailto:a.lumsden@abdn.ac.uk)
- Priv.-Doz. Dr. Sigrid Rieuwerts, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, Germany, [rieuwerts@uni-mainz.de](mailto:rieuwerts@uni-mainz.de)

## 29. Over 100 Years Later: The Reception of Late 19th-century British and Irish Fiction in Europe

The late years of the 19th century were times in which significant changes and innovations took shape in British and Irish fiction. Some authors, such as Samuel Butler, Thomas Hardy or Oscar Wilde, reacted against major mid-Victorian idols and conventions. The "fallen woman" was replaced by the "new woman" in novels by Sarah Grand and Mona Caird. Similarly, various innovative narrative strategies appeared in novelists such as Joseph Conrad and Henry James. The aim of this seminar is to explore how all these changes and innovations have been received in Continental Europe. Thus, papers are invited that investigate the ways in which authors from this period have been translated, published, read and reviewed in European countries over the last 100 years and more. We welcome a variety of approaches – historical, textual, cultural, bibliographical – within the field of reception or translation studies, although participants should feel free to present other interdisciplinary approaches or innovative perspectives on their topics of interest.

Convenors:

- Ebbe Klitgård, University of Roskilde, Denmark, [ebbek@ruc.dk](mailto:ebbek@ruc.dk)
- Alberto Lázaro, University of Alcalá, Spain, [alberto.lazaro@uah.es](mailto:alberto.lazaro@uah.es)

## 30. Persuasion in Scientific Discourse: Strategies and Linguistic Resources

Empirical research of the past several decades has suggested that socially constructed persuasion is at the heart of scientific discourse and that different disciplines and cultures create persuasive texts employing different strategies, techniques, and linguistic resources (Berkenkotter & Huckin 1995; Hyland 2004, 2005; Fløttum et al. 2006; Hyland & Jiang 2019; Dontcheva-Navratilova et al. 2020, among others). In this seminar we look for contributions investigating patterns of effective persuasion in traditional academic genres such as conference abstracts, academic book reviews, research papers, textbooks, and in digital genres such as science blogs, research project websites, crowdfunding proposals and e-zines.

A fruitful area for research of persuasive strategies is the interplay of stance and engagement linguistic resources and how these are employed by scientific authors in their writing. Therefore, we are interested in analyses of persuasion linked to the engagement of the reader and the expression of personal stance and point of view and how these interact with discourse structure and topic presentation and discussion in academic texts. Especially as far as digital genres are concerned, both symmetric and asymmetric discourse contexts may be considered where persuasion is addressed to experts and/or non-experts and in both monologic and dialogic genres. We also welcome rhetorical approaches to persuasion in science communications, as long as the linguistic dimension is highlighted (as, for example, in Luzón & Pérez-Llantada 2019). We invite studies of texts in English as well as cross-linguistic and cross-disciplinary studies.

Berkenkotter, C. & Huckin, T. 1995. *Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Dontcheva-Navratilova, O., Adam, M., Povolná, R. & Vogel, R. 2020. *Persuasion in specialized discourses*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fløttum, K., Dahl, T. & Kinn, T. 2006. *Academic voices: across languages and disciplines*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Hyland, K. 2004. A convincing argument: Corpus analysis and academic persuasion. In *Discourse in the Professions: Perspectives from corpus linguistics*, ed. Ulla Connor & Thomas A. Upton, 87-113. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Hyland, K. 2005. Stance and engagement: a model of interaction in academic discourse. *Discourse Studies*, 7: 2, 173-192.

Hyland, K. & Jiang, K. 2019. *Academic discourse and global publishing: Disciplinary persuasion in changing times*. London: Routledge.

