



Constructions of Identity XI: 'Transmission'

18-20 May 2023

English Department, Faculty of Letters
Babeş-Bolyai University

Keynote Speakers

Professor Ros Ballaster (University of Oxford):

"A Woman's Touch: Historiographical Metafiction on Screen and the Transmission of Women's Writing"

Ros Ballaster is Professor of Eighteenth-Century Studies in the Faculty of English, University of Oxford and professorial fellow at Mansfield College. Ros is a literary historian with a particular interest in the history of narrative and performance. She has published monographs and many articles on the 'rise' of the novel exploring the significance of romance fiction, women's writing (*Seductive Forms*, 1992), and the oriental tale (*Fabulous Orient*, 2005). She edited Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* for Penguin Classics (1995). In recent years her research interest has turned to the interaction of the Georgian (eighteenth-century) theatre and the novel and her book *Fictions of Presence in the Eighteenth-Century Theatre and Novel* was published by Boydell Press in August 2020. Her current project extends her thinking about 'presence' in art through an investigation into our search to make past worlds tangible again in contemporary narrative forms, particularly those designed to provide immersive, long-serial experiences to the consumer. She is exploring contemporary intermedial treatments of the eighteenth century on the stage, page and screen with the working hypothesis that the 'long' eighteenth century (from the latter half of the seventeenth century to the mid-nineteenth) is increasingly shaped in contemporary print, screen and stage as a form of speculative fiction: a world beyond our known one, a place of world-making and shape-shifting between media and social forms.

Professor Eve Patten (Trinity College Dublin):

"Transmission and Aftermath: Reading, Writing, and 'Agreement' in the Northern Irish Novel"

Eve Patten is Director of the Trinity Long Room Hub Arts and Humanities Research Institute and Professor of English at Trinity College, Dublin. A scholar in modern Irish and British literature, she is editor of a volume of essays, *Irish Literature in Transition, 1940-1980* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), and author of a monograph on representations of Ireland's revolutionary decade in English writing, *Ireland, Revolution, and the English Modernist Imagination* (Oxford University, 2022). She is currently co-PI on the HEA Shared Island research project 'Ireland's Border Culture: Literature, Arts, and Policy'; and co-editor of *Dublin Tales*, forthcoming from Oxford in 2023. She worked for the British Council in Romania in the early 1990s, drawing on her experience to explore the Bucharest-set novels of wartime author Olivia Manning in a monograph entitled *Imperial Refugee: Olivia Manning's Fictions of War* (Cork UP, 2012).



**Associate Professor Ana-Karina Schneider (Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu):
“Of Black Boxes, Carrier Pigeons, Bookstorms, and Other Transmissions in Contemporary Women’s Dystopias”**

Ana-Karina Schneider is Associate Professor of English Literature at Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Romania, holding a PhD in critical theory and Faulkner studies from Lucian Blaga University (2005), and a Diploma in American Studies from Smith College, USA (2004). Her publications include the monographs *Critical Perspectives in the Late Twentieth Century. William Faulkner: A Case Study* (2006), *Studies in the Rhetoric of Fiction* (2015), and *Understanding Anne Enright* (2020), as well as textbooks and study guides for classroom use. She has published articles and chapters on the contemporary British novel, the critical reception of various British and American writers in Romania, literary translation, reading practices, and English Studies in the Romanian higher education. Dr. Schneider is Editor-in-Chief of *American, British and Canadian Studies*.

**Hugo Hamilton (Irish novelist):
“The Spaces Between - An Exploration of Belonging and Identity in Life and Writing”**

Hugo Hamilton is the best-selling author of *The Speckled People* – a memoir of his childhood in Dublin, growing up with a German mother, speaking German and Irish at home, and prohibited by his revolutionary Irish father from speaking English, the language of the street. This ‘language war’ and the formative questions of identity and silence have been the focus of his acclaimed memoirs, novels and plays. Described by Anne Enright as a writer who ‘loves the spaces between things: his characters live, not just between cultures or between languages, but between the past and the future.’ His work has won many international awards including the French Prix Femina Etranger, the DAAD scholarship in Berlin, and the prestigious Bundesverdienstkreuz, awarded by the German state for his understanding of cultural diversity. Hamilton is a member of the Aosdana arts body in Ireland and lives in Dublin. His memoir *The Speckled People* was translated into 20 languages and adapted for the stage in a production for the Gate Theatre in Dublin, and published as a stage play by Methuen. His latest novel – *The Pages* – (based on the life of the author Joseph Roth) was published by 4th Estate in London and Knopf in the USA.

**Professor Lieven Buysse (KU of Leuven):
“Building rapport across languages. Pragmatic markers in learner and native discourse”**

Lieven Buysse is Professor of Linguistics at KU Leuven, where he teaches a.o. English Linguistics, British Culture, and Language & Technology. His research interests are mainly in the fields of contrastive and interlanguage pragmatics, and he is the Reviews Editor of the journal *Corpus Pragmatics*. Since 2017 he has been Campus Dean of the Faculty of Arts at KU Leuven’s Brussels Campus, and has held positions in various academic associations, such as currently that of Secretary-General of CIUTI and President of the European Network for Public Service Interpreting & Translation.



Conference Participants

**Simona Catrinel Avarvarei (“Ion Ionescu de la Brad” University of Life Sciences, Iași),
Nicoleta Rodica Dominte (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iași):
“The ‘Paradox’ of co-Authorship in Human-AI Collaborative Writing”**

Abstract: Celebrated as one of the most common allegories of classic Latin texts, the bucolic union of oaks or elms and vines as symbol of complementing partnership has travelled a long way up to the seventeenth and eighteenth century when it came to portray the symbolic ‘marriage’ between unequal partners (Gerard Langbaine, Account). In a seemingly metaphorical exercise, we intend to look at the construct of co-authorship, encapsulated within one of the latest human-AI collaborative writing projects, as we would like to fathom and (in)validate the Ancient musing on the (im)balance of gift and skillfulness of different authorial identities encoded in the image of the two intertwined botanical elements and reflected by some co-authored literary exercises. At times when humanity is challenged as never before, engulfed by an ever-domineering tendency to delegate an alarmingly large number of attributes to a volatile superintelligence, one cannot help wondering if creativity, imagination and aesthetic sensibility can be encrypted and stored in logarithms and software codes. Is AI ‘weak’ and unable to stand upright unless supported by an ‘abler Hand’, quoting the eighteenth-century poet George Woodward, or does it (already) have a voice of its own in the world of arts and letters?

Bio: Simona Catrinel Avarvarei holds a Ph.D. in Philology following the defense of the thesis Mapping the Territories of the Hidden Victorian Female Self. She teaches English for Specific Purposes at the “Ion Ionescu de la Brad” University of Life Sciences, Iasi, Romania. She has translated books of political theory and literature and has published articles on a range of authors and topics, with a special interest in British literature and a constant focus on the nineteenth-century British novel. Her fields of interest focus on gender studies, transculturalism and identity construction. Email: catrinel_04@yahoo.co.uk

Bio: Nicoleta Rodica Dominte holds a Ph.D. in Law. She teaches Intellectual Property Law at the Faculty of Law, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi, Romania. She has published books and articles on copyright, trademarks and other topics of Intellectual Property Law. Also, she has coordinated the conference “Law and Literature” at the Faculty of Law, “Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iasi, Romania and the publication in 2022 of a volume with papers presented at the conference. Her fields of interest focus on the objects of Intellectual Property Law, both from a juridical as well as a literary perspective. Email: nicoleta.dominte@uaic.ro

**Claudiu Mihai Argeşanu (Ovidius University of Constanţa):
“Place-Making in Nineteenth-Century Paintings adapted from Shakespeare’s A Midsummer
Night’s Dream”**

Abstract: This essay applies geocritical theories in order to show pictorial techniques of place-making in works by Victorian painter Richard Dadd (*Puck*, 1841), and Scottish artist and illustrator Sir Joseph Noel Paton (*Oberon and the Mermaid*, 1883). While the concept of place-making has been used in modern architecture to show how artists have worked to revitalize certain urban areas, I extrapolate this concept to Victorian art to demonstrate how these particular painters have



repurposed Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for their nineteenth-century viewers. Do the pictorial representations of Puck and Oberon correspond to the theatrical and metaphoric space created on stage during the production of this comedy? The answer is no, because paintings create their own place, based on visual representation and the viewers' imagination about the spaces suggested in the play, as well as their personal experience and understanding of the characters represented in the play. While Shakespeare's comedy invites the audience to recreate the imaginary places of the wood and the fairy-world, the two painters make place on canvas by exploiting the viewers' imaginary picture about Shakespeare's play, and the existing conventions. Thus, the two paintings show spaces that the audiences could only imagine while attending a performance of Shakespeare's comedy.

Bio: Claudiu Mihai Argeşanu is a PhD student at the Doctoral School of Humanities, Faculty of Letters, Ovidius University of Constanţa. He graduated from the Ovidius University with an MA in Arts. He teaches art at the Mihai Viteazu High School, and is also a teaching assistant at the Faculty of Arts of the Ovidius University of Constanţa.

Hogar Najm Abdullah (University of Szeged, Hungary):

“From Moderation to Rage: Violent Black Men in Ann Petry’s ‘Like a Winding Sheet’ and ‘In Darkness and Confusion’”

Abstract: This paper embarks on providing intersectional analyses of two black male characters anguished between their potential as humans and marginalization as masculinities in Ann Petry's short stories – “Like a Winding Sheet” (1945) and “In Darkness and Confusion” (1947). I argue that despite the subtle interplay of moderation and rage in these characters, they achieve a sense of assumed self-realization as they perform their masculine angst in the most unpredictable violent ways. I rely on Price M. Cobbs and William H. Grier's term “black rage” to reflect on how Johnson and William Jones in the two above-mentioned stories perceive their violence as a defense mechanism to compensate for their marginalized masculinities. They represent African American masculinities who are confined by certain stereotypical attributes which restrict their pursuit of fulfilling their expected roles as providers and protectors. Thus, they turn to violence as a desperate attempt to contend their marginalized status and assert their masculine power. This paper peruses Petry's unwavering project of portraying nuanced images of black male character in her fiction to subvert the reductive and dehumanizing typecasting of African American men in the dominant cultural narratives of the 1940s US society.

Bio: Hogar Najm Abdullah is a doctoral candidate in the English and American Literatures and Cultures Program at the University of Szeged in Hungary and a faculty member at the University of Duhok in Iraq. He holds a master's degree in English Literature from the University of Sheffield in Britain. His research interests include (African) American fiction, gender studies, race/ethnicity studies in literature. Currently, he focuses on the representations of black masculinities in the works of Ann Petry. Email: hogar.abdullah@uod.ac



**Hassan Ait-el-Ouali (University of Debrecen):
“Landscape Writing and Masculinity in Raja Shehadeh’s Palestinian Walks”**

Abstract: *Palestinian Walks: Notes on a Vanishing Landscape* (2007) explores the relationships between landscape and masculinities. The author/protagonist, Raja Shehadeh, embodies what can be called “postcolonial-ecological masculinity” through the practice of hill-walking, registering the text in “landscape writing”. As Alexander Neal notes, “[c]ontemporary landscape writing tends to be preoccupied with finding ways to communicate the affective textures of lived experience in particular landscapes, of personal and more broadly cultural modes of engagement with the world.” Hill-walking, a “practice of landscape” as well as a narrative technique, challenges exploitative and destructive policies towards the land and at the same time challenges the discourse of Palestinian men’s nationalism, which legitimates armed struggle as the only means of resistance. The narrative perspective is informed by the conviction that Palestinians can be as guilty as the “colonizers” for damaging the landscape while promoting an ethics of sustainability and care for the environment.

Bio: Hassan Ait-el-Ouali is a doctoral student at the university of Debrecen (Hungary). He holds an M. A. degree in Gender Studies at the university of Fez (Morocco). He is currently working on a Ph. D. dissertation that looks into the (re)production of men and masculinities in Arab men’s autobiographical narratives. His research interests include, gender and masculinity studies and also feminism, psychoanalysis, and post-humanism. Email: hassan.ait-el-ouali@arts.unideb.hu

**Lucian Alixandrescu (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“A Monster with Many Heads:” Mob Rule and Public Weal in Thomas Elyot’s *The Book Named the Governour* and Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus***

Abstract: One of the foremost representatives of the Renaissance in England, Thomas Elyot produced extensive treatises and translations on subjects ranging from Christian ethics to medicine. However, his most significant and longest-standing contribution to Elizabethan thinking stands in the field of political philosophy. *The Boke named the Governour* (1531) best encapsulates Elyot’s ideological precepts, which identify a strong, unchallenged monarch as the sole source of statal prosperity. *The Governour* enjoyed great popularity in the Tudor period, and Shakespeare likely drew upon its political concepts when devising his histories and Roman plays. *Coriolanus* in particular may provide proof of Shakespeare’s admiration (and potential imitation) of *The Governour*, given the political discussions that pervade the play. This paper aims to highlight identifiable connections between Elyot’s *The Boke named the Governour* and Shakespeare’s *Coriolanus*, by analyzing the two authors’ similar formulations about governance and mob rule, their similar emphasis on the concepts of public and common weal, and similarities in describing republican governance.

Bio: Lucian Alixandrescu holds an MA in British Cultural Studies, and is currently preparing a PhD on “Thomas Elyot’s *Book named the Governour* and Shakespeare’s Political Plays” at the Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj. He is also a teaching assistant at the English Department of the Babeş-Bolyai University. Email: lucian.alixandrescu@ubbcluj.ro



Shaimaa Alobaidi (University of Debrecen):

“The Contact-Zone of Cultures: Thomas Builds-the-Fire ‘The Misfit Storyteller’ To-Be Lead Singer in Sherman Alexie’s *Reservation Blues*”

Abstract: This paper argues that Alexie’s use of storytelling as a traditional American Indian method of education and cultural presentation is an articulation of Homi Bhabha’s third space of cultural negotiation, whereby the protagonist conducts his self-identification in a verbal mode. Thomas Builds-the-Fire is a storyteller who is not recognized by his fellow American Indians for his talent in reserving Spokane’s Indigenous culture. When he is unable to fit in as a storyteller in his reservation community, Thomas feels alienated. When he doubts his ability, as a lead singer in Coyote Springs, to turn those oral stories into written words and be heard by a multicultural audience in metropolises, the feeling grows stronger. By pursuing Thomas to tell stories, Alexie expresses the significance of this physical space in assisting the reconstruction of an alienated into an alienation survivor. The conversations between Thomas and Chess, both American Indians, are the highlight of such verbal negotiations shaping and examining answers to many cultural questions. Those remarks of mutual (dis)agreement between the two fully grasp Alexie’s characterization of hybridization and identity reconstruction process in contemporary reservation environments.

