

SEMINARS – ESSE2024 @UNIL:

Please note that seminars take place either IN PERSON or ONLINE.

The final format choices of the different seminars will be made available in early April 2024.

The current information is based on the original seminar submission.

• English Language

1. Information structure and cognitive and pragmatic aspects of communication [in person]

The seminar presents current approaches to the study of human communication. The focus is on the cognitive pragmatic aspects and the information structure of discourse. The papers deal with various topics in the field, especially the theme-rheme / topic-focus structure of the sentence; the perception of communicative importance of language units by communication participants; the role of context and intonation; syntagmatic and paradigmatic structure of sentences and texts; and other topics related to the study of mental processes of communication. The studies presented in this seminar are based on the material of written and spoken texts and parallel bi-lingual or multilingual corpora.

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2. English phraseology through the prism of other languages' phraseology [in person]

A contrastive approach to English phraseology is essential in order to identify and describe the specificities of its lexicogrammar, imagery and figurative and formulaic language. This seminar invites participants interested in exploring contrastive phraseology and phraseotranslation. We welcome papers focusing on English collocations, idioms and other fixed phrases, conversational formulae and proverbs as well as phraseological patterns with open slots and other phraseological constructions in contrast or in comparison with other languages. Methodological stances and theoretical frameworks can include corpus linguistics, translational studies, construction grammar, cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor theory, linguo-cultural analysis and lexicography, among others.

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3. Conceptual Metaphor, Metonymy, and Their Interaction [in person]

Almost three decades after A. Barcelona organized a seminar on metaphor and metonymy at the ESSE conference in Debrecen (1997) it seems apposite to take inventory of what insights we have gained meanwhile. By taking a cross-linguistic/cross-cultural perspective (involving English, on which researchers have mostly concentrated so far, and/or going beyond), the proposed seminar aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of conceptual metaphor and metonymy and how these mental processes interact in language, thought and culture. By examining their fundamental principles, mechanisms, and implications, the seminar will explore the intricate dynamics that shape our conceptual systems.

Possible topics to be covered: interaction between metaphor and metonymy; blending and integration of metaphor and metonymy in conceptualization; complementary and contrasting roles of metaphor and metonymy; case studies and empirical research on the interaction of metaphor and metonymy; the role of metaphor/metonymy in shaping cognition, language, and culture; cultural variation and context in metaphor/metonymy usage; metaphor and metonymy from a multimodal perspective; metaphor and metonymy in word-formation; analysis of metaphor and metonymy in specialized discourse (e.g., politics, business, science, advertising, film, religion)

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4. To Believe or not to Believe: Approaching Manipulation in Current Discourses [in person]

Given the difficulty to ascertain the intentions of text producers (Maillat, 2013; Maillat and Oswald, 2009; Oswald, 2014), studying manipulative discourses presents challenges at different levels. Firstly, as a matter of definitions, manipulation and persuasion are often difficult to differentiate (but see de Saussure, 2005 and Sorlin, 2016 for some attempts). Secondly, at analytical and interpretative levels, establishing whether manipulation occurs often relies on speculative arguments on the part of the researcher.

In view of the above, the main aim of the seminar is to encourage contributions that offer proposals of innovative analytical tools and theoretical frameworks which:

- 1) would explore the nature of verbal and non-verbal (e.g. pictorial/visual) manipulation and establish its definition;
- 2) could be applied to the study of various types and degrees of manipulation (including fake news);
- 3) would enable to identify manipulation in various types of mono- or multimodal discourses (in the sense of Forceville, 2020), and possibly to find out whether or not manipulative techniques vary depending on the genre.

We invite researchers working within various frameworks and engaged in studying various types of English language media, including – albeit not limited to – online portals, social media, television, the press, or posters.

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5. The success of invisible Anglicisms: a global trend? [in person]

Previous ESSE conferences – including the one in Košice in 2014, at which the Global Anglicism Database Network (GLAD) was founded – successfully included seminars focusing on the worldwide lexical impact of English.

For the 2024 conference, we propose a seminar on invisible Anglicisms, i.e. English-based semantic borrowings, loan translations and syntactic calques. Now attested as highly frequent in several Germanic speech communities (Gottlieb 2020, Andersen 2021), such invisible Anglicisms – tokens of English impact unnoticed by most speakers – may experience increasing usage in Romance, Slavonic and other speech communities, too (Witalisz 2015).

We welcome contributions from Europe and abroad testing or challenging this claim.

References:

- Andersen, Gisle (2021). *On a daily basis ... a comparative study of phraseological borrowing*. In Ramón Martí Solano & Pablo Ruano San Segundo (eds) *Anglicisms and Corpus Linguistics. Corpus-Aided Research into the Influence of English on European Languages*. Peter Lang. 13-30.
- Gottlieb, Henrik (2020). *Echoes of English. Anglicisms in minor speech communities – with special focus on Danish and Afrikaans*. Peter Lang.
- Gottlieb, Henrik et al. (2018). Introducing and developing GLAD – The Global Anglicism Database Network. *The ESSE Messenger* 27(2): 4-19.
- Witalisz, Alicja (2015). *English loan translations in Polish: Word-formation patterns, lexicalization, idiomaticity and institutionalization*. Peter Lang.

Convenors:

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6. Multidisciplinary Approaches to Ecological Discourse and Ecological Challenges [online]

This seminar will investigate how ecological challenges and social threats (including military conflicts and ecological and social damage caused by wars) are reflected in ecological texts and discourses, and how these texts and discourses respond to and react against such challenges and threats by proposing practical solutions and positive change. The contributions to the seminar will scrutinise ecological texts and discourses (literary and non-literary, verbal and multimodal, contemporary and non-contemporary) by applying various theoretical frameworks and methodologies. These may include, but are not limited to, ecolinguistics, stylistics, positive and critical discourse analysis, ecocriticism and environmental communication (both with a linguistic approach). Of particular interest will be contributions adopting interdisciplinary frameworks, or falling within disciplines, like pragmatics, which are less frequently employed to explore ecological discourse.

References:

- Fill, Alwin F. & Peter Mühlhäusler (eds.). 2001. *The ecolinguistics reader: Language, ecology and environment*. London & New York: Continuum.
- Fill, Alwin F. & Hermine Penz (eds.). 2018. *The Routledge handbook of ecolinguistics*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Stibbe, Arran. 2021. *Ecolinguistics: Language, ecology and the stories we live by*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Viridis, Daniela F. 2022. *Ecological stylistics: Ecostylistic approaches to discourses of nature, the environment and sustainability*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

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7. Lexicography, Discourse, and Power: Dictionary-Making in History and the Construction of Hegemonic Discourses [in person]

This seminar proposal explores the complex relationship between lexicography, discourse, and power dynamics from a historical perspective, acknowledging the significant role of dictionaries in shaping dominant discourses and power structures (Bourdieu 1991; Schmid 2001).

It seeks to uncover the impact of dictionary-making practices on language, culture, and society throughout history. By examining the historical and social contexts of dictionary creation and usage, the seminar focuses on their contribution to constructing and perpetuating hegemonic discourses.

Discussions may encompass various aspects of lexicography, e.g., word selection, definition, organization, labelling, and contextual information, considering the influence of social, cultural, and political factors (Cowie 2008; Allan 2013; Considine 2019).

The purpose is to facilitate interdisciplinary dialogue, inviting participants to critically examine how dictionaries reinforce or challenge dominant discourses over time.

References:

- Allan K. (ed.) (2013). *The Oxford handbook of the history of linguistics*. Oxford: OUP.
- Considine J. (ed.) (2019). *The Cambridge world history of lexicography*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Bourdieu P. (1991). *Language and symbolic power*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Cowie A. P. (2008). *The Oxford history of English lexicography: Vol. I: General-purpose dictionaries; Vol. II: Specialized dictionaries*. Oxford: OUP.
- Schmid C. L. (2001). *The politics of language: Conflict, identity, and cultural pluralism in comparative perspective*. Oxford: OUP.

