

PASE 2022: “Transitions”
30th Conference of the Polish Association for the Study of English
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PLENARY LECTURES

Prof. Andreas H. Jucker
(University of Zurich)

The pragmatics of emotion in fiction

Emotions are an essential part of our daily lives. They are part of our everyday interactions in our private lives, at work and during our leisure activities. They are part of the news media, which often seem to maximise the emotional impact of their news stories. And they are also part of the many fictional worlds around us, be it in the form of movies or television series, novels or theatre plays. However, in spite of their pervasiveness, they are remarkably elusive to any empirical investigation. They are, by their very nature, fuzzy and indeterminate, and, therefore, difficult to pinpoint. In the context of fictional texts, the problem is exacerbated because the emotions experienced by the reader or viewer may either converge or diverge, sometimes even radically, from the emotions experienced by the depicted characters. Moreover, it is one of the paradoxes of fiction that it may arouse very strong emotions in spite of the fact that readers or viewers are generally aware of the fictitious nature of the depicted events.

In this presentation, I want to explore a number of different inroads that pragmatics has to offer to explore emotions in fictional contexts. In a first step, I will explore the emotion tags used on the fan fiction website Archive of Our Own, and in a second step, I will explore the emotion vocabulary of the fictional artefacts themselves. This includes both terms that are used to express emotions and terms that are used to describe emotions. Here I will show how a corpus-based study of such items can be used to trace diachronic developments, e.g. in the Fiction section of the *Corpus of Historical American English*, in the *Movie Corpus* or in the *TV Corpus*.

Prof. dr hab. Andrzej Łyda
(University of Silesia in Katowice)

Emotive shifts: academia, genre, and translation

The view persuasively incorporated into a large number of academic writing manuals and academic style guides that academic discourse, at least the written one, should be formal, logical, impersonal and – what is most interesting to me – unemotional has rarely been challenged in the literature. Actually, the literature on the topic is not very extensive and systematic studies on emotivity are just a few. Even rarer are the studies on “emotivity in translation” of academic discourse, the more that the number of scientific publications translated has been decreasing with the increasing role of English as lingua franca.

In this presentation I will focus on the problem of “emotivity in translation” in academic discourse. Academic discourse is defined here after Hyland (2009) as a continuum of discourses ranging from research discourses to popular (science) discourses. My presentation addresses both of the discourses represented by two genres, the research article and popular science journal article. It reports on a few studies I have undertaken recently on the extent of emotivity in academic discourse and translational emotive shifts in a cross-linguistic perspective.

Prof. Dr. Felix Sprang
(University of Siegen)

Literary transitions: from silence to utterance

In the beginning there was the word. Literature – not exclusively but particularly in a Christian paradigm – is a creative act evoking the silence that precedes the word. In my talk I will revisit the notion of literature as a transitional form originating from pressured silence. I will hark back to classical rhetoric and Renaissance poetics, examine Victorian notions of the dialectical relationship between silence and speech, and explore contemporary poetics in order to illuminate the idea that literature is rooted in silence. With Don Paterson's loquacious *The Poem* (2018) as a fulcrum and plant humanities as a context, I will invite us to connect with the voice of Alice Oswald. Exploring that voice – alongside other voices of past and contemporary poets – can facilitate our conversation about the many ways that literature in general and poetry in particular oscillate between silence and utterance. Reflecting on literature as a transitional form can ultimately help us address the structures and hierarchies in which speech and silence are entangled. With silence and utterance staking out the field between humility and humiliation, literature reminds us of what we stand to lose if we do not reflect carefully on the conditions for that transition.

Prof. dr hab. Elżbieta Chrzanowska-Kluczevska
(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

Semiotic transitions: Transmedial crossings of textual frames

Over the last five decades, the concept of *frame* has meandered through several scholarly disciplines and paradigms. Suffice it to mention Erving Goffman's sociologically-oriented *frame analysis* (1974), Charles Fillmore's *Frame Semantics* (propagated since 1975) or the notion of *frame* developed in AI Studies (Minsky 1975, Petöfi 1976) that refers to a global cognitive pattern of storing chunks of knowledge in memory and which has made its way into cognitive poetics, psycholinguistics and computational linguistics.

However, since the year 2022 marks the centenary of Juri Lotman's birth, I propose to return to his own idea of *textual frame* (developed partly in collaboration with Boris Uspensky). This term was expounded by Lotman in *The Structure of the Artistic Text* (1970/1977), in the traditional understanding of a *limit* or *boundary* that separates an artistic text – produced in a verbal or non-verbal medium – from *extra-textual structures*, that is other texts or *non-text* (a real-life context). Thus, his notion of *frame* comes close to its definition in literary studies, as well as in the theory and philosophy of art. Lotman returned to the discussion of the textual frame in *Universe of the Mind* (1990), mainly in application to the fine arts, where he pointed out some cases of transgression of textual borders that bear straightforwardly on the phenomenon of *transmediality* (which he dubbed *transcoding*). Such crossings of boundaries between different semiotic modes, media and perceptual modalities are simultaneously creative and potentially confusing in that they display a collision of artistic codes, play with illusion and require a heightened processing effort on the part of the interpreter.

My vantage point is basically semiotic, with the focus of interest going less to the verbal medium (texts without clear endings, crossing the boundaries between fiction and reality within text/discourse worlds of literary texts, etc.) and more to transgressions of frame in the visual arts, architecture and theatre. The semiotic considerations on *the transition of boundaries* will be complemented with a short *phenomenologically-oriented* discussion of the aesthetic and cognitive import of *framing devices* (Derrida 1987, Simmel 1994, Crowther 2009). Namely, *frames* can be viewed antithetically either as “defences against the exterior” and hindrances to creative liberty or as unifying and integrating mechanisms. In the latter capacity they become devices endowed with their own artistic value, able to complement the text they enclose, especially when they are enriched with verbal explanations.

Following in the footsteps of Lotman, our semiotic excursion will begin with the Baroque *bel composto*, a theatrical unity of all the arts, described by Gilles Deleuze (1988/2006) as a *total extension* of artistic modes. Next, we will consider modern art (mostly from British collections), and specifically *collages* (Picasso 1913, 1914; Burri 1954; Hamilton 1962). Lotman discussed such compositions as a clash of *the fictitious* with *the real*, of a text with extra-text, a visual phenomenon which is also doubly figurative, metaphoric and metonymic in nature. Transmedial effects become conspicuous also in spatial experiments conducted on the borderline between painting and sculpture by artists working within the currents of Minimalism (LeWitt 1962; Flavin 1968) and Hyperrealism (Gober 1989-92); Dan Flavin’s work in particular raises the issue of *metatextual value of the frame*. Joseph Kosuth’s conceptual artwork *Clock* (1965), playing with artefacts produced in three different media – a real object (ready-made), a photo and a printed text, exploits the trick of a “frame within a frame”, as does Ukrainian artist Lesia Chomienko’s *Wonderland* (2010). In turn, in Jenny Holzer’s (2011) light projection of a quote drawn from Czesław Miłosz’s poetry and reflected against the walls of the Wawel Castle, a verbal text is framed by a blend of architecture and natural environment, with the semiosphere merging into the biosphere (the Vistula River). Finally, Velázquez’s Infanta Margarita, a travelling motif in European high and popular art, will step out of *Las Meninas* to enter the frame of Tadeusz Kantor’s painterly and theatrical experiments in Cracovian Cricot 2 Theatre.

Hopefully, this short itinerary across different artistic media will present the idea of *frame* devised by Lotman as an important *integrational category* valuable for all kinds of semiotic research on a broadly conceived textuality.

Selected References:

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CONFERENCE PAPERS (in alphabetical order)

Tymon Adamczewski

(*Kazimierz Wielki University, Bydgoszcz*)

When oil and water mix: hyperobjects, theory and artistic practices in Tom McCarthy's *Satin Island*

My paper aims to discuss the equivocal qualities of petroleum and their links with creative practice as illustrated in Tom McCarthy's novel *Satin Island*. The analysis will focus on the representation of oil employed both in the book's form and content. While McCarthy is interested in depicting the fluctuating status of Theory as an explanatory cultural discourse, his writing addresses both cultural persistence of the avant-gardes and their links with the experimental mode in literature. Employing the critical perspectives of Timothy Morton's explorations of hyperobjects and Nicholas Royle's proposition to regard literature as a form of veering, I intend to think through the semantic ambiguities of petroleum as they appear throughout the book, especially that both theoretical standpoints effectively manage to problematise the non-anthropocentric perspectives for environmental thinking and processes like writing or immersion brought about by texts.

Patrycja Austin

(*University of Rzeszów*)

"Every end is a new beginning": fungal transformations in Jeff VanderMeer's *Ambergris Trilogy*

When he stated that "there is no end in nature, but every end is a new beginning", Ralph Waldo Emerson may have as well been writing about the role of fungi that the scientists have only recently come to appreciate. Along with the plant turn within environmental humanities, there emerged new materialist theories stressing the circulation of matter in the universe, undermining the finality of death which now gives way to transition and transformation. At the same time, however, these theories have neglected the significance of individual beings who, in this view, have become stages in the processes they are a part of. This view perfectly fits with the physiology of fungi which are processes assisting in beginnings and ends, themselves devoid of defining separate identities. Such view, which reverses the postmodernist priority of text over matter, is explored by Jeff VanderMeer in his *Ambergris Trilogy* which gives fictional flesh to textual creations. In my talk, I want to explore the possible limits of an individual in the balance between postmodernist textuality and posthuman materiality.

Łukasz Barciński

(*University of Rzeszów*)

Traumæscapes: hybrid spaces at the interface of translation and trauma

The field of the discipline of Trauma Studies seems to have a huge research potential if juxtaposed with the discipline of Translation Studies: many contemporary novels can be analysed from the perspective of the traumatic experiences of their protagonists and their representation in works of fiction with special focus on the psychological aspect. Postmodern texts seems to constitute an apt illustration of the inescapable interface of trauma in translation as the process of translation has to make allowances for the hybridity of trauma fiction and recreate it in the target text. The analysis of the rendition of novels by Joseph Conrad (into Polish) and Witold Gombrowicz (into English) can illustrate the triplicity of trauma which has to be considered during the translation process: (1) the performative recreation of the original traumatic event; (2) literary texts as inherently traumatic due to the inescapable entry into the symbolic order of linguistic codes; (3) the double bind of the translation process, i.e. the trauma of impossibility of translation. The works of the above mentioned authors, especially the centrifugal drive in their self-referential fiction in translation, can illustrate various theoretical aspects of trauma as applied to the field of Translation Studies with special attention to the generic, typological and functional hybridity of works of fiction.

Katarzyna Bazarnik
(*Jagiellonian University in Kraków*)

“Dublin by Lamplight” or translatorial pitfalls of Joyce’s short stories

Joyce’s short stories collected in *Dubliners* are characterised by the style of “scrupulous meanness”. Their austere, economical language appears deceptively unproblematic, but it hides different traps for both experienced and budding translators. Kalina Wojciechowska’s first translation of Joyce’s short stories has been insightfully analysed by Jolanta Wawrzycka; less attention has been paid to Zbigniew Batko’s new translation of 2005. In my paper I will juxtapose their versions with a set of translations participating in the recent translatorial competition organised by the Polish Association for Irish Studies in order to identify and discuss specific challenges posed by Joyce’s style, which range from culture-specific terms to nuances of narratorial perspective.

