

De Memoria: Views of Remembrance through the History of Ideas
Third International Conference in Interdisciplinary Humanities

May 11, 2023

The Department of Letters within Emanuel University of Oradea, in conjunction with Sola Scriptura University in Chicago and GIRES Foundation in Amsterdam, Netherlands, organize the Third International Conference in Interdisciplinary Humanities scheduled for May 11, 2023. The conference committee invites researchers, academics, and university professionals in all the fields of humanistic sciences to consider a presentation on

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in areas such as literature, literary theory and criticism, theology, Christian theory and praxis, narrative theology and cultural history, practical theology and social politics, cultural studies and religious or non-religious ethics, modern political discourse and church history, anthropology, contemporary philosophy and secular history, etc.

The agenda of the conference provides a space for relevant investigation about the complexity of mind and memory in contemporary theoretical research and practical work, given that ideas about memory/remembrance affect human beings not only emotionally but also ontologically. Since memory in all areas involves a degree of trauma and pain, both physical and spiritual, while over the centuries it acquired many characteristics as well as begat substantial distinctions, it appears that contemporary discussions about human memory and perception of time require further reflection. At the same time, the interdisciplinary nature of the debates seems to be needed for further research on the subject.

Reflection and discussions on the topic may refer to: remembrance of things past; remembering what we already know; piling up memories for the future: things that stay and things that go away; memories coming as one: the image/the lesson; memory of time and space: the memory of places; the abyss of memory: being cut off from reality and one's self; long lost memories and prefabricated memories; flashback and retrospection beyond boundaries; recollections and journals; aesthetics and reminiscence; qualms of conscience and memory lapses; real memories and made up stories; "... the mother of all wisdom" and the tragic flaw: memory and/as *hamartia*, etc.

Paper Presentation and Submission

The papers presented at the conference must be related to views and ideas about the body. Relevant insides regarding in person and online presentations will be provided personally. However, please bear in mind that all papers shall include: name and affiliation of the participant; a 250 word abstract, and 5 key words. The accepted language of both the presentation and the paper is English. All papers should have a minimum length of 5.000 words, while references and bibliographies should be formatted according to the latest APA style.

Participants must send their abstracts and key words by the 1st of May 2023. The full papers must be submitted by the 15th of October 2023. All accepted papers will be published in a peer reviewed journal covered by SCOPUS, EBSCO, ERIH+, ATLA, etc. All queries about the conference, venue, accommodation, and accepted papers should be addressed to Dr. Ramona Simuț at ramona.simut@emanuel.ro. For further details regarding our partners in this event, please access: www.emanuel.ro.



**De Memoria: Views of Remembrance
through the History of Ideas**
Third International Conference in Interdisciplinary Humanities

PROGRAMME

9.20-9.50

Breakfast

9.50-10.00: Welcome and introduction

10.00-10.20

Ramona Simuț

Reader in Comparative Literature and Literary Theory

Emanuel University of Oradea, Romania

**SURREAL REMINISCENCE IN REALISTIC NOVELS.
THE COSINESS OF A DETACHED READING**

ABSTRACT. While the historicity of our collected memories is traceable to our immediate or remote experiences, in some occurrences it is not our past that generates memories and our event experience that stores them in a cache-like built up, as the proponents of Bergsonism hold. The conscious and rational thoughts and happenings which not only manifest on a regular basis, but also bring about dreams and feelings, are not the intended context of the surreal either in life or art. Thus, the irrational, uncanny, distorted and spontaneous dream-like reality is seemingly a repetitive appearance in our inner life of which we are hardly aware. Moreover, since this kind of experience eludes all automatisms, it renders the true measure of one's personality and creative capabilities. In Allan Gardner Lloyd-Smith's *Uncanny American Fiction. Medusa's Face* from 1989, this inner memory is an idea borrowed from Freud, who in his 1919 essay, "Das Unheimliche"/uncanny, commenced a particular tradition of analysing such surreal reminiscences as interplay of what seems both "familiar and friendly" and what is "concealed/withheld from others". This kind of familiarity with hidden things, apart from its remote similarity with concepts like blurred/foggy reality, partial recall/hidden history/exclusion, etc., is what we find specific to the literary construct of the double/duplicate in Dostoyevsky and Flaubert's seminal works, for instance, where simple, plain existence is always evading their realistic characters, hence the very plot and action revolve around the purported irrationality of their behaviour and the difficulty to attain eureka on the reader's part.

