

“But They’re Nothing Like Us!” A Pedagogic Approach to Shakespearean Drama in Kuwait

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Abstract

This paper considers teaching British canonical texts such as William Shakespeare’s tragedy *Othello, the Moor of Venice* in multicultural settings. The author discusses her experiences with teaching Shakespearean drama to a group of undergraduate students who are not essentially interested in Western texts. Making connections to the students’ immediate lives proves to be essential in drawing the students into a more active learning environment that brings Shakespearean texts closer to home. By localizing Shakespeare’s text, the students were able to find literary value that resonates with their own lived experiences. The classroom thus becomes a place of safety and finding one’s voice both inside and outside the classroom.

Keywords: Shakespeare, Arab, personal narrative, pedagogy, cultural studies

Clowns, Guns and a Writer's Block: Romanian-American Encounters in *Her Alibi* (1989)

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Abstract

When Bruce Beresford's film *Her Alibi* was released in early 1989, it was unenthusiastically received by the American critics and audiences as just another mixture of romantic comedy, crime and mystery, better suited perhaps to television than to the big screen. What seems to be paid little attention to in numerous professional or amateur reviews of the film is that it actually foregrounds the encounter of the American culture with the Romanian other. Not only does it reflect cultural differences that shape the sense of identity of the American hosts and of the Romanian migrants, but it sets them against the background of the tensions between the West, represented by the USA, and the East, represented by communist Romania, over the last years of the Cold War. The paper proposes an imagological exploration of the interplay of images of American identity in the late 1980s and of the Romanian migrant, trapped between 'Home' and the 'West', in an American production that, more or less explicitly, draws on propaganda-ridden Cold War themes.

Keywords: film, self/other, migration, East/West, propaganda

Consciousness on Stream in *The Ambassadors* by Henry James

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Abstract

The purpose of the current paper is to analyse, in parallel, the works of two American brothers, William and Henry James, who influenced the psychological and literary standards of the twentieth century. William theorised the concept of consciousness and coined the term “stream of consciousness”; Henry pictured it in his novels by imitating the stream of consciousness of his characters. The wide variety of Thematic Progression and lexical repetition throughout the latter’s novel, *The Ambassadors*, is accompanied by numerous literary devices which attempt to reconstruct the movements of thought and the psychological processes related to it. In this regard, the paper aims to analyse Henry James’s skilful use of the Theme and Rheme pattern in *The Ambassadors*, which seems intended to increase the complexity of the narrative thread, as well as the lexical repetition present throughout the novel, accompanied by numerous literary devices which, in turn, attempt to reconstruct the movements of thought and the psychological processes related to it.

Keywords: thought, stream of consciousness, introspection, thematic progression, lexical repetition

The Otherworlds of the Mind: Loci of Resistance in Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Word for World Is Forest* and *Voices* (Book II of the *Annals of the Western Shore*)

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Abstract

Space is of utmost importance in Ursula K. Le Guin's fantasy and science fiction works, in which it often functions as a metaphor for the mind. The heterotopic spaces in the novella *The Word for World Is Forest* (one of the works in her *Hainish* cycle) and in the novel *Voices* (book II of the *Annals of the Western Shore series*) serve as loci of resistance: otherworlds mirroring the consciousness of entire cultures fighting for survival. This paper analyzes the way in which two drastically different forms of resistance, violent and peaceful, unfold in the mindspaces of their respective cultures.

Keywords: Le Guin, resistance, space, heterotopia, heterochrony

Constructing Identity in Higher Education Prospectuses. Approach to the Rhetoric of *Excellence*

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Abstract

Taking a discursive approach to prospectuses of higher education institutions, this paper explores the way identity is constructed in this type of discourse envisaged as an instance of promotional discourse that displays a carefully weighed self-promotion strategy meant to build an image of academic excellence and professionalism for the institution. The study details the characteristics of this discourse genre using data from French, British, and American prospectuses. The findings shed light on the interactional, and argumentative devices which count as identity-building strategies meant to create and ensure the reception of the image intended by the institution. Means of referring, devices used to outline worth against competitors and argumentative practices employed to promote prestige and value of the institution are investigated.

