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FORKING PATHS

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FORKING PATHS

International Student Conference

in English Studies

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
University of Zagreb
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ANGLOPHONIA

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Foreword

Two roads diverged in a wood, and I-
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken"

When coming up with this year's conference theme, our thinking was not only focused on the complexity of interpretation, but also on the multitude of paths (both strange and sinuous at times) our own research might take. In some sense, the idea of forking paths also symbolizes the thrill of exploration, as well as the ways in which other people might shine light on new avenues for us to explore.

Continuing on the path set by the previous conferences, it remains our goal to provide a platform where students and future scholars can present their work and, in this way, encourage student engagement in academic study and research on all university levels. Over the course of three days, 24 student presenters from 13 European universities will have the opportunity to share their research and ideas with other colleagues, professors and the public. We hope this will not only create a stimulating and inspiring environment, but also help forge professional relationships that will lead us down new paths and see us through the rest of our academic journeys.

On the behalf of the Organizing Committee
Nika Keserović

Keynote Speakers

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Anglo Phonies: English as an Acquired Taste

This talk presents a personal account experiences I've had navigating the world of Anglophonia and how they shaped my sense of an ethnic identity in the U.S.A. I relate how my adventures, on the streets of Chicago and in the libraries and school, shaped my intellectual development and fashioned my career as a writer and professor of English and Italian American culture. Through my research and writing about Italian American authors he was able to deal with social and institutional politics as I made the move from the margins of a Little Italy neighborhood in Chicago into the international world of ethnic studies.

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The Literary History and Future(s) of Forking Paths

In his 1915 poem "The Road Not Taken" American poet Robert Frost speculated "two roads diverged in a wood, and I, I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference." Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges's 1941 short story "The Garden of Forking Paths" complicated this idea, exploring what a story would look like if the writer took all paths simultaneously, thus creating "various futures, various times which start others that will in their turn branch out and bifurcate in other times." Both writers' ideas address a provocative aspect of how we understand reality—in a world in which free will is assumed, choices matter, and this makes "all the difference." In this presentation, U.S. cultural historian Mark Metzler Sawin will explore the "forking paths" of choices and their consequences through an examination of literature itself, and how technological shifts create profound changes in what writing, authorship, reading, and literature itself means. He will first focus on nineteenth-century changes that resulted in the rise of popular fiction, and then on today, when high-level computing, hyperlink functionality, RPGs and AI are again changing how we tell and understand stories.

Student Presenters

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Memetic suggestions: A comparative sentiment analysis of multimodal and textual posts

This linguistic study focuses on the use of memes on social media and their utilization in the posters' representation and the reception they receive. The study looks at social media posts regarding certain polarizing topics – both textual and memetic – and, using sentiment analysis, determines the answer to the question: Does usage of memetic elements improve the sentiments of the audience towards the more positive?

The research takes into account a number of posts gathered from social media platforms, such as Facebook and X, and compares pairs by the same poster on the same topic in order to retain a similar baseline of presumed popularity of the contribution. The study then looks into how these pairs (of which one is textual and one memetic) are perceived by the public – if the memetic element evokes more positive responses than the textual one. A sample size of the reactions to these posts are subjected to sentiment analysis using both artificial intelligence tools and subsequent manual qualitative evaluation of the post by the author regarding its contextual cues and accuracy of the AI's determined sentiment. The overall sentiment values, extracted from a few such pairs of posts, then portray whether the tactic of using memetic elements to engage the crowd and skew the opinion of polarizing topics is successful in these instances.

By a mixed qualitative and quantitative examination of the data, the project gives insight into representation manipulation on social media and the power of memetic elements as communication units in digital environments. The study thus observes how the paths of textual and multimodal communication diverge in their effects on the audience and draws conclusions from the results.