Luzón, M. J. and Pérez-Llantada, C. (eds). 2019. *Science Communication on the Internet. Old Genres Meet New Genres*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Convenors:

- Jolanta Šinkūnienė, Vilnius University, Lithuania, [jolanta.sinkuniene@flf.vu.lt](mailto:jolanta.sinkuniene@flf.vu.lt)
- Maria Freddi, University of Pavia, Italy, [maria.freddi@unipv.it](mailto:maria.freddi@unipv.it)

### **31. Rebellious Marys: Women on Self-Development in Late 18th-and Early 19th-Century Fiction and Prose Writings**

This seminar is inspired by Mary Wollstonecraft's, Mary Robinson's, Mary Hays's, and Mary Shelley's work and by their revolutionary novels, *Mary* (1788), *Maria* (1798), *The Victim of Prejudice* (1799), and *Mathilda* (1820) among others. In all these works, the female protagonist struggles to find her own way in life, aiming to fulfil her self-development and to escape the constraints of the 18th and 19th centuries. This seminar intends to give voice to those courageous women – writers, journalists and fictional characters – who dared to question, criticise and/or transgress the boundaries of their social roles, emphasising the importance of (self-)education, self-knowledge and self-reliance. We welcome proposals discussing prose and fictional works written by “the rebellious Marys” not only in the Pre-Romantic and Romantic periods but also in the early Victorian times. The seminar papers may also focus on other genres, such as treatises, journalistic pieces, or fables, in addition to

novels, and life writing while keeping the main concern of contextualised female self-development in mind.

Convenors:

- Eva Antal (Eszterhazy Karoly Catholic University, Hungary), [antal.eva@uni-eszterhazy.hu](mailto:antal.eva@uni-eszterhazy.hu)
- Antonella Braidà (Université de Lorraine, IDEA, France), [antonella.braidà-laplace@univ-lorraine.fr](mailto:antonella.braidà-laplace@univ-lorraine.fr)

### 32. Reconceptualizing Violence against Women

Since the 1970s, a crucial process of reconceptualizing and redefining violence against women has been going on in a variety of fields. The seminar intends to assess the stage reached by now by looking at formative influences (e.g., women's movements, also in the global south, UN), landmark initiatives (CEDAW, Istanbul Convention, metoo, Black Lives Matter), landmark works (Atwood), obstacles (like engrained broader patterns of thought and expression), systemic understandings, and the effects of a more comprehensive gender focus. Contributions from all sectors of English Studies welcome.

Convenors:

- Işıl Baş (Istanbul Kültür University, Turkey, [isil@boun.edu.tr](mailto:isil@boun.edu.tr))
- Florence Binard (Paris Diderot – Université de Paris, France, [fbinard@eila.univ-paris-diderot.fr](mailto:fbinard@eila.univ-paris-diderot.fr))
- Renate Haas (University of Kiel, Germany, [haas@anglistik.uni-kiel.de](mailto:haas@anglistik.uni-kiel.de))
- María Socorro Suárez Lafuente (University of Oviedo, Spain, [lafuente@uniovi.es](mailto:lafuente@uniovi.es))

### 33. Research on English Language Learning and Teaching

The processes of English language learning and teaching represent a complex system of interconnected components, which this seminar aims to shed light on. Papers based on methodologically sound empirical research on various aspects of the field will be presented. Papers will introduce participants to recent research findings relevant to an international audience and are expected to promote discussion on topics such as classroom interaction, assessment, teaching materials, educational technology, and teacher education in various settings (e.g. elementary, secondary and tertiary institutions) and delivery modes (i.e. face to face, online, and hybrid models).

Convenors:

- Katalin Doró, Institute of English and American Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Szeged, Hungary ([dorokati@lit.u-szeged.hu](mailto:dorokati@lit.u-szeged.hu))
- František Tůma, Department of English and American Studies, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic ([tuma@phil.muni.cz](mailto:tuma@phil.muni.cz))
- Thomas E. Bieri, Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Business Administration, Nanzan University, Japan ([bieritho@ic.nanzan-u.ac.jp](mailto:bieritho@ic.nanzan-u.ac.jp))

