

## **Plenary Lecture 1**

### **Transcending the Subject – Philosophical Answers to the Ecological Crisis in the Anthropocene (Bruno Latour versus Georg Picht)**

**Henrieke Stahl (University of Trier)**

For Bruno Latour, the Anthropocene is "a shock that affects the entire earth system" and changes "the concept of nature as well as that of man". The earth is, as he points out, a new "political actor" that "strikes back": for the earth responds to its exploitation with catastrophes of enormous proportions. His suggestion for a way out of the crisis leads into the heart of my lecture: For Latour wants humans to change themselves, to change their attitude, before they change the world. This is a crucial insight whose relevance we are now beginning to understand (almost) worldwide. However, as I would like to show you, this change should be different from what Latour proposes. Because his premise is itself the very root of the catastrophes, and his approach is fundamentally inhumane, for it is based on egoism, which leads to a neo-Social Darwinist struggle for existence.

With the Heidelberg natural philosopher Georg Picht, Latour's false premise can be corrected, and another approach can be developed. Picht understands humanity and nature as an organism whose well-being is based on a balanced relationship of all its components. For this, however, man has to change himself by learning to open his closed subject to the world. Art and literature, especially poetry, can help here, because humanity also goes to the free community with the cosmos, in Friedrich Schiller's words, "through the beauty." Latour's *anthropocentrism* should be replaced by Picht's *openness of the subject to the world*.

## Plenary Lecture 2

### Hybridization: the wasp and the orchid. New ecological paradigm or new ecology of the paradigm? Towards a knowledge revolution

Anne Sauvagnargues (Paris Nanterre University)

In the Western tradition, the question of the animal has classically made it possible to define human beings by specific difference: whether it's a question of the biological definition of man as an animal species, or of his political essence, the human is most often torn from the animal sphere by his spirit, his soul or his history, and this dualism implies a new division between "Man" (dominant male) and the other humans (barbarians, slaves, women, subalterns) over whom he extends his empire. Deleuze and Guattari objected to this dualistic, phallogocentric position derived from ancient thought, using the model of the capture between wasp and orchid (*Proust et les signes*, 1964; *Mille plateaux*, 1980). If there's no reason to cut humans off from other living beings by a difference of principle, it's no more appropriate to isolate the living from the material by a cut separating the animate from the inanimate. The concept of animal serves to ensure human distinction in two ways: because it commands the distinction between nature and culture, corporeality and spirituality, but also because it separates the vital from the material. It therefore only has an operative function in a dualistic philosophy of domination, a phallosophy. Yet Deleuze affirms continuities: between the material and the vital, by thinking of individuation as a differentiation of forces; between the natural and the cultural, by demanding that we extend the analysis of subjectivity to non-human vital modes. The concept of the organism is profoundly transformed by a meditation on the animal: the organ is certainly decisive for the differentiation and individuation of living things, but life cannot be reduced to these organized forms. It is a matter of co-evolution, and hybridizes the material, organic and psychic realms (Guattari, *Les trois écologies*, 1992). Not only is life, for Deleuze, inorganic, but the analysis of subjectivity is opened up to non-human modes of life (Sauvagnargues, 2004), moving from a philosophy of becoming-animal (Deleuze) to a philosophy of symbiosis (Haraway).

Initially developed around the question of the subject and an epistemology of the life sciences inspired by Canguilhem, the question of the animal soon asserted itself as a strategic zone for the

elaboration of the system's concepts. By virtue of the position, it occupies as an anthropological frontier, and the discussions it provokes about its status, the animal enables Deleuze to elaborate a theory of the anomalous, with direct reference to Georges Canguilhem and Gilbert Simondon. This involves replacing an invariant, transcendent norm with the idea of an immanent, fluctuating normativity of the vital (Canguilhem), replacing the classical opposition of matter and form with an intensive modulation of forces and materials (Simondon). The study of Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire enables Deleuze to refine his epistemology of variation, and to think of the animal as anomalous variation (teratology). The animal thus plays the role of epistemological matrix for the guiding concepts of metaphysics, and shows all its theoretical power in the philosophy of art, where it produces an original constellation of concepts: devenir-animal, corps sans organes, capture, ritournelle.

Yet today, this analysis remains insufficient because it remains focused on the individual animal, and thus still refers to the dominant individual human, instead of elaborating a horizontal rhizomatic model of hybridization: it is the advances of contemporary biology and the mycorrhizal models of the plant (Hallé, Haraway, Tsing) and of coevolution that must replace the old notion of man's becoming-animal. In biology, as in the cultural sciences, hybridization is not a counter-model, a new paradigm that replaces the old one by taking over its function, but a new ecological conception of the paradigm, as we shall show through a few examples from the history of the arts: the decisive role of Japan in the evolution of the arts in the West (modernism), the case of Dubuffet and "art brut", the case of "barbarian" arts (Visigoth, Merovingian, Carolingian) in the West and the role of non-figurative ornament (Riegl). The importance of the co-evolution of plants and animals (rather than the becoming-animal) plays a leading role in the epistemology of knowledge today.

## **Book Presentation**

### **The Taste of Dictatorship**

**Rusudan Gorgiladze (Tbilisi State University, writer)**

It is non debatable that three dictators have forever left their marks not only on the twentieth century but on the entire human history – Joseph Stalin, Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler. The beginning and the end of the totalitarian regimes that were established by these men, followed by destructive consequences that were unseen before, was what turned the twentieth century into especially tragic and bloody section of the world history.

This book talks about personal and social lives of the three dictators. In addition to various aspects, it draws attention to the political instrumentalization of food in the Soviet Union, Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany. In popular language, the book discusses peculiarities of each regime, including the “pearls” of the food ideology and their role in propaganda techniques.