Anton Belenetskyi
(*Jagiellonian University in Kraków*)

By sound in the dark: the diffractive practice of echolocation in the 21st-century American literature

“To all those who navigate by sound in the dark” is the dedication with which ecopoet Evelyn Reilly opens her latest poetry collection *Echolocation* (2018). The addressee is clearly a porous, capacious, collective “we”—teeming with humans and nonhumans alike—that are always already navigating the uncertainties of the Anthropocene in the sticky darkness of Timothy Morton’s “dark ecology” (2016) where the now-proverbial interconnectedness of every-thing and every-one glares with non-innocent inescapability.

Drawing on the broadly understood theories of new materialisms and feminist posthumanisms (Barad 2007, Haraway 2016), this paper approaches echolocation as a diffractive practice of both reading and writing the experience of the anthropocenic contingency. In so doing, the paper itself diffracts three recent American texts: Richard Powers’ novel *The Echo Maker* (2006), Reilly’s *Echolocation*, and Alexis Pauline Gumbs’ collection of poetic essays *Undrowned: Black Feminist Lessons from Marine Mammals* (2020). The literary strategy of echolocation is argued to challenge the spurious binaries—between the human and the nonhuman, the self and the echo, eco and echo, to name but a few—by superposing them in the process of material-discursive worlding of the ongoing ecological disturbance. Diffractive echolocation thus becomes understood as both a prerequisite for the possibility of post-anthropocentric, more-than-human “hope in the dark” (Solnit 2004), which always already implies the dark-ecological fear, and evidence of the enduring relevance of contemporary multigeneric literature for articulating such hope.

Katarzyna Biela
(*Jagiellonian University in Kraków*)

Touching the unspoken: emotion, eschatology and speechlessness in B.S. Johnson’s work

This paper captures the intriguing transition between the tangible and the unspoken in the interdisciplinary work of the post-war British author, B. S. Johnson. Since he viewed the book as a physical object and was of the opinion that the shape of the volume influences the reading process, he would often resort to material devices, e.g. holes in pages, double column and blanks between text segments. While making the reader aware of the physical features of the book, such tools often prompt a break in reading and open up space for reflection in the face of speechlessness. In their materiality, they have the potential to suggest themes difficult to articulate, e.g. grief, anxiety, and eschatological doubts. I discuss how Johnson traverses between the tactile and the indescribable in his novels, but also in drama and film, where he considers the body of a performer and solutions that can be viewed as “unstageable” (category discussed by Karen Quigley). I also note that more often than not such a transition guides all kinds of multimodal literature. Our awareness of it may enrich the way we approach literature in the digital age, and art in general.

Anna Budziak
(*University of Wrocław*)

The united Europe according to T. S. Eliot

In March 1946, Eliot delivered three radio talks on the BBC German Service, which were later on published as “Reflections on the Unity of European Culture.” Then in the autumn of 1949, he went on a three-week tour in Germany, lecturing on “The Idea of a European Society;” he cautioned that neither the union “which is *only* based upon fear” nor the one based on personal relations (with individuals of various nations “liking each other”) is stable. Instead, he urges, Europeans should try to find “the ways in which we are alike” in the realm of culture. This paper, by considering Eliot’s lecture, talks and earlier writings, demonstrates how his vision of Europe—due to its cultural emphasis—differs from the alternative proposed by Julien Benda. It also shows how Eliot’s idea of Europe perpetuates the myth of empire and how—by relying on the pattern of obligations characteristic for historical empires and kingdoms—it retains (perhaps surprisingly) a contemporary relevance. While stressing the contemporaneity of his vision, this paper indicates an analogy between the image underlying Eliot’s idea of civic duties and the metaphor that was used by Martha Nussbaum to elucidate her notions of civic obligations and cosmopolitanism.

Anna Cholewa-Purgal
(*Jan Długosz University in Częstochowa*)

Adaptation as transition in Charles Williams’s novel *All Hallows’ Eve*

The paper argues that Charles Williams’s last novel, *All Hallows’ Eve* (1945) might be viewed as a popular culture adaptation of a high-brow concept of *telonia* or aerial toll houses, an eschatological belief held by some believers of the Christian Orthodox Church, and apparently based on the patristic teaching, as expounded, for instance, by an American 20th c. convert and hieromonk Fr. Seraphim Rose.

Telonia concerns the journey of a soul just after death through ‘aerial custom houses’, when demons vehemently fight for the soul by fiercely articulating all its sins and demanding damnation, as counterbalanced by some angels, who provide an account of the soul’s good deeds, aided by prayer and intercession of the living and of the saints.

This interpretation of Williams’s novel in question is an experiment in thought, as there seems to be no clear indication of the writer’s interest in Orthodox eschatology. Kirsten Pinto Gfroerer, a Canadian writer and theologian, argues, however, that Williams ‘was as close to Orthodoxy as a “Westerner” could get’ (https://web.ncf.ca/an359/charles_williams.html). In *All Hallows’ Eve* the spirits of two recently departed young women, Lester and Evelyn, seem to be following, in a sense, the paths of *telonia*, embedded in the convention of a thriller, spiritual though it is.

Magdalena Cieślak
(*University of Łódź*)

Destruction or change? Alex Garland’s *Annihilation* as an ecofeminist critique of anthropocentrism

Alex Garland is a writer and director that has always experimented with a posthumanist perspective. From his earlier films, like *28 Days Later* (screenplay), through the adaptation of Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go* (screenplay), to *Ex Machina* and the recent miniseries *Devs* (director), he explores the liminalities of humanity in a variety of contexts: zombies, aliens or AI. In *Annihilation* (director, 2018), he also investigates the nature of humanity by exploring human confrontation with the unknown – an environmental anomaly from outer space. The Shimmer, as it is called in the film, is a slowly expanding mysterious area that lets nothing and nobody that enters it out. The narrative follows the attempts at examining it of a team of five scientists, incidentally all women, as previous military expeditions failed to return.

Whether it is seen as an alien life form or an environmental change, the Shimmer as a metaphor opens to several readings. Being a place of destruction of what is understood as a human realm, it is a critique of civilization as we know it, implicitly patriarchal and anthropocentric. The destruction it brings is, however, actually a change as the Shimmer refracts all cells, creating new entities. It works partly like cancer, annihilating the life it meets, but creating new life forms: doubles, hybrids, fusions. Indiscriminately merging human, animal and plant life, the Shimmer can thus be understood as a force of nature that works beyond the human concepts of creation or destruction, volition or incident, intention or reaction. In my presentation, I would like to discuss *Annihilation* as a film that critically investigates the anthropocentric premises of the relationship between humans and the environment, combining ecocriticism with a feminist perspective.

Monika Coghén

(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

“A glimpse into our English existence”: manuscripts collected by Thomas Carlyle for Karl Varnhagen von Ense

Karl August Varnhagen von Ense was a German diplomat and man of letters, highly valued by his contemporaries for his chronicles of the intellectual, political, and literary life of the Romantic era. He was also a passionate manuscript collector, and his collection of autographs, bequeathed by his niece Ludmilla Assing to the Königliche Bibliothek in Berlin, through the vagaries of World War II found its way to the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków. The collection has been a treasure trove for musicologists and literary scholars ever since Polish authorities grudgingly admitted to its preservation in the late 1970s. Now its investigation has become a major project of the Faculty of Modern Languages at the Jagiellonian University. The English-language manuscripts include Thomas Carlyle’s letters to Varnhagen and the manuscripts of letters by various British eminent personalities of the time procured by Carlyle, who annotated some of the manuscripts for his German correspondent. This paper shows the results of a preliminary investigation into this part of the collection, paying particular attention to Carlyle’s annotations of the letters and aiming to establish what image of British society he aimed to construct for his German correspondent.

Rowland Cotterill

(Independent scholar)

William Empson’s modernist Shakespeare: gradual and sudden transition in plot, character and thought

Leading British modernist writers, seeking and constructing mythic models of literary history to authorise their double-acts of critical construction and creative rebellion, had difficulties with Shakespeare. Eliot notoriously valorised, above his plays, the epics of Virgil and Dante; Wyndham Lewis played off Shakespearean against Machiavellian nihilism; Joyce generated for him a mythical and Oedipal biography. In this context Empson’s treatment of Shakespearean poetic drama stands out – for brilliant ingenuity, theatrical awareness, and relative subsequent neglect. This paper shall address Empson’s responses to three Shakespearean cases of problematic transition. Concerning *Hamlet*; why does the protagonist return, from England, so changed? Is the change superficial or real? Does Hamlet’s soliloquy, before departure, clarify or confuse the issue? Concerning Falstaff; how do developments, or continuities, in the role illuminate the links and the gaps between the plays of *Henry IV* and *Henry V*? Concerning Cleopatra; how do images of fertility and of destruction, how do practices of patience and caprice, map on to her options and actions in face of death? For Empson, indeed, encounters with death focus, supremely, options for self-assertion – hence, for both critical distinctions and inclusive richness.

Izabela Curyłło-Klag
(*Jagiellonian University in Kraków*)

Re-engagement with the classics in the 1920s and now: Naomi Mitchison and Pat Barker

The paper will explore recastings of classical narratives by bringing together Naomi Mitchison's *The Conquered* (1923) and Pat Barker's *The Silence of the Girls* (2018). Both novelists use ancient stories to illuminate uncomfortable aspects of their respective cultural milieus. Themes of aggression and power, relationships between friends and comrades, masters and servants, men and women, seem to be located in an old world, but are in fact very much informed by the concerns of the day, and perhaps also reflect some anticipation of a watershed moment. As Barker has recently observed in an interview, "people return to the beginning when they feel things are coming to an end". Mitchison's re-engagement with the classics came in the wake of the carnage of World War I, when women's roles were changing, and British imperialism was undergoing a reevaluation in the course of the Anglo-Irish War. Barker's take on the *Iliad*, with its depictions of rape, assault and erasure of identity, possesses a #MeToo timeliness. Additionally, it resonates with pressing ecological issues as it foregrounds the cost of wars waged by men, and the devastation resulting from human activity in general.

James Dale
(*Kazimierz Pułaski University of Technology and Humanities in Radom*)

"I heard myself proclaim'd": the transition in the critical and textual reception of Edgar in Shakespeare's *King Lear*

The publication of Shakespeare's First Folio in 1623 marked the beginning of a period, spanning over three centuries, where the critical reception of Edgar in *King Lear* was often unenthusiastic judging by the opinions of successive theatre practitioners and literary critics. Among such voices were those who questioned the relevance of Edgar to the plot, some viewing him to be a superfluous character. In addition, stage interpretations continued to diminish Edgar's heteroglossia, stripping away the complex multiplicity of voices in Shakespeare's character by omitting lines given to the character in the play's Quarto version. However, a transition in Edgar's critical (and textual) reception began to be noticed in the latter part of the twentieth century, evidenced through the research of stage directors and textual scholars wishing to uphold the ethical importance of Edgar in the play. In doing so, this led to the reinstatement of Edgar's lines in stage performances. Moreover, recent critics are now paying more attention to Edgar's dexterity in the use of language and disguise which they claim re-establish the character as vital to the plot of the play.