Keywords: promotional discourse, prospectuses, identity, interactional devices, argumentative devices

Essential Textual and Editorial Markers of the Editions of the Bible's Georgian Translations in the Pre-Soviet, Soviet and Post-Soviet Eras

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Abstract

The paper studies the editing history of the Bible's Georgian translations (BGTs), covering the pre-Soviet, Soviet and post-Soviet eras. The main goal of the article is to identify the essential textual and editorial markers of the editions carried out in these three different epochs. Actuality of the research is conditioned by the fact that in Georgian reality (and not only), the field of the Editorial Studies is still considered as an applied part of the Textual Scholarship, associated with publishing and the scientific boundaries between these two disciplines are not clearly delineated yet, despite the fact that the Georgian editors have always conducted editorial work alongside with the textual one since the early middle ages. This is especially obvious in the example of the editions of the BGTs, which appeared in the early years of Christianity (5th-6th cc.) and occupy one of the honourable places on the world cultural map alongside the Latin, Coptic, Gothic, Armenian, Arabic, and Aramaic translations. The Georgian textual criticism and editorial studies developed within the practice of: a) producing manuscripts of the BGTs (before invention of the printing press), b) editing them (in the print era) and c) making electronic editions (in the digital era). In the article, I do not deal with the issue of producing manuscripts, but only with the history of printed editions and with a few electronic editions. The research has shown that, despite ideological pressure in the Soviet era, thanks to the Georgian scientists, the editions of the BGTs spiritually and intellectually fed the Georgian national being and strengthened its national identity.

Keywords: Bible's Georgian Translations, Pre-Soviet Era, Soviet Era, Post-Soviet Era, Scholarly Edition

Private Letters as Visual Evidence for Disclosure of the Totalitarian Regime

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Abstract

The paper aims to prove the impact of the totalitarian regime on individuals, society and interpersonal relationships, reflected in personal letters, as well as the consequences of this impact. The research object includes the epistolary legacy of the 19th-century Georgian poet and public figure, the General of the Russian Army, Grigol Orbeliani, and that of the 20th century Georgian historian, founder and Rector of Tbilisi State University, Ivane Javakhishvili. They both were members of the Georgian society, on extremely different sides, owing to their beliefs and worldviews: the former was an active participant in the creation of the totalitarian regime and represented the foothold of Russian authority in fulfilling the forcible policy in the Caucasus, and the latter was a victim of the totalitarian regime; by keeping the national values, worldviews, and personal freedom, he opposed authority. As a result, he became an object of persecution and insult. The comparative analysis of the two different epochs has once again revealed that Bolshevism was a logical extension of Tsarist Russia's imperial policy: in both epochs, the Russian sovereignty used similar methods to implement and maintain a totalitarian regime: obtaining the public confidence, dividing the society, encouraging people to denounce and doom each other in order to create successful careers and so on. By bringing the examples from modern life, the work shows that, despite the fact that communism has fallen, its influence on society is still evident.

Keywords: totalitarian regime, private letters, Grigol Orbeliani, Ivane Javakhishvili, Russian authority

“... the price we pay for peace”: Luba Lukova’s Poster Art

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Abstract

Placed at the crossroads of fine and applied arts, of advertising and reproduction, the poster is a hybrid visual medium which synthesises words and images to communicate its message through both semantic content and aesthetic features. Significantly, the poster’s visual cues are arranged into patterns that are powerfully direct and focused, meant to act on and trigger responses from the potential audience, while, through its manipulation of cultural codes, generalised meanings and beliefs, they can construct or deconstruct contemporary ‘myths,’ the same as other multimodal texts, like film, may do. Hence, the aim of the paper is to offer a semiotic analysis of Luba Lukova’s conceptual poster entitled War and Peace in order to demonstrate how, by means of a simple visual language, her work revisits and revises the myths of ‘war heroics’ and ‘blissful peace,’ imparting a strong social and political vision as poignantly and effectively as complex multimodal texts like Michael Cimino’s ‘The Deer Hunter’, Hal Ashby’s ‘Coming Home’, or Oliver Stone’s ‘Born on the Fourth of July’ did on the screen.

Keywords: conceptual illustration, political poster, anti-war film, myth, semiotics, multimodality

Narrative Strategies of the Representation of Consciousness in the Modern Georgian Novel: Post-Soviet Experience (Based on *Obole* by Aka Morchiladze)

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Abstract

The paper presents the outcomes of the research on the following topic: the formation of the national identity in the Post-Soviet/Post-Communist Georgian literary discourse. The material is taken from *Obole* – a novel by a famous representative of post-modern Georgian literature Aka Morchiladze. The research methodology consists of cognitive narratology, namely, the narratological knowledge aimed at the study of the character’s consciousness (Palmer 2004, Zunshine 2006). In order to identify the peculiarities of the act of remembering, the research uses various approaches to the research of memory (Neumann 2005, Birke 2008). The aim of the research is to define the role of values, aspirations and opinions (regarding the reality beyond “the iron curtain”), obligations, traumatic experience, action programs (stereotypes) (Antonio Damasio) formed in the Georgian society (on the individual and collective levels) during the Soviet regime in the functioning of the autobiographic self/identity of characters living in the Post-Soviet reality. The research attempts to study how the old model of identity meets human homeostatic and homeodynamic (Antonio Damasio) needs in the new reality of the Post-Communist period. The research also attempts to find out whether the act of remembering (Soviet experience) supports or hampers the formation of the new national identity. Based on the novel under analysis, the research identified the peculiarities of individual and social consciousness in the Post-Soviet reality. Implementation of the above-mentioned objectives clarified the cultural representation of Communism in the Post-Soviet States.