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8. Teaching Specialized Translation in the Machine Translation Era [in person]

The swift progress of neural machine translation (NMT) and the advent of tools such as Google Translate, DeepL, eTranslation and ChatGPT have considerably reshaped the world of translation. As a natural consequence, translation teaching has also been impacted by this paradigm shift. We invite participants interested in discussing any of the following:

- Integrating NMT tools in specialized translation teaching
- Teaching the limits and benefits, the pros and cons of NMT in specialized settings
- Teaching NMT post-edition in specialized translation
- Annotating errors in NMT post-edition of specialized texts
- Defining quality with NMT tools (quality/quantity performance)
- Comparing the use of NMT vs other tools by students (corpora, web search, terminological databases, translation memories, etc.)
- Comparing NMT-aided translations with human specialized translations
- Tendency to over-trust / mistrust NMT in specialized translation teaching / learning

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9. Critical Issues in English Language Teacher Education [in person]

In this seminar, we would like to consider critical issues in training or education of English language teachers. A critical issue is understood as a component of the educational content that can be considered difficult, problematic, demanding, or even failing, for a variety of reasons. In this case we would like to think about problems or difficulties of teacher trainees or beginner teachers in the process of becoming ELT professionals and also problems or difficulties in EL teacher training courses from the perspective of teacher trainers or the training institutions or

schools, the future employers. A critical issue can be identified in any component of the teacher training programme – language competence of the students, their linguistic knowledge, knowledge of literature and culture and last but not least the school experience or teaching practice. We would primarily welcome research based papers.

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10. New perspectives on English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and interfaces [in person]

Genres are “essentially multidimensional” (Bhatia, 2017) and can be studied through various approaches and frameworks. Genres are defined both from linguistic (terminological, lexicogrammatical, structural, rhetorical, etc.) and/or extra-linguistic perspectives. It has also become generally accepted that they are attached to discourse communities (Swales, 2016) and that they interact with other genres within these communities. These interactions can be of different natures:

- surface interaction, such as interdiscursivity or interrelation
- interaction in the discourse community in the form of genre networks, genre sets, etc.
- interfaces between specialized and non-specialized discourses

We welcome theoretical, methodological and pedagogical papers on these topics and other related themes.

References:

- Bhatia, V. K. (2017). *Critical Genre Analysis: Investigating Interdiscursive Performance in Professional Practice*. New York: Routledge.
- Swales, J. (2016). Reflections on the concept of discourse community. *ASp. La Revue Du GERAS*, 69, Article 69. <https://doi.org/10.4000/asp.4774>

Convenors:

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11. English Language and Nationalism Through the Ages [in person]

In this seminar we propose a diachronic examination of the relationship between language, power and nation. Each of the studies presented problematizes the ideological use or promotion of English – that is, English per se, or particular varieties of English – to serve nationalist ends,

however defined. To deconstruct the ideological motives spurring its promulgation it is fruitful to trace the historical constitution of English across different domains of use. From common tongue to elevated standard, English has been bolstered by contentious, sometimes paradoxical, claims for its intrinsic linguistic qualities, invariably serving politico-cultural, and inevitably exclusive, interests through the conferment of prestige.

Convenors:

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• **English Language, Literatures in English**

12. Specialised language and specialised texts from medieval England [in person]

In the Middle Ages, people relied perhaps more heavily on one another, and membership in a certain group, such as a guild, a monastic community, or a parish brought professional and social security and created a sense of common purpose. Medieval communities of practice generated specialised texts, which were meant to inform their members about important aspects of their trade or to motivate them to conform to established norms. Each activity produced its own specialised lexis, e.g. medical, didactic, legal, agricultural, etc., which aimed to cover all aspects of the respective domain.

This seminar brings together papers exploring specialised language and specialised texts from medieval England, c.500-1500. We invite papers that focus on a wide range of specialised texts, using various literary, linguistic, historical, or cultural approaches. We encourage contributions that move beyond disciplinary and period boundaries.

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13. Shakespearean Drama in (Re)Translations, Audiovisual Adaptations and Media Accessibility [in person]

Recent developments in Adaptation Studies (Leitch 2017), Audiovisual Translation (Minutella 2013, Ranzato 2023) and Retranslation Studies (Gregor 2019) as well as the spread of concerns about accessibility and inclusiveness in academic and professional circles have called attention to the variety of intercultural and multimodal transfers of meaning in Shakespearean drama.

This seminar invites discussion to explore a wide range of translation practices that shape and promote Shakespeare scholarship in the 21st century.

We welcome contributions that address the following topics:

- interlingual translation and retranslation practices,
- intersemiotic translation,
- Audiovisual Translation of Shakespeare film adaptations,
- censorship and ideological manipulation in Shakespeare translations,
- translation flows of Shakespearean drama,
- accessibility and inclusiveness.

References

- Gregor, Keith. 2016. Canonization and Obsolescence: Classic Translations versus Retranslations. In *The Cambridge Guide to the Worlds of Shakespeare* edited by B. Smith, 1352-1357. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Leitch, Thomas. 2017. *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Minutella, Vincenza. 2014. *Reclaiming Romeo and Juliet: Italian Translations for Page, Stage and Screen*. Leiden: Brill Academic.
- Ranzato, Irene. 2023 (forthcoming). Carry On Caesar: Creative Manipulations of the Cinematographic Roman Emperor. *Translation and Translanguaging in Multilingual Contexts*, n.9(3), edited by J. Díaz Cintas, A. Rizzo & C. Spinzi, 2023.

Convenors:

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• Literatures in English

14. Beyond Borders: Contemporary Novels of Migration [in person]

In the wake of the mobilities turn, scholarly discussions of migration have mainly focused on the process of movement in space. Migration tends to be seen as a linear trajectory leading the figure of the displaced person across national borders, from a point of origin (and belonging) to a destination, from departure to arrival. Contemporary novels of global migration invite us to reconsider this standardised view of the migrant experience; moving beyond the spatial dimension of migration, they explore temporalities, inner exiles, as well as affective, spiritual and transcendental homelessness. This seminar will attempt to take stock of this recent fiction of migration and its engagement with the temporalities of displacement.

Convenors:

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15. Modernist continuities in contemporary Anglophone fiction [in person]

The proposed seminar invites abstracts concerned with the various ways the relationship between Modernism and contemporary Anglophone fiction has been reevaluated both by critical insights and by new waves of innovative fiction. Possible themes addressed by the proposed papers might include: the contested links between Modernism and Postmodernism; revisitations of the narrative strategies, compositional designs and epistemological positions of Modernism in recent fiction; the Modernist and anti-Modernist preoccupations of „experimental literature” (including its continental influences and the role of the Avantgarde); the relevance of the Modernist traditions for displaced, migrant identities; planetarism and the reevaluation of modernist internationalism; the relevance of Modernist strategies in addressing contemporary issues like the ecological crisis and posthumanism, as well as to feminist and postcolonial issues; the role of liminal – or connecting – figures like Samuel Beckett, Vladimir Nabokov, Anthony Burgess; the presence and relevance of Modernism in the work of writers like Ali Smith, Ian McEwan, Alan Hollinghurst, Nicola Barker, Eimear McBride, J. M. Coetzee, Rachel Cusk, Jon McGregor; the contemporary rewriting or revisiting of particular Modernist texts.

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16. Adaptation in the Second Degree: The Eighteenth Century and Beyond [in person]

This seminar will study the ways in which adaptations of eighteenth-century texts themselves become subject to processes of adaptation. Prospective papers will address the peculiar relationships that the texts establish between themselves, which go beyond the primary-secondary text dynamic, complicating it with the shadowy presence of the foundational text. Potential topics include adaptations of adaptations of such works as Robinson Crusoe, Gulliver’s Travels and the writings of authors such as Sterne and others. The vast corpora of Robinsonades, Gulliveriana, Sterneana, etc. feature a number of works that were adapted themselves or sparked off their own imitative micro-traditions. In this seminar, we are interested in how these adaptations in the second degree generated meaning through a dialogue with both the adapted text and the ur-text behind it.

