

**9th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE,  
LITERATURE AND CULTURE  
CROSSROADS III**

***RISK AND SAFETY***

**October 14<sup>th</sup> - October 15<sup>th</sup> 2021**

University of Białystok, Poland  
Plac Niezależnego Zrzeszenia Studentów 1, Białystok



**Book of Abstracts**

## Conference organisers

Anna Maria Karczewska (University of Białystok, Poland)  
e-mail: a.karczewska@uwb.edu.pl



**Anna Maria Karczewska** holds MA in English and Spanish Philology. She has a Ph.D. in cultural studies from the University of Social Sciences and Humanities (SWPS) in Warsaw. She has written a monograph *New Journalism as a Window onto the 1960s Counterculture* (2017), she has also published articles related to Latin American culture and literature. Her current research project concerns the representation of violence in literary reportages about Medellin, Colombia.

Mustafa Kirca (Cankaya University, Turkey)  
e-mail: mkirca@cankaya.edu.tr



Mustafa Kirca holds a Ph.D. in English literature from Middle East Technical University. His dissertation examines Jeanette Winterson's and Salman Rushdie's novels as historiographic metafiction. His research focuses on postmodernist fiction, postcolonialism, parodic re-writing, and metafiction in contemporary literature. He has very recently co-edited (with Hywel Dix) *Multicultural Narratives: Traces and Perspectives* (CSP, 2018). Presently, he is an assistant professor of English Literature at Çankaya University in Ankara.

# Keynote Speakers



KEYNOTE 1 Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> October: **Prof. Dr. Stef Craps (Ghent University)**

Ecological Mourning: Living with Loss in the Anthropocene



KEYNOTE 2 Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October: **Prof. Dr. Gerd Bayer (*Friedrich–Alexander University Erlangen–Nürnberg*)**

Jenny Diski's Writing, Illness, and Survival



KEYNOTE 3 Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October: **Dr. Silvia Martinez Falquina (University of Zaragoza)**

“None of us gets home until we all get home”: MMIW activism, art, and literature

**Biography: Stef Craps** is a professor of English literature at Ghent University, where he directs the Cultural Memory Studies Initiative. His research interests lie in twentieth-century and contemporary literature and culture, memory and trauma studies, postcolonial theory, and ecocriticism and the environmental humanities.

He is the author of *Postcolonial Witnessing: Trauma Out of Bounds* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) and *Trauma and Ethics in the Novels of Graham Swift: No Short-Cuts to Salvation* (Sussex Academic Press, 2005), a co-author of *Trauma* (Routledge, 2020), and a co-editor of *Memory Unbound: Tracing the Dynamics of Memory Studies* (Berghahn, 2017).

He has also (co-)edited special issues of *Collateral*, *American Imago*, *Studies in the Novel*, and *Criticism* on decolonizing English literature, art and climate change, ecological grief, climate change fiction, postcolonial trauma novels, and transcultural Holocaust memory.

**Biography: Gerd Bayer** is a professor of English studies, in particular literature, at Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg. His research interests include postmodern and contemporary novel; early modern prose fiction; postcolonial studies; Holocaust studies; genre; heavy metal studies; mockumentary film; epistolarity. He has been awarded numerous grants and research fellowships across Europe and the US. He has been a member of editorial boards of many academic journals, including *The Journal of Popular Culture* (USA), *Miscelánea: A Journal of English and American Studies* (Spain), *Anthem Studies in Popular Culture*, Anthem Press (UK), *Studies in World Literature*, Ibidem Press, *Humanities* (Switzerland). He authored three books, including his recent *Novel Horizons: The Genre Making of Restoration Fiction* (2016), and contributed to many others.

**Biography: Silvia Martínez-Falquina** is Senior lecturer of English at the Department of English and German of the University of Zaragoza. After completing her Bachelor's Degree in English Philology at the University of Oviedo, for which she was awarded the Excellency Award in January 2002, she obtained a competitive national scholarship to pursue her doctoral studies at the University of Oviedo, and she was a long-term research scholar at Michigan State University (graduate) and Glasgow University (postdoctoral). Her PhD dissertation, entitled *Ceremonias postindias: transgresión y re/visión de fronteras en la narrativa de Louise Erdrich* (*Postindian Ceremonies: Border Transgression and Re/vision in Louise Erdrich's Narratives*) was awarded the Excellency Doctorate Award. The dissertation was published by Oviedo University Press in 2002.

Martínez-Falquina has held teaching positions at the University of Oviedo, Saginaw Chippewa Tribal College, Glasgow University, and the University of Zaragoza, where she currently teaches US Literature. She has also taught various courses in North American Literature, Native American Literatures, English Pronunciation, English language, and Spanish.

A specialist in contemporary Native American fiction, as well as ethnic and women's US writing, she published *Indias y fronteras: El discurso en torno a la mujer étnica* (KRK, 2004, winner of the I AUDEM Award for Young Women Researchers); and she coedited *On the Turn: The Ethics of Fiction in Contemporary Narrative in English* (with Bárbara Arizti, Cambridge Scholar Publishing, 2007), and *Stories Through Theories/Theories Through Stories: North American Indian Writing, Storytelling, and Critique* (with Gordon Henry and Nieves Pascual, Michigan State UP, 2009). Her most recent articles and book chapters have appeared in Palgrave/MacMillan, *Iperstoria*, *Humanities*, *Atlantis*, *ES* and *REN*. As part of the research team directed by Dr. Susana Onega, she is currently studying the new sociocultural paradigm of Transmodernity in Native American fiction.