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Escape from Innsmouth and The Shadow over Innsmouth – The Role of The Reader in Postmodern Multimedial Narratives

This paper focuses on the Escape from Innsmouth scenario from the 2011 Fantasy Flight Fames cooperative tabletop game Mansions of Madness and its intertaxtual relationship to Howard Philips Lovecraft's short story The Shadow over Innsmouth. More precisely, this paper centers on the postmodern nature of Mansions of Madness, with a particular interest in the relationship between the role of the reader and that of the player. In doing so, the aim of this kind of reading is to connect the narratives born from this contact-area between board games and literary narratives – the one between board game players embodying the role of the readers and the one of the readers in the role of post-Barethesian „producers" of the text. With this in view, this paper starts by introducing some fundamental aspects of postmodernism relevant to this relationship, moving to the question of genre regarding both the game and Lovecraft's story. An exposition of the intertextual essence of the game's scenario leads to the final underlining of the fundamentally postmodern phenomenon of the expansion of the passive reader's role to that of an active player, and the importance of such fundamentally postmodern narratives which invite us to shape them through our own participation, to produce plural truths and readings, and to develop creative imagination and alternative pathways in the postmodern constant questioning of the world that surrounds us.

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Kazuo Ishiguro's An Artist of the Floating World: Living in a Changed World

At the dawn of new historical eras when times and politics are changing people often find themselves at crossroads of their lives. They belonged to one world yet now they find themselves in a new one and are forced to change themselves to fit. The aim of this paper is to take a look at the struggle of people in accepting change, both political and personal, and navigating their new environment by focusing on the protagonist of An Artist of the Floating World, painter Masuji Ono. This paper looks into into Ono's character and more importantly, his own perception of himself and his actions during WWII era of Japan and how it continues to affect him and his actions in the newly-forming nation of postwar Japan. It analyzes the ideas of shame, guilt and confronting one's past as presented in the novel. Apart from that, it also explores to which degree Ono is a victim and to which he is the perpetrator and how one finds themselves standing at the wrong side of history.

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Chained to the Desk: Reactions to Late Capitalism in American Psycho and Fight Club

This article utilizes Fredric Jameson's seminal exploration of postmodernism as a framework for examining the complex interplay between consumerism and late capitalism. Through an exploration of Patrick Bateman's character in Bret Easton Ellis's novel American Psycho and the protagonist of Chuck Palahniuk's Fight Club, the article delves into the multifaceted dynamics of contemporary consumer culture and its discontents.

Bateman's persona serves as a focal point for dissecting compensatory consumerism within the confines of a stifling corporate culture. Embedded in this exploration is an exposition of the cyclical nature of consumption within the capitalist and postmodernist framework, wherein desires are incessantly manufactured and commodified to create an illusion of choice. The two protagonists indulge in markers signifying their social status which emphasizes their efforts to construct an impenetrable façade behind which they act as agents of chaos. The article further investigates the nuances of satire and comedy of manners inherent in Bateman's narrative, juxtaposing them against the backdrop of the Puritan work ethic that inspired and fueled capitalist ideology since its inception.

Furthermore, the discourse extends to the portrayal of the protagonist in Fight Club as his "Project" represents his symbolic but questionable liberation from the binds of consumer capitalism. However, it serves as a contrast to Bateman's subdued and individualistic reaction in American Psycho which reflects his Yuppie sympathies. Through a comparative analysis, the article stresses the differing levels of awareness exhibited by these two characters facing the drawbacks of late capitalism.

In conclusion, while Bateman and the protagonist of Fight Club share a common disillusionment with capitalist consumer culture, their responses reflect varying degrees of defiance, organization, and credibility.

Keywords: postmodernism, late capitalism, consumerism, *American Psycho*, *Fight Club*, compensatory consumerism

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Agency in Worldbuilding

Fictional worlds in and of themselves are stages for endless creative choices and infinite worldbuilding agency, however depending on the medium in which they're portrayed, this vastness, complexity or moldability has to be limited. The method of worldbuilding and the nature of the world and how audiences interact with it comes to a fork in the path, where it branches out. It may take the form of complex worlds where the agency of the audience is limited to different degrees, such as the worlds of novels, which allow for detailed backstories, legends, languages etc; Or forms where depth is potentially sacrificed to offer greater freedom for audiences, like in tabletop roleplaying games or in some genres of video games, where one could even have the ability to modify the world presented to varying degrees.