Bio: Shaimaa Alobaidi is a PhD student at the University of Debrecen, Doctoral School of Literary & Cultural Studies. She is in her eighth semester of research work. Her research focuses on the theme of alienation and self-identification in Sherman Alexie’s prose and poetry. The theme is articulated through Bhabha’s post-colonial theory of third space cultural negotiation. Email: shaimaa.aswad@uod.ac

Alexandra Bacalu (University of Bucharest):

“The Imagination as ‘Arch-Faculty:’ Popular Psychology and Circulating Devotional Exercises in Seventeenth-Century Treatises on the Government of Thoughts”

Abstract: This paper looks at a group of neglected seventeenth-century works of practical divinity – sermons and tracts – that may be understood as forming the often overlooked yet prolific genre of the early modern ‘treatise on the government of thoughts.’ My interest in these popular and practical-prescriptive writings lies in the specific articulation of the imagination that they propose, which finds itself at the crossroads of several discourses of the time. I’d like to argue that this articulation is principally the result of a combination between the popular Biblical psychology of the heart and circulating moral-philosophical ideas about the faculty’s properties and capacity for self-regulation, reconfiguring the imagination as a kind of ‘arch-faculty’ of the mind that is responsible for the vast majority of its operations and holds a distinctly privileged position. My paper explores the manner in which these constantly shifting and transforming early modern discourses on the imagination (which become more simplified – and perhaps diluted – in such practical and devotional contexts) produce tensions between versions of the faculty that see it as dangerous and totally depraved and ones that posit it as a self-remedying space of leisure, thus giving way to more familiar 18th-century conceptions of imaginative pleasures.

Keywords: intellectual history; practical divinity; care of the self; self-government; thoughts; imaginative exercises;

Bio: Alexandra Bacalu is Assistant Lecturer in the English Department at the University of Bucharest, where she teaches eighteenth-century British literature and the history of the care of the self. Her research focuses on early modern intellectual history, with a particular interest in questions



surrounding human nature and faculty psychology in literary, philosophical, and medical contexts. Her recent book, *Eighteenth-Century Stoic Poetics: Shaftesbury, Akenside, and the Discipline of the Imagination* (Brill, 2023), traces a neglected conjunction of poetic and moral-philosophical discourses in the poetics of Lord Shaftesbury and Mark Akenside, arguing that Stoic exercises for disciplining the imagination play a significant role in the emergence of eighteenth-century poetic notions of imaginative freedom and creativity. Email: alexandra.bacalu@ls.unibuc.ro

Mihnea Bâlici (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“The Other Side of Migration. Transmission, Dissimilation, and Labour in the Post-Communist Romanian Novel”

Abstract: This paper is aiming to analyze the representation of labour migration in the post-communist Romanian novel. This specific theme is challenging the national canon of ‘exile’ literature, as well as the central paradigms of the ‘migrant turn’ in Western literary studies. If migration has been celebrated as a form of positive cultural transmission by both postcolonialism (Homi K. Bhabha, Edward S. Said) and postmodernism (Søren Frank, Sten Pultz Moslund, Nikos Papastergiadis), the East-Central European case offers a materialist and critical image of labour mobility within the current capitalist and transnational world-system (Immanuel Wallerstein). Using both the hypothesis of the new economics of labor migration (NELM) and David Scott FitzGerald’s concept of ‘dissimilation’ from his analysis of Mexican emigration (2013), this paper will highlight the way in which Romanian narratives portray not only the transformations of migrant subjects, but also the social distancing between those who leave and their households from home.

Bio: Mihnea Bâlici (b. 1998) is a student at the Doctoral School of Linguistic and Literary Studies from Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca. He is currently writing a doctoral thesis on the representation of migration in post-communist Romanian fiction, but his interests also include literary criticism, literary theory, world-literature, the relationship between literature and core-periphery dynamics, and Marxism. He has published articles in *Transilvania* and *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory*. In 2022, he published a chapter on the thematisation of rurality in post-war Romanian poetry in *Ruralism and Literature in Romania* (Peter Lang, 2019), a collective volume edited by Ştefan Baghiu, Vlad Pojoga and Maria Sass. Email: mihnea.balici@ubbcluj.ro

Tamás Bényei (University of Debrecen):

“The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde as a Metapsychological Fable”

Abstract: It is a cliché that Robert Louis Stevenson’s 1886 novella is concerned with some of the dilemmas that Sigmund Freud was exploring around that time – thus, psychoanalytically informed readings of the text abound. In my proposed paper, I shall read *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* as a text that, in a sense, reads aspects of Freud’s theory *avant la lettre*. I suggest that the novella juxtaposes two ideas of the unconscious: the Unconscious as the repressed and the Unconscious as the id. The closing narrative of *Dr Jekyll* starts out as a case study about the price exacted by severe repression, but Jekyll’s metaphors change in his account of his first metamorphosis, suggesting a more primal entity and experience. The shift between the two corresponds to the shift in Freud’s conceptualisation of the psyche – as related in *The Ego and the Id*. I shall also argue that this metapsychological reading helps us understand the relationship between Jekyll/Hyde’s tragedy and the story of Mr Utterson and the other professional gentlemen.



Bio: Tamás Béneyi is Professor of English Literature at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. His fields of interest include contemporary British fiction, crime fiction and women's writing. He has published seven books in Hungarian and one in English, as well as numerous articles in many countries. Email: tamasbenyei@yahoo.com

Ada Beleuță (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“Trying to avoid the mirrors:” The Limits of Mimesis in Caitriona Lally’s *Eggshells* (2015)”

Abstract: Marco Caracciolo suggests that forms and patterns hold an intrinsic ethical power by way of abstraction and mesh-like interconnections between the human and the nonhuman, but also between “the sensory and the invisible” (12-13). Meanwhile, Anna Gibbs’ sees mimesis as a means of communication through “a borrowing and [“sharing” (Condon qtd. in Gibbs 187)] of form” (193) by engaging different “sensory and affective modalities” (191). If, to Gibbs, imitation functions through affective contagion, Caracciolo sees a similar process in how narratives continuously enmesh structures of feeling and perception and as such other textual, social, or ideological patterns (7). To investigate the transhistorical contagion of certain affective and literary structures as well as experimental literature’s idiosyncratic play with such forms, I will analyse how Caitriona Lally’s *Eggshells* mirrors or distorts the web of actual, fictional, or fictionalized, human and non-human others that embeds its character.

Bio: Ada Beleuță is a MA student in The History of Ideas, the History of Images at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University. She is also a graduate of the Irish Studies MA and a member of the Center for the Study of the Modern Anglophone Novel. Her main research interests include narrative ethics, cognitive and postcognitive narratology, and biofiction studies. Email: beleutaandreea@yahoo.com

Loredana Bercuci (West University of Timisoara):

“Multimodal Archives: Visual Repositories of Identity in GB Tran’s *Vietnamerica* (2011)”

Abstract: In GB Tran’s 2011 graphic memoir, the autobiographical narrator visits Vietnam to forge his identity by discovering his immigrant parents’ history of struggle. Images of Vietnamese landscapes and cityscapes function as archives of his family’s history and identity, as well as personal repositories of Vietnam’s national history. The memoir shifts between the story of Tran and that of his parents, problematizing intergenerational trauma as tied to sites of memory. These sites take on the quality of mental spaces visually represented for archival purposes. This paper compares the photographs of Vietnam included in the memoir to the drawings thereof, interpreting them as what Pierre Nora sees as spontaneous memory. Susannah Radstone notes that there is an enduring bond between memory and visual media, which derives from the often-noted visuality of memory, photography being capable of decreasing temporal distance in the representation of memory. I will argue that drawings in graphic memoirs function in a similar way.

Bio: Loredana Bercuci is assistant professor at the Department of Modern Languages of the West University of Timișoara, where she teaches American cultural studies, academic writing and applied linguistics. She holds a PhD in American Studies, with a focus on trauma and transmedia storytelling. In 2016-2017, she conducted research at Empire State College, State University of New York as a



Fulbright grantee. Her research interests include trauma studies, adaptation studies, the representation of race in American popular culture, and critical theory. Her most recent publications in the field are “The Remaking of the Radical in the Harlem Renaissance: Claude McKay’s Home to Harlem” (*Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses* 84, 2022, 31-43) and “The Monsters among Us, or Decentering Whiteness in Contemporary American Visual Culture: Jordan Peele’s *Get Out*” (in *Multicultural Discourses in Turbulent Times*, edited by Alexandra Cotoc, Octavian More, Mihaela Mudure, Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2021, 45-58). Email: loredana.bercuci@e-uvt.ro

Carmen Borbély (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“Receding into the Mesh: Matter on the Go in Sara Baume’s *Seven Steeples*”

Abstract: Sara Baume’s *Seven Steeples* (2022) probes the possibilities of an “ecostitial” consciousness (Cohen 2014) that grapples with a sense of the in-built finitude of matter, both animate and inanimate, while also opening itself up to the emergence, transmission, subsidence, or obstruction of affect across thickly webbed material networks in which the human is unobtrusively situated. The novel features recluses who abscond themselves in incrementally disappearing man-made environs. Here they act as custodians of the slow-paced dissipation of commodified objects into a debris-strewn landscape in which their own individual selves are eventually composted. Drawing its conceptual cues from the new materialist paradigms that prize the radiant liveness that the objectual world may convey to the human (Bennett 2010), this paper explores the novel’s focus on the persistence of moribund matter (disused, unusable, or obsolete things) and the effects of “dwelling in the dissolve” (Alaimo 2016), that is, in a material mesh that is disintegrating, dispersing, and potentially receding into waste.

Bio: Carmen Borbély is Associate Professor of English Literature at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj, where she teaches eighteenth- and twentieth-century literature, and is affiliated with the Centre for the Study of the Modern Anglophone Novel (CSMAN), the Centre for European Modernism Studies (CEMS), and the Phantasma Centre for Imagination Research (Cluj). She has conducted research at John F. Kennedy Institute Berlin, Notre Dame University and, as a Chevening Scholar, at the University of Oxford. She is the author of *Genealogies of Monstrosity. Constructions of Corporeal Otherness in Contemporary British Fiction* (2015), and, with Petronia Petrar, of *Our Heteromorphic Future: Encoding the Posthuman in Contemporary British Fiction* (2014). In 2022, together with Erika Mihálycsa and Petronia Petrar, she edited *Temporalities of Modernism* (Ledizioni, Milan). She serves as executive editor of *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Philologia* and is an editor of *Caietele Echinox*. Email: carmen.borbely@ubbcluj.ro

Georgiana Bozîntan (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“Nature Memes in Norwegian Fiction about Climate Change”

Abstract: In several works, Nina Witoszek has examined the importance of nature in the history of Norwegian culture by making use of Richard Dawkins’s concept of meme, understood as “a unit of cultural transmission” (Dawkins, 2016: 249). In Witoszek’s understanding, memes are “images, stories, tunes and rituals which replicate and re-fashion themselves over several generations and which endow human cultures with meaning” (2011: 17). She argues that certain culturally transmitted ideas about nature have essentially contributed to the foundation of a so-called Norwegian “regime of goodness”. While approaching Witoszek’s claims from a more critical stance,



in this paper, I wish to discuss how such nature memes are conveyed in contemporary Norwegian fiction about climate change. I throw light on the representation of concepts like *friluftsliv* (“open air life”) and national symbols related to nature, such as the Norwegian *hytte* (“cabin”), birch trees, or water in novels by Christian Valeur, Brit Bildøen, Ingrid Tørresvold and Jan Kjærstad. I try to suggest that literary texts about climate change either portray the ecological crisis as a threat to national identity or call into question the mythological and utopian relationship with nature that is typically considered to characterise Norwegian society. Thus, seeing memes as a “product of creative process” (Witoszek, 2011: 17), I seek to show how climate change narratives have the potential to challenge culturally constructed values and conceptions about nature that often seem to hinder a more complex perspective upon the reality of the climate crisis.

Bio: Georgiana Bozîntan is a PhD student at the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literatures at Babeş-Bolyai University in Romania. She is writing a thesis about climate change narratives in contemporary Norwegian fiction. Email: georgiana.bozintan@ubbcluj.ro

Gabriel Burrow (Birkbeck, University of London):

“Dreaming of Leela: Counterspeculation, signal, and noise in Hari Kunzru’s *Transmission*”

Abstract: This paper will explore the way technology and speculative imagination shape counter-hegemonic practices in Hari Kunzru’s novel, *Transmission* (2004). It will revisit the “imagined simultaneity” that Benedict Anderson (1983) identified within 19th century literature, placing it in dialogue with Aris Komporozos-Athanasiou’s recent theorisation of Speculative Communities (2022). The latter describes the ephemeral, global collectivities that are connected via technology in the 21st century. These communities experience what Komporozos-Athanasiou terms “speculative simultaneity”, which is the product of digitally-mediated engagement with visual media and messaging. I will examine the formal characteristics of speculative simultaneity within the novel, which plots the outbreak of a computer virus and a community that forms around it. In the process, I will make the case for the continued significance of literary texts in creating new vocabularies with which we can imagine possible futures, even as social platforms increasingly dictate the way that “stories” are created and consumed.

Bio: Gabriel Burrow is a writer and editor based in London. He graduated Summa Cum Laude from Leiden University with an MA in Literature and Society and is now studying for a PhD at Birkbeck, University of London. The focus of his research is representations of speculative communities and counter-hegemonic practices in 21st century literature. He also moonlights as a Senior Copywriter for a creative communications agency, writing reports and whitepapers for major technology firms. Email: gabriel.burrow@gmail.com

Elena Butoescu (University of Craiova):

“The Triumphs of Affections: *Crébillon* films, Translation and the Eighteenth-Century English Narratives of Motion and Emotion”

Abstract: The French influence on English sentimental writing has been a rich topic for criticism since France became a significant linguistic hub for the transmission of Anglophone texts as early as the first decades of the eighteenth century. French sources took a stance on English realist fiction by



infusing it with emotional narratives of men of feeling that hinged on acts of translation, whereby translation is understood not only as adapting a text into another language but also as a form of resistance against long-standing literary practices that advocated institutionalised moral codes in realistic fiction. The study will consider Claude Prosper Jolyot de Crébillon's translations from French into English in order to epitomize the new type of discourse that popularised virtue through eroticism, satire and decadence. This article aims to rethink eighteenth-century affective theory in relation to translation studies, while reading Thomas Hobbes' concept of motion as a metaphor for the historical and mindset transformations that were fundamental to the writing of the history of literature.