Just like the twenty-one-year-old history of the Fascist Italy, so does the twelve-year-old history of the Nazi Germany, begin and end with the rise to power and the death of their creators – Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler. As for the Soviet Union, its near seventy-year-old existence did not start or end with Stalin. For this reason, in the Soviet part of the book, despite the fact that the biggest attention is paid to Stalin’s leadership, the book also relates the pre- and post-Stalin eras.

## **Individual Papers 1 (in English)**

### **1. Library Wars in the Hellenistic World**

**Vassilis Vagios (National Taiwan University)**

Following the death of Alexander in 323 BC and for a period of almost 50 years, Alexander's successors fought for control of the vast empire he left behind. Parallel to their armed campaigns, they also engaged in cultural campaigns with the aim of legitimising their claims to power. One of the great successes of the first phase of these conflicts was the Great Library of Alexandria, set up by the Ptolemies to be a research centre of the highest prestige within the Greek world. About a century after the establishment of the Library in Alexandria, another Hellenistic Kingdom, Pergamon, pursued the establishment of a library that would rival that of Alexandria. As the Ptolemies felt threatened by this development, they took measures to thwart it; as a result, the two kingdoms engaged into a rivalry that included trade embargoes, development of new technologies in book production, bidding wars for books (as well as confiscations and seizures), incitement of scholars to move from one library to the other (as well as imprisonments of them so as to prevent this eventuality). This paper will survey these events and attempt to provide an explanation of the reasons that led to these Library Wars.

### **2. Pan, we have lost you. What can the Greeks teach us about environmental crises?**

**Guendalina Daniela Maria Taietti (University of Liverpool)**

This paper aims at rethinking the role of Humanities – and more specifically, of ancient Greek civilization – in addressing one of the major crises of our era: the environmental crisis and the imbalances created by heavy human exploitation of nature, animals, and their habitats. Ecology, the study of the environment that helps us understand how organisms live in a habitat and interact with each other, is a modern discipline, which did not exist in ancient Greece. However, the Greeks showed great respect towards nature, which is reflected not only in their mythology, but also in some practices like crop rotation, the use of natural fertilisers, and animal husbandry.

Thus, while we possess no formal treaty on 'environmental matters' or ecology, several authors

of different literary genres, such as Hesiod (*Erga kai Hemera*), Xenophon (*Oikonomikos*), Aristotle, and Theophrastus (*On Agriculture*), are characterised by a fair degree of ecological awareness. Via the discussion of passages of the aforementioned Greek authors, this paper will explore a) ecological issues of ongoing importance since antiquity, e.g. draughts, pandemics, or agricultural practices, b) what the ancients have ever taught to us, and c) what else we can (and should) learn from them in trying to solve our environmental crisis.

### **3. Seneca's powerful tyrants and their fear inducing display of violence:**

#### **How power shapes attitudes to violence.**

**Sofia Bongiovanni (University College London)**

This paper focuses on the representation of violence exacted by tyrants in Seneca's epistles 7 and 14 and his tragedies *Phaedra* and *Thyestes*. This paper will argue that Senecan representations of tyrants and the violent torture they perpetrate are emblematic of the perception of power during the critical historical period at Rome that is the rapid succession of 'bad' emperors.

Seneca's powerful tyrants torture and kill those around them and this display of violence creates fear in the spectator. This dynamic is mirrored in the tragedies where the kings impart the same kind of violence on those around them whom they kill, dismember, and eat. However, when the power dynamic changes the spectator becomes tyrant and demands 'a little throat cutting in the meantime'. Scholarship has discussed tyrannical characters in Seneca, Bexley (2022) and Schiesaro (2003), and how Senecan tyrants have influenced later authors Miola (1992).

This paper will connect extant scholarship and put it in discussion connecting Seneca's didactic messages in epistles 7 and 14 to the theatrical representation in the tragedies. Thus, inviting the discussion to focus on literary representations of social dynamics related to major political struggle and the displacement of power.

## **Individual Papers 2 (in English und Italian)**

### **1. Re-Designing the Equilibrium:**

#### **Notes on a (Neo)Modernist Critique of Instrumental Reason**

**Andrea Sartori (Nankai University)**

Climate and environmental crises, along with the redefinition of international relationships underlying the supply of natural resources, have shown the Malthusian limitation to both an exponential growth of wealth and a linear model of development. This limitation undermines the image of modernity based on Max Weber's understanding of rationality as a calculation of the most efficient means to acquire profit, a calculation triggered by merely "acquisitive passions" (Pulcini, 2012). Such understanding of rationality underlies John Nash's (1928-2015) work on so-called non-cooperative games, a work that Nash developed during the years of the Cold War, so contributing to 'rationalize' the "equilibrium of terror" between the two superpowers of that time, US and USSR.

Today the global scenario is different from the past and co-operation is needed along with a different way to define what a *rational agent* is. The paper argues that literature, as a 'territory' partly molded by imagination and able to stir different forms of empathy, can help us reshape our understanding of rationality, a more open and inclusive one.

To illustrate the point, the paper provides, first of all, a critical interpretation of William Flesch's (2007) approach to literary criticism – an approach that shares the Weberian premises of the theory of non-cooperative games. As a further step, the paper makes the case, instead, of an Italian modernist writer, Italo Svevo (1861-1928), whose biography and works are representative of an age of crisis that has a lot to say to ours. Likewise, the paper also recalls the figure of an anomalous critic of modernity, Giacomo Leopardi (1798-1837), whose poetic illusions and rational, Pyrrhonian skepticism integrate with one another and contribute to interpret our (neo)modernist concerns.