My presentation explores worldbuilding across various genres and media, including fan fiction, tabletop role-playing games, and computer games, examining how the depth of worldbuilding and the worldbuilding process itself shapes the immersive experiences of participants and audiences, which in my opinion is determined by its method of presentation. I investigate the choices creators of fictional worlds face regarding how the overall narrative experience is presented and the divergent paths that open up before them, considering specific genres and media of worldbuilding.

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Intersecting Crossroads: A Comprehensive Exploration of Identity Formation in Second-Generation Migrants through Postcolonial and Transnational Perspectives

Understanding identity formation has always been a pressing matter examined by many approaches and theories. The transnational perspective provides a broader complementary understanding to its predecessor, the postcolonial theory. While the postcolonial approach would navigate identity through addressing issues of hybridity, assimilation and preservation of cultural heritage; the transnational perspective diverges by attempting to move beyond borders and cross cultures to create crossroads that transcend the nation-state.

By employing these two approaches, it is possible to have a comprehensive understanding to identity formation in 2nd generation migrants. The 2nd generation is usually stranded between the parents' homeland, and their own homeland; issues of belonging and finding one's self are made more challenging with two cultures to navigate. The transnational approach bridges crossroads that lead to Bhabha's third space. In this space, the single narrative losses any connotations to colonial hegemony in the postcolonial sphere and becomes a victory in the transnational approach, and identities become hyphenated and fluid in nature.

Keywords: identity formation, transnational, crossroads, postcolonial, belonging

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Ruritania Slaps Back: A Case of an Internalised Narrative of the Other

In order to examine the vast yet rarely acknowledged role British literature has played in shaping the way we conceive of the Balkans as a geopolitical space, I will analyse a disproven urban legend connected to Serbian history and compare it to relevant British literary works, showing how imperialist stereotypes inhabit the narrative discourse in the region. The apocryphal story in question, in which young Winston Churchill gets slapped by an opinionated Serb and subsequently gets his revenge, has appeared on social media as well as in many Serbian tabloids. Despite its local origin and anti-British sentiment, I find that it exhibits marked similarities with the way British writers, diplomats and journalists described the Balkans in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This sort of literature, often called the Ruritanian romance genre, has been interpreted by many researchers as akin to what postcolonial critics have dubbed Orientalism. My theoretical frame will be based on the seminal study of Ruritanian literature, Inventing Ruritania by Vesna Goldsworthy, centring especially on her concept of the imperialism of the imagination. I will methodically examine the elements of the story that also feature prominently in British Ruritanian fiction, thus combining a case study with a comparative approach. The aim of my analysis is to prove that the Victorian and Edwardian view of the Balkans has become so persistent that, to this day, even the patriotic-nationalist narratives coming from the region itself are not free from these powerful imperialist and othering presuppositions, and can, ironically, further enforce them.

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The Sacred and the Profane: Symbolism in Eliot's "The Burial of the Dead"

T. S. Eliot's "The Waste Land", an epochal poem portraying the fall of modern civilization, has had a decisive role in shaping 20th century anglophone anthology and modernist anthology on the whole. Divided into five sections, that is five thematically correlated poems, The Waste Land combines motifs from both religious and occult mythologies with those of drab urban settings. The underlying building block of Waste Land's society is the total lack of religious principles. All throughout the poem, motifs referencing traditional Christianity are opposed with those representing the Waste Landers' lifestyle, the former standing for something either warped in their view or entirely unattainable to them. While the inhabitants of this dystopic world are not devoid of interest towards the metaphysical, this interest does not manifest in following traditional religion, but in resorting to alternative spiritual practices, namely cartomancy. The poem's first section, titled "The Burial of the Dead", abounds with religious symbols which are contrasted with those of occultism. The aim of this paper is to analyse sacred and profane motifs in complementation within the first section specifically. It focuses on the meaning of natural motifs, religious imagery and Tarot symbolism, all of which are utilized for contrasting purposes in some way, often intertextually, as they reference various Western canonical works.

