

**KÁROLI ENGLISH STUDIES CONFERENCE FOR
GRADUATE AND POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS**

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

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General Program

12:00 - 16:10	Registration – second floor landing
12:15	Opening of the Conference – Room 221 <i>Dr. Miklós Péti</i> , Head of the Institute of English Studies, Károli Gáspár University
12:30 - 14:00	Panel Session I
14:00 - 14:20	Coffee Break – Room 215
14:20 - 15:50	Panel Session II
15:50 - 16:10	Coffee Break – Room 215
16:10 - 17:10	Keynote Lecture – Room 221 <i>J. Kirk Trombley</i> , Esq. University of New Hampshire, USA
17:10 - 17:40	Coffee Break and Poster Session – Room 215
17:40 - 19:10	Panel Session III
19:10	Closing Remarks – Room 215 <i>Dr. habil. Kinga Földváy</i> , President of the Hungarian Society for the Study of English (HUSSE)
19:20 - 21:00	Wine & Cheese Reception supported by Gróf Degenfeld Wine Estate – Room 215

Abbreviations:

DE	University of Debrecen
EKKE	Eszterházy Károly Catholic University
ELTE	Eötvös Loránd University
KRE	Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary
ME	University of Miskolc
PPKE	Pázmány Péter Catholic University
PTE	University of Pécs
SAP	Sapienza University of Rome, Italy
SJE	J. Selye University, Slovakia
SZTE	University of Szeged
IAU	Istanbul Aydın University
MU	Masaryk University
UNP	Parthenope University of Naples



Program for the Panel Sessions

Room	Panel Session I 12:30-14:00
221	<p data-bbox="416 398 1283 432" style="text-align: center;">Echoes of Greek Myth in British and American Literature</p> <p data-bbox="695 439 1007 472" style="text-align: center;">Chair: Dr. Miklós Péti</p> <p data-bbox="161 495 549 528">Lilla Rozália Nemes, KRE</p> <p data-bbox="201 535 1465 607">Identity in Aristophanes and Oscar Wilde: A Comparison of <i>Frogs</i> and <i>The Importance of Being Earnest</i></p> <p data-bbox="161 629 456 663">Livia De Luca, SAP</p> <p data-bbox="201 669 1417 703">Mirroring the Tragedy: Traces of Greek Myths in <i>The Passenger</i> by Cormac McCarthy</p> <p data-bbox="161 725 552 759">Mariaconcetta Muto, SAP</p> <p data-bbox="201 766 1102 799">Name's Determinism in Thomas Pynchon's <i>The Crying of Lot 49</i></p> <p data-bbox="161 822 472 855">Boglárka Nagy, KRE</p> <p data-bbox="201 862 1522 934">If Nothing Is Original, Is There Anything Left to Say? How Modern Retellings of the Homeric Epics Represent Marginalised Groups</p>
223	<p data-bbox="683 976 1018 1010" style="text-align: center;">British Poetry and Art</p> <p data-bbox="651 1016 1050 1050" style="text-align: center;">Chair: Dr. Veronika Ruttkay</p> <p data-bbox="161 1072 523 1106">Orsolya Bundász, PPKE</p> <p data-bbox="201 1113 1262 1146">Innocence and Inequality: The Child's Voice in Blake's <i>The Little Black Boy</i></p> <p data-bbox="161 1169 592 1202">Mátyás György Lajos, ELTE</p> <p data-bbox="201 1209 1066 1243">Echoes of Blake in Ursula K. le Guin's <i>Always Coming Home</i></p> <p data-bbox="161 1265 472 1299">Dorka Lippai, ELTE</p> <p data-bbox="201 1305 1414 1339">On the Issue of Acquiring Models: William Holman Hunt's Orientalist Female Figures</p>
224	<p data-bbox="373 1379 1326 1413" style="text-align: center;">Early Modern Literature: Drama, Performance and Adaptation</p> <p data-bbox="603 1420 1098 1453" style="text-align: center;">Chair: Prof. Dr. habil. Tibor Fabiny</p> <p data-bbox="161 1520 719 1554">Muhammad Jahanzaib Dildar, PPKE</p> <p data-bbox="201 1561 1513 1594">The Divided Will: The Conflict of Free Will and Predestination in Marlowe's <i>Doctor Faustus</i></p> <p data-bbox="161 1617 501 1650">Zaid Abu Najm, SZTE</p> <p data-bbox="201 1657 1533 1729">Embodied Villainy: A Semiotic and Cross-cultural Exploration of Shakespearean Antagonist in RSC and Arab-world Production</p> <p data-bbox="161 1751 456 1785">Duygu Mazak, SAP</p> <p data-bbox="201 1792 1430 1825">Minor Characters and the Absurd Condition in <i>Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead</i></p> <p data-bbox="161 1848 475 1881">Katica Kurcsik, KRE</p> <p data-bbox="201 1888 1481 1960">Intertextuality and Performative Identity in Dark Academia: Shakespeare's Legacy in M. L. Rio's <i>If We Were Villains</i></p>

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EFL Classroom 1

Chair: Dr. Mária Adorján

Cajethan Chineke, *KRE*

Secondary School Students' Poor Performance in English Language Exams in Nigeria: A Case Study of Sociolinguistic, Educational, Institutional, and Socio-Economic Influences in Oji River L.G.A.

Vega Hesmatantya, *SZTE*

Does Teaching Experience Matter? Assessment Theory Knowledge among Indonesian Secondary School English Teachers

Lili Tamás, *KRE*

NLP Tools and Methods for Fake News Detection and Factchecking in English

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Adaptation Studies

Chair: Dr. Zsuzsanna Péri-Nagy

Júlia Áder, *PPKE*

The Woman in Blue: Gendered Power and Visual Symbolism in Modern Arthurian Adaptations

Eszter Krakkó, *DE*

From Narrator into the Object of the Male Gaze: Transformations of the Female Figure in Tracy Chevalier's and Peter Webber's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*

Muhammad Saad Ullah, *PPKE*

Cinematic Grammar and Paternal Trauma in Guillermo del Toro's *Frankenstein*

Begüm Sude Mızrak, *IAU*

Down the Rabbit Hole of Trauma: Spatial Memory in *Alice: Madness Returns*



Room

Panel Session II
14:20–15:50

221

Film and Media Studies

Chair: Dr. Gábor Patkós

Regina László, DE

Domesticating Sovereignty: Televisual Modernity and the Reinvention of Monarchy in *Royal Family* (1969)

Fatemeh Ahmadi, SZTE

Metalepsis as Self-Escape: The Body as a Narrative World in Contemporary Body Horror

Fedoua Manar Grouri, DE

Beyond the Poetics of Military Condemnation: Technology and Perception Interwoven in David S. F. Wilson's *Bloodshot* (2020)

Dóra Busi, ELTE

The Conspiracy Theorist American Hero and the Complicated Emancipatory Politics of *Bugonia* (2025)

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Feminism

Chair: Dr. Sára Tóth

Eleonora Martines, SAP

Refuse the Hand That Feeds You: Mutiny and Self-destruction *The Edible Woman* and *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*

Gergő Kulyó, EKKE

Being Exposed, Consumed, and Silenced through Dehumanisation: A Comparative Analysis of Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* and Dezső Kosztolányi's *Anna Édes*

Sára Viktória Valicskó, DE

Weird Girl Lit: Shifting Representations of Twenty-First-Century American Womanhood

Manel Ben Harkat, SZTE

Embodied Dehumanization: Asian Women in Lan Cao's *Monkey Bridge* (1997) and Nora Okja Keller's *Comfort Woman* (1997)

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Culture and Identity

Chair: Viktória Baráth

Adrienn Gulyás, KRE

The Question of Nineteenth-Century Camp Nursing in the Light of the Nursing Management Activities of Zsuzsanna Kossuth and Florence Nightingale

Emese Melkó, EKKE

Women's Stage: Aestheticism, Politics and Theatricality in Oscar Wilde's *The Woman's World* (1887–1890)

Viktória Paál, KRE

Blackfoot Cultural Identity from the Age of Fur Trade to 1914 in Canada and the United States

Bettina Ádor, KRE

Brewed in Ireland and Bound to Britain: The National Identity of the Guinness Family

Room	Panel Session II 14:20–15:50
225	<p style="text-align: center;">EFL Classroom 2 Chair: Dr. Zsófia Menyhei</p> <p>Doua Khenat, PPKE Strategic Competence and Teacher Mediation in Hungarian EFL Classrooms: Results from a Pilot Case Study</p> <p>Victor Achuodho, PPKE Communicative Language Teaching in Literacy-Disparate Classrooms: Bridging Literacy Gaps and Communicative Competence</p> <p>Dilara Can, KRE Exploring Affective Accordances and Barriers of AI Chatbots in L2 Speaking Practices Among Hungarian University Students</p> <p>Almontassar Bellah Taieb, PPKE Looking Back at Vocabulary Learning Strategies: Developments, Challenges, and Future Directions</p>
226	<p style="text-align: center;">African and Asian American Experience in Literature and Film Chair: Dr. Katalin Kállay</p> <p>Tabish Nabi, DE “These Bones Shall Live”: The Body as Mnemonic Archive in Enslaved Christian and Muslim Practice</p> <p>Shaowen Zhang, SZTE Silent Struggles: Chinese American Female Identity in <i>Everything I Never Told You</i> by Celeste Ng</p> <p>Minh Duc Ngo, DE <i>Everything Everywhere All at Once</i> (2022): Reinterpreting and Reconstructing Asian Identities in Contemporary American Cinema</p>



Room

Panel Session II
14:20–15:50

229/A

Translation and Literature

Chair: Dr. Judit Mudriczki

Lilla Edit Kárpáti, *KRE*

The Confined, the Vindicator and the Despot: The Creature's Wollstonecraftian Roles in Ágnes Péter's Translation of *Frankenstein*

Fruzsina Burszán, *KRE*

Retranslating Shakespeare's Sonnets: A Comparison of the Hungarian Translations by Lőrinc Szabó and Sándor Fazekas

Dániel Richárd Tarnóc, *KRE*

Misanthropy in a Philosophical Perspective in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Short Fiction

Leila Alexandra Pintér, *PPKE*

A Seed-Portrait of Ireland's Joan(na) of Arc: Intertextual Relations and Performativity in Medbh McGuckian's *The Seed-Picture*

229/B

Sociolinguistics

Chair: Dr. Mária Adorján

Nina Alassafin, *KRE*

Constructing Female Vulnerability: A Cross-Linguistic Analysis of Gendered Metaphors in Arabic and English Proverbs

Zhansaya Umbetbay, *KRE*

Latinization in Kazakhstan: Attitudes, Practices and the Symbolic Role of Global English in Almaty

Abdelhamid Djeghoubbi, *PPKE*

A Pilot Move Analysis of Abstracts in Algerian Economics Research Articles

Kateřina Koprnová, *MU*

Geordie Goes Pop: Geographical Differentiation of Tyneside English

Room	Panel Session III 17:40–19:10
221	<p style="text-align: center;">Literary Trauma Studies Chair: Dr. habil. Ágnes Györke</p> <p>Éva Urbán, DE Indigenous Cosmological Storytelling and Contemporary Social Issues in <i>Bad Medicine</i></p> <p>Zouhour Kacem, DE The Deferred Wound: Delayed Remembrance and Trauma in <i>Beloved</i></p> <p>Eszter Fanni Katona, KRE The Representation of Trauma in Contemporary Historical Fantasy Fiction</p> <p>Safa Merzougui, DE Haunting Across Generations: Gothic Motifs as a Manifestation of Intergenerational Trauma in Mansoura EzEldin's <i>Maryam's Maze</i> (2007)</p>
223	<p style="text-align: center;">Narrative Acts: Voice, Style and Agency Chair: Dr. habil. Tamás Juhász</p> <p>Gyöngyvér Fazekas, PPKE The Devil's Irony: Sarcasm, Theology, and the Narrative Voice in Twentieth- and Twenty-First-Century English Literature</p> <p>Tracy Gyimah, SAP Writing The Woman Into Existence: Narratological Perspectives on Authorship, Agency and Identity in <i>The Golden Notebook</i> and <i>Foe</i></p> <p>Domenico Ianuale, UNP Speaking in Silence: Narrative Voice and Liminalities in Colm Tóibín's <i>One Minus One</i></p>
224	<p style="text-align: center;">British and American History and Politics Chair: Dr. habil. Ágnes Beretzky</p> <p>Dorottya Kiss, KRE Lord Northcliffe's Propaganda Campaign Against Germany from 1916 to 1918 and his Postwar Vision of the British Empire</p> <p>Bernát Dauner, KRE British and American Chemical Warfare Preparation Between 1920 and 1945 in the Reflection of Hungarian Military Studies and Archive Documents</p> <p>Veronika Luca Kovács, KRE Croats and Cold War Cartographies: U.S. Eyes on a Yugoslav Puzzle</p> <p>Gergely Miklós, KRE The Price of Prevention: The Chilling Effect of National Security on the First Amendment in Post-9/11 America</p>



Panel Session III
17:40–19:10

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EFL Classroom 3
Chair: Dr. Ágnes Abuczki

Erika Bertók, *SJE*

Accessible Drama Techniques for Intercultural Learning in the EFL Classroom

Ekin Demirsan, *SAP*

Using Children's Literature to Develop Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension in Young EFL Learners

Lirike Muhadri, *KRE*

English Vocabulary Expansion Through Movies and Series as a Language Learning Strategy

Laura Tajti, *PPKE*

Interlocutor Effects on L2 Speaking Anxiety: Comparing Human and AI-Mediated Task Performance in Advanced EFL Learners — A Pilot Study

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Postcolonial and Postmodern Literature

Chair: Dr. Thomas Cooper

Mawada Saeed, *DE*

Nostalgia and Haunting in Jamal Mahjoub's *Wings of Dust* (1994)

Rita Júlia Jansik, *DE*

Postmodern Hauntings: The Unhomely in Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves*

Cyntia Kálmánová, *ELTE*

Haunting the Academy: Reimagining the Gothic in the Dark Academia Genre

Room

Panel Session III
17:40–19:10

229/A

Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century British Writing

Chair: Dr. Zita Turi

Andrea Nikolett Majoros, PTE

“What is a Child? [...] An experiment. A fresh attempt to produce the just man made perfect: that is, to make humanity divine”: George Bernard Shaw on Education

Réka Törzsök, DE

“Delude the world to its undoing”: War, Religion, and Ethics in Theodora Wilson Wilson’s *The Last Weapon*

Szilvia Dancs, KRE

Urban Space in Twentieth-Century Dystopian Fiction

Elisa Bőjte, PTE

The Question of Constance Chatterley’s Agency in *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*

229/B

Eastern Spirituality and Nature

Chair: Dr. Edit Gállá

Anna Maria Graziosi, SAP

Emersonian Philosophy in Bashō’s Haiku

Fanni Forgács, ELTE

“I noticed the Guru was dead”: Buddhism, the Process of Noticing and Mourning in Allen Ginsberg’s *On Cremation of Chögyam Trungpa, Vidyadhara*

Fanni Kovács, ELTE

Beyond Animal: Analyzing the Construction of “Dog” in Paul Auster’s *Timbuktu*

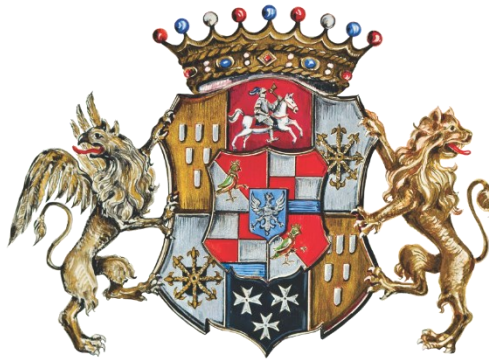
Chahra Zed Khodja, DE

Intergenerational Trauma and Spiritual Healing in Sahar Mustafah’s *The Beauty of Your Face* (2020)



KÁROLI GÁSPÁR UNIVERSITY
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We would like to express our gratitude to Gróf Degenfeld Wine Estate for supporting Károli English Studies Conference with a selection of wine from the historical Tokaji wine region.



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ABSTRACTS

Prof. Kirk Trombley
University of New Hampshire

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

In Their Voice: Dissent as a Genre from the Declaration of Independence to Judicial Dissents

Dissenting opinions are conventionally understood as legally nonbinding expressions of disagreement within judicial decision-making. This presentation challenges that understanding. Drawing on modern rhetorical genre theory, it argues that dissent constitutes a distinct and enduring form of constitutional discourse—a genre that emerges when institutional authority resolves a legal question but fails to extinguish competing interpretations of constitutional meaning.

Tracing this rhetorical form from the Declaration of Independence to contemporary Supreme Court practice, this demonstrates that dissent exhibits stable structural features: narrative construction, appeal to shared principles, rejection of authoritative resolution, and orientation toward future audiences. Through close analysis of dissents in *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Korematsu v. United States*, and *Trump v. Hawaii*, this shows that dissent operates as a mechanism for preserving contested constitutional meaning across generations. Understanding dissent as genre reframes its constitutional role: not as doctrinal residue, but as a central and necessary component of constitutional development and contestation.

Victor Achuodho

Pázmány Péter Catholic University

Communicative Language Teaching in Literacy-Disparate Classrooms: Bridging Literacy Gaps and Communicative Competence

In Kenya, the Competence-Based Education Curriculum emphasizes communicative competence as a central learning outcome. However, research reveals persistent challenges in children's mastery of reading, especially in under-resourced areas. Consequently, some learners enter communicative language teaching (CLT) classrooms without basic literacy skills, creating a pressing pedagogical and theoretical challenge. Teachers are confronted with the difficulty of supporting non-readers within CLT classrooms, raising a critical question: how can learners with limited literacy participate meaningfully without compromising learning progression? Drawing on existing global literature in low-literacy education, this paper argues for an integrated approach that aligns foundational literacy development with CLT principles. It synthesizes strategies that embed literacy support within communicative instruction. Key approaches include oral-first sequencing, task-embedded literacy scaffolding, multi-modal mediation, strategic first-language use, and targeted small-group remediation. The reviewed literature demonstrates that literacy recovery and communicative competence can be mutually reinforcing rather than competing objectives. The paper emphasizes early identification of non-readers, embedding remediation within communicative tasks, sustained professional development, and continuous formative assessment. While informed by the Kenyan policy context, the proposed framework is transferable to other global contexts where literacy gaps challenge communicative pedagogy.

Keywords: *communicative language teaching (CLT), literacy development, non-readers, foundational literacy, competence-based curriculum*

Victor Omondi Achuodho is a PhD student of Applied Linguistics at Pázmány Péter Catholic University. His research interest is in language curriculum design, material evaluation, and implementation with a special attention to Communicative Language Teaching, cognitive assessment, individual learner differences, and Socio-Cultural Communicative Competence.