## **2. Kepler's standard: science fiction, science literacy and climate-fiction**

**Lorenzo Cardilli (Politecnico of Milan)**

Now more than ever the Humanities seem to be caught in the throes of a crisis that calls into question their relevance and epistemological groundings. While technological game-changers are forcing us to rethink how we produce and assess content, calls for a renewed role of the Humanities can easily degenerate into the “trench warfare” typical of digital communication (Karlsen et al 2017). In this paper, I claim that any rethinking of the Humanities implies a rejection of the apocalyptic paradigm (Erspamer 2010) and a strong focus on metacognition (knowing “how to use knowledge”, Beach 2018). Literature can contribute to such paradigm shift, especially with regard to the development of science literacy. Science-literacy, defined as a crucial competence for both individual/collective decision-making and part of the “21<sup>st</sup>-century literacy” (Catenaccio 2021), could be significantly fostered through an educational focus on science-fiction works. Kepler set the standard with his 1634 *Somnium*, a lunar journey aiming to popularize the novelties of the Copernican revolution. After carrying out an analysis of the main fictional/epistemological features of the *Somnium*, I will focus on a list of 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> century climate-fiction works (Andersen 2020) featuring a similar ground-breaking conceptual structure and educational potential.

## **3. Ambiente, narrazione ed etica nella letteratura per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza**

**Pietro Mazzarisi (University of Modena and Reggio Emilia)**

Malgrado ancora oggi sia spesso tacciata come “minore”, il valore strutturale dei modelli offerti dalla letteratura per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza è primario e antichissimo. Al suo interno, gli indirizzi etici non sono fini a se stessi, ma atti a un inserimento organico e dinamicamente attivo delle narrazioni rispetto alle crisi, i problemi e gli aspetti dell'alterità affrontati dalle società. Cinquant'anni fa, per esempio, nella critica ai modelli femminili proposti da questa produzione in USA, Francia e Italia, un famoso saggio concludeva che - oltre per l'infanzia e l'adolescenza - le «rappresentazioni [...] non sono senza conseguenze presso gli stessi adulti, genitori o educatori, che, invece di essere aiutati a immaginare un nuovo tipo di bambino, nuovi rapporti con lui e il nuovo posto che egli potrebbe occupare nella società, vengono risospinti verso vecchi modelli che dovrebbero essere definitivamente



abbandonati» (Belotti, 1973, p. 121). Oggi, la necessità di riformulare e cambiare gli approcci verso il non umano e i modelli scaturiti dai paradigmi consumistici investe le narrazioni di una nuova responsabilità e ne connota spesso la scrittura. L'intervento ha per obiettivo l'analisi delle componenti etiche ed ecologiche in quattro iconotesti: dall'ecosistema lagunare in Tiziano Scarpa all'allevamento intensivo e al consumo responsabile in Guido Sgardoli (infanzia), dall'ecosistema marino in Chiara Carminati a quello montano in Susanna Tamaro (adolescenza), i comuni intenti di alfabetizzazione tecnicofunzionale, culturale e critica (Khan, 2008, p. 9) per i pubblici 3-10 e 11-17 anni segnano gli iconotesti di aspetti condivisi e caratteristiche proprie indagate e offerte dalla ricerca.

## **Individual Papers 3 (in English)**

### **1. Tahir Salakhov and the Age of Crisis of Soviet Socialist Realist Paintings**

**Hiromasa Sato (Hosei Univeristy)**

“Severe Style” (Суровый стиль) in the context of the Soviet art scene is a style of Socialist Realist painting that symbolises the Thaw period. This movement took place in the late 1950s, after the denunciation of Stalin. In contrast to the Stalin period, when painting the ideal life of the Soviet people was considered the official rule, the representatives of “Severe Style” touched upon more realistic subjects, such as wounded veterans of World War II. For this reason, “Severe Style” aroused controversy and faced criticism at the outset, even though the artists followed the rules of Socialist Realism.

Despite the initial criticism, the painters of this style are highly respected today. One of the most outstanding examples is the Azerbaijani painter Tahir Salakhov, whose works were highly appreciated in the Soviet Union. Salakhov's case shows that, paradoxically, the “Severe Style” helped Socialist Realist paintings to survive during the period of crisis for Socialist Realism, that is, the Thaw.

This presentation provides an overview of the development of “Severe Style” through the life and works of Tahir Salakhov.

## **2. Azerbaijan's Forgotten History: Past, Memories, and Trees in Akram Aylisli's Works**

**Yorika Tsutsumi (University of Tokyo)**

Akram Aylisli (1937–) is one of the most famous writers of Azerbaijan. However, he became a target of harassment and persecution after the publication of the controversial novel *Stone Dreams* (2012), in which the writer depicts his own nation's violent crimes against Armenians.

To understand the recent controversy, it is necessary to examine Aylisli's earlier works, for there is evident literary integrity in his creation throughout the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. One of the themes that Aylisli consistently explores is the past and memories.

This article focuses on the theme of the past in Aylisli's works of the Soviet period, such as the novel *What I Said to the Cherry Blossom* (1983) and the trilogy *People and Trees* (1970). Special attention is paid to the relationship between the theme of the past and the motif of trees, which carries significant meaning in Aylisli's works. These works convey the idea that people should never, or can never, abandon their past, their homeland, and their roots. This thought can be seen as one of the factors behind Aylisli's criticism of the anti-Armenian sentiment in Azerbaijan, which is, in a sense, the oblivion of the past, when people of different nationalities lived together.