KEY WORDS: partial recall, eureka, irrational memories, blurred reality, appearance

10.20-10.40

PRATEEK UPRETI

Corresponding Author & Research Scholar

(Post Colonial Literature, Diasporic Writing and Cultural Studies in Indian context)

School of Liberal Arts and Management, DIT University, Dehradun, India

ADITI JAIN
Assistant Professor
(Cognition, Expressive Therapies & Clinical Psychology)
School of Liberal Arts and Management, DIT University, Dehradun, India

SAKSHI SEMWAL
Assistant Professor, Ph.D.
School of Liberal Arts and Management, DIT University, Dehradun, India

**BROUGHT THROUGH SENSES:
EXPLORING SENSES AS A GATEWAY TO MEMORIES IN GYASI'S NOVELS**

ABSTRACT. Autobiographical Memory is a complex blend of memories of single, recurring, and extended events integrated into a coherent story of self, that is created and evaluated through sociocultural practices. These memories once integrated are recalled/retrieved through Distinctive Cues (different cues inducing different memories), both voluntarily and involuntarily. Yaa Gyasi is a young American novelist of African descent and her novels *Homegoing* (2016) and *Transcendent Kingdom* (2020) are stories of history, colonialism, separation, migration, slavery, inter & intra-personal relations, depression and conflicts. Memory therefore is a dominant occurrence in Gyasi's works. This paper analyses the use and allusion of five primary senses and their role as distinctive cues inducing distinct memories for the characters throughout the course of two novels. The study highlights how this usage helps Gyasi shape her characters and their characteristics connecting many small tales into one large narration. The paper also enquires how recalling and practicing other cues, mainly socio-cultural & religious, helps in forming and strengthening relations between similar groups of people in faraway lands through their shared collective memory.

KEY WORDS: autobiographical memory, cue distinctiveness, senses, characters & characteristics

10.40-11.00

SAKSHI SEMWAL
Assistant Professor, Ph.D.
School of Liberal Arts and Management, DIT University, Dehradun, India

PRASHANT MAURYA
Assistant Professor of English, Ph.D.
Humanities & Applied Sciences Area
Indian Institute of Management, Ranchi, India

MEMORY AND MIGRATION: A STUDY OF UTTARAKHAND FOLK SONGS

ABSTRACT. Uttarakhand, the northern state of India is culturally rich and has inherent customs and traditions. People of Uttarakhand celebrate each occasion, their joy and sorrow through folk songs, folk music and folk dance, etc. This hilly Himalayan region has seen a large migration of people leaving the villages totally uninhabited as ghost villages. Young men who were born and brought up in the lush green mountains of Uttarakhand, moved to cities for better life style and job opportunities but they always memorize the local culture and traditions. This paper aims to study Uttarakhand folk songs that depicts the deep universal emotion of memorizing one's home, pain of migration and pain of separation from their dear ones as Uttarakhand's social life had multiple mode of movements like out marriages, outmigration, jobs in army. Singing and listening to folk song about migration is basically connected with feelings and emotions of migrants and local people. The regional and folk songs brings nostalgia and serves as a medium of communication between the migrants and left-behind homes and families. The paper will also focus on reading the importance of memory to bring the hope of being reunited and return to roots that is clearly visible in the selected folk songs.