Júlia Áder

Pázmány Péter Catholic University

The Woman in Blue: Gendered Power and Visual Symbolism in Modern Arthurian Adaptations

This paper examines how *King Arthur* (2004) and *King Arthur: Legend of the Sword* (2017) modernize Arthurian mythology through distinct visual styles and tonal approaches while reserving a remarkably similar female archetype. Despite differences in genre, pacing, and aesthetic, namely Antoine Fuqua's grounded, historical realism versus Guy Ritchie's stylized, fast-cut fantasy, both films position their central female figures as blue-gowned spiritual mediators who connect Arthur to Merlin's power and legitimize his rise to kingship. Through costume design, lighting, and framing, these women visually contrast with the earthy, dark-toned male warriors dressed in leather, fur, and metal. The recurring use of blue, occasionally layered with burgundy clothing, symbolizes calmness, stability and intelligence. In both films (although they appear quite late), the female leads are presented with a dark background, while light shines on their face. Guinevere and the Mage each guide Arthur toward recognition of his destiny as the "chosen one," providing knowledge he lacks and mediating his access to Merlin's supernatural authority. Even the brief appearance of the Lady of the Lake in *Legend of the Sword*, returning Excalibur to Arthur, reinforces this symbolic pattern of female-enabled sovereignty, as she also appears in blue. Yet, despite their narrative importance, the leading female characters ultimately function in support of male authority. While stylistic updates modernize the legend's aesthetics, they maintain traditional gendered structures in which female power serves primarily as spiritual validation for male rule.

Keywords: *film adaptation, visual representation, female archetype, Arthurian legend, spiritual guidance*

Júlia Áder is an MA student in English studies; her English BA thesis topic was Romanticism and Patriotism in Irish and Hungarian Poetry. Her research interests are: nineteenth-century poetry, mythology and legends, and ancient cultures. She plans to write her future MA thesis on the similarities and differences between Scottish and Irish mythological creatures, focusing on fairies.

Bettina Ádor

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Brewed in Ireland and Bound to Britain: The National Identity of the Guinness Family

The Irish national identity is a complex concept. It is shaped by far more than just any tradition or culture and it is influenced by several tides of history, including power struggles. Irish nationalism is often associated with resistance to British rule, the preservation of Catholic identity, and the revival of Gaelic culture. The ways history is remembered influence how communities see themselves, showing that identity depends as much on perception and collective interpretation as on ancestry. Over centuries, these perceptions have been reshaped, creating multiple layers of belonging that coexist within the same population. The Guinness family shows this duality quite well. As supporters of the Anglo-Irish Protestant elite, they maintained close political and social connections with the British ruling elite. At the same time, their enterprise became deeply embedded in Ireland's economic and social life. Through philanthropy, cultural engagement, and global visibility, Guinness gradually came to symbolize Ireland itself, showing how material, cultural, and symbolic contributions shape national belonging. This contradiction demonstrates that identity is shaped not only by political allegiance, but by memory, representation, and reinterpretation. National belonging evolves, absorbing elements of its contested past and redefining them. Irish nationalism, and any national identity, can be seen not as a fixed inheritance, but as a dynamic process. One in which even symbols born within structures of dominance can be reclaimed, redefined, and integrated into the nation's story, reflecting Ireland's layered and adaptive character.

Keywords: *national identity, Guinness Family, Anglo-Irish history, cultural symbolism*

Bettina Ádor is a graduate of English and American Studies at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary where she also completed a higher education vocational qualification in Paralegal Studies. She is currently a second-year MA student in the same field. Her academic interests lie in cultural history and nationalism studies, with particular emphasis on conflicting national identities and the construction of Irish identity.

Fatemeh Ahmadi

University of Szeged

Metalepsis as Self-Escape: The Body as a Narrative World in Contemporary Body Horror

This paper examines metalepsis in contemporary body horror by analyzing how bodily transformation generates narrative worlds that enable forms of self-escape. Drawing on Marie-Laure Ryan's Possible Worlds Theory and Alain Boillat's concept of cinematic worldbuilding, the study conceptualizes the primary body as the narrative's Actual World (AW) and transformed or duplicated bodies as Alternative Body Worlds (BW) that remain physically distinct yet ontologically linked to the original embodiment. Through an analysis of *Possessor* (2020), *Infinity Pool* (2023), and *The Substance* (2024), the paper demonstrates how corporeal alteration operates as an ontological threshold that disrupts linear embodiment and introduces modes of narrative organization. The research traces how shifts in embodiment, from possession to duplication to experimental regeneration, produce metaleptic crossings that force characters to navigate unstable boundaries between their primary and alternative bodily selves. These transitions function as narrative events and ontological fractures, immersing audiences in layered corporeal realities and prompting reconsideration of how meaning emerges when the body becomes a site of world-creation. Situating these dynamics within contemporary body horror reveals a genre concerned with fragmentation, multiplicity, and the erosion of bodily coherence. By foregrounding the body as the site and generator of narrative worlds, these films extend metalepsis beyond textual boundaries and embed it within the ontology of the body, ultimately presenting the body itself as a narrative world. In doing so, the paper highlights how body horror reframes metalepsis as a vehicle for existential inquiry and expands possibilities for understanding embodiment, narrative complexity, and world-construction in twenty-first-century cinema.

Keywords: *body horror, metalepsis, contemporary cinema, narrative worlds*

Fatemeh Ahmadi is a PhD student in Literary and Cultural Studies (Department of American Studies), is also a researcher, writer, and filmmaker currently pursuing a PhD in Literary and Cultural Studies (Film Studies) at the University of Szeged, Hungary. Her research specializes in narrative theory, specifically focusing on metalepsis in cinema and literature. A recipient of the 5th Annual Iranian Cinematic Research Award, she has presented her work at international venues in Germany, Denmark, and Hungary. Beyond academia, she is the author of two acclaimed novels and has directed three experimental short films.

Nina Alassafin

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Constructing Female Vulnerability: A Cross-Linguistic Analysis of Gendered Metaphors in Arabic and English Proverbs

Language is not merely the reflection of social reality, but it also constructs it. Proverbs in particular, due to their concision, memorability, and authority, are considered as effective tools of ideological reproduction, as they present social hierarchies as natural and unquestionable. This paper studies the metaphorization of female vulnerability in Arabic and English proverbs from a cross-linguistic, discourse-based perspective to provide insights into the differences in social norms and contextualization between Arabic and English proverbs. This study, informed by Critical Discourse Analysis and Conceptual Metaphor Theory, will analyze the vocabulary, metaphors, and evaluative frameworks used to represent women as cognitively, physically, or morally deficient in a purposive corpus of Arabic and English proverbs and compare the Arabic proverbs, mainly drawn from the varieties spoken in Syria, with their English proverbs counterparts to investigate possible similarities and differences. It shows how metaphorical models are used in the two languages to represent the relevant restrictions on women as natural, not socially constructed, as a means of naturalizing and legitimizing inequality, and explains the differences in metaphorical patterns, cultural associations, and the prominence of explicit ideology between the two as being the result of different sociocultural and gender contexts. Anchoring this study in sociolinguistics, discourse analysis, and cross-cultural gender studies shows that the everyday use of language can be used to display, reaffirm, and reproduce gender hierarchy.

Keywords: *sociolinguistics, contrastive linguistics proverbs, language and ideology, discourse analysis, gender stereotypes*

Nina Alassafin is a Syrian MA student at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church. Her academic interests include sociolinguistics, discourse studies, and language and gender. She also has a broader passion for cultural studies and social justice, and often found herself searching for answers to difficult questions. She hopes her dissertation will help her find some of them. Since her country is facing economic and political challenges and instabilities, she is currently working on her plans to find a safe place that aligns with her ambitions and goals.

Erika Bertók
János Selye University

Accessible Drama Techniques for Intercultural Learning in the EFL Classroom

Creative methods and approaches have become a permanent part of modern language teaching. The successful implementations of drama techniques in teaching foreign languages have been confirmed by several research findings (see e.g. Maley & Duff, 1982; Swale, 2009; van de Water et al., 2015). EFL (English as a Foreign Language) lessons offer valuable opportunities to involve learners in communication practices and explore cultural perspectives and contexts. Drama techniques are considered to be a vital and experiential pathway for this exploration. This paper focuses on how accessible drama techniques can support intercultural learning in everyday EFL classrooms as language and cultures are inseparable. Cross-cultural encounters, social situations and cultural norms can be analyzed by adaptable drama techniques, such as role-play, improvisation, hot seating or freeze frames. Drama techniques may also serve as a bridge between practice and theory, and additionally, they can make passive learners into active talkers. Learners participate not only physically but also mentally and emotionally in drama activities while they engage with life-like scenarios. Furthermore, the findings of neuroscientific research suggest that learning is more efficient when the body, emotions and mind are connected. During EFL lessons that are supported with drama techniques, communicative competence, empathy and critical thinking are developed. Practical classroom examples will illustrate how drama techniques can be integrated into everyday EFL lessons with special attention given to creating inclusive spaces where learners feel confident while exploring the target-language culture. This presentation highlights how everyday EFL lessons can foster linguistic development and cultural understanding by adjusting drama techniques as accessible pedagogical tools for intercultural awareness.

Keywords: *English as a Foreign Language, drama techniques, intercultural learning, practical classroom, culture*

Erika Bertók is currently a PhD student at the János Selye University, a Hungarian minority university in Slovakia, Komárno. She holds an MA degree from English Language and Literature and History at János Selye University in Komárno, Slovakia. Her main research interests span educational drama and drama techniques in teaching English as a foreign language and the incorporation of physical movement in foreign language learning. Erika Bertók worked in a primary school before starting her PhD studies.

Elisa Bőjte
University of Pécs

The Question of Constance Chatterley's Agency in *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

The canonical interpretation of Constance Chatterley characterizes her as a strong woman who prioritizes her physical and mental satisfaction over her status as Lady Chatterley. It is because of the lack of physical satisfaction which she does not receive from her husband that Connie decides to have an affair with her husband's gamekeeper, Oliver Mellors. This interpretation of her character therefore renders Constance Chatterley as a true agent in her story, who possesses the will to act according to her own benefits. Contrary to this interpretation, however, this paper raises the question of whether Connie's affair is because of her promiscuity or her lack of agency. It argues that Connie's affair is the result of her being persuaded into the act by her father's suggestion, thus essentially stripping her of her agency. The paper elaborates on the fact that Sir Malcolm presented the idea of Connie acquiring a lover to both her and her husband, and how, by simultaneously presenting this with the promise of Constance bearing a child that Clifford could raise as his own, Sir Malcolm essentially forces Connie on the path he considers is best suited for her. The research looks into Sir Malcolm's endeavors from the perspective of parental guidance, which even if not entirely controlling, are very persuasive and it analyzes how this might have impacted Connie's decision of committing adultery. Furthermore, it argues that class and social mobility are of great importance when considering Constance's rebellion against her father in several attempts to regain her agency.

Keywords: *feminism, agency, control, social class, paternal bond*

Bőjte Elisa is a first-year MA student at the University of Pécs, interested in all matters controversial. During her BA studies she delved into the issue of female agency, and how this might be overlooked in the readings of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. In her current research, she takes this further by asking the question of female agency in contemporary horror and romance novels. She is interested in the question of female agency, especially in relation to the way masculinity is presented in these works.

Orsolya Bundász
Pázmány Péter Catholic University

Innocence and Inequality: The Child's Voice in Blake's "The Little Black Boy"

This paper examines the role of the child's voice in William Blake's poem "The Little Black Boy" from *Songs of Innocence*. In the poem, the young speaker states that although his skin is black, his soul is "white": "I am black, but O! my soul is white." His mother has taught him that earthly differences, like skin color, are temporary and that in heaven, everyone will be equal in God's eyes. Initially, this message seems to offer comfort and spiritual equality; yet, the final lines of the poem reveal a key tension when the little black boy concludes, referring to the white boy that "I'll shade him from the heat till he can bear, ... And be like him and he will then love me." The black child seems to imply that the English boy's love will come only when he becomes like him. Even though he has learned that all souls are equal, he still places himself in a lower position and sees the white child as someone he must serve and imitate. This shows that he does not fully believe in his own equality. Through this contrast, Blake suggests that the boy has already accepted the idea that whiteness is superior. The child speaks innocently, but his words reveal how social ideas about race have shaped the way he sees himself and others. In this way, the poem shows that even a message about love, faith, and equality can contain hidden inequality.

Keywords: *William Blake, innocence, equality, race, prejudice*

Orsolya Bundász completed her BA at the University of Nyiregyháza and currently is an MA student. In her BA thesis, she analysed the short stories of Nathaniel Hawthorne, with a particular focus on the Christian symbolism in his works. Her research paper centers on the nineteenth-century poet William Blake, especially on the child's voice in his poem "The Little Black Boy." For her MA thesis, she plans to compare the poems of William Blake and William Wordsworth, focusing on their perspectives on childhood and how these ideas are conveyed in their poetry.

Fruzsina Burszán

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Retranslating Shakespeare's Sonnets: A Comparison of the Hungarian Translations by Lőrinc Szabó and Sándor Fazekas

This paper examines the Hungarian retranslation of William Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, comparing the original version to the translations of two people, Lőrinc Szabó and Sándor Fazekas. Lőrinc Szabó is one of the most significant Hungarian Shakespeare translators, and he was the first one who translated all of Shakespeare's sonnets. Sándor Fazekas is a contemporary translator who made a retranslation of the sonnets in 2023. The aim of this research is to examine the differences between the first translation and the retranslation, acknowledging the circumstances of the times of the two translators: the beginning of the twentieth century and the world of contemporary literature. These differences include the old generation of Hungarian translators, the challenges of translation, the Nyugat-generation, and the changing needs of the audience of literary works.

Keywords: *retranslation, sonnets, poetry, twentieth-century, contemporary, differences*

Fruzsina Burszán is a second-year MA student of English Studies, specializing in English Literature and Culture at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. Her research focuses on the retranslation of Shakespeare's sonnets, including the historical background of the generation of the first Hungarian Shakespeare translators and the differences of today's scholars.

Dóra Busi
Eötvös Loránd University

**The Conspiracy Theorist American Hero and the Complicated Emancipatory Politics of
Bugonia (2025)**

Yorgos Lanthimos's *Bugonia* (2025) is part satire, part social commentary. Following two men who kidnap the CEO of a pharmaceutical company due to their suspicion that she is an alien, the film puts a black comedy sci-fi spin on both conspiracy theory-fueled post-truth discourses that operate on misinformation or outright lies, and critiques of "elites," or CEOs (depending on where the criticism comes from) and their often exploitative practices. The question that arises when watching the film is how to differentiate between these two strands of argumentation. What is an acceptable way to share grievances towards, for example, the pharmaceutical industry, and what line must be crossed for discourses to be deemed conspiratorial? Moreover, is the reveal of wrongful practices always for the good of society, or not so much? This presentation focuses on these questions, framing them in terms of emancipation and heroism, through an analysis of the emancipatory potential of the conspiratorial discourse in *Bugonia*. Utilizing theoretical work on contemporary films and the interconnectedness of the political and the aesthetic within them, the author aims to examine whether a conspiracy theorist can become an archetypal American hero, and if so, what novel characteristics he embodies when embracing "alternative facts."

Keywords: *conspiracy theory, emancipatory film, American hero, media studies, American studies*

Dóra Busi is a PhD student at the Department of American Studies at Eötvös Loránd University. Her research focuses on conspiracy theories in American fiction, particularly in contemporary crime television and film. Her main interest lies in examining the narrative potential of conspiracies and conspiracy theories for identity construction and social criticism.

Dilara Can

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Exploring Affective Affordances and Barriers of AI Chatbots in L2 Speaking Practice Among Hungarian University Students

This study explores students' perceptions of the affective affordances and perceived barriers of using an AI-based chatbot (ChatGPT Voice Mode) in L2 speaking practice, with particular attention to English speaking anxiety. The study included two phases: a questionnaire focusing on the students' experiences with, and attitudes toward the use of AI chatbots (e.g. ChatGPT) for English-speaking practice, and the reasons behind their choices, followed by a small-scale case study with two volunteer students. In the case study, participants were instructed to practice speaking English by using ChatGPT's voice mode. Following the speaking activity, participants took part in semi-structured interviews in which they reflected on their affective experiences while using ChatGPT Voice Mode for L2 speaking practice. The study aimed to investigate the perceived affective affordances, such as reduced anxiety and increased sense of control, as well as potential barriers to its use. The preliminary findings showed a great preference for speaking practice with real people, as the use of AI chatbots is seen as inauthentic by the participants. Furthermore, the biggest disinclination toward AI chatbots was the harmful effects of AI on the environment. On the other hand, the participants who preferred utilizing AI chatbots for English speaking practice underlined the convenience of them, which makes the speaking practice easier and gives the individual more autonomy in their learning. The participants reported they felt less stress about making mistakes and being judged or evaluated negatively. This research highlights the potential of reducing second-language speaking anxiety with the help of AI chatbots while still focusing on the importance of interacting with peers for more authenticity and socialization.

Keywords: *second language acquisition (SLA), English-speaking skills, second language anxiety, ChatGPT voice mode, AI-assisted language learning*

Dilara Can is a postgraduate student pursuing an MA in English Studies with a specialization in Applied Linguistics at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church. She earned her BA in English Language Teaching at Bolu Abant İzzet Baysal University in Türkiye. Her research focuses on Applied Linguistics, AI-enhanced English Language Teaching, speaking skills development, and second language speaking anxiety, particularly in AI-mediated and peer interaction contexts.

Cajethan Chineke

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Secondary School Students' Poor Performance in English Language Exams in Nigeria: A Case Study of Sociolinguistic, Educational, Institutional, and Socio-Economic Influences in Oji River L.G.A.

This case study investigates secondary school students' consistent poor performance in English Language exams in Nigeria with a focus on Oji River Local Government Area of Enugu State. In most of the studies previously conducted, the influencing factors have been examined separately. This study adopted an integrated approach by examining the interactions between the students' sociolinguistic environment, educational practices, institutional resource provision and students' socio-economic background. This study is an ongoing mixed-methods study. The study will combine quantitative data (questionnaires completed by the students, teachers and school administrators) with qualitative data (semi-structured interviews). Although the study does not involve observing classes, it collects self-reported and experience-based data from participants to understand their perceptions of English language learning and underachievement. Presently, the study is based on four hypotheses that will be tested when the data collection and analysis processes are complete. These hypotheses are: (1) greater exposure to English in students' sociolinguistic environments will result in better language skills; (2) appropriate educational practices will lead to better learning outcomes; (3) greater availability of institutional resources will support language acquisition; and (4) better socio-economic conditions will improve English language performance. Additionally, the study expects variation in how students, teachers, and administrators identify the sources of underachievement. It is anticipated that the results of the study will illustrate that underachievement in English language learning is a complex problem arising from the interplay of multiple contextual factors, rather than being the result of one single factor. The study also aims to contribute to the current debates about language teaching in multilingual contexts and lay the groundwork for future empirical verification and development of policies.

Keywords: *English language underperformance, sociolinguistic factors, teacher preparedness, academic language proficiency (CALP), systemic educational reform*

Cajethan Chineke Goodluck is an MA student at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary in English studies. He is specifically interested in second-language learning, language-in-society, as well as language teaching and learning in multilingual environments; he focuses on Nigeria as a specific context.