Keywords: Soviet experience. National identity, cognitive narratology, Aka Morchiladze

The Complete Works of Shakespeare in Ukrainian: A Breakthrough or a Slowdown?

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Abstract

During the times of the USSR, only four of its states managed to publish complete works of Shakespeare in their local languages. The first edition to include 37 plays of the Great Bard appeared in Russian SFSR in 1937 – 1945. Among other Soviet nations, Estonia was the first to publish the complete works of Shakespeare in its native language (its seven volumes were released from 1957 to 1975); in the 70s Georgia followed. The Ukrainians were the last to join the “elite” club, with their six-volume edition published from 1984 to 1986. The publication was a remarkable feat of a team of translators, editors and literary scholars and is widely regarded as a cornerstone of the Ukrainian Shakespeareana.

The paper focuses on the history of the multi-volume editions of Shakespeare in Ukrainian, showing the wide cultural and political context that led to the appearance of the complete works of the Bard in the Ukrainian SSR. The author shows the directions of critical re-evaluation of this edition that in the independent Ukraine has acquired the critical immunity which resulted in the shift of this set to the periphery of readers and literati’s interest. The reconsiderations of the translations and critical apparatus of the complete Ukrainian Shakespeare would intensify the creation of new Ukrainian versions of Shakespeare’s plays and undermine the well-established image of the Bard as an antiquated and pretentious playwright.

Keywords: Shakespeare, complete works, multi-volume edition, accuracy, performance-oriented translations

The Mock-Shakespeare by Les Podervianskyi: Overcoming Soviet Experience

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Abstract

Shakespeare's presence in the Soviet and early post-Soviet culture was ensured not only by translations, productions and general official appraisal, but also by travesty and mockery, which were typical of the underground cultural space. The paper considers the specificity of the Soviet Shakespeare appropriation with a special focus on its burlesque type. The case of the Ukrainian artist and playwright Les Podervianskyi, who employed Shakespeare's plots and characters to mock Communist ideological clichés and stereotypes, is under study. The author aims at tracing the ways in which irony, mockery and burlesque remakes of the eternal classic literature undermine a range of destructive political and social discourses at various levels. Through the analysis of Shakespeare-based plays by Les Podervianskyi – *Hamlet, or The Phenomenon of the Danish Katsapism* and *King Liter* – the article highlights one of the main tendencies of the Soviet underground literature (that of mocking the gruesome reality) and specifies Podervianskyi's unique attitude which was both anti-Soviet and anti-Russian.

Keywords: William Shakespeare, Les Poderviankyi, travesty, burlesque, totalitarian discourse

Intertextual Ever Afters: Fictionalised Biography and Compensatory Adaptation in *Shakespeare in Love* and *Becoming Jane*

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Abstract

The paper aims to explore the fusion of intertextual borrowings and imaginative historical recreation in John Madden's 1998 *Shakespeare in Love* and Julian Jarrold's 2007 *Becoming Jane* in an attempt to establish the full extent of the similarity between the strategies employed in their scripts and the relevance of the insights they provide into issues concerning literary authorship and a wider cultural landscape. This will entail both a comparative assessment of the two cinematic endeavours and a side-by-side analysis of each film script and the literary work whose plot it mirrors (*Romeo and Juliet* and *Pride and Prejudice* respectively). Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which isolated lines or entire episodes from William Shakespeare's tragedy and Jane Austen's novel are subtly adapted or simply pilfered to fill in gaps in two similarly elusive biographies and to account for the inspiration behind two of literature's most enduring couples, whilst also somehow compensating for the missing element of romance in the real lives of their creators. In focusing on the complex fusion of literary biography and adaptation to be discovered under the surface of apparently facile (albeit bittersweet) romantic comedy, this exploration will ultimately try to assess each film's relevance in the context of the constantly escalating interest in William Shakespeare and Jane Austen and the daunting intertextual (and multimedial) universes radiating from these two centres of the western and universal canon.