## **3. Re-thinking of Literary Classics: Amateur Interpretations and "Reading crisis"**

**Elizaveta Litovskaia (National Taiwan University)**

The problems of reading and the popularization of reading among the younger generation are one of the main challenges literature at the beginning are facing in the early 21st century. An overloaded school program, large volumes of text and - the most important - a lack of understanding of the pragmatic value of the studied materials lead to the fact that for many students literature turns from a pleasure or an intellectual challenge into a boring and incomprehensible activity. Parents and the mass media are permanently discussing the loss of important skills of reading, analysis and creative interpretation and a reading crisis. But is the situation really that bad?

User-generated content on social networks (Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, YouTube, etc.) shows that it is too early to sound the alarm. A lot of younger generations creators and bloggers are still finding literature inspirational but use social media mechanisms and language to talk about books

they've read. In this presentation, I would like to highlight the main types of this content, identify the main strategies of bloggers and answer the question of could new types of amateur interpretations help our society to overcome the "reading crisis".

#### **4. We Are all Food:**

##### **Ecological Animalism in Olga Tokarczuk's *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead***

**Yi-Jen Chang (National Taipei University)**

A recent news in Taiwan profoundly explicitly portrays the conventional relationship between human and animals. The incident of an escaped baboon killed by a hunter has sparked an outcry and allegation of animal cruelty. While the hunter claimed that his shooting was out of the intention of preventing the baboon from going rampant, public outrage has been fuelled about the death of the baboon for the animal had not hurt anyone during its wandering. The relationship between human and animal has long been centered around the image of the hunter and the hunted animal, the master and the creature with the potential to be a threat to humans. The Polish novelist, also a Nobel laureate, Olga Tokarczuk provides an acute display of the macho hunting culture and the hierarchy of humans among their fellow animals in her 2009 novel, *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*. The story is narrated by Janina Duszejko, who, along with her neighbor, found a poacher named Big Foot dead, suffocated by a bone fragment from a deer he killed. Events begin to unfold that lead Duszejko to investigate the strange deaths of several other villagers, who were also local hunters. Duszejko had her theory that animals commit murder as a revenge of her villagers for their love of hunting, for sport and for meat. What, the novel asks through Duszejko's voice, does it take to be a human, and what is it to be an animal? Why is the killing of an animal a mere sport and a justified act, and the killing of a human murder? The paper therefore aims to argue how Duszejko and her relationship with the animals in the novel represents Ecological Animalism, a philosophical and ethical ecology with the potential to challenge and disrupt the dominant anthropocentric ideology of mastery over an inferior sphere of animal and nature.

## **5. Shifting Paradigms, Shifting Gender: A Polish Women Soldier's War in "*Longue Durée*"**

**Chenwen Hong (National Taipei University of Business)**

Cicero admonished his fellow citizens to consider "Historia vero testis temporum,..magistra vitae" (Cicero, 1862, p. 110). Apparently, history, on the one hand, witnesses the passing of time, and on the other hand, serves as "the directress of life" (Watson, 1860, p.92). As history teaches us lessons, the orator's dictum from ancient Rome brings up an opportune reply to Margaret R. Higonnet's question: "When is change not change?" (1987, p. 31). For one thing, the nerve-wracking question, first posed in late 1980s, has directed scholarly attention to a growing repertoire of women's war writings. Such an inquiry also marks an influential critical perspective from which gender relations during and after World War I operated like two strands of a "double helix." For another, the question, while being revisited during the Armistice Day centenary, prompts us to re-examine gender and the Great War in terms of the "*longue durée*" that inevitably challenges a defined chronology and geography. This paper seeks to investigate Zofia Nowosielska's serial war memoirs in "*longue durée*" by probing into her publishing strategies and the use of literary devices. The paper aims to answer Higonnet's question while foregrounding Polish female soldiers' war efforts and war stories about the war.

### **Individual Papers 4 (in English)**

#### **1. Taiwan Meets Its Unmaker: Precarity Potential in Circum-I(sle) and gHost Films**

**Sheng-mei Ma (Michigan State University)**

Opinions vary as to when exactly Taiwan would meet its unmaker—China. On February 1, 2023, the US Air Mobility Commander Gen. Mike Minihan sent a memo to his officers urging readiness for China's takeover of Taiwan in 2025 in the wake of presidential elections in the US and Taiwan. On February 2, CIA Director William Burns revealed publicly that President Xi Jinping had ordered the People's Liberation Army plan for the cross-strait invasion in 2027. Toward the goal of "historic reunification" and, of course, his personal legacy, Xi opened the Communist Party's 20th party

Congress on October 22, 2022 with the vow that Beijing “will never promise to give up the use of force and reserve the option to take all necessary measures.”

It is but a cliché that “crisis” consists of two Chinese words: “danger and opportunity,” or “precarity with potential.” The operative words supplied in translation are the conjunctions “and” and “with,” both of which do not exist in the original *weiji* (危機). Given their absence in the original, what yokes the oxymoronic phrase is not so much “and” and “with” as the implied “be” verb. Taiwan’s danger *is* an opportunity for the US to check China’s growing ambition, and for the PRC to challenge the American hegemony. The “afterlife” of the postwar American Century and the difficult birth of the millennial Chinese Century militate against each other through the proxy of an island, a fail-safe buffer to stave off World War III. Taiwan is rolled like the dice between two gamblers bluffing with twenty-three million Taiwanese lives.

Taiwan’s danger two or four years hence is also my opportunity, if not subconscious obsession. Like a primal wound, I fled its haunting memories in my adulthood to the promised land, to lead a professional career spanning over a dozen scholarly monographs, whereby the pen never failed to drift back to, to “automatic write,” in a chapter or two, Taiwanese Chinese-inflected materials. My repetition compulsion mirrors Taiwan’s own. With the burgeoning of Taiwanese identity under the long shadow cast by China, Taiwanese artists in films and social media embrace the island nation by caressing incessantly its coastal highways in circum-isle tours on bicycle, well-nigh an OCD or escapist self-medicating in the wake of traumas of the 1970s international rejections of its sovereignty and of the millennial military incursions from the PRC missiles, fighter jets, warships, and agitprop swarming its shores and consciousness. Taiwanese artists react by withdrawing into the island itself in films such as *A City of Sadness* (1989), *Island Etude* (2006), *Cape No. 7* (2008), and *Seven Days in Heaven* (2010).