Szilvia Dancs

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Urban Space in Twentieth-Century Dystopian Fiction

Dystopian literature is a relatively new genre when measured against the massive literary history of the world, but that does not prevent it from being one of the most beloved by contemporary readers and critics alike. Being a distorted mirror image of utopia, these imagined worlds are meant to force the reader to consider how social progress can go horribly wrong without warning. The genre is characterized by mind-numbing political propaganda, insane restrictions of freedom, only sometimes guised as benevolent protection by the state, all this justified through a baffling set of leaps of logic and false dichotomies. Not surprising it is then that the majority of scholarly interest lies with dystopia's political programme and the imagined and real social implications of it. While considering the politics of such literature can teach us about the dangers of totalitarian takeover, politics is not the only sphere where totalitarian control manifests. Largely ignored perhaps for being less flashy is dystopias' setting. This paper examines *1984*, *Brave New World*, *Swastika Night*, and *Meccania: The Super-State* from an urban perspective, arguing that closely observing dystopian literature's urban settings one can discover hitherto ignored areas of control, terror and suffering conducted through the static but all the more oppressive physical and social structure only possible in the proverbial city. For this analysis, these four early twentieth-century dystopian novels of varying notoriety, severity and political affiliation will be measured against each other, while exploring the contemporary views of the urban in light of genre conventions, the spatial turn and literary urban studies.

Keywords: *dystopia, urbanism, twentieth-century, totalitarianism, spatiality*

Dancs Szilvia Laura is a second-year MA student at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. Her main interest lies with twentieth and twenty-first century literature, urbanism and videogame studies. She wrote her MA Thesis on nineteenth-century American poetry and grief and is currently working on her paper on urban dystopia.

Bernát Dauner

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

British and American Chemical Warfare Preparation Between 1920 and 1945 in the Reflection of Hungarian Military Studies and Archive Documents

Following the First World War, not only in every European but also in the USA's army's military, theoreticians began to evaluate the experiences of the gas war. As a result of this, various new methods were developed. The US military command, like every other army of its time, created its own chemical warfare organisation, the Chemical Warfare Service. Until the end of the Second World War, the organisation continued to develop warfare agents, often experimenting on humans. The same process took place in the British armed forces. The army of the Kingdom of Hungary, which had lost the First World War, was soon at a disadvantage in terms of development due to the military resolutions of the Trianon Peace Treaty. Therefore, Hungarian military intelligence kept a constant eye on events abroad. On the other hand, between the world wars, some information about chemical warfare preparations appeared in foreign military journals. Hungarian military theorists followed this closely and used them in their own work. However, the question arises as to how much the information received by Hungarians reflected reality. In the presentation the author describes the above-mentioned processes with the help of Hungarian archival sources and English-language literature.

Keywords: *chemical warfare, United States of America, United Kingdom, Kingdom of Hungary, intelligence service*

Bernát Dauner earned his BA and MA degrees from Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. During his BA and MA studies, he earned two prizes at the National Scientific Student Conference. Afterwards, he started to study historical museology and continued his research at the Doctoral School of History. Moreover, he has been a member of the Benda Kálmán College of Excellences since 2018. His doctoral research topic is the chemical warfare troops of the Hungarian Royal Army between 1936 and 1945.

Livia De Luca

La Sapienza University of Rome

Mirroring the Tragedy: Traces of Greek Myths in *The Passenger* by Cormac McCarthy

“You’re a missing Greek tragedy, Squire” (McCarthy 139), says John Sheddan in one of his conversations with Bobby Western. But what does being Greek mean to Bobby, as well as to McCarthy? In literary criticism, especially in the context of classical tragedy, being Greek might refer to being destined to an inescapable fate, impossible to decipher or to prevent, and to being the bearer of an internal, unspeakable tragedy. All these characteristics seem familiar to the protagonists of *The Passenger*. The aim of this essay is to highlight how McCarthy made use of Greek mythological archetypes to develop his characters. If the *Myth of Prometheus* can easily be juxtaposed to the “good guys who carry the fire” (Luttrull 24) as the father and son in *The Road*, it is possible to see the same tragic hero in the character of Alicia. Guilty of hubris for having discovered that even mathematics is unable to explicate the reality of the world, Alicia is tormented and bound by her hallucinations of the Kid and her suffering, just like Prometheus is punished by the gods by being bound to a stone and tormented by an eagle gnawing his liver. In a similar way, Bobby seems to embody some of the features of Oedipus, unable to find or fully understand the events that have defined his life. Indeed, if the sins of the fathers fall on their children, like in the case of Oedipus, whose father Laius committed the crime of violence against Chrysippus, Bobby defines himself as the product of two of the biggest tragedies of the twentieth century: the atomic bomb and the Holocaust. Lastly, the relationship between Bobby and Alicia recalls aspects of the *Myth of Orpheus and Eurydice*, where the Greek singer mourns his lost lover Eurydice, desperately trying to rescue her from the Underworld.

Keywords: *myth, classical tragedy, archetypes, sins, modern hero*

Livia De Luca is an MA student in English and Anglo-American Studies, with a strong academic focus on the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century American literature. Her undergraduate thesis focused on *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, exploring in particular its non-linear structure and narrative complexity to frame a representation of memory, identity, and trauma in literature. For this paper, the classical education from high school sparked her interest in exploring how myth and classical tragedy can inspire modern American fiction.

Ekin Demirsan

La Sapienza University of Rome

Using Children's Literature to Develop Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension in Young EFL Learners

This paper explores the use of children's literature as an effective pedagogical tool for developing vocabulary and reading comprehension in young learners of English in EFL contexts. Teaching these skills to young learners presents specific challenges, particularly in sustaining motivation while providing meaningful and comprehensible input. Children's literary texts, such as picture books, fairy tales, and simplified versions of classic literary works, offer age-appropriate language input supported by narrative structure and visual elements. Drawing on principles from communicative language teaching and reader-response theory, this study examines how literary texts can be integrated into vocabulary and reading instruction for young learners. The paper discusses the selection of suitable texts and outlines classroom-based activities, including storytelling, guided reading, visual scaffolding, and post-reading vocabulary tasks. These activities encourage learners to infer meaning from context, develop reading strategies, and actively engage with the target language. By focusing on simplified and carefully adapted literary materials, the study demonstrates that literary texts can be used without overwhelming young learners linguistically. Instead, they provide repeated exposure to vocabulary and support comprehension through familiar story patterns and illustrations. The paper argues that the integration of children's literature not only enhances vocabulary retention and reading comprehension but also fosters positive attitudes toward reading in English. The findings suggest that incorporating children's literature into EFL classrooms offers a balanced approach that supports linguistic development while promoting learner engagement. This approach highlights the pedagogical value of literary texts in early language education and encourages their wider use in teaching English to young learners.

Keywords: *young EFL learners, children's literature, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, language teaching*

Ekin Demirsan graduated from Middle East Technical University, Department of Foreign Language Education in 2023. She worked as an EFL teacher at the elementary school level for two years, gaining practical classroom experience in teaching young learners. She is currently an MA student at Sapienza University of Rome in the Department of English and Anglo-American Studies.

Muhammad Jahanzaib Dildar

Pázmány Péter Catholic University

The Divided Will: The Conflict of Free Will and Predestination in Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*

This paper examines Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* as a dramaturgical manifestation of the late sixteenth-century conflict between the conflicting views on the freedom of choice or the lack of it. While Desiderius Erasmus's *De Libero Arbitrio* posits a human will capable of cooperating with divine grace, Martin Luther's *The Bondage of the Will* asserts a post-lapsarian nature incapable of self-determined salvation. By grounding the play in the specific theological climate of the 1595 Lambeth Articles, which attempted to solidify strict Calvinist predestination within the Elizabethan Church, this study argues that Faustus's downfall is not merely a moral failure but a "spiritual crisis" of predestination. Central to this argument is John D. Jump's analysis of theological despair, which serves as the primary obstacle to Faustus's salvation, effectively transforming his internal conflict into a "metaphysics of despair." Through the "Staging of the Divided Soul" and the Good and Evil Angels, Marlowe moves beyond medieval tropes to create a sophisticated Elizabethan tragedy that refuses resolution. Ultimately, the play depicts a hero whose "intellectual pride" is systematically paralyzed by theological considerations that offer no easy comfort for the non-elect, rendering his final soliloquy a profound "Poetics of the Fall."

Keywords: *Christopher Marlowe, Doctor Faustus, freedom of choice, despair, determination*

Muhammad Jahanzaib Dildar is a Pakistani student of English Literature currently pursuing his MA in English Studies. He completed his BA degree in English Literature from Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan, where his undergraduate thesis focused on issues of gender and power in contemporary culture. His academic interests include literary theory, postcolonial studies, Renaissance drama, and critical approaches to literature. His current research interests particularly focus on postcolonial identity, cultural hybridity, and migration in postcolonial literature. He is especially interested in examining how literature reflects the psychological and cultural conflicts produced by colonial histories and global migration. His future thesis research aims to explore themes of identity, displacement, and hybridity within postcolonial literary texts.

Abdelhamid Djeghoubbi
Pázmány Péter Catholic University

A Pilot Move Analysis of Abstracts in Algerian Economics Research Articles

Research article abstracts (RAAs) are of paramount significance for academics in terms of communicating information about their research, as well as being an essential part of the process that allows researchers to gain access to publish internationally. Genre-based research has examined academic abstract structure for decades in English-speaking countries; however, there has not yet been much focus on the rhetorical structure of abstracts written by Algerian economists. The current study investigates the move structure of Algerian economics research articles' abstracts based on Hyland's five-move model (2000): Introduction, Purpose, Method, Product, and Conclusion. The corpus consists of ten English-language research articles, with two articles selected from each of five different peer-reviewed economics journals from the Algerian Scientific Journal Platform (ASJP). Following move analysis (Swales, 1990), the study will employ manual coding of the moves to identify moves, their frequencies, and their sequencing in the corpus. This pilot study will examine whether the abstracts conform to or deviate from the established international model, as well as identify new rhetorical tendencies in the context of the Algerian academic community, using a multi-journal sample. This initial analysis aims to provide some indications of local authoring practices and to further develop the analytical framework for a future larger-scale study. The findings are expected to contribute to genre research in the Algerian under-represented academic context and to inform English for Academic Purposes (EAP) pedagogy in Algeria.

Keywords: *genre analysis, move structure, research article abstracts, Algerian academic writing, economics discourse*

Abdelhamid Djeghoubbi is an Algerian international PhD student in Applied Linguistics at Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest. He holds an MA degree in Linguistics and a BA degree in English Language and Literature from Kasdi Merbah University of Ouargla, Algeria. His research interests include English for Specific Purposes, genre analysis, corpus linguistics, and academic discourse. His doctoral research examines the genre structure of economics research articles in the Algerian academic context.

Gyöngyvér Fazekas
Pázmány Péter Catholic University

**The Devil's Irony: Sarcasm, Theology, and the Narrative Voice in Twentieth- and
Twenty-First Century English Literature**

This project explores the evolution of ironic and sarcastic representations of the devil and demonic figures in twentieth and twenty-first century English literature. It focuses on *The Sorrows of Satan* (Marie Corelli, 1895); *The Screwtape Letters* (C. S. Lewis, 1942); *Job: A Comedy of Justice* (Robert A. Heinlein, 1984); *Good Omens* (Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett, 1990); and *I, Lucifer* (Glen Duncan, 2002). These works present a striking transformation of infernal narratives: rather than depicting the devil as a wholly evil antagonist, they reimagine him through irony, satire, and linguistic wit. The study argues that sarcasm and parody serve not merely as stylistic devices but as epistemological and theological tools that interrogate the nature of good and evil, divine justice, and human fallibility. The ironic devil emerges as a narrative mediator who destabilises traditional Christian cosmologies, turning moral absolutes into sites of negotiation and scepticism. Through the lens of narratology, stylistics, and theological criticism, this project examines how authors employ irony, self-reflexivity, and narrative unreliability to engage readers in moral dialogue and to question inherited theological paradigms. The research adopts a comparative, interdisciplinary methodology combining close reading, stylistic analysis, and contextual theology. Each primary text will be examined for its use of ironic narrative techniques (lexical choices, tone, and narrative framing) that construct the demonic voice as an ironic commentator on human morality. A discourse-stylistic approach will identify linguistic markers of irony and parody (following Leech and Simpson), while narratological tools will uncover how point of view, temporal manipulation, and metafictional strategies shape readers' moral engagement. Contextual analysis will situate each text within its historical and theological milieu, tracing the cultural movement from late Victorian moral allegory to postmodern moral relativism. Finally, the study synthesizes these findings to articulate how the devil's ironic rhetoric shifts in Western thought regarding evil, justice, and divine authority.

Keywords: *narratology, stylistics, contextual analysis, theological criticism, twentieth and twenty-first-century English literature*

Gyöngyvér Fazekas holds an MA in English Literature at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary and an MA in Theology and is pursuing a PhD in the same field at Pázmány Péter Catholic University. Her research focuses on a combination of narratological, linguistic, and theological frameworks. From linguistic and stylistic theory, her project employs pragmatics, models of satire and humour to analyse the mechanics of sarcasm and irony at the level of discourse and semantics. She is particularly interested in how narrative and setting shape ethical and metaphysical questions in literature.

Fanni Forgács
Eötvös Loránd University

**“I noticed the Guru was dead”: Buddhism, the Process of Noticing and Mourning in
Allen Ginsberg’s “On Cremation of Chögyam Trungpa, Vidyadhara”**

This paper explores the relevance of perception, the art of noticing, mourning and Buddhist rituals in Allen Ginsberg’s poem “On Cremation of Chögyam Trungpa, Vidyadhara,” published in *Cosmopolitan Greetings* (1994). The poem stands as a commemoration of the Tibetan Buddhist guru Chögyam Trungpa and shows Ginsberg’s deeply rooted engagement with Buddhist rituals and philosophy during the later stages of his career. Earlier scholarship has frequently focused on Ginsberg’s Jewish background or anti-consumerist ideology, thus, this research aims to fill a gap in academia. The analysis is based on three interconnected aspects: the presence of Buddhist ritual symbolism, the position of a Western observer within an Eastern spiritual context, and the relationship between language, perception, and death. The repeated phrase “I noticed” is central in the poem. These repetitive lines structure the speaker’s observations of the cremation ceremony and its surroundings. This repetition evokes practices of mindfulness and awareness found in Buddhist meditation traditions, particularly those associated with breathing and attentive observation. Additionally, the paper argues that the gradual disruption of the repetitive “I noticed” lines marks the emotional climax of the poem; the speaker confronts the guru’s bare-chested body. Linguistic fragmentation can be seen as a reflection of the limitedness of language in articulating grief and loss. Furthermore, Ginsberg’s poem combines Western poetic expression and Buddhist concepts, such as impermanence and emptiness. Ultimately, the study highlights the limits of a Western man’s attempt and ability of understanding Buddhism and investigates how repetition is never the same, in reference to Deleuze.

Keywords: *Beat Generation, Allen Ginsberg, Buddhism, mourning, rituals*

Fanni Forgács is a second-year PhD student at Eötvös Loránd University. Her main research interests include the exploration of religion and spirituality in the context of the Beat Generation. She is particularly interested in the intersection of Jewish and Buddhist traditions in the poetry of Allen Ginsberg. Additionally, her current work examines how spiritual, Catholic and Buddhist influences shape Jack Kerouac’s *The Scripture of the Golden Eternity*.

Anna Maria Graziosi
La Sapienza University of Rome

Emersonian Philosophy in Bashō's Haiku

Across distant cultural and historical contexts, nineteenth-century American transcendentalism and early Edo-period Japanese poetic tradition share common visions of humanity's place within nature and the universe. In the seventeenth century, the Japanese poet Matsuo Bashō wrote haiku that expressed a vision of the unity of existence and a direct, meditative experience of nature. Centuries later, the American scholar Ralph Waldo Emerson similarly asserts a direct and intuitive experience of nature, conceiving of it as a source of spiritual knowledge and universal truth. Bashō's haiku can thus be meaningfully interpreted through an Emersonian lens. Through a comparative reading of selected haiku by Bashō alongside key passages from Emerson's essays, particularly "The Poet, Nature, and Self-Reliance," this study aims to highlight similarities between Emerson's vision of an "original relation to the universe" and the Zen-influenced aesthetic experience embedded in Bashō's haiku. Central to this comparison is the dissolution of dualism between subject and object, a principle expressed both in Emerson's notion of spiritual self-reliance and in the Zen concept of Satori, which informs Bashō's poetics. Particular attention is devoted to brevity, simplicity, and the poetic dignity of humble natural phenomena as vehicles of transcendental knowledge. Bashō's haiku, like Emerson's symbolic language of nature, reveal the sacred dimension of everyday life and challenge hierarchical distinctions between high and low, presence and absence, sound and silence. By placing Emersonian transcendentalism in dialogue with Bashō's Zen aesthetics, this paper proposes a transnational approach to American philosophy and aims to highlight the comparative potential of English Studies within a global intellectual context.

Keywords: *transcendentalism, Emerson, Bashō, comparative literature, poetics of nature*

Anna Maria Graziosi is a recent MA graduate in English and Anglo-American Studies from Sapienza University of Rome. She holds a BA in Comparative Languages and Cultures from the University of Naples L'Orientale, where she specialized in Japanese language and culture. Her research interests include comparative literature, cross-cultural thought, cultural studies, and intercultural aesthetics.

Fedoua Manar Grouri

University of Debrecen

Beyond the Poetics of Military Condemnation: Technology and Perception Interwoven in David S. F. Wilson's *Bloodshot* (2020)

To be a site for the exploration of military experimentation and its ethics is not a novelty in the context of American comic-book superheroes, whether this experimentation serves as background lore (Marvel and DC Comics) or as a central theme (Valiant and Image Comics). However, a question emerges: can its depictions posit a site for the examination of human perception? David S.F. Wilson's 2020 adaptation of Valiant Comics' *Bloodshot* provides, through its distinct cinematic language, an appropriate example and a valuable audiovisual expanse to analyze how technology interweaves with human perception. Military superhero narratives have been recognized for possessing a tendency of adhering to biochemical and cybernetic technologies in their exploration and problematization of military enhancement. However, through challenging this convention of American superhero universes via the portrayal of nanotechnological enhancement, *Bloodshot* provides a potential for academic scrutiny in regards to the study of the aforementioned phenomenon. The film revolves around Ray Garrison, a deceased U.S. Marine who undergoes a technological resurrection by Rising Spirit Technologies' CEO and lead scientist, Dr. Emil Harting, becoming the first successful human subject of the "Bloodshot" program. His journey of being the scientist's weapon prototype comes to a halt as he encounters Wilfred Wigans, a programmer, who reveals Harting's agenda. Garrison, Wigans, and KT, an enhanced former US navy diver, confront RST and search for a new life at last. By performing a close reading, this paper approaches this crux through a phenomenological lens, specifically Don Ihde's microperception.

Keywords: *technology, perception, superhero, Bloodshot, phenomenology*

Fedoua Manar Grouri is a second-year PhD student at the University of Debrecen. She is affiliated with the North American subprogram of the Doctoral School of Literary, Cultural and Linguistic Studies. Her research interests encompass American science fiction, philosophy of technology, phenomenology, and transhumanism.