### 34. Romanticism, Environmentalism, and Visual Culture [SEMINAR WITHDRAWN]

### 35. Shakespeare, Women and Cultural Contexts

Likely the most canonical of English plays, William Shakespeare's works have been widely rewritten, reshaped, staged and performed through the centuries, in different media, forms of art and cultural contexts. They have been used to tackle ever diverse topical problems and issues, such as national crises, global conflicts, and momentous political situations (see, among others, M. Dobson, *Shakespeare and Amateur Performance*, CUP 2011; E. Sheen, I. Karremann eds., *Shakespeare in Cold War Europe*, Palgrave 2016; S. Bigliuzzi ed., *Shakespeare and Crisis. One Hundred Years of Italian Narratives*, John Benjamins 2020). The afterlife of Shakespeare's plays constitutes, indeed, an engaging and prolific field of research, from many different schools of criticism, including the one of women's studies; yet further investigation is needed from this research perspective. In her *Shakespeare and Women* (OUP, 2005), Phyllis Rackin brilliantly argues on the one hand that feminist criticism has overestimated the subjugation of women in Shakespeare's England – which in its turn has led to a risky overestimation of the contemporary emancipation of women –, and on the other she points out that the afterlife of Shakespeare and of his female characters should be analysed as documents of the history of the role of women in society. The role of women in Shakespeare's reception, the narrative around femininity carried out or challenged through Shakespeare's female characters and the use of Shakespeare's plays as catalysts to discuss the woman question and/or to promote a redefinition of gender roles in different cultural and historical contexts are, thus, among the topics that should be paid further attention. This seminar welcomes papers about Shakespeare and women in different cultural contexts. Possible topics include:

Feminist rewritings of Shakespeare's plays

Women's role in Shakespeare's afterlife

Historical studies of the role of women in early modern society through Shakespeare's plays

Early modern (male and female) reception of Shakespeare's female characters

The reception of female characters through the centuries, in different media and in different cultures

Performances of Shakespeare's plays by contemporary women theatre directors

Actresses' training for and experiences in performing Shakespeare's female roles

Analysis of Shakespeare's female characters in relation to the genre of the play

Convenors:

- Marissia Fragkou, Canterbury Christ Church University, United Kingdom, [marissia.fragkou@canterbury.ac.uk](mailto:marissia.fragkou@canterbury.ac.uk)
- Maria Elisa Montironi, University of Urbino Carlo Bo, Italy, [maria.montironi@uniurb.it](mailto:maria.montironi@uniurb.it)
- Cristina Paravano, University of Milan, Italy, [cristina.paravano@unimi.it](mailto:cristina.paravano@unimi.it)

### 36. Stay at Home: Re-Assessing Home Spaces during Covid-19 in Literary Representation and Cultural Consumer Practice

When COVID-19 hit countries in Europe at the beginning of 2020, most governments reacted by imposing a range of restrictions to slow the spread of the virus. Chief among these restrictions was putting societies into lockdown, a measure that included social distancing and staying inside, restrictions on travel, the closing of businesses, schools, and kindergartens, as well as the widespread practice of working from home. The lockdown forced people, often under threat of police penalties such as fines or arrest, to remain in their private homes, an experience that made many re-evaluate this seemingly familiar space. Instead of a warm, cosy space of retreat, home (a privilege that is taken for granted by many) became associated with tedium and dullness at best or isolation and imprisonment at worst. For many, it became obvious that home is not 'our' private refuge but open to interference and a site of social disparities. However, it also turned into a space that afforded new cultural forms and consumer practices.

In the seminar, we want to look at both literary re-assessments of home and the reception of literature at home during lockdown, e.g. in streamed theatre, changing reading practices, or new forms of cultural communities online. We explore how notions of home as a private comfort zone are re-evaluated in literary representations and consumer practices after Covid, and how these practices make new meaning and use of an allegedly known and private space, merging the boundaries between who is producing and who is consuming culture.