KEY WORDS: migration, memory, folk songs, Uttarakhand, separation

11.00-11.20

Coffee Break

11.20-11.40

AUREL MUREȘAN

Assistant Professor in English Literatures

Emanuel University of Oradea, Romania

**MEMORY, SELF-DECEPTION AND DENIAL IN
KAZUO ISHIGURO'S *THE REMAINS OF THE DAY***

ABSTRACT. Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *The Remains of the Day* presents a complex exploration of memory, self-deception, and denial through the perspective of its protagonist, Stevens, a butler in an English country house. This paper examines how these themes are interwoven in the novel and how they shape Stevens' identity and worldview. The novel portrays the process of remembering as an act of constructing a narrative, as Stevens selectively recalls events and interprets them to fit his image of a perfect butler. He is deeply committed to his professional duties and his loyalty to his employer, Lord Darlington, blinds him to the latter's misguided political agenda. Stevens' commitment to duty and his denial of the reality around him, however, result in his isolation and eventual regret for missed opportunities. This paper argues that Stevens' self-deception and denial are rooted in his desire to maintain a sense of dignity and purpose in life, but they ultimately lead to his unfulfilled life. Ishiguro uses Stevens' journey to comment on the dangers of sacrificing personal integrity for the sake of maintaining social norms and expectations. Through the novel, the author illustrates how the act of remembering and interpreting the past can be shaped by our personal biases, which can lead to self-deception and denial. The paper also explores how the novel's themes resonate with broader philosophical debates about the nature of memory and identity, highlighting the ethical implications of selective memory and the importance of acknowledging past mistakes for personal growth and societal progress.

KEY WORDS: memory, self-deception, denial, unreliable narrator, Ishiguro

11.40-12.00

IAKOVOS MENELAOU

(Ph.D. King's College, London, Modern Greek Studies)

BALKAN HISTORY ASSOCIATION

LEPROSY AND STIGMA IN HISLOP'S *MARIA'S ISLAND*

ABSTRACT. In this paper, we propose a reading of Victoria Hislop's *Maria's Island* through the lens of the medical humanities. The novel belongs to the literary genre of children's literature and, thus, is meant to be read by children. However, its strong meanings make it an interesting read for the adult reader, as well as the scholar in the fields of literary studies, the medical humanities and medicine. The plot unfolds in the small Greek villages of Plaka and Spinalonga (in Crete) and revolves around a leprosy epidemic. As we are going to see, the locals viewed the disease as a "curse" and a "social stigma," and not as a medical condition. After a historical account of the disease, its "shame" and "stigma," we proceed with a detailed analysis of the novel and explain how these notions are manifested. We also analyse how Maria, Anna and Doctor Nikos Kyritsis (three key characters in the story) represent different values and perspectives. On the one hand, Anna reflects the mentality of a conservative society and the view that leprosy carries a social stigma. On the other hand, Maria and Nikos believe that leprosy should be seen like any other disease that needs treatment, and that the leprosy patient is not a "stigmatised" or a "cursed individual." Maria and Nikos represent the medical community in the novel, as Maria becomes a nurse and Nikos is already a doctor, and show how medicine, compassion and a feeling of understanding create a safe and secure environment for the patient. Memory and flashback are key elements in the story, as Maria, the main character of the novel, explains to her granddaughter what happened in her village many years ago.

KEY WORDS: leprosy, stigma, curse, medical humanities, literature

12.00-12.20

ANCA TOMOIOAGĂ
Assistant Professor of Romanian Literature
Faculty of Letters, State University of Oradea, Romania

MIHAI EMINESCU – METAMORFOZELE MITULUI ȘI RECEPTAREA SA AZI

ABSTRACT. Studiul de față își propune să prezinte, în linie diacronică, metamorfozele imaginii eminesciene, mitologizate, care a dublat și însoțit prezența, istorică sau literară, a marelui poet de-a lungul timpului până azi. Poetul devenise întruchiparea poetului național în imaginarul românesc și imaginea pe care poporul român o avea despre sine și identitatea sa. Ulterior, această imagine a fost contaminată ideologic și nu numai, ceea ce a dus la distorsionări care au mărit distanța dintre cititor și opera poetului. Lucrarea noastră urmărește transformările, dar și felul în care cercetătorii, în studii recente, observă formarea mitului eminescian și importanța lui pentru români. Criticii literari sesizează importanța mitului cultural pentru imaginarul colectiv, iar scriitorii români contemporani se preocupă de imaginea poetului și dinamica ei.