Adrienn Gulyás

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

The Question of Nineteenth-Century Camp Nursing in the Light of the Nursing Management Activities of Zsuzsanna Kossuth and Florence Nightingale

In this presentation, the author has attempted to outline the life paths and nursing organization activities of two women who were contemporaries and pioneers in the history of nursing. During the research, the author discovered numerous similarities and differences between the social status, emotional and health backgrounds, as well as the chief nursing work of Zsuzsanna Kossuth and Florence Nightingale. The life of Zsuzsanna Kossuth, who came from a landless lower-noble family from Upper Hungary, was generally influenced by periodically recurring existential insecurity. Florence belonged to the English social elite, lived a life characterized by financial security; in fact, she even had her own income from an allowance periodically paid by William Edward Nightingale. During the Crimean War, she contributed from her own wealth to the supply of hospitals multiple times, but her transformation into an icon—supported by her family as well—namely “The Lady with the Lamp” as a trademark, also opened many wallets for the care of the wounded. In the case of Zsuzsanna, it seems like she acquired her nursing experience primarily through home care practices customary at the time, as she cared for her sisters and their mother on several occasions. Florence regarded nursing as her vocation and life goal, and thus never considered marriage. Zsuzsanna married Rudolf Meszlényi, a reform politician from Fejér County, in May 1841, and they lived in a happy marriage for about seven years. In this presentation two different personalities who got a similar position with very different tasks during wartime are introduced.

Keywords: *Zsuzsanna Kossuth, Florence Nightingale, camp nursing, chief nurse, field hospitals*

Adrienn Gulyás is a PhD student in the Doctoral School of History at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. Her research topics are women’s roles during the Revolution and War of Independence in 1848–1849. She is principally focused on women soldiers and nursing activity during wartime, with special attention to the figure of Zsuzsanna Kossuth chief nurse. Her study on the topic was recently published in Károli Gáspár English-language publication *Distance Revisited* and in Hungarian in *The Quarterly of Military History [Hadtörténelmi Közlemények]*.

Tracy Gyimah

La Sapienza University of Rome

Writing the Woman into Existence: Narratological Perspectives on Authorship, Agency, and Identity in *The Golden Notebook* and *Foe*

This paper proposes to highlight the common ground upon which Anna Wulf and Susan Barton meet, in Doris Lessing's *The Golden Notebook* (1962) and J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* (1986). On the one hand, an independent, successful writer, woman, and mother; on the other hand, a woman marooned on an island searching for her daughter and, most importantly, for an authoritative figure to tell her story. What could they possibly have in common? This research is thus a meditation on the dynamics of authorship, agency, and the power that writing inevitably entails. Subdued, unrooted, and insecure, both Anna and Susan, through writing and while resisting a patriarchal, misogynistic, gendered, and somehow colonial world, are in pursuit of order and meaning in their existence. As the title highlights, in both novels writing is existential, ethical, and political. By means of close readings and narratology, this paper foregrounds frame narratives, metafiction, polyphony, fragmentation, and narrative shifts as a profound recording of fragmentary existence. The intersection of feminism and writing remains ultimately unresolved: the impossibility of bridging the gap between experience, writing, and truth, despite the urge and necessity of retrieval. At the intersection of authorship, power, gender, race, and truth, *The Golden Notebook* and *Foe* are narratives of resistance and reclamation, where writing is impossible yet necessary.

Keywords: *authorship, agency, fragmentation, metafiction, feminism*

Tracy Gyimah is an MA student in English Studies. Her research focuses on narratology, feminism, postcolonial studies, and poststructuralism. She explores the dynamics of authorship, agency, identity, gender, and power, with particular attention to fragmentation, metafiction, and the ethics of writing. Engaging with theoretical frameworks by Spivak, Bhabha, Derrida, Lyotard, Bakhtin, and Barthes, she examines the intersection of feminism and writing in postmodern and postcolonial literature.

Manel Ben Harkat

University of Szeged

Embodied Dehumanization: Asian Women in Lan Cao's *Monkey Bridge* (1997) and Nora Okja Keller's *Comfort Woman* (1997)

Feminist and postcolonial feminist scholars frequently emphasize that women's bodies have long been constructed as symbols of national identity and cultural preservation; as a result, they have been repeatedly objectified, sexualized, and dehumanized in wars. This paper analyzes Lan Cao's *Monkey Bridge* (1997) and Nora Okja Keller's *Comfort Woman* (1997), primarily exploring three critical elements: embodied war trauma, representations of womanhood, and structured othering. Both novels discuss the maternal relationships destabilized by war, the enforced silencing of women, the identity erasure reinforced by renaming, and employ the past as a narrative mechanism through which trauma is manifested. The paper explores the historically distinct apparatuses through which Asian women's bodies are dehumanized and marginalized. Using qualitative literary analysis, Rosemarie Garland-Thomson's freak discourse serves as an analytical frame to examine racial and sexual subversion of Asian female bodies, alongside trauma theory, mainly the works of Cathy Caruth, Maria Root, and Laura Brown, to unravel how war and systematic oppression inscribe and shape female protagonists' bodies in the selected novels. Combined with Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's concept of the subaltern, this study argues that the protagonists' narratives are distorted, and their agency is constrained. This study contributes to the existing body of work in literary and gender studies by negotiating Asian women's othering and by focusing on the intergenerational trauma in each novel within the contexts of the Second World War and the Vietnam War. Therefore, it offers a new perspective on embodied dehumanization in *Monkey Bridge* (1997) and *Comfort Woman* (1997), not solely reframing their memory and bodies as markers of testimony, but also as sites of resistance, expanding critical discussions in women's war literature.

Keywords: *Monkey Bridge*, *Comfort Woman*, women's war literature, trauma, dehumanization

Manel Ben Harkat is an MA student in American Studies at the Institute of English and American Studies at the University of Szeged, Hungary. Her current work focuses on culinary narratives, female agency, and insidious trauma in Latinx literature. Her research interests include women's writing, war narratives, feminist trauma studies, and minority and identity studies.

Vega Hesmatantya
University of Szeged

Does Teaching Experience Matter? Assessment Theory Knowledge among Indonesian Secondary School English Teachers

Language assessment literacy is an essential professional competency for English teachers in ensuring valid, reliable, and aligned evaluation practices with learning objectives. This study aims to (1) identify the level of English teachers' perceived knowledge of assessment theory in lower and upper secondary schools in Indonesia, and (2) examine the extent to which teaching experience predicts their perceived knowledge of assessment theory. The dimension of assessment theory knowledge in this study is part of a broader construct, i.e., Language Assessment Literacy (LAL). This study surveyed 33 lower secondary and 64 upper secondary school English teachers across Indonesia through six items measuring the dimension of knowledge of assessment theory, part of the LAL instrument developed by Kremmel and Harding (2020), using a 0–4 Likert scale. Descriptive statistics showed that the perceived knowledge of assessment theory of lower secondary school teachers was in the moderate category ($M = 2.26$; $SD = 0.67$), and for upper secondary school teachers ($M = 2.26$; $SD = 0.76$). Linear regression analysis revealed that teaching experience did not significantly predict teachers' perceived knowledge of assessment theory in either lower ($\beta = -.186$, $p = .300$) or upper secondary schools ($\beta = .035$, $p = .782$). These findings indicate that years of teaching experience do not meaningfully contribute to teachers' theoretical understanding of language assessment. This research provides an empirical contribution showing that professional expertise in language assessment does not develop automatically through years of teaching experience, highlighting the urgent need for systematic, theory-driven professional development programs to strengthen teachers' Language Assessment Literacy.

Keywords: *Language Assessment Literacy, assessment theory knowledge, teaching experience, secondary school English teachers, Indonesia*

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Domenico Ianuale
Parthenope University of Naples

Speaking in Silence: Narrative Voice and Liminalities in Colm Tóibín’s “One Minus One”

In Colm Tóibín’s short story “One Minus One,” liminality emerges as a defining condition of the protagonist’s existence, permeating his experiences of space, identity, time, and narrative voice. As an Irishman living in Texas, the character occupies a position of geographical and cultural liminality, displaced from home yet unable to fully belong in his current environment. His relationships with others, marked by emotional restraint and social reticence, further situate him in a space between connection and concealment, where what is most significant remains unarticulated. Temporally, the story’s retrospective structure traps him in a limbo between past and present, as memory becomes a site of both comfort and stasis. The act of remembering does not enable movement or resolution; instead, it reinforces a circular pattern of return, binding him to what has been lost. This emotional and existential suspension is heightened by the absence of an audience: his monologue unfolds without a clear recipient, emphasizing his isolation and turning the narration into a form of self-reflective void. Moreover, Tóibín’s restrained prose style—characterized by understatement and silence—mirrors the protagonist’s internal condition, formally enacting the very in-betweenness the story explores. This research examines how Tóibín’s narrative constructs liminality not as a phase of transition, but as a lasting state of emotional and existential exile, positioning the protagonist in a perpetual “in-between” where grief, identity, displacement, and silence converge.

Keywords: *liminality, narrative voice, displacement, memory, silence*

Domenico Ianuale is a PhD candidate in “Studi Linguistici, Terminologici e Interculturali” at Parthenope University of Naples. He obtained his MA degree in English and Anglo-American Studies at La Sapienza University of Rome with a thesis entitled *Language on Trial, Bodies at Stake: Legal and Linguistic Representations of the Female Other in the Pendle Witch Trials*. His research interests include discourse analysis and pragmatics in postcolonial and feminist literature.

Rita Júlia Jansik
University of Debrecen

Postmodern Hauntings: The Unhomely in Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves*

Haunted houses have always been of interest to writers, artists, and filmmakers. The tale of Athenodorus and the Haunted House, Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher*, Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House*, and numerous other pieces of literature are centered around cursed, formerly or simultaneously domestic places, often inhabited by the spirits of the deceased, while other haunted houses simply carry an air of wrongness or malice. The common denominator is the transgression upon the safety of the home: the embodiment of the "*unheimlich*," often translated as the "uncanny," manifesting as the "unhomely." How can the limits of this sub-genre of horror fiction be pushed further? Mark Z. Danielewski's 2000 novel, *House of Leaves*, provides a sufficient answer. The novel features a haunted house in a form that is far from the customary and is closer to what Sigmund Freud outlined in his 1919 essay "The Uncanny", or what Heidegger later expands upon in *Being and Time* and subsequent lectures. It is a negation or lack of the familiar, and the structure of the novel, as well as the text itself, shifts to accommodate or amplify the uncanny and the unfamiliar. The text becomes a medium for the unhomely; it is a visual representation of the narrative space, but it also defamiliarizes the reader and challenges normative modes of engaging with texts. This research seeks to examine *House of Leaves* as a postmodern haunting, devoid of ghosts and instead haunted by words and domestic collapse.

Keywords: *postmodern, American literature, ergodic literature, haunted houses, the uncanny*

Rita Júlia Jansik is a first-year MA student in the American Studies program at the University of Debrecen, where she also received her BA degree in English and American Studies and completed a minor in Aesthetics. Her research interests lie in literary studies, with a focus on contemporary American literature and postmodernism, often exploring the notions of the Other and the Uncanny.

Zouhour Kacem
University of Debrecen

The Deferred Wound: Delayed Remembrance and Trauma in *Beloved*

This paper explores the fields of trauma and cultural memory in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*, in connection with questions of violence, slavery, memory, history, and testimony. *Beloved* is a postcolonial neo-slave narrative that centers on the trauma of infanticide and the haunting presence of a two-year-old murdered child. Morrison employs non-linear chronology, polyvocality, and the material embodiment of the ghost as narrative techniques to show how this novel functions as a medium for cultural remembrance and to further examine the capacity of literature to articulate trauma. Be it personal or collective, psychological or cultural, the act of remembering and articulating trauma can itself become traumatic, reopening and perpetuating the "voice crying out from the wound." The poststructuralist philosophy of trauma also presents traumatic experience as beyond representation, fundamentally unknowable and incomprehensible. Other literary trauma narratives, however, challenge the aesthetics of the unknowable and show an affinity with the hermeneutic philosophy of trauma, which emphasizes the mediateness of traumatic experience. Thereby, Morrison's *Beloved* challenges the poststructuralist trauma aesthetics of the unexperienceable, unsayable, and unknowable. This paper thus examines how trauma in this novel is introduced as a painful consequence of a violent event through the concepts of belatedness and unknowability, shedding light on silences, fragmentation, and gaps experienced by haunted victims of trauma. It demonstrates how Morrison's portrayal of damaged memories acts as a reflection of the psychological damage inflicted by the institution of slavery.

Keywords: *Beloved, trauma, cultural memory, delayed remembrance, neo-slave narrative*

Zouhour Kacem is a first-year American Studies MA student at the University of Debrecen. She holds a BA degree in English Language, Literature, and Civilization from the Faculty of Letters, Arts, and Humanities of Manouba, Tunisia. Her research interests include American and English literature, Romantic poetry, and the intersections of literature and visual arts, with a particular focus on postmodern American literature. Her broader academic interests engage interdisciplinary approaches to Anglophone literature and the relationship between literary form and cultural context.

Cyntia Kálmánová
Eötvös Loránd University

Haunting the Academy: Reimagining the Gothic in the Dark Academia Genre

The genre of Dark Academia is frequently characterized by its engagement with classical and philosophical traditions, the intertwining of moral dilemmas, the romanticization of academic life, and an overwhelming, uncontrollable fascination with the limits of reason. The somber undertones of the phenomenon have also been noted to be reminiscent of the brooding, melancholy atmosphere of the Gothic tradition, thereby establishing an additional connection through a shared preoccupation with terror and beauty, even if, at their core, both Dark Academia and the Gothic ultimately gravitate towards fundamentally different concerns. Despite the distinct thematic explorations and stylistic differences evident in both genres, this paper aims to investigate the literary and thematic connections between Gothic literature and modern Dark Academia fiction. By drawing parallels between Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and selected Dark Academia novels, such as Leigh Bardugo's *Ninth House* and Alexis Henderson's *An Academy for Liars*, the present study argues that the phenomenon of Dark Academia offers a reinterpretation of key Gothic motifs, including aestheticism, the concept of haunting, and themes of intellectual obsession and moral corruption, while situating them within the context of intense academic settings. Through a comparative analysis and close textual reading, the analysis of the aforementioned novels aims to illustrate the manner in which the Gothic tradition intersects with the intellectual and emotional journeys of characters in the context of Dark Academia. The paper's objective is therefore threefold: firstly, to analyze character archetypes, recurring themes, and narrative strategies; secondly, to identify how Dark Academia both preserves and reshapes Gothic sensibilities to reflect contemporary cultural and academic anxieties; and thirdly, to explore the broader relationship between the two genres.

Keywords: *Dark Academia, Gothic fiction, aestheticism, intellectual obsession, academic fiction*

Cyntia Kálmánová is a PhD student in the Modern English and American Literature and Culture Doctoral Program at Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary. She also teaches as an Assistant Professor at J. Selye University, Komárno, Slovakia, at the Faculty of Education, Department of English Language and Literature. Her research interests include historical fiction, mythology, and fantasy literature. Her dissertation focuses on the genre of Dark Academia and the representation of female identity in selected Dark Academia novels, with a particular emphasis on the feminist perspective in the male-dominated field of academic fiction.

Lilla Edit Kárpáti

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

The Confined, the Vindicator, and the Despot: The Creature's Wollstonecraftian Roles in Ágnes Péter's Translation of *Frankenstein*

Mary Shelley may not explicitly reference her mother in *Frankenstein*; or, *The Modern Prometheus*, Mary Wollstonecraft's enlightened feminist theories nonetheless appear among the novel's diverse themes. Before last year, Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* had not been published in Hungarian in its entirety, thus the new translation by Ágnes Péter—the same acclaimed scholar who retranslated Shelley's novel in 2022—invites critical attention to the newfound intellectual correspondence between mother and daughter. In recent scholarship, *Frankenstein*'s Creature has been recognized as occupying a curiously feminine role, but Ágnes Péter's Hungarian translation further emphasizes the ambiguity of gender. In contrast to the source language, Hungarian does not have gendered personal pronouns; even so, Péter does not specify these third-person singulars or any adjectives and nouns used in regard to the Creature. Hence, if Hungarian readers can disregard the influence of pop-cultural imagery, they might as well imagine a female character behind what is mostly described as a “wretch.” This paper aims to reconsider Wollstonecraftian parallels through Ágnes Péter's translation of *Frankenstein*, with special attention to the unspecified gender of the Creature. Wollstonecraft's most central images of women's lives and situations in eighteenth-century society will be recognized in the Creature's fate, i.e., in confinement, as a vindicator of rights, and as a despot. Most importantly, the order in which Shelley assigned these Wollstonecraftian roles to the Creature may reveal an implicit criticism of her mother's liberal feminism.

Keywords: *Mary Wollstonecraft, Hungarian translation, gender, female identities, body*

Lilla Edit Kárpáti is a graduate student of Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary and Eötvös Loránd University. She has an English Studies BA and MA degree from Károli Gáspár University, as well as a translation and interpretation MA certification from Eötvös Loránd University. Her research interests range from poetry and translation studies to Gothic prose, the sublime, and feminist criticism. Currently, she works as an editorial assistant at Károli Book Workshop but also plans to enroll in a PhD program researching Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Eszter Fanni Katona

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

The Representation of Trauma in Contemporary Historical Fantasy Fiction

Historical fantasy, a genre still in the process of being defined by scholars, is gaining ground rapidly in not only contemporary YA [Young Adult] literature, but adult fiction as well. Since this surge in its popularity, academic discourse ought to engage with the genre critically. Similarly, literary trauma studies is a discipline that has undergone significant criticism in recent years and is in a position where further research is imminent. Scholars have pointed out the field's Eurocentric biases and the strict narrative rules, mainly based on the trauma aesthetics advanced by Cathy Caruth in the 1990s, which rely heavily on postmodern strategies for representing trauma. Not unlike the genre of historical fantasy or literary trauma studies, the postmodern literary movement has been discussed extensively lately, and scholars have theorized a new trend in the contemporary age. This paper argues that the shifts in literary trauma studies regarding both theme and narrative structure are traceable in the two historical fantasy books analyzed. *The Poppy War* (2018) by R. F. Kuang conveys the traumatic event of the Second Sino-Japanese War, a rarely discussed trauma from the East, while *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* (2011) by Ransom Riggs recounts the events of the Holocaust, a widely represented tragedy in YA fantasy literature, but through unconventional narrative devices. The supernatural, in both cases, serves as a way to bring traumatic experiences to the foreground and represents them through new and fresh perspectives. Furthermore, the novels challenge the postmodern Caruthian aesthetics of trauma representation. Thus, the developments of these narrative structures and the widening scope of depicted traumas in the process of conveying wounding experiences show a significant distancing from postmodern strategies and early trauma theory.

Keywords: *literary trauma theory, historical fantasy, postmodern, close reading, narrative*

Katona Eszter Fanni is a second-year MA student in the English Studies program, specializing in English literature and culture at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. Her current research interests include literary trauma theory, a field constantly shaped by scholars, global historical fantasy, along with urban fantasy and cosmopolitanism. Her thesis focuses on the shift in literary trauma theories concerning narrative structure and thematic expansions.