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Native American Women's Writing: Decoding Sophia A. Callahan's Wynema: A Child of the Forest (1891)

Sophia Alice Callahan's novel Wynema: A Child of the Forest has nowadays been acclaimed as the first novel authored by a Native American woman; however, it was long devoid of any recognition. Callahan's work operates along the framework of women's writing as part of literary sentimentalism and particularly draws on the conventions of the domestic (romance) novel, as it follows along the life stories of Wynema Harjo and her white teacher Genevieve Weir becoming friends, colleagues, and in-laws. The novel has evoked an avid discourse in scholarly circles as to how far the text's assimilationist ideology, rooted in the way especially Wynema and her journey of acculturation are framed, is to be understood. In my presentation I will argue that while Wynema can be read as reinforcing negative and racist stereotypes held against the Native community—alongside foregrounding a controversial white Christian assimilationist perspective—this can be understood as part of the intentionally implemented strategies used by Callahan in order to appeal to the codes of a white female readership, facilitating a later subversion of these aspects by making a passionate case for Indigenous rights. My theoretical approach thereby will be founded on the research done in the fields of sentimental women's writing and Native American literary studies, exploring how especially indigenous women writers were able to employ sentimental textual strategies as productive tools to subtlety go against the status quo. In order to appropriately relate the theory to Wynema in the context of my presentation, my methodology will center on performing close readings of select passages to use them as a graspable framework from which to render larger arguments about the text in its entirety even more convincing.

Keywords: Native American literature, women's writing, sentimentalism

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Orwell's Political Enigma: Decoding the Left-Right Conundrum in Interpretations of George Orwell

Eric Arthur Blair, the writer who worked under the pseudonym George Orwell, stands as one of England's most influential and incisive literary figures. Born in 1903, Orwell produced an extensive body of work that delved into the complexities of political ideology, societal structures, and the human condition, and was published throughout what were arguably the most tumultuous decades in 20th-century Europe. Through his novels, essays, and articles, we gain profound insights into the man's philosophies, ethical positions and political orientations, which — much like the world around him — underwent significant transformation.

Given the subject matter of his works, it seems perhaps inevitable that his writing would one day be invoked to affirm the contemporary political convictions of those who identify most closely with him. But Orwell, curiously, has emerged as an unwitting standard-bearer for individuals across the entire political spectrum, serving as a tool through which conservatives, progressives, and everyone in between can validate their own political positions. This is particularly noteworthy given that Orwell, as evidenced in his "Politics and the English Language", procured a deserved reputation for championing coherent and unpretentious writing that valued clarity and concision. An unavoidable question therefore arises:

Why do modern-day readers generate such a diverse array of (mis)interpretations from his writing?

Through in-depth analysis of his œuvre, this paper explores how readers might attempt to decode the intentionality of Orwell's writing, and how doing so through the mired lens of the modern-day perspective poses particular challenges unforeseen by the author.

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It is Time for The Fans! How the Young Adult Fiction Authors Changing the Classic Fictions

Most fan fiction authors are amateurs in the literary discipline. Because of its derivative nature, traditional literature does not easily recognize fan fiction's substance. Fan fiction authors use well-known characters and aspects of popular culture as the foundation for their stories. Fan fiction is a genre that consists of stories based on existing cultural works. Any cultural artifact has the potential to spark fan fiction, including books, movies, TV shows, plays, musicals, video games, and recordings. Real people can also serve as the main characters in fan fiction. Fans commonly rewrite the works of musicians, artists, entertainers, sports stars, and historical figures (Bacon-Smith, 1992). Young adult fiction authors use fan fiction techniques, a type of adaptation, to create stories inspired by a particular source book or text. Source texts might be published fictional works, historical archives, or any other narrative impact. This study examines four common fan fiction approaches applied by reader-writers: oppositional gazing, alternate universes, cross-overs, and mash-ups. Young adult fiction disregards typical adaptation guidelines and genre conventions to establish a unique area for narrative exploration. Contemporary writer-readers naturally identify opportunities in the omissions of their selected source texts and are compelled to enhance the original text. The connection between text and reader is a very personal experience that may be more important than the link between text and author.