Marta Dąbrowska
(*Jagiellonian University in Kraków*)

English—a language of Polish entertainment? A linguistic landscape analysis of Polish advertisements of cultural events

An overview of Polish advertisements and billboards demonstrates that public signs advertising various cultural and mass events are more and more frequently composed in both Polish and English, with various items in the two languages being combined in one sign. The materials discussed in the paper, investigated from the point of view of linguistic landscape combined with multimodality analysis (the arrangements of text components, the use of fonts and colours, etc.) will be advertisements of various events collected in the Polish public space, both offline and online. An objective of the study will be to observe what types of events tend to be publicised with the help of English and why, thereby identifying some of the current trends regarding the employment of English in the Polish public space in respect of what meanings are conveyed by it. The analysis will also aim to establish typical textual patterns in which Polish and English tend to be used in the limited space of an advertisement in terms of what information is expressed in each of the two or in both languages simultaneously. It will also investigate where the respective elements are located in the signs and how they are enhanced or downplayed visually.

Tomasz Dobrogoszcz
(*University of Łódź*)

Mr Godot won't come this evening and surely not tomorrow, either: humans and animals facing the apocalypse in Béla Tarr's *The Turin Horse*

Béla Tarr's 2011 film, *The Turin Horse* (*A torinói ló*), is a bleak portrait of an expiring world. A reversal of the Genesis narrative, it reports six days of its three (still) living protagonists—a father, a daughter and a horse—who spend their days on monotonous, routine and trivial tasks, heading towards their inevitable extinction. The director's use of his idiosyncratic “slow cinema” techniques – ascetic black-and-white cinematography, scarce dialogue, outstandingly long takes and rudimentary plot—tests the viewers' patience and demands their utmost emotional engagement. The film's minimalism, its concern with metaphysical austerity and its affinity with epic theatre calls to mind Beckett's plays. At the beginning of the movie the narrator recounts an apocryphal story about Friedrich Nietzsche embracing a horse whipped by its owner and then collapsing into madness. In my presentation I analyse *The Turin Horse* as an apocalypse narrative, employing posthumanist approaches to human-nonhuman relations. Looking at Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's notion of *becoming-animal*, Donna Haraway's image of the *companion species* and Rosi Braidotti's *nomadic thought*, I will review the issue of human-nonhuman relationship in the apocalyptic context, attempting to explore the consequences of the fact that animals, unlike humans, are actually not waiting for Godot.

Wojciech Drąg
(*University of Wrocław*)

From narrative to database: a paradigm shift in life-writing?

In *The Language of New Media* (2001), Lev Manovich calls the database “a new way to structure our experience of ourselves and of the world” after the demise of the grand narratives and the arrival of the Internet. Its nonlinearity and refusal of sequence situate the database as the “natural enemy” of narrative, which Manovich sees as the other competing mode of representing reality. In contemporary life-writing, one can observe an increase in works that opt for the logic and aesthetics of the database. Among them are texts that renounce a life-narrative in favour of a list, an archive, a catalogue, an inventory, a transcript or a digital repository.

In this paper, I wish to focus on several recent examples of autobiographical projects whose aim is to give an account of one's experience through numbers: Nicholas Fenton's *The Feltron Annual Report* (2005–2014), Alan Bigelow's “My Life in Three Parts” (2013) and Steve Giasson's *Autoportrait* (2014). In my analysis, I shall rely on the notions of the quantified self (Gary Wolf and Kevin Kelley), the virtual self (Nora Roberts) and the data-driven life (Wolf).

Jacek Fabiszak, Anna Wołosz-Sosnowska
(*Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań*)

Theorizing adaptation as transition

Adaptation is a vast topic which can be approached from various angles and perspectives. One of the metaphors that at least partially addresses the complexity of the phenomenon of adaptation is transition, which can be defined as “[A] passing or passage from one condition, action, or (rarely) place, to another; change” (2a. O.E.D., online edition, September 2021). This concept captures some significant features of adaptation, such as change and movement; the idea of a “passage” further suggests liminality and graduality. The concept of transition places more significance on the process of adaptation rather than a finished and finite product. In our paper we will explore the usefulness and potential of this metaphor and confront and juxtapose it with the potential of other metaphors in the context of adaptation process and in adaptation studies.

Tomasz Fisiak
(University of Łódź)

Gothic on the dancefloor: creative transitions in Sophie Ellis-Bextor's music videos

From the 1980s onwards, a music video as a separate artistic creation has been gaining more and more recognition, among casual viewers and within academia. Lori Burns suggests that “[i]n the late 1980s and early 1990s, a number of scholars analyzed music videos as a postmodern cultural form, considering the implications of artist promotion and spectatorship and offering critical textual analyses of selected videos,” whereas in the 2000s “we witnessed a developing interest in video aesthetics and design features”(67). The following paper will focus on music video aesthetics. More precisely, I will attempt to demonstrate how Gothic elements are creatively redefined in such a visual context. Using the theoretical framework of intertextuality and transmediality, I will refer to selected Sophie Ellis-Bextor's music videos to illustrate how Gothicism transitioned into a new medium.

Patrick Gill
(Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz)

Key transitions in the Crusoe/Friday dynamic

On the surface, the long history of the Robinsonade could easily be seen as characterised by a series of transpositions, or simple substitutions, undertaken in an effort to preserve near-equivalence with the original: what used to be a ship is now a rocket; what used to be a desert island is now planet Mars; and what used to be a native tribesman is now an alien. But no other constellation is as telling in its discrepancies and deviations, no other constellation is as eloquent with regard to the transformations the genre as well as attitudes to otherness have undergone, as that between the respective Robinson figure and their Friday. My paper argues that this ever-changing relationship encapsulates the essence of the Robinsonade and thus of its reflection of changing attitudes towards colonies and the project of colonialism as well as nature and our shared planet. In making these points, my paper will discuss the Robinson/Friday dynamic in J. G. Ballard's *Concrete Island*, Adrian Mitchell's *Man Friday*, Yann Martel's *Life of Pi*, and Michael Dudok de Wit's *The Red Turtle*.

Thomas Gurke
(University of Koblenz-Landau)

Adapting transition: Coleridge Cook's *The Meowmorphosis*

Considering transitions and their adaptations, Coleridge Cook's mash-up version of Kafka's *Die Verwandlung* (*The Metamorphosis*, 1912) is an interesting case in point. His *Meowmorphosis* (2011) first follows conventional patterns of literary mash-ups but then veers off this beaten path. By employing a form of empowerment over the hypotext, he engages with Kafka's original work, transposing bug to cat, and thereby adds—as in Grahame-Smith's *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*—a contemporary and popular topic: instead of the zombie, a different all-inclusive dimension of the popular is supplied: *#catcontent*, i.e.: the phenomenon of cats becoming the unofficial “mascot of the Internet” (Alexander 2011).

The Meowmorphosis thereby adds a transition to Kafka's *Metamorphosis* and begins with “[o]ne morning, as Gregor Samsa was waking up from anxious dreams, he discovered that he had been changed into an adorable little kitten” (2011: 7). But Cook's mash-up transgresses mere empowerment. Instead of simply inserting the “little kitten” into the three parts of Kafka's *Die Verwandlung*, he re-writes a whole side story that negotiates his role as co-modifier of Kafka's original text and thereby enables a debate on the concepts of authorship and storytelling in the 21st century.

Alina Ielisieieva

(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

Assimilation, adaptation and transition: the role of place and space in migrant literature

The key concepts of migrant literature such as “sense of place” and “sense of belonging” are deeply rooted in the eternal philosophical categories of place and space. Place, as Leonard Lutwack writes, gets into literature in two ways, as idea and form: as attitudes about places that the writer picks up from his experience, and as materials for the forms he creates to place his narrative in. In literature the place becomes the tool that writers use to charge the story with symbolic and psychological meanings in order to create different fictional environments to render events, characters, and themes. Texts of migrant literature deal with place as with an objective element of a story, a common ground for all the participants assigned to a particular location. On the contrary, space, which philosophers have treated as boundless and absolute, in migrant literature is attributed with subjectivity, flexibility and changeability, which within a fictional framework of a story enable a person to adapt and make a transition from an old life to a new one more quickly and easily. This work, however, focuses not on the distinctions between these two terms, but rather on their compensatory interrelation in migrant literature when the appropriation of a new place and assimilation to new environment for a character are only possible through successful creation of new space of living and productive social interactions. The paper will also focus on the evolution of the concepts of place and space in human thought which will provide us with the theoretical framework to analyse their representations in migrants’ narratives.

Agnieszka Jagła

(University of Łódź)

Towards the posthuman: a study of *Waiting for the Barbarians* by John Maxwell Coetzee

This paper analyses the novel *Waiting for the Barbarians* written by Noble prize winning author John Maxwell Coetzee. The critical reading is supplemented by trauma theory of Ann Kaplan, whereas posthumanist argument is provided by the writings of Rosi Braidotti and Cecilia Åsberg. Such a framework allows us to identify the link between transformative potential of trauma towards the posthuman. Throughout the course of the novel the protagonist suffers from two types of trauma, one which affects him directly and the second one, which influences him indirectly and is suffered by the Barbarians. As a privileged white male country official, the Magistrate at the beginning is a representative of humanism. However, his vision is challenged by unsettling circumstances of torture and trauma. My aim is to provide a comparative analysis of the transformation underwent by the Magistrate by juxtaposing his pre and post trauma mindset. Ultimately, I conclude that through the experience of suffering the protagonist develops responsiveness to Barbarians, which allows him to embrace otherness and causes a shift in his humanist perspective, as well as uncovers post-anthropocentric vision of the world in front of him. The journey of the protagonist towards embracing “otherness” and altering the human-centred perspective in favour of posthumanism can demonstrate inspiring potential held in trauma experience.

Kinga Jęczmińska

(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

Between the mind and the body: the stage of transition in J. M. Coetzee’s *Slow Man*

The paper analyses the presentation of the stage of transition experienced by the main protagonist of J. M. Coetzee’s novel *Slow Man*. Paul Rayment faces a dramatic change in his life when he loses one of his legs due to an accident. Not only does the event cause changes in his existence, but possibly

also in his consciousness (Mehigan 2014: 195; cf. Wilm 2017: 34–35). The focus on the impact of bodily changes on the state of the mind invites the analysis of the novel in terms of the mind-body relation. On the one hand, the layered composition of the novel turns a spotlight on the fictional status of characters, accentuated by the introduction of the figure of Elizabeth Costello. Together with metaphorical linguistic devices it connotes the idea of the mind compatible with substance dualism. On the other hand, the description of humans and events in the language of “nonhuman animal life” together with the focus on the body and its fragility as well as threats to the continuity of life and the mind’s efforts to cope with them (Mulhall 2009: 243; Wilm 2017: 111) may lead to interpretations compatible with naturalism or embodied mind theories.

Aleksandra Kamińska

(Jesuit University Ignatianum, Kraków)

Being human: bridging the human/non-human animal divide in drama

With the growing sense of responsibility and urgency to move beyond the Anthropocene era, interspecies dialogue becomes of utmost importance. In view of this, calls are being made for transforming the practice of theatre. Advocating for the “theatre of species,” Una Chaudhuri asks for theatrical practices that “restage all life as species life” and explore “ideas and practices through which human beings relate to the ‘more-than-human’ world” (2012: 50). This poses a significant challenge for drama, operating within the intrinsically anthropocentric medium of human language, and questions the modes of representing non-human animals in drama and on stage. Among ethical concerns linked with potential representational violence, playwrights are searching for ways of re-imagining animal others and reconfiguring interspecies relationships so as to transition beyond the binary categories of human/non-human animal and towards interspecies continuum. The proposed paper will use the example of two such attempts: *Human Animals* by Stef Smith (2016) and *Being Human* by Timberlake Wertenbaker (2020).