We invite papers that include, but are not limited to, discussions of:

literary representations of home spaces and home-making practices in texts reacting to the Covid-19 pandemic;

literary engagements with the intersections of 'race', ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality or other categories within the home during lockdown and the inequalities that have become explicit during and due to the pandemic;

the role of literary and cultural genres and their transformation and/or use for dealing with and representing experiences of home during the pandemic and the rise of new forms of cultural production;

historical comparisons with writing on home and home-making practices during other pandemics, past and present;

political, social and cultural contexts for writing about home during the pandemic, e.g. Brexit, Black Lives Matter, or the 'Refugee Crisis', and their impact on cultural representations of home;

re-assessments of 'home' vs. 'work' spaces in light of the pandemic and engagements with these topics in cultural texts;

home spaces during lockdown as sites of creativity and subversion of capitalist structures of work and productivity;

online space(s) as substitutes or additions to home spaces and reflections on these intersections.

Convenors:

- Sarah Heinz (University of Vienna, Austria), [sarah.heinz@univie.ac.at](mailto:sarah.heinz@univie.ac.at)
- Heidi Liedke (Universität Koblenz-Landau, Germany), [liedke-heidi@uni-landau.de](mailto:liedke-heidi@uni-landau.de)

### 37. Suffering in Anglophone Literatures

This seminar will address literary representations of human suffering. Contributors are encouraged to explore how Anglophone literatures from a variety of cultures and historical eras pay witness both to individual forms of suffering and to more cultural or collective practices relating to times of war, the global pandemic or the looming ecological collapse. Aristotle's *Poetics*, which stands at the beginning of Western discourse on tragedy, asserts that drama without suffering cannot be tragic. Yet, whereas for Aristotle the suffering of lowly-ranked individuals is of no importance, the novel goes on to subvert such established hierarchies, opening a space for the general human suffering (David B. Morris, 'About Suffering: Voice, Genre and Moral Community', 1996). Suffering thus becomes both individual and social as it opens up the Western canon to minority figures.

In terms of individual suffering, recent research has shown that prolonged suffering can result in the establishment of a 'new self'. For example, Catherine Malabou re-examines Freud by using psychoanalysis and neuroscience (*The New Wounded*, 2012). According to Malabou, our new understanding of the brain renders Freud's understanding of sexuality as the cause of psychological dysfunction unnecessary and revises our understanding of the injured subject. In terms of social suffering, we can speak about different conditions that 'simultaneously involve health, welfare, legal, moral and religious issues' (Veena Das; Margaret Lock, *Social Suffering*, 1997) where the grouping of social problems transcends the individual and points to the close linkage of personal and social problems.

In the last couple of decades established trauma theory has suffered a series of discontents, and this seminar accordingly seeks to move beyond Caruth's well-established reading of trauma as an overwhelming experience which resists integration and expression. It will question genealogies which seek to limit trauma to phenomena historically situated after the introduction of the modern, psychological usage of the term in the 1860s. What, for instance, is the connection between trauma and older concepts for suffering such as tragedy, melancholia, nostalgia and *Angst*? Further, this seminar will seek to expose the trauma theory's Eurocentric biases to show that the local is implicated in the global and that ethical responses to suffering need a wider, global approach. This is in accordance with how the title of the seminar invokes Anglophone literatures, reflecting our hope to include global writing in English and give voice to minority traumas. According to Stef Craps (in *Postcolonial Witnessing*, 2013), what we need is a decolonized, at once inclusive and culturally sensitive, trauma theory which can act as a catalyst for meaningful change, and also papers addressing this challenge are welcome.

In general, binaries such as fact vs. fiction, hegemonic vs. marginalized, and narrative vs. non-narrative memory may be interrogated. By using an interdisciplinary approach, the seminar revisits trauma theory and sets up new perspectives on literary representations of human suffering.