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17. Salman Rushdie and the Historical Novel [online]

This seminar will explore Salman Rushdie's historical novels from *Midnight's Children* (1981) to *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008) and *Victory City* (2023). Submissions are welcomed on Rushdie's entire oeuvre, nevertheless, we are particularly interested in analyses that trace the ways in which his fiction has transformed. The seminar will focus on three specific questions: how do Rushdie's novels conceptualize global history and the metafictional elements of historical storytelling? What is the role of translocality, that is, the focus on two or more different cities and continents, in his historical novels? How do his recent novels depict fundamentalisms, the politics of post-truth, and contemporary history?

Convenors:

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18. Literary representations of sport(s) in Anglophone fiction [in person]

Fuelled by such critically acclaimed films as *Chariots of Fire* (1981), *Million Dollar Baby* (2004), or *Invictus* (2009), recently re-energized discussions of representation have a growing interest in sports in visual media. Nonetheless, no systematic study of this aspect is discernible in literary studies, though relevant texts like Bernard Malamud's *The Natural* (1952) or Naomi Benaron's *Running the Rift* (2010) abound. In this seminar, we discuss sport(s) in Anglophone fiction, with the aim of analyzing the various forms of representation—cultural, social, and political—featuring sports in literature in English since the late 19th century.

Potential participants are invited to contribute to any of the following thematic strands of the seminar:

- Sports and society: social interaction, power relations, and identity construction—local, national, regional, international—through sports;
- The rhetoric of sports: heroes, celebrities and sports discourse in the public sphere;
- Gender (under)representation in sports literature;
- Sports in an information technological era;
- Binary constructions in sports fiction: masculine vs. feminine; national vs. international; heterosexual vs. homosexual; able vs. disabled;
- Etc.

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19. Food and Eating in Anglophone Literature and Travel Writing from the Nineteenth Century to the Present

[online]

Scholars' investigation of the relationship between food and literature has resulted in the emergence of the academic discipline of literary food studies. This seminar's goal is to broaden the field's framework by including travel writing as well as literature. As a genre concerned with relations between self/same and other, travel writing approaches food and eating as complex signifiers of national, racial, and cultural identity. Similar perceptions are found in literary texts. Themes such as commensality, hospitality, feasting, starvation, inclusion, and exclusion characterize both contexts.

Related to food and eating is the act/art of cooking. Representations of food preparation enhance our awareness of the complexities of gender politics, social cohesion, cultural continuity, and the introduction of new elements in food systems. Themes such as the professionalization of cooking and the consumption of food in public spaces as opposed to domestic eating play important roles in both literature and travel writing.

Contributors are encouraged to discuss representations of food and eating in literature and travel writing over a lengthy period of time marked by significant changes in all the areas mentioned above. Key critical texts include *Food and Literature* (CUP, 2018) and *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Food* (2018).

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20. What's the Point of Modern Editions?

[in person]

Seminar supported by the Centre for the Study of the Renaissance (Warwick) and Oxford University Press.

In their roles as general editors of the Oxford University Press editions of Raleigh (Bajetta) and Shirley (Grant), the convenors of this seminar often grapple with the question 'what is the point of a modern edition of a text?' All the macro and micro editorial choices shift the purpose in sometimes unexpected ways and sharing their ramifications across editions helps inform decision-making practice with the benefit of others' experience.

We hope to encourage paper submissions which address the question in diverse ways and across various sub-disciplines of English. These may address e.g. the purposes of recuperation of texts, their bibliography, (print) history, sociology, performances and their impact outside the academy. We welcome contributions from editors (or proto-editors) of all English works from medieval to modern, those editing English translations or specific genres of texts, and editions which include making a distinction between the literary and the non-literary. In the course of the panels for this seminar, we expect a lively debate to arise about what the point of a modern edition of a text should be.

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21. The Challenges of Auto/Biography: Old and New Trends [in person]

This seminar aims to illustrate old and new trends in auto/biographical writing and life writing in general across different periods, cultures and disciplines. It invites topics ranging from the challenges of self-representation and self-fashioning to the more recent concerns in the ethics of auto/biography. Topics may include, but are not limited to auto/biography and life writing in relation to: self-portraiture, 'writing the self', 're-making of the self', 'metaphors of the self', 19th century self-portraits of the artists vs. modernist self-mythologizing portraits, generic boundaries and intersections, hybrid genres and current trends, cognition, truth and authenticity, intersections between private and public domains, old and new methodologies, auto/biographies in the (post)digital era, etc.

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22. Voicing Otherness: Reconfiguring Australia's Postcoloniality? [in person]

Australian fiction often raises the complexity of multiculturalism. This workshop on Australian literatures seeks to analyse the various forms of marginalization that occur in a "postcolonial moment" that may encourage new modes of writing: alternative ways of living and of relating to the earth, alternative ways of approaching and experiencing otherness, also alternative literary discourses of the non-European Other. The issues at stake will be the reconstruction of landscapes, the rewriting of myths or stories and whether they trace the contours of a postcolonial dilemma. How writings about the Other may create a diaspora of forms and thus relocate the postcolonial in an "alter moment".

References:

- Appadurai, A. *The Future as Cultural Fact: Essays on the Global Condition*. Verso, 2013
- Ashcroft, B. *Postcolonial Transformations*. London: Routledge, 2001.
- Bhabha, H K. *The Location of Culture*. Abingdon: Routledge, 1994.
- Bourriaud, N. *Radicant*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2009.
—*Inclusions*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2023.
- Demos, T. J. *Decolonizing Nature: Contemporary Art and the Politics of Ecology*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016.
- Gilroy, P. *Postcolonial Melancholia*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 2005.
- Hage, G. *Alter Politics*, Carlton: Melbourne U P, 2015.
—*The Diasporic Condition*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2021.

Mbembe, A. *The Earthly Community*. V2_Publishing: Rotterdam, 2023.

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23. Poetic Form in Historical Context [in person]

The rise of new formalism had led to an invigorated fascination with literary forms in recent years. Such research is particularly interested in thinking about forms as productive acts of forming and shaping, and approaches them not in isolation, but in relation to contemporary cultural and social conditions. This panel aims to showcase such research, by exploring historical perspectives on poetic forms and addressing questions like: Why do different poetic forms arise out of particular and varied moments in (literary) history? Which affordances of a poetic form are only developed as a result of prior historical usages?

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24. Anxiety, Fear, and Dis-ease in Contemporary Anglo-American Drama and Performance [in person]

Under the influence of the pandemics or the Russia-Ukraine war, emotions like anxiety and fear have increasingly become modes of perception that serve as key perspectives in the processes of sense making. Patrick Duggan has suggested that “in a state of dis-ease the world [...] becomes othered, distanced and shimmers in and out of readability in an encounter that makes one feel [...] perturbed by the experience of it.” (Key Words 2017: 45) Contemporary theatre and performance have especially been investigating current tensions between experiences of agency and powerlessness. Whereas governments increasingly construct the citizen as vulnerable, we have suggested that “the theatre offers the members of the audience the possibility of being vulnerable in a safe space.” (Brusberg-Kiermeier et al., JCDE 1/2019: 3) We wish to discuss the central role that the emotional states of anxiety and fear play in and for drama, theatre, and performance practice. Participants might wish to analyse representations of anxiety, fear, and dis-ease on page and stage or discuss how theatre and performance can and do attend to the emotions raised in local and global conflicts or the (post)apocalyptic narratives of the present.

Convenors:

- Stefani Brusberg-Kiermeier (University of Hildesheim, Germany)
brusberg@uni-hildesheim.de
 - Patrick Duggan (Northumbria University, UK)
patrick.duggan@northumbria.ac.uk
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25. Transnational Perspectives on Women and the Nineteenth-century Ghost Story [in person]

This seminar addresses the popularity of the nineteenth-century ghost story across countries and nationalities. We are interested in exploring connections and differences between the Anglophone tradition (with authors such as Elizabeth Gaskell, Margaret Oliphant, Vernon Lee, to name just a few) and that of the Mediterranean countries, for example, to ascertain whether potential networks and circulation of ideas between women facilitated the existence (and the popularity) of the ghost story, thus uncovering a neglected area of study. We also welcome approaches to transnationalism and the ghost story, which may involve other geographical territories such as Eastern Europe, where the occult also featured prominently in the nineteenth century.