# Individual Presenters Day 1 Thursday, October 14th

**Adelheid Rundholz** (Cankaya University, Turkey)  
e-mail: aeubanks@jcsu.edu

Unwelcome Consequences: Christina Dalcher's *Vox* and John Lanchester's *The Wall*

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists' Doomsday Clock, first introduced in 1947, recently moved the fictional clock forward; it now rests at 100 seconds to midnight, or 100 seconds from destroying ourselves. The numerous threats posed by nuclear weapons, pandemics, weaponized technology, and catastrophic climate change create an 'environment of misery' in which all action—and all inaction—is fraught with risk. Two recent novels emplot dystopian visions of the United States and Britain, respectively, and explore consequences of social engineering that takes place to minimize (perceived) risks and increase safety. In Dalcher's *Vox* (2018), half the population, namely women, wear wrist counters that tally the words they speak in a given day. If they exceed one hundred words, they suffer painful electric shocks. The archconservative government also decrees that women cannot have passports and are no longer part of the workforce. Transgressions like adultery lead to labor camps. The (female) protagonists of the novel are angry and realize that they find themselves in their present predicament only because they failed to act when they still could. Lanchester's *The Wall* (2019) envisions the British isle surrounded by a wall that is designed to keep 'the others' (migrants) out. In this dystopian text, climate change has wreaked havoc and forced people from their home(land). Because an earlier generation failed to act, the current population suffers and feels forced to isolate itself from the rest of the world. Read together, the two novels are a 'commentary' on a world in which risk is pervasive and in which (in)action can exacerbate dire circumstances. At the same time, the novels highlight that local (national) action is doomed to fail if it does not also consider the global interconnectedness of challenges and risks.

**Keywords:** contemporary fiction, dystopian, risk, authoritarianism, oppression

**Biography:** **Adelheid Rundholz** is a native of Cologne, Germany. She has a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature and in Romance Languages and Literatures (French). Her research interests are literature of migration, novel, literary theory, world literature, aesthetics and language, comparative literature, and translation. She has numerous publications and participates in many conferences both in the United States and in Europe.

**Aleksandra Niemirycz** (Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Poland)  
e-mail: aniem@wp.pl

Shelley, Keats and Norwid in Search of Rescue in the Risky World

It is right to believe that the Anthropocene started with the era of the French and industrial revolutions, the invention of steam and press machines which initiated mass culture, global warming and pollution, but the humans' struggle for survival continue to be one of the key themes of literature since the ancient Greece. The myth of Prometheus sacrificing his freedom to give men authority over the powerful element of nature in spite of the will of gods was, in modern times, used by Percy Bysshe Shelley, one of the Romantic rebels, who chose to "be damned with Plato" rather than "go to heaven with Paley and Malthus". In his *Prometheus Unbound* the suffering Earth, one of the *dramatis personae*, cries in despair: *Misery, oh misery to me [...] Howl, spirits of the living and the dead, / Your refuge, your defence lies fallen and vanquished*. In the poet's vision neither Prometheus, nor the human kind are ultimately doomed; there are *the seals* stronger than *Destruction's strength: Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom and Endurance*. Resorting to the moral values which may prevent the catastrophe resounds with the words of the author of *Promethidion*: the labour of ages has not ended yet, since the globe has not been burnt with conscience. Both Shelley and Norwid, and a few other visionaries of the Romantic and post-Romantic literature told the future of humankind with a warning that people must change themselves, be more compassionate to the others and to the chain of being. Both Norwid and Shelley came to similar ethical conclusions, in spite of the major difference concerning religion - Norwid being a Roman catholic of strong faith, and Shelley declaring himself an atheist. Also, they both – like John Keats with his unforgettable praise of the Grecian urn – believed in the saviour power of art.

**Biography:** Polish researcher, poet and philosopher, free lance translator and conference interpreter (Polish, English and Russian). In the past worked as an editor, a journalist and a high school English and Polish teacher. Graduated from the University of Warsaw (M.A. in Philosophy 1988, M.A. in Polish Studies 1989; Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Studies in Translation and Interpreting, continued her literary education in the Institute of Literary Research of the Polish Academy of Sciences. In November 2016 she earned her doctorate at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University in Warsaw.

**Alexandra Nikčević-Batrićević** (University of Montenegro)  
e-mail: alexmontenegro@t-com.me

American Women Poets and The Risks of Creativity: Go Back To Tradition and Then Beyond the Millennium

The study of American women's poetry culminated in the second half of the twentieth century with a diversity of approaches that were characterised by the interest of critics' merging into a variety of aspects that constitute the structure of a poem. The attempt to define the field of American women's poetry or, at least, to emphasise the main characteristics of this field's poetics, remains, according to Jo Gill, similar to the story of "the shifting currents, cross-currents and counter currents" (Jo Gill: *Women's Poetry*, 2007, 2), to a never-ending, risky and challenging process that shifts us back and forth to aspects, such as historical, cultural, social, political, in order to help us grasp the complex continuity of the endlessly challenging creativity of women within the area of American poetry. Such an interest in grasping the very

core of the creative processes of American women poets has visibly culminated in the 21st century in numerous anthologies in which the emergent points refer, among other things, to autopoetical texts that have been written in a variety of ways (prose/poetry, complex/simplistic, explicit/implicit), by women poets belonging to different generations, but sharing similar views in regards to creativity, tradition, political situation in the world, issues of risk and safety (literally and metaphorically), history, their precedents and the literary paradigms that have affected the dispersions of their literary expressions. We will closely read their autopoetical texts, focusing on their preoccupation with and perception of literary creativity and the way those processes have found their expression in the finely structured and thematically innovative poems that constitute American poetry written by women (Kimiko Hahn, Rae Armantrout, Rosa Alkala, for example). These are texts that provide a valuable example of American women poets' deep rootedness in exposing and examining the issues that are included in the basic poetic registers, initiating anew a constant and eminent preoccupation with traditionality, and the way in which that traditionality, among other things, is reassessed, reinvented and reinforced.

**Biography: Prof. Aleksandra Nikčević-Batričević** lectures in American Literature, British History and special literature courses (Feminist Literary Theory and Criticism, American Women's Poetry, New York Poetics, American Fiction, Toni Morrison's Poetics) within the Study Programme for English Language and Literature. She is the author of various texts on American literature as well as one of the organisers of an international conference of Anglicists held at the Faculty of Philology in Nikšić, organised by the Department of English Language and Literature. She has organised conferences dedicated to women's writing held at the American Corner in Podgorica and Cetinje. Nikčević-Batričević has initiated many translation projects and is the coordinator of several projects being realised in the former Yugoslavia. She has had many stays in English-speaking areas, carrying out research work in the area of American literature (2002, 2004, 2007, 2009 and 2013, in Cambridge and in New York and other cities in the USA). During 2004 she spent time as part of a Melville Society scholarship at the Maritime Institute in New Bedford, Massachusetts.