Featuring a hearing-impaired bicyclist, of the minority Austronesian descent to boot, *Island Etude* encapsulates Taiwan’s rage of soft and sentimental escapism à la “Japan Cool” to the extent of secreting itself in one disabled, aboriginal body. Taiwanese viewers join the grief-stricken, tear-filled protagonist, suspended between a loving flaneur across the home island and a repressed farewell to it. *Aitai* (愛台 loving Taiwan) happens to pun with 哀台, or mourning Taiwan. Loving and mourning conjoin in the wheels turning around a spool that is fixed, around an island so besieged and transfixed that it increasingly self-identifies as a “ghost island.” That nomenclature has been adopted by multiple

Taiwanese cultural practitioners, including the website <https://ghostisland.media/>.

A recent manifestation of Taiwanese spectrality lies, literally, in its popular video game *Detention* launched in 2017 and the subsequent eponymous film in 2019. The film is set during Taiwan's "White Terror" or the martial law era, where a high school study group, forbidden at the time, and its teacher mentors are persecuted, some executed. The student traitor informing on the study group turns into a ghost to relive her sins. Indeed, facing the disgraceful history of Chiang Kai-shek and nationalist excesses is the first step toward truth and reconciliation in a democratic, multiethnic Taiwan. However, *Detention's* cinematic turn to the past and the uncanny serves to avert from Gorgon's gaze from across the Taiwan Strait, no different from *Island Etude's* masturbatory self-love. But who are we to judge the last words of those about to be "unified" with their "Fatherland"? To speak at all, even if self-deceivingly and paranoically, even if in circling words and ghost stories, before meeting their unmaker deserves our attention from afar, who are safely removed—for the time being.

## **2. Sustainability and its concept in the poetry of the Taiwanese nativist poet Wu Sheng**

**Thomas Fliß (University of Trier)**

The term "sustainability", although its specific definition is not agreed on yet, is a concept and goal aiming at the safe coexistence of people on Earth. It plays an important and vital role in the venture to solve or at least counter major environmental problems, but also to guarantee that the actions taken shall not diminish the opportunities of future persons to enjoy similar levels of wealth, utility, or welfare. The closely related concept of "sustainable development" and its goals declared in 2015 by the UN have been implemented in Taiwan since 2019.

Environmental conciousness is not new in Taiwan, in the 70s and 80s the well-known Taiwanese poet Wu Sheng (b. 1944) already started to publish poems about the unchecked exploitation and the environmental issues caused by it. Similar to environmentalists like Aldo Leopold (1887 – 1948), Rachel Carson (1907 – 1964) and Edward O. Wilson (1929 – 2021), Wu Sheng has his own concept of relation between humanity and its environment.

This paper aims to describe and summarize this concept through analysis of Wu's poetic oeuvre, while also pointing out the topics it is connected to by translating some examples, thus giving a better understanding of the connection between environmentalism and nativism.

### **3. Migrating Stories:**

#### **Traditional Chinese Narratives in Contemporary English-Language Fantasy and Science Fiction by First- and Second-Generation Chinese Immigrants**

**Barbara Witt (National Chengchi University)**

After decades of exclusion of Chinese stories from the North American mainstream, recent years have seen a number of authors of Chinese descent enter English-language book markets. While many of their works reflect lived experiences, these authors are also perfectly situated to adapt traditional Chinese narratives for audiences in their new homes. This presentation will focus on recent examples in fantasy and science fiction that showcase the hybridity of these works: Ken Liu's four-volume *Dandelion Dynasty* (2015-2020), Rebecca Huang's *The Poppy War* trilogy (2018-2020), SL Huang's novella *Burning Roses* (2020), and Xiran Jay Zhou's YA series *Iron Widow* (2021). All these works borrow characters and storylines from Chinese history and literature repackage them for an audience unfamiliar with the originals. This gives them greater license for rewrites than would have been possible when confronted with the expectations of a Chinese audience, and they use this as a chance to adjust these stories to the sensibilities of their North American homes, explore injustices in the originals, confront family traumas, and include diversity that had so far been absent from the narratives.

### **4. Human Mind Nature: The ecological mind-set in Taiwan's energy transition**

**Josie-Marie Perkuhn (University of Trier)**

Given the changing paradigm towards securitization with regard to a growing awareness of nature's materiality in the era of the Anthropocene, the intersection of ecological thinking and Taiwan's green energy transition poses an intriguing case of how the awareness of crisis, such as global warming, transfers into action. To encounter high energy demand around the world, Taiwan seeks to reduce its consumption by efficiency and aims for a greener energy mix. Installing new nuclear power plants is politically unthinkable, burning-up fossil fuels is unwelcome, the turning to sun and ocean becomes a viable option. As a matter of fact, the discourse changed accounting for Taiwan's ocean- driven materiality among agents who support energy transition. Geographically, Taiwan is an island and

supposedly the Taiwan-Straits are well-suited for offshore wind-farming. Same counts for the outlook of using solar power as means of sustainable energy by the average hours of sunshine. This study tackles the shift towards ecological thinking in the Humanities and analysis how the nature's materiality is woven into the measures taken and how it is medial presented regarding the debate on Taiwan's green energy transition. This contribution identifies involved players and actors in the process of energy transition regarding their media appearance and/or strategy.

