

PROJEKT BADAWCZY 1 i 2

2023/2024_SEMESTR LETNI, 2024/2025_SEMESTR ZIMOWY

KULTURA-MEDIA-TRANSLACJA

Dr hab. Rafał Borysławski, prof. UŚ

“Emotional engines”: Literary studies after the emotional turn.

Since the so-called “emotional turn” in sociology, psychology, and history, the study of emotions as social, historical, and cultural drives has gained momentum and does not show signs of abating. Likewise, with the rise of the influence of social media, we seem to be living in an increasingly emotional or overemotionalised time when various impassioned responses are expressly or even violently demanded politically and culturally from us. Based on these premises, this series of research project seminars will extend an invitation to closer studies of emotions and emotional motivations that operate in and through literary works as well as, more broadly, in the works of culture. We are going to face and ask a number of questions, such as those about how fundamental emotional motivations are for culture to take its shape; about the specific ways emotions are manifested in literary and cultural works and how it is that they manage to impact the ways we experience them. We will discuss whether and how we can share an emotional rapport with literary creations of the present and the past and we will talk about what, in fact, emotions in literature and culture are. Are certain emotional states culturally overrepresented, and whether, as is the case of anger in social media, some of them are more culturally effective than others? Finally, we are also going to ask if it is at all possible to recreate an emotional experience or disposition of the past and whether such a reconstruction contributes to our understanding of emotional engines of the present.

Throughout the first term of the course, we will study and debate critical texts devoted to the psychology, sociology and history of emotions to see how their potential extends to the understanding of emotional mechanisms acting in and through literary texts. As intense case studies, we will scrutinize selected short poetic works of 20th- and 21st-century British poets (e.g., Philip Larkin, Seamus Heaney, Carol Ann Duffy). You will be invited to work in small teams and in pairs and, in the second part of the term, devise and present a discussion of cultural manifestations of an emotional state or an emotionological study of a cultural choice of your own in the form of a small conference. After the summer break, our meetings will continue in the first term of your final year of studies, when you will work more closely and individually on separate emotion-related projects that will be directly pertinent to your M.A. dissertations. Again, the hope then will be that your projects will form a basis for our shared discussion of your findings that will likely be inspirational for the entire research project group and, possibly, beyond.

Dr Tomasz Gnat

Title: Beyond Play: Exploring Games in Broader Cultural and Contextual Landscapes

The research project "Beyond Play" aims to examine the diverse roles games play in broader cultural, social, economic, and historical contexts. This study seeks to unravel the intricate connections between games and various aspects of human life, including their impact on cultural identity, social dynamics, economic ecosystems, and historical narratives. By adopting a multidisciplinary approach, the research endeavors to contribute to a holistic understanding of games as complex and influential phenomena within the broader tapestry of human experience.

Possible points of focus:

1. Investigate the cultural significance of games: Examine how games function as cultural artifacts, shaping and reflecting cultural identity, traditions, and narratives across different societies and historical periods.
2. Explore the social dynamics within gaming communities: Analyze the emergence of gaming subcultures, communities, and the role of games as platforms for social interaction, identity formation, and collective expression.
3. Examine the economic impact of the gaming industry: Investigate the economic dimensions of the gaming industry, including its contributions to employment, innovation, and the broader digital economy.
4. Analyze the historical evolution of games: Explore the historical development of games, tracing their roots and evolution across different cultures and time periods, and their role in shaping historical narratives.
5. Investigate the intersection of games with other media forms: Examine how games interact with and influence other forms of media, such as film, literature, music, and visual arts, contributing to the broader cultural landscape.

Methodology: This research project will employ a comprehensive mixed-methods approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative research methods. The study will also involve the analysis of historical documents, cultural artifacts, and media content related to games. The culmination of the "Beyond Play" research project is envisioned to result in a comprehensive presentation or research paper that synthesizes the multifaceted dimensions of games in broader cultural and contextual landscapes.

Dr Anna Kisiel

Trauma – Togetherness – Femininity

The research project *Trauma – Togetherness – Femininity* is addressed to students interested in critical readings of English-language texts of culture, including literature, films, TV series, and music. The participants of this project are encouraged to study the correspondences between selected texts of culture and literary theory – especially psychoanalysis, trauma studies, and feminist criticism. The use of methodological tools based on the mentioned theories will provide students with a critical insight into such phenomena tackled in cultural texts as: workings and potentialities of the human body and mind; individuality, community, otherness, and togetherness; attempts at representation of the irrepresentable; and society, power relations, and an individual. In order to support students in achieving this goal, this project pays utmost attention to discussions, presentations, and readings of selected theoretical texts, expanding our critical perspective on the everyday reality.