KEY WORDS: mit cultural, clișeu, poet național, imaginar, memorie

12.20-12.40

COFFEE BREAK

12.40-13.00

KONSTANTINOS D. KARATZAS, Ph.D.
Director, Global Institute for Research Education & Scholarship, Amsterdam, Netherlands (GIRES)
(21st century international political history and racial violence)

THE IMAGE OF THE IDEAL GERMAN MOTHER IN NAZI ERA POSTERS

ABSTRACT. Our presentation examines the role of women in Nazi Germany and ways the policy and propaganda implemented and enacted both plans and policies to transform women into the mothers of the nation. The paper will focus on the ways propaganda posters were used in order to engage public opinion, using the power of visual arts into manipulating public opinion that the body of a woman should be devoted to the Reich, (re-)producing the pure-blooded German and support the creation of a new empire. The posters supported and acted as a direct reminder of the policies set by Nazi regime, and their ideology on family planning, racial purity and gender roles. The propaganda machine that produced them borrowed symbols from religious works of the Renaissance connecting the “ideal mother” to images of Holy Mary, in a twisted connection between religion and social engineering. The presentation will discuss about the ways Nazi Germany elaborated the role of women, the (ab)use of their body and the ideal depiction of it according to the regime, the distortion of iconic renaissance paintings along with the ways that religion and public policy have been weaved in order to manipulate and re-educate an entire nation will be parts of the presentation in order to highlight this interesting part of history.

KEY WORDS: propaganda, art, female body, Renaissance, nazi Germany

13.00-13.20

CILLIERS VAN DEN BERG

Associate Professor of Afrikaans and Dutch, German and French

Faculty of Humanities

Editor of *Acta Germanica*

University of Bloomfontein, South Africa

COMPARING MEMORY CULTURES AND LITERATURES

ABSTRACT. German literature's engagement with both the Second World War as a traumatic event and the subsequent legacy of the war as difficult past, has become an important motif in the tracing of its historical trajectory. The usual conclusion drawn is that it took a number of years for German writers to break the "language of silence" and to engage in an "Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit" (coming to terms with the past). If this narrative holds, it seems to be quite different from the relative swift response of many Afrikaans writers and critics from South Africa who, during Apartheid's political conclusion and the first years of democracy for all, engaged this system of institutionalised, racial segregation. This presentation intends to examine some differences and similarities between German and Afrikaans fiction with respect to coming to terms with the legacy of a difficult past. Some questions to be answered would be why there are differences, and whether these can be related to the respective dynamics of its different memory cultures. Related to this is the question whether smaller literatures proceed in a different way when compared to bigger or major literatures – if and when the motif of historical legacies comes into play.

KEY WORDS: memory culture, difficult past, Afrikaans literature, German literature, minor literatures

13.20-13.40

YADAV SUMATI

Assistant Professor, Department of English

PG Govt. College for Girls, Chandigarh, India.

REMAPPING THE ACCESS TO MEMORY AND DISCOVERING THE VEILED OTHERNESS OF SITA IN SELECT NARRATIVES

ABSTRACT. Sita, the female protagonist in the Epic *Ramayana* has actively persisted in the memory of Hindus in India as the goddess of all the virtues that entail the idea of non-negotiable conjugal devotion, familial obligation and silent forbearance in women. Moreover, even with changing times and contexts, any reimagining of this cultural icon is taken to be a distortion. However, from the late twentieth century onwards, there has been a strong sense of resistance to the perpetuation of this normative view of femininity in a number of popular retellings and re-citing of the story of Sita, especially by female writers, activists and folk female singers in India. This article traces the detours taken by select writers to access the sites of their cultural memory and to reconfigure Sita's character. The discussion is organised around the parallel understanding of the idea of what certain Hindu texts called *Smriti* (that which is remembered) stand for and how that finds resonance with Jan Assman's theory of Cultural Memory. The article essays to expose how cultural hegemony has controlled the process of remembrance and dis-remembrance and how such practices have been subverted by women in India whose mental meeting with the mythological Sita paves the way for exploring the entire spectrum of femininity in a particular socio-cultural set up.

KEY WORDS: culture, femininity, memory, Ramayana, Sita

13.40-14.00

ADRIANA FOLTUȚ
Assistant Professor of Romanian Literature
Emanuel University of Oradea, Romania