Doua Khenat

Pázmány Péter Catholic University

Strategic Competence and Teacher Mediation in Hungarian EFL Classrooms: Results from a Pilot Case Study

This pilot study investigates the current state of strategic competence within the Hungarian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom, focusing on the interplay between learner Oral Communication Strategies (OCS) and teacher interactional moves. Grounded in the Dörnyei and Scott (1995) taxonomy, the research utilized a hybrid observation instrument to track 34 first-year BA students across three university-level lessons. The findings identify a “stalling-dominance” profile, characterized by an asymmetrical reliance on fillers and hesitation devices to manage cognitive load, while complex achievement strategies, such as circumlocution, remain infrequent. The analysis of classroom discourse reveals that teacher mediation, primarily through scaffolding and form-focused interventions, often resolves communicative gaps, thereby prioritizing interactional flow over student-led strategic production. These results confirm that OCS use is interactionally enacted and heavily mediated by teacher intervention rather than being a purely cognitive possession.

Keywords: *strategic competence, teacher mediation, Oral Communication Strategies, pilot study, classroom discourse*

Doua Khenat is a second-year PhD candidate in Applied Linguistics at Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest, Hungary. Her dissertation focuses on mapping the current scene of strategic competence in the Hungarian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. She is striving to promote the implementation of strategy training programs and to shed light on their crucial role in facilitating oral communication in English. Her main academic interests fall under the umbrella of second language acquisition, language pedagogy, and pragmatics.

Chahra Zed Khodja

University of Debrecen

Intergenerational Trauma and Spiritual Healing in Sahar Mustafah's *The Beauty of Your Face* (2020)

The present paper draws on Cathy Caruth's theory of trauma (Caruth 1996) as an unclaimed event that returns and repeats (5) to explore intergenerational trauma in Sahar Mustafah's *The Beauty of Your Face* (2020). The novel follows Afaf Rahman, a Palestinian American school principal, grappling with post-9/11 discrimination and an identity crisis rooted in diasporic displacement. Through a close reading of Afaf's experiences, the paper maps how the female protagonist inherits Palestinian histories of loss, silence, and exile, not as direct memories, but via Marianne Hirsch's concept of post-memory (2008), transmitted through family stories, behaviors, and unspoken pain (103). It investigates generational patterns of fear, control, and emotional distance, which exacerbate Afaf's inner conflicts, perpetuating cycles of suffering. Yet the novel charts a path from trauma-induced identity crisis to healing and reconstruction. This study contends that through her personal relationship with God, Afaf finds stability and meaning; Islam offers her a framework to process grief, reflect on suffering, and rebuild her identity with greater clarity and confidence. In this way, faith transcends cultural markers to become a practical and emotional support system, enabling Afaf to break inherited cycles of pain and achieve emotional balance and self-understanding in diasporic life.

Keywords: *intergenerational trauma, spiritual healing, post-memory, diasporic identity, Muslim faith and resilience, Palestinian American experience*

Chahra Zed Khodja earned her MA degree in English Language and Culture from the University of 8 Mai 1945 Guelma, Algeria, in 2025, and is currently a PhD student in the North American Literature and Culture subprogram of the Doctoral School of Linguistics, Literary, and Cultural Studies at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. She previously participated in the Erasmus+ program at Alexandru Ioan Cuza University in Romania. Her research interests include contemporary North American literature, postcolonial and postmodern literature, with a particular focus on questions of identity, the politics of home, transnational connections, and gender studies.

Dorottya Kiss

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Lord Northcliffe's Propaganda Campaign Against Germany from 1916 to 1918 and His Postwar Vision of the British Empire

This thesis examines how Lord Northcliffe transformed the British press into a powerful instrument of wartime propaganda during the Great War. It addresses how the media functioned as a tool of political persuasion and shaped British wartime policy, public perceptions of German propaganda, and imperial unity. The study aims to assess whether Northcliffe's vision of a strengthened "united British nations" was realized in the postwar settlement. The study investigates Northcliffe's role as the proprietor of *The Times* and the *Daily Mail*, his involvement in British propaganda institutions, and his writings, particularly *At the War* (1916). Further primary sources, including correspondence with Mary Roberts Rinehart, reveal his wartime optimism and his belief in the cohesion of the British Empire. The analysis demonstrates that the press, as an instrument of political persuasion, shaped narratives of British sacrifice, undermined German propaganda, and promoted imperial cohesion across Britain and the Dominions. However, while initial wartime commemorative practices reinforced a shared sense of sacrifice and imperial loyalty, they simultaneously encouraged growing demands for autonomy within the Dominions. The thesis concludes that Northcliffe's wartime optimism was only partially fulfilled. Rather than strengthening imperial unity, the Great War accelerated the reconfiguration of the Empire, culminating in the Balfour Declaration (1926) and the Statute of Westminster (1931). Northcliffe's propaganda helped to sustain a shared imperial responsibility, but it could not prevent the long-term restructuring of Dominion autonomy. Further research could explore how Dominion-based newspapers interpreted British propaganda narratives during the Great War, and whether these interpretations reinforced imperial unity or encouraged distinct national identities.

Keywords: *Lord Northcliffe, propaganda, British press, Great War, imperial identity*

Dorottya Kiss is an MA student in History and Culture at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. Her MA thesis examines the propaganda activities of Lord Northcliffe and their crucial role in shaping public opinion during the First World War through the transformation of mass media into a tool of political persuasion. Her research interests include wartime propaganda, press transformation, public opinion, and early twentieth-century Britain.

Kateřina Koprnová

Masaryk University

Geordie Goes Pop: Geographical Differentiation of Tyneside English

Tyneside English, widely known as Geordie, comes from a region with a strong cultural identity and a dialect that is remarkable when compared to other varieties such as Standard English or Received Pronunciation. Tyneside has become an important area for researchers who study how accents evolve and how dialects vary, especially since urban cities in the North of England are known to be the centers of accent change. The cultural context shows a clear difference: large industrial cities experience language shifts driven by increasing migration, contact with other dialects, and innovation. This then leads to the formation of distinct urban varieties. In contrast, the surrounding rural areas often adopt a conservative stance as they seek to preserve the original features of the variety. While urban Tyneside English is heavily influenced by dialect leveling, which results in regional dialects becoming more similar due to contact between speakers, rural Tyneside accents maintain a conservative position, which means that they are preserving older forms of the language. This difference in stance is clear in salient phonological features and is inherently linked to speakers' personal and social identity, which influences their perception of both their own variety and other varieties. The primary source for the research will be newly collected data, which will be gathered from speakers of both varieties, namely urban and rural varieties of Tyneside English, and will then be analyzed using appropriate sources such as vocabularies.

Keywords: *Geordie, phonology, Tyneside English, analysis, historical development*

Kateřina Koprnová is a second-year MA student of English Language and Literature at the Department of English and American Studies at Masaryk University in Brno. Her field of interest includes phonetics and phonology, particularly Tyneside English, widely known as Geordie. She is planning to apply for a PhD with her project on Northern English varieties of British English and their urban and rural variants.

Fanni Kovács

Eötvös Loránd University

Beyond Animal: Analyzing the Construction of “Dog” in Paul Auster’s *Timbuktu*

The display of animals in literature, especially dogs, traditionally utilizes a “combination of anthropomorphization and infantilization” (Jacobs 64), which tends to verbalize animal thoughts in a simplified, ungrammatical manner. At the same time, human-animal interactions are characterized by a language of “motherese” or “baby talk,” which in many cases reinforces human superiority. Jutta Ittner’s insightful essay shines a light on the paradigm shift of the traditional anthropomorphic view—which places animals “inextricably linked to human consciousness” (182) and deprives them of their own agency—toward “a new anthropomorphism that views the animal as a separate and unknowable entity” (183). Paul Auster’s *Timbuktu* (1999) disrupts the conventional literary pattern and hierarchical order concerning the display of animals in literature. On the one hand, animals in literature are typically distinguished as diegetic animals “that appear as living beings in story-world” (Castellanos 133). On the other hand, semiotic animals “appear only by name in the diegesis to denote someone or something other than an animal” (Castellanos 134); they stand as a sign, as a part of the semiosis, customarily representing human qualities on a metaphorical level. The present research aims to explore the possible dimensions of the dog as: a) a diegetic (literary) animal; b) as a semiotic animal; and c) the ways in which each type defines and determines the conveyed meaning in the novel. Ultimately, what is at stake is contesting the humanocentric Anthropocene by erasing the human and non-human boundaries through the humanities.

Keywords: *Paul Auster, animal studies, diegetic animal, semiotic animal, co-textual animal*

Fanni Orsolya Kovács is an MA student in the American Studies program at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. The title of her BA thesis was *From the Bonds of the Literary Father to Discovering the Authorial Voice: Analyzing Paul Auster’s Plays through the Legacy of Samuel Beckett*, written under the supervision of Pál Hegyi (PhD, Dr. habil.). For this work, she received the Outstanding Thesis Award (2023) from the School of English and American Studies at Eötvös Loránd University.

Veronika Luca Kovács

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Croats and Cold War Cartographies: U.S. Eyes on a Yugoslav Puzzle

This study investigates how U.S. intelligence and actors perceived the Croatian minority in Hungary following World War II. Drawing on declassified CIA reports, press translations, and *Foreign Relations of the United States* volumes, it examines the discursive logics through which Croats were subsumed under the homogenizing category of “Yugoslavs”. The analysis combines qualitative discourse analysis with a structured comparison of document genres to trace recurring labels and contexts—border security, propaganda, defections, and bilateral tensions. It shows that U.S. officials rarely engaged with the internal cultural life of Croatia’s Hungarian community; instead, they treated “Yugoslavs” as indicators of geopolitical risk, using them to measure the health of Hungarian–Yugoslav relations and the potential for Soviet–Yugoslav conflict. Furthermore, when demographic estimates disaggregated Croats, the larger classification regime emphasized loyalty and “border populations” rather than ethnic specificity. The study also explores how the Helsinki Final Act’s human rights language gradually introduced a normative vocabulary of minority rights, challenging but not replacing the security-driven categories. By combining minority studies with Cold War intelligence history and American perspectives, the research highlights the gaps and biases in U.S. knowledge production and encourages a rethinking of how small communities were interpreted through the lens of global power politics.

Keywords: *Croats; Yugoslavs; Cold War; U.S. intelligence; Somogy*

Veronika Luca Kovács is a PhD candidate in history whose research focuses on the socialist political system of post-World War II Hungary. Her work explores how communities were observed and controlled. Combining archival research with approaches from network analysis, Cold War studies, and geopolitics, she examines broader political power structures. She is a member of the History Workshop of Benda Kálmán College of Excellence, has presented her research at several international conferences, and has participated in academic study visits abroad.

Eszter Krakkó
University of Debrecen

**From Narrator into the Object of the Male Gaze: Transformations of the Female Figure
in Tracy Chevalier's and Peter Webber's *Girl with a Pearl Earring***

Often regarded as the “Mona Lisa of the North,” the seventeenth-century Dutch painter Johannes Vermeer’s *Girl with a Pearl Earring* is indisputably his most enigmatic painting. Therefore, one of the main aims of contemporary author Tracy Chevalier was to retain the ambiguity of the female figure depicted in the portrait when she transformed the woman into the first-person narrator of her 1999 novel of the same title. However, she also managed to create a complex character of Griet, the new maid in the Vermeer household, who has not only the eye but also the voice of an artist when she recounts her passionate yet painful encounter with love, art, and Vermeer himself. The ways in which the strong and independent character of Griet present in Chevalier’s text is deprived of her narrative voice in Peter Webber’s 2003 artist biopic will constitute the central argument of this presentation, as this analysis argues that the loss of her complex and multifaceted female identity goes hand in hand with the reduction of her character to an object of desire for the male characters who are ready to possess her—or at least her image.

Keywords: *art, gender, artist biopic, Johannes Vermeer, Tracy Chevalier*

Eszter Krakkó is a junior lecturer at the Institute of English, American and German Studies at Eszterházy Károly Catholic University, where she teaches nineteenth-century British and Canadian literature, Canadian culture, and translation. She is also a PhD student in the English and American Studies Program at the Doctoral School of Literary Studies, University of Debrecen, focusing on the parallel study of literature and visual arts, with a particular interest in the representations of female artists in nineteenth- and twentieth-century novels.

Gergő Kulyó

Eszterházy Károly Catholic University

Being Exposed, Consumed, and Silenced Through Dehumanization: A Comparative Analysis of Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* and Dezső Kosztolányi's *Anna Édes*

Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* (1996) and Dezső Kosztolányi's *Anna Édes* (1926), despite their different cultural and historical contexts, offer strikingly similar representations of female figures subjected to institutional judgment and patriarchal authority. Both novels focus on women accused of extreme acts of violence whose identities are constructed not through their own voices, but through the interpretive frameworks imposed upon them by male-dominated social, legal, and medical institutions. Within these domestic and institutional structures, the processes of dehumanization emerge through recurring symbolic elements that reduce the female protagonists to objects of consumption. Among these elements, the labels of the "machine" and the "specimen" stand out as unifying motifs which illuminate the erasure of female agency through the male gaze. This paper examines how Anna and Grace are exposed through the metaphor of spectacle and how they are consumed through the appetite of the upper class using the metaphor of food imagery. By tracing the processes of the framework of dehumanization, this study intends to uncover the internal mechanisms of the characters' responses to their environments. While Anna's total internalization of her environment leads to a fatal eruption of violence and a state of absolute unreadability, Grace successfully transforms her objectification into a site of resilience and utilizes silence and secrecy to curate her own narrative against the curiosity and hunger of the social and medical institutions.

Keywords: *dehumanization, consumption, silence, Kosztolányi, Atwood*

Gergő Kulyó is a fifth-year MA student in the Teacher Training program at Eszterházy Károly Catholic University. His main interests include ethical problems, feminism, the female body, and the lives of maids. Recently, he has been researching Dezső Kosztolányi's *Anna Édes* and Margaret Atwood's *Alias Grace* in a comparative analysis, examining how dehumanization reduces the maids to the labels of "machine" and "specimen" while being exposed, consumed, and silenced by the upper class and medical institutions.

Katica Kurcsik

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Intertextuality and Performative Identity in Dark Academia: Shakespeare's Legacy in M. L. Rio's *If We Were Villains*

“You can justify anything if you do it poetically enough,” says Oliver in M. L. Rio's *If We Were Villains*. The emergence of the Dark Academia aesthetic has become a worldwide phenomenon, which results in the romanticization of literary obsession and the never-ending need for knowledge. Although the Dark Academia genre serves as the basis for demonstrating obsession toward something unattainable, it also highlights the importance of classical literary interpretations. Through the lens of theatrical prodigies, *If We Were Villains* displays the tragic outcome of artistic obsession. The paper will analyze the Dark Academia genre, its popularity in modern fiction, and its inherent conflicts as depicted in *If We Were Villains*. The aim of this paper is to analyze the downfall of morality intertwined with obsession in the genre and through the intertextual representation of Shakespearean characters. The study argues that William Shakespeare's works function not only as an anchor for understanding but as a lived experience for the students who study at Dellecher Classical Conservatory. Therefore, the students start to merge with the characters they play on stage and have serious difficulty dissociating from their onstage personas. Through close reading and comparative analysis, the main aim of this study is the discovery of intertextual links between Shakespearean plays and Rio's contemporary novel, mainly focusing on obsession and villainy. Thus, the paper provides an overview of the Dark Academia aesthetic embedded in contemporary literature and its effects concerning classical literary works.

Keywords: *Dark Academia, Shakespeare, aesthetic, obsession, contemporary literature*

Katica Kurcsik is a second-year MA student at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. She earned her BA degree at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary with a thesis on the representation of Puritan ideals and morals in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. However, her current thesis focuses on a contemporary novel in which she analyzes the Dark Academia genre as an emerging phenomenon and the Shakespearean intertextual references—solely focusing on obsession and villainy—in M.L. Rio's novel, *If We Were Villains*.

Mátyás Lajos
Eötvös Loránd University

Echoes of Blake in Ursula K. Le Guin's *Always Coming Home*

In her paper “A Non-Euclidean View of California as a Cold Place to Be” (1982), Ursula K. Le Guin formulates a theoretical basis for what would become her 1985 book, *Always Coming Home*. For this, she quotes William Blake’s *The First Book of Urizen* and *The Four Zoas* in order to illustrate the Urizenic attitude toward utopianism which her work opposes. This presentation will follow this thread into the work itself, illuminating references to Blake both on a textual and a thematic level. In Le Guin’s book, the poem cycle “Three Poems by Pandora, Written Sideways from the Valley to the City of Man” explicitly references Blake in the title “Newton Did Not Sleep Here,” and another poem indirectly replies to the Urizenic “One King, one God, one Law” speech which Le Guin quotes in the paper mentioned above. The vision described in the short story “The Visionary: The Life Story of Flicker of the Serpentine of Telina-na” (in the same book) also has a clearly Blakean quality, reminiscent of the “Memorable Fancies” in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. Besides a close examination of these texts, the presentation will also underline how these references form part of a broader thematic consonance between these two authors, as well as being part of a shared critique of Enlightenment rationalism. The presentation will also highlight how anti-hegemonic utopianism is central to the works of both authors.

Keywords: *Ursula K. Le Guin, William Blake, utopia, rationalism, adaptation*

Mátyás Lajos is a PhD student in the Modern English and American Literature and Culture Doctoral Program at Eötvös Loránd University. Previously, he studied mathematics and English literature, also at Eötvös Loránd University. His research focuses on William Blake's polemical relationship with the classical epic tradition, and the techniques of subversion and inversion Blake applies with regard to this tradition.

Regina László

University of Debrecen

**Domesticating Sovereignty: Televisual Modernity and the Reinvention of Monarchy in
Royal Family (1969)**

The *Royal Family* (dir. Richard Cawston, 1969) documentary was an unprecedented media product that followed the life of the British royal family for a year, offering a glimpse into the private and public life of Queen Elizabeth II. By showing scenes from everyday family life, the program presents a new image of the monarchy. Sovereignty is no longer shown only as distant authority but as something connected to family life and ordinary routines within British society. Alongside intimate domestic scenes, the documentary also presents official engagements such as royal tours, the reception of ambassadors, knighting ceremonies, and meetings with Commonwealth presidents. By presenting the royal household as both exceptional and ordinary, the film negotiates continuity and change while also demonstrating the importance of preserving tradition. During the 1960s, the then Press Secretary, Richard Colville, and his successor, William Heseltine, held differing views on how to manage the relationship between the royal family and the media. Amid decolonization processes in Asia, the Middle East, and primarily Africa, the Commonwealth was on its way to becoming a new concept with the extent of its expansion; we can observe how it was evolving into a truly multiracial, multi-continental organization. This study contends that the documentary marks a decisive “televisual turn” in the British monarchy’s communicative strategy. It serves as a response to a period marked by decolonization and rapid media transformation, while also providing insight into how long-standing institutions strategically reframe themselves in response to significant historical shifts to stay relevant.

Keywords: *Royal Family, media revolution, Commonwealth, decolonization, 1960s*

Regina László is a first-year PhD student in the British Literature and Culture Subprogram of the Doctoral School of Linguistics, Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Debrecen. Additionally, she is an assistant lecturer in the Department of English Language and Culture at the University of Nyíregyháza. Her research focuses on the cultural representations of the British royal family, and the foundation of her research lies in historiography, film and media studies.