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Analysis of School English Textbooks in Afghanistan from the Perspective of Global Englishes

This BA thesis project focuses on analyzing English textbooks for grades 4, 9, and 12 at schools in Afghanistan from the perspective of Global Englishes (GE). GE represents a paradigm in English language learning and teaching that "explore the linguistic, sociolinguistic, and sociocultural diversity and fluidity of English use and the implications of this diversity of English on multifaceted aspects of society..." (Rose et al., 2020). In essence, GE acknowledges the evolving nature of languages, driven by societal changes and language users, and adapts language teaching and learning methodologies accordingly, transcending geographical and linguistic boundaries.

Methodologically, the study employs both quantitative and qualitative data collection approaches. Textbook analysis adopts a combined quantitative and qualitative study approach, replicating Syrbe & Rose's (2016) framework for the analysis of English textbooks in Germany, focusing on three criteria: target interlocutors, language norms, and cultural representation. Additionally, data collection involves conducting two semi-structured interviews with four Afghan school English teachers to gather their perspectives on current school English textbooks in Afghanistan and lessons designed from a GE perspective.

As this study is ongoing and scheduled for completion by April 10th, definitive results are not yet available. However, initial data collection from interviews and textbook analysis indicates a noticeable absence of GE influence in the textbooks but reveals a positive response to GE-based lessons. Once the study is completed, it aims to serve as a valuable source for developing new school English textbooks in Afghanistan that reflects modern changes in English language while addressing language learners' needs.

Keywords: English textbooks, Global Englishes, sociolinguistics, language learners, Afghanistan

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Unreliable narrators and myth retellings: a study on the contemporary image of Penelope, Athena and Helen of Sparta

In the past twenty years, Greek myth retellings featuring a female narrator have been on the rise, and their impact has not gone unnoticed. The power of these retellings resides in their narrators, often strong female figures such as Penelope, Circe, Briseis or Calypso. These women and goddesses provide a new point of view on stories commonly narrated from a male perspective. These rewritings are able to shape a new mental image of the classical characters in the mind of the readers. Nevertheless, their voice is also not unconditionally reliable, since it is easy to boast Circe's greatness when Circe is the narrator. It is this ambiguity and unreliability that I seek to further dissect in my research. Instead of focusing on a single book, I am looking at Madeline Miller's Circe, Nathalie Hayne's A thousand ships, Margaret Atwood's The Penelopiad and Pat Barker's The silence of the girls, in order to discuss how these retellings build a complex new image of Penelope, Athena and Helen of Sparta. I have chosen these three characters not only because they play important roles in the Greek stories and appear in all of the chosen books, but also because they antagonize each other to some extent. Penelope's patience is idealized, Helen's beauty is both idolized and despised, and Athena's power is feared. My work calls for a constant doubting of the narrator, whilst claiming that a multitude of voices creates more complex and well built characters. Additionally, my research puts the new image of these figures through a feminist lens to underline the values their lives and actions portray in these retellings. Some of the discussion topics on the characters involve: agency, language, female relationships, class, motherhood and social expectations.