Alisa Kavetska

(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

“Ah I misunderstood your comment”: a relevance-theoretic treatment of misunderstandings on Reddit

The study presents a qualitative analysis of communication breakdowns in Internet-mediated text-based conversations. A pool of overt (Hinnenkamp 2003) misunderstanding cases on the Internet forum Reddit were collected and analysed within the framework of relevance theory (Sperber & Wilson 1986/95; Wilson & Sperber 2012).

The preliminary results reveal that misunderstandings can be identified as instances of communication situations which involve context mismatch (Gutt 2000). The *sender user* (Yus 2021) intends a different context for the utterance interpretation from what the *addressee user* in fact selects (cf. Sedlaczek 2012). In other words, a different inferential path for the message interpretation from what the sender user has envisaged is taken by the addressee user.

A number of misunderstanding sources are identified, i.a. reduced access to common ground (Dynel 2017) and discursal confusion of the topic originating from the simultaneous coexistence of several threads in a single polylogue, which is a typical feature of forum threads. The indeterminacies and cultural differences in language use, as well as the misinterpretation of non-propositional intended effects (Yus 2017, 2021; Wilson and Carston 2019; Moeschler 2009) are shown to contribute to the jeopardy of digital communication outcomes.

Matt Klauza

(Palm Beach State College, Lake Worth) (lecture)

The Interesting and Tragic Life of Mark Twain

In his time, Mark Twain was arguably one of the most famous men in the world. His name is synonymous with innocence and nostalgia, with painting fences and Mississippi River rafts, with Princes and Paupers, and Connecticut Yankees. However, there is much more behind the man in the white suit, including a darker side. This lecture examines the historical, cultural, and biographical events during Twain's life and how they shaped his writing.

Monika Kocot

(University of Łódź)

Liminality and transitoriness in Kathleen Jamie's *Surfacing*

The paper will discuss selected essays from Kathleen Jamie's *Surfacing* (2019) with an emphasis on narrative in-betweenness and transitoriness. Jamie is a keen practitioner of what Kenneth White calls *voyage-voyance* (travelling-seeing—learning how to look in order to see), and in her essays the focus on the here and now is often juxtaposed with references to the (distant) past. In a number of essays Jamie returns to the idea of time as a spiral in order to foreground the issue of bodily wisdom ("Tibetan Dog"), to revisit some cultural narratives from a postcolonial perspective ("Reflection"), or to point to intriguing, and often dynamic, links between places/landscapes and personal memories ("Surfacing"). I am interested in showing those narrative moments of in-betweenness that make the reader stop and reflect upon the constantly evolving message of a given story. I will also discuss the importance of paratexts such as the book cover, epigraphs and/or selected pictures which open a given narrative.

Ewa Kowal

(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

"Like a comic book by Virginia Woolf": Alison Bechdel's dialogue with *To the Lighthouse* in *Are You My Mother? A Comic Drama*

Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic* (2006) has been thoroughly analysed as a graphic memoir shaped by both the myth of Icarus and Daedalus and James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Perhaps most memorably, in her paper on *Fun Home*, Ariela Freedman observed that "Bechdel makes the very Joycean point that books have other books as babies while adding an implicit twist; that graphic narratives are the queer bastard child of high modernism." In this paper I will look at Bechdel's second graphic memoir, *Are You My Mother? A Comic Drama* (2012), which can be seen as an intertextual offspring of even more texts, letting us into an even more complex labyrinth than the one Bechdel created in her debut book. In particular, I will focus on Bechdel's dialogic relationship with Virginia Woolf's autobiographical writings, especially *To the Lighthouse*. The aim of the paper will be to trace the parallels and differences between the two authors' quests to examine their respective relationships with their own (mythologised) mothers, as well as their depictions of an artist's quest to have and complete her vision.

Katarzyna Kozak

(University of Natural Sciences and Humanities, Siedlce)

Indifferent but engaged: Richard Steele's journalism

Discourse of reason and the passions constituted one of the major points of discussion during the early 18th century. Paradoxically, as it may seem, it was in the Age of Reason that views on passions changed. Locke's breaking point in understanding some of the passions as the sole product of rational cognition was further theoretically developed, among others, by Shaftesbury, but also its practical

implementation was relatively immediate. Acknowledging the rational source of some passions, the next logical step led to positioning the human mind as a decisive factor in the treatment of passions. Traditionally, the common pre-Lockean view on the reason-passion relation emphasised the need to tame the passions. This view, on the grounds of Locke's new propositions, was challenged by Steele. A close reading of his essays on envy and grief in *The Spectator*, co-edited with Addison, shows a divergent treatment of passions by both authors. Steele encouraged the readers to "pass through Afflictions in common with all who are in human Nature" and experience the "pleasing Perplexities" of affective intensity. The presentation argues that the analysis of his further journalistic undertakings enables him to trace and demonstrate his tactics to promote new ideas on passions while still addressing the conservative views held by his reading audience. What is more, Steele skilfully adopted the new narration in a pen war waged largely with the main Tory press organ—*The Examiner*.

Olga Kubińska
(University of Gdańsk)

The war as watershed transition: Kindertransporten literature and translation

Violence, war, displacement, loss and trauma are inevitably entangled with loss of geographical home ground and semantic, i.e. linguistic, leeway. New constructs of memory, often prosthetic in nature, become essential, i.e. mediation of meaning (much has been written about this subject by Hoffmann and others), adequate literary "genres as repositories of cultural memory" (to recall the seminal collection of papers dating back to 1995), representations suspended between testimony, autobiography and literary narratives or oral testimonies.

The paper investigates dimensions of representation of first and second generations of kinder from Kindertransporten (Gerda Meyer, Karen Gershon, the Urbach family, Edith Milton, Thea Felix Eden and many others). Given the fact that the bulk of Holocaust texts was a consequence of code-switching evoked by the bilingualism of the Survivors and English had become the language of Holocaust (Rosen) one may well assume that the discussion on Holocaust literature is in fact a discussion on translation.

Bożena Kucala
(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

The past in the present tense: Hilary Mantel's historical fiction

This paper argues that the employment of the present tense in Hilary Mantel's Tudor trilogy, *Wolf Hall* (2009), *Bring Up the Bodies* (2012) and *The Mirror & the Light* (2020), is a fundamental component of the novelty of her historical fiction. Present-tense historical fiction such as Mantel's represents a combination of two recent tendencies – on the one hand, the evolution of the historical novel and, on the other hand, the growing popularity of narration in the present tense, which constitutes a challenge to the long-established practice of using the past tense as the basic narrative tense. The paper offers a formal analysis of Mantel's novels, exploring her technique of simultaneous narration, as well as the structural ramifications of abandoning retrospection.

Ewa Kujawska-Lis
(University of Warmia and Mazury, Olsztyn)

Apocalypse Oz and its hybridity

Apocalypse Oz, the 2006 short film conceived and directed by Ewan Telford, with cinematography by Kev Robertson, hybridizes two cinematic productions: Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979) and Victor Fleming's *The Wizard of Oz* (1939). The Vietnam war film and the fantasy fairytale musical are, in turn, intermedial adaptations of Joseph Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" and L. Frank Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, respectively. Applying Gérard Genette's terminology, *Apocalypse Oz* has two hypotexts, namely the two films, and two proto-hypotexts, namely the two fictional works that served as the basis for their adaptations. The hybridity of the twenty-first century production involves hybridizing the plot, characters, dialogues and narration of its two hypotexts and

attests to the complex ways in which texts get transformed, altered and/or appropriated in contemporary culture, creating a new quality that thematically opens to new interpretations. The aim of this analysis is to discuss some of the transformations introduced in the film as well as audio-visual metaphors and hybrid characters to indicate interpretative shifts between *Apocalypse Oz* and its primary sources.

Monika Kusiak-Pisowacka
(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

Strategy training: past, present, future

Studies into FL/L2 instruction provide evidence that strategy instruction can bring promising results. An important question arises: What kind of instruction can be applied and what makes this kind of teaching effective? The talk will look at the evolution of FL/L2 strategy training. First, it will focus on instruction inspired by cognitive psychology, which aims at developing learning strategies, awakening learner awareness, intentionality and control over the strategies used. Then, the author will move to strategy training influenced by contemporary sociocultural perspectives, in which more attention is drawn to reader motivation, self-efficacy, engagement and developing classroom discourse. Differences between the two types of instruction will be discussed and illustrated with strategy training tasks drawn from EFL coursebooks and strategy instruction studies presented in research papers. Finally, the question concerning future directions in strategy training will be tackled.

Michał Lachman
(University of Łódź)

David Ireland's *Ulster American*: decomposing Irish identity

David Ireland's 2018 play addressing the fallout of the Brexit referendum paints a grotesque but unnerving picture of Irish identity whose narrative has disintegrated in the face of the coming disaster. *Ulster American* dramatizes how an American actor, a British director and a Northern Irish playwright struggle to agree on basic elements of their historical background. They attempt to narrate their cultural and political views, seeking acceptance and understanding from one another, yet inevitably fail in getting the message across. The production, which they are going to rehearse the following day, forces them to reconsider what they have so far seen as solid values and concepts building their political and cultural heritage. Ending in perhaps too hysterical a finale, Ireland's play reveals fundamental transitions within the national narratives.

The paper suggests that the historic event of Brexit, which Fintan O'Toole calls a "heroic failure" (*Heroic Failure: Brexit and the Politics of Pain*, 2018), is primarily a narrative venture. Its power of affecting people's imagination lies in telling the story of independence and identity in entirely new ways. David Ireland's play concerns the topics of what it means to be British, how to define the Northern Irish identity, and how much of it can be understood by American or European audiences whose cultural capital is primarily moulded by popcultural clichés and politicized fake news. Destabilizing the cultural and political narrative, which the Brexit campaign inevitably succeeded in, leads to unearthing forces of influence, domination and colonialism which were kept under cover as long as the issues of identity and belonging were temporarily settled in the post-Good-Friday-Agreement Ireland. The article analyses how individual characters in Ireland's play speak from within a number of systems of power, how they unwittingly replicate political propaganda and cultural clichés, revealing the devastation of the Brexit-related politics of identity.

Justyna Leśniewska
(*Jagiellonian University in Kraków*)

Why applied linguistics is rarely applied: reflections on the disconnect between linguistic research and the practice of language teaching

This paper examines and discusses the current situation with respect to the relationship between the practice of foreign (or second) language learning and teaching and the academic discipline of applied linguistics, especially one of its sub-fields: second language acquisition research (SLAR). It also looks at the dynamic growth of this area of scholarly inquiry and comments on its specific features that feed into the widening disconnect between scholarly investigations of language acquisition and state-of-the-art teaching practices. These factors include the interdisciplinary character of SLAR, the abundance of very diverse methodologies, and the abstruseness of certain current theories of second language acquisition. Other factors which contribute to this situation are the specificity of the ELT market and the nature of the fast-expanding sector of language learning software development. Finally, the paper offers some reflections on the challenges connected with the labelling of academic fields related to the study of language and on the unfortunate consequences of the ensuing terminological confusion.

Jakub Lipski
(*Kazimierz Wielki University, Bydgoszcz*)

Transforming the castaway's body

This paper explores the metamorphoses of the body in selected 18th-century Robinsonades, showing how an evolutionary bodily change, or positively-evaluated transformations of the body, metonymically represent the castaway's life on the island. Departing from typical visualisations of imperial masculinity, this paper prioritises potentially counter-hegemonic material, and shows how selected eighteenth-century Robinsonades, including *The Hermit* (1727), *Peter Wilkins* (1751) and *The Female American* (1767), were able to counter-balance or complicate the genre's conventional imperial message. It will be argued that even if potentially subversive Robinsonades could still be read as colonial fantasies, they opened a space for radical speculation in contemporary fiction, which has offered more consistent rejections of the imperial agenda.