Bio: Elena Butoescu is a Lecturer in British Literature (Eighteenth Century) at the Department of British, American, and German Studies, University of Craiova, Romania. She earned her Master's Degree in British Cultural Studies at the University of Bucharest and her Master's Degree in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies at the University of Leeds. In 2011 she defended her PhD thesis in the field of eighteenth-century British literary imposture at the University of Bucharest. Her research interests include print culture and modernity, cultural history, and travel literature. She is the co-author of *An Imagological Dictionary of the Cities in Romania represented in British Travel Literature (1800-1940)*, Târgu-Mureş, 2012. Her most recent book, *Literary Imposture and Eighteenth-Century Knowledge. The Tradition of the Literary Faker in England from Marana to Goldsmith* was published by Zeta Books in December 2019. She is currently working on another book on the cultural history of bread in English literature. Email: elenabutoescu@yahoo.co.uk

Mihaela Buzec (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“Exploring Framework Bias: The Case of Minimalism vs Parallel Architecture in Studies on Language Evolution”

Abstract: The theory of language we use as a theoretical framework will often influence the way a hypothesis is formed, an experiment is designed and carried out, and ultimately our interpretation of the data. This is not only because of the personal bias that comes with a certain theoretical framework, but because each theory of language will focus on something else, and it will dictate a certain way of formulating questions and thinking about possible answers. The ensuing issue then becomes that of framework bias. In this paper I will briefly explore this through the analysis of two lines of study concerning language evolution, one framed by the Minimalism program and one by the proposal of Parallel Architecture of language. The researchers tackle the same topic using the same parameters for research, but reach significantly different conclusions because of their theoretical framework.

Bio: Mihaela Buzec is a PhD candidate at the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca. Her research is within the field of neurolinguistics, focusing on the linguistic aspects of aphasia and the analysis of linguistic theories within biolinguistics. She is teaching seminars in English syntax and history of the English language, and she has previously published papers and delivered talks on topics in Old English word formation, generative grammar, sociolinguistics, internet linguistics, and language evolution. You can reach Mihaela Buzec at mihaelabuzec312@gmail.com/mihaela.buzec@ubbcluj.ro



Saleh Chaoui (University of Debrecen):

“Embodied Faith and the Limits of Female Agency in Randa Abdel-Fattah’s *Does My Head Look Big in This?*”

Abstract: The present essay discusses Randa Abdel-Fattah’s *Does My Head Look Big in This?* by focusing on the rendition of Islam as an axis of social agency in an environment that is excessively antagonistic of any version of Islam that falls outside the contours of the “liberal model” morphed by the Western creed of equality, liberty. Amal, the protagonist, embodies the dilemmas of choice and agency within an ideological rubric which disassociates such notions from faith-based convictions. The analysis relies on the notion of Muslim agency as theorized by Saba Mahmood, for whom the conscious formation of deeply rooted religious subjectivities is sidelined within the modern secular rubrics of self-formation. The article also draws on W.E.B. Du Bois’s concept of double consciousness to highlight the extent to which Muslim female bodies are caught at the intersection between religion and nation. Hence, this essay discloses the challenges facing Muslim women whose exercise of agency is tied to their religious beliefs in a backdrop characterized by multicultural and secular economies.

Bio: Saleh Chaoui is a Ph.D. candidate in the British and American Studies program of the Doctoral School of Literary and Cultural Studies, University of Debrecen, Hungary. He has his MA in Cultural Studies from the University of Fes, Morocco. His research focuses on the return of religion in postcolonial literature, particularly the interplay between Sufism and identity politics and the experience of diaspora in contemporary female diasporic writings. His academic research areas include postcolonialism, diasporic fiction, religion, gender studies, cosmopolitanism and migration. Email: schaoui14@gmail.com

Cristina Chevereșan (West University of Timișoara):

“Goodbye, Americana, Hello Real Time’: Idealism vs. Extremism in Philip Roth’s *American Pastoral*”

Abstract: Philip Roth’s 1997 *American Pastoral* is a textbook example of failed cultural transmission: the transference and transformation of values, idea(l)s and information in the lives of Seymour Levov, his family, his community proves governed by loss, misrepresentation and, ultimately, entropy. Far from delivering the romanticized version of life in the Jewish neighborhood that the title implies, the novel captures a disenchanting Americana, wherein idealism and radicalism clash against the background of the ideologically in-/ con-fused 1960s. While “the Swede” initially hypnotizes via his apparent embodiment of the American Dream (super)hero, middle class America’s evolution after World War II is captured as a mixture of convention and rebellion, both stemming from indoctrination of different kinds. This paper’s aim is to examine the book’s polarizing discourses, starting from an emblematic passage: “Maybe the best thing would be to forget being right or wrong about people and just go along for the ride.”

Bio: Cristina Chevereșan, Professor Ph.D. Habil., teaches modern and contemporary American Literature, Culture, and Civilization at the West University of Timișoara, Romania. She is the Director of the Faculty of Letters’ American Studies Center, the Director of the English Department’s American Studies M.A. Program, a member of several European and American scientific societies and professional associations, as well as a Ca’ Foscari Venice Visiting Professor (2019). Past recipient of fellowships from the Salzburg Global Seminar, UCD Clinton Institute for American Studies, the Cornell School of Criticism and Theory, Fulbright Senior scholar (Harvard University) and Fulbright Ambassador, she has published nine books in English and Romanian, as well as numerous articles in



national and international journals, collected volumes, and the Romanian cultural press. She has translated and edited a dozen other volumes. Email: cristina.cheveresan@e-uvv.ro

Maria Chiorean (Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu):

“From Imagology to Postcolonial Studies: towards an ethically-driven analysis of ethno-racial difference in literature”

Abstract: The formation of ethno-racial identities in literature has been the object of multiple disciplines, from imagology – with its decidedly detached and apolitical approach – to postcolonial analysis, which deals with the historical consequences of various conceptions of cultural difference and nationness. In this paper, I argue for the combined use of these two theoretical frameworks, claiming that, far from being mutually exclusive, they can coalesce once the othering of marginal literary characters is seen as an embodied, material process rather than a mere discursive strategy. I use examples from modern Romanian prose and, more specifically, narratives with Jewish and Romani characters to discuss the phenomenon of “narrative racialization,” in which the bodies of those belonging to an ethnic minority are constructed as being incompatible with the “natural” progress of the nation (and, implicitly, the body politic). In this sense, I draw on theoretical work on corporeality by Carolyn Sorisio and Eva Cherniavsky, as well as the decolonial critique of hegemonic modernity and linear time (especially by Aníbal Quijano).

Bio: Maria Chiorean is a PhD candidate at “Lucian Blaga” University in Sibiu, Romania, researching the depiction of ethnic and racial minorities in modern Romanian literature. She holds a BA in Comparative and Romanian Literature from UBB Cluj-Napoca and an MLitt in Postcolonial and World Literatures from the University of St Andrews (Scotland). Her work has been published in scientific journals such as MJCST, Transylvanian Review and Transilvania. Email: maria.chiorean@ulbsibiu.ro

Alex Ciorogar (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“World-Authorship: a Combined and Uneven Development Approach”

Abstract: By deploying the concept of world-authorship (against the definitions of this term given to it by Boes, Braun, and Spiers, 2020 i.e. - 'world authorship' with no hyphenation) I offer a cultural materialist critique of the novel situation of writers of capitalist modernism and modernity in, through, and out of the metropolis and the interrelations of core, semiperiphery, and periphery, by articulating and historicizing archeological and systemic dynamics of discursive formations and non-discursive domains or practices through the analytical instrument of combined and uneven development. Taking its cue from Immanuel Wallerstein’s theories on world-systems, my presentation is, consequently, interested in discussing contemporary modes of cultural practice through which authoriality functions in a globalized and/or globalizing economic and social environments (Saussy 2006). My claim is that this post-Bourdieuian reorganization of the discipline should be complemented by exposing and analyzing the power relations, negotiations, and collaborative tactics between the rhetorical and media actors involved in what is claimed to be an integrated yet uneven literary world (WReC 2015).

Bio: With a Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, Alex Ciorogar is a lecturer with the English Department of the Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania (Faculty of Letters). His research interests include twentieth century and contemporary literary theory, authorship studies, and Romanticism.



He has published papers on the postmodernist and the contemporary novel, and has edited two collections of essays, including one on Posthumanism. He is the director of *Echinox* Magazine, a member of the Centre for the Study of the Modern Anglophone Novel, and the owner of OMG Publishing House. "The Ascension of the Author and Ecologies of Knowledge A New Theoretical Framework" (*Transylvanian Review*, 2022), "The Ecology of Translation, or, The Translator as World Author" (*Philobiblon*, 2021), and "The Ecology of Authorial Ascension" (*French Studies Bulletin*, OUP, 2020) are just some of his most recent publications. Email address: alexandru.ciorogar@ubbcluj.ro

Alina Cîmpean (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

"The Romanian Language Day and Political Discourse: A Glimpse into Language Ideologies"

Abstract: Language ideologies represent the beliefs and attitudes that individuals have regarding language(s). They "are morally and politically loaded because implicitly or explicitly they represent not only how language is, but how it ought to be" (Woolard, 2020: 2). Furthermore, they are not just about language but they can also create connections between language and identity (Woolard, 2020: 2). As a result, language may be used in political discourse to create a group identity and promote group values. However, this is often done to the detriment of other languages and, especially, on days of national significance such as the National Day or the Romanian Language Day. The present paper focuses on the latter event and, specifically, on the public discourse of three elected officials: the President's, the Prime-Minister's and the Minister of Culture's. By drawing on monoglossic ideologies (e.g. Milroy 2001, Langer&Davies 2005), I will analyse the three official statements in order to identify the underlying attitudes and beliefs regarding language.

Bio: Alina Oltean-Cîmpean is a Junior Lecturer at the English Department of the Faculty of Letters of the Babeş-Bolyai University. With a wider interest in sociolinguistics, her research topics include multilingualism, code-switching, language ideologies, and online language use. Email: alina.oltean@ubbcluj.ro

Daniel Clinci (Ovidius University of Constanţa):

"Contagion: the Militarized Rhetoric of Western Medicine and a Posthumanist Alternative"

Abstract: Susan Sontag mentioned in her book *Illness as Metaphor* that the militarized rhetoric permeated Western medical discourse at the end of the nineteenth century, with the discovery of bacterial infections. This rhetoric, perpetuated during the twentieth century, was amplified during the Covid-19 pandemic both in the medical and public discourses. Considering the fact that the theories of disease in Western history of Medicine acted not only as ways to account for signs and symptoms, but also as theories of subjectivity, I employ a Foucauldian historicist perspective and a Deleuze-Guattarian political approach to show that militarized medical discourse is fundamentally based on extreme humanism, with its refusal to acknowledge a number of profound changes that have occurred in the fields of biology, pathology, physiology, and critical theory. I also provide an alternative to this humanism in the form of a radical critical type of posthumanism.



Bio: Daniel Clinci is a Lecturer at Ovidius University of Constanța, where he teaches Medical English, and holds a PhD from the University of Bucharest, with a thesis on the historical Avant-garde and the transition to experimental postmodernity. During his doctoral studies, he researched critical cultural theory and media studies at the University of Amsterdam. He is also co-editor of *Post/h/um. Jurnal de studii postumaniste*, an independent journal dedicated to bringing new critical theories and concepts into Romanian through the translation of very recent academic articles from researchers worldwide. He published *Avangardă și experiment. De la estetica negativă la cultura postmodernă*, București, 2014, and *First, Do No Harm. A Medical English textbook*, Constanța, 2020. Email: daniel.clinci@yahoo.com

**Cătălin-Emil Codreanu (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj)
“Hamlet Seen from the Stage”**

Abstract: For actors, Shakespeare is “the Bible of the theatre”. The Shakespearian canon is a great acting school, which demands an intersectional and multifaceted (conceptual, intuitive, psycho-physical, imaginative-creative) approach. The actor’s work ranges from understanding the philosophy of the text to appropriating it. The actor must incorporate and embody the part, and spatialise the spoken text; he or she must express the tension of interior images, and the coherence of ideas, actions and emotions. My presentation will discuss all these starting from two famous productions in which I have acted at the National Theatre of Cluj: *Hamlet*, directed by Vlad Mugur in 2001, and *Hamlet*, directed by Roberto Bacci in 2012 (a reinterpretation by Roberto Bacci and Stefano Geraci).

Bio: Cătălin Codreanu is an actor at the “Lucian Blaga” National Theatre of Cluj, and an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Theater and Film, Babeş-Bolyai University. He specialises in acting, martial arts, and fencing. His research focuses on interculturality, transculturality, and Eurasian theater. He is interested in traditional Japanese theatrical forms, especially Nō theater, but also in contemporary ones, like the Tadashi Suzuki method. Email: catalin.codreanu@ubbcluj.ro

**Alexandra Cotoc (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj), Anamaria Radu (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“Romanian Microcelebrities’ Identity Repertoires. Telling a Life Story with a Social Impact”**

Abstract. The light multimodal identities of microcelebrities on SNS and the complementarity between textual and visual elements contribute to telling an autobiographical story that aims at transcending the digital world. This study focuses on the analysis of the online activity of queer Romanian influencers who produce online diaries of their personal lives. We will analyse the way in which these Netizens’ online presence has an impact through the use of text and visual elements. The digital communication behaviour of these Netizens aims at raising awareness of the normality of the minority groups they represent and shedding light on other contemporary social issues. These identities are constructed by the collage technique, making these profiles emblematic of the self-culture in which self-representation is constructed by apparently disjointed bits and pieces which constitute a puzzle. The expression of identity repertoire involves three actants, the online content



users, consumers, and creators, all contributing equally to the creation of a safe discursive space in which stories are told via complex language, discourse, and semiotic architecture.

Bio: Alexandra Cotoc is a lecturer PhD in the Department of English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania. Her scientific fields of interest are Internet Linguistics, Sociolinguistics, Discourse Analysis, and Digital Humanities. She is an alumna of the European Summer School in Digital Humanities in Leipzig, Germany. Alexandra Cotoc teaches undergraduate courses on English grammar, courses and seminars on New Media Language, and Internet linguistics. Email: alexandra.cotoc@ubbcluj.ro

Bio: Anamaria Radu is a junior lecturer in the Department of Romanian Language, Culture and Civilization at Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Currently, she is a lecturer at the Department of Romance Languages and Literature at the University of Geneva, Switzerland. In addition to teaching and evaluating Romanian as a foreign language, her research interests include Language Acquisition, Sociolinguistics, Discourse Analysis, and Digital Humanities. Email: Anamaria-Viorica.Radu@unige.ch

Karla Csuros (West University of Timisoara):

“What the hell is going on here?: A Corpus Perspective on Profanity in *The Office* (2005-2013)”

Abstract: Based on a corpus containing all dialogue lines from the contemporary American workplace sitcom *The Office* (2005-2013), this paper looks at the use of profanity (i.e., swear and taboo words) in the series. Despite being a network show, which entails a certain level of restriction on swearing, *The Office* features mild profanity sporadically and few instances of bleeped out hard profanity. Taking into consideration Bednarek’s (2019) taxonomy of linguistic practices concerning the use of profanity in TV series, I attempt to explain the various roles and comedic goals of profane language in *The Office*, as well as the manners in which the show deals with its linguistic regulation of swearing.