Convenors:

- Charles Ivan Armstrong, University of Agder, Norway, [charles.armstrong@uia.no](mailto:charles.armstrong@uia.no)
- Martina Domines Veliki, University of Zagreb, Croatia, [mdomines@ffzg.hr](mailto:mdomines@ffzg.hr)



### **38. Technology-Enhanced Approaches, Models and Processes in English/ESP/CLIL/ Translation Teaching and Learning**

After 50 years of CALL/TELL and the global impact of digital technologies on language teaching methodologies during the recent pandemic, the need emerges to look back and consider how approaches to EFL/ESL have changed in order to host technological innovation in language teaching and learning. The objective of this seminar is to document the gradual or abrupt transition from face-to-face through blended to fully online teaching and learning, while focusing on the transformed frames of reference. Research papers are welcome from authors from all three strands (literature, culture and language) that will address the theory/theories behind this change based on the approaches, models, and processes selected and applied in their EFL/ESL language classes. The ultimate goal is to offer an updated, research-based representation of technology-enhanced EFL/ESL teaching and learning in diverse contexts.

Convenors:

- Viviana Gaballo, University of Macerata, Italy – [viviana.gaballo@unimc.it](mailto:viviana.gaballo@unimc.it)
- Éva Szabó, Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary – [szabo.eva@btk.elte.hu](mailto:szabo.eva@btk.elte.hu)

### **39. The Agency of Invisibility in Contemporary Fiction and Theory**

Invisibility is a prominent conceptual metaphor of social marginalisation, encompassing ideas of death, reification, and disregard (Le Blanc, *L'invisibilité sociale*, 2009). Yet, Esther Peeren argues, there is also an empowering “agency of invisibility” (2014), which becomes apparent in the contemporary figure of the living ghost. In order to contribute to the emerging field of invisibility studies from the perspective of literary studies, our seminar asks the following questions: To what extent does (the agency of) invisibility inform contemporary novels and short stories? What is the significance of literary narratives for aesthetic, social, political, and ethical concepts of invisibility? What uses can we make of concepts and metaphors of invisibility in our critical readings?

Convenors:

- Alice Borrego (Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier 3, France, [alice.borrego@univ-montp3.fr](mailto:alice.borrego@univ-montp3.fr))
- Gero Guttzeit (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, Germany, [gero.guttzeit@lmu.de](mailto:gero.guttzeit@lmu.de))
- Héloïse Lecomte (ENS de Lyon, France, [heloise.lecomte@ens-lyon.fr](mailto:heloise.lecomte@ens-lyon.fr))

### **40. The Ethics of Attention in Contemporary Fiction**

A salient feature of our post-liberal and post-industrial world is the emergence of what Jean-Luc Nancy calls the “inoperative community” (1998), a community ruled by mutual suspicion and indifference, in which the death of its members has neither function nor finality. As Judith Butler argues in *Precarious Life* (2004), the vulnerability and invisibility of those community members that can be readily sacrificed by the State stem from the loss of those social attachments that dictate the criteria that makes us human in our global context of

violence. Her words echo Giorgio Agamben's contention in *Homo Sacer* (1998) that, in the modern era, misery and exclusion are not only economic or social concepts but eminently political categories.

One of the functions of literature is to retrieve individuals or groups from invisibility/inaudibility, as indicated by these philosophers and others like Guillaume Le Blanc in his *L'invisibilité sociale* (2009). Its ethical and political purpose is to shift the norms of perception of relegated subjects. Fiction trains readers to educate their perceptions and to be attentive to subjects and situations that are either invisible or too irrelevant to draw our attention and whose very visibility, right under our eyes, prevents us from seeing them. In so doing, literature calls on us to re-think the frames of perception, recognisability, apprehension and intelligibility, as recommended by Judith Butler in *Frames of War* (2009). Through its presentation of embodied individuals embedded in social and environmental networks, it also prompts readers to attend to particular situations and to exert an ethics of a particularist type, a responsive ethics that turns its back on moral dogmas and takes the responsibility of deciding on what matters. Such imperative to attend is very much in line with the proposals of Ordinary Language Philosophy that, in the wake of Wittgenstein's early works, has been developed by such authors as Hilary Putnam, Stanley Cavell, or Sandra Laugier, among many others. It is also consonant with the principles and practice of the ethics of care, a development of Emmanuel Levinas' ethics of alterity that sets store on paying attention to others and, more concretely, on helping the other in an enduring, sustainable way.