David Livingstone
(*Palacký University, Olomouc*)

Redeeming time: Hal's transition from "comedian" to king in Shakespeare's second Henriad

Inspired by the remarkable personage of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and his transition from comedian and actor to an inspirational leader admired around the world, this paper will examine the similar fate of Hal/Henry V in Shakespeare's second Henriad (*Richard II*, *Henry IV part 1*, *Henry IV part 2*, *Henry V*). The focus will be on Hal's comic "career," prior to ascending the throne, "slumming" with Falstaff and his followers. There will be an attempt to demonstrate how Hal, contrary to expectations, makes profitable use of his time to "learn the ropes." Certain comic passages which mirror and anticipate Hal's eventual reign as King will be analysed. In contrast, however, with Zelenskyy who has bravely rallied his country and inspired the world with resistance to a larger aggressor in a defensive war, Hal as Henry V does the exact opposite invading neighbouring France on the most flimsy of pretexts. Although lionized in many productions as a great military leader, icon of Englishness and man of the people, this paper will argue for his ultimate failure as a leader, failing to heed the lessons of his comic "apprenticeship," in stark contrast to Zelenskyy.

Agnieszka Łowczanin
(University of Łódź)

From affirmation to doubt and back: shipwreck experience in *Robinson Crusoe*, *Foe* and “Wyspa”

Daniel Defoe’s novel is a spiritual autobiography which registers the process of its eponymous character’s religious conversion and economic growth. Being an affirmation of the shipwreck experience, of Robinson’s religious and colonial zeal and his successful self-appraisal, it is also a story of lack. In his Trieste lecture on Defoe, James Joyce famously saw in Crusoe the epitome of “all the Anglo-Saxon soul” with “unthinking cruelty” and “sexual apathy” as some of its exponents. Subsequent renderings and transformations of Defoe’s story picked and elaborated on what it lacked: insufficient environmental thoughtfulness, denial of Friday’s agency, the absence of women or of Robinson’s awareness of the trick of the trade of journal/novel writing. The aim of this presentation is to examine how subsequent rewritings of Defoe’s story pick on what their authors saw as its shortcomings and limitations.

Gerard McCann
(St Mary’s College, Queen’s University, Belfast)

Brexit: context, culture and dislocation

Brexit has significantly altered the direction of political culture in the United Kingdom. The June 2016 referendum opened up visceral divides within British society that had been held at bay for a generation. The outpouring of highly divisive sentiments both before and subsequent to the vote has reframed the way in which British society views itself and how others view it. From its awkward history to its geo-political dislocation, the process of withdrawal from the European Union has created more difficulties for Britain than it sought to solve. It has repositioned the region outside the mainstream of European life and has set in train a process which could alienate British citizens for a generation. This paper will explore the background to this hegemonic shift, the pivoting of political culture and the breakup of the British post-war consensus. It will assess the fault-lines in British politics that have led to this divergence and reflect on the implications this mandate has had for British society, culture and political engagement.

Kristína Melišová
(Masaryk University, Brno)

Modernist lionhunting: an exploration of patronage in cultural imaginary

This article aims to discuss modernist literary patronage in order to comment on the myths of modernism in a twofold manner. Firstly, the form patrons take in the cultural imaginary of modernist writers directly influences the final versions of their works. Thinly veiled versions of patrons appear time and again in various modernist novels, contributing to the way patrons are perceived in real-life and academic discourse as well. By being reduced to lion hunters or two-dimensional characters in roman à clefs, patrons are mythologised, which allows writers to navigate the difficult power dynamics and expectations of literary patronage more easily. Secondly, studying the way patrons are written and talked about allows us to critically engage another, bigger myth of modernism: that of the author and their creative dominance. By looking at Lady Ottoline Morrell, a modernist patron, and her beneficiaries, D. H. Lawrence and Aldous Huxley among others, this paper provides a novel perspective on modernist works and their conception.

Rod Mengham

(Jesus College, Cambridge)

Adaptation and transition in the work of Stefan Themerson

In 1942, the Polish artist and writer Stefan Themerson re-located to London. His first published novel, *Bayamus* (1949) was written in English. His own adaptation to a second language culture proved to be the basis of a lifelong investigation into various forms of transition. In *Bayamus*, the protagonist's head is transplanted onto another man's body, while the other man's head is transplanted onto his body. The re-housing of memory and sensibility within an alternative sensorium is logically absurd if carried out literally, but ethically productive if carried out imaginatively. In a realistic fiction, the surgical operation would be replaced by geographical and cultural dislocation; the anatomical grafting, by second language acquisition. The historical situation of Themerson, Polish exile in London, generates a series of thought-experiments—which is to say: novels—in which incongruous discourses, conventions of thought and structures of feeling are forced into congruity with each other. The paper proposed for PASE 2022 considers the furthest reach of this experimentation in Themerson's last two novels: *The Mystery of the Sardine* (1986) and *Hobson's Island* (1988), in which characters from a range of backgrounds and occupations—and with wildly conflicting agendas—all converge on the same place at the same time: leaving the reader to negotiate an imaginative adaptation beyond the threat of spiralling epistemic crisis.

Aleksandra Mochocka

(Kazimierz Wielki University, Bydgoszcz)

Hybrid entities, environmental mimicry, and post-humanist Darwinism in Paolo Bacigalupi's storyworlds

My proposal concerns biopunk science fiction literature written by a contemporary American writer, Paolo Bacigalupi, with the focus on the post-human characters that the author introduces in his storyworlds. The premise here is to discuss the use of popular aka genre/formulaic literature as the means of artistic expression and the platform of eco-aware activist criticism. Following the science fiction tradition, a significant number of Bacigalupi's characters belong into the category of hybrid entities, verging on human and non-human: animal or mechanical. Reinventing a selection of well-established formulas as he is, Bacigalupi succeeds in the defamiliarisation of Capitalocene, his aim to direct his audiences into new modes of thinking about the environmental crisis. To illustrate his strategies, I am going to analyse examples of the above mentioned post-human characters in the framework of post-classical narratology and worldbuilding theory.

María del Pino Montesdeoca Cubas

(University of La Laguna, San Cristóbal de La Laguna)

Ethical reflections in Brexit fiction: Ian McEwan and Ali Smith

Soon after the 2016 United Kingdom European Union membership referendum, several British and Irish journalists started to discuss Brexit extensively. Fintan O'Toole, Tony Connelly and Tim Shipman, among others, have published volumes questioning the rationale of the process and delving into its myriad consequences. Academics such as Terry Eagleton, Danny Dorling and Sally Tomlinson have also edited scholarly monographs which examine the issue from different perspectives. Subsequent literary responses to Brexit present a similarly critical approach, particularly a number of novels soon to be known as "BrexLit." The typology of these works is certainly diverse, ranging from those set in a congenial, sometimes comic, domestic milieu, to other deeply sceptical, even dystopian ones. In fact, the zeitgeist reflected in Brexit fiction portrays mainly a scenario of pessimism, division, criticism, complaint and regret. Ian McEwan presents this overall distaste in *The Cockroach* (2019), whose unconventional protagonist, a cockroach turned into a prime minister, results as a Kafkaesque means to caricature the politicians and politics of Brexit. Another significant narrative presenting a deep critical commitment responding to this issue is Ali Smith's *Summer*

(2020), the last volume of her widely celebrated *Seasonal Quartet*, which plunges into a “truth-revealing” storytelling against the backdrop of fake “truth-telling.” By exploring these works through the lens of narratology and ethical criticism, I aim at showing that Brexit fiction bears witness to a new turning point in the role of the author and the novel in a world that is much changed, hopefully not utterly.

Merritt Moseley

(University of North Carolina at Asheville)

Liminality in George Saunders’s *Lincoln in the Bardo*

The Tibetan Buddhist concept of the Bardo was initially shared with the English-speaking West in the translation (1927) called *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, whose original title is *Bardo Thodol*. It means something like “liberation through hearing in the intermediate state” or in “an existence between”—that is, Bardo.

In his 2017 novel *Lincoln in the Bardo*, George Saunders adopts, and adapts, the Bardo for his own purposes. Though the original context of the Bardo is a metaphysics of rebirth and redeath, Saunders deploys it in a different way. His Bardo is liminal and transitional, but not to a new incarnation: rather to something he calls the matterlightblooming phenomenon. And it is less the karma earned through one’s previous life that propels the transition than a movement toward acceptance.

In a radically diverse narrative that alternates excerpts from journalistic and historical accounts of Abraham Lincoln’s presidency and events in the White House with the tragicomic interactions of a cast of people who are dead but refuse to acknowledge it, *Lincoln in the Bardo* is a brilliantly reimagined *Book of the Dead*.

Aleksandra Mrówczyńska

(Kazimierz Wielki University, Bydgoszcz)

Didacticism and the 19th-century Robinsonade: a comparative reading of selected examples

Under the pretext of narrating island adventures, the Robinsonade shares a didactic message and imparts knowledge on morality, religion and society. In my presentation I would like to conduct an analysis of the following Robinsonades: A. Dygasiński’s *Przygody młodzieńca, czyli Robinson polski*, F. Marryat’s *Masterman Ready, or the Wreck of the Pacific* and G. Gräbner’s *Robinson Crusoe* with the aim of presenting the relationship between the genre and nineteenth-century pedagogical thought. The juxtaposition of Polish, English and German Robinsonades will unfold the complexities and transformations of the 19th-century didactic reality simultaneously illustrating the similarities and differences in the cultural, social and pedagogical contexts.

Stankomir Nicieja

(University of Opole)

Sex Education in transition: teen sex comedy in the era of online streaming

The Netflix series *Sex Education* (2019–2021, three seasons) has been one the most popular and critically acclaimed televisual shows in recent years. It has attracted an impressively wide global audience and inspired numerous similar productions around the world. In my presentation, I want to investigate the roots of the show’s extraordinarily wide resonance. I will approach *Sex Education* as a symptomatic piece, illustrative of the new trends in the entertainment available on the streaming platforms. The first of those trends is the return to the coming-of-age narratives, often set in schools or other educational institutions. *Sex Education* is openly indebted to the 1980s cinematic tradition of teen sex comedies, particularly those associated with John Hughes’ popular movies such as *Sixteen Candles* (1984), *Weird Science* (1985) or *Breakfast Club* (1985). However, the Netflix series offers much more than a simple remaking or recycling of the old material. It introduces new and quite

revealing narrative patterns and motifs. My second concern in analysing *Sex Education* will be related to the representation of adolescence and adolescent sexuality and how it has transformed in recent years. The last aspect of the series I wish to investigate is the cultural content. Although the show is explicitly set in provincial Britain, it evokes an intriguing and sanitised version of the country, apparently adjusted to the global and particularly American expectations.