Bio: Karla Csuros is currently a 1st year PhD student in Philology – Linguistics at the West University of Timisoara, under the guidance of Senior Researcher Dr. habil. Mădălina Chitez. Karla Csuros is also a research assistant at the Centre for Corpus Related Digital Approaches to Humanities (CODHUS), where she is involved in various research projects related to academic writing, pre-university education and others. Email: karla.csuros@e-uvt.ro

Roger Davis (Red Deer Polytechnic, Alberta):

“End Transmission: Space Travel in Indigenous Short Film”

Abstract: This paper uses Indigenous short film media of North America, Oceania, and Australia to argue that the theme of space travel creates multiple modalities of transmission for identity construction for Indigenous cultures. First, space travel as an industrial and colonial project offers opportunities for interplanetary transmission of messages that define not only the immediate purpose of space travel but also the technocultural imperative for Indigenous peoples to participate in or to resist Western progress. Second, the specific films challenge the compatibility of technological progress (space travel, genetics) with intergenerational transmission of Indigenous science through



oral history (wayfinding, sustainable agriculture). Third, the films' resolutions of domestic tensions relate to the real-world history of colonial displacement and familial fragmentation through policies like reserve lands, residential schools, and forced adoptions. The films under consideration are *Jarli: Reach for the Stars* (Australian (2021)), *Kalewa* (Hawaiian (2018)), *The 6th World* (American Navajo (2012)), and *The Rocket Boy* (American (2010)).

Bio: Dr. Roger Davis (Roger.davis@rdpolytech.ca) is the Head of English in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at Red Deer Polytechnic in Red Deer, Canada. His research interests include cannibalism, dystopian literature, poetry and poetics, and academic integrity. Email: roger.davis@rdpolytech.ca

Chaymae El Ajjani (Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University Fez Morocco):
“The Intergenerational Transmission of Trauma in *A Woman is No Man* by Etaf Rum”

Abstract: For decades, trauma has been systematically considered as a subject of Medical Studies. However, with the emergence of Trauma Studies as a field in Humanities, trauma has been given different dimensions. A Literary Approach to trauma, specifically to works by female writers, challenges the male narrative and allows the readers to reflect on the condition of female identities, struggles, and various silenced voices. The aim of this paper is to understand the psychology of shame in the patriarchal Arab culture by examining the intergenerational transmission of trauma. The analytical lens shall focus on extracts from the novel *A Woman is No Man* by the Palestinian-American writer Etaf Rum. The narrative is divided into separate chronological periods and follows the story of two main characters; Isra and her daughter Deya. Most often, girls and women inhabit the past that preceded them, continue to live it, and even reproduce it and pass it on. However, the younger generation resists and attempts to break free from the repetitive cycle of transmission

Bio: Chaymae El Ajjani is a PhD candidate at The Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences, Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdellah University Fez Morocco. Her academic fields of interests include Gender Studies, Diaspora Literature, Sexuality, and Trauma Studies. She is now on an Erasmus+ mobility and conducting research at the Faculty of Letters of Babeş-Bolyai University. Email: chaimae.elajjani@gmail.com

Andrea Erdély Perovics (University of Szeged):
“The Poetic Existence of Cruelty (The indispensability of paradoxes in the works of Artaud and Kierkegaard)”

Abstract: In my study titled *The Poetic Existence of Cruelty* (The indispensability of paradoxes in the works of Artaud and Kierkegaard), I interpret poetic existence defined by Søren Kierkegaard through the lens of the writings and practice of Antonin Artaud concerning cruelty. The key importance of contradiction or paradox is evident in the works of both thinkers. My first question in the study concerns why paradox becomes indispensable for Kierkegaard and Artaud. Furthermore, what might be the significance of paradox for each of them? It is not a matter of coincidence, either, that the source of dedication towards contradictions is Heraclitus for both authors. I will focus on contradictions, the consequent indirect communication, and the concepts of motion and change – from the perspective of the inner, and not of the external world.

Bio: Andrea Erdély Perovics is a PhD student of Doctoral School of Philosophy at the University of Szeged. Her research concentrates on the field of the philosophy of art with a special emphasis on the



role and significance of theatre. Apart from her academic work she is the actress of the collective Metanoia Arthropædics, thus having a day-to-day, practical connection with theatre, too. Email: andreaerdely@yahoo.com

Armağan Ekici (independent scholar):
“Etienne, chanson! - A Turkish Contemporary of Joyce in Paris”
***Ulysses* round table**

Abstract: Yahya Kemal Beyatlı (1884, Skopje - 1958, Istanbul) is a colourful and influential figure in the development of Turkish literary modernism. Like Joyce, he eloped to Paris as a young man in 1903 and met the Ottoman equivalent of the Irish Wild Geese, the “jeunes turcs”. His studies of French poetry in his Paris years led to finding his own style and to his unique contribution to Turkish literature. He created a new form of poetic expression using the classical poetical meters and rhymes, but in a pure, direct, colloquial Turkish, which he called “the white language”. He eventually became a teacher, ambassador and member of parliament in the new Turkish Republic formed in 1923. He was one of the most respected figures in Turkish literature in his lifetime, and his follower Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar (1901 - 1962) became arguably the most important writer of early Turkish modernism. His posthumously published memoirs show interesting parallels with Joyce’s life and *Ulysses*, illustrating how the young writers of his generation from the peripheries of Europe meeting in Paris went through very similar experiences.

Bio: Armağan Ekici (Ankara, 1971) translated James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Lewis Carroll's *Alice* books, Raymond Queneau's *Exercices de Style*, and works of The Oulipo, Anne Carson, Harry Blamires, Herman Melville, Edgar Allan Poe, Alberto Manguel and Ambrose Bierce to Turkish, and published two volumes of essays. He also edited Turkish translations of Flann O'Brien's two novels and participated in a joint project of translating Bob Dylan's lyrics. He studied Business Administration in the Middle East Technical University and works in a bank. Email: armaganekici@gmail.com

Robert-Cristian Enescu (Ovidius University of Constanța):
“Consider the Poster: How Print Advertising Has Contributed to Shakespeare's Commodification”

Abstract: In this paper, I will discuss William Shakespeare’s contemporary image as a figure of modern consumerism by focusing on a heavily overlooked medium. Starting from advertising posters, event posters, etc., I argue that end-user gratification is a decisive issue in consumer culture. The uses of Shakespeare in contemporary consumer culture have almost transformed the early modern playwright (ubiquitously called “the Bard” on the internet, but not only) into an instrument of manipulating young users of popular culture into believing that associating a particular product with the image of Shakespeare will make them aware of the values of the past. In this context, taking Shakespeare from another point of view can provide new perspectives on the development of consumerism outside his works; and despite the numerous academic explorations of consumerism, the research area reserved for this social and economic order has yet to be exhausted.



Bio: is a PhD student in the humanities at the Ovidius University of Constanța. His research interests lie at the intersection of theatre, consumerism, and cultural studies, with a particular focus on the contemporary uses of Shakespeare (PhD title: *From Theatre to Consumerism: Contemporary Uses of Shakespeare*).

Andrada Fătu-Tutoveanu (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“A Foreign Pen: Life-Writing and Transmission in Olimpia Zamfirescu’s and Anne-Marie Callimachi’s English Memoirs”

Abstract: The interest in and, we may safely say, fascination of the readers, editors and film-makers for life-writing and all its subgenres has been constant in the last decades, together with that for their film adaptations into biopics. In post-totalitarian societies, such as the Romanian one, following collective trauma and the associated cultural memory, an interest in recovering such genuine recordings is even more legitimate. In the case of the diaries, memoirs, correspondence and hybrid genres associated with this collective traumas, transmission takes multiple forms and bears the significance of recording and disseminating important cultural memory details. Following the author’s previous research on Romanian women’s life-writing on Cold-War Romania, the current research tackles an interesting and unusual aspect related to this genre in relation to transmission. The two case-studies represent life-writing documents and/or personal narratives of Romanian women educated in the British culture. The historical and personal context of their exile, together with their education, led to their memoirs being written in English, despite being accounts on personal and historical events experienced in Romania. Thus, the transmission of such recordings of cultural memory takes place in a mediated manner, through translations performed decades later (more than six decades after the publication of the English version, in one case), which makes them an interest object of research.

Bio: Andrada Fătu-Tutoveanu is a lecturer at Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Between 2017-2019 she was a lecturer at the University of the Balearic Islands, Spain, and is a member in the Media studies research group (RIRCA) since 2017. She holds a PhD (2009) in Philology and conducted a three-year postdoctoral research (2010-2013). Her work covers Cultural Studies, Media and Gender Studies, with a recent focus on female life-writing in Cold War Romania. Author of four monographs (among them *Personal Narratives of Romanian Women during the Cold War (1945-1989)*, Edwin Mellen Press, 2015), book chapters and articles in international journals and editor of several volumes. She was a member in international research projects on internationalisation (IntlUni, 2014 and EXPERT-- Heading towards excellent European universities, 2011-2013, in Košice, Slovakia, where she also gave lectures), a project manager or participant in different research projects. She was granted a STAR-UBB Advanced Fellowship in 2020. Email: andrada.pintilescu@gmail.com

Maria Gherase (Ovidius University of Constanța):

“Margins, Transgression and Exceeding Boundaries in the Film Television Adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Othello* Directed by Geoffrey Sax (2001)”

Abstract: The present study is aimed at analysing some features shared by the Shakesperean play *Othello* in connection with the concept of metatheatre, as represented in the British film adaptation of *Othello* directed by Geoffrey Sax (2001). The study focuses on the uncommon context in which director (Geoffrey Sax), script writer (Andrew Davies) and actors (Eamonn Walker, Christopher



Eccleston and Keely Hawes) choose to present the play. How do the director and scriptwriter manage to “break the fourth wall” in this film adaptation? How does the director convey the ideas of monstrosity and racial difference? The examples will present particularities of the representations of peripheral places of the world, main themes, and the diversity of theatrical styles appropriated in the script. In the Sax adaptation, John Othello, interpreted by Eamonn Walker, is a contemporary London police officer, who wears a silken gown and is represented as an exotic character. The gown becomes the incriminating evidence, which replaces the handkerchief of the play’s text. The story is narrated by Ben Jago, a corrupt and manipulating police detective of the London Metropolitan Police, and the framing of the story suggests the idea of metatheatre, as the character is aware of his own role as a character in the play. Other metatheatrical devices, such as direct address to the audience (especially in soliloquies, asides, prologues, and epilogues), as well as references to acting, theatre, dramatic writing and spectatorship suggest to the viewer that “all the world is a stage”. I argue that the film adaptation of Shakespeare’s *Othello* employs theatrical (or metatheatrical) techniques, even if the medium of cinema is different from the live performance in the theatre.

Bio: Maria Gherase is a PhD student at the Ovidius University of Constanța. She is currently preparing a PhD dissertation under the supervision of Prof. Monica Matei Chesnoiu. Email: maria.gherase@yahoo.com.

Edoardo Giorgi (University of Pisa):

“Ușa: Matei Vișniec’s First Drama in a Perspective of “Tyrannical Virulence”

Abstract: The first drama ever written by one of the most important dramatist of modern day Romania, Matei Vișniec, is extremely interesting from many points of view: firstly because it was written by a twenty years old author and already is a text extremely well-polished and ethically ‘soaked’; secondly, it represent clearly some dynamics of fear that have been noticed by anthropologists after nearly fifty years, during the Covid-19 outbreak. I have thus operated, using some anthropological articles written a few years ago about the health crisis, an analysis focused on the mechanisms of terror that are present in both cases (although in the drama these are directly imputable to the regime, while in the pandemic situation those were perceived in another situation all around).

Bio: Edoardo Giorgi obtained his Master’s degree with honours in Italian Studies at the University of Pisa (Italy) in December 2021 with a thesis on the theatre of Matei Vișniec. In December 2022, he obtained the qualification of “Cultore della materia” in Romanian Literature at the same university. He participated as a speaker for the first time in the conference entitled: “Discurs critic și variație lingvistică. Traducerea ca interpretare: perspective teoretice, problematizări și aplicații” held at the Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava, Romania (26-28 May 2022). He is the author of the articles, recently published in Italian, *Il teatro decomposto di Vișniec: l’uomo che dorme e quello che vive*, in «Storie e linguaggi», no. 8, fasc. 2, 2022, p. 279-302, and *La parola “progresso”: c’è vita oltre la morte? C’è vita oltre la guerra?* in «Studia UBB Philologia», LXVII, 4, 2022, p. 357-377. Email: e.giorgi13@studenti.unipi.it

Alexandra Ivan (University of Bucharest):

“The Intermediation of Knowledge and Art by AI – the Ethics and Concerns of AI-driven Content”



Abstract: The increased lack of face-to-face interaction during the pandemic, as well as the transference of learning into the online sphere, has led to a predilection to lean on electronic devices and means of acquiring knowledge. The development of AI into a form that can be interacted with freely and which supplies answers in a humanesque format, is contributing to the shift from human-created content to the AI-created content. AI machines range from those who can supply knowledge, or rather, which supply information under the pretense of truth, such as ChatGPT, to Artist AIs, such as NightCafe and DALL-E, and even impersonation AIs, such as Character.AI, which can take on roles ranging from celebrities like Elon Musk to impersonating roles such as one's own therapist. The present paper aims to highlight the dangers of AI-driven content in the presence of missing regulation in the field, regulation which would allow for the ethical development of AI, highlighting the blatant misinformation and the art theft conducted by AI in order to produce answers which can satisfy the person sending the query.

Bio: Alexandra Maria Ivan is a recent PhD graduate in English Philology with a thesis tackling the created languages hybrid Englishes in Science Fiction novels by Ada Palmer, David Mitchell, and China Miéville. Notable past papers are "The Strain of Language in China Miéville's *Embassytown*: between Multiculturalism, Oppression, and the Alien Society", "Sonmi~451 and the Image of the Subservient Asian Woman", and „The (Mis)Translation of Future English in *Cloud Atlas*: Sloosha's Crossin' an' Ev'rythin' After". Email: alexandram.ivan@gmail.com

Dragoş Ivana (University of Bucharest):

“Between Imitation and Autonomy: The Early American Novel and the Problem of Literary Identity”

Abstract: The paper zooms in on the status of the early American novel as a hybrid genre set against the background of an unstable national culture and literary market deprived of dominant publishing hubs. Analysed by most critics as a mere transmission or imitation of English (canonical) models, the early American novel reveals formal peculiarities, experimental and quasi-fictional forms whose role was to problematise the nation's character and literary identity. In this light, I seek to show that the early American novel – basically seen as a form of transatlantic cultural exchange – became a site for probing the ideals of the early Republic, for appraising its historical accomplishments, and, ultimately, for inveighing against its democratic failure. Rising to prominence as a result of English prototypes reworked in accordance with American pressing socio-political matters, the early novel juxtaposed fiction with philosophy, diary writing and epistolary conventions in an age in which the drastically redrawn geographic and imperial boundaries were as permeable as the novelistic genre itself.