Drawing on these insights, this seminar will strive to elucidate how fiction written in English after the 1990s contributes to foster an ethics—and possibly a politics—of attention, and how, by so doing, it becomes instrumental in the foregrounding of an ecology of attention, to take up the title of Yves Citton's influential study (2017).

Convenors:

- Jean-Michel Ganteau [jean-michel.ganteau@univ-montp3.fr](mailto:jean-michel.ganteau@univ-montp3.fr) (Montpellier 3, France)
- Susana Onega [sonega@unizar.es](mailto:sonega@unizar.es) (Zaragoza, Spain)

#### **41. The Persistence of Character**

Alain Robbe-Grillet and the Nouveau Roman once dismissed the notion of character as “outdated”. It was reduced to a mere abstract agent, a “combination” (Barthes 67) and limited to a few roles by structuralists and decentered by post-structuralists. If character however never went away as readers maintained their interest in fictional representations of people and their story worlds, the notion of characters as mere paper beings has been quite influential among critics. Yet, character and reader response to it are again getting some critical attention (as Rita Felski writes in her 2020 critical work on readers or viewers identifying with characters in novels and films, “the antihumanist orientation of the last few decades inspired a default skepticism about the status of fictional persons; critics insisted that characters were nothing but signifiers: textual holograms, verbal phantasms, or visual illusions. As such, they bore no relation to persons; to treat them as such was the epitome of naivete or philistinism” (Felski, *Hooked. Art and Attachment*, 2020, 86). Yet, character and reader response to it are again getting some critical attention: for instance Felski points out that for many readers and viewers, “in one sense, fictional characters are real; they have effects in the world; they inspire emulation and adaptation, irritation and dislike; their

existence makes a difference” (Hooked 85). This panel on contemporary Anglophone literary and popular fiction and media (film, TV series, digital games, graphic novels etc.) proposes to explore, through different approaches, this renewed interest in characterization and “reassessment of character in literary studies” (Anderson et al.1). It has a specific interest in – but is not restricted to – the representation of non-human characters.”

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Barthes, *S/Z*, trans. Richard Miller. New York: Hill and Wang, 1974.

Robbe-Grillet, Alain. *Pour un nouveau roman*. Paris: Editions de minuit, 1963.

Felski, Rita. *Hooked, Art and Attachment*. London: The University of Chicago Press, 2020.

Convenors:

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- Gloria Lauri-Lucente, University of Malta, Malta, [gloria.lauri-lucente@um.edu.mt](mailto:gloria.lauri-lucente@um.edu.mt)
- Armelle Parey, Université de Caen Normandie, France [armelle.parey@unicaen.fr](mailto:armelle.parey@unicaen.fr)
- Isabelle Roblin, Université du Littoral Côte d'opale, France [isabelle.roblin@univ-littoral.fr](mailto:isabelle.roblin@univ-littoral.fr)

#### **42. The Reception of John Ruskin's Work in Translation across Europe and Beyond** **[SEMINAR WITHDRAWN]**

#### **43. The Construction of Childhood in Victorian England**

The Victorians' interest (bordering on obsession) in childhood is easily discernible: indeed, novels, short stories, poems, photographic displays, pedagogical essays and medical treatises focused on children multiplied. Children's literature (which, in the nineteenth century, developed dramatically as a separate genre) contributed sensibly to this cultural shift. Furthermore, the minors' legal rights and needs were also brought to the forefront. This seminar aims at exploring the way Victorian children were depicted in literature (both in fictional and non-fictional narratives): special emphasis will be placed on the way childhood was constructed to suit political, social, and cultural agendas.