Convenors:

- Rosario Arias (University of Málaga, Spain)
rarias@uma.es
 - Patricia Pulham (University of Surrey, UK)
p.pulham@surrey.ac.uk
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26. Collaboration, networks, and supporting new work in medieval English studies [in person]

This seminar invites proposals for papers exploring new forms of collaboration and community in medieval English studies. Since Covid-19, novel collaborative methods have developed as scholars sought to transfer existing communities into the virtual sphere or to forge new international connections. How can collaborations advance our scholarship and improve our well-being? What collaborations have worked for you, and why? How can collaboration facilitate feminist and anti-racist practices? Why might collaboration be particularly necessary for studying the pre-modern? While focusing upon medieval English studies, we are also interested in cross-period collaborations and engaging wider interest in collaborative methodologies across specialisms and disciplines.

Convenors:

- Hannah Piercy (University of Bern, Switzerland)
hannah.piercy@unibe.ch
 - Jane Bonsall (University of St Andrews, UK)
janebonsall@gmail.com
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27. Conceptualising the Novella [in person]

The novella's continuing perception as something best defined *ex negativo* presents a barrier to a deeper understanding of the structures and effects of it as a form in its own right. This seminar aims to gather an array of approaches on novellas across different periods to crystallise the constitutive affordances of the genre. We invite scholars to engage with and reframe the traditional conception of the novella and its function in storytelling, as well as (re-)consider the form and its history in terms of production, reception and national contexts. This seminar also invites case studies of specific novellas from the early modern period to the present day, engaging with how stories, values, and characters are framed and managed by the form.

Convenors:

- Zsuzsanna Csikai (University of Pécs, Hungary)
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 - Patrick Gill (University of Mainz, Germany)
patrick.gill@uni-mainz.de
 - Roslyn Irving (University of Mainz, Germany)
rirving@uni-mainz.de
 - Jordan Kistler (University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom)
jordan.kistler@strath.ac.uk
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28. Transnational Narratives: European Women's Fiction in the Early Modern Period [online]

Traditional approaches to the 'origins of the novel' question have often overlooked the role played by women's contribution to the development of the genre. Usually, formal realist criticism has underestimated minor works, anonymous texts, fiction signed by women, as well as reprints, abridgments and translations. This seminar proposes a discussion of women's printed fiction during the seventeenth century from a transnational and European perspective to help us situate the early days of the novel in context. We invite papers which discuss crosscurrents or influences among texts authored by European women, as well as about biographical and/or cultural relationships at work between women writers and intellectuals in the period of study. We aim to discuss whether we can trace a continuum in European women's fiction which explains transitions of genre/gender and literary culture, from the perspective of transculturality, drawing on all literary sources as fields of crossmedia influences. We will consider papers about English women's native fiction, like Aphra Behn, Delarivier Manley, Mary Pix, as well as about translations and adaptations of continental women's works printed in England, as the examples of Marie de Lafayette, Mlle de la Roche Guilhem, Madeleine de Scudéry, or María de Zayas, make clear.

Convenors:

- Gerd Bayer (Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, FAU, Germany)
gerd.bayer@fau.de
 - Sonia Villegas-López (University of Huelva, Spain)
villegas@uhu.es
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29. Heights, Depths and Other Extremes in Dickens [in person]

In 1846 Charles Dickens temporarily moved his wife, six children and the family dog to Villa Rosemont in Lausanne. Dickens's fascination with Switzerland, and the exploration of the country to which this gave rise is well documented in his letters, magazine articles and fiction, e.g. in *Pictures in Italy*, *David Copperfield*, *Little Dorrit* and *No Thoroughfare* (written in collaboration with Wilkie Collins). The sublime scenery and vertiginous mountain passes seemed to have had a powerful hold on his imagination. He was both fascinated by heights and other extremes that the Alpine region could provide and equally aware of the dangers of high altitude travel, of which the Great Saint Bernard's morgue was a painful reminder. The theme of heights and depths, of abrupt rising and falling is explored both literally and metaphorically in Dickens's fiction. The organisers invite you to interpret the topic of "heights, depths and other extremes" in Dickens broadly and imaginatively in connection with his fiction, travels, journalism or personal life. Please submit your abstracts of 250–300 words to seminar convenors Michael Hollington and Magdalena Pypec (wahlverwandschaften@gmail.com, magdalenapypec@uw.edu.pl) by 31 January 2024. The notifications of acceptance will be sent out by 29 February 2024.

Convenors:

- Michael Hollington (Life Member, Clare Hall, Cambridge University, UK)
wahlverwandschaften@gmail.com
 - Magdalena Pypec (University of Warsaw, Poland)
magdalenapypec@uw.edu.pl
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30. British Radical and Revolutionary Women Writers (1770s–1830s) [in person]

The seminar will focus on women writers and also female characters in literature who can be associated with radicalism and revolutionary ideas. In addition to writings of fiction, poetry and drama, journalistic pieces are also welcome in the proposals that are presented from either historical-political or cultural-feminist perspectives.

Among the women writers who reported on the French Revolution, Helen Maria Williams and Mary Wollstonecraft could claim to eyewitness the events; while Wollstonecraft, Mary Hays, and Mary Robinson would join radical aims to proto-feminist ones. Moreover, women writers' interest in revolutions was rife in the period, with Catharine Macaulay's history of the Commonwealth and the Civil War, and in the 1820s, Mary Shelley wrote in support of the Italian and Spanish liberal revolutions.

The seminar convenors also invite papers discussing the socio-cultural aspects of changes in the history of women—see, for instance, "the revolution in female manners" (Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, 1792)—in the decades of radicalism from the 1770s to the 1830s.

Convenors:

- Eva Antal (Eszterhazy Karoly Catholic University, Eger, Hungary)
antal.eva@uni-eszterhazy.hu
 - Antonella Braidà (Université de Lorraine, IDEA, France)
Antonella.braidà-laplace@univ-lorraine.fr
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31. Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? – Aesthetics, Politics and Ethics in Woolf's Oeuvre [in person]

The seminar intends to explore the interrelationship between Woolf's aesthetics, politics and ethics, including both her fiction and non-fiction. Whereas the interrelationship between her aesthetics and politics has been widely interpreted, we invite presentations that extend the investigation to the ethical concerns in her works, preferably integrating the discussion into the already existing body of academic work on how her aesthetics and politics are undividable. In our understanding, these three aspects are inseparable in Woolf's oeuvre, and the recent developments investigating issues of ethics in texts contribute to adding further complexities to the comprehension of the Woolfian texts. Close readings may reveal how her commitment to modernist aesthetics also means an involvement not only with her (feminist) politics but also with ethics. From this perspective, the papers may also address and challenge some aspects of Woolf's "elitism" by pointing out how her works also feature affect and empathy with the underprivileged. By adding ethics as one more component to aesthetics and politics, we mean to re-frame both theoretically and analytically the academic discussion of her anti-establishment attitude (threatening for many; hence our seminar title), while also calling attention to Woolf's deep engagement with issues of power, the subject, and intersubjectivity.

Convenors:

- Petronia Popa-Petrar (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania)
petronia.petrar@ubbcluj.ro
 - Nóra Séllei (University of Debrecen, Hungary)
sellei.nora@arts.unideb.hu
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32. Literature and Mental Health: Diagnosis, Syndromes and Symptoms [in person]

Despite the field of mental health being currently dominated by biomedical and neurological approaches, literature continues to see individuals as not reducible to their brain. Novels, auto/biographical texts and emerging forms of literature have never stopped refusing the conflation of 'having' a condition with an ontological definition: the subject's symptoms in literary works challenge medical assignation and produce new narratives and imaginary worlds. The following seminar will welcome papers on the effects of the 'failure of diagnoses' (Waugh 2013) in the 'syndrome novels' that emerged in the 1980s and have flourished since, as well as in literary texts exploring subjective crises triggered or enhanced by medical diagnoses, in particular diagnoses of mental health. The seminar welcomes contributions addressing new developments within health humanities, encouraging questions about the literary representations of care, wellbeing and a better understanding of the implications of the therapeutic process in the way individuals make sense of the symptoms that they complain about, the syndrome they are said to suffer from and the diagnosis that turns them into patients. Contributions about illnesses outside the field of mental health are also welcome.