Bio: Dragoş Ivana is an Associate Professor of English and Head of the English Department of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures of the University of Bucharest. His main research interests are English literature, early American literature, Cervantes studies, critical theory and city studies. He is treasurer of the Romanian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies and delegate member of the Executive Committee of the International Society for Eighteen-Century Studies. Ivana published two books: *Embattled Reason, Principled Sentiment and Political Radicalism: Quixotism in English Novels, 1742-1801* (Brill, 2014) and *Behind “the Great Tradition”: Popular Culture in Eighteenth-Century England* (Ars Docendi, 2017). He was the recipient of several doctoral and postdoctoral research scholarships at the University of Kent, the Bodleian Library, the British Library, Chawton House Library, and Vanderbilt University. In 2018 he was appointed Fulbright Ambassador to the University of Bucharest. Ivana has published extensively on novel theory and the reception of



Cervantes in 18th-century England. His current project focuses on representations of quixotism in the early American novel. Email: dragos.ivana@lts.unibuc.ro

Chen Luyu (University of Szeged):

“Attacking on Asian American Citizens as an Effect of the Trumpist Political Discourse during the Covid-19 Pandemic”

Abstract: Attacking on Asian American citizens as an effect of the Trumpist political discourse during the Covid-19 pandemic

Anti-Asian American violence was fueled by Donald Trump, the 45th president of America, whose rhetoric of white supremacy and xenophobia attacked Asian Americans, and particularly Chinese Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, Asian Americans would no longer be understood as the result of individual or family immigratory trajectories, but rather as a massive influx of "enemies" or "viruses" seeking to establish themselves in the country. Therefore, this paper considers hate speech against Asian Americans as a symptom of a representation crisis by delving into Trumpist political discursive processes in which representation produces extremist stands and viewpoints. In my talk, I use corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis to analyse Trump's tweets which include 683 posts with the keywords "Asian/Asia" and "China/Chinese", collected between March 17, 2020 to January 08, 2021. The aim of the study is aim to explore how the messages on Donald Trump's Twitter account implement a persuasive strategy of producing hate against Asian Americans.

Bio: Chen Luyu completed a Master's programme in Global Journalism and Public Relations at Coventry University in UK and is currently as a PhD candidate working on political discourse analysis and media studies at the University of Szeged, Hungary. She has published the articles on *Journal of Intercultural Communication Research and Forum* (John Benjamins). Her current project extends her previous working in cyberhate through an investigation on Trump's speech, particularly based on Trump's tweets and press conference how the anti-Asian resentment creep cross America, what media plays role in and how it attenuates or enhances individuals' perspectives. Email: chenluyuma@gmail.com

Nóra Máthé (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj/Sapientia University, Târgu Mureş):

“Cultural and Temporal Transmission in *A Tale for the Time Being* by Ruth Ozeki”

Abstract: Years after the devastating 2011 Tōhoku earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan, a Hello Kitty lunchbox washes up on the shore of a small island in British Columbia. The inquisitive author, Ruth finds the contents of the strange box, a diary written by a Japanese-American teenage girl called Nao. The young girl begins her diary by claiming that she does not have much time left. Her thoughts about sadistic bullying, her uprooted state (from the United States to Japan) and her interaction with Japanese culture pull Ruth into an all but obsessive search for the answer to the question: What happened to Nao? The aim of my presentation is to examine the interaction between the two authors, Nao who wrote her diary with the goal to be read by someone and Ruth who finds, annotates and dissects her text.



Bio: Nóra Máthé is a PhD student at Babes-Bolyai University and an assistant lecturer at Sapientia University. Her research interests include contemporary American literature, post-9/11 nonfiction, gender studies and American popular culture. Email: mathenora@yahoo.com

Adela Matei (Ovidius University of Constanța):

“Figuring Displacement: Spaces of Imagination in Early Modern and Postmodern Literary Transmissions”

Abstract: This essay examines ecocritically and comparatively the transmission of metaphoric spaces from drama to novel, as represented in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* and in Julian Barnes’ *A History of the World in 10 ½ Chapters*—seas, mountains, islands, jungle—to show that these spaces allow for different interpretations, yet they are spaces of individual imagination in both the play and the novel, suggesting transformation and metamorphosis. I argue that these literary spaces show a common feature of displacement, which allows human language to re-imagine other worlds—in literature and in visual arts. The spaces of imagination proliferated through Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* and Julian Barnes’ novel have suffered a transformation—or “sea change”—in time and space, as they speak to audiences and readers from the past and present. The sea in Barnes’ chapter “Shipwreck” symbolizes danger but also hope, as does the sea in the storm scene in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. The Mountain in Barnes’ eponymous chapter represents an isolated and inaccessible landscape on Mount Ararat, at the intersection of three cultures (Armenia, Turkey and Russia), but it also represents the biblical language of faith and hermitic isolation. Similarly, the island in *The Tempest*, which is—geologically—a mountain above the water, represents metaphorically the island of the mind. The jungle in Barnes’ chapter “Upstream” is a remote place in the forest on the Orinoco River, where Europeans and native Indians interact while making a movie; this movie is a work of visual art, represented in a novel; so is any one of the many productions of *The Tempest*, which reiterates the island’s imaginary space in various directorial interpretations. All these locations are metaphoric spaces of imagination, in which reality is transformed into literary representation by means of fictional description or theatrical action.

Bio: Adela Matei is PhD student at Ovidius University of Constanta and her research is focused on multiculturalism in early modern and postmodern literary interpretations. Email: adelamatei7@yahoo.com

Kristína Melišová (Masaryk University, Brno):

“The Priestess, The Medium, The Prophetess’: Identity in British Modernist Literary Patronage”

Abstract: Placing modernist literary production into the larger context of the avant-garde personal networks greatly erodes the myth of the modernist creative genius. It allows for an understanding of the complex mechanisms at play even in small-scale productions, each capable of influencing the final literary work. Easy to see from hindsight, especially with help of Bourdieu and Becker, it was also felt acutely by the modernist writers themselves. For fear of their work being viewed as unoriginal or, even more radically, collaborative, writers such as Aldous Huxley, Lytton Strachey, D. H. Lawrence, and Siegfried Sassoon took pains to distance themselves from their patrons who often facilitated the production of their works by means of financial or non-material support. In order to navigate the labyrinthian relationships of patronage, both them and their patrons, chiefly Ottoline Morrell and



Sibyl Colefax, assumed various identities and employed strategies which will be explored in this paper.

Bio: Kristína Melišová holds an MA degree in English Language and Literature from Masaryk University. In her Ph.D. research, she focuses on patronage and its role in connection to modernism. This is a continuation of her previous research on the Bloomsbury Group and the broader modernist milieu. This particular topic not only represents a confluence of literature, visual arts, aesthetics, and biography, all of great interest to her, but also shines a light on the circumstances under which the works that influence our lives so thoroughly come into being. Email: tinamelisova@mail.muni.cz

Erika Mihálycsa (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
***Ulysses* round table**

Bio: Erika Mihálycsa is Associate Professor at the Department of English at Babeş-Bolyai University Cluj, where she teaches modern and contemporary British and Irish literature. Her recent publications include “A wretchedness to defend”: Reading Beckett’s Letters (2022) and the co-edited volume *Retranslating Joyce for the 21st Century* (Brill, 2020). Her articles and reviews on Joyce’s and Beckett’s language poetics, Joyce in translation, Beckett and the visual arts, various aspects of Anglophone and European literary and visual modernism have appeared in *Word and Image*, *Joyce Studies Annual*, *European Joyce Studies*, *James Joyce Quarterly*. She edited Rareş Moldovan’s new Romanian translation of Joyce’s *Ulysses* (2022) and has translated fiction by Beckett, Flann O’Brien, Patrick McCabe and others into Hungarian, and a handful of modern and contemporary Hungarian authors into English. In 2022, together with Carmen Borbély and Petronia Petrar, she edited *Temporalities of Modernism* (Ledizioni, Milan). She co-edits the literary and arts journal *HYPERION: On the Future of Aesthetics* (New York: Contra Mundum), and serves as one of the editors of *European Joyce Studies* (Brill). Email: erika.mihalycsa@ubbcluj.ro

Orsolya Milián (University of Szeged):
“‘The picture’s secret’ in Julian Barnes’s *A History of the World in 10 and ½ Chapters*”

Abstract: My paper intends to examine the word-and-image relations in the fifth chapter, “Shipwreck” of the British writer Julian Barnes’s postmodern novel *A History of the World in 10 and ½ Chapters* (1989). This chapter of Barnes’s historiographic metafiction is divided into three parts: Based on the accounts of two survivors (Jean-Baptiste Henri Savigny and Alexandre Corréard), its first part recounts the disastrous fate of the French frigate *Medusa* in 1816. The first part is followed by a fold-out reproduction of Théodore Géricault’s painting *The Raft of the Medusa* (1819), which remediates the catastrophe of the *Medusa*, and which, as a ‘foreign’ medial intrusion into the verbal narrative, can be conceived as the second part of the chapter. The last part of *Shipwreck* consists of the painting’s ekphrasis that describes it from the bifocal point of view of the “ignorant” and the “informed eye”. In other words, the chapter “Shipwreck” not only provides us a highly unconventional literary ekphrasis that appears together with the (reproduced) picture within the same typographical space, but also displays multiple intermedial transpositions. My presentation aims at discussing the implications that the reproduced picture’s visible/material presence has for ekphrasis, and at unraveling the role it plays in the novel.

Bio: Dr. Orsolya Milián (1977) has a degree in Hungarian language and literature and English language and literature from Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca (2000). She completed her PhD at the University of Szeged, Hungary in 2010, entitled *Az ekphraszisz fikciói* [Fictions of Ekphrasis].



She's a senior lecturer at the Department of Visual Culture and Literary Theory, University of Szeged, Hungary. She is the author of dozens of articles and two books published in Hungarian: *Képes beszéd* [Visual/Figurative Speech], 2009; *Átlépések* [Transgressions], 2012. Her research interests include word and image studies, ekphrasis, intermediality, contemporary Hungarian literature and the interrelations between popular music and film. Email: milianro@yahoo.com

Gabriela Mocan (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“Liminal Spaces of Creation: Identity and Otherness in the Writings of British Migrant Authors”

Abstract: The present paper explores the ways in which British migrant authors negotiate their identity and otherness through their writings. The study focuses on two groups of authors: first-generation immigrant writers and British-born authors of mixed-race backgrounds, relating to their writings and worldviews as shaped by inherited pasts and negotiated presents. Literature has long been a significant agent in the cultural transmission of identity, and the liminal spaces of creation that contain these authors give birth to complex interrogations about self and other. Emphasizing ways in which experiences of migration, displacement and hybridity are articulated in their work, we aim to highlight the importance of recognising the diverse and multifaceted voices of migrant writers in shaping contemporary British literature and culture, while also pointing to the longevity of the colonial project in that even those authors who are born in the UK have been socialised as immigrants.

Bio: Gabriela Mocan lectures in English for Business and Intercultural Communication at the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj. She was Head of Literature, Architecture and the Arts at London's Romanian Cultural Institute (2013-2019) and the Creative Producer of the first Romanian-British literature festival ever organised in the UK, *Romania Rocks* (2020). Her research interests include identity studies, intercultural communication, cultural management, diplomacy, translation studies, narrativity and world literatures. Email: gabriela.mocan@ubbcluj.ro

Călina Moldovan (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“Liquid Ontologies and Planetary Assemblages. Representations of Water in Contemporary Norwegian Literature”

Abstract: In an essay from 2017, Astrida Neimanis states that fluids tend to “breach borders and invite the confluence and collaboration of things; they challenge an ordering of the world according to a logic of separation and self-sufficiency”. Water forms a global, planetary assemblage of forces and synergies, a rhizome-like structure, with no beginning, no centre, and no end: “Waters literally flow between and within bodies, across space and through time, in a planetary circulation system that challenges pretensions to discrete individuality” (Cecilia Chen, Janine MacLeod and Astrida Neimanis, *Thinking with Water*, 2013). Human agency is set aside and no longer needed in such a system, where the flow of everything precedes human intention. An ocean is an ocean, but an ocean is also a conglomerate of various independent and autonomous non-human entities or actants that communicate and operate in mutual reliance, creating a mesh-like structure. The purpose of my presentation is to investigate how this planetary water assemblage is depicted in contemporary Norwegian fiction, in novels by Maja Lunde, Morten Strøksnes, and Roy Jacobsen. I argue that these narratives disturb long-established, but slowly outdated conceptions of matter and non-humanity,



and create new sensibilities and new modes of understanding the mesh of interconnected human and nonhuman realities.

Bio: Călina-Maria Moldovan is a PhD student at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca. She holds a Master's degree in Comparative Literature and, as of 2022, she is a member of the Ecocritical Network for Scandinavian Studies. Her research interests include nonhuman studies, (blue) ecocriticism, new materialist theories, Scandinavian literature and film. She has published articles and book reviews in *Studia Scandinavica*, *Studia Philologia*, *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies* and *Theory and Ekphrasis Journal*. Email: calina.moldovan@ubbcluj.ro

**Rareş Moldovan (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
Ulysses round table**

Bio: Rareş Moldovan is Associate Professor of English at Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj. He teaches American literature, Irish film and a course on Samuel Beckett. His research interests include American contemporary fiction and poetry, film and adaptation studies, Irish literature (especially James Joyce and Samuel Beckett) and literary theory. He is the author of *Symptomatology: A Study of the Problem of Legitimation in Late Modernity* (2011), and he has published articles and book chapters on American literature and film, literary theory, James Joyce. His translation of Joyce's *Ulysses* into Romanian (co-edited with Erika Mihalycsa) has been published in March 2023, and his other translations include Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* and Harold Bloom's *The Anxiety of Influence*. He is the Editor-in-chief of the *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Philologia* and affiliated with the Centre for the Study of the Modern Anglophone Novel (CSMAN) at Babeş-Bolyai University. Email: rareș.moldovan@ubbcluj.ro

**Octavian More (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“The Things You Had Forgotten to Imagine’ —Rebecca Elson’s poetry of cosmic wisdom”**

Abstract: Despite having left us only a small body of verse, collected in the posthumously published *A Responsibility to Awe* (2001), Montreal-born astronomer and poet Rebecca Elson impresses through a particular sensibility resulting from the unlikely union of positivist certitude and existential angst informed by an acute sense of one's biological finitude. In this paper, intended both as a recuperative effort and an interpretive exercise, we will try to shed light on how poetry, as Elson's case demonstrates, can be an “essentially ecological discipline” and a “science of belonging” (Burnside 2006), reminding us that the urgency of the quotidian experience is inextricably linked with cosmic allegiances.