Elena Ogliari

(University of Eastern Piedmont)

Cuchulainn as an epigone of Leopold Bloom? Irish mythology and alternative Irelands in Eimar O’Duffy’ Cuanduine trilogy

In line with current developments in Irish and modernist studies, this article focuses on Eimar O’Duffy to illuminate a facet of the legacy of James Joyce’s *Ulysses* in post-revolutionary Ireland and how Free State’s writers established a dialogic relationship with their nation’s mythology. A lesser-known figure of Irish literature, O’Duffy is now remembered for his Cuanduine trilogy (1926–1933), in which he depicts the return of Cuchulainn—a mythological hero celebrated by Irish nationalism and the Literary Revival—to Ireland. As Cuchulainn wanders through an impoverished Dublin marred by ethno-religious sectarianism, the author satirises whatever heroic pretensions the Free State could still have. Despite parodying also Joyce’s pretentiousness, O’Duffy draws heavily on *Ulysses* in terms of intertextuality and form, including the mimicry of different writing styles. Moreover, like Joyce, O’Duffy uses myths not only to ironically juxtapose heroic values with bleak contemporary realities: Ireland’s mythical tradition was created by a vital culture, characterised by hybridities and openness, from which contemporary Ireland should take inspiration. Hence, the analysis of the trilogy, here situated in a larger cohort of texts, points to the innovative use of myth in Free State’s writing, which differed from the Revivalists’ and the nationalists’ because it was geared to proposing a less monolithic version of Ireland.

Katarzyna Ojrzyńska

(University of Łódź)

Disability and ecorelational aesthetics

Taking Patricia Piccinini’s works as a starting point for discussion, the paper examines the concept of ecorelational aesthetics. Analogously to Nicolas Bourriaud’s concept of relational aesthetics, it can be defined as a theory that consists in judging aesthetic practices on the basis of the ethical relations between the human and the non-human world which they represent, produce, and prompt. In particular, I will examine works by four artists with disabilities, which combine a counter-ableist approach with post-anthropocentric environmental ethics. These include: Sunaura Taylor’s oeuvre, Julia Watts Belser and Claire Cunningham’s project *We Run Like Rivers*, and Hanna Cormick’s performance *The Mermaid*. Promoting interdependence, porousness, interconnectedness, and fluidity, the ecorelational aesthetics of these works facilitates critical reconsideration and re-evaluation of the ways of being in the world that have traditionally been seen as less valuable, less pleasurable, and thus disposable, as well as offers a non-ableist, post-anthropocentric, and (inter)dependent vision of a “habitable world”—to use Nancy Mairs’ turn of phrase—that wants diverse human and non-human bodies in it.

Michał Palmowski

(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

The myth of nature in Robinson Jeffers’ inhumanist poetry

Robinson Jeffers defined his philosophy as “inhumanism.” Its essence was formulated in the poem “Caramel Point”: “We must uncenter our minds from ourselves;/ We must unhumanize our views a little, and become confident/ As the rock and ocean that we were made from.” Inanimate and inorganic nature, best exemplified by stone, represented for Jeffers the pinnacle of creation, “the astonishing beauty of things” which we, being merely human, fail to see. Jeffers’ poetry could be

perceived, on the one hand, as part of the modernist movement which Joseph Hillis Miller termed as “poetry of reality,” and which was a clear break from the romantic forms and ideas. On the other hand, though, as it was argued by Czesław Miłosz, Jeffers’ concept of nature was ultimately a product of his imagination, not a reality.

Anna Paluchowska-Messing
(*Jagiellonian University in Kraków*)

Shakespeare’s Hermione and feminine self-display in the works of Frances Burney

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Mr Bennet stops one of his daughters from diverting the company at a party with the memorable words: “That will do extremely well, child. You have delighted us long enough. Let other ladies have time to exhibit.” What Mr Bennet thus reveals, much to his other daughter Elizabeth’s discomfort (and the reader’s amusement), is not only his own peculiar sense of humour but also the very mechanisms underpinning the nature of eighteenth- and early 19th-century sociability. Especially for a woman, to socialise meant to exhibit herself and her accomplishments in order to entertain the company. Part of the reason why Elizabeth finds her father’s words embarrassing lies in the catch-22 of this arrangement, namely, that women’s modesty was supposed to make them shun any overt self-display.

The paper explores this paradox of immodest self-exhibition both expected of and criticised in women, and traces the ways in which it is played out in the works of the novelist and playwright Frances Burney. The paper views Burney’s depictions of feminine self-display as re-examinations of the portrayal of the morally upright and yet much wronged Hermione in William Shakespeare’s *The Winter’s Tale*. The play was very much present in the communal imagination of consumers of the eighteenth-century culture (David Garrick’s revision *Florizel and Perdita* was part of the theatrical repertoire at the time) and provided the fascinating trope of feminine self-exhibition: that of the queenly statue that may be displayed for a moral lesson. The analysis of the dialogue into which Burney entered with the trope points to the intrinsic fluidity of the terms nature, artifice, and monstrosity, when applied to women’s sociable behaviour. Far from denoting opposing ways of conduct, these terms were, in fact, often used interchangeably for women’s active negotiations of their public images. The paper shows also that in returning to the Shakespearian trope, Burney not only encouraged further reflection on feminine self-display in her own audience but she also succeeded in underlining the important function of storytelling—and, crucially, *retelling* of stories—in the processes of communal reformulation of social norms and paradigms.

The paper further shows that the tensions resulting from the paradoxes inherent in feminine sociability were amplified for women writers. Writing and reading were themselves viewed as sociable exchanges in which women authors exposed themselves and put their reputation at risk. The paper examines Burney’s take on the delicate question of the nature of authorial self-exhibition and argues that the writer seems to have aligned herself with Shakespeare’s Paulina of *The Winter’s Tale*, who though she uses artifice and stratagem, she does so primarily to edify her audience.

Agnieszka Pantuchowicz
(*SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Warsaw*)

Translational transition into transhumance

The paper offers a reading of Mireille Gansel’s *Translation as Transhumance* in its English version penned by Ros Schwartz and published by Les Fugitives. Paralleling Eva Hoffman’s *Lost in Translation: A Life in A New Language* on the one hand and testimonies offered by survivors of ongoing military conflicts on the other, the book dwells on questions concerning the merging and intertwining of the languages of (literary) autobiography, metacultural reflection and translatology. Simultaneously, it revisits all sorts of paradigmatic concerns and opens up a new perspective in the fields of Translation and Cultural Studies. Gansel’s proposition carries across transhumance routes of translation witnessing encounters and exchanges, thus promising a slow and patient crossing

capable of eradicating borders, forming new vernaculars, and gesturing towards a (post)humanistic perspective. An acclaimed translator herself, in an interview given around the time she was nominated for *The Times Literary Supplement's* Books of the Year (2017) award and having won French Voices Award and an English PEN Award, the author claimed: “One doesn’t translate the words but life and human beings.”

Karolina Pasiut

(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

Merlin: new beginning

The figure of Merlin dates back to medieval English literature but permeates throughout the medieval Europe and reaches far more. Predominantly a wizard, magician and sage, but also an advisor, war strategist, prophet, teacher, guardian, Merlin is a mythological figure, a blend of legendary as well as historical figures, whose powerful undertakings made him famous worldwide. He influenced the whole Arthurian civilization, as he empowered those around him to accomplish great deeds. When his time comes, Merlin surrenders to life imprisonment- whether in a cave, a magical bubble, tower, castle, or a tree, his departure is being greatly mourned by his contemporaries. However, the end of his earthly presence is only a new beginning because of the Merlinian legacy he leaves, which is powerful enough to continue and influence others for centuries on.

I would like to propose a paper with an overview and analysis of exemplary representations of Merlin in literatures following the middle ages up to the twentieth century, as well as a brief presentation of his literary heritage transferred by the 21st-century media coverages.

Mirosław Pawlak

(Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań)

Implicit vs explicit learning of grammar: state of the art

There is consensus at present that if learners are expected to learn the grammar of a foreign or second language (L2), sheer exposure to that language or interaction opportunities will not guarantee success unless they are accompanied by pedagogic intervention (cf. Ellis, 2016; Larsen-Freeman, 2015; Nassaji & Fotos, 2001; Pawlak, 2014, 2021). One of the leading controversies, however, is whether such intervention should be more implicit or more explicit so that it can activate implicit or explicit learning mechanisms. The former might involve such techniques as input flooding, input enhancement or recasts, while the latter can range from the provision of rules, through controlled and communicative practice or more explicit types of error correction (e.g., metalinguistic cues), to training learners in the use of grammar learning strategies. While the empirical evidence points to greater efficacy of more explicit types of instruction, much depends on the mediating factors which may be linguistic (e.g., the difficulty of the structure), contextual (e.g., out-of-class access to the target language) or individual (e.g., aptitude, working memory, motivation, beliefs, learning styles) (Ellis, 2010; Pawlak, 2017). The talk provides an overview of theoretical and empirical arguments for the employment of techniques and procedures promoting implicit and explicit grammar teaching, as well as offering some pedagogical implications.

Marek Pawlicki

(University of Silesia in Katowice)

Exploring the states of in-betweenness: Nadine Gordimer’s late short fiction

When Nadine Gordimer, in her article “Witness: The Inward Testimony” (2006), argued that “literature has been and remains a means of people rediscovering themselves,” she was referring to the South African nation, but the statement can just as aptly be applied to herself. Throughout her long career Gordimer reinvented herself as a writer and public intellectual, exploring topics that are both deeply political and intensely personal. Both the political and the personal dimensions of Gordimer’s late fiction can be discussed using the category of transitoriness or in-betweenness, understood as a state of suspension between departure and arrival, the past and the future, the physical

and the metaphysical, the tangible and the elusive. The category of transitoriness will be used as a lens through which to discuss Gordimer's late short fiction, especially the stories collected in her last two volumes: *Loot* (2003) and *Beethoven Was One-Sixteenth Black* (2007). The paper will cover topics that are both political (such as Gordimer's views on globalization, migration and the impact of apartheid on the consciousness of South Africans) and existential (the topics of loss, mourning and death).

Elżbieta Perkowska-Gawlik

(Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin)

The female voice in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's short stories: a cognitive analysis

It may be assumed that when a female writer chooses the first-person narrator for her tale, especially one with a feminist slant, she does so to strengthen the power of her genuine female discourse. The reader tends to suspect that such stories are written to aim at facilitating the discovery of a hidden or yet unawakened identity which will eventually conquer those imposed by numerous social stereotypes. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's collection of short stories entitled *The Thing Around Your Neck* (2009) shows that the strong female voice can flourish in the first, second, and third person narrative alike, employing their characteristic features to emphasize women's struggle to dismantle their acquired, inherited and still very much well-ingrained patriarchal perception of femininity.

The aim of this paper is to analyse an interplay between the narrative perspectives employed by Ngozi Adichie and the readers' ability to experience a deictic shift, allowing them to recognise, comprehend and accept the way her female characters get involved in the slow and often painful process of shaping their self-status and self-perception as unique and fully independent individuals. My reading and interpretation of Ngozi Adichie's short stories will employ both the narratological and the cognitive approach to literary texts.

Józefina Piątkowska-Brzezińska

(University of Warsaw)

The pragmatic role of tense and aspect switches in lyric poetry

The lyric poetry is usually defined by the presence of the clearly self-reflexive speaker or a speaker that makes himself a theme of the poem. Thus lyric stories are generally concerned with internal phenomena. However, in order to present his/her feelings and thoughts within a specific context, the speaker needs to refer to some facts external to his consciousness. In effect, most of the poems are composed of two complementary parts: the descriptive and the reflexive one.

