



UNIwersYTET
ŁÓDZKI

PASE 2018

The 27th Annual Conference of the
Polish Association for the Study of English



LANGUAGE, ART, LITERATURE: IN SEARCH OF IDENTITY

UNIVERSITY OF ŁÓDŹ, 25-27 JUNE 2018

To speak of identity at the beginning of the twenty-first century is necessarily to engage a paradox. The death of the self-conscious Cartesian subject heralded by the advent of twentieth-century poststructuralism and the critique of essentialism came hand in hand with denials of any fixed or stable value to notions such as gender, race, or even human nature itself. Much of this critique capitalized on the ripe strata of earlier philosophical skepticism as to the possibility of circumscribing the human self within a definable horizon of expectations, a position going back to the thought of David Hume in the early days of the modern world as we know it. Yet, to look at the modern world as it nears the end of the second decade of the new century is to see these very same categories reemerge and not just shape the theoretical discourse of the human sciences but affect the lives of people across the globe. As new nationalisms rise, religious wars touch populations worldwide and racism still dominates much of identity politics, it is worth asking how to square theory with social reality to say something meaningful about the world around us and how it came to be what it is.

In *Seeing Through Race*, W.J.T. Mitchell provides a framework for reflection on the nature of socio-cultural perception by arguing that race is “not merely a content to be mediated, an object to be represented visually and verbally, or a thing to be depicted in a likeness or image, but that race is itself a medium and an iconic form—not simply to be seen, but itself a framework for seeing through or (as Wittgenstein would put it) seeing *as*.” This conference aims to expand this perspective onto other historically essentialist notions such as gender, sex, age, class, nation, ethnicity and religion and to scrutinize the categories that have come to define identity throughout the history of Anglophone cultures, literatures, and in the English language. Suggesting that it is worthwhile to look at each of these concepts not as something to be studied but rather, as Mitchell has it, as “a frame, a window, a screen, or a lens” through which people have historically structured the world around them and endowed it with meaning, we thus hope to inquire not just into how language, literature and art *reflect* reality but also how they *shape* it. The thematic session suggestions listed below do not exhaust the topic and contributors are welcome to submit paper proposals on any historical or contemporary aspect of the construction of identity in the English-speaking world.

Thematic Sessions - Literature

Body, Discourse, Language: Locations of Identity
Self and/or Other - Othering and Otherness in Literary History
Intersections of Religion and Identity in Anglophone Literatures
Gender and Identity in Anglophone Literatures and Cultures
Nation, Nationalism and National Identity - a Literary Perspective
Identity in the Age of Posthumanism

Thematic Sessions - Linguistics

The Linguistics Sessions are meant to bring together various perspectives on language as a tool in identity creating, perpetuating, challenging or resisting. Potential topics include:

Identity in and across sociolinguistic contexts and discourses

Linguistic processes and strategies in identity construction and performance

Categorization and identity

Identity and multilingualism

Identity and foreign language learning/teaching

Discourse strategies of identity construction

Positioning theory and identity

Conversational settings and personal identity performance

Communication and public management of self

Narrative as a tool in identity construction and performance

Identity and cognition

a. Time, space and identity maintenance

b. Memory and identity

c. Conceptualization of self and the other

d. Cognitive models of self

The following scholars have accepted our invitation to address the conference as plenary speakers:

Christoph Bode (LMU Munich)

Adam Głaz (Maria Curie Skłodowska University, Lublin)

Jan Jędrzejewski (University of Ulster)

Agnieszka Kiełkiewicz-Janowiak (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań)

Barbara Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk (State University of Applied Sciences in Konin)

Proposals for twenty-minute papers are welcome on any aspect of the conference theme. All abstracts (maximum of 300 words) must contain the title of the proposed paper, the name of the author and contact information (institutional affiliation, mailing address and email address). Proposals for discussion panels on all subjects are also welcome; the Organizing Board will put together panels on hate speech, Irish studies and children's literature, but we will also be happy to include other panel-format discussions in the conference programme. Abstracts should be submitted by 28 February 2018 to the following e-mail address:

paseliterature2018@uni.lodz.pl - for papers in literature and culture

paselinguistics2018@uni.lodz.pl - for papers in linguistics

Notification of acceptance will be sent by 1 April 2018.

Conference fee:

550 PLN for academics holding positions at Polish Universities without PASE membership

500 PLN for PASE members

400 PLN for doctoral students

140 EURO for delegates based outside of Poland

The fee covers conference materials, coffee and snacks and the conference reception.