Convenors:

- Patricia Waugh (Durham University, UK)
P.n.waugh@durham.ac.uk
 - Nicolas P. Boileau (Aix-Marseille University, France)
Nicolas.boileau@univ-amu.fr
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33.Liminality and Border-Crossing in Contemporary English-Speaking Theatre **[online]**

While in the current era of Transmodernity globalisation has led to transnational interconnections that seem to dissolve certain spatial and temporal limits, the nationalist reactions to migratory movements have reinforced national borders in many parts of the world. This has ushered in a new age of walls that exacerbates the already harsh condition of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, creating numerous instances of humanitarian crisis. Against this background, this seminar proposes to analyse how contemporary English-speaking theatre represents the liminality involved in the simultaneous but opposed movements of the reaffirmation and the crossing of borders.

Convenors:

- Sibel Izmir (Atilim University, Turkey)
sibeleceizmir@gmail.com
 - Claus Peter Neumann (Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain)
cpneuman@unizar.es
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34.The Development of Narrative from the Middle Ages to the Eighteenth Century **[in person]**

Narratology since the turn of the millennium has increasingly considered the development of narrative both formally and functionally through the centuries. The panel welcomes new work in this line of research. We particularly encourage proponents of historical and diachronic narratology to participate in the seminar. Contributions can focus on a variety of developments on selected topics or levels of narrative, including work on genre history, subjects like the representation of consciousness or outward appearance, the handling of plot structure, stylistic and linguistic aspects or other features of narrative. In addition, issues like prosification, the influence of drama on narrative (or vice versa), the rewriting of materials from other genres in fictional narratives (for instance, of saints' legends in Deloney), or the introduction and handling of chapter divisions will be of interest. The functions and status of narrators are another extremely relevant topic.

Convenors:

- Monika Fludernik (University of Freiburg, Germany)
monika.fludernik@anglistik.uni-freiburg.de
 - Rahel Orgis (University of Berne, Switzerland)
rahel.orgis@unibe.ch
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35.Sound and Mysticism in Medieval English Literature **[online]**

The recent scholarly fascination with medieval aurality has demonstrated that, even though no fully-fledged theory of auditory perception can be gauged from medieval theoretical literature, many writings foregrounded the relationship of sound and cognition. An important group of texts exploring the nature of sound, its perception by the inner and outer senses, and its impact on human cognition and behaviour is constituted by mystical writings describing hallucinatory

experiences. The seminar invites papers exploring the engagements of medieval mystical texts (in English or translated into English) with sound, perception, and any aspect of audition, such as inner hearing, auditory imagery, auditory memory, and hearing and cognition.

Convenors:

- Denis Renevey (University of Lausanne, Switzerland)
Denis.Renevey@unil.ch
 - Tamás Karáth (Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest and Comenius University, Bratislava)
tamas.karath@gmail.com
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36. The End of Traditional Fixed Forms in Poetry [in person]

Have contemporary poets completely abandoned traditional fixed forms for free verse? Are sonnet, villanelle, rime royale, ottava rima things of the past? Is this a passing phase or something lasting? Have creative writing courses and a poetry culture that validates, above all, self-expression and the therapeutic virtues of poetry had an influence on such abandonment? Do publishers and magazines favour a specific kind of brief free-verse lyric? Do scholarship and criticism that are predominantly thematic in orientation play a role in attenuating an interest in traditional craft? Or have traditional fixed forms survived in the work of older and younger poets? And what of new fixed forms such as those derived from African and West Indian poetic traditions: reggae, dub, rap?

We invite proposals for papers that address these and other issues in the first two decades of the twenty-first century. In addition, papers that consider late twentieth-century traditional formal verse and its links with later work will be welcome.

Convenors:

- David Malcolm (SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Poland)
dmalcolm.pl@gmail.com
 - Wolfgang Görtschacher (University of Salzburg, Austria)
Wolfgang.Goertschacher@plus.ac.at
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37. Contemporary Crises in the Anglosphere: Fragmentation and Relationality in 21st-century Narratives [in person]

The complex etymology of the term “crisis” suggests both a rupture and an alarming situation requiring a critical attitude. Even though “crisis is [...] a process embedded in the ordinary that unfolds in stories about navigating what is overwhelming” (Berlant 2010: 10), the last three decades are characterised by multiple intersecting crises. This has led to the coinage of the neologism permacrisis, which defines “an extended period of instability and insecurity, esp one resulting from a series of catastrophic events” (Collins Dictionary word of the year in 2022). The aim of this seminar is to explore, focusing on literary and cultural practices, the multifarious ways in which contemporary literature (2010s onwards) is responding to contemporary crises (Russia’s war in Ukraine, economic/security crisis, pandemic crisis, global political imbalances, climate emergency), and how it is influencing their construction

and our perception of them. The main area to be explored is the Anglosphere, which is affected and questioned by these crises.

Contributions are welcome to address:

- Planetarity; relationality
- Fragmentation; vulnerability
- Cosmopolitanism, transnationalism; globalisation
- Migration; Diaspora Studies
- Ecocriticism
- Postcolonial, Decolonial and Indigenous Studies
- Gender; Queer Studies
- Anglosphere; Brexit

References:

Berlant, Laurent. 2010. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham: Duke UP.

Convenors:

- Chiara Battisti (University of Verona, Italy)
chiara.battisti@univr.it
 - Julia Kuznetski (Tallinn University Estonia)
jul@tlu.ee
 - Silvia Pellicer-Ortín (University of Zaragoza, Spain)
spellice@unizar.es
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38. Class and Conflict in Anglophone Literatures: The Historical Dimension **[in person]**

The theme of social class and conflicts related to social status have been central in Anglophone fiction, from the early narratives to contemporary works. The aim of this seminar is to explore how authors have tackled class divisions, depicting the struggles and tensions that arise as a result, and how the representation of these class issues has evolved over time, reflecting changing social and political contexts. Thus, contributions are invited that address the representation of class in historical fiction and its relationship to social and political contexts, the construction of class identity in different periods, and the role of race, gender, or other intersecting identities in class dynamics.

Convenors:

- Martina Domines Veliki (University of Zagreb, Croatia)
mdomines@ffzg.hr
 - Alberto Lázaro (University of Alcalá, Spain)
alberto.lazaro@uah.es
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39. Transformations of the Environment in Victorian, Edwardian and Modernist **Essays** **[in person]**

Victorian, Edwardian and Modernist essays have been mainly studied as exemplifying the art of criticism in their time or as products of the periodicals in which they were initially published, or as parts of writers' production. The aim of this seminar is to focus on the way

the essays of the late 19th and early 20th centuries register and reflect the environment in which their authors were living, and its transformations.

Rural or urban, beautiful or polluted, affected or damaged by urbanization or war, how did the environment find its way in the essay? Was this eminently plastic genre affected in some way in its style or form by the transformations of the environment? Asking such questions will be a way of exploring essays by canonical writers as well as neglected ones and refining our knowledge of what the environment meant for them.

Convenors:

- Dominika Buchowska-Greaves (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland)
drusz@amu.edu.pl
 - Bénédicte Coste (Université de Bourgogne, France)
Benedicte.Coste@u-bourgogne.fr
 - Christine Reynier (Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier3, France)
christine.reynier@univ-montp3.fr
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40.Fictional Criminality and Humour [in person]

While criminality, crime fiction and deviance (in its various forms) are typically not treated comically, there are surprisingly many literary and cultural works that do exactly this either within the traditional genres of detective, crime or spy fiction or as parodies of these. Criminality is not funny per se, but it can be represented as such. While some genres of crime fiction, such as Cozy Crime Fiction, rely on expressions of humour, other genres seem to entirely exclude any form of humour or comedy from the depiction of crime and detection. Humour, thus, can be either overtly present or conspicuously absent, indicating a complex relationship of crime fiction and humour overall.

This seminar investigates the relationship between fictional criminality and humour in Anglophone literatures and cultures from as many perspectives, and timespans as possible. We welcome (interdisciplinary) papers using theoretical, philosophical, social, or psychological perspectives, examining the complex socio-cultural backgrounds of humour theories in relation to crime fiction and/or films. Papers should address how humour qualifies the treatment of fictional criminality and how this affects understanding human fallibility and deviance.