**Corinne Fournier Kiss** (University of Bern, Switzerland)  
e-mail: corinne.fournier@rom.unibe.ch

The Natural Catastrophe in the *Sertão*: Reading Some Brazilian Novels of the Twentieth Century

In Romantic literature, the region of the *sertão* in the Brazilian Northeast is represented as the heart of Brazilian identity, a place perceived as having preserved an authenticity lost in the rest of the country in the face of the advance of European civilization. Since the great droughts at the end of the nineteenth century, this same region has fostered a completely opposite literary imagination: that of a place of catastrophe, destruction, and misery. The protagonists in many works, as if mimicking the hostile and arid landscape that surrounds them, are also portrayed as hostile to one another, and arid in their emotions, thoughts, and words. Why then persist in living in these places that dry out the soul and the body? What is the relationship that binds such characters to their environment? Are climate and

“nature” the only factors responsible for reducing man to the state of an animal, or even a plant?

We will attempt to answer these questions through an ecocritical approach to two Brazilian novels: *Vidas Secas* (1938, translated into English as *Barren Lives*) by Graciliano Ramos, and *Grande Sertão Veredas* (1956, translated into English as *The Devil to Pay in the Backlands*) by Guimarães Rosa.

**Keywords** : natural catastrophe, drought, *sertão*, nature and culture, ecocriticism

**Biography:** **Corinne Fournier Kiss** is is *Privatdozentin* at the University of Bern (Switzerland), from which she received in 2017 the *venia legendi* for French Literature, Comparative Literature and Slavic Literature (triple habilitation). Her interests and research areas include Literature and Interculturality, Literature of the Fantastic, Women’s Writing, Francophone Literatures, Literature and Music, Literature and Ecocriticism, Literature and the Representations of Space (of cities, borders, landscapes and gardens).

Her recent publications:

- She has edited n. 18 (Special Issue) of the review *Pessoa Plural - A Journal of Fernando Pessoa Studies*, entitled *Fernando Pessoa: Originality and Cosmopolitanism* (Brown University 2020) and n. 48 of the review *Colloquium Helveticum on Music and Emotions in Literature* (Bielefeld, Aisthesis, 2019)
- She has coedited with with Patrick Suter the book *Poétique des frontières* (MetisPresses, Geneva, 2021), with Onorina Botezat and Ramona Mihaila *Romanian Authors Writing in Foreign Tongues* (ProUniversitaria, Bucharest, 2021), with Anna Janicka and Marya Bracka the two volumes on *Przemiany dyskursu emancypacyjnego kobiet* (Temida, Białystok, 2019).
- She has authored the monograph *Mme de Staël et George Sand en dialogue avec leurs consoeurs polonaises* (Presses universitaires Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand, 2020), a Polish translation of which (made par Barbara Głowacka) will be published in November of this year (Instytut Badań Literackich PAN, Warszawa, 2021)

**Hernando Blandon Gómez** (Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana (UPB), Medellin)  
e-mail: hernando.blandon@upb.edu.co

Medellin: Living between Fear, Courage and Hope

The underprivileged and invisibilized population is always under more risk pressure. Multiple risks sum up and, so, reduce the sustainability and resilience of the group, generating additional new risks. Present paper shares the experience of the project coordinated by the department of architecture and design focused on increasing the resilience of the underprivileged population of Medellin, Colombia. The population in question is discussed as “forgotten” in their calls for action. Majorly formed of the displaced population from the conflict zones, they are not recognized as such, and invisibilized, stigmatized because of the association with conflict, and poverty. The territory of their settlement in Medellin is vulnerable geologically, also because of the spontaneous settling. The project is focused on improving their living conditions as well as on increasing their visibility. The paper offers a critical reflexive exercise of the conditions in the city that won a name of the most innovative city in 2014 yet struggling with the severe and ever-increasing social fragmentation. The paper also



reflects on the potential of design for sustaining resilience of the territory and its population and on pedagogical exercises with the design students on developing sensibility towards the territory for social transformation. The analysis is informed by the framework of bioart and sustainability studies (Kagan), the actorred network (Lacan) and feminist posthumanism (Barad).

**Biography: Hernando Blandón Gómez**, PhD (Philosophy), Professor, Faculty of Graphic Design, Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana, Medellin, Colombia; artist and designer. Research interests include power relations, philosophy of art, aesthetics and power, theory of image, transdisciplinary qualitative research methodology, art-based pedagogy.

**Joanna Wildowicz** (University of Białystok, Poland)  
e-mail: j.wildowicz@uwb.edu.pl

Terra Damnata in McCarthy's *Blood Meridian* and *The Crossing*

*Terra damnata* in Cormac McCarthy's "*Blood Meridian*" and "*The Crossing*" focuses on the history of America and Mexico. The space of the Borderland constantly conquered appears to be a cursed land, not the Promised Land that the settlers still coming to the West expected. The pursuit of nobody's territory sets out all the diversity of the human species on the road: from a common farmer to barbarians and filibusters. Bearing the risk of traveling into the unknown, they do not stop at the Borderland. Mexico seems to be an easy target for another conquest. Anything goes: plunder, scalping, murder. In *Blood Meridian* Cormac McCarthy presents the true shameful history of the United States. In *The Crossing* he reveals the aftermath of shameful deeds done to American nature.

**Biography: Joanna Katarzyna Wildowicz** is a graduate of American Studies Center, University of Warsaw. She defended her master's thesis under the supervision of Prof. Cynthia Dominik entitled: *American values reflected in situation comedies*. Joanna Wildowicz completed her PhD studies and obtained a PhD, defending a dissertation: *The Construction of American History according to Cormac McCarthy. "Blood Meridian", "The Border Trilogy" and "The Road" as a heterogeneous epic*. She works for Foreign Language Training Center and Department of Translation Studies and Didactics of Foreign Languages, University of Białystok. In her research, she deals with the culture of the United States, as well as the culture and history of Eastern Poland Jews.