## **5. Development towards linguistic uniformity in the Sinosphere – language change as deliberate policy or natural phenomenon?**

**Mariana Münning (Heidelberg University)**

In the current Chinese-speaking world, one language variant is the uncontested standard language: Mandarin, also known as Guoyu 國語 or Putonghua 普通话. These different terms bear witness to the language planning efforts of KMT and CCP and to an immense loss of linguistic variety and pressure on non-standard varieties (often called “dialects”) and non-Chinese languages (“minority languages”) spoken in the territories of the PRC and Taiwan.

Ironically, today's standard language was shaped in contact with Mongolian and Manchu, two minority languages under extreme pressure or (nearly) extinct in the PRC today. However, the legitimization strategies of Republican Era linguists and language planners emphasized the Chinese-ness and the “elegance” 雅 of the standard language and marginalized dialects and non-standard languages as “vulgar” 俗.

In the PRC, efforts to document endangered languages and dialects cannot compensate the political, social and linguistic pressure on minor language communities. Also the measures to preserve and revitalize the Minnan 閩南 dialect or indigenous languages in Taiwan have limited success. This paper investigates the mutual interdependency between language planning, linguistics and language change.



## **Individual Papers 5 (in English)**

### **1. Significant moments in the therapeutic encounter: an interdisciplinary perspective**

**Jasmin Spiegel (Hebrew University of Jerusalem)**

The “significant moment” has been attracting attention ever since humanities existed, starting with antiquity and its personification in the concept of Kairos. Later, Lessing (1766) conceptualized the fertile moment as a principle for the artist’s painting. Today, moments of significance are understood as a cornerstone for a healingly psychotherapeutic encounter. Due to recent pandemic and warlike times, human interaction shifts from a face-to-face setting to the virtual space, from long talking-cures to shorter behavioral focused interventions. This development urges a growing need for elucidating the transformations of human relationships and their encounters in emergent or significant moments in the therapeutic space. The emergent moment will be presented as a methodological search formula, a response to a directed focus of attention, and even more: the intensity of such a moment includes the temporal dimension of the after and becomes the anchor points of memory. An interdisciplinary connection between dance science and psychoanalysis will lead to a mutual hermeneutic reading of significant moments in the interaction, which relies on kinesthetic identification and resonance. The reading takes place between a fundamental primacy of kinesthetic experience on the one hand and reflexive processes of meaning-making on the other.

### **2. Disorientation as Everyday Experience: Resolving Migration and Movement in Rural Japan**

**Oscar Wrenn (Kobe University)**

Whilst depopulation is emerging as a serious problem in the 21st century, against the backdrop of falling birth-rates and an ageing population the movement of people domestically is often also experienced as a population 'crisis', one that requires management by individuals in their day-to-day lives, particularly in remote rural areas. These areas are often defined by complex patterns of migration and movement, predominately flows of people from rural to urban areas, but also counter-urbanisation and forms of cross-rural transit, which structure the lives of residents as they resolve the destabilising

effects of this movement on their lives. Using data from anthropological fieldwork with farmers in an upland community in central Japan, this paper will examine the effects of the movement of people to, from, and through their working environment, arguing that their ability to manage and traverse their increasingly dispersed farmland is disrupted by a fluid landscape of field ownership and management, and a material environment rationalized for the movement of people and goods through, not within, it. This then produces a experience of place as 'disorienting', as farmers find it impossible to 'keep on top' of the contradictory, and arrhythmic forms of movement that characterise their daily lives.

### **3. Migrations and Political Ideologies in Colonial Surinam: A Literary Perspective**

**Megumi Ohsumi (Kobe University)**

This paper explores the topic of migration, especially with regards to diasporas as they are reflected in literature. At times hailed as the first professional female writer in England, Aphra Behn is an anomalous figure who sojourned in South America, purportedly on an espionage mission under King Charles II. Her novella, *Oroonoko: or, the Royal Slave* (1688), expresses imperialist ideologies as she looks back on her days in English-controlled Surinam. In an endeavor to shed new light on the realities of colonial life, the paper adopts an interdisciplinary approach and juxtaposes Behn's observations with other European records. For instance, the paper compares Behn's depictions of African slaves in *Oroonoko* to those delineated in the Dutch painter Dirk Valkenburg's *Slave Dance* (1707). Surinam was the locus of diasporas and racial inequities for the enslaved as well as the indigenous, and the paper suggests that, in addition to peoples, the transposition of natural resources and manufactures may merit more scholarly attention. It attempts to demonstrate that literary testimonials such as *Oroonoko* have much in connection with art history and possess potential in uncovering the ways in which hegemonic paradigms shifted in the New World.

## **Individual Papers 6 (in English)**

### **1. Cultural recycling and neo-Soviet myth in the pre-war Russia**

**Aleksei Semenenko (Umeå University)**

This paper is a part of the research project “No(w)stalgia of Modernity: Neo-Soviet Myth in Contemporary Russian Culture and Politics”. In this project we analyze “the neo-Soviet myth”, or the unity of ideas, texts and practices that reconceptualize and “recycle” Soviet heritage in various ways, creating the image of an alternative Russian future. Since the 2010s, this myth has been especially notable on different levels of Russian culture and played an important role in the process of growing nostalgization of Russian media sphere. It was used by different actors with different purposes but most notably, it was exploited by the State and pro-State actors in their “agitainment” strategies. I focus on the recent developments in this sphere after the Russian invasion of Ukraine and discuss some important theoretical questions regarding cultural recycling, memory politics and cultural resistance.