Dorka Lippai
Eötvös Loránd University

On the Issue of Acquiring Models: William Holman Hunt's Orientalist Female Figures

One of the obstacles William Holman Hunt had to face during his first journey to Egypt in 1854 was the difficulty of convincing models to sit for his works. In his autobiography written decades later, Hunt recounts several anecdotes related to his initial culture shock, and upon observing the letters he sent during his travels, it is also evident that the artist was immensely frustrated by these circumstances. The aim of this paper is to investigate the cultural context behind the Pre-Raphaelite painter's struggle to find willing local models and to examine the depictions of the Orientalist female figures in Hunt's first genre paintings from Egypt, as well as to answer the following research questions: Was Hunt influenced by contemporary Victorian Orientalist travel writers? What cultural and religious influences inform the portrayal of the models in the chosen paintings? Do Hunt's works go against the visual characteristics of nineteenth-century British Orientalist works? The following oils by William Holman Hunt will be discussed in more detail: *The Afterglow in Egypt* (two versions) and *A Street Scene in Cairo: The Lantern-Maker's Courtship*.

Keywords: *William Holman Hunt, Pre-Raphaelite, Orientalism, Victorian culture, models*

Dorka Lippai is a second-year PhD student in the Modern English and American Literature and Culture Doctoral Program at Eötvös Loránd University. She is currently teaching a course on nineteenth-century British art to undergraduates, and her research interests include the pre-Raphaelite artists, iconography, and Orientalism in Victorian art and culture. Her dissertation focuses on William Holman Hunt's travels and Orientalist oeuvre.

Andrea Nikolett Majoros

University of Pécs

“What is a child? [...] an experiment. A fresh attempt to produce the just man made perfect: that is, to make humanity divine.” — George Bernard Shaw on Education

George Bernard Shaw is mostly associated with his play *Pygmalion*—the inspiration for the musical *My Fair Lady*—and the character Eliza Doolittle. However, people tend to overlook him as an advocate of Fabianism and socialism and his publications on various principles and topics such as education, feminism, war, philosophy, Irish British relations, and class systems. Furthermore, Shaw, an anti-Darwinist and pro-Lamarckian himself, was intrigued by Henri Bergson’s book and philosophy of Creative Evolution. Shaw evolved Creative Evolution into his own philosophy of Life Force, introduced in his play *Man and Superman*. In *Man and Superman*, he contemplated the creation of a superior human being and the idea of the emancipated but womanly woman, worthy of being the mother of his Superman. While his views might seem contradictory and even occasionally intentionally provocative, they display consistency through his lifetime since he highly prioritized education and independence and perceived motherhood and equality between the sexes as pivotal in nurturing and reforming humankind. The study seeks to provide a chronological analysis of Shaw’s mainly consistent, albeit sometimes arbitrary and rudimentary, views on education, demonstrated through his fictional and nonfictional publications in the literary frameworks of Shaw’s contemporary education scholars and Shavian scholars. The fictional works include “My Dear Dorothea...,” *Man and Superman*, *Pygmalion*, *Back to Methuselah*, *The Adventures of the Black Girl in Her Search for God*, and nonfictional publications are *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, *Treatise on Parents and Children*, *The Intelligent Woman’s Guide to Socialism and Capitalism*, and *Everybody’s Political What’s What*.

Keywords: *George Bernard Shaw, critical pedagogy, Pygmalion, creative evolution, publication*

Andrea Nikolett Majoros is a PhD student at the University of Pécs. Although she wrote her BA thesis about *Emma* and the conventions of the Regency-era polite society, she later switched to the topic of G. B. Shaw and Eliza Doolittle’s creation story. She slightly amended her research topic and focuses on Shaw’s principles of education in his fictional and nonfictional publications, how they are impacted by Victorian principles, education theories, and movements, and how they resonate with Shaw’s contemporaries.

Eleonora Martines
La Sapienza University of Rome

**Refuse the Hand That Feeds You: Mutiny and Self-Destruction in *The Edible Woman*
and *My Year of Rest and Relaxation***

Both Margaret Atwood's *The Edible Woman* (1969) and Ottessa Moshfegh's *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* (2018) describe the distress and instability faced by young women in their early 20s, a critical age in which one is supposed to settle into a career, a role, and an identity. The spatiotemporal gap between the two novels supports Atwood's impression of the scope of the problem—the futile dream of self-realization in a consumerist and patriarchal society that strips anyone, especially women, of selfhood. For this reason, this paper interprets the heroines' estrangement from themselves and the world as a way in which the authors depict a broader social malaise. Through a post-structural lens, the evidence of a fractured subjectivity is not pathologized as a symptom of an individualized illness but is instead interpreted as both a consequence of and a reaction to alienation. The study focuses on the self-destructive practices employed by the novels' protagonists to escape their current predicament and create a new, more fulfilling path. Focusing on what aspect of the "self" is undermined and what this destruction reveals, the aim of this paper is to consider if this form of rebellion works and to what extent.

Keywords: *Margaret Atwood, Ottessa Moshfegh, alienation, identity, feminism*

Eleonora Martines completed her MA in English and Anglo-American Studies in 2025 at the La Sapienza University of Rome with a dissertation on abjection in Philip Roth's *American Trilogy*. A licensed English teacher, she is interested in visual arts, literature, and internet culture. Her research interests include postmodern depictions of personal identity, the role of eroticism in literature, and the relationship between human and inhuman subjects.

Duygu Mazak

La Sapienza University of Rome

Minor Characters and the Absurd Condition in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*

Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* reimagines two marginal characters from *Hamlet* and places them at the center of a narrative shaped by uncertainty, confusion, and existential anxiety. Originally minor figures in Shakespeare's tragedy, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern become the protagonists of a play that explores the absurdity of human existence and the instability of identity within predetermined narratives. This paper examines how Stoppard uses the perspective of secondary characters to reveal the limits of agency and knowledge in a world governed by forces beyond individual control. Throughout the play, the two characters struggle to understand their purpose, repeatedly questioning the events unfolding around them while remaining unable to alter their fate. Their confusion reflects a broader existential condition in which individuals occupy roles within structures they neither create nor fully comprehend. Drawing on ideas from the Theatre of the Absurd and existential philosophy, this paper argues that the play destabilizes the traditional dramatic hierarchy by shifting attention from the heroic center to the narrative margins. By foregrounding characters who lack authority over the plot, Stoppard exposes the fragility of identity and the arbitrariness of narrative structures.

Keywords: *Absurd theatre, marginal characters, existential uncertainty, metatheatre, Shakespeare adaptation*

Duygu Mazak holds an honors degree in English Language and Literature from Süleyman Demirel University. She is currently pursuing graduate studies in English and Anglo-American Studies at La Sapienza University of Rome. Her academic interests include modern and contemporary literature, narrative experimentation, and questions of identity in literary texts. She has previously published an article on Ursula K. Le Guin's *She Unnames Them* and continues to explore issues of narrative form, marginality, and existential uncertainty in modern and contemporary drama.

Emese Melkó

Eszterházy Károly Catholic University

Women's Stage: Aestheticism, Politics, and Theatricality in Oscar Wilde's *The Woman's World* (1887–1890)

The aim of my research is to offer a detailed analysis of the Victorian periodical *The Woman's World* (1887–1889), edited by Oscar Wilde, with particular attention to the magazine's artistic and political positions on women's "visibility," Victorian social expectations, and the interrelation of theatre and aesthetics—key concepts that form an integral part of Wilde's oeuvre. Under Wilde's editorship, the periodical broke with the conventions of fashionable society magazines and positioned women not merely as consumers of culture and fashion, but as active intellectual participants in public life. The present paper examines the principles of Wilde's aestheticism and cultural criticism through the articles in *The Woman's World*, which provided a platform for educated and professionally active women to engage with literature and art—for instance, in Lady Wilde's "Irish Peasant Tales" and Mary Catherine Stirling's "The Home Arts and Industries Association." In addition, articles were published on fashion (e.g. "Paris Fashion"), featuring, among others, the stage costumes of Sarah Bernhardt in Emily Crawford's "Women Wearers of Men's Clothes," and on theatricality, such as "The Woodland Gods" by Janey Sevilla Callander. Women's politics, public affairs, and feminist concerns are discussed by Millicent Garrett Fawcett in her "Women's Suffrage" or Margaret Mansfield in "On Woman's Work in Politics." Based on a thorough contextual analysis, this study argues that *The Woman's World* periodical functioned as a significant cultural forum that challenged restrictive gender norms, redefined the literary and aesthetic framework of women's magazines, and intervened in contemporary debates on women's social roles.

Keywords: *Oscar Wilde, aestheticism, The Woman's World, women in public life, Victorian cultural criticism*

Emese Melkó is a graduating MA student in the Teacher Training program at Eszterházy Károly Catholic University. In 2025, she presented her paper on the aesthetic dimensions of Oscar Wilde's fairy tales at the Károli English Studies Conference. Recently, she has been researching *The Woman's World*, a Victorian women's periodical edited by Wilde, examining articles written by women that cover artistic and political positions on women's "visibility," Victorian social expectations, and the interrelation of theatre and aesthetics.

Safa Merzougui
University of Debrecen

Haunting Across Generations: Gothic Motifs as a Manifestation of Intergenerational Trauma in Mansoura Ez-Eldin's *Maryam's Maze* (2007)

This paper offers a postcolonial reading of Mansoura Ez-Eldin's *Maryam's Maze*, aiming to analyze how Gothic motifs translate the inner horrors endured by female figures of the El Tagi family, particularly Maryam, the protagonist. The novel is set in modern Egypt, following Maryam waking up in unfamiliar surroundings where none of the people from her life exist anymore. The storyline shifts from the past where the reader gets to know the intricacies of Maryam's family, to the present, where she is trying to decipher her strange surroundings that are depicted in a dreamlike fashion. Arab feminist Gothic literature is a genre that is scarcely researched, which invites a range of critical perspectives on the use of global female Gothic writing to tackle feminist issues in the postcolonial Arab world. *Maryam's Maze* constitutes a rich case study of Gothic elements such as the ghost of Maryam's grandmother, Maryam's alter ego or in folkloric terms, the "Qarina" which symbolizes the "other", and the family mansion that is identified as the haunted Gothic space. Building on Roxanne Douglas's work on *Maryam's Maze* and the exploration of the Gothic genre in a non-Western context, this research is grounded in Steff Craps's postcolonial trauma theory, Jeffrey Alexander's idea on cultural narratives and collective trauma, and Angela Connolly's work on intergenerational trauma to dissect the transmitted wounds of the El Tagi women and the multifaceted layers it is founded on, taking into consideration social and cultural factors that shape our understanding of trauma in the novel.

Keywords: *Global female Gothic, postcolonial trauma, Arab feminist literature, ghosts, haunting*

Safa Merzougui is a first-year PhD student in the British Literature and Culture subprogram of the Doctoral School of Linguistics, Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Debrecen. Her fields of interest are contemporary Gothic literature and women's writing.

Begüm Sude Mızrak
Istanbul Aydın University

Down the Rabbit Hole of Trauma: Spatial Memory in *Alice: Madness Returns*

Video games not only can thematize trauma but can also embed its structures within an interactive form. Fragmented memory, repression, and delayed awareness, concepts central to trauma theory, can be reproduced within this interactive system. In this case, trauma ceases to be merely a theme represented in the game; it becomes the structuring logic that shapes the spatiality and aesthetic transformation of the game world. The relationship between the narrative and the game systems creates a ludo-narrative structure in which the traumatic experience is produced. *Alice: Madness Returns*, as a dark reinterpretation of Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, reimagines the familiar Wonderland universe as a post-traumatic field of consciousness. In this version, the fairytale world does not offer escapism; on the contrary, it serves as an environment in which the protagonist must face and fight off the threats in order to find out or remember the truth about her trauma. As the information about her trauma is gradually revealed throughout the game, the visual language, level structure, and forms of encounter in Wonderland also change. The world design and narrative progression move in the same direction. Thus, Wonderland is positioned not as a fixed background, but as a space shaped by Alice's trauma and serves as a mirror of her traumatized psyche. This paper will argue that *Alice: Madness Returns* not only deals with trauma as a theme, but also structurally reproduces the traumatic experience by adapting the environment around Alice to her trauma.

Keywords: *trauma theory, traumatic memory, spatiality, ludo-narrative, adaptation*

Begüm Sude Mızrak from Türkiye is currently pursuing an MA in English Language and Literature at Istanbul Aydın University. She is an Erasmus+ trainee at Eszterházy Károly Catholic University. She has published two articles on the divided psyche and madness and serves as a foreign language consultant and assistant editor for the *Journal of Cultural Studies*. Her MA thesis analyzes trauma as a narrative form in Sarah Kane's *Blasted* and *4.48 Psychosis*, focusing on lexicality, spatiality, and temporality.

Gergely Miklós

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

The Price of Prevention: The Chilling Effect of National Security on the First Amendment in Post-9/11 America

Following the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, there were various changes initiated by the United States. One of the most widely known is the Global War on Terror, which led to the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan; however, due to the international importance of the aforementioned, these conflicts, the domestic legal changes are often overlooked by the public. The presenter will argue that despite the Constitution and the First Amendment's central role in American democracy, the U.S. government, in the name of national security, enacted multiple laws in the post-9/11 era that produced a chilling effect on both political association and religious expressions in American society. The goal of the presentation is to showcase through the analysis of two landmark cases, namely, *Holder v. Humanitarian Law Project*, 561 U.S. 1 (2010) and *Hassan v. City of New York*, 804 F.3d 277 (3rd Cir. 2015), the flawed logic that the American judicial system utilized. Among other judicial flaws, it will critique the Supreme Court's speculative "fungibility" argument used to deter Non-Governmental Organizations from providing aid to Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Furthermore, it will expose the constitutional and judicial flaws in the secret surveillance case against Muslims ruled initially by Judge Martin. By detailing these cases and their legal issues, it will become evident how the use of national security permanently altered the American legal system and negatively affected Muslim communities.

Keywords: *First Amendment, case, surveillance, violation, constitution*

Gergely Miklós is a second-year MA student at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. He is in the Society and Culture of English-Speaking Countries program. Previously, he wrote his BA thesis on the Panama Canal and its political and financial consequences, so he has developed an interest and keen expertise in United States domestic and foreign policy. Moving forward, he intends to continue his research on U.S. federal institutional accountability while expanding his focus toward modern global affairs and international diplomacy.

Lirike Muhadri

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

English Vocabulary Expansion Through Movies and Series as a Language Learning Strategy

The possession of an extensive vocabulary, an essential aspect of language ability and learning of vocabulary, is influenced by multiple factors. The determination of these factors is dependent upon the utilization of different strategies for vocabulary learning. The two most preferred strategies for vocabulary learning are deliberate learning and incidental learning. Choosing the most favorable learning strategies is determined by many factors, including learners' gender, age, personality type, or motivation. Using audio-visual media, such as movies and series, proved to be a successful strategic approach in mastering oral skills and expanding vocabulary. This study was conducted through an online Google questionnaire to measure the strategy choices and uses of the 79 subjects. According to the collected data, as leisure time activities, listening to English-language music and using mobile applications were more popular than watching movies and series. However, when it comes to vocabulary expansion, movies and series proved to be beneficial educational methods, through which learners might acquire vocabulary intentionally or incidentally. In terms of learning vocabulary, most respondents strive hard to understand unfamiliar expressions from context.

Keywords: *learning strategies, incidental learning, movies, series*

Lirike Muhadri is a second-year MA student in the Applied Linguistics program at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. She is originally from Albania and has been living in Hungary for more than ten years. Her BA thesis explored the effects of subtitles on vocabulary learning. Her current research interests focus on vocabulary acquisition through exposure to audiovisual media, particularly movies and series.

Mariaconcetta Muto
La Sapienza University of Rome

Name's Determinism in Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*

In *The Crying of Lot 49*, Thomas Pynchon uses the name Oedipa to define the identity of the female character. Her name recalls Sophocles's classical tragedy *Oedipus the King* which has been an object of Freud's homonymous psychoanalytic theory. Throughout the story, Oedipa Maas repeatedly shapes her narrative in comparison to her counterpart, trying to figure out who she is by looking for certainties and detaching herself, as the story goes, from the male-centered environment. The Oedipus myth, from a psychoanalytic perspective, was employed for the interpretation of different literary texts. The article will draw on the research carried out by Lucienne Kroha who explores the intricate relationship between literature and psychoanalysis. In addition, the article will highlight Oedipus' myth presence in the novel and finally, will link these considerations by explaining how, in the end, thanks to her quest, Oedipa defines herself as a whole and changes the deterministic nature of her name. This article aims to apply the Oedipus myth and its psychoanalytic theory to the novel to analyze it. It will focus on Oedipa's quest, the meaning of Maxwell's Demon, and the figure of Pierce Inverarity, by associating them with Apollo's oracle in the myth. Then, it will concentrate on Oedipa's search for Tristero, which is the riddle that needs to be solved and the truth that it should, but will not, reveal.

Keywords: *Oedipus myth, psychoanalysis, determinism, quest, female identity*

Mariaconcetta Muto is twenty-three years old, and she is an MA student in English and Anglo-American Studies at La Sapienza University of Rome. She holds a BA in Languages and Cultures, where she studied English and Spanish. Now, in her MA, she is focusing only on English language and literature. Her academic interests include modern and postmodern American and English literature, and she would like to continue her studies in this field by applying for a PhD program in September, after her graduation.

Tabish Nabi

University of Debrecen

“These Bones Shall Live”: The Body as Mnemonic Archive in Enslaved Christian and Muslim Practice

This paper examines the enslaved body as a site of mnemonic resistance in the antebellum American South, arguing that religious practice transformed the commodified body from an object of violence into a living archive of African and Islamic memory. Reading the body through the lens of performance studies—particularly Diana Taylor’s distinction between the “archive” of written documents and the “repertoire” of embodied practice—the paper analyzes embodied religious experience as preserved in African American Christian and Muslim slave narratives. Through close reading of John Jea’s *The Life, History, and Unparalleled Sufferings of John Jea, the African Preacher* (1811), Boston King’s *Memoirs* (1798), and Omar ibn Said’s Arabic-language autobiography (1831), the paper demonstrates how these texts register embodied religious experience through accounts of trembling, visions, dreams, conversion paroxysms, and the disciplined maintenance of Islamic prayer and fasting under enslavement. The paper argues that Christian narratives emphasize ecstatic release and the body as a vessel for divine possession, while Muslim narratives emphasize disciplined submission and the preservation of ritual precision as fidelity to tradition. Both traditions converge; however, in their fundamental achievement, they made the body a site of freedom, a witness to humanity that the slaveholder could not fully own. By attending to what these narratives reveal about embodied practice while remaining honest about their silences, this paper contributes to ongoing scholarly conversations about agency, resistance, and cultural transmission in African American religious history.

Keywords: *Slave narratives, embodied religion, performance studies, John Jea, Boston King, Omar ibn Said, African American Christianity, African American Islam*

Tabish Nabi is a PhD candidate at University of Debrecen whose research focuses on African American Muslim and Christian slave literature examining the historical and cultural intersections of faith, identity, and literary expression. Her academic work highlights marginalized voices within African American literary traditions and contributes to broader conversations in cultural and literary studies.