Keywords: myth, retellings, feminism, narrator, agency

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"Tell her I'm not going anywhere: I'm quite happy here in hell." Diasporic identities in construction: An analysis of two Iranian-American short stories

This research delves into the intricate realm of Iranian-American identities through the lens of literature, specifically examining the works of authors Laleh Khadivi and Porochista Khakpour. By drawing on Avtar Brah's framework of diaspora and its socio-political implications, the study seeks to unravel the complexities of Iranian-American experiences woven into their narratives. The theoretical approach involves exploring the power dynamics, cultural influences, and historical contexts that shape the formation of a distinct diasporic identity. Through a close reading of two selected short stories, the aim is to shed light on how these authors navigate the intersections of personal, political, and cultural dimensions in their storytelling. Ultimately, this research serves as a preliminary exploration into the rich tapestry of Iranian-American literature, highlighting the nuances of identity construction and the profound impact of diasporic experiences on literary expression.

Keywords: diaspora, Iranian-American, literature, identity, fiction

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The Lady is Always Causing Distress: Discussing the Representations of the "Sensational Double" within Neo-Victorian Context

The "mad-double" type of transgressive heroine became quite popular in Victorian sensation fiction because sensation authors could reveal the social instability of the period. Through the portrayal of a troubled female protagonist with mental illness (e.g., Lady Audley), they could demonstrate and criticise the anxieties created by restricting societal norms and expectations. The illustration of the double trope through the transgressive female character found its own significance within the genre's afterlives, as well. Neo-Victorian sensation fiction gave a new perspective to "the portrayal of a troubled female protagonist", in which most female neo-sensation authors demonstrate the complexities and richness of characters and their multi-faced identities. Having far more potential than just being analysed alongside its link to mental illnesses, the appearance of the double through these female characters raises important questions concerning identity and gender and turns into a characteristic trope of its own in neo-Victorian sensation fiction. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the portrayal and significance of the "sensational double" in selected neo-Victorian novels, such as Daphne du Maurier's Rebecca (1938), Margaret Atwood's Alias Grace (1996), and Vera Caspary's Bedelia (1945). This research will try to explore the role of the "sensational double" in critiquing societal norms and expectations regarding gender roles and femininity, and to examine how this specific type of double reflects and engages with the legacy of the double trope in Victorian sensation fiction, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of gender and identity issues in contemporary Victorian literature.

Keywords: double, mad-double, neo-Victorian, sensation, gender, identity

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The Importance of Being an Androgynous Transatlantic Radio Demon

In the last five to ten years, a number of shows depicting the conflict between heaven and hell have appeared across various media platforms. These include the likes of The Good Place, Lucifer, Miracle Workers and Good Omens. A cornerstone of these shows is that they tend to be critical about the very foundations of Heaven, exposing Heaven as not all that different from Hell. Taking one such show as its vantage point – specifically, A24's first adult animation project Hazbin Hotel (2024 -) – it is the aim of this essay to explore not so much the moral aspect of the Heaven/Hell dichotomy, but rather, its implications for interpreting the problems and outcomes of the various ongoing battles for media supremacy and the function of intermediality. The essay proposes a dual reading of Hazbin Hotel alongside two of Neil Gaiman's novels-turned-TV-shows, with which Vivienne Medrano's animated series has been compared in various reviews: Good Omens, which deals with the imminence of the final battle between Heaven and Hell, and American Gods, in which the final confrontation between the "old" gods and the "new" gods is represented as a conflict between (Old) Media and New Media. Much like Gaiman, Medrano poses the problem of genre at the centre of the conflict between Heaven and Hell, perhaps most explicitly in the rivalry between Hell's overlords Alastor, the so-called Radio Demon, and the three Vees – Vox, Valentino and Velvette – who stand for television, pornography (film as pornography) and social media, respectively. The essay, in this respect, explores the possibilities (and failures) of contemporary media to construct all-encompassing mythological stories, which attempt to imitate, as well as redefine, myth's social function and the idea of a shareable discourse.