MEMORIA TRAUMATICĂ – PRETEXT NARATIV ÎN ROMANUL *GRĂDINA DE STICLĂ* DE TATIANA ȚIBULEAC

ABSTRACT. Experiențele copilăriei și ale adolescenței marcate de suferințe, traume și neîmpliniri sunt rememorate de Tatiana Țibuleac, reconstituind o lume dominată de răutate, ură, mizerie și grotesc. Apelând la memoria, chiar și involuntară, autoarea creează substanța epică în *Grădina de sticlă*, un roman grav și profund prin care se realizează sondarea unei experiențe sufletești și sociale. Urmărim o poveste de viață spusă din perspectiva Lastocikăi – personajul care parcurge etapele obligatorii ale existenței: copilăria, adolescența, tinerețea și maturitatea. Parcursul ei existențial dezvăluie o lume în care șansa de a supraviețui a fetei abandonate de părinți într-un orfelinat și adoptată de o rusoaică rămâne adaptabilitatea la ne iubire și construirea propriului caleidoscop din cioburi colorate de sticlă. Prin intermediul acestui obiect își va proiecta o realitate a lucrurilor în tonuri de lumină și culoare, în ciuda faptului că elementul uman îi va furniza durere, suferință, deznădejde și dispreț, al căror cumul va duce la instalarea traumei care va eroda adânc în sufletul copilului și al femeii.

KEY WORDS: memorie, copilărie, experiențe, suferință, traumă

14.00-15.00

LUNCH BREAK

15.00-15.20

11. ANNETTE ARONOWICZ
Professor of Religious Studies, emerita
Franklin & Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, USA

MEMORY AND MEMOIR WRITING IN CHARLES PEGUY AND ROMAIN GARY

ABSTRACT. In this paper, I will draw on two twentieth-century French writers and extract from their works their ideas about memory and memoir writing. The first, the poet and philosopher Charles Péguy (1873-1914) wrote a great deal about memory, bringing the philosophy of Henri Bergson into realms of daily life that the philosopher himself did not. Not all of Péguy's meditations on memory are related to memoir writings, and yet they provide a possible frame for anyone who would want to engage in such a task. He himself often spoke about writing his confessions someday, in the process giving his readers a taste of what they would sound like. The second author, Romain Gary (1911-1980) was a prolific novelist, whose works were among the greatest best sellers in post-War France. I will focus on his literary memoir, *Promise at Dawn*. Gary's ideas on memory are embedded in his autobiographical narration. Despite the many difference between the two writers, I would like to argue that both authors focus on the ethics of memory and memory writing. That ethics revolves not so much on telling the literal truth, the getting this or that detail correctly, but in capturing and conveying the commitments that have marked one's life, and capturing them in such a way that they do not coincide with current pieties either about the past or the present. Memoir writing for both authors is a way of responding to the times one is living in, a kind of critique.

KEY WORDS: Charles Péguy, Romain Gary, memory, memoirs, ethics

15.20-15.40

ÉVA ANTAL, Ph.D., Habil.

Professor of English Literature and Philosophy

(British literature, contemporary literary theory, and aesthetics)

Institute of English, American and German Studies

Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, Eger, Hungary

Visiting researcher, University of Glasgow

Guest professor, IDEA, University de Lorraine (Nancy–Metz, France)

MEMORY, REASON AND FANCY IN MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT'S PHILOSOPHICAL NARRATIVES

ABSTRACT. The eighteenth-century novelist, essayist, and educationalist Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797) was an enlightened thinker. She was greatly influenced by the ideas of her radical contemporaries, and she was an ardent believer in reason and rationality. John Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Emile, or On Education* (1762; in English 1763) had a great impact on her philosophy of education and her early *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters* (1787) and *Original Stories* (1788) clearly showed the influence of Locke's and Rousseau's ideas. Wollstonecraft also left behind an unfinished philosophical tale titled "The Cave of Fancy" (1787, posthumously published in 1798), which she composed while writing her early educational narratives. In my paper, I am focusing on the mental quality of *fancy*, the way in which it is based on common sense and coloured by the individual characteristics of the human thinker. Relying on the Lockean framework in Wollstonecraft's writing, the concept of *tabula rasa* is described in terms of the functioning of the mind, fancy, and experience. Fancy is also strongly connected to *memory*; similarly, wit is associated with the quickness of the mind, operating with fixities and memories. I will discuss Wollstonecraft's narrative, "The Cave of Fancy" that did not only provide a way for the creative development of the female mind but later, its images and features would be *recollected* in a Romantic philosophical tale, in her daughter Mary Shelley's "The Fields of Fancy" (1819).

KEY WORDS: Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, *tabula rasa*, fancy, wit

15.40-16.00

Conclusions and farewell