I also discuss several theoretical concepts and their relevance for the study of “turbulent periods” in history, such as the notion of *cultural recycling* and *myth*. Cultural recycling (V’ugin 2018, Engström 2019) describes the mechanisms of reconceptualization of cultural values which are closely associated with the problems of retrospectivism, revisionism, and nostalgia. The concept of *myth* and *cultural memory* are now widely used in social and political studies (Assmann [1988], Halbwachs 1992, Smith 2002). By myth, I understand both a specific narrative that promotes a certain ideology and—in terms of cultural semiotics (Lotman 1990, 2009)—a specific type of texts that serves as a model of reality and organizes one’s worldview. Myths enable the recycling of cultural and ideological artefacts of the past and are crucial for understanding the current ideological climate in Russia.

### **2. Crisis of Environmental Journalism- The Case of Turkey**

**Barış Çoban (Doğuş University)**

The crisis in the field of economy and politics brought with it a crisis in journalism. The crisis of

authoritarian governments has led to the deepening of urban and environmental problems. Alternative media has an important function in discussing this crisis and producing solutions. However, this process also brings security problems in terms of journalism practice.

This study discusses how environmental journalists working for alternative media in Turkey, who continuously faces physical assaults, psychological distress, and lawsuits, develop safety *tactics* against repressive *strategies*. Since alternative media have no longer been considered as legitimate news media by the authorities, independent journalists experience varying degrees of harassment. Mining initiatives, hydroelectric power plants, and thermal power plants in different localities make the environment uninhabitable for the people living there. This situation draws the reaction of the public and causes the emergence of environment-based distributed social movements. Therefore, critical environmental journalists who shed light on them are faced with safety issues. Although most of the threats come from law enforcement, there are increasing numbers of incidents involving security personnel of companies, partisan mobs, and paramilitary groups. In addition, like the recent earthquakes, wildfires, and floods in Turkey, many other safety risks emerge due to the lack of protective equipment and vital information regarding how to stay safe during a natural disaster. However, previous studies demonstrate that creating safe working conditions for journalists is not a priority in Turkey's alternative media. By drawing on alternative journalism theory and literature on the safety of journalists, this gender-sensitive qualitative research focuses on the security of environmental journalists, who closely follow the struggles in protecting nature. I will conduct in-depth interviews with the alternative media reporters to get an insightful view of their awareness of the subject and the protective measures they use.

### **3. Critical Discourse Analysis of Some Western Public Intellectuals' Media Appearances on Russian Invasion of Ukraine (2022-2023)**

**Olena Semenets (Taurida National University)**

Russia's full-scale armed aggression against Ukraine (2022-2023) has clearly revealed the border between evil and good, aggressor and victim, totalitarian propaganda and the desire for freedom, Realpolitik and human dignity. The Great War of the 21st century found out absolutely clear moral assessments and guidelines.

However, some influential public intellectuals (Jürgen Habermas, Noam Chomsky, Jordan Peterson, and others), under the influence of Russia's nuclear blackmail and the threat of a Third world war, are calling for a 'peaceful settlement of the conflict', even if it is 'peace in exchange for territories', which means essentially meeting most of the aggressor's demands.

How does this manifest the 'ethics of discourse' of public thinkers? How are their arguments consistent with the principles of morality, the interests of particular countries and humanity as a whole?

It is expedient to analyze the media appearances of these influential scholars, relying on the procedural approach to ethical critique in CDA proposed by Norman Fairclough, based upon the 'argumentative turn' in Critical discourse analysis.

## **Individual Papers 7 (in English and French)**

### **1. Humanities Scholars in the Public Sphere: Squaring the Circle of Relevance**

**Guy Spielmann (Georgetown University)**

Ever since it was first identified almost exactly a century ago, the "crisis of the humanities" has been predominantly conceived as one of "declining prestige [...] defunding of [...] programs, and [...] poor employment prospects of its students." (Paul Jay, "The Humanities Crisis Then and Now," 2014). While these certainly remain serious concerns, they obnubilate the most crucial challenge that we now face: the startlingly diminishing impact that humanities scholars have on public debates about social, political and cultural issues. My analysis of the current situation brings to light the processes that have led to the discreditation of academic experts and to the concomitant promotion of pundits with slim credentials and the freedom to express opinions masquerading as knowledge, yet without the constraints imposed on actual research. I will argue that this crisis results not from external forces, but within academic institutions that keep imposing strictures on faculty work (as they should) while promoting as fully accredited contributors outsiders who need not conform to the exigencies of scientific research. How can bona fide humanities scholars, on the one hand, affirm their role in the public sphere and, on the other hand, reclaim the university as a site for scholarship that resists

oversimplification and ideological militancy? Deliberate strategies must be implemented, not so much to restore the prestige of the humanities than to reposition expertise at the core of academic institutions, and as the basis for public debate on compelling issues like social justice.

## **2. Man and Nature: Reboot the Traveling of *Around the World in Eighty Days* in the Age of Crisis** **Vivianne Wen-Hui Chang (Chung Yuan Christian University)**

*Around the World in Eighty Days*, which described in the 19th century a British gentleman gambled all the wealth in the bank: he promised himself that he could travel around the world in 80 days, is one of the representatives of the French writer-Jules VERNE. This paper aims to reboot the traveling in the age of post-epidemic by analyzing the interconnectedness between human and nature, or human and non-human beings. When the British colonial culture in the 19th century was transformed into the post-pandemic era, first, would people still be chatting in bars? And will the protagonist still travel across mountains, across deserts, and across oceans? Or affected by the epidemic, has there been any change in the relationship between man and nature? An attempt is made to summarize the interconnectedness of the story in a new and refresh ecological perspective.