Keywords: *Hazbin Hotel*, Neil Gaiman, intermediality, mythology, eschathology

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Perceptions Veiled in Cosmic Uncertainty: Unraveling Subjectivity in H.P. Lovecraft's 'The Nameless City'

This study examines the complexity of individual perspective, cognition, and existential ambiguity in H.P. Lovecraft's short story, "The Nameless City." This study critically analyses the protagonist's personal experiences, the interaction between their individual perception and objective reality, and the portrayal of intense fear from their perspective in the narrative, using a combination of literary analysis, psychological investigation, and existential philosophy. Moreover, this study explores the dichotomy between subjective reality and objective truth within the narrative structure. The text scrutinizes the protagonist's understanding of the city's past, challenging the trustworthiness of their personal observations and exploring the indistinct distinctions between subjective perception and objective reality. Furthermore, this investigation highlights Lovecraft's motif of the precariousness of human comprehension in the presence of the unfathomable and inscrutable. In summary, this investigation of subjectivity in "The Nameless City" reveals the complex levels of perception, the constraints of subjective comprehension, and the disconcerting domain of cosmic ambiguity. This study provides a detailed analysis of the protagonist's personal experiences in Lovecraft's stories; and highlights how Lovecraft's narrative strategies effectively create a sense of cosmic fear and existential introspection in speculative fiction by focusing on the transformational nature of subjectivity.

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Expanding the lexicon via analogy and schemas: A constructionist approach to proper names with suffixes

As a more recent approach to word formation, Construction Morphology has put forward the idea of the hierarchical lexicon, which assumes both analogical word formation, based on individual model words, and word formation based on abstract schemas (Booij 2010). In this presentation, we look into proper names with suffixes as new lexemes (e.g. Obamahood, San Francisco-ness) collected from COCA (the Corpus of Contemporary American English) and we analyze their form and meaning. We investigate whether there are any established words in wider context which serve as model words (M) for the suffixed proper names or targets (T). There has to be a clear association between the model and the target based on partial resemblance (be it phonological, morphotactic, or semantic) in order to identify analogical word formation (Mattiello 2017). In case there are no model words, we apply schematic representations of the suffixed proper names so as to demonstrate that there is a form-meaning correspondence for each pattern. The results suggest that both analogy and schemas incorporate specific extra-linguistic knowledge related to either proper names or some other referents, which is necessary in interpreting the new lexemes with proper names and suffixes correctly.

Keynotes: analogy, schemas, proper names, suffixes, lexicon

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"The Dream Has Gone, but the Baby is Real." – Elements of Kitchen Sink Realism in UK Indie and Alternative Music

In 1954, British art critic David Sylvester coined the term 'kitchen sink' to describe the works of the British artist collective Beaux Arts, who painted individuals encountering everyday objects, often adding subtle social commentary to their paintings.

Throughout the second half of the 1950s and 1960s, the concept of kitchen sink realism expanded beyond visual art, influencing literature, film, and theatre. This expansion saw a shift towards more explicit social commentary. Works like John Osborne's 1956 play "Look Back in Anger" and various British New Wave films (e.g., "Saturday Night and Sunday Morning," "A Taste of Honey") depicted the monotony of everyday life in Britain. Kitchen sink realism also prominently featured candid discussions of socially sensitive topics such as alcoholism, abortion, and extramarital affairs.

While the concept of kitchen sink realism has been well-documented academically, its influence on UK indie and alternative music remains largely unexplored, even though the lyrics of the songs occasionally took concepts of kitchen sink realism and adapted them in accordance with the relevant social context. This research aims to define and affirm the presence of kitchen sink realism in the lyrics of select UK pop and indie bands (The Smiths, Arctic Monkeys, The Libertines, Pulp, Blur etc.) This will be achieved through a combined approach: historical and literary analysis of the genre, as well as analysis of social attitudes within the chosen songs using the appraisal framework of systemic functional linguistics (SFL).