My research interests include, but are not limited to:

- trauma and memory in English-language cultural texts;
- psychoanalytical readings of English-language cultural texts;
- body and corporeality in English-language cultural texts;
- femininity, motherhood, and daughterhood in English-language cultural texts;
- otherness and togetherness in English-language cultural texts;
- feminist readings of English-language cultural texts.

These are the areas that I find myself most comfortable working with. I am especially interested in contemporary British literature, but I am open to other possibilities as well. Topics of students' individual projects – especially those outside my immediate research interests – need to be approved by me.

When involved in the project, students will need to formulate a research question and a thesis statement, prepare an annotated bibliography, carry out the supervised research, and, ultimately, present the result of their study. The result – the key goal of the project – might be presented in a form of an article to be published in an academic journal, a paper at an academic conference, a publication on a website, etc.

Dr hab. Jacek Mydla, prof. UŚ

MIMESIS: PHILOSOPHY – LITERATURE – CULTURE

This project's concern is mimesis, or artistic representation and imitation of reality, also known as the "mimetic mirror." The focus of interest in the course will move from theory (1st semester) to its applications in interpretive practice (2nd semester). In the first semester, we are going to study the classical theories of mimesis (i.e., Plato, Aristotle, Johnson) and their contemporary interpretations (e.g., Murdoch, Nehamas and Halliwell), as well as chosen contemporary approaches to mimesis and its redefinitions (e.g., Ingarden, Auerbach, Girard, Lawtoo). We'll pay special attention to philosophical and theoretical extensions of the meaning of mimesis. In the second semester, students will explore chosen aspects of mimesis, namely, the ways the concepts, approaches and theories discussed in the 1st semester apply to a range of literary and artistic works and other cultural practices and products (e.g., films), possibly including the material they are working with in their MA projects. The scope of this project is broad and allows students (1) to study one of the most persistent conceptual paradigms in Western culture while (2) pursuing their distinct academic interests.

Dr Sabina Sweta Sen-Podstawska

Indigenous Methodologies in Practice

This research project focuses on the application of Indigenous methodologies and is primarily addressed to students already working on topics related to Indigenous literature, art, history and culture for their MA theses or other projects.

Students will be introduced to Indigenous methodologies (offered by Indigenous Elders, scholars and artists in Canada) alongside the basic principles of sensory ethnography, autoethnography and embodied methodologies. Putting adequate methodologies into practice, students will undertake research projects on chosen topics of interest within Indigenous cultural expressions in visual arts, performance, and multidisciplinary art in Canada. Possible aspects of the study include but are not limited to the role and characteristics of oral traditions (storytelling), traditional beliefs, worldviews, ceremonies, rituals, spiritualities, relationships with the land/water/sky, gender relations and Indigenous feminisms in artistic practices and

their influence on identity formation and contemporary cultural expressions in the context of historical and ongoing relations between Indigenous Nations and the Canadian government. In their research projects, students are encouraged to explore how cultural expressions of contemporary Indigenous artists enable them to speak, resist and challenge, dismantle the colonial, patriarchal and other dominant systems of oppression, and demonstrate resilience, stewardship and healing towards the well-being of all people and the earth.

The study and research process will involve the formulation of research questions, preparation of annotated bibliographies, preparing research proposals, research diaries, research reports, writing abstracts of projects/presentations/papers, carrying out supervised research while incorporating adequate tools and adhering to ethics and protocols, delivering and sharing the result of the study in a chosen form (an academic article for publication, a presentation at a students' conference or seminar, workshops for high school students, a popular science article for publication in journals, websites and social media platforms, etc.).

While students can choose to work on individual research projects, they will be encouraged to find patterns and themes of connections across personal research interests, fostering collaborative research projects in small groups. We will also consider how, as the entire group, we can support, share and learn from each other's work (successes and challenges) and also present the results of the research and the process of applying Indigenous methodologies to a broader community (academic and non-academic) on platforms and manners that will be suitable to the research topics and decided together by the group.

This research project places equal emphasis on the process as well as the outcome. While skills such as critical and creative thinking, academic integrity, planning, time management, evaluating and giving feedback, and teamwork will be nurtured, an openness to undergo inward reflections/self-reflections and growing awareness of one's positionality will be an integral part of this experience. To honor the ethics and protocols of Indigenous methodologies, we will invite and host Indigenous Elders, scholars and artists as part of the learning, research and presentation process.