The aim of my presentation is to focus on the shifts from one tense/aspect to another as a sign of the poet's pragmatic intention to move between the reflexive and the descriptive parts of the poem. The examples illustrating this tendency will be gathered from English and American poetry of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Krystian Piotrowski

(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

Betwixt and between: exploring the interstices of affect and somatic theory

Affectivity and somaticity—one would be hard pressed to find a pair of more contentious terms. The former much more popular than the latter, they both elude, and exasperatingly so, simple linguistic capture. Their feasibility and practicality as conceptual categories cannot be denied, especially in that they build bridges between the humanities and the natural sciences in a way which ensures a productive, and very much needed, cross-pollination of ideas. Scholarship on affect and the human body enjoys unprecedented popularity, informing many a discipline and enhancing our understanding of the complexities of the human sensorium and corporeality, but it is also underlaid with scores of methodological and theoretical disjunctions. Formal divergence, whilst a potent stimulus for further

research, is also what greatly complicates any scholarly or critical enquiry in the field. Particularly problematic is the dyadic relationship between one's somato-affective disposition and textuality whereby written material reframes, mediates, and quite possibly reappropriates perceptual and sensorial qualia that, precisely because of their inherent ineffability as phenomenological *sensa*, resist unambiguous verbalisation. The fascinating triangulation of affect, corporeality, and the arts is something that has been present in human culture since time immemorial but, despite its irrefutable significance, has still not received sufficient meta-critical examination. On this account, the paper offers an overview of the imbrications between affect studies and somatic studies with a view towards their popularisation, which—being based on heretofore vastly underexplored notions—both disciplines very much deserve.

Artur Piskorz

(Pedagogical University of Kraków)

Erasing “Knowable Communities”: The Case of Mark Herman’s *Brassed Off*

The paper focuses on a cinematic vision of the impact of Thatcherism on communities in Northern Britain. The premise is to explore a variety of ways working class was affected by the collapse of traditional industries in 1980s and 1990s and the cinematic rendition of this process. M. Herman's *Brassed Off* serves as a case study in the long tradition of British realist storytelling.

Elżbieta Rokosz

(University of Rzeszów)

Tragedy in transition: *Gnomeo and Juliet* (2011) as an animated spin on William Shakespeare’s play

In 2011 Touchstone Pictures released a computer-animated film, classified as “romantic comedy,” loosely based on William Shakespeare's tragedy *Romeo and Juliet*. The animation, which features garden gnomes as members of the feuded families, can provide an interesting material for an analysis consistent with the focus of the “Adaptation as Transition” panel. Shakespeare's play goes through a genre and medium change, gets a different addressee, remaining, however, recognizable even to a moderately knowledgeable viewer. I would like to discuss the genre-change induced modifications and intertextuality of the production, but also to refer briefly to the film's rather unsuccessful sequel *Sherlock Gnomes* (2018).

Paweł Schreiber

(Kazimierz Wielki University, Bydgoszcz)

Worldbuilding in Michael Ondaatje’s *Collected Works of Billy the Kid*

The aim of the paper is an analysis of Michael Ondaatje's *Collected Works of Billy the Kid* as a work participating in the construction of a broader Wild West storyworld. The theory of storyworlds (developed by, among others, Wolf 2021 and Ryan 2014) is usually applied to transmedia franchises, such as *Star Wars*, and shows how individual works of fiction participate in a larger storyworld. Each individual work offers fragmentary glimpses into a larger whole. Following Ryan (2019) Mochocki (2021) suggests the idea of historical storyworlds (often amalgamating historical data and various fictions) as the basis of heritage practices in fields such as role-playing games or historical reconstruction. The present paper looks at the possible applications of this method in literary studies. *Collected Works of Billy the Kid* is a particularly suitable example. It does not create a complete vision of the world it represents, but rather offers random glimpses, forcing the reader to rely on additional information from (sparse) historical sources and (much more numerous) fictitious accounts of Billy's life – in other words, a broader storyworld not directly presented, but always present in Ondaatje's work.

Artur Skweres

(*Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań*)

Adapting to the new (un)reality in James Thurber's short story *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* and its film adaptations

The eponymous character of James Thurber's short story *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (1939) is so well known in American culture that he has his own dictionary entries. The presentation will consider both the story and its two subsequent film adaptations, a 1947 comedy directed by Norman Z. McLeod and 2013 romantic comedy directed, produced by and starring Ben Stiller. Walter Mitty has become synonymous with a daydreamer locked in a limbo of unfulfilled potential. His incessant fantasizing boosts his self-esteem in his personal space only, since without externalizing his achievements they serve to belittle him rather than give him reasons for lasting satisfaction. Yet despite sharing this common ground, the two adaptations constitute disparate interpretations of the source material. As such they can serve to highlight some of the changes which occurred in the perception of fulfilled life and career within sixty years in American society. Building on the principles of media ecology and theories of Marshall McLuhan, the analysis will also consider the impact of the media on human psyche and perceptions, especially in the age of transition from the analog to the digital and online media.

Agnieszka Solska

(*University of Silesia in Katowice*)

Rethinking incongruity as a source of humour in puns

Puns, utterances whose humorous nature is usually taken for granted, are treated in scholarly literature as a type of joke and their perceived humorousness is typically attributed to incongruity resulting in a clash between two aspects of the punning utterance. These may include two incompatible propositions derivable from a pun or two distinct scripts a pun may evoke. In my presentation, I will argue that thus understood incongruity, underlying a whole host of humour theories, can account for the emergence of humour only in some puns. I will examine a number of examples, including the ones quoted in literature on humour, to show that the kind of incongruity that all puns exhibit is not linked to a pun's conceptual or propositional meanings but to a clash between the default interpretative mode normally associated with utterance processing and the non-prototypical interpretative mode that we have no choice but to embrace while making sense of puns.

Rachael Sumner

(*Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz*)

Changing models of imperial masculinity in *Robinson Crusoe* and *Heart of Darkness*

The imperial subject who emerges in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* ushers in a new model of masculinity as self-sufficient unit, capitalist venturer and master of his own appetites. Within this self-contained vision, female figures are conspicuous by their absence and Crusoe's masculine gaze portions out his island into a measured, coherent system, based on his own routines and a social hierarchy in microform—his exclusively masculine relationship with Friday.

Written on the cusp of empire's decline, *Heart of Darkness* offers an implicit commentary on the state of that imperial model of masculinity. Indeed, Conrad's text very much stands within the tradition of the adventure novel established. Except, of course, that by the time we arrive at Marlow and Kurtz, that concept of the imperial subject as a stable, masculine identity has been undermined by anxieties, degenerating into chaos and insanity.

This paper argues that the rise and collapse of imperial values are reflected in the construction and collapse of accompanying models of masculinity. Crusoe's masculine gaze and status as self-controlled, self-sufficient hero transforms into Marlow's paranoid introspection and Kurtz's eventual descent into madness.

Joanna Szczepańska-Wloch
(*Jagiellonian University in Kraków*)

The infotainment of political talk as an instance of in-betweenness

A type of political interview that arouses both an avid interest amongst the scholars and genuine emotions amongst the audience or the hosts themselves is the *hybrid political interview*, which results from the commercialization, deregulation or digitalization of the media. It encompasses standard broadcast news interviews and confrontational exchanges, which is often termed *infotainment* (Thussu 2007; Hutchby 2011). This peculiar mix of forms of broadcasting violates conventional interviewing procedure; merges the political interview and biased, partial and subjective reporting. The journalist's role has been changed to that of "advocate, inquisitor or arbiter of truth" (Hutchby 2011: 116). The way of managing the interchange is depicted as "belligerent and emotionally heightened episodes of direct confrontation with the interviewee" (ibid.). This genre mixing or ventriloquism also observable in the political exchange "adds extra spice" to the game of politics. It convincingly portrays and reinforces the speakers' intent, and—what is even more significant—brings the speaker closer to the audience, persuades them into their own mode of thinking or else manipulates them. In the following paper the attention will be drawn to a micro-strategy of infotainment and its propensity for in-betweenness.

Magda Szolc
(*University of Opole*)

South African Modernism as Exemplified by Olive Schreiner's Selected Writings

The author of the first South African novel *The Story of an African Farm* (1883) and the representative of African modernism, Olive Schreiner was a highly-acclaimed writer, feminist and an advocate for gender and race equality. Born in 1855 in the Eastern Cape, South Africa, Schreiner's writings are characterized by anti-imperialist views and rejection of Victorian perspectives on the role of women, marriage and religion. Schreiner's experimenting with allegory, her use of detailed and realistic descriptions of South African life and her groundbreaking outlook on the world influenced other South African postcolonial writers, namely Solomon Plaatje, William Plomer, Doris Lessing or Nadine Gordimer. Although Schreiner's novels focus on South African peripheries and their black inhabitants, her literary *oeuvre* had a great impact on shaping modernist thought in the imperial center. As a modernist pioneer on a black continent, Schreiner's influence did not limit to her African literary counterparts, since the writer encouraged the forerunners of British modernism to experiment with symbolism and naturalism in their writings. Therefore, in order to highlight Schreiner's significance in the formation and development of South African modernism, the aim of the presentation is to analyze the main characteristics of the movement, as exemplified in *The Story of an African Farm*.

Marcin Tereszewski
(*University of Wrocław*)

"A sense of space": dystopian spaces in E. M. Forster's *The Machine Stops*

This paper attempts to illustrate the possibilities of approaching dystopian works of fiction within the spatial turn in literary studies. Specifically, E. M. Forster's only dystopian work of short fiction *The Machine Stops* (1909) will be approached within this context, with recourse also to the postmodern aspects of spatiality developed by Fredric Jameson. A staple trope in dystopian fiction is the transition of the protagonist from ignorance to awareness, which usually entails breaking out of a pre-programmed way of thinking, and serves as the catalyst for the plot to unfold. It will be argued in the paper that in *The Machine Stops* this transition is juxtaposed with the passage from automation to humanity, from isolation to death, a passage that remains deeply entrenched in the spatial dynamics of the environment in which the protagonists find themselves.

Tereza Topolovská
(*Charles University, Prague*)

***Chimera*: pioneering Simon Mawer's (spatial) poetics**

This paper aims to situate *Chimera* (1989), a debut of contemporary British author Simon Mawer, within the context of his literary creation as well the context of contemporary fiction and scholarly research in the field of literary representation of space and place. Dominated by aspects of spatiality and liminality, the novel embodies the main preoccupation of its author—to situate the plots of his novels into tumultuous historical and geographical settings marked by radical and fundamental transformation. *Chimera* hosts a series of elements typical of Mawer's creation—the Mediterranean as the prototypical site of historical, cultural and religious in-betweenness, a war conflict, illicit relationships, and most importantly a prominent spatial motif—in this case it is the archaeological dig of the ancient Etruscan town. The novel provides a unique perspective on place, which it presents from a number of different angles, corresponding with the perspectives of psychogeography and deep topography, as well as ecocriticism and geocriticism. However, as this paper endeavours to demonstrate, the place in question outgrows the limits of a singular, clearly demarcated entity and becomes a universal expression of spatial experience, eventually stipulating a phenomenological perspective as the principal approach to its analysis.

Przemysław Uściński
(*University of Warsaw*)

As “the selfish loves increase”: Tiger's labour and the “transition” to capitalism in William Blake's early poetry

Paying attention to recent theoretical and historical work on the “transition” to capitalism in early-modern period, my paper seeks to examine Blake's poetic discourse in terms of his reaction to the modern “culture of exploitation” in its different aspects: exploitation of nature, men and women's bodies, art, work and religion. More specifically, I want to look closely at the metaphorical logic in his early short poems and early prophetic works, not only to underscore the poet's critical account of the economic shift towards “sorrowful drudgery” (*The Four Zoas*), but to discuss how Blake's rejection of “Natural Religion” and his revaluation of the Enlightenment are involved in his broader countercultural poetic/artistic project: Blake tends to counterpose an “abstracted,” exploitative societal reification that “banish[es] eros from labor” not simply with pre-capitalist or putatively medievalist conceptions of social bonds (as Martin Bidney argues) but also with his own “ethic of work,” so to speak, or the vision of “unrepressed labour” (as Michael Ferber puts it), based on “Imagination” and thus hostile to the Urizen-led forces of modern mechanical (re)production.