Convenors:

- Elisabetta Marino, University of Rome "Tor Vergata", Italy, [marino@lettere.uniroma2.it](mailto:marino@lettere.uniroma2.it)
- Adrian Radu, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, [adrian.radu@ubbcluj.ro](mailto:adrian.radu@ubbcluj.ro)

#### 44. Translating and Analysing Charles Darwin and Darwinism in(to) European languages (1859-2022)

If Charles Darwin is “perhaps the most discussed writer in English besides Shakespeare”, in George Levine’s words, he certainly is also one of the most debated authors in any language. Yet European readers outside Britain – whether scientists or ordinary educated people – have usually read and criticized his texts through translations into their own languages. Now language was a terrible problem for Darwin himself as he had to express revolutionary ideas using words that had been employed through centuries of Creationist thought, as was brilliantly shown by Gillian Beer in her seminal *Darwin’s Plots* (1983). It can be said that Darwin’s materialistic and un-teleological concepts had to be translated into an old Christian English language. The European translations of Darwin’s works in turn reflect the difficulty of coining new phrases for new ideas, but they also mirror the specificities of each different language and culture. In France for instance, Clémence Royer – Darwin’s first French translator – read *The Origin of Species* through Lamarckian lenses and produced a Lamarckian translation that was taken for Darwin’s actual views by thousands of readers for many years. Clémence Royer’s translation was also found to convey a higher degree of certainty pertaining to the views expressed than Darwin’s own original text. Heinrich Georg Bronn translated the *Origin* into German in 1860 and opted for ‘*Entstehung*’ rather than ‘*Ursprung*’ for ‘origin’ and ‘*Kampf*’ for ‘struggle’. With his cuts and terms he paved the way for strands of social Darwinism under the auspices of Ernst Haeckel. The reception of Darwinism in Europe was therefore highly influenced by the individual situation of each country in terms of translation, edition, readership and cultural market. This seminar aims at showing the diversity of the circulation and reception of Darwinism (Darwin himself but also such authors as T.H. Huxley, Wallace, Spencer, or many others) from the publication of *The Origin* in November 1859 to the present day in the various European countries and cultures. Proposals for papers in the domains of translation and comparative studies, reception studies and linguistics are invited. Papers on linguistic research questions applied to both the original work and the translations of Darwin’s work are welcome; linguistic topics and traditions which may be addressed include (but are not limited to) modality and epistemic stance, Appraisal Theory and Systemic Functional Linguistics, semantic relations (e.g. causality or similar semantic relations), and metaphor theory. We also welcome proposals that probe into textual aspects of the discursive relation, for example reader response theory within a Christian framework as well as an emerging atheist stance, literary appropriations of Darwin’s work and reactions of contemporary readers in the twenty-first century, Systemic Functional analyses of the textual function, etc.

Convenors :

- Emeritus Professor Michel Prum, Université de Paris Diderot, France, [prum.michel@wanadoo.fr](mailto:prum.michel@wanadoo.fr)
- Professor Felix Sprang, University of Siegen, Germany, [felix.sprang@uni-siegen.de](mailto:felix.sprang@uni-siegen.de)
- Professor Heidi Verplaetse, University of Leuven, Belgium, [heidi.verplaetse@kuleuven.be](mailto:heidi.verplaetse@kuleuven.be)

#### 45. Travelling to and from the Indian Subcontinent in the long Nineteenth Century

With the implementation of steam engines to power trains and boats, human mobility increased, as travelling became less expensive and, therefore, widely accessible. What we now define as “the Global South” attracted both travellers and tourists, journalists and photographers, as well as women writers who viewed their experience abroad as an opportunity to carve a niche for themselves as individuals and authors.

By focusing on the Indian Subcontinent, at a time when British imperialism was reaching its zenith, and taking into consideration both perspectives (Indians abroad, British subjects exploring the Subcontinent), this panel aims at tackling the different facets of the literary and artistic portrayal of 19th century India, as well as issues of identity and subjectivity, while delving into the cultural tensions stemming from the encounter.