**Katarzyna Więckowska** (Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, Poland)  
e-mail: Katarzyna.Wieckowska@umk.pl

Time and Climate Change in Contemporary Anglophone Fiction and Art

Jason Hickel's book on the present ecological disaster, *Less is More: How Degrowth Will Save the World* (2020), begins with framing the early 21<sup>st</sup> century within the discourse of trauma; as he writes, surrounded by images of the coming end of the world, "on some deep level we know that the trauma has already arrived. We're already in the middle of it. We are living in a world that is dying" (17). This sense of living in a dying world is accompanied by a disturbed sense of time, when it seems impossible to envisage a livable future and to escape the apocalyptic mode. In this presentation, I look at selected examples of images of the future in contemporary Anglophone fiction and art, focusing on the opposing timeframes of the postapocalyptic mood of climate fiction and the more optimist visions of solarpunk.

**Keywords:** climate change, time, postapocalyptic fiction, solarpunk, cli-fi

**Biography:** Katarzyna Więckowska is university professor in the Department of Anglophone Literature, Culture and Comparative Studies at Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń. Her research interests include the contemporary novel in English, ecocriticism, feminist criticism, studies of masculinities, and hauntology. She is the author of *Spectres of Men: Masculinity, Crisis, and British Fiction* (2014), editor of *The Gothic* (2012) and co-editor of *Haunted Cultures / Haunting Cultures* (2017).

**Maria Antonietta Struzziero** (independent scholar)  
e-mail: mstruz@hotmail.it

"Caught in a web of absence": Risk, Death and Survival in Maggie O'Farrell's *Hamnet*

Maggie O'Farrell's *Hamnet* (2020) is a reimagining of the death of Shakespeare's only son, an event that ripples through the calm surface of the protagonists' life and tips it over into psychological devastation. The title, however, is slightly misleading because, though the text is saturated with Hamnet's presence even after his death as a ghostly creature, the central character is his enigmatic mother, Agnes Hathaway, known as Anne.

The narrative oscillates between two timelines: the present begins on the day the plague first afflicts Hamnet's twin sister Judith and soon takes away the boy himself. It is a traumatic loss that risks breaking both the family bonds and the individual psyche, and leaves them to cope with grief and the necessity of finding strategies of survival. The past swings back to Agnes's meeting with her future husband about 15 years earlier.

Though Hamnet died of unknown causes, O'Farrell attributes it to the bubonic plague that actually raged throughout the country at the time. The novelist follows close by the causes, insidious spreading and devastating consequences of the pestilence in a remarkable section of the novel. It is an aspect of the story that, at this moment in time, resonates with tragic topicality due to the global Covid-19.

O'Farrell also traces to Hamnet's death the inspiration for Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, a tragedy in which the playwright, looking for his dead son everywhere, at last "find[s] him, or a version of him" (315), in the alchemy of his most famous play.

*Hamnet* is a text crossed, and haunted, by a number of deaths both in the family of the dramatist and of his wife. As such, the paper argues, it is a profound meditation on loss and grief, as well as an exploration of the different forms that trauma and mourning take.

The novel will be read in light of trauma theory and psychoanalysis.

**Keywords:** plague, risk, death, trauma, survival

**Biography:** **Maria Antonietta Struzziero** is an independent scholar. She completed a PhD in Linguistic and Literary Studies at the University of Salerno with a doctoral dissertation on Jeanette Winterson and the love discourses in some of her novels. She has published several articles and book chapters on different topics and authors, and given papers at Italian and international conferences. Her fields of interests include: modernism; post-modernism; gender studies; auto/biographical writing; feminist theories; trauma studies. She has co-edited “Voci ed echi: Quaderni di letteratura comparata” and translated two novels. She is currently working on mythology in some contemporary novels.

**Maxim Shadurski** (Siedlce University of Natural Sciences and Humanities, Poland)  
e-mail: Maxim.Shadurski@uph.edu.pl

Representing Risk through Landscape: Rubbish and Dreams in the Fictions of Maggie Gee and Will Self

In his essay ‘The Storm-Cloud of the Nineteenth Century’ (1884), John Ruskin established a vantage point which allowed him to discern risk in the landscape he surveyed. This paper will explore Ruskinian legacies in Maggie Gee and Will Self, whose fictions conjoin the representation of risk with landscape.

Written under the influence of 9/11, Gee’s *The Flood* (2004) and Self’s *The Book of Dave* (2006) impart risk a series of narrative, allusive, and generic embodiments. First, its contingency and gradual unveiling affect the flow of narrative time: prolepsis enables apocalyptic prophecy, such as becomes evident, with a varying aesthetic effect, in Gee’s flooded gardens and Self’s inundation of waste. Second, catastrophe mobilizes allusions to earlier traditions of writing, specifically that of the modernist wasteland, which both Gee and Self rework into a commentary on how the literature of the past becomes the compost for that of the future. Third, representations of risk surpass both novels’ generic boundaries. *The Flood* and *The Book of Dave* suspend the rigours of chronometric time and geometric space, which results in distinctly ecotopic visions of landscape. The latter becomes a figure of simultaneity, which draws on pre-realist forms of expression and supplies insight into post-capitalist order. Just as Gee’s final section breaks into poetry, Self’s narrative privileges allegory and parable in the sections set in the future. Such generic reconfigurations are further enhanced by the intersubjectivity of the novels’ narrators. The indeterminacy of Gee’s ‘we’ matches the self-conscious androgyny of Self’s characters, which signals the abandonment of dominant normative positions from which risk has been appraised and landscape envisaged. Ruskin’s project acquires thus a new lease of life, so much that the waste of civilization becomes such stuff as dreams are made on.

**Keywords:** risk, landscape, representation, genre, catastrophe

**Biography:** Maxim Shadurski is the author of *The Nationality of Utopia: H. G. Wells, England, and the World State* (Routledge, 2020) and two other monographs about utopia. His work has appeared in *Clio: A Journal of Literature, History and the Philosophy of History*, *English Studies*, and *Modern Language Review*, as well as in edited collections published by Anthem and Palgrave Macmillan. He edits *The Wellsian: The Journal of the H. G. Wells Society* and serves as an academic advisor for the Gale/Cengage publishing group. He holds a PhD from the University of Edinburgh and is an Associate Professor of English Literature in the Institute of Linguistics and Literary Studies at Siedlce University (Poland).