Keywords: kitchen sink realism, United Kingdom, indie, alternative, systemic functional linguistics

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The Contemporary Legacy of the Red Scare

My paper will consider the stubborn presence of anti-communist tendencies and the paranoid fear (as described by Richard Hofstadter) of leftist ideologies in the American society and beyond it since the Bolshevik Revolution until today. The evolution of these tendencies will be contextualized through three different stages of the phenomenon known as the "Red Scare"; starting from the years after the Russian Revolution, to cultural Marxism and its proponents, and lastly, focusing on the analysis of the contemporary legacy of the prior two stages as embodied in Jordan Peterson's term of 'postmodern neo-Marxism'. Namely, the focus will primarily rely on the analysis of the contemporary American discourse around the topics of Marxism, postmodernism, identity politics and its most popular contenders ranging from academic professors and public intellectuals such as Peterson to various American politicians. The analysis will try to uncover the connection between these public figures and their paranoid style of anticommunist discourse (again as defined by Hofstadter), and the contemporary leftist response surrounding the issues. Methods of analysis will include the perspectives of cultural studies including critical discourse analysis, psychoanalysis and "Ideologiekritik".

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Perversion of history in Alasdair Gray's "Poor Things"

One of the key characteristics of British postmodern fiction is a certain unwillingness to accept history as an objective phenomenon. This reality-destabilizing skepticism is also found in Alasdair Gray's novel Poor Things (1992), which lays bare the history-constructing processes of contemporary society. The aim of this paper is to explain the novel's narrative discourse and its implications for the reader. Gerard Genette's narrative texts, primarily his Essay in Method, will be used in order to analyze the narrative how. This type of elaboration will show that the entire novel functions as a representation of human history. Like historical discourse, Poor Things is also tampered with by multiple individuals that reinterpret it to their advantage. The reader's position within this framework will also be examined, primarily by making reference to Foucauldian discourse analysis, that focuses on power relations and the role they play in creating meaning. These conclusions will ultimately demonstrate how Poor Things, with all its discursive (re)writings, serves as a cautionary tale about the importance of critical thinking in history-perverting times.

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Pierre Bourdieu's Habitus in relation to Orwell's Newspeak in Nineteen Eighty-Four

Pierre Bourdieu offers a model and a framework in the Outline of a Theory of Practice (1977) for understanding how cultural contexts produce and reproduce the means of their own production and for examining the impact of this (re)production on the specific subjects of a given "habitus." According to Bourdieu, a habitus is a self-sufficient collective entity that is used to create and propagate dominating sociocultural conditions. Habitus, therefore, refers to "a subjective but not individual system of internalized structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group or class" (p.86). Additionally, these "internalized structures" and "schemes of perception" structure the subject's shared worldview and their "apperception" of the world in which they suppose they exist. Consequently, language and the construct of identity via psychological conditioning shape Dystopian elements of control and subjugation, thus, this essay will elucidate how can we understand Newspeak as medium of control by crossing Nineteen Eighty-Four with Pierre Bourdieu's 'Habitus'.

Keywords: habitus, theory

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Men and Masculinity in Hari Kunzru's Transmission

While Transmission by Hari Kunzru has seen commercial success and some degree of academic interest, most of the work on the novel has followed two approaches, and in some cases, the intersections of these approaches. One was to approach the novel has been to view it through a postcolonial lens and focus on Arjun Mehta's (the protagonist) immigrant status and Indian background. The other one was to examine the topics of security in the contemporary digital world, particularly in the aftermath of 9/11. These approaches are perfectly valid and have produced important analyses of the novel, but they have generally avoided looking into Arjun's specific position as a man who has to navigate a hegemonic masculinity that not only seeks to exclude him based on his class position and immigrant status, but also doesn't align with his personal values and desires. Therefore, this analysis focuses on the representation and deconstruction of hegemonic masculinity, which is here identified with what R. W. Connell terms 'transnational business masculinity'. The paper examines the most prominent male characters who, on the surface, typify this version of masculinity, and how their masculinity ultimately turns out to be a mere performance. Another focus is Arjun's strategies of navigating this world, his attempts to counter it, and whether or not his protest is successful. This analysis aims not only to shed some light on Kunzru's work, but also on the workings of masculinity in the late capitalist world and ways of countering rigid gender norms.

Notes

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