Convenors:

- Elisabetta Marino, University of Rome “Tor Vergata”, Italy, [marino@lettere.uniroma2.it](mailto:marino@lettere.uniroma2.it)
- Daniela Rogobete, University of Craiova, Romania, [dani.rogobete@yahoo.com](mailto:dani.rogobete@yahoo.com)

#### 46. Victorian and neo-Victorian Wasted Lives: Bodies that Do not Matter

The production of “human waste” - or more precisely, wasted lives, the “superfluous” populations of migrants, refugees and other outcasts – is an inevitable outcome of modernisation. It is an unavoidable side-effect of economic progress and the quest for order which is characteristic of modernity. This notion of wasted lives unravels the impact of this transformation on our contemporary culture and politics and shows that the problem of coping with “human waste” provides a key for understanding some otherwise baffling features of our shared life, from the strategies of global domination to the most intimate aspects of human relationships.

We welcome paper proposals that deal with Victorian and neo-Victorian cultural and literary productions which are concerned with ideas about wasted lives and bodies that do not matter and which find reflection in our current societies.

Papers can encompass various approaches and methodologies such as textual analysis, traductology and literary translation studies of Victorian and neo-Victorian literary texts (and their audiovisual remediations), Victorian and neo-Victorian literary genres and neo-Victorian media and visual representations. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- the poor
- migrants
- outcasts
- prostitutes
- disabled bodies
- refugees
- criminals
- deviants
- sick bodies

Convenors:

- Maria Isabel Romero-Ruiz (University of Málaga, Spain), [mirr@uma.es](mailto:mirr@uma.es)
- Simonetta Falchi (University of Sassari, Italy), [sfalchi@uniss.it](mailto:sfalchi@uniss.it)

#### 47. Women's Writing and their Writings on Writing

The area of research delineated under the seminar Women Writers and their Writings on Writing is that of women novelists having inscribed their fictional and non-fictional contributions in English within the frame of postmodernism. Simultaneously using and abusing the canon, writers like Margaret Atwood, Antonia Susan Byatt, Ursula Le Guin, Doris Lessing, or Angela Carter, to name but a few, make their voices heard via metafiction, literary theory and criticism, newspaper articles, reviews, lectures and recorded/televised interviews – demarches which are quintessentially technical, therefore automatically/stereotypically associated with men.

Flourishing in the 1970-1980s, the theoretical writings on self-reflexivity in literature that have remained mainstays in the critical approaches to postmodernism (and not only) have been quoted and replicated ever since. In its holding a mirror for literature to see itself as literature, and for the reader to be aware of its fictionality, metafiction has pervaded contemporary writings. Its peculiarities, which raised eyebrows in the dawns of the genre, and later, in early postmodern fiction like that authored by Borges, Barth or Fowles, are now becoming almost normative in the construction of the fictional text, which, we believe, requires a thorough critical reassessment. This is why this seminar aims to bring together various case studies, with a view to outline a renewed and updated theory on metafiction. Ideally, the contributions will jointly prove that the anxiety of authorship generated by the lack of models for women writers in the Victorian age and their perilous propensity towards specific gender roles – already famously deconstructed by Virginia Woolf a century ago in *A Room of One's Own* – is now part of the ancient 'herstory' of literature and that women writers of the second half of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first century are now on equal footing with their male colleagues in point of complexity of styles, techniques, thematic content and, not least, in point of their being successful on the literary market. Construed as one of the most complicated narrative modes at the disposal of contemporary writers, metafiction, copiously employed by women authors, is a niche identified for a research that leaves aside the second-wave feminists' complaints on the secondariness of women's writing, and asserts instead, in a bold fourth-wave feminist manner, that contemporary literature produced by women may and will stand the tests of time, complexity and quality.

Therefore, we welcome abstracts of proposed presentations aimed at: discussing (post)postmodern women's writing and identifying the embedded metacritical and metafictional practices; assessing the evolution of women's writing from its patterns of domesticity to complex discursive structures which produce new meanings and propose solutions to contemporary issues; updating the extant theories on metafictional literary writings.

Convenors:

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- Oana-Celia Gheorghiu, University of Galati, Romania, [oana.gheorghiu@ugal.ro](mailto:oana.gheorghiu@ugal.ro)