**Sławomir Koziol** (University of Rzeszów, Poland)  
e-mail: musajos@interia.pl

Margaret Atwood's *The Heart Goes Last: Trading (Risky) Freedom for (Illusory) Safety*

Margaret Atwood's *The Heart Goes Last* follows two characters—a young married couple—who, exhausted by a dire social and economic crisis, volunteer to take part in a socio-economic experiment which demands their moving into the safe but closed town of Consilience, part of which is taken by a large prison complex. In the town they spend half of their time—alternate months—as inmates working inside the prison and the other half they work outside of the prison, living in a normal, comfortable house. The whole town is supposed to become a model of an economically viable community, whose safety is ensured by constant surveillance.

The novel is a satire on the current socio-political situation in the USA that can be interpreted on two levels. On one level it can be seen as a commentary on the development of the so-called “prison-industrial complex”—the number of prisoners in the country has increased dramatically over the last several decades, with the employment in correctional facilities accounting for an increasingly significant percentage of both state and corporate employees.

On another level, the novel may be seen as a satire on the political developments in the USA after the September 11 attacks, when, in the name of fight with terrorism, a number of national security measures was introduced, as a result of which some thinkers compare the current situation in the country to a permanent state of exception or counterrevolution. These measures involve constant surveillance, which puts an average citizen in a position of a constantly watched prison inmate and at the same time is highly profitable for companies whose business model is based on selling personal data.

As Atwood suggests in her novel, giving up civil liberties in exchange for the promise of safety is not a wise thing because people put themselves at the mercy of the watchers who are not free from typical flaws of human nature.

**Keywords:** Margaret Atwood, prison-industrial complex, state of exception, counterrevolution, surveillance,

**Biography:** Sławomir Koziol, PhD, is presently an assistant professor at the University of Rzeszów, Poland. He has published a monograph on representations of social space in the twentieth-century British novel, as well as a number of scholarly

articles dealing with pop culture, new media art and representations of art in fiction. His recent publications are also concerned with science fiction and posthumanism.

**Sylwia Borowska Szerszun** (University of Białystok, Poland)  
e-mail: s.borowska-szerszun@uwb.edu.pl

### A Look-Back from the Future: Anthropocene and Memory in Contemporary Speculative Fiction

As evident from recent works within humanities and social sciences, the Anthropocene poses many challenges to human imagination, necessitating new ways of thinking about temporality, spatiality, entanglements of nature and culture, and the scope of human agency. Similar concerns have been expressed in memory studies, as the very concept of the Anthropocene affects the way we conceptualize memory (e.g., by including non-human agents, shifting temporality of remembrance to make it more future-oriented, and changing our understanding of the archive). Because of its imaginative capacities, speculative fiction can become an important tool for both addressing the challenges related to the representation of the Anthropocene and for redesigning existent memory frameworks. Drawing on the discussion of “anticipatory memory” (Craps) and “speculative memory” (Crownshaw) in contemporary speculative novels, I propose to examine N.K. Jemisin’s *Broken Earth* trilogy (*The Fifth Season*, 2015; *The Obelisk Gate*, 2016; and *The Stone Sky*, 2017) as an attempt to explore from the distant future the aetiology of the conditions leading to the environmental catastrophe. Employing the tropes of science-fiction, fantasy and post-apocalyptic fiction, Jemisin’s novels are further removed from the consensual reality than other, more typical, speculative realism or cli-fi texts, and yet deeply convincing in their exploration of the issues related to the changing memory frameworks.. Examining entanglements of individual and collective memory, juxtaposition of foundation myths and counter-memories, tensions between human and planetary remembrance in Jemisin’s narrative, I read it as an attempt to direct attention to the systemic exploitation of both marginalized minorities and the environment as key ethical problem of the Anthropocene.

**Biography:** **Sylwia Borowska-Szerszun, PhD**, is Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Philology at the University of Białystok, Poland. She is a co-editor of *Images of the Anthropocene in Speculative Fiction: Narrating the Future* (2021). She is also interested in cultural memory and popular medievalism, especially as construed in fantasy literature. Her most recent project concerns the intersections of history, memory and medievalism in Guy Gavriel Kay’s works.

**Sylwia Janina Wojciechowska** (Ignatianum Jesuit University in Kraków, Poland)  
e-mail: sylwia.wojciechowska@ignatianum.edu.pl

Narrating a Turning Point: Joseph Conrad’s “Poland Revisited” Reconsidered

The paper investigates the narrative structure of an autobiographical essay, "Poland Revisited," by a Polish-born writer, Joseph Conrad. Using Ansgar Nünning's notion of *turning point* narration as theoretical backdrop, I examine "Poland Revisited" (1915) as an idiosyncratic *crisis* narration. Written within the first few months following the declaration of war, the essay thematizes shock and trauma felt at the first news of the outbreak of WWI; disconcertingly, as the essay evolves, present concerns seem gradually sidelined by past commitments. Thus, I argue that the idiosyncrasy of the essay consists in the disproportion of interest paid to past events, which clearly disfavours, and indeed diminishes the significance of the present moment. In the narrative, the temporal layers as well as spatial dimensions become interlaced in a manner which welcomes a reflective stance on both the past and, to a lesser degree, the present moment. Hence, "Poland Revisited" offers insight into the workings of a retrospective construction of meaning, which turns the essay into a *crisis* narration. First, the semantics of *crisis* and *turning point* narration are elaborated upon. Second, Svetlana Boym's notion of *reflective nostalgia* is explored and practically applied in an analysis of the narratological framework of the essay. Furthermore, I discuss how the technique of defamiliarization impacts on the literary value of the essay and contributes to its originality. Finally, I argue that the deployment of *reflective* nostalgia in a *crisis* narration favours latency and creates space of a mental retreat from the present moment; by the same token, it contributes to the escapist character of the narrative. I conclude that, natural as it seems, the interlacement of nostalgia and autobiography becomes discernible as a distinct mode of expression of anxiety felt as a reaction to the unforeseen and unexpected.