Bio: Octavian More (Ph.D., Babeş-Bolyai University, 2010) holds a lecturer position in the Department of English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca. His main research interests include modernist poetry, Canadian literature, Victorian literature, British cinematography and cultural studies. He is the author of a series of articles on these subjects, published both in Romania and abroad, and has also participated in numerous scientific conferences, seminars and workshops. Email: octavian.more@ubbcluj.ro



Ioana Mudure-Iacob (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj), Veronica Diana Micle (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“Creating communicative context through the use of emojis and politeness in online academic written interactions”

Abstract: The current study aims to provide a glimpse into the way higher education students and language instructors establish rapport in the academic written communication framework through the use of emojis and online face-work strategies. Contextualisation cues are created in order to regulate transaction based communicative exchanges that result in positive outcomes, subsequently fostering an inclusive culture. Linguistic display of online discourse is fraught with perils that may impede on appropriate written academic interactions occurring between instructors and students. Negotiation of identity becomes a main objective, as there are differences in status, power and various degrees of communicative achievement between interactants. The study shares results obtained from a questionnaire administered to university students offering a framework for embedding emojis and face-work in online identity negotiation via written communication. It aims to offer a digital pedagogical competence approach to cater for the emotional needs of learners whose identities as digital natives take additional effort to create in the context of using transversal skills.

Bio: Veronica-Diana Micle, Ph.D. is a lecturer in the Department of Modern Languages and Business Communication at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration, Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania. Her scientific fields of interest include English for Specific Purposes, English for Academic Purposes, Pragmatics, Sociolinguistics, Professional Communication, Intercultural Business Communication, Oral Proficiency Enhancement, Foreign Language Testing and Assessment in Higher Education. She is currently working in the DIAL4U Erasmus+ project - *Digital pedagogy to develop Autonomy, mediate and certify Lifewide and Lifelong Language Learning for (European) Universities*, focusing on developing caring teaching and learning digital frameworks that draw on pragmatic politeness and social and emotional learning applications. Email: veronica.micle@ubbcluj.ro

Bio: Ioana Mudure-Iacob is an assistant professor in the Department of Specialised Foreign Languages, Faculty of Letters and has been teaching English for Specific Purposes since 2009 to undergraduates majoring in Business Management, Tourism, Political Sciences, Sports and Psychology. She studied English and French Philology, Economics, American studies and Intercultural Business communication, and she has a PhD in American literature with a thesis on Walt Whitman's Polymorphous Aesthetics. She is currently working in the DIAL4U Erasmus+ project - *Digital pedagogy to develop Autonomy, mediate and certify Lifewide and Lifelong Language Learning for (European) Universities*, focusing on developing digital technologies and pedagogy in language learning and teaching processes. Her scientific fields of interest include Blended Learning, Assessment using digital tools, Gamification in Language Teaching and Assessment, Digital Escape Rooms in Formative Assessment, incorporating ICT tools in teaching and evaluation. Email: ioana.mudure@ubbcluj.ro

Alexandru Oravițan (West University of Timisoara):

“Disrupted Transmission and Fragmented Identity in Don DeLillo’s *The Silence*”

Abstract: Don DeLillo’s short 2020 novel *The Silence* focuses on the impact of an unexpected and widespread blackout on Super Bowl Sunday 2022, which disrupts channels of communication and transportation systems, leading to an overarching sense of confusion. By representing the characters’



polarizing reactions, the novel draws attention towards broader ruminations on the nature of identity in a technologically mediated world. Furthermore, *The Silence* emphasizes the fragility of current modes of transmission, effectively fleshing out a crisis of communication threatening humanity itself. This paper analyzes DeLillo's framing of disrupted transmission and fragmented identity, thus revealing a poignant and prescient understanding of the role of technology and media in shaping individual and collective identities in the contemporary world.

Bio: Alexandru Oravițan is Research Assistant PhD at the West University of Timișoara, Romania. He has conducted extensive research into post-9/11 literature as part of his doctoral work. Currently, his postdoctoral research endeavours revolve around contemporary American literature and culture, as part of his affiliation with the American Studies Center (CSAM), and corpus linguistics, within the Centre for Corpus Related Digital Approaches to Humanities (CODHUS). Email: alexandru.oravitan@e-uvt.ro

Adrian Papahagi (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“Shakespeare on Page: Studying the Complete Works 400 Years after the First Folio”

Abstract: The period following the Second World War has redefined the Shakespearean canon, and has introduced new modes (and fashions) of interpretation. The latest Arden editions add the names of Shakespeare's collaborators on the title pages of plays like *Pericles* and *Timon of Athens*, and plays to which Shakespeare's contribution is marginal are being forced into the canon. Theories and ideologies have been haunting scholars for many decades now: as a result, the text was often reduced to a mere pretext for whatever Marxist, feminist or postcolonialist theory scholars were upholding. How can one go back to the text, when everything that matters, and so much that does not matter has been said? And, of course, to what text may one go back?

Bio: Adrian Papahagi is Professor of English at the Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj. He holds a PhD in medieval studies from the Sorbonne, and was a fellow of the Warburg Institute, London. He has published widely on Old English literature, manuscript studies, and on Shakespeare. His recent publications include *Providence and Grace: Lectures on Shakespeare's Problem Plays and Romances* (Cluj: Presa Universitară Clujeană, 2020), and six volumes in the ongoing series *Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi* (Iași: Polirom, 2020–), which aims to analyse the complete works of William Shakespeare. Email: adrian.papahagi@ubbcluj.ro

Paul Mihai Paraschiv (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“The Lives of Nonhuman Narrators: Reading Literary Animals in Eighteenth-Century Animalographies”

Abstract: This paper seeks to highlight a particular mode of writing in the long eighteenth century, namely the animal biography. Also referred to as “animalographies”, these narratives employ nonhuman narrators in order to tell their own story, while at the same time mounting a critique of their contemporary society. Having in mind Tobias Menely's notion of “creaturely voice”, this article aims to ascertain whether the narrative model of such animal biographies can challenge anthropocentric perspectives and direct the attention towards the interspecies contiguity of the time. Adopting a critical animal studies lens, I explore several such animalographies. Specifically, I analyse *Memoirs of Dick the Pony* (1799), *The Dog of Knowledge*; or, *Memoirs of Bob the Spotted Terrier* (1801),



Marvellous Adventures; or, the Vicissitudes of a Cat (1802), *The Adventures of Poor Puss* (1809), *The Life of the Famous Dog Carlo* (1809), *The Little Woodman, and his Dog Cæsar* (1818), and *History of Tabby, a Favourite Cat* (1809), in order to illuminate the multifaceted ways in which the treatment of animals in these literary creations reflects and reverberates with broader notions and perspectives regarding nonhuman life during the Enlightenment era. In so doing, I seek to elucidate how the materialization of a particular writing pattern essentially advocating for greater animal literary representativeness began to take root during this pivotal epoch of English literature.

Bio: Paul Mihai Paraschiv is a PhD student at the Faculty of Letters, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca. He holds a Master's degree in Irish Studies and, as of 2020, he is an affiliate of the Centre for the Study of the Modern Anglophone Novel. His research interests include posthumanism, critical animal studies, ecocriticism, 18th century literature and literary theory. He has recently published a translation into Romanian of Cary Wolfe's "Human, All Too Human: 'Animal Studies' and the Humanities" in *Post/h/um Journal* and articles or reviews in *Studia Philologia*, *Caietele Echinox* and *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory*. Email: paul.paraschiv@ubbcluj.ro

Andreea Paris-Popa (University of Bucharest):

"I've read you right — I'm with you now': Aesthetic Reading in Virginia Woolf's Metafictional Short Stories"

Despite critical interest in Virginia Woolf's intense preoccupation with the imaginative process at the root of literary creation, little attention has been paid to the manner in which, through metafiction, the writer turns her short stories into reflections upon the nature of reading. Both in stories published during her lifetime – such as "An Unwritten Novel" (1921) and "A Mark on the Wall" (1921) – and in the short fiction published posthumously – "The Lady in the Looking-Glass" (1943) and "The Fascination of the Pool" (1985) – the boundaries between literature and criticism, between fiction and reality, take center stage. For Mark Currie, it is precisely this point of convergence that metafictional works take as subject matter, proving that "fiction and criticism have assimilated each other's insights, producing a self-conscious energy on both sides" (Metafiction 2). Thus, Virginia Woolf's 'character-reading' makes its way into her stories and the author's critical stance upon the act of reading, revealed primarily in her essays, is now transmitted thematically through characters who appropriate the readers' active construction of meaning while living in the same textual world inhabited by the fictitious characters they ardently wish to interpret. Through the advancement of a specific type of reading: active, emotive, empathetic, fluid, inquisitive, intimate and indeterminate, yet always close to the text it is engaged with, Virginia Woolf may be said to prefigure the type of transactional reader-response criticism underpinned by Louise Rosenblatt, whose insistence upon aesthetic reading calls for a two-way transmission of meaning that is simultaneously constitutive of the literary work and of the reader's self.

Bio: Andreea Paris-Popa is a Ph.D Lecturer in English at the faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, at the University of Bucharest, where she teaches Twentieth-Century British Literature, Contemporary Critical Theory, an elective course entitled "Narcissistic Art: Twentieth-Century British Metafiction, Metadrama and Metacinema", as well as an optional course in Ethics and Academic Integrity. She is also preparing a course in Contemporary British Cinematography for students of the British Cultural Studies M.A. programme at the University of Bucharest. Her most recent publications are "Metaleptic Rewriting as Sham Authorial Justice in Flann O'Brien's *At Swim-Two-Birds*" (2021) and "Between Troubles and Peace in Northern Ireland: Cinematic Divisions in Kenneth Branagh's



Belfast (2021) and Terry Loane's Mickybo and Me (2004)" (2022). Email: andreea.parispopa@lils.unibuc.ro

Elena Păcurar (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“When is man ever safe from contagion?: forms of isolation in Emma Donoghue’s *Haven*”

Abstract: The present proposal is an overview of the complex forms of confinement (psychological, physical, verbal), as illustrated in Emma Donoghue’s latest novel. Besides dwelling on the rhetoric of infection/contamination (used as pretext for physical alienation), we focus on the features of incarcerated narratives and investigate various instances of censorship, as well as of failure in the act of communication. Verbal contention, uneven lexical exchanges and the (re)invention of a vocabulary for diverse forms of entrapment are some of the areas addressed in the text.

Bio: Elena Păcurar is Lecturer at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca. She has been teaching English for Specific Purposes to students in Tourism, as well as Irish prose to the students from the Irish Studies MA Programme. She is interested in active learning strategies, flipped classroom pedagogy and Irish modernism & postmodernism. Email: elena.pacurar@ubbcluj.ro

Petronia Petrar (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“Contaminating Ethics in Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves*”

Abstract: The notable (and relatively recent) interpretive efforts to read Virginia Woolf’s *The Waves* as a serious investigation of the ideological context of its production, rather than the result of a supposedly modernist, aestheticizing retreat into solipsistic formalism, have foregrounded the radical political and ethical implications of the text. Inaugurated by Jane Marcus’s groundbreaking “*Britannia Rules The Waves*” (1991) and continued by critical attention to the communal, nonviolent ethos of vulnerability created by Woolf’s choices of form with its effects of “suspended subjectivity” (Högberg, 2020: 172), such studies recast the novel as a response to the catastrophic threat posed by the belligerent history of the 1930s. Drawing on their insights, my paper will focus on the emergence of an ethics of impurity and contamination propagated by means of what Jinny calls “the hieroglyphs written on other people’s faces” – bodily interruptions of narratives constantly placed in the position to look for an absent audience.

Bio: Petronia Petrar is a lecturer with the English Department of the Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Her research interests include twentieth century and contemporary fiction, the Scottish novel, and narrative ethics. She has published papers on the modernist, postmodernist and the contemporary novel, and she has edited several collections of essays, including a special issue of the journal *American, British and Canadian Studies on “World and Nation: Tropes of Representation in Contemporary Scottish Writing.”* She is the director of the Centre for the Study of the Modern Anglophone Novel, affiliated with her home university. She is the author of *Spatial Representations in Contemporary British Fiction* (2012), and, with Carmen-Veronica Borbély, of *Our Heteromorphic Future: Encoding the Posthuman in Contemporary British Fiction* (2014). In 2022, together with Erika Mihálycsa and Carmen Carmen Borbély, she edited *Temporalities of Modernism* (Ledizioni, Milan). Email: petronia.petrar@ubbcluj.ro



**Judit Pieldner, Enikő Pál (Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Miercurea Ciuc):
“Sea-changing, you might say.’ Margaret Atwood’s Hag-Seed: A Rhizomatic Metatext”**

Abstract: Ever since it was published, Margaret Atwood’s *Hag-Seed* (2016) has been scrutinized for its peculiar engagements with the Shakespearean pre-text at the cross-section of various discourses, from literary and media studies, through drama pedagogy, even to prison studies. Drawing on the prison metaphor in the source text and recontextualizing it as a contemporary prison performance is just one of the multitudinous ways in which *The Tempest* is incorporated into Atwood’s novel. Thus, a salient aspect one may encounter is its intertwining metatextuality which encapsulates many of its core interpretations as a rewriting and/or adaptation. The presentation aims at unravelling the many layers, means and functions of this particular type of metatextuality found in the novel, with special focus on the rhizomatic nexus of texts and contexts that defines Atwood’s novel as an experiment that reconsiders, with a gesture of metatextual homage, the prospects of fan fiction in the contemporary age.

Bio: Judit Pieldner, PhD, is Associate Professor at the Department of Humanities of Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Miercurea Ciuc, Romania. Main research interests: rewriting, adaptation, literature and film, intermediality. Her latest volume: *Adaptation, Remediation and Intermediality: Forms of In-Betweenness in Cinema*, Cluj University Press, 2020. She is executive editor of the journal *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Philologica*. E-mail: pieldnerjudit@uni.sapientia.ro

Bio: Enikő Pál, PhD, is Assistant Professor at the Department of Humanities of Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, Miercurea Ciuc, Romania. Her main scientific concern is the Romanian-Hungarian linguistic contacts. She is author of the book *Influența limbii maghiare asupra limbii române. Perioada veche* [The Influence of the Hungarian language on the Romanian language. The Old Period], Alexandru Ioan Cuza University Publishing House, Iași, 2014. Occasionally, she translates from and into Romanian, English and Hungarian. E-mail: paleniko@uni.sapientia.ro

**Aura Poenar (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“Disorienting Maps. Spaces of (dis)appearance. Practices of Remembrance”**

Abstract: In 2021 Metropolitan Opera premiered *Eurydice*, a modern opera composed by Matthew Aucoin based on Sarah Ruhl’s 2003 play which offers a radical staging of the classical story of Orpheus by rewriting it from Eurydice’s perspective. By exploring the discontinuities in the transmission of language (as a personal message) and its relation with the (im)possibility to retain one’s memory (identity/history) the play explores the possibilities of a liminal space where identity is both erased and voiced in a fragile interplay between remembrance, oblivion, legibility, and the mapping out of a space for the other to emerge. We will investigate how various contemporary artists engage with the (arbitrary aesthetic and narrative) visual continuity of the western representation that has driven and shaped the reading and mapping of the world in a seamlessly objective rendition where the map (does not meet or replicate but) becomes the real. Clement Valla’s *Postcards from Google Earth* question the very reading of our geographies through our screens and play on the liminal space where a seemingly continuous transmission is interrupted and the ‘stitching’ that is meant to render a seamless visual representation of the real is exposed. We will focus on how the dynamics of remembering and forgetting the collective trauma in Guillermo Kuitca’s paintings of a precarious and endangered space as subject to disintegration is also building a securing place of refuge and stability to make the emergence of the language/memory/other possible and how the almost total absence of figuration in his artworks functions as a medium for transmission of an objective space of memory



where the violence and voiding of individuality is rendered visible beyond any subjective experience or empirical representation of the state terror. Similarly, Colombian artist Doris Salcedo's memory sculptures create a topography of life where the absence of human figuration is marked by the idea of violence threatening private space and is tied to the history of disappearances and the war on civilians. This "anthropomorphic imagination of loss that intimates human presence through its very absence" is also explored by Nalini Malani in her 2023 installation commissioned by the National Gallery, London, as a reflection on how (our) past histories are presented and "how historically marginalised voices can be heard". In exploring how the memory and identity of a culture and community are shaped by alternative means of seeing the world, the video installation responds to the museum's (historical) collections by interlacing myth, history and politics in an interrogation of the legacies of past ownership all the while deconstructing the western history of representation through overlapping narratives (using both sound and image) confronting oppression and persecution and giving voice to the marginalised. Our paper explores the idea of art as a medium made up of discontinuities where the other is allowed to appear through the exploration of disaster and inequality.