Boglárka Nagy

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

If Nothing is Original, is There Anything Left to Say? How Modern Retellings of the Homeric Epics Represent Marginalized Groups

This paper examines three cases of how marginalized groups used retellings of the Homeric epics for representation in the last couple of decades. The study aims to find out how the three authors of different cultural backgrounds transform *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* to reflect Caribbean, feminist, and queer issues, respectively. The main method used is close reading of the major works—Derek Walcott’s *Omeros*, Margaret Atwood’s *The Penelopiad*, and Madeline Miller’s *The Song of Achilles*—and their comparison to each other and the epics. As fanfiction, nostalgia-driven popular culture, and twenty-first-century trends of adaptation were the original inspiration behind the research, the paper also examines how rewriting is related to these contemporary issues. The analysis shows that the modern retellings challenge the canonical authority of who is allowed to tell stories, and focus on individual experience, giving voice to those silenced by imperial, patriarchal, and heteronormative traditions. The findings also indicate that identity, following postcolonial and postmodern ideas, is established through hybridity. Uniqueness is created by creating an unprecedented combination of existing elements, the original remains as a framework, while focus, perspective, and style is shifted. The talk will demonstrate how the combination of adaptation, reader-response theory, and postcolonial, feminist, and queer perspectives illustrates that, while the derivative nature of retellings situates them more effectively within the literary canon and enhances their accessibility, it does not solely define these works.

Keywords: *retelling, adaptation, Caribbean literature, feminist literature, queer literature*

Boglárka Nagy is a second-year MA student in English Studies at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, specializing in English Literature and Culture. Inspired by fanfiction, nostalgia-driven popular culture, and twenty-first century trends of adaptation, her research focuses on how retelling in literature shapes identity and represents marginalized groups, exploring the ways storytelling can illustrate diverse experiences and challenge societal norms.

Zaid Abu Najm
University of Szeged

Embodied Villainy: A Semiotic and Cross-Cultural Exploration of Shakespearean Antagonist in RSC and Arab-World Production

This paper examines how contemporary Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) stagings mobilize embodiment, gesture, and theatrical semiotics to re-interpret Shakespearean villainy for twenty-first-century audiences. Building on Keir Elam's foundational semiotic model of theatre, which frames the stage as a "signifying machine" (Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, Routledge), the study traces how bodies, voices, and spatial arrangements function as evolving sign systems that shape spectators' moral and affective responses. Close performance analysis of RSC productions—particularly portrayals of Richard III, Iago, and Macbeth—reveals how villainy is no longer communicated through static moral codes, but through dynamic processes of embodiment that foreground ambiguity, charisma, and fractured subjectivities. Drawing on Julia Kristeva's notion of the unstable subject (*Revolution in Poetic Language*, Columbia University Press) and Michel Foucault's theorization of power as relational action upon action ("The Subject and Power," University of Chicago Press), the paper argues that contemporary villainy emerges through semiotic negotiations between performer, text, and audience. These productions do not merely represent evil; they stage the conditions through which villainy is read, felt, and culturally circulated. The project thus positions Shakespearean antagonists as semiotic constructs whose afterlives illuminate shifting cultural anxieties about authority, agency, and embodiment in modern performance.

Keywords: *Shakespeare, villainy, semiotics, performance studies, RSC*

Zaid Abu Najm is a PhD candidate in Cultural Studies at the University of Szeged. His research focuses on Shakespearean performance, semiotics, and contemporary reinterpretations of villainy in the Royal Shakespeare Company. He also teaches English and writes on adaptation, embodiment, and early modern drama in modern media.

Lilla Rozália Nemes

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Identity in Aristophanes and Oscar Wilde: A Comparison of *Frogs* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*

In the late nineteenth century, Greek culture experienced a revival in Britain, and many Victorian writers were consequently influenced by ancient Greek literature and thought. One of these well-known figures was Oscar Wilde. He began his classical education at Trinity College Dublin, before continuing his studies at the University of Oxford, where he deepened his engagement with classical culture. Although Wilde's aesthetics were shaped by a wide range of influences, the impact of Greek literature is particularly noticeable in several of his works. Within this broader context of classical reception this paper compares Oscar Wilde's comedy, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, with *The Frogs* by the ancient Greek playwright Aristophanes. Despite the distance between Victorian comedy and the tradition of Old Comedy, the paper argues that the two plays can be meaningfully compared through their use of comic inversion, dual identities, and agonistic debates. Oscar Wilde employs exaggerated master-servant dynamics and their mutual dependence to critique the rigid class structure and moral hypocrisy of Victorian society. Similarly, in *The Frogs*, Aristophanes emphasizes the comic potential of shifting hierarchies through the relationship between Dionysus and his slave, demonstrating how social treatment often depends on outward appearance. Both plays explore performative identity through disguise and dual roles, and the use of agonistic debates allows both authors to comment on their contemporary concerns and broader philosophical questions about life and culture. While Aristophanes's play contains a single extended agon, Wilde's comedy presents a similar argumentative structure with shorter confrontations.

Keywords: *Comparative literature, classical reception, Victorian comedy, social satire, performative identity*

Lilla Rozália Nemes is a second-year student who is finishing her degree in English and American Studies at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary in Literature and Culture Specialization. Her research interests include Victorian literature, classical reception, and comparative approaches to ancient and modern drama as well as Gothic literature. She wrote an article on the Gothic Monster, titled, "The Advance of the Gothic Monster: The Projection of Fear in Gothic Stories." Her current research focuses on classical reception, and she is particularly interested in the influence of ancient Greek literature on nineteenth-century British writers.

Minh Duc Ngo
University of Debrecen

***Everything Everywhere All at Once* (2022): Reinterpreting and Reconstructing Asian Identities in Contemporary American Cinema**

This study examines how *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (dir. Kwan and Scheinert, 2022) challenges Hollywood's long-standing stereotypes of Asian Americans and redefines their representations. Cultural production in history has been a mirror reflecting the discourse of the time. For Asians in the US since the twentieth century, this has often manifested as dichotomies between "Us" and the "Other," between rational and chaotic, and between civilization and exoticism. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019 and intensified anti-Asian hate at its center, the success of *Everything Everywhere All at Once* acts as a breath of fresh air that challenges this unfounded fear of the Other. Drawing on Stuart Hall's representation theory and Homi Bhabha's concept of the Third Space as the theoretical framework, this study aims to understand how stereotypical portrayals of Asians in Hollywood films, such as Dr. Fu Manchu, affect US audience's perceptions of reality. Moreover, by analyzing the film, this paper argues that Evelyn's adventure to save the world, using the multiverse as the Third Space, parallels the immigrant journey of creating a new identity. By putting these characters and their fractured universes against earlier Oriental figures, the study also examines how the film uses ethnic humor not only as a site for renegotiating power, but also to humanize the immigrant experience, replacing the pejorative, flattened stereotypes with more complex portrayals of first and second-generation identities in contemporary US cinema.

Keywords: *orientalism, immigrant experience, representation theory, Asian American, US cinema*

Ngo Minh Duc is an MA student in the American Studies program at the University of Debrecen. His field of research focuses on cultural studies and identity, especially in film and video game adaptation.

Viktória Paál

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Blackfoot Cultural Identity from the Age of Fur Trade to 1914 in Canada and the United States

Although the Blackfoot Confederacy historically occupied territory crossing present-day Alberta and Montana, comparatively little research has examined how the Canadian and American legal and political frameworks shaped the Blackfoot differently across the international border. In general, Canada has demonstrated more reconciliatory gestures, while the U.S. has provided more political sovereignty and empowerment for tribes. Yet, both Canada and the US can be subject to criticism concerning their treatment of their First Nations. This paper aims to show that the two states used different political and legal frameworks, but both profoundly reshaped Canadian and American Indianness. In this way, we will be able to better understand the uniqueness of Blackfoot cultural heritage and the Canadian and American Indian structures, particularly in terms of treaties, governance, cultural practices, and historical experiences. The paper entails the analysis of specific treaties, such as Treaty 7 and the Allotment Act, and diary entries of travelers who visited the Blackfoot tribes. The general focus will be to outline the framework of Blackfoot cultural identity. In turn, the paper will address the treatment of First Nations across the border, including treaties and government policies. Next, it will examine how Blackfoot adapted to, resisted, and negotiated these imposed frameworks. In addition, it will also examine what aspects of culture and identity were lost, what survived, and what was transformed across the border.

Keywords: *Blackfoot Confederacy, Culture, Identity, Governance, Comparison*

Viktória Paál earned her BA in English and American Studies at Eötvös Loránd University. She is currently a second-year MA student at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary in the same field. She specializes in history and culture. Her academic work focuses on Indigenous studies, particularly the cultural identity of the Blackfoot people in Canada and the United States.

Leila Alexandra Pintér
Pázmány Péter Catholic University

**A Seed-Portrait of Ireland’s Joan(na) of Arc: Intertextual Relations and Performativity
in Medbh McGuckian’s the Seed-Picture**

This presentation will endeavor to reinterpret one of Medbh McGuckian’s earliest poems entitled “The Seed-Picture”. The poem appeared both in McGuckian’s first volume entitled *The Flower Master* (1982) and the revised edition thereof, entitled *The Flower Master and Other Poems* (1993). It is a text which the reception—despite the growing body of academic work on the early poetry’s political relevance—rarely reads as a political poem, that is, as a poem that engages with the questions of colonialism and nation. The reading will suggest that the poem can be read politically—and, in a Bhabhaian sense, as a fundamentally performative text—through hitherto unexplored intertextual relations by focusing on two interconnected aspects of the poem. Firstly, a potential allusion to the figure of Joan of Arc as a conventional metaphor for Maud Gonne as an Amazonian warrior of the Fenian cause and to the image of the phoenix as Ireland, which was employed several times by Yeats, and subsequently by other Irish poets too, like Patrick Kavanagh, Thomas Kinsella and Seamus Heaney. Secondly, an allusion to Emanuel Swedenborg which, while tying back to Yeats, problematizes symbols (and symbolism) in terms of the power and desirability of sameness in the face of an inherited literary tradition with a penchant for representations that idealize violence. With this focus the reading will provide both a new intertextual horizon for the poem and a new lens of interpretation that can shed light on the text’s potential political significance alongside its much-analyzed feminist and self-reflexive aspects.

Keywords: *Medbh McGuckian, W. B. Yeats, intertextuality, Homi Bhabha, performativity*

Leila Pintér is a PhD student at Pázmány Péter Catholic University and does research on the early poetry of Medbh McGuckian with a focus on intertextuality, gender, and postcolonialism. She is a cultural journalist and a translator, having published interviews, reviews, essays, and literary translations in the journals: *Prae, Tiszatáj, Versum, Szépirodalmi Figyelő* and HJEAS, among others. From 2023 she has been a member of the MLLK (Modern Líraelméleti és Líratörténeti Kutatócsoport) research group. In 2025, she was a Grantee of the Babits Mihály Scholarship for Translators.

Mawada Saeed
University of Debrecen

Nostalgia and Haunting in Jamal Mahjoub's *Wings of Dust*, 1994

Wings of Dust, originally published in 1994 by the British Sudanese author Jamal Mahjoub, has attracted attention following the recent conflict in Sudan, which coincides with its second publication by Bloomsbury in 2023. Nostalgic discourses saturate the entire narrative. The novel opens with the protagonist narrator, Sharif, as a middle-aged man in a dilapidated hotel (Mme Tedesco) in South-East France. Sharif is battling with health issues, memory loss, and insomnia; his only escape from the approaching insanity is in revisiting his and his friends' life stories. Sharif is also considered an allegory of his native country, as his stories coincide with the critical period of early independence in Sudan. Sharif and his friends were among the first generation of Sudanese intellectual elites sent to Oxford to prepare for the challenging task of leading the country after the end of British colonial rule in Sudan. Mahjoub deploys Sharif's account to reflect on the struggles of this generation and on this period simultaneously. However, the question to be raised here is whether Sharif's account is considered melancholy or nostalgia. On the other hand, spectrality pervades the narrative from the beginning. In the opening page, Sharif recounts how the Mme Tedesco hotel, where he is currently residing, is haunted by the ghosts and spirits of his long-gone friends and lovers. Yet, their memories, which are at the same time an essential part of Sharif's life and memory, are vividly present. The study aims to investigate the central issues of nostalgia and haunting in Jamal Mahjoub's second novel, *Wings of Dust*. The study also raises the question of whether Sharif's account conveys a sense of melancholy or nostalgia.

Keywords: *nostalgia, haunting, Sudanese postcolonial intellectual elite, melancholy*

Mawada Saeed is a first-year PhD student of Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Debrecen. Her research interests include psychoanalysis, melancholy and trauma studies, postcolonial studies, migrant studies, and crime fiction.

Almontassar Bellah Taieb
Pázmány Péter Catholic University

Looking Back at Vocabulary Learning Strategies: Developments, Challenges, and Future Directions

Over the past few decades, vocabulary learning strategies (VLSs) have gained considerable attention in research on vocabulary knowledge development. Many scholars have focused on examining the relationship between strategy use and individual difference variables, such as language aptitude, motivation, and proficiency, while comparatively limited attention has been paid to broader contextual influences, including learners' socio-economic backgrounds. At the same time, recent calls have emphasized the need to reconceptualize VLSs as an emergent variable that arises from observable indicators rather than existing independently (Alamer et al., 2024, 2025). Against this background, the present paper revisits the concept of VLS in strategy research and critically examines its major theoretical and methodological developments. In particular, it discusses challenges related to construct definition, measurement practices, and the relative neglect of contextual factors in strategy research. The paper further considers how recent advances in construct validation may offer a new perspective on understanding vocabulary strategy use as a dynamic, context-sensitive phenomenon.

Keywords: *vocabulary knowledge, vocabulary learning strategies, socio-economic status, second language acquisition*

Almontassar Bellah Taieb is a third-year PhD student at Pázmány Péter Catholic University. He is particularly interested in L2 vocabulary research, learning strategies, and academic discourse. In addition to his research focus, Almontassar is a university lecturer at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, where he teaches courses in English language and academic skills.

Laura Tajti

Pázmány Péter Catholic University

Interlocutor Effects on L2 Speaking Anxiety: Comparing Human and AI-Mediated Task Performance in Advanced EFL Learners — A Pilot Study

Foreign language anxiety (FLA) significantly impacts oral performance, even among advanced learners (Horwitz et al., 1986; Tóth, 2011). With the rapid integration of AI tools like ChatGPT into language learning contexts, understanding how different interlocutor types affect learner anxiety has become increasingly relevant. While research suggests that AI-mediated practice may reduce evaluative anxiety (Fryer et al., 2020), direct comparisons between human and AI interlocutors remain limited. This pilot study investigates whether speaking tasks conducted with ChatGPT versus a human interlocutor elicit differential levels of foreign language anxiety among advanced Hungarian EFL learners. Three high-anxiety university students (B2+/C1 proficiency level) will participate in a within-subjects experimental design. Each participant will complete two, 3–5-minute discussion tasks on the same topic: one with ChatGPT and one with a human researcher. Task order will be counterbalanced to control for sequence effects. Participants will be selected based on high scores on the Hungarian-adapted Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Tóth, 2008). Data collection will include: (1) post-task Likert-scale ratings of state anxiety experienced during each interaction, (2) researcher observation notes documenting visible anxiety indicators, and (3) audio recordings of both tasks (with participant consent), which will be transcribed for linguistic analysis. All data will be pseudonymized using alphanumeric codes and stored on password-protected devices in compliance with GDPR regulations. This pilot study will test the feasibility of experimental procedures, validate data collection instruments, and assess task design effectiveness in preparation for a larger-scale investigation with 10 high-anxiety participants. Preliminary findings will illuminate whether AI-mediated speaking practice offers affective advantages for high-anxiety learners and will inform the development of evidence-based guidelines for integrating conversational AI in language pedagogy.

Keywords: *Foreign language anxiety, ChatGPT, AI-mediated learning, L2 speaking, advanced EFL learners*

Laura Tajti is an assistant lecturer at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. She is currently a PhD candidate in Applied Linguistics at Pázmány Péter Catholic University, where her research focuses on language acquisition. Her work examines how learners develop linguistic competence and the cognitive and social factors shaping this process. Her current study is conducted in collaboration with Péter Hatvani, a fellow PhD candidate at Pázmány Péter Catholic University, who works as an AI engineer at Instructure.

Lili Tamás

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

NLP Tools and Methods for Fake News Detection and Factchecking in English

The vast amount of fake news, along with false news, yellow journalism, and advertorial, makes it increasingly difficult to obtain reliable information. Baptista and Gradim (2022) define fake news as intentionally designed and circulated disinformation. AI-generated content presents an additional challenge. Manual methods alone are insufficient given the volume of information, but NLP tools can assist these tasks. This paper aims to provide a (non-comprehensive) overview of available NLP methodology for fake news detection and factchecking in English from 2024 onwards that could be employed in future research. The reviewed items include tools that utilize deep learning and machine learning, as well as available datasets and benchmarks, such as Nadeem et al.'s (2024) hybrid framework or Shen et al.'s (2025) multimodal modeling approach. This overview provides the theoretical and methodological background for my future research into fake news detection. The research steps are currently planned to be the following: (1) Prepare the benchmark data set; (2) train and evaluate the detection model; (3) select specific non-credible news sources; (4) crawl news data from websites; (5) apply the detection model to the collected real-life data; (6) evaluate the model's performance.

Keywords: *NLP, natural language processing, fake news, factchecking, disinformation*

Lili Tamás is a second-year graduate student in the English Studies program at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. Her academic interest primarily revolves around language technology.

Dániel Richárd Tarnóc

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Misanthropy in a Philosophical Perspective in Nathaniel Hawthorne's Short Fiction

In the Cambridge English Dictionary, misanthropy is described as “the fact or quality of not liking other people.” According to Merriam-Webster, misanthropy is “a hatred or distrust of humankind.” Such a human attitude is applicable to nineteenth-century American short fiction infused with a sense of disillusionment with mankind. The presentation is partly inspired by Alicia Chudo, asserting that the contempt of mankind is rooted in the failure of the utopian perspective, the process of which includes the following four stages: utopian idealism, disruptive event, moral collapse, and disillusionment. Arguably, one of the best-known examples of misanthropic demeanor is found in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726), but I am interested in tracing its presence in American short fiction in the nineteenth century. It is well-known that Nathaniel Hawthorne's (1804–1864) literary universe is determined by the questionable past of his ancestors and the respective guilt felt over their historical crimes. This psychological burden, coupled with a disenchanting personal attitude, led to his pessimistic worldview. Consequently, the paper explores the manifestation of philosophical misanthropy in the following three short stories by Hawthorne: “Young Goodman Brown” (1835), “The Minister's Black Veil” (1836), and “The Birthmark” (1843).

Keywords: *Nathaniel Hawthorne, misanthropy, disillusionment, philosophy, short fiction*

Dániel Richárd Tarnóc attends Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, and he is in the correspondence English Studies MA program. His main interest is American Literature. Apart from his studies, he is currently teaching English in a secondary school.