**Key words:** crisis narration, turning point, reflective nostalgia, escapism, autobiographical essay

**Biography:** Dr Sylwia Janina Wojciechowska is Assistant Professor in the Modern Languages Institute at Jesuit University Ignatianum in Krakow. Currently, she has been the Acting Head of the Department of Literary Studies. She holds an MA in Classical Philology, hence her interests in Greek and Latin reminiscences in contemporary British literature. She also graduated in English and Italian philology at Stuttgart University, Germany. Her research mainly focuses on post-Romantic Anglophone fiction. Apart from numerous articles, she has published a monograph *Re(Visions) of the Pastoral in Selected post-Romantic Fiction* (Krakow 2017) and co-edited *Colossus: How Shakespeare Still Bestrides the Cultural and Literary World* (Krakow 2017).

## Individual Presenters Day 2 Friday, October 15<sup>th</sup>

**Adesanya M. Alabi** (Karabuk University, Turkey)  
e-mail: adesco101@yahoo.com

Encountering Trauma Response in Wole Soyinka's Drama: the Exegesis of Mourning, Grieving and the Sequelae of Disquieting Events in Postcolonial Texts

In an attempt to annotate the complex and enigmatic nexus between trauma and postcolonial theories, this study examines and accentuates the literary truth that

establishes trauma study which foregrounds the issues of grieving and mourning of the African populace in the hands of their despotic rulers. This is widely assumed as the quotidian disposition of most of the African rulers. In this study, one of Wole Soyinka's drama *Kongi's Harvests* is given a literary and intellectual appreciation, confining it to postcolonial and trauma studies. The main focus here crystallises how African leaders use political power to traumatise their citizens and the after-effect of their tyrannical rule is brought under focus. In *Kongi's Harvest*, Wole Soyinka uses the instrument of dehumanization and political misappropriation to establish how the rulers of the African continent inflict trauma on their subjects. Although, there have been some general opinions and studies on the Eurocentric trauma theory but the present study establishes insightful tenets that go beyond Eurocentric generalization. It accentuates the Afrocentric trauma and instances built around the facet of literary postcolonial and trauma studies. Hence, the emergence of trauma theory began in the 1990s as a means of constructing critical feedback to the situation of human grief and the representation of their cultural artistic phenomenon. However, during the past decades many postcolonial writers have criticised trauma theory that it has not established its purpose because of the cross-cultural transposition and professional involvement. Notwithstanding, as the study progresses, the spectrum between postcolonial and trauma studies as reflected in Wole Soyinka's drama is significantly annotated.

**Keywords:** trauma, postcolonial study, Afrocentric instances, political power, African rulers

**Biography:** **Adesanya M. Alabi** is an international (PhD) student of the department of English Language and Literature, Karabuk University, Turkey. His areas of interest are postcolonial literature, literary criticism and classical literature. His PhD dissertation presently focuses on sociopolitical situation in Africa and Middle East using certain politically oriented texts to survey specific problems in both regions. The research also examines the role literature plays in proffering solution to these problems by applying Foucauldian discourse analysis.

**Agnieszka Dziakowska** (James Cook University, Australia)  
e-mail: [agnieszka.dziakowska@my.jcu.edu.au](mailto:agnieszka.dziakowska@my.jcu.edu.au)

### Voicing Gender Violence in Poetry and Narrative in Oceania

The emergence of Pacific literature in the 1970s gave Oceania new voice in the international writing scene and a new platform for addressing social issues, such as gender violence. This conference presentation will trace the way in which women in the South Pacific have become increasingly bold in their writing, particularly on the topic of gender violence since the 1970s. From Grace Mera Molisa's first volume of poems *Black Stone Poetry* (1983) which begin to find language for women's violent experiences, to Sia Figiel's novels such as *Where We Once Belonged* and *The Girl in The Moon Circle* (1996), which narrativise incest and rape.

Violence against women is prevalent problem in Oceania (Biersack and Macintyre, 2016, 4). But in atmosphere of shame and silencing, it has been a challenge to find forms to express and address this issue. From the earliest emergence of Pacific

literature in the 1970s, poetry has offered a significant outlet for expression through which women of the Pacific have begun to find voice, agency, and representation. As Caroline Sinavaiana-Gabbard (1998, 485) has noticed, narrative representation becomes in these cases linked to other forms of representation, such as in law or in the historic record, where finding a voice for gender violence in the South Pacific is about “the possibility of choice itself, the imperative for speech, for breaking silences, for opening locked doors and telling stories, what really happened.”

This presentation will consider how poetry affords both voice and agency in terms of recovery from trauma and violence which falls outside the ambit of narratable language. It will trace an arc of development of this voice from early poetic forms to longer form autobiographical storytelling in ways that reveal an emerging voice to address what Hayner has called “unspeakable truths.”

### **Works cited:**

Biersack, A., Macintyre, M. (2016). Introduction: Gender Violence and Human Rights in the Western Pacific. In A. Biersack, M. Jolly, & M. Macintyre (Eds.), *Gender Violence & Human Rights. Seeking Justice in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu*. ANU Press, pp. 1-46.

Hayner, P. B. (2001). *Unspeakable Truths: Transitional Justice and the Challenge of Truth Commissions*. Routledge.

Sinavaiana-Gabbard, C. (1998). Review of *Where We Once Belonged*, by Sia Figiel; *The Girl in the Moon Circle*, Sia Figiel. *The Contemporary Pacific*, 10(2), 483-488.

**Keywords:** anxiety, suffering, loss, displacement, violence

**Aroa Orrequia Barea and Encarnación Almazán-Ruiz** (University of Jaén, Spain)

e-mail: aroa.orrequia@gm.uca.es

e-mail: ealmazan@ujaen.es

Coronavirus’ panic: a discourse analysis of British headlines reporting the risk

As the coronavirus disease spreads, so does the media coverage on the risk of this global warning, what has become a trendy topic. Reports on this virus in the press has contributed to create a health public concern by means of the depiction of this potential threat.

The aim of this paper is to make a comparative linguistic analysis of headlines from serious and sensationalist journalism in UK. The corpus consists of a compilation of headlines published during one month (from 20th January to 20th February), which have been extracted from four broadsheets: *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Times* and *The Telegraph*; and four tabloids: *The Sun*, *The Mirror*, *The Express* and *The Daily Mail*.