Valentyna Ushchyna
(*Lesya Ukrainka Volyn National University, Lutsk*)

Stancetaking in online media: a risky juncture or a dead end?

Looking at how language is used today, one can argue that it gives people the power not only to judge, evaluate or persuade, but also to manipulate and even create an optional reality. The world stopped being understandable, future became unclear, and people lost certainty in their actions. Risk has become a common construct around which political, social and moral problems of the modern world are described, organized and practiced. As a result, risk communication stopped being about risk per se, turning out into a never-ending discussion of personal and collective choices or stances on risk. Linguistic research of risk and risk communication is a new but growing sphere of investigation, gaining a specific role in the era of Internet, when any individual decision on risk may have considerable social, political and economic ramifications world-wide. I put forward the idea that risks and risky events as well as discourse stances on them are built and described in interaction through various risk communication signals—both verbal (language) and non-verbal (images and symbols)—in order to promote the desired views on social, economic, political and cultural events in society.

Jana Valová

(Masaryk University, Brno)

Escaping the women's sphere in neo-Victorian literature

Neo-Victorian literature carries with it the inherent need to transform and reinterpret the past in order to free its characters from the stifling rules of the nineteenth century. As a result, the predetermined roles are abandoned in favour of unconventionality, happiness and, in some cases, deviancy.

Peter Ackroyd's novel *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem* explores what happens when the main heroine refuses only to portray a woman's role, and instead, Elizabeth Cree seeks freedom. Some of the roles that significantly affect the formation of her character are that of a daughter, a music hall performer, a wife, and a cross-dressing murderer.

Sarah Waters's novel *Tipping the Velvet* is another work that explores the love of the performative and the opportunities it creates for previously overlooked characters. Just like in Ackroyd's work, the main heroine Nancy Astley manages to explore her desires through cross-dressing and deceit.

This presentation focuses on the liberation that the mentioned characters achieve thanks to their refusal to embody a limiting role of a Victorian woman. It argues that by occupying both spheres—male and female—they can freely explore their possibilities and arrive at a more authentic and well-rounded image of who they are.

Olga Vorobyova

(Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute)

From paradigm to postparadigm: transitions redefined

A recurrent loop of history (a pandemic followed or accompanied by war, later provoking a shift of scientific/scholarly paradigm) gave additional lucidity to the changes of current episteme that had covered quite a distance from the reigning paradigmal period (that of hypotheses and methodologies—evolutionism, structuralism, functionalism, cognitivism) to the emergent postparadigm stage focusing upon multi- and transdisciplinary studies of interphenomena. This transition is not only characterised by the fluctuations between chaos and a new rhizomatic order of things but has a definite flavour of epistemic irony, predicted by Virginia Woolf in her 1941 sketch *The Watering Place*. The latter, multimodally presenting the lifestyle of a small seaside town where everything is saturated with the smell of fish and where people are just imitations of emptied shells, draws a queer parallel between the sound of seawaves and its toilet imitation, thus mixing together romanticism and profanity projected here on the epoch of post-.

Corin Wardzich

(Jagiellonian University in Kraków)

Anything that touches: reconceptualisation of tenderness in online poetry communities

In the recent years, the concept of tenderness has been a major area of interest for online poetry communities within social media such as Instagram or Tumblr, which now serve as major platforms for aspiring poets to publish their work and connect with other writers. Through linking it with the effects of social injustice on individuals, the notion of tenderness is now discussed through the lens of intersectionality as coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, but it is also represented in various modes of combining text and visual arts. In this paper, the author analyses prevalent themes in representations of tenderness in online poetry communities and sets out to provide a coherent definition of the new way of understanding and conceptualising tenderness. The paper also features the examination of the use of various media forms within separate works and the concept of “web weaving” present on the mentioned social media platforms, especially on Tumblr.

Katarzyna Więckowska
(*Nicolaus Copernicus University, Toruń*)

Multispecies futures: solarpunk narratives of becoming

In the introduction to a collection of short stories titled *Multispecies Cities: Solarpunk Urban Futures* (2021), the editors argue that the only way to understand the contemporary world and to face uncertain futures is to “look at the many ways humans and other life forms are entangled” (3) and to learn from alliances with “plants, animals, microbes, rivers and other more-than-human actors” (2). Taking entanglement as a key feature of the emerging genre, this paper aims at exploring images of co-habitation, responsibility, and taking care of human and non-human others in selected solarpunk stories and art projects. As solarpunk is not only an art movement but also an active countercultural intervention into the present, the analysis focuses on the representation of inclusivity, sustainability, and social justice and the treatment of literature as a form of activism. Throughout the paper, I adopt the perspectives of new materialism and posthumanism to outline the post-anthropocentric mode of caring proposed by solarpunk.

Ewa Wiśniewska
(*Jan Kochanowski University, Kielce*)

The roots of a new world: ecofeminist tones in Sheri S. Tepper’s *Arbai Trilogy*

The first novel of Sheri Tepper’s *Arbai Trilogy*, entitled *Grass*, published in 1989, offers a wide spectrum of dangers lurking for the humanity. It depicts planet Terra, the inhabitants of which struggle with overpopulation and depletion of natural resources. Equipped with advanced technology, they search for a safe haven, dreaming of making a newly discovered planet called *Grass* their home.

The newcomers, with high hopes to establish a permanent settlement for their peers, encounter humans whose life is governed by rituals and practices but also by regular meetings with quasi-animal mysterious creatures. Making effort to establish proper diplomatic contacts, they face layers of secrets related to the proper functioning of life. Not to prolong that transitory waiting period, they decide to immerse into the new world and its issues.

Despite their generic classification, Sheri Tepper’s *Grass* and its continuation *Raising the Stones* and *Sideshow* depict the worlds that resemble 21st-century Earth to a large degree. The novels could be read as an urge to radical changes in human attitude towards nature, a warning that still after over thirty years of publication have not been treated with a much needed care.

Tomasz Wiśniewski
(*University of Gdańsk*)

Geography of imagination: Marina Carr and theatre in Dublin after lockdown

In autumn 2021 theatre life in Dublin slowly came back to more regular functioning after several months of lockdown. It was additionally time when new directors of the Abbey Theatre started their new season with the production of a new play by Marina Carr—*iGirl* and it was followed by a revival of *Portia Coughlan*. These productions will be at the centre of a discussion of a provisional sketch that illustrates present directions of theatre development in Dublin.

Sylwia Wojciechowska
(*Jesuit University Ignatianum, Kraków*)

Idealizing or critical? Nostalgia for the Edwardian Golden Age

The myth of the Golden Age which is found in 20th-century British prose fiction and, particularly, in accounts of the Edwardian decade. Suggestive of peace, innocence, and prosperity, the myth features in literary renditions of a pre-WWI world, with the works of Kenneth Grahame being a notable example. In the accounts, war—and particularly WWI—constitutes a caesura at which the playful

agon of the Edwardian Golden Age transforms into a life-and-death struggle; thus, it dramatically severs the nostalgically recalled visions of peace and security. In the paper, I first focus on defining the mythical and the nostalgic. I argue that, exposed through the workings of nostalgia, the notion of war becomes a pivot upon which the myth of the golden-age Edwardian England is constructed. Furthermore, I argue that British literature includes literary examples which, paradoxically, both re-enforce and yet simultaneously challenge the golden-age traits of the Edwardian decade. In Kenneth Grahame's *The Golden Age* and *Dream Days* the golden past is firmly cemented, whereas in Siegfried Sassoon's autobiographical fiction as well as L. P. Hartley's *The Go-Between* the initial reminiscences of a blissful pre-WWI countryside expose the reality of the Edwardian era.

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From the centre to peripheries: Patrick White's littoral modernism in *Signal Driver* (1983)

The aim of this paper is to examine the transition of Modernism from the strictly European phenomenon to the worldwide way of perceiving, thinking and creating in the spheres of art, culture and literature that were visible in the 20th century outside Europe. Since the modernisms born in the traditionally viewed peripheries of the then British Empire were not – and could not be—pure transplantations of European Modernism, the idea is to note and discuss its alternative, post-colonial forms and see how they function in the cultural environments fundamentally different from the original ones.

Exhibiting a displaced European sensibility with a mix of the local colours and climate, Patrick White's plays seem to exemplify the late twentieth-century Australian theatrical transition from the centre of (European) Modernism to a peripheral, Australian form that may be today referred to as littoral, both in a symbolic and literal sense. For the sake of conciseness, Patrick White's 1983 play, *Signal Driver*, alone will be used as a textual illustration of the issues at stake.

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“Such were some of the parts, but how bring them together?”: the literary sibling as Dr Frankenstein in Pat Barker's *Toby's Room*

Harold Bloom's highly influential model of the “anxiety of influence”—the *agon* between fathers and sons—and the haunting presence of the ‘myth’ of literary Modernism, which all succeeding generations of writers have had to contend with, may induce literary critics to view contemporary writers as the “children” or “grandchildren” of their great Modernist precursors. While investigating the intertextual relationship between Pat Barker and Virginia Woolf, however, it is, I argue, far more useful to analyse Barker's engagement with Woolf's work in the context of Juliet Mitchell's theories of sibling relationships (2003). The lateral aspect of Barker's intertextual relationship with her precursor is best demonstrated through a detailed analysis of *Toby's Room* (2012), whose title is a direct reference to Woolf's third novel, *Jacob's Room* (1922). Like Elinor Brooke, whose paintings express her desire for freedom from the oppressive absence of her dead brother, Toby, Barker attempts to “clear [some] imaginative space” (Bloom 1997) for herself, to make some “room” in which she can exist, by challenging a few of Woolf's most influential views, as expressed in her fiction and in such works as *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas*. *Toby's Room* is thus the product of Barker's combined admiration and hostility towards Woolf's oeuvre—an ambivalent *hommage* in which Barker positions herself not as Woolf's descendant, but as a literary sibling. By re-assembling various fragments of Woolf's oeuvre, just as Elinor re-assembles the “pieces” of her brother, Barker resurrects her precursor in such a way as to be able to simultaneously honour her and to allow her own literary self to exist.

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Narrating the future as the construction of collective identity in Ben Okri's *The Famished Road* trilogy

Research into national identities (e.g. Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* and Homi K. Bhabha's *Nation and Narration*) has established that nations construct their collective identities through the narratives about themselves. This article will examine Ben Okri's literary attempt at constructing collective identity of the post-colonial nation in his Abiku trilogy (*The Famished Road, Songs of Enchantment, Infinite Riches*). The special emphasis will be placed on Okri's narrative about the "unborn nation" with regard to the temporality of the future. At the beginning, the article will demonstrate how the idea of the future is embodied in the trilogy's plot scheme which resists the pattern of cyclic repetition. Next, it will discuss the political visions of Okri's characters as the form of imagining the nation's future. The collective experience of dreaming the future will become the focus of the last part of the article. By exploring the relations between Okri's narrative and temporality in *The Famished Road* series, this paper will intend to show that, first, the temporality of the future is the place where nation can be imagined, and, second, the nation can be understood as the imagined community of people that dream about their collective future.