Bio: Aura Poenar is a postdoctoral researcher in aesthetics and history of art. She has received a doctorate in comparative literature at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University. She has published academic articles, essays and studies on contemporary art, aesthetics, cultural theory, theatre, cinema, photography, performance arts. She collaborates as a lecturer with the Faculty of Theatre and Film of Babeş-Bolyai University. Email: aurapoe@gmail.com

Horea Poenar (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
"Is Virginia Woolf Dead or Are We Dead in the Eyes of Virginia Woolf?"

Abstract: Amidst the fashions of post-this and post-that which pervade the academic world, it is perhaps high time to enact some critical distance and revisit a few different readings of the recent past and the contemporary. One of these references is Michael Fried's analysis that postmodernism is not an Event but a reactionary stance towards the authentic Event of Modernism. Along the same line, for somebody like Peter Osborne, postmodernism is just the misrecognition of a particular stage in the dialectics of modernisms. Why however is there such a hysteric insistence to break up with the past and to claim a different and continuous (futureless) present? In such a context, what would authors that are rarely read today tell us? The title of this paper suggests that Modernist literature, far from being dead (or just fixed and closed in its proper past), could hold answers to our dilemmas. What we are trying to sketch here is the possibility of a Woolfian view on the present age. Among other things, "being dead in the eyes of Woolf" could mean the refusal of any future that is not framed by the present, the opposite of the core of Modernist temporality for which any present is framed by a radically different future. Does the present or what we call contemporaneity have any critically meaningful sense and could such a sense be reached without a politics of the forms (something that many of today's chic literary methods love to abhor)? Perhaps what we miss and are no longer aware of is the political shift in and through the forms, something that names the core mechanisms of writers like Woolf. If for Deleuze and Guattari art is a bloc of sensations, a compound of precepts and affects, then experimental activity on forms, only apparently divorced from life and ideology, produces the real political effects on practice, perception and experience.

Bio: Horea Poenar is a novelist and an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Letters at Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca where he teaches literary theory, aesthetics and critical theory. From 2001 to 2009 he was director of the *Echinox* literary magazine and from 2008 he has been a collaborator



(as moderator, anchor and interviewer) of TVR, the Romanian National Television. He has published four books and many academic articles, essays and studies on literary and cultural theory, critical thinking and contemporary art. His latest book, *The Theory of The Phantom Fish. Ten Studies on Literary Theory* reworks the definitions of theory in relation to politics, the understanding of culture and the current trends in critical theory. His novel *Locuri blinde pentru Aura* was published in 2018. He has won important awards from prestigious institutions including the Romanian Writers Union and the Museum of Romanian Literature. He is currently working on a book tapping into the articulations between jazz and critical theory. Email: horea.poenar@ubbcluj.ro

Liliana Pop (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“Mary Shelley’s LAST (ENGLISH)MAN”

Abstract: Although the title *The Last Man*, turned into a theme, has known a definite vogue lately, the accents chosen by Mary Shelley, some of her predecessors and of her contemporaries are very different. This paper tries to put Mary Shelley’s novel in the context of her own ethnic and personal preoccupations, hoping to bring out as well the evolution of her famous radicalism.

Bio: Liliana Pop is an associate professor of English, with a PhD on the poetry of T. S. Eliot and religion. She has been teaching at the English Department since the regime change in Romania - December 1989 - specializing in poetry, with special accents on Romanticism and Modernism. She also teaches courses on individual poets, such as W.B. Yeats. Her writing, in English and French, focuses on poetry and religion, poetry and landscape, poetry and the Mediterranean.

Andrei-Bogdan Popa (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“Debt and Disclosure in Claire Keegan’s *Small Things Like These*”

Abstract: In her novel *Small Things Like These*, Claire Keegan concocts a specific language through which to articulate the national trauma of the Magdalen Laundries in its specific impact upon the national consciousness of contemporary Ireland. More precisely, the text's vocabulary of affect seems to be doubled by the subtext of debt and the language of religion. Starting from Sheila Killian's work on the Magdalen Laundries, this paper shows how Keegan's novel problematizes the financial complicity between the Catholic Church and the Irish body politic, wherein a culture of secrecy curtails the transmission of information regarding systemic abuse. The novella therefore explores the various discursive barriers that keep individuals from addressing institutional injustice, but it also hints at possible ways of undermining the stasis and silence maintained by the apparatus of debt.

Bio: Andrei Bogdan Popa is a graduate student in the History of Ideas, History of Images M.A. and holds an Irish Studies M.A. degree at the Faculty of Letters of Babeş-Bolyai University. His articles have been published in Revista Transilvania, East-West Cultural Passage, the Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory, Studia Philologia, and American, British and Canadian Studies. His research interests include contemporary Anglophone fiction, critical theory, ecocriticism, and the ethics of fiction. Email: andrei.bogdan.popa@stud.ubbcluj.ro

Georgiana Popa (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“The Critical Reception of George Eliot in Communist Romania”



Abstract: Drawing on the premise that Communist Romania was the space of a culture deeply loaded with and restricted by the assertive Marxist ideology, the present study aims at establishing the (critical) reception of George Eliot in that period. Also, building from Edmund Husserl's claim that the actual object of philosophical investigation is not the object itself (that is, the literary text) but the contents of our consciousness, I shall argue that the way in which the Victorian writer was received in Romania is highly dependent on and influenced by the social and political context of its reception. The most significant period of Eliot's reception was 1960-1980, when new translations of novels such as *The Mill on the Floss* (by Catinca Ralea and Eugenia Cîncea), *Silas Marner* (by Mihai Radulescu) and *Middlemarch* (by Eugen Marian) emerged. It is hoped that by looking at both the critical introductions of these translations and the translated texts, the study will support the claim that Eliot's works had been used to promote literary tendencies and movements such as ruralism and socialist realism, that suited the Communist agenda.

Bio: Georgiana Popa is a PhD student at the Faculty of Letters, "Babeş-Bolyai" University, Cluj-Napoca. Popa researches the reception of Victorian literature in Communist Romania. She has published articles in *Hradec Králové Journal of Anglophone Studies*, *Buletinul Sesiunii Studenţilor şi Masteranzilor Filologi*, *Journal of Student Research in Languages and Literatures* and *Studia Philologia*. Her main interests are Victorian literature, reception studies and cinematography. Email: georgianabretagne@gmail.com

Nicolae-Andrei Popa (The Bucharest University of Economic Studies):
"The Transhumanist Death of Identity in Don DeLillo's Zero K"

Abstract: Don DeLillo's *White Noise* conviction that "all plots tend to move deathward" is meticulously scrutinized in his 2016 novel *Zero K* in which he invites his readers to ponder upon the ontological and identitary consequences of eluding death. What is presented is an "aggressively Promethean" (Peters, *Transhumanism and the Post-Human Future*, 150) transhumanist project whose goal is to stop the process of ageing through cryopreservation and to transfer human consciousness to a mechanical body. One important question that arises is to what extent the person that emerges from the experiment is still himself/ herself. Does the death of death bring about the death of identity? The present paper aligns itself with the critical inquiries put forth by Aubrey de Grey, Brian Wowk, James Hughes and Giulio Prisco who tackle the identity conundrum raised by the transhumanist desire to overcome biological limitations and enhance the human condition. Thus, Don DeLillo's fictional transmutation which results in the "birth" of ahistorical humans with minimal consciousness is analyzed in relation to what appears to be a death of identity.

Bio: Nicolae-Andrei Popa is an Assistant Lecturer at the Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies, where he teaches Practical English Courses and Business English for undergraduate students, but also a freelance translator and English language trainer. He holds M.A.s in British Cultural Studies and Religious Studies and a Ph.D in English Philology from the University of Bucharest. His volume entitled *Spiritual Religion in S.T. Coleridge's Aids to Reflection* was published in 2021 and his research interests include English Romanticism, American Postmodernism and the Philosophy of Religion. Email: nicolae.popa@rei.ase.ro

Veronica Tatiana Popescu (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iaşi):
"Ramin Bahrani's *Fahrenheit 451* (2018) as a palimpsestic adaptation of Ray Bradbury's novel"



Abstract: Drawing on Linda Hutcheon’s metaphorical description of adaptations as palimpsests (2006; 2013), this paper will analyse the ways in which Ramin Bahrani, director and co-writer of the script of *Fahrenheit 451* (HBO, 2018), rewrote Ray Bradbury’s dystopian novel by the same name, leaving only traces of the source text visible in his appropriation. Supposedly re-imagining Bradbury’s text for a new generation of viewers, digital natives of the virtual worlds of social media, the film reads more like a heavy-handed filmic palimpsest that allows only some of the book’s ideas and memorable lines to resurface from underneath the new writing. Relying mostly on visual spectacle and the screenwriter-director’s own concerns about the effects of the internet and social media, the film leaves audiences wondering about the appropriateness of the title – an anchoring device promising more than a similarity with the text – and the film’s actual relation with the novel.

Bio: Veronica Tatiana Popescu is a senior lecturer at the English Department, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania where she teaches British and American literature (British Neoclassicism and Latinx fiction) and film studies, as well as a course on film adaptation. She is also a member of the Editorial Board of LINGUACULTURE Journal. Her research interests currently focus on adaptation studies and Latinx fiction. Contact address: veronica.t.popescu@uaic.ro

Amelia Precup (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“Aggression, Suffering, and Affective Development in *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* by Eliza Haywood”

Abstract: Published during a period of transition from “the epistemological or cognitive” to the “affective dimension of fiction”, to use Catherine Gallagher’s conceptualization of the progress of the mid-eighteenth-century novel, *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* is often read as a story of development from ‘thoughtless coquette’ to ‘thoughtful wife’. With these two social roles in the background, this paper sets forth to examine the affective and emotional development of Betsy Thoughtless through a close reading of her reactions to sites of suffering and forms of aggression. The claim of the paper is that, while Miss Betsy is still far from the “woman of sensibility” (Sill, 2012) that had already begun to emerge around the middle of the eighteenth century, her history progresses on her growing empathy and capacity to internalize potentially traumatic events, which invite sympathetic identification.

Bio: Amelia Precup is lecturer in the Department of English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University. Her academic interests lie in contemporary American literature and seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century English literature. She has read or published papers on contemporary American literature, representations of gender and ethnicity, early modern English fiction, Restoration and eighteenth-century English poetry. Email: amelia.precup@ubbcluj.ro

Alina Preda (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“Dynamics of Identity Negotiation: A Case Study on a Facebook Post Pertaining to Abortion Rights”

Abstract: With the advent of computer mediated communication, Internet users have formed routines and rituals that mirror the articulation, the negotiation and the formation of online identities. This extremely subtle yet complex process has stimulated researchers’ interest in the particularities of the socio-cultural acts performed in the on-line environment. The present study



focuses on the negotiation of self- and group identity and on techniques of self-definition and self-representation, through an analysis of the reactions to a Facebook post regarding abortion rights.

Bio: Alina Preda is Associate Professor at Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Her research interests include Syntax and Discourse Analysis, Gender Studies, Contemporary English Literature and Comparative Religious Studies. Dr Preda is the author of various articles published in peer-reviewed academic journals such as *Philobiblon – Transylvanian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Humanities*, *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory*, *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses*, *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies*, *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai*, and of several books, including *Jeanette Winterson and the Metamorphoses of Literary Writing* (2010), *A Synoptic Outline of Phrasal Syntax and Clausal Syntax and Interferences: On Gender and Genre* (2013). Email: alina.preda@ubbcluj.ro

Adrià Lacreu Sanmartín (Universitat de València):

“His work is so good it has almost been taken for forgery:’ The Original and the Copy in William Gaddis’s *The Recognitions*”

Abstract: Often deemed to be a postmodern classic *avant-la-lettre* (Attell 265), *The Recognitions* delves into the lives of over fifty characters searching for authenticity in life and in art; the irony is, however, that all of them are frauds. Its main character, Wyatt, is an aspiring artist that, disappointed with the artistic scene of the Greenwich Village, turns to forgery. In this paper I explore the extent to which the ambivalence surrounding authenticity is the novel’s central motif. The artists and bohemians that Wyatt meets are only able to replicate canonical forms of art, to the point that most of them are plagiarists in one way or another. However, Gaddis’s novel itself is stuffed with unattributed quotes and references—the very title is an allusion to the *Clementine Recognitions*. Soon, the ambiguity regarding the original and the copy extends to seemingly unrelated spheres to explain broader cultural phenomena—notably, the pagan origins of Catholicism.

Bio: Adrià Lacreu Sanmartín is a postgraduate student at the University of València. Currently enrolled in a Master of Arts in Language and Literature Research, he has a Degree in English Studies from the Universitat de València, where he also obtained a Degree in Audiovisual Communication and a Master of Arts in Advanced English Studies. His areas of research extend to a variety of fields that range from Adaptation Studies to Post-45 American Literature and Culture, with a particular interest in postmodern literature and the way it (re)configures space. Email: lacreu@alumni.uv.es

Nóra Séllei (University of Debrecen; Babeş -Bolyai University, Cluj):

“Virginia Woolf’s Modernism vs her Feminism – or her Modernism and Feminism: ‘The Mark on the Wall’ Transmitted into *Three Guineas*”

Abstract: Though the question whether Woolf’s modernism and feminism are connected is no longer debatable, there are texts in the *oeuvre* that are purely seen as manifesting her modernism *or* feminism, like “The Mark on the Wall” (1919) and *Three Guineas* (1938) respectively. In my reading, however, “The Mark on the Wall”, considered one of her early modernist experimental texts *per se*,



can also be seen as foreshadowing ideas that are explicitly spelt out in her most markedly feminist text, *Three Guineas*. In this way, intratextual transmission (characteristic of the Woolfian texts in general): both reiteration and transformation are discernible in these two texts that are usually categorised as radically different. A comparative reading of the two texts will reveal how Woolf's modernism, using free associations, is always already feminist, and how her feminism, due to the rhetorics and epistemological effects of *Three Guineas*, is also inevitably inscribed in her modernism.