The syntactic and semantic analysis highlights not only the convergences, but also the divergences which illustrate each newspaper's ideological stance on the current epidemic. The corpus management tool *Sketch Engine* has been used to accomplish this research. It allows the user to do both an automatic analysis of the text and basic statistics from Corpus Linguistics. In our case, the features *Word Sketch* and *Concordances* have been applied. On the one hand, Word Sketch provides a detailed analysis of the words and its surroundings, that is, collocations or patterns that shows how words are used in language. On the other, the function Concordances gives information about the context where the words are used. The list of keywords from each corpus has also been compared so as to see to what extent the lexical choice makes a difference.

A variety of linguistic devices, such as lexical choice or noun strings, typical from journalistic language, shows different ways of dealing with this issue, all of them being scaremongering in different degrees. The headlines of tabloids generally include more instances of vague language than broadsheets, aimed at provoking social alarm meanwhile readers' attention is caught up.

### **Works cited:**

- Baicchi, A. (2004). The cataphoric indexicality of titles. *PRAGMATICS AND BEYOND NEW SERIES*, 17-38.
- Dor, D. (2003). On newspaper headlines as relevance optimizers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 35(5), 695-721.
- Fuertes-Olivera, P. A., Velasco-Sacristán, M., Arribas-Baño, A., & Samaniego-Fernández, E. (2001). Persuasion and advertising English: Metadiscourse in slogans and headlines. *Journal of pragmatics*, 33(8), 1291-1307.
- Kilgarriff A., Jakubíček M., Rychlý P. *et al* (2014) The sketch engine: ten years on. *Lexicography* 1, 7–36. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40607-014-0009-9>
- Kronrod, A., & Engel, O. (2001). Accessibility theory and referring expressions in newspaper headlines. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 33(5), 683-699.
- Molek-Kozakowska, K. (2013). Towards a pragma-linguistic framework for the study of sensationalism in news headlines. *Discourse & Communication*, 7(2), 173-197.

**Keywords:** *coronavirus, British press, headlines, corpus linguistics, discourse analysis.*

**Biography:** **Dr. Aroa Orrequia-Barea** is a lecturer at the University of Jaén, where she teaches both undergraduate and postgraduate studies. Previously, she worked as a research assistant at the Institute in Applied Linguistics at the University of Cádiz. Dr. Orrequia earned a Ph.D. in English Studies from the University of Cádiz with a thesis dissertation on attitude verbs and clause embedding. Her research focuses on Corpus Linguistics which she applies to a wide range of topics, such as Semantics, Lexicology, Computational Linguistics, and Sentiment Analysis, among others. Dr. Orrequia is currently working on the discourse analysis of media trendy topics such as political speeches or the coronavirus crisis. One of her most recent publication deals with the analysis of the political speeches during the Brexit process. In addition, Dr. Orrequia is collaborating in an innovative interdisciplinary project to create a multilingual dictionary of onomatopoeias

**Biography: Encarnación Almazán Ruiz** holds a PhD in English Linguistics at the University of Granada. She currently works as an adjunct professor at the University of Jaén, teaching in both Graduate and Postgraduate programs. She has gained vast teaching experience working not only at the university level but also in Secondary Education schools and as a freelance teacher. Her research interests include Corpus Linguistics, Discourse Analysis, and innovative teaching approaches in the EFL classroom. Dr Almazán has published several papers on the *Flipped classroom* approach to teaching English grammar. One of her most current publications consists of a discourse analysis of press headlines during the outset of the coronavirus crisis from a linguistic perspective.

**Galina Dondukova and Bato Dondukov** (East Siberia State University of Technology and Management, Ulan-Ude, Russia)  
e-mail: galina.dondukova11@gmail.com  
e-mail: dondukovb@gmail.com

Ecological Ethics in the Didactic Literary Monuments of Buddhism: “The Mirror of Wisdom” by a Buryat monk Erdeny Galshiev

The rise of global environmental awareness results in searching for new sources of ecological values not only in Western ones, but also in Eastern traditions. Our presentation is aimed to show the Buddhist ecological values on the example of a literary monument *The Mirror of Wisdom, Explaining Accepted and Rejected under Two Laws* written by a Buryat monk Erdeny Galshiev (1855-1915) in the beginning of the 20th century.

Buryatia, Russia is one of the most northern areas of Buddhism. Tibetan Buddhism started to spread among the Buryats, the ethnic group of Mongolian origin, in the beginning of the 17th century. *The Mirror of Wisdom, Explaining Accepted and Rejected under Two Laws* represents subhashita, a genre of Buddhist didactic poetry which represents a combination of two Buddhist issues – secular and sacred. *The Mirror of Wisdom* by Galshiev contains 1000 verses in 8 chapters. The first six chapters are devoted to worldly issues, starting with extremely practical advices for well-being of your body, property, and family, to the instructions for improvement of your mind, interrelation with other people, good intents and good deeds. The last two chapters describe the 10 black sins of body, speech and mind, and in general follow the principles of *Lamrim* for laymen. In other words, *The Mirror of Wisdom* represents a guideline for self-cultivation which can lead to wellbeing and enlightenment. With the help of close reading analysis, we try to reveal the environmental principles of the Buddhism concealed in the poems.

**Keywords:** ethnic identity, Buryat people, post-Soviet Russia, nomadism

**Biography: Galina Dondukova** is currently a senior research fellow at the East Siberia State University of Technology and Management, Ulan-Ude, Russia. She has obtained the degree of Kandidat nauk in Philology in 2013. The same year she was awarded an Erasmus Mundus PhD scholarship at the interdisciplinary project “Searching Identity: Global Challenges, Local Traditions” at the Faculty of “Artes Liberales”, University of Warsaw, Poland. In 2019 she obtained the PhD degree in

Literary Studies. Her research interests are Buryat ethnic identity, Buryat literature in Russian language, indigenous literature, Buddhism in Buryatia.

**Biography: Bato Dondukov** is currently a senior research fellow at the East Siberia State University of Technology and Management, Ulan-Ude, Russia. In 2019 he obtained the PhD degree in Culture and Religion at the University of Warsaw, Poland. His research interests are = Buddhism in Russia, Buddhism in Buryatia, ecological ethics of Buddhism.