## **3. Maux d'humour d'Annette Messenger: transformer les discours et les sociétés** **Charlène Clonts (Kyushu University)**

Dans la remédiation de l'installation *Les Pensionnaires* (1971-1972) sous la forme du livre d'artiste du même nom (2007), la plasticienne Annette Messenger combine le récit et l'art visuel dans un *espace conceptuel* qui propose la duplication (au sens étymologique de déploiement) d'une performance liminaire contenue dans les plis de l'œuvre. En mettant en évidence des mécanismes humoristiques, on montrera comment la transformation de discours établis génère un grotesque dont la dissidence est dirigée contre des modèles de société et contre certaines catégorisations conventionnelles, notamment dans le domaine des arts. Les dispositifs critiques de cet ouvrage produisent un déplacement, voire un décentrement, du regard de l'observateur.trice. Dans son rapport avec des normes dépassées, l'œuvre faussement naïve et farcesque de Messenger souligne la possibilité d'autres paradigmes pour un corps politico-social en crise, mis en scène au travers du corps féminin.

De Mai 1968 à nos jours, cet espace de résistance par l'art soulève certes les questions de la liberté individuelle et de l'égalité des genres mais aussi celle de la vigilance démocratique dans les rapports entre le pouvoir, la force et la société.

## **Individual Papers 8 (in English)**

### **1. The Seven Years' War and Vienna Court Nobility:**

#### **Count Johann Kevenhüller's Perspective through Diary Topic Analysis**

**Taisei Yamashita (Doshisha University)**

**Atsuhiko Uchida (Kobe University)**

The 18th century was a turbulent period in Europe. With armed conflicts triggered by dynastic succession and territorial expansion, in particular, the reign of Maria Theresa (1740-1780) in the second half of the century saw the outbreak of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). The war is well known as a calamitous international war; however, it had various historical significance depending on the position of the actors. Among the actors were the court nobles who were advisers to the monarch at the Viennese Court. Nevertheless, few attempts have analysed the perception of the Seven Years' War from the perspective of the Court, which was not directly affected by the war. Therefore, this report takes Count Johann Kevenhüller's view of the war as a case study to address such issues. He was a leading court aristocrat of his time, a close associate of Maria Theresa as the lord high chamberlain at the Imperial Court. Over an extended period, he kept diaries of his observation. By using text mining, this study combines digital technology methods and historiographical analysis to examine this ego document. The result will provide a more multifaceted understanding of the historical meaning of the Seven Years' War, a turbulent period.

## **2. A Crisis Forgotten:**

### **Language, Cultural and Personal Identity in Kazuo Ishiguro's *The Buried Giant***

**Barbara Marquardt (University of Trier)**

In Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *The Buried Giant* (2016) the protagonists Beatrice and Axl venture out of their village in order to solve a personal crisis: the disappearance of their son. However, as the elderly couple embark on their journey, it quickly becomes evident that their problems are even bigger than initially anticipated: not only have they forgotten their son's name and the reason for their quarrel, they also do not know where to find him. Like many of their peers, the couple experience a severe memory loss that clouds their daily life as well as their personal history and affects their sense of belonging. This memory loss, brought about by a higher power in the aftermath of a devastating war, also has grave implications for the characters' personal, national and cultural identity, a fact that is also mirrored in their language output. This paper aims to explore the interrelation between personal and cultural crises as well as their impact on identity by analysing the elusive poetics of forgetting and the language output and style used in the novel on the character level as well as on the level of narration.

## **3. Performance in an Age of Permacrisis**

**Laura Bissell (Royal Conservatoire of Scotland)**

Performance artist Guillermo Gómez-Peña claimed at the start of the decade that "Performance as an artistic 'genre' is in a constant state of crisis, and is therefore an ideal medium for articulating a time of permanent crisis such as ours" (*Dangerous Border Crossers*, London: Routledge, 2000: 9). The term permacrisis overtook polycrisis in 2022 as a descriptor of multiple challenges that occur constantly. This paper explores performance-making as responsive, discursive and activist in relation to a state of permacrisis. From the turn of the century to the present there has been political instability caused by 9/11, the financial crisis and its fall out, the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum followed by the Brexit vote which led to the UK leaving the EU in 2020. The refugee crisis, global COVID-19 pandemic, white supremacy, war in Europe and worsening climate crisis are all part of a culture of permacrisis that performance makers and artists have been responding to. This paper asks, what can art do? Using case studies of contemporary performances, I argue that performance



practitioners have responded to the context, both as the impetus for the creation of new work, its subject matter, and as a tool to encourage political and social change.

#### **4. The Nonmodern Alternative Beyond Metamodernity:**

##### **Graham Harman on the Way Out of Modern Philosophy**

**Adam Lovasz (ELTE University)**

During the course of the past decade, the concept of the „metamodern” has emerged. Partly as a result of the perceived failure of the postmodern movement to truly go beyond modernity, partly itself a syncretist response to the crisis of modernity, metamodernism has grasped the attention of scholars working in multiple disciplines. In my paper, I argue that metamodernism remains for the most part enmeshed within modern ways of thinking. The worryingly „post-ironic” sentimentalism, even retrograde humanism of the movement’s representatives are not enough. As an alternative, I suggest that Graham Harman’s nonmodernist approach works better. In Harman’s view, building on the work of late sociologist Bruno Latour, any genuine alternative to modernity must be predicated upon a thoroughgoing rejection of modern philosophy’s anthropocentrism. As Niki Young emphasizes, Harman’s work as a whole is an exercise in transcending onto-taxonomy, the hierarchical categorization of beings in relation to centralizing concepts of the human. By confronting the humanist excesses of metamodernism with nonmodernism, a genuine „outside” to modernity’s universalizing anthropomachinery can be envisioned which is open to the „pluriverse” (Arturo Escobar’s expression).