To apply, please send your proposal (c.250 words) and a brief bio to tothzsofianna@gmail.com and kerstin-anja.muenderlein@uni-bamberg.de.

Convenors:

- Zsofia Anna Toth (University of Szeged, Hungary)
tothzsofianna@gmail.com
 - Kerstin-Anja Munderlein (Bamberg University, Germany)
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41.Latest Developments in Reception Studies

[in person]

The first volume of the series *The Reception of British and Irish Authors in Europe* (gen. ed. Elinor Shaffer) was launched in 2002. Since then, with the appearance of distant reading, new national databases, or electronic press archives, research on the national receptions of individual authors has continued, widened, and speeded up, promising new data in the field. We invite participants to discuss the latest results of the reception history of individual authors, British, Scottish, or Irish, in national literatures throughout Europe. The seminar also offers an opportunity to discuss and share possible directions and methods of research in Reception Studies.

Convenors:

- David M. Clark (Universidade da Coruña, Spain)
david.clark@udc.es
 - Gabriella Hartvig (University of Pécs, Hungary)
hartvig.gabriella@pte.hu
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42.Multifaceted India in Travel Literature

[in person]

Though generally considered to be a relatively young literary genre in India, dating back to the colonial period, travel literature has since proven to be a very successful formula. The double image thus generated – the India seen by the foreign travel writers and the India described by local travelers – forms a complex panoramic and palimpsestic representation that engenders a protean space rendered either as a “space of the mind” – defined by factual, realistic, social and historical details, or as a “space of the heart” – offering a sentimental, often romanticized depiction, but always fascinating and enlightening.

This seminar welcomes papers that focus on the portrayal of India as apparent in writings inspired by a particular form of travel, the pilgrimage, real or metaphorical, that takes the readers along a meandering path into the heart of India, its customs and traditions, its sites of cultural heritage and spiritual enlightenment towards a final morally higher significance. Contributed papers may variously illustrate this transformative experience of looking for essences, the search for truth and beauty, even starting from less glamorous aspects of reality to picturesque landscapes, bridging past and present, physical and spiritual spaces, outer and inner realities.

Convenors:

- Daniela Rogobete (University of Craiova, Romania)
dani.rogobete@yahoo.com
 - Elisabetta Marino (University of Rome, “Tor Vergata”, Italy)
marino@lettere.uniroma2.it
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• Literatures in English, Cultural and Area Studies

43. Word and Image in Process: Adaptation, Repurposing and Re/Transmediation [in person]

This seminar invites speakers interested in diverse transformations of words and images in the process of adaptation, remediation and transmediality. While adaptation involves broader cultural contexts, repurposing puts the stress on the conceptual or ideological agenda of the adaptor. Remediation converges around mediality showing how one medium is adapted, absorbed, and transformed by other media. Transmediality, and transmedia story-telling, refers to the ways in which narratives are developed across various media platforms. We are interested in the complexity of the processes, their rhizomatic proliferation and aesthetic effects. We invite researchers working in the broadly conceived field of word/image relations including more traditional forms of literature/visual arts to new media, such as computer games and graphics, video, film and digital art.

Convenors:

- Ewa Kęblowska-lawniczak (Wrocław University, Poland)
freeway.bohemia@gmail.com
 - György Szönyi (Szeged University, Hungary)
geszonyi@lit.u-szeged.hu
 - Liliane Louvel (University of Poitiers, France)
liliane.louvel@wanadoo.fr
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44. Facing Trauma in Contemporary American Literary Discourse [in person]

Trauma has always been part of the American collective experience, but only since September 11, 2001 has it been acknowledged on a widespread scale. Most people will experience some form of trauma during their lifetime, but in contemporary American culture, it is often understood as a problem to be blamed on someone, fought, or repressed entirely. Despite burgeoning trauma studies, popular responses to trauma from the media to politics produce ever more aggression and fear. This seminar the power of narrative invites the contributors to respond to this growing awareness through literary analyses. A good story can become a space for curiosity in the face of trauma and uncertainty. A story opens imaginative possibilities for asking, in what ways can readers bring more awareness to the benefits of seeing our planetary interdependence in the midst of global polarization? The readings of novels, autobiographical texts, and poems are to ponder how this question might as well be among the most valuable we can ask in the early 21st century. The topics to be discussed might include, yet are not limited to — the role of house and/or home, the presence of a singular trauma experienced by the protagonist that acts as a catalyst for the story, the ambition of the narrator/protagonist to be a survivor rather than victim of trauma, the attempt to relate individual trauma to a historical past, and, finally, the ability of the protagonist to take action that influences the environment without controlling others.

Convenors:

- Laura Castor (Arctic University of Tromsø, Norway)
laura.castor@uit.no
- Michaela Marková (Technical University of Liberec, Czechia)
michaela.markova@tul.cz

- Anna Světlíková (Technical University of Liberec, Czechia)
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45. Petrofiction **[in person]**

This seminar on the topic of petrofiction offers a space to enquire into how the current energy and climate crises relate to the renewed rise in nationalism and ‘traditional’ gender roles. Indian writer Amitav Ghosh (1992) introduced the term petrofiction to discuss the cultural implications of oil regimes. We wish to add to existing debates by engaging specifically with those aspects of “petromodernity” and “petrocultures” that do not benefit from the extraction of non-renewable energies globally. We welcome contributions that question those cultural strategies which presume that modern prosperity, democracy, and equality are founded, without alternative, on non-renewable energy regimes. Therefore, our interest is the intersection of energy, gender, and nation, as well as the role it plays in endowing non-renewable energy with cultural significance, following Cara New Daggett (2018) theorisation that misogyny, climate change denial, and the recent rise in nationalism are not separate dimensions but co-constitutive. The seminar will combine literary and cultural studies, inviting contributions from such fields as ecocriticism, energy humanities, gender studies, and postcolonial theory to explore representations of petromasculinity, transport mobilities, and extractivism in literary texts and other forms of cultural production such as films, television series, or graphic novels.

Convenors:

- Sophie Kriegel (Free University Berlin, Germany)
suk@posteo.de
 - Johannes Riquet (Tampere University, Finland)
johannes.riquet@tuni.fi
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46. Boundaries of American identity **[in person]**

The aim of the panel is to examine contemporary writing for young adults as they are the group where the consequences of erecting walls, social structures and discourses of separation may impact with pressing insistence. American teenagers are the most ethnically diverse population segment in the country, with over one out of three teens belonging to a minority group (Mediamark Research Inc., 2004, p. 5). The current increasing trend in contemporary US YA fiction is therefore to deal with the ethnic experience of young adults. How does the fact of living in imaginary or physical borderlands generate their sense of belonging within a family, a group, or the country? Is their Americanness the result of growing up into the world of diverse, and often conflicting backgrounds through the process of descent or is it a consensual process of appropriating the qualities of the world strange enough to be contested? Or is a laborious process of acquiring the balance in the world-in-between? The stories examine, question, and undermine the cultural narratives of both dominant and marginalised groups and provide the readers with a penetrating look at forms of otherness through the eyes of teenagers. Existing between radically different stages of life young teenagers can be viewed as a looking glass disclosing diversity and complexity of growing up ethnic and national. The characters based on them are at odds with traditional views on the concept of American race and go against the grain in manifesting their religious values and beliefs. Their stories reveal what it inherently

means to be at the same time from the outside and inside of social and cultural structures and get us closer to answering the question: what makes America American? As the ethnic makeup of the American population grows more diverse, Americans demand greater representation in media and politics, indicating a shift in values. American identity is no longer to be represented by a single ethnic majority, but made up of diverse cultures with a voice. Diverse representation is only one of the many growing values among Americans, but significant to the tone of political debate and policy differences observed between generations. The individual papers in this panel will examine a selection of contemporary YA novels and question characters are at odds with the traditional views on the conceptual American race, and whether they go against the grain in their religious values and beliefs.