**Irene Rabinovich** (Holon Institute of Technology, Israel)  
e-mail: irener@hit.ac.il

### Tragic Victims of Mania a Potu ('Madness from Drink'): A Study of Literary Nineteenth-Century Female Drunkards

Temperance literature, though widely popular in 1830 – 1880 in America and Britain, has lost its allure in the decades that followed. In spite of its didactic and moralistic nature, the public eagerly consumed temperance novels, thus reciprocating contemporaneous writers' efforts to promote social ideals and mend social ills. The main aim of this paper is to redress the critical neglect that the temperance prose written by women about women has endured by looking at three literary works—two novellas and one confessional novelette—written by mid-nineteenth-century American female writers. These works serve as a prism through which the authors present generally “tabooed” afflictions such as inebriation among high-class women and society's role in perpetuating such behaviors. The essay examines the conflicting forces underlying such representations and offers an inquiry into the restrictive and hostile social climate in mid-nineteenth-century America and the lack of medical attention given to alcohol addicts as the possible causes that might have prompted women's dangerous behaviors, including inebriation. This paper also demonstrates the cautious pace nineteenth-century female writers had to take while dealing with prevalent social ills, such as bigotry, two-facedness and disdain directed at female drunkards. It shows how these writers, often sneered at or belittled by critics and editors, had to stride very carefully between the contending forces of openly critiquing social mores, on the one hand, and not being censored, on the other.

**Keywords:** female inebriation; temperance; social antagonism; patriarchy; social risks/ills

**Biography: Dr. Irina Rabinovich** is a lecturer in the English Language Department at Holon Institute of Technology, Israel. Most of her research deals with the representation of women, especially Jewish female artists, in 19th century British and American Literature. She has published numerous articles in various academic journals and presented papers at British, Jewish and American Literature conferences. She is the author of *Re-Dressing Miriam: 19th Century Artistic Jewish Women* (2012).

**Lourdes Estrada López** (University of Jaén, Spain)  
e-mail: lestrada@ujaen.es

### Queer Apocalypse. Dismembering the (Hetero) Romance

It can hardly be a better moment to reflect on risk and safety as media reports on new coronavirus infections are building up public fear of contagion. It's the aim of this paper to analyze how the introduction of zombies in Burr Steer's movie *Pride & Prejudice & Zombies* (2016) contributes to the queerization of Jane Austen's novel, on the one hand, by the depiction of "closeted" zombies, and on the other, by the confrontation of two different types of temporalities present in this film: the temporality of the romance, based on the promise of a "happily ever after" ending, and a queer temporality of the zombie apocalypse, which interrupts and perturbs any hope of heteronormative futurism.

**Keywords:** Contagion; Closetedness; Zombies; Movie Adaptation; Queer Temporality.

**Biography:** **Lourdes Estrada López** obtained her Ph.D. in Spanish from the University of Connecticut in 2012, and she also holds a BA in English from the Universidad de Huelva. From 2012-2017, she worked as Assistant Professor of Spanish in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics at West Virginia University, where she taught courses on Spanish literature, cinema, culture and language. Since 2017, she has been working at the Universidad de Jaén (Spain) in the Department of English Studies. Her field of research is Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies with an emphasis on gender and sexuality. Her research has been published in several journals such as *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, *Hispanic Research Journal*, *Letras Femeninas*, *Estreno: Cuadernos de Teatro Español Contemporáneo*, among others. Her last two essays focused on gender have appeared in two volumes published respectively by Routledge, and Olms Verlag.

**Munise Betul Kandiraz** (University of Bremen)  
e-mail: bornsinger11@gmail.com

### The Representation of Identity Formation in Refugee Tales with regards to Liminality, Solidarity and Forced Migration

Research on writing travelogues has a long tradition. However, unlike other travelogues, refugee travel writing plays a different role since it has distinct modes of travel. As Shemak discusses, refugee and asylum seekers exemplify and constitute the most crucial forms of contemporary travel (2018, 188). Refugee traveling is driven neither because of curiosity nor a deep urge to find new exciting places. It is forced immigration stemming from various reasons such as wars, human rights violations, political chaos, underdevelopment, natural disasters, and many more. As a result of forced immigration, from the very beginning of the journey, the fugitive people have

been defined as asylum seekers and later refugees — if they are lucky enough to claim asylum— thus, they are not travelers or voyagers. This paper analyzes several chapters including Aghabi's "The Refugee's Tale", Cleave's "The Lorry Driver's Tale" and, Smith's "The Detainee's Tale" from *Refugee Tales* and compares the identity formation of protagonists through their journey. This paper also examines the relationship of refugees' solitude and solidarity and analyzes how forced migration influences their activities in their recent social contexts. Most interestingly, each individual's identity crisis affects their cycle of adaptation at their "new home." Thus, it is important to point out how solidarity functions in itself through the journey between refugees. Also, Shemak argues that in terms of identity formation of refugees, new forms of colonialism and imperialism have occurred (2018, 189). In other words, through time, imperialism has transitivized into several different forms. From this point of view, how is the eurocentric gaze portrayed in the selected chapters? How is the treatment of refugees or asylum seekers represented in detention and removal centers? How do the authors observe and narrate the identity confusion and cultural liminality of protagonists in selected chapters? Thus, This paper will identify the new forms of imperialism and colonialism in the narratives of *Refugee Tales*.

**Keywords:** refugee, travel writing, postcolonialism, identity formation, solidarity

**Works cited:**

Herd, David, and Anna Pincus, editors. *Refugee Tales*, Comma Press, 2016.

Shemak, April. "Refugee and Asylum Seeker Narratives as Postcolonial Travel Writing." *The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Travel Writing*, edited by Robert Clarke, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp.

**Biography:** **Munise Betul Kandiraz** began her master's degree at the University of Bremen after finishing her bachelor's degree with the highest grade. She is nearing the end of her studies and is working on her thesis, which is titled "Exploring the Concepts of Forced Migration in Contemporary Refugee Narratives in English." Her research interests include the intersection between travel writing narratives and forced migration, the pervasiveness of colonialism, gender studies, and diverse themes such as nostalgia, in-betweenness, and home.