Keywords: adaptation, authorship, biopic, intertextuality, reception

The Main Father-Daughter Relationship in Julia Kavanagh's *Rachel Gray*: Between Reality and Fictionality

Alina PINTILII (Senior Lecturer, "B. P. Haşdeu" Cahul State University)

Abstract

The present paper carries out a contrastive analysis between the paternal and filial images that form the main parent-child relationship depicted in Julia Kavanagh's *Rachel Gray* in order to invalidate the assumption that Victorian realist writers sought to hold a mirror to reality even in the cases when their novels were founded on fact. This analysis will show that there is a significant divergence between the literary and socio-historical constructs of the family roles of mid-Victorian working classes, in spite of the fact that some of the elements used in the creation of fictional characters were borrowed from real-life experiences. Moreover, the article will indicate that the paternal figure it deals with deviates from its prototypical counterpart by approximating one of the most powerful stereotypes revolving around working-class Victorian men, namely the stereotype of the absent father.

Keywords: mid-Victorian working classes, father-daughter relationship, devoted filial love, paternal indifference, socio-historical prototype

The Art and Politics of Rewriting. Margaret Atwood's Historical Notes on *The Handmaid's Tale*

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Abstract

Among the many frameworks of interpretation that Margaret Atwood's dystopia (or ustopia, as she calls it) *The Handmaid's Tale* allows, a particularly challenging one is its reading in/as palimpsest. Choosing not to favour an attempt at hierarchizing the narrative construction and the fabula contained in Offred's spoken tale – transcribed from audiocassettes two centuries after the deployment of the Christian fundamentalist coup d'état that turned the United States into a horrifying inferno for women –, and also leaving on the sidelines the seductive, yet rather facile feminist evaluation that the novel invites, this paper focuses on metafiction and the rewriting of "herstory", in an analysis of the 'Historical Notes' that conclude the novel, going backwards rather than forwards in tracing its art and politics.

Keywords: metafiction, rewriting, authenticity, intertextuality, canon

The Azerbaijan Carpet Museum: A Symbol of National Identity and Heritage in a Post-Soviet Era

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Abstract

This article outlines the history and overview of the modern Azerbaijan Carpet Museum located in Baku. It explores the museum's efforts to document and educate the public about the art and cultural heritage of carpet weaving in Azerbaijan from fiber production to finished product, providing innovative approaches to curation, such as having live carpet weavers as part of the museum display. Furthermore, the article examines the role of the museum as not simply a repository for artefacts, but as a symbol for building a national identity and shared heritage among Azeri nationals in a post-Soviet Azerbaijan.

Keywords: Museums, Cultural Heritage, Post-Soviet National Identity

(De)Constructing Leadership through Ritualised Discourse

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Abstract

This study deals with the notion of leadership, envisaged broadly as the quality of a head of state to lead his people towards a common goal while conveying the image of a role-model by both his actions and statements. During his presidential term, a head of state is confronted with many institutionalised contexts where he is expected to issue an official speech. From the numerous official speeches that a president is likely to deliver, I have chosen to dwell on one of the most ritualised discursive sequences, namely the presidential greetings on New Year's Eve, in order to highlight how the presidential ethos is built through discursive and extra-discursive elements. In this context, I have taken into account the greetings of the Romanian ex-President, Traian Băsescu, from the period 2004-2013 (he was elected twice) with a view to analysing both the purely discursive devices (speech acts, appellatives, semantic content emphasized) and the extra-linguistic elements (place where the discourse is delivered, communication channel). The analysis aims at answering the following questions: Can we consider the presidential greetings and the choices made within and outside the discourse itself as indirect evidence of the diminution of the public support that the president had benefited from? Do the greetings emphasize the president's effort to adapt to his audience while maintaining the tradition of a well-established ritual?

Keywords: presidential address, discourse analysis, epideictic rhetoric, ethos

On Book to Movie Adaptations

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Abstract

Adapting full-length novels, short stories or novellas to movies has become a very frequent endeavour. Filmmakers choose (potentially) iconic literary works and adapt them for the screen so that they become accessible to very large audiences, which is to be quite expected in the digital era. This study aims to take a look at the symbiotic relationship between books and movies.

Keywords: literary text, filmic adaptation, reader, audience

The Rhetoric of Geopolitical Fiction in Churchill's Iron Curtain Speech

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Abstract

An examination of the power of words, of the realm shared by fiction, poetry and political discourse, brings us to one of the most important common points linking the language of literature and its rhetoric, on the one hand, and the rhetoric of political discourse on the other: the consistent use of figurative language to appeal to the feelings of audiences. Most people would think, whether rightly or wrongly, of politics as relatively impure and manipulative and of literary language as elevated and enlightening. The emphasis in this text, a reconsideration of Churchill's famous "Iron Curtain Speech," is not on the evaluation of the quality of the literary and political discourses, but on the devices used in the public space that heavily rely on what one usually calls fictional, literary, even poetical devices to create "extra-literary" effects.

Keywords: rhetoric, geopolitics, the Cold War, the special relationship, the Iron Curtain

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