Réka Törzsök

University of Debrecen

“Delude the world to its undoing”: War, Religion, and Ethics in Theodora Wilson

Wilson’s *The Last Weapon: A Vision*

In *The Last Weapon: A Vision* (1916), Theodora Wilson Wilson stages a pre-apocalyptic scenario structured by binary oppositions. The novel’s ethics are based on the opposition of fear—not hate—and love: the Weapon of Fear (an imaginary nuclear-missile-like device named “Hellite”) and the Weapon of Love are presented as the two alternatives through which an unnamed country, presumably Britain, might bring the war to its end. Through characters such as the ghostly Child, the Christ God, and the Prince of Fear, the novel articulates these tensions using Christian discourse. Focusing on this dimension, the presentation reads the novel as a sustained interrogation of the role and function of religion in times of military conflict. Organized religion is depicted ambivalently, critiqued when it legitimates violence, yet affirmed in its insistence on an ethic of love capable of sustaining peace. A storehouse of wartime ethical moments, the narrative stages scenes of interpersonal violence that destabilize the “us–them” mentality. Drawing on René Girard’s theory of mimetic desire and scapegoating, the paper argues that the novel exposes the mimetic escalation of fear and violence that often underpins warfare while advancing a humanist ethics, in which love operates as an active counter-weapon. Ultimately, recovering this neglected 1916 text contributes to scholarship on pacifist literary depictions of the First World War and early anti-nuclear imaginaries.

Keywords: *Theodora Wilson Wilson, war, religion, Christianity, ethics*

Réka Törzsök is a first-year PhD student in the British Literature and Culture subprogram of the Doctoral School of Linguistics, Literary, and Cultural Studies at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. Her interests include dystopian literature, the fiction of George Orwell and Aldous Huxley, and narrative design in video games.

Muhammad Saad Ullah
Pázmány Péter Catholic University

Cinematic Grammar and Paternal Trauma in Guillermo del Toro's *Frankenstein*

While popular culture frequently reduces Mary Shelley's 1818 novel, *Frankenstein*, to a cautionary tale of scientific hubris, Guillermo del Toro's 2025 film adaptation actively reframes the narrative as a psychological study of generational trauma. This paper utilizes formal film analysis to examine the cinematic translation of paternal authority, specifically contrasting the textual representation of Alphonse Frankenstein with his on-screen counterpart. In Shelley's original text, Victor's father is portrayed as a flawed but ultimately benevolent patriarch; despite early misunderstandings, the text allows Victor a retrospective realization that his father's actions were driven by a desire for domestic unity and protection. The paper argues that Del Toro's adaptation employs specific cinematic grammar to actively deny redemption of the father figure. Through the recurring use of oppressive low-angle framing, low-key chiaroscuro lighting, and aggressive proxemics, the film's visual language overrides the novel's textual benevolence. By focusing on these technical mechanics, this paper demonstrates how the 2025 film shifts the ethical responsibility and relocates the narrative's "original sin". Because the cinematic Victor is denied any connection with a protective father, his subsequent abandonment of his own Creature is re-contextualized. It is no longer an isolated failure of humanist arrogance, but rather the inescapable, traumatic repetition of a cycle of paternal abuse. Ultimately, the film's cinematography updates the definition of monstrosity for a contemporary audience, shifting the ethical burden from the manufactured body to the systemic failures of the patriarch.

Keywords: *Frankenstein, Guillermo del Toro, cinematic grammar, generational trauma, adaptation theory*

Muhammad Saad Ullah is an MA student in English Studies at Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest. His academic research primarily focuses on the intersection of eighteenth and nineteenth-century literature, film studies, and modern adaptation theory. With a deep interest in how classic historical texts are visually translated for contemporary audiences, his current work explores cinematic grammar and evolving narrative frameworks. He is particularly focused on applying formal film analysis to unpack subtextual shifts in power dynamics.

Zhansaya Umbetbay

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Latinization in Kazakhstan: Attitudes, Practices, and the Symbolic Role of Global English in Almaty

This research focuses on the reform of Latinization of the Kazakh language as a sociolinguistic process in the context of modernization and the spread of English as a lingua franca. In spite of the official announcement of the transition to the Latin alphabet in 2017 and step-by-step plan for its implementation, the Cyrillic alphabet continues to dominate in daily communication. This situation shows the gap between institutionally promoted language policy and real language behavior of native speakers. The aim of the study is to examine how Kazakh speakers perceive Latinization and how these attitudes relate to their actual language practices. Special focus is given to the symbolic role of the Latin alphabet, which is considered to be connected with global communication, mainly mediated by the English language. A mixed-methods approach is used in the research, including a survey and semi-structured interviews to determine individuals' attitudes and examine their individual experiences. The results demonstrate that Latinization is generally assessed positively and is linked to modernization, globalization, and access to international resources. Nevertheless, its practical usage remains limited, indicating the impact of stable writing system formed within the Cyrillic system. Therefore, a gap is identified between the symbolic adoption of Latinization and its daily use. The study shows that attitudes towards Latinization reflect not only language attitudes, but also broader orientations towards global (often English-mediated) communicative forms. The work contributes to sociolinguistic studies of language policy, writing and global English, emphasizing the necessity of analyzing language reforms taking into consideration the interaction of ideological and practical factors.

Keywords: *Latinization, language attitudes, language policy, sociolinguistics, global English*

Zhansaya Umbetbay is a second-year MA student majoring in English Studies with Applied Linguistics specialization at the Institute of English Studies at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. Currently, her research focuses on Latinization in Kazakhstan with a focus on language attitudes, writing practices, and the role of global English in the perception of this reform. She is also interested in sociolinguistics, language policy, multilingualism, and bilingualism.

Éva Urbán

University of Debrecen

Indigenous Cosmological Storytelling and Contemporary Social Issues in *Bad Medicine*

What do a werewolf, shapeshifting creatures, and water-dwelling tricksters have in common? These figures not only evoke Cree cosmology but are also used to reflect on contemporary social issues affecting Canadian First Nation communities. This paper examines how Christopher Twin, in his debut graphic novel, *Bad Medicine* (2023), draws on Indigenous epistemology to demonstrate the role of traditional stories in processing personal and collective trauma. In *Bad Medicine*, four teenagers share stories by the campfire, each tale becoming increasingly disturbing as its subject matter deepens. The first story features the Mimiskiwaw—small, child-like creatures living by riversides—and serves as a cautionary tale about the importance of adhering to tribal stories. The subsequent narratives delve into issues such as substance abuse and the crisis of domestic abuse in connection with MMIWG (Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls). The appearance of the werewolf also illustrates how colonization affected Cree cosmology, since the human–wolf hybrid known today was heavily influenced by French folklore. Through the act of storytelling, the characters begin a healing process, and by the end of the night, the teenagers recognize their potential to break the vicious cycles within their own families. The positive effects of sharing stories stand in contrast to the way these tales are presented. The narratives feature detailed depictions of violence, typically associated with the horror genre, yet ultimately, the narrators demonstrate that horror’s darkness becomes the very tool that helps them confront their traumatic lived experiences.

Keywords: *indigenous, storytelling, visual narrative, horror, cosmology*

Éva Urbán is a second-year PhD student in the North American Literature and Culture subprogram of the Doctoral School of Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. She started her research in contemporary Native American literature in 2020. Currently, she is working on her doctoral dissertation, which focuses on storytelling, healing, historical trauma, Indigenous epistemologies in contemporary Native American fiction, and the role of visual narratives in Indigenous novels, comics, and illustrated texts.

Sára Viktória Valicskó

University of Debrecen

Weird Girl Lit: Shifting Representations of Twenty-First Century American Womanhood

To better represent being a woman in twenty-first century America, contemporary works by women writers tend to create complex female protagonists, who in some way subvert expectations and ideals regarding femininity, beauty, or behavior. Often called “weird girl lit,” these novels present the “unpresentable” parts of womanhood, allowing their female protagonists to exist more freely without the constraints of societal expectations, thereby offering a wider range of possibilities to better represent the complexities of womanhood. Though not yet widely researched, the character of the “weird girl” seems to resonate with readers, enjoying increasing popularity on social media and being recognized by traditional publishing houses. The aim of the presentation is first to trace the literary antecedents of the “weird girl” character, followed by a list of defining characteristics based on two iterations of the “weird girl” character: namely Dorothy Daniels from *A Certain Hunger* (Chelsea G. Summers, 2020), and the unnamed protagonist of *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* (Ottessa Moshfegh, 2018). The presentation argues that the “weird girl” characters may act as a representation of anxieties experienced by women, reflecting contemporary issues and presenting contemporary struggles, thereby creating a new literary archetype of modern womanhood.

Keywords: *genre studies, women’s literature, trends in American fiction, portrayals of womanhood, female archetypes*

Sára Viktória Valicskó is a first-year MA student in American Studies at the University of Debrecen, Hungary. Their research interests include Dark Academia both as a literary genre and as a social media phenomenon, American Gothic literature, and the representation of women in contemporary North American fiction.

Shaowen Zhang
University of Szeged

Silent Struggles: Chinese American Female Identity in *Everything I Never Told You* by Celeste Ng

This paper offers an intersectional close reading of Celeste Ng's *Everything I Never Told You* to examine how silence shapes Chinese American female identity in everyday life. Focusing on Lydia Lee, it argues that silence in the novel is not a stable personality trait, but a context-dependent practice produced at the crossings of race, gender, and family expectations. At home, Lydia's minimal replies, selective non-disclosure, and performed "normalcy" function as care; they manage conflict, protect parental hopes, and keep the household script running. In school and other public settings, however, the same quiet is frequently misread through institutional templates and success scripts, where silence signals manageability rather than distress. This cross-setting coding gap helps explain why silence persists and intensifies; speaking up becomes costly, while concealment and performance are rewarded as signs of stability and achievement. By comparing key family and public scenes, the paper traces how silence shifts from short-term protection to long-term burden. The conclusion reads Lydia's death beyond a simple suicide/accident binary as a structurally conditioned outcome of compounded pressures, while briefly considering the "silent struggle" as uneven; individual self-emancipation fails, yet the family is forced into belated recognition and partial repair of its silence mechanism.

Keywords: *Asian American literature, silence, intersectionality, model minority, racial melancholia*

Shaowen Zhang is an MA student in American Studies at the University of Szeged, Hungary. Supervised by Professor Zsófia Anna Tóth, she is writing her thesis on Asian American identity and gendered silence in Celeste Ng's *Everything I Never Told You*. Her research focuses on American women's writing and contemporary multicultural American fiction, especially how narratives of girlhood negotiate race, gender, and family.

POSTERS

Zsuzsanna Balogh

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

The Impact of Motivation and Anxiety on Adult English Language Learning

The study focuses on the role of motivation and anxiety on the learning capabilities of adult students in learning English as a second language. The main research question is: How do motivation and language learning anxiety affect the experiences and success of adult learners studying English? The research will seek to prove that motivation and anxiety are vital factors that determine adult learning outcomes. While motivation promotes persistence, engagement, and effort by the learners to learn a language, anxiety impairs communication, loosens self-esteem, and limits classroom engagement. The paper examines the interaction of these two factors of affect and their impact on the learning process among the adults who usually integrate education and work and family matters. The thesis statement argues that high motivation combined with effective strategies to manage anxiety significantly improves adult learners' engagement and success in English language learning. The primary source of the present study is the qualitative data on surveys among adult English learners, which will discuss their experiences, the motivation factors, and the challenges associated with anxiety. These relationships aid teachers in creating better learning settings. Finally, motivation and anxiety can be simultaneously dealt with to enhance the confidence and long-term language success of the adult learners.

Keywords: *motivation, language, learning, anxiety, strategies*

Zsuzsanna Balogh is a second-year, part-time (correspondence) student majoring in English Studies at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. Her interests are teaching and the fields of psychology and pedagogy. In her work, she places great emphasis on ensuring that her students feel as comfortable as possible and that learning brings them joy and satisfaction rather than difficulty. In recent years, she has observed how strongly motivation and fear are present in learning processes, which greatly influence a learner's self-confidence on the path to successful language acquisition. For this reason, she conducted a study among them in order to gain insight into the true extent of this phenomenon.

Szilvia Czémán

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

Posthuman Bodies and Gendered Power in Naomi Alderman's *The Power*

What happens to gender, power, and the human body when biological transformation disrupts established social hierarchies? Naomi Alderman's *The Power* (2016) imagines a world in which women develop the ability to generate electricity from their bodies, radically altering global structures of power. This poster examines how the novel engages with ideas of posthumanism and transhumanism through body transformation and shifting gender dynamics. How does *The Power* use the transformation of the female body to explore post-human ideas of identity, embodiment, and power? Considering Donna Haraway's "A Cyborg Manifesto" and Rosi Braidotti's *The Posthuman*, the analysis examines how Alderman challenges power dynamics in a patriarchal society after a biological transformation of the female body. Through close reading of the novel, this research shows how the emergence of the "skein" reshapes female embodiment and creates new power dynamics. The development of the story demonstrates that the redistribution of power does not necessarily lead to equality, but can reproduce familiar patterns of domination, corruption, and violence. By situating *The Power* within contemporary discussions of posthumanism, this study highlights how speculative fiction provides a space for critically reimagining the relationship between gender, technology, and the future of the human body.

Keywords: *Posthumanism, transhumanism, gender, dystopia, contemporary*

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The Critical Period Hypothesis Revisited: Age Effects in Childhood Foreign Language Acquisition

The study examines differences in English-learning attitudes, self-perceived proficiency, cultural openness, and teacher preferences among Hungarian 6th–7th graders, with a focus on the age at which English instruction began. A total of 332 students from four diverse primary schools in the South Great Plain region of Hungary participated by completing anonymous paper-based questionnaires. The sample was balanced in terms of gender and socioeconomic background, supporting the findings. In Hungary, public primary schools follow the National Core Curriculum (NAT 2020), which introduces English as a foreign language from Grade 4 (age 9–10), partially aligning with CEFR A2 objectives but missing the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) sensitive window (ages 2–12). In contrast, preschool English instruction is largely provided by private, non-regulated programs, which are increasingly popular. However, the long-term educational impact of such early instruction remains under-researched in the Hungarian context. Addressing this gap, the present study compares learners who began English earlier with those who started at the age prescribed by the National Core Curriculum. The results indicate that earlier starters report higher self-perceived proficiency, more positive attitudes towards English, greater cultural openness, and stronger preferences for native-speaker models.

Keywords: *Critical Period Hypothesis, EFL education in Hungary, preschool English, age of onset, learners' attitudes*

Renáta Fölk is an English teacher completing her MA in Applied Linguistics and a short-cycle English teacher training at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. For her thesis, she conducted research across four primary schools on 332 students, re-examining the Critical Period Hypothesis in Generation Alpha's L2 learning. Her publication, “Skibidi Generation,” quantifies TikTok slang's impact on English acquisition by comparing contextual versus dictionary meanings. Post-graduation, she plans to pursue a PhD in the following research fields: sociolinguistics, EFL in Hungary, Gen Alpha slang, digital methodologies, and language pedagogy.

Zoltán Mezei

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Structural Violence in Martin McDonagh's *Leenane Trilogy*

The presentation deals with the structural violence in Martin McDonagh's *Leenane Trilogy*. The interpersonal violence between the characters of the trilogy happens because of structural violence. The presentation deals with the different forms of structural violence in the trilogy and tries to shed light on how these shape the characters and their relationships. The presentation is going to examine economic deprivation which includes dependency, limited mobility, lack of opportunity and migration; it will examine gender oppression that appears in *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* through the protagonist being imprisoned by her mother who even controls her sexual desires and life, and in the other two dramas (*A Skull in Connemara* and *The Lonesome West*) through toxic masculinity and the absence of women. The last form of structural violence in the trilogy is institutional neglect. Characters are let down by the healthcare system, by the police and even by the church. The presentation shows how different types of structural violence cause interpersonal violence in Martin McDonagh's *Leenane Trilogy*.

Keywords: *Martin McDonagh, Leenane Trilogy, structural violence*

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Petra Pásku

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Trauma and Memory in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

This MA thesis is going to make a comparative analysis of trauma and memory presented in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Remains of the Day* and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*. This thesis interrogates the following research questions: How do trauma narrative techniques in *Beloved* and *The Remains of the Day* reflect the psychological and emotional disruptions induced by trauma? In what respect do the novels represent the transmission of trauma through the subsequent generations? As for the methodological approach, this thesis adopts a close reading methodology and employs comparative literary analysis of the two novels, engaging with and challenging the trauma theory and the different dimensions of trauma. This research methodology supports the study of the different approaches authors apply in their works, such as narrative structure, character arc, and relevant historical background, in order to demonstrate the understanding and impact of trauma. Meanwhile, this approach also helps to see how these literary works are connected to the broader spectrum of trauma, including trauma and memory, emotional repression, and intergenerational trauma theories. This thesis aims to apply the following theorists' work: Cathy Caruth, Dominick LaCapra, Bessel van der Kolk and Onno van der Hart, and Jeffrey C. Alexander. Each one of them represents the three main methods of analysis, such as historical trauma (Dominick LaCapra), psychological trauma (Bessel van der Kolk and Onno van der Hart), and cultural trauma (Jeffrey C. Alexander). The in-depth analysis of such works provides a model or method with which the different layers and dimensions of trauma can be examined in the two novels. The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate how different cultures experience different types of trauma, such as emotional repression, personal loss, and atrocious past events in divergent historical settings, while showing how individual and collective trauma, along with intergenerational trauma and trauma transmission, are presented through different trauma narratives.

Keywords: *trauma and memory, intergenerational trauma, trauma transmission, emotional repression, trauma response*

Petra Pásku is a second-year MA student in the specialization of English Literature and Culture at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary. She is interested in English and American literature, and she is especially keen on English Romanticism, especially Dark Romanticism and Contemporary Literature. As the abstract of her thesis shows, her main focus is on trauma, because she loves solving puzzles and revealing the original cause of tragedies. Apart from literature, she is fond of teaching English as a second language. Therefore, she would like to continue her studies in the university's Teacher Training Program.

Melinda Tarcsa

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Lines of Fidelity: Evaluating DeepL's Limits in Translating Krisztina Tóth's *Vonalkód*

Machine translation (MT) has emerged as an important tool in recent years for overcoming language barriers in an increasingly globalized society, but its effectiveness in the creative field of literature is still highly debated. This paper investigates the performance and limitations of machine translation in the domain of literary translation. It compares raw machine translation output to human translation (HT) in terms of accuracy, clarity, authenticity, and stylistic consistency, using a selected Hungarian short story from Krisztina Tóth's collection *Vonalkód* and its English translation by Peter Sherwood. This linguistic focus is especially important because MT performance has generally been lowered for less-resourced, agglutinative languages such as Hungarian. First, the paper provides a theoretical framework including the evolution and primary types of MT, as well as the unique issues presented by literary translation. Secondly, it describes the research methodology, including the source material, the used MT tool, and the qualitative and quantitative criteria used for evaluating errors and corrections. Afterwards, it provides an extensive summary of common MT errors, and lastly, it highlights the advantages and disadvantages of machine translation in literary contexts, as well as its ethical and creative implications. By combining theoretical discussion with text-based analysis, the research demonstrates that while machine translation can be a useful supplementary tool, particularly when followed by expert post-editing, it cannot replace human literary translators in maintaining the cultural depth and creative nuances essential in literature.

Keywords: *applied linguistics, literary translation, machine translation, creativity, accuracy*

Melinda Tarcsa is a second-year MA student at Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, specializing in applied linguistics. She earned her BA in English Studies from Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary in 2023. Her research interests include translation studies and modern English literature.