Bio: Nóra Séllei is Professor of English at the Department of British Studies of the Institute of English and American Studies, University of Debrecen, Hungary, and at the Department of English, Catholic University in Ruzomberok, Slovakia. Her main teaching and research areas include gender studies, feminist literary theory, and 19th and 20th-century women's literature, primarily novelists and autobiographers. Her publications include five monographs and about one hundred and thirty articles. She was the series editor of the Hungarian feminist book series Artemis Books, and she is the Hungarian translator of Virginia Woolf's *Moments of Being* and *Three Guineas*, and Jean Rhys's *Smile Please*. She also edited a volume on female subjectivity, and edited and translated a reader on postmodern feminist theory. She is the Head of the Gender Studies Centre at the University of Debrecen, and the president of the Hungarian Society for the Study of English (HUSSE). In the current academic year, she is guest lecturer at the Institute of Hungarian Literary Studies, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania. Email: sellei.nora@arts.unideb.hu

Ioana Stoicescu (University of Bucharest):
"Culmination Inferences in Child Romanian"

Abstract: The study investigated the interpretations assigned by Romanian-speaking children to two main categories of telic predicates, namely incremental theme predicates and change of state predicates in which the verb selects a definite object. Previous work revealed that the culmination inference develops early for change of state predicates, and is delayed for incremental theme predicates (García del Real Marco 2015). In Romanian, a Romance language, the past tense form is not aspectually under-determined like the English past, and we hypothesized that it supports an earlier development of the culmination inference. This hypothesis was confirmed with data from a comprehension experiment which showed that non-culminating interpretations were not frequent with definite DOs for both incremental theme predicates and change of state predicates. The results are similar for all types of verbs tested (incremental theme / change of state / pragmatically telic / semantically telic). Comparing the results presented here with previous work on the comprehension of telicity with indefinite DP objects (Stoicescu and Dressler 2022), we conclude that, in child Romanian, definite objects elicit higher rates of culmination inferences than indefinite objects.

Bio: Ioana Stoicescu is a Lecturer at the English Department of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, teaching courses on pragmatics, tense/aspect/modality and Legal English. Her research interests include language acquisition, the syntax and semantics of tense and aspect and pragmatics. Her work has focused on the acquisition of tense and grammatical aspect, scalar implicatures and pronominal reference in child Romanian. Email: iodu2004@yahoo.co.uk

Adriana Șerban (Paul-Valéry University Montpellier 3):
"Transmission and translation as flow: A few thoughts about literature and religion"
Ulysses round table



Abstract: The theme of transmission is of such relevance to translation (and the other way round) that the two terms can be said to overlap, in more ways than one. Clearly, both of them designate complex processes which cannot under any circumstances be reduced to the mere transportation and delivery of an item although, of course, delivering translation jobs is a stage of the process itself, irrespective of whether a translator works in the literary field or translates film or opera, technical texts, or acts as interpreter. In this paper, I conceptualise both translation and transmission as flow, in other words a form of movement involving a continual change of place of the constituent particles, by comparison with the type of movement which is possible (under specific conditions) for solid entities which need to travel as a block, with the position of each constituent remaining unchanged in relation to that of the others. Flow involves reshuffling; derived from the Old English *flōwan*, the word has other meanings which point to aspects of translation: ‘to issue’, ‘to derive from a source’, ‘to circulate’ and, also, ‘to abound’, ‘to overflow’. It is used to describe texts (e.g., “the text flows easily”, “this sentence doesn’t flow very well”), and the term ‘fluent’, omnipresent in the evaluation of translations, also belongs to the semantic field of ‘flow’. I illustrate my argument with examples from the history of religious and literary translation and draw on three translation monographs authored by contemporary translators who have made major contributions to culture and the transmission of literature, and who decided to write about their craft: Gregory Rabassa’s memoir *If This Be Treason: Translation and Its Dyscontents* (2005), Edith Grossman’s *Why Translation Matters* (2010), and Daniel Hahn’s *Catching Fire: A Translation Diary* (2022).

Bio: Adriana Şerban is Senior Lecturer in Translation at Paul-Valéry University Montpellier 3, France, where she coordinated the Masters in Translation. Her research interests are in the area of film translation, literary translation, and religious texts. She is the co-editor of several volumes among which *Friedrich Schlegel and the Question of Translation* (2015, Walter de Gruyter), *Key Cultural Texts in Translation* (2018, John Benjamins), *Corps et traduction, corps en traduction* (Éditions Lambert-Lucas, 2018), *Poésie-Traduction-Cinéma / Poetry-Translation-Film* (Éditions Lambert-Lucas, 2018), *Opera in Translation: Unity and Diversity* (2020, John Benjamins), and *Women Translators of Religious Texts* (2022, special issues of *Parallèles*). She is currently working on a monograph about the aesthetics of detail in translation. Email: adriana.serban@univ-montp3.fr

Andreea Şerban, Dana Percec (West University of Timișoara):
“The strength of the(ir) illusion” (*Macbeth* III.5.1478) – Gendering the ‘Magical Space’ in *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*

Abstract: In a 2016 collection of essays, *Shakespeare and Space*, Ina Habermann and Michelle Witen established a hierarchy of seven types of space in Shakespearean drama, all of which are meant to offer a deeper understanding of how Shakespeare envisaged performance and negotiated the various geographical boundaries and the social interactions of the characters. Starting from this classification, our paper will focus on topological and social/gendered space. What we aim to discuss here is how two of Shakespeare’s plays involving magic – namely, *Macbeth* and *The Tempest* – make use of crossing various boundaries to move the plot forward, while also constructing space simultaneously as magical and political, a “thirdspace” (cf. Soja) where power relations in general, and gender relations in particular, are negotiated between ordinary characters and magic-wielding ones (the witches and Hecate vs. Prospero and Ariel, as well as Sycorax).

Bio: Andreea Şerban is Associate Professor of English at the West University of Timișoara. She has published extensively on Shakespeare, feminism, and on British culture and civilisation. Her



publications include: *The Call of the Wild: M/Other Nature in Margaret Atwood's Novels* (Cluj-Napoca: Napoca Star, 2010), and *Drama and Culture in Shakespeare's Age* (Timișoara: Eurostampa, 2011 – with Dana Percec). She co-edits the periodicals *Gender Studies* and *Romanian Journal of English Studies* (DeGruyter/Sciendo). Email: andreea.serban@e-uvt.ro

Bio: Dana Percec is Professor of English at the West University of Timișoara. She has published extensively on Shakespeare, and on British culture and civilisation. Her publications include: *Reading Cultural History in William Shakespeare's Plays* (Szeged: Jate Press, 2014), *Drama and Culture in Shakespeare's Age* (Timișoara: Eurostampa, 2011 – with Andreea Șerban), and *The Body's Tale: Some Ado about Shakespearean Identities* (Timișoara: Editura UVT, 2006). She edits the periodicals *Gender Studies* and *Romanian Journal of English Studies* (DeGruyter/Sciendo). Email: dana.percec@e-uvt.ro

Ewa Stasińska (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań):

“In Every Language the Same Thing Is Called Something Different’: Hybridity in Aglaja Veteranyi’s cross-genre novel *Why the Child Is Cooking in the Polenta*”

Abstract: Romanian-German writer Aglaja Veteranyi’s debut cross-genre novel “Why the Child is Cooking in the Polenta” is an example of transnational literature that portrays the childhood of a migrant in Switzerland. The author has developed her own writing style, where transgressive aspects of her life and work meet in-between: the figure of a migrant encounters the native, Romanian, Spanish and Hungarian meet German language, the western culture meets the eastern folklore and cuisine. Veteranyi has travelled across Europe and Africa to find a place to (not) settle down – the autobiographical aspects are clearly visible in her texts. The aim of this presentation is to investigate the exophonic writing of Aglaja Veteranyi in context of her experiences as a modern homo viator – writing in an adopted language offers a chance for reveal a newfound sensibility in an Ovidian-style metamorphosis. Exophony, which is writing literature in a non-native language, confronts in Veteranyi’s texts aspects of hybridity, autobiography, third space and Littérature mineure.

Bio: Ewa Stasińska is a graduate in German Philology, French Studies and Foreign Language and Culture Studies at the University of Warsaw and Slavic Studies at the University of Tübingen, currently a PhD student at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań. Her research interests focus on the 20th and 21st century exophonic literature, comparative literature as well as postcolonialism in literary studies. Her doctoral dissertation and research focus on literary text of Aglaja Veteranyi and Emine Sevgi Özdamar. Email: ewasta10@amu.edu.pl

Éva Székely, Veronica Buciuman (University of Oradea):

“The Poet as Messenger of the Alienating City: Romantic Poetry as Resonant Space in William Blake’s ‘London’ and Mary Robinson’s ‘London’s Summer Morning’”

Abstract: The end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century was a time of great change and transformation in London. The economy of the city was shifting away from the traditional crafts and trades towards manufacturing, and new factories and mills began to spring up all over the city. The resulting growth in the population led to an experience of alienation at the level of the individual. Based on Hartmut Rosa’s theory of ‘social acceleration’ and ‘resonance’ as well as on Sybille Krämer’s study *Medium, Messenger, Transmission. An Approach to Media Philosophy* (2016)



and Marshall McLuhan's *Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962), our paper examines the various types of alienation (horizontal, vertical, diagonal) described in the two poems as well as the role of the poets as messengers that transfer the chaotic hyperesthetic aural experience of the city into the pictorial space of the written word.

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Adriana Todea (Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj):
"Pronominal/anaphoric vs. reflexive clitics in Romanian: a syntactic analysis"

Abstract: This paper explores the multiple uses of reflexive SE in Romanian true and pseudoreflexive (retroherent unaccusative; retroherent unergative; impersonal) constructions and whether its syntactic behaviour aligns with that of Accusative pronominal clitics with regards to case absorption, movement and coordination with DPs.

Bio: Adriana Todea, PhD is a lecturer at the English Department of the Faculty of Letters of the Babes-Bolyai University. She teaches courses and seminars in Formal Semantics, Generative Syntax, Argumentation Theory, Sociolinguistics and History of English language. Her research interests focus on syntactic phenomena and language competence teaching and assessment with papers published



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Ira Torresi (University of Bologna):

“The Hygienics of Translation and Interpreting: Metaphors of Purity and Contamination, and the Construction of Translator’s and Interpreter’s Identity”

Abstract: Rooted in Critical Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics, and using metaphors as a heuristic tool, this presentation will look at public and academic discourses on the practices of translation and interpreting associated with notions of cleanliness/purity vs uncleanliness/contamination. Such discourses may appear abstract and speculative in nature, but have practical impact on normative (self) perceptions of translators’ and interpreters’ professional behaviour and habitus. They also seem to run through the academic and theoretical understandings of translation and interpreting along the axes of fidelity/infidelity and translator’s invisibility/visibility, but also, by extension, in terms of respecting/trespassing boundaries (notions of norms of translation, or the interpreter as a conduit or gatekeeper). Real-life examples will be discussed to illustrate and deconstruct such metaphorical devices and highlight their connection with underlying value judgements attached to purity vs contamination. Existing metaphorical alternatives, which allow for the construction of more nuanced translators’/interpreters’ identities, will also be discussed.

Bio: Ira Torresi is Associate Professor of English language and translation at the Department of Interpreting and Translation of the University of Bologna (Forlì Campus), where she is Head of the MA programme in Interpreting. Her research interests include ‘contamination areas’ such as non-professional interpreting, particularly Child Language Brokering; the Italian translation of James Joyce's *Ulysses*; visual semiotics and gender studies applied to translation. Her previous reflections on metaphors of translation can be found in "Message(s) in a bottle: translating memory, the memory of translation", in *TRAlinea* Vol. 18 (2016, with R.M. Bollettieri Bosinelli), <https://www.intralinea.org/archive/article/2213>. Email: ira.torresi@unibo.it

Mihai Țapu (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):

“The Cybernetic Culture Research Unit and the Genesis of Theory-Fiction. A Diagrammatic Approach”

Abstract: This paper seeks to outline the particularities of theory-fiction, a hybrid discourse which emerged during the 1990s, using theoretical and practical devices taken from what is broadly conceived as diagrammatology. I begin by discussing the little-known para-academic group who pioneered theory-fiction at the University of Warwick in the 1990s, the Cybernetic Culture Research Unit (CCRU). Here, I focus specifically on underlining the diverse discourses involved in the construction of theory-fiction, from the fictional background belonging to the cyberpunk and supernatural horror subgenres, to important post-structuralist and scientific concepts. Then, I will argue for the utility of a diagrammatic approach, by referencing previous research in this area, such as the mathematically-influenced writings of Rocco Gangle and Gilles Châtelet, and the “metamodeling” developed by Félix Guattari. The final part will introduce certain practical elements of diagrammatology and use them in constructing diagrams which account for the dynamics between theory-fiction and the elements it subsumes.



Bio: Mihai Țapu is a PhD student at the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca. B.A. studies in Comparative and Universal Literature and MA studies in Digital Humanities. He has published articles and reviews in *Metacritic Journal for Comparative Studies and Theory* and *Echinox Journal*. Current research interests range over “theory-fiction”, speculative realism and accelerationism. Email: mihai.tapu@ubbcluj.ro

**Ana Țăranu (Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj):
“Scenarios of Post-critique. The Re/Insurgence of Weak Theory”**

Abstract: Post-millennial literary studies have embraced an increasingly self-reflective stance. The field’s disciplinary borders, its historiographical apparatus, institutional formulae, and involvement with the non-literary have all undergone a twin process of displacement and attempted relocation. Grappling with the (oftentimes tautological) relativism and methodological determinism they inherited from the hermeneutics of suspicion (Ricoeur), contemporary literary studies have come to embrace epistemological modesty (Williams), increasingly turning to the social and hard sciences for methodological solutions. It is against the backdrop of these recent developments that I read Wai Chee Dimock’s advancement of “weak theory” as an alternative project of disciplinary hybridisation and survival. By distancing herself from the work of digital formalism, Dimock reimagines the field of literary history as willingly precarious, post-Latourian in its inherently rhizomatic functioning, and empiricist by nature (in the Boylean sense of the term). By tracing this enmeshment of Dimock’s weak theory with its complementary post-critical discourses, I ultimately aim to interrogate the disciplinary consequences and sustainability of such an approach.

Bio: Ana Țăranu is an M.A. student with the Department of Comparative Literature of the Faculty of Letters, Babeş-Bolyai University. Her present research interests include intellectual history, Central and East-European art and culture (with a focus on Russian aesthetic modernism), and the “post-critical” turn. She has previously published on contemporary genre theory, the theoretical afterlives of Mikhail Bakhtin’s aesthetics, and the involvement of national literary systems in the dissemination of political imagery. Email: taranuanamaria@gmail.com