Convenors:

- Alena Smiešková (Univerzita Komenského, Bratislava, Slovakia)
alena.smieskova@uniba.sk
- Michaela Marková (Technical University of Liberec, Czechia)
michaela.markova@tul.cz

47. Neo-Victorian Biofiction

[Part 1 online, Part 2 in person]

In Juliette Atkinson's terms, the Victorian era was 'the Age of Biography' and so it is apt that neo-Victorian literature and culture is also preoccupied with reimagining the lives of nineteenth-century subjects.ⁱ The term biofiction is key here; the genre is characterised by the blurring of boundaries between historiography and literature, fact and fiction, traits that are particularly suited to neo-Victorianism's interest in challenging the master discourse of the traditional historical record. 'Eminent Victorians' might be fictionalised to emphasise their indiscretions, making conspicuous the power inequalities of history. Marginalised Victorians are brought to the fore and provided with a narrative agency that was denied in their cultural moment. However, as extant scholarship has demonstrated, ethical quandaries loom large in the arena of neo-Victorian biofiction.ⁱⁱ

We welcome paper proposals that deal with any aspect of neo-Victorian biofiction in texts, neo-Victorian media and visual representations. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Neo-Victorian 'celebrity' biofiction
- Biofiction of nineteenth-century 'others'
- The ethics and/or politics of neo-Victorian biofiction
- Narratology in neo-Victorian biofiction
- Neo-Victorian biofiction and historiography
- Contemporary biofiction, LGBTQIA+ studies, and nineteenth-century identities
- (Critical) Race studies and biofiction based on the nineteenth century
- Neo-Victorian biofiction and fresh critical perspectives: ageing, disability, diaspora, indigeneity, cosmopolitanism, (trans)nationalism/s, animal studies, ecocriticism, etc.

ⁱ Juliette Atkinson. *Victorian Biography Reconsidered*. (Oxford: OUP, 2010), p. 14.

ⁱⁱ See, for example, Marie-Luise Kohlke and Christian Gutleben's collection, *Neo-Victorian Biofiction: Reimagining Nineteenth-Century Historical Subjects* (Amsterdam and New York: Brill, 2020).

Convenors:

- Maria Isabel Romero-Ruiz (University of Málaga, Spain)
mirr@uma.es
 - Helen Davies (University of Wolverhampton, United Kingdom)
H.Davies6@wlv.ac.uk
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48. Imagining the Railway in the 20th Century **[in person]**

That the arrival of the railway changed people's perception of the world has been well established since Wolfgang Schivelbusch's pioneering work. There is a substantial body of scholarship documenting the nineteenth-century railway's influence on the experience of travel and its impact on different cultural media. The history of railway experience in the twentieth century, when the train was challenged by the automobile and aeroplane, remains neglected in comparison. Trains did not disappear, however, but were invested with new imaginative possibilities, for instance in novels by Graham Greene and Toni Morrison.

This seminar will explore the literary and cultural significance of the railway in the twentieth century. It reflects on new developments in mobility studies and infrastructure studies. We welcome proposals that focus on the relationship between the twentieth-century railway and English-language literature, cinema, the visual arts and/or other cultural modes.

Themes to be explored include, but are not limited to the following:

- the railway and (literary) form
- gender and sexual identity
- (post)colonial perspectives
- railway and war
- experiences of long-distance travel
- experiences of commuting
- spaces of the railway
- the railway's impact on landscape and environment
- comparisons between literary and visual depictions of the railway

Convenors:

- Frederik van Dam (Modern Languages and Cultures, Radboud University, Netherlands)
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 - Jason Finch (English Language and Literature, Åbo Akademi University, Finland)
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 - Adam Borch (English Language and Literature, Åbo Akademi University, Finland)
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49. Exploring the Scandalous **[in person]**

We invite abstracts on the topic/narrative structures/media conditions of the scandalous (in the 19th-21st centuries) through the lens of in_visibilisation. Scandals – in the context of sex, money or power – tend to involve obfuscation, an audience that is in the dark, but willing to see, agents who have an interest either in disclosure or in concealment. These interests are shot

through with power that can be gendered, often contains a class-imbalance, is sometimes racialized, and not infrequently centres on non-normative desires. One area in which these dynamics of scandalization become particularly obvious are the cultural practices of fame and celebrity. The intersections of scandal, celebrity, the marketplace, and literary culture are perhaps most strikingly exemplified by Lord Byron, whose enduring fame and position in the cultural imagination rest on a mix of social and sexual transgression, religious heresy, and political dissent. The commodification of the author's scandalous private and professional life also has distinctly gendered implications, more readily translating into posthumous fame for male than for female authors. Papers might discuss, but are not limited to: literary or filmic representations of political or financial or sexual or corruption scandals or a mix of all three.

Convenors:

- Sandra Mayer (Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria)
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- Sylvia Mieszkowski (University of Vienna, Austria)
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- Barbara Straumann (University of Zurich, Switzerland)
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50. Travel Writing Poetics [in person]

Travel studies have flourished for 20 years, with dedicated academic journals (Studies in Travel Writing, Literary Geographies), conferences ('Borders and Crossings'), and learned societies (Société d'Etude de la Littérature de Voyage du monde Anglophone). It is therefore time to take stock and chart new directions. Rather than focus on the 'what'— who travels, what is described, and what ideologies are manifest – we will discuss travel writing's 'how': what conceptual and writing strategies do travel writers employ to make sense of their experience and convey it to an audience?

We aim to think of the theoretical work done by Robert Tally Jr. in literary geography/cartography, Bertrand Westphal in geocriticism and geographers like Tim Cresswell on topopoetics and Eric Magrane on geopoetics. We are keen to introduce space and emplacement paradigms from literature, philosophy and geography, and go beyond Lawrence's 'sense of place', Foucault's heterotopia and Deleuze/ Guattari's smooth and striated spaces. While (short) individual case studies across geographies and periods are encouraged for exemplification, our primary agenda is a meta-level reflection on the poetics of this heterogeneous and malleable genre.

Depending on interest, we may consider shorter 'lightning papers' to allow for more presenters and paradigms.

Convenors:

- Claudia Capancioni (Bishop Grosseteste University, UK)
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- Mariaconcetta Costantini (G. d'Annunzio University of Chieti-Pescara, Italy)
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- Julia Kuehn (The University of Hong Kong/Aix-Marseille University; from January 2024: The University of Groningen, Netherlands)
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51. Victorian Heterotopias: Alternative Spaces and Places in Nineteenth-Century Britain **[online]**

Starting out from philosopher Michel Foucault's definition of heterotopias as "worlds within worlds, mirroring and yet upsetting what is outside," the seminar aims to explore fictional representations and real-life experiences of alternative spaces and places in nineteenth-century Britain. We are interested in fantasized "elsewhere" – like Alice's Wonderland, William Morris's Nowhere, Dr Jekyll's laboratory, haunted houses or the madwoman's attic in Jane Eyre – where the dominant ideology is subverted and deviation from the social norm is tolerated in imaginary forms. But we also seek to explore how man-made "counter-sites" – including transient spaces as transatlantic steamships, medical institutions as asylums, imperial territories as colonies, and technological loci as the Crystal Palace – prove to be both symptomatic and formative of the conflicted Victorian frame of mind. In accordance with Yi-Fu Tuan's humanistic geography, our mappings move beyond the analysis of cartographical locations to examine the sense of space: place as it lives in the experience and consciousness of people who render meaning to it. Research areas include, but are not limited to cultural studies, literature, architecture, aesthetics, environmental geography, gender studies, and medical humanities.

Convenors:

- Anna Kérchy (University of Szeged, Hungary)
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 - Béatrice Laurent (Bordeaux Montaigne University, France)
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 - Sidia Fiorato (University of Verona, Italy)
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52. Representing Gender-based and Sexualized Violence in Literature **[in person]**

Following the #MeToo movement there has been renewed interest in giving visibility to narratives of long-established and persistent forms of gender-based and sexualized violence. This seminar seeks to shed light on the role that literary texts can play in understanding and challenging such forms of violence by focussing on its representation across different genres, including crime fiction and other narrative prose, poetry, drama and memoir, from the nineteenth century to the present. We are particularly interested in proposals considering textual strategies, narrative perspective/voice, the ethics of narrative representation and theoretical perspectives for approaching this kind of violence. We welcome papers that deploy innovative, interdisciplinary frameworks drawing on a combination of, for example, legal and criminological perspectives and narratology.

Questions for consideration include, but are not limited to:

How are literary technique and genre used to explore such violence?

How do writers negotiate ethical questions in relation to these topics?

How do texts balance the voice(s) of perpetrators with those of the victims or survivors?

What are the roles of publishing agendas and audiences in making visible and/or exploiting gender-based and sexualized violence?

To what extent do cultural and cross-cultural specificities impact on the representation of such forms of violence?

Convenors:

- Işıl Baş (Istanbul Kultur University, Turkey)
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 - Anne Schwan (Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland)
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53. Energy Ecologies **[in person]**

At a time of environmental, economic and energetic crisis, humanity's continuing dependence on fossil fuels has come to the forefront of cultural debate. The emerging field of energy humanities responds to such urgent concerns in exploring how energy has shaped, and continues to shape, history, culture and literature. Energy is fundamentally entangled with human culture and literature in often unexpected ways and therefore exceeds not just geographical and temporal, but also disciplinary boundaries. This seminar seeks to bring together research on ecologies of energy to establish a critical and multiperspectival dialogue about literary and cultural negotiations of energy.

Convenors:

- Julia Ditter (University of Konstanz, Germany)
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 - Ursula Kluwick (University of Bern, Switzerland)
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 - Paul Hamann-Rose (University of Passau, Germany)
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54. Waters and Environmental Crisis in the nineteenth century **[in person]**

The nineteenth century witnessed intensified environmental problems due to unprecedented demographic, technological; infrastructural, and industrial changes; and through the expansion of agriculture, tourism, commerce, and consumption. In order to consider the complex socio-environmental issues resulting from these transformations, we invite speakers to address ways in which European and global aqueous environments (oceans, seas, rivers, lakes, reservoirs, lagoons, canals, glaciers, water supplies, sewers, etc) were marked by the impacts of environmental change, in terms of pollution and other insidious impacts of human activity. Speakers may wish to address the ways that water's primarily benign status was complicated in Romantic and Victorian literature, becoming an ambivalent or frightful site.

Presentations may cover fiction, poetry, drama, non-fiction, scientific works, journalism, or art, and might relate (but are not confined) to:

- Depictions of water in specific locations (real or imagined).

- Water pollution.
- Water management.
- Loss or abundance (floods and droughts).
- Water in science and industry.
- Global waters: colonial and imperial contexts.
- Waters and borders.
- Waters in art and myth.
- Water tourism, travel and exploration.

The ESSE seminar format encourages lively participation by speakers and audience members, so papers should be orally presented rather than read, and designed to encourage participatory dialogue.

Convenors:

- Emma Sdegno (Università Ca'Foscari, Venezia, Italia)
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- Mark Frost (University of Portsmouth, UK)
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55. Fictional Representations of Journalistic Practices in Literature, Film and Television **[online]**

The relationship between journalism and literature has been long-lasting. Since the 19th century, when the news industry developed into a mass communication system, journalists and the (un)ethical practice of the profession have become the object of cultural scrutiny and fascination. Furthermore, in the 20th and 21st centuries, novels, films and television series about the intricacies of news communication have been released in great numbers. However, fictional representations of journalistic practice have not been prominent in academic studies until recently. We invite contributions that examine how such representations negotiate the role(s) of, and challenges for, journalism in modern, postmodern and transmodern cultures.

Convenors:

- Barbara Korte (University of Freiburg, Germany)
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- Beatriz Valverde (University of Jaén, Spain)
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• Cultural and Area Studies

56. What do the Humanities have to say to Law? **[in person]**

This seminar makes the claim that the Humanities have a great deal to say to Law, legal training, and critical legal theory. We investigate Law and Humanities research from the perspectives of legal actors as well as scholars working in English Departments, located in

Continental Europe, bringing their own literary and legal systemic traditions to common law and Anglophone legal texts. The seminar investigates new directions in Law and the Humanities, including – but not exclusively – how affect and metaphor theory change the primarily narrative-based research that has dominated the past.

Convenors:

- Greta Olson (University of Giessen, Germany)
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 - Armelle Sabatier (Paris-Panthéon-Assas University, France)
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 - Claire Wrobel (Paris-Panthéon-Assas University, France)
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• **Cultural and Area Studies, English Language**

57. Exploring epistemic and effective stance in discourse on racism, immigration and refugees **[online]**

Within the broad category of stance, which encompasses the expression of attitude or evaluation, epistemic stance relates to the justificatory support of transmitted information, involving the assessment of its validity. Conversely, effective stance focuses on the realization of events and aims to determine or influence the course of reality. This seminar invites contributions that explore epistemic and effective stance in discourse related to critical themes such as racism, immigration, and refugees in English discourse, as well as contrastive approaches involving other languages and cultures. The discussion will encompass diverse crises, temporal periods, ideological perspectives, languages, and geographical contexts. We warmly welcome papers that adopt a holistic approach to either one or both categories of stance. Furthermore, we encourage submissions that delve into subcategories such as epistemic modality, evidentiality, deontic modality, or volition. Additionally, we welcome papers that examine one or more specific markers, including modal auxiliaries, lexical verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and adverbials.

Conveonors:

- Elena Domínguez Romero (Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain)
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 - Anna Ruskan (Vilnius University, Lithuania)
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58. Professional and disciplinary cultures in English for specific purposes (ESP) **[in person]**

Cultures are complex systems of values, norms and representations shaping professional competence and the discourses of specialised communities. In ESP, the notion of culture can be approached from two distinct angles: national culture and disciplinary and professional cultures. Even though the former is often neglected in ESP, it could shed some light on the

particularities of the professional and disciplinary cultures, firmly anchored in specific national contexts. We invite speakers to reflect on various ways to study professional and disciplinary cultures, including ethnography and intercultural rhetoric, or share their experiences of teaching such cultures. Contributors may approach the latter from a sociological standpoint, viewing the enculturation process and acquisition of cultural competence as professional socialisation.

Convenors:

- Evgueniya Lyu (University Grenoble Alpes, France)
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 - Nadežda Stojković (University of Niš, Serbia)
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 - Caroline Peynaud (University Grenoble Alpes, France)
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• **Cultural and Area Studies, English Language, Literatures in English**

59. Gendered discourses of nation- and community-building in the English-speaking world

[in person]

This interdisciplinary seminar takes up Tebaldi and Baran's "call to return to questions of power and oppression in the study of language and gender" (2023: 10) by investigating dominant as well as marginalised narratives of nation- and community-building in the English-speaking world. We invite contributions from researchers who are interested in exploring fictional and non-fictional texts and discourses writing nations and communities from a gendered perspective. The relevant topics include but are not limited to: the role of gender in the discursive construction of institutions and collective identities; the links between gender and nationalism, as well as collective memory; the symbolic representations of masculinity and femininity in (anti-)national(ist) discourses.

References:

Tebaldi, C., & Baran, D. (2023). Of tradwives and TradCaths: The anti-genderism register in global nationalist movements. *Gender and Language*, 17(1), 1–13.
<https://doi.org/10.1558/genl.25635>

Convenors:

- Polina Shvanyukova (University of Udine, Italy)
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 - Mariana Sargsyan (Yerevan State University, Armenia)
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 - Célia Atzeni (Université Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne, France)
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60. The Complexities of the Contemporary Concept of Motherhood **[online]**

The seminar convenors invite presentations from all sectors of English Studies addressing the contemporary concept of motherhood both as a social phenomenon and in cultural representations. The new sides of motherhood touch upon issues of essentialism, backlash and scientism in society, law, medicine, culture, language or literature. Presentations may include topics such as surrogate motherhood, right to parenthood, artificial uterus, etc. Surrogacy commercializes the wombs of women in need, and shifts the focus from the rights of the child and the surrogate mother to that of the prospective parents, raising ethical and human rights questions in the context of an unofficial turn towards essentializing women's role.

Convenors:

- Işıl Baş (Istanbul Kültür University, Turkey)
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 - Florence Binard (Université Paris Cité, France)
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 - Renate Haas (University of Kiel, Germany)
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 - María Socorro Suárez Lafuente (University of Oviedo, Spain)
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