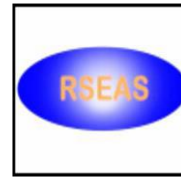




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**The Department of British, American and German Studies
Faculty of Letters, University of Craiova**

in partnership with
University of Sassari, Sardegna
The Romanian Society for English and American Studies (RSEAS)
The European Society for the Study of English (ESSE)

announces

THE 21st INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND CULTURAL POLICIES

MIRARI, MIRABILIA, MIRROR

REFLECTIONS OF REALITY IN LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS

to be held in Craiova, Romania

21-23 October 2022

“Mirrors should reflect a little, before throwing back images.”

(Jean Cocteau, *The Blood of a Poet*)

One of the most common activities that people do on a regular basis is looking in the mirror. Whether people like what they see or not, whether the mirror distorts the image of the reflected object or sometimes replaces it with a new image, looking at the self in a mirror puts everybody in some sort of puzzlement (*mirari*), which turns this activity into an uncanny experience. Since a mirror reproduces what comes from outside, the practice of mirroring creates the impression of a parallel space and time, which reflects the acknowledged division between reality and illusion. Being the marvelous (*mirabilia*) instrument for showing people themselves, mirrors can act as both deceivers and carriers of truth, as separators between what we want to see and what we fear to see.

The unforeseeable evolution of this banal object, once rare and expensive, has determined the direction our civilization actually takes. In classical antiquity mirrors were attributed a heuristic value, which explained the natural phenomena, miracles and the unseen atomic world. In the

Middle Ages, mirrors played an essential part in folklore and folk tales. The metaphor of the mirror as a beautifying instrument for women was the major theme of many religious works which gave birth to the mirror literature (*Speculum Virginum*). The Renaissance invented the glass mirror, ‘the technological marvel of the age’ (Herbert Grabes), which made the individual more aware of her/his identity and made possible a new reflexive self-consciousness. In early modern, modern and contemporary times, mirrors have been employed as metaphors for rationality and knowledge, strongly rooted in psychology, linguistics and semiotics. Richard Rorty considered that knowledge is nothing but a mirror-image of the world.

Reflecting and *speculating* upon the world around us, while *considering* the information that we have about it, all this is done by means of words. The connection between language and thought has been analyzed ever since antiquity. Language has been seen as an expression of thoughts (Aristotle), it reflects an immediate, sensorial experience (Empiricism), or is a mere expression of reasoning (Rationalism); it creates a representation of reality (Wittgenstein), shapes our views of the world (the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis) or articulates innate abilities to communicate (Chomsky).

A synchronic analysis of language offers a snapshot of reality at a specific time in the development of a linguistic community; analysed in diachrony, language provides an indicator of the change of mentalities and of technical and scientific progress. Therefore, it mirrors the world we live in, but it can also skillfully mystify reality, when need be. It reflects people’s personalities, it is therefore as much a mirror of its users’, as it is of the world they are part of and wonder about. As Ben Johnson said, “Language most shows a man: speak that I may see thee!” More often than not, people tend to hide behind words, cultivating ambiguities and innuendoes, irony and vagueness, and the word becomes a multi-faceted mirror, reflecting for each of us the meaning that we are inclined to associate with it and/or able to grasp.

This conference joins together science and art, literature and discourse studies, literature and philosophy, cultural and gender studies with theoretical and applied linguistics, translation and comparative studies with EFL teaching methodology studies.

We are happy to announce the keynote speakers of the 2022 conference:

Associate Professor Loredana Salis, University of Sassari, Sardegna
Associate Professor Antonio Pinna, University of Sassari, Sardegna
Associate Professor Dragoş Ivana, University of Bucharest

The conference hopes to bring together scholars and postgraduate students working in a range of disciplines and departments and to create the perfect occasion for a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary exchange of ideas.

Possible topics can include, but are not limited to, the following themes:

Literary and Comparative Studies

- Mirrors as metaphors of truth and deception
- Didactic/decorative/liminal/subversive/mimetic reflections
- The supernatural and the marvelous reflection
- The devil’s distorted reflections
- Self-reflection and self-knowledge – the mirror as autoscopy
- Wonderlands, Fairylands, Dreamlands, Marvelands

- Mirror literature - *Speculum mundi*
- Narratives of mirabilia
- Mirrors in superstition and folk tales
- Mirrors as moral reflections of the soul

Cultural Studies

- The mirror and the body
- Mirrors, art and technology
- Mirrors and ideology
- The metaphor of the shop window
- Mirrors as thresholds of liminal spaces
- Heterotopias and polysemic realities
- The mirrors tage in screen representations
- The culture of collecting
- Colonialism and exotic mirabilia
- Travel studies and wonder

Gender Studies

- Reflections of gender and sexuality
- Narcissism and gender identity
- The Mirror as a space for reinvention: dualities and ambiguities
- Women in/and the mirror: representations of femininity

Theoretical and Applied Linguistics

- Language/thought/reality: theoretical perspectives
- Linguistic change and adaptation reflected in language use
- Reflecting reality vs. shaping opinions: the language of the media
- Proverbs, stereotypes, formulaic expressions as reflections of the world: a semantic and pragmatic analysis
- Ownership of English - language variation
- Specialised languages - identity and borderlines
- Meaning generation and interpretation in cross-cultural pragmatics

Translation Studies

- Mirroring and the limits of translation
- Distorted reflections: translation at fault
- Modern times reflected in and by translation: advantages and challenges
- Translating texts: between essence and appearance
- Thick translation - use, misuse, abuse
- Translation and creative writing
- Self-translation - shadowing the author
- Wonder and scepticism in translation

EFL Teaching methodology

- Reflections on teaching and learning English
- Teaching language as a mirror of everyday realities
- Teaching young learners to master the (good) power of words in an era based on visual communication. New methodological approaches in EFL teaching
- Developing the foreign language learners' creativity: one's views reflected in one's words

Submission instructions

Proposals (maximum 200 words) for 20-minute papers, included in the Registration form attached to this call, can be sent to the organisers at craiovaconference2022@gmail.com by **1 September 2022**.

The languages of the conference are English and German.

Conference fees

-participants presenting papers: 250 RON / 50 EUR

-attendance without presentation: 70 RON/ 24 EUR

A selection of papers will be published after the conference. The fee, which will be paid upon arrival, does not include travel expenses, accommodation and the social programme (to be announced).

Venue: Casa Universitarilor, 57 Unirii Street

The scientific committee:

Professor Titela Vîlceanu, University of Craiova
Associate Professor David Brett, University of Sassari
Dr. Simonetta Falchi, University of Sassari
Associate Professor Antonio Pinna, University of Sassari
Associate Professor Loredana Salis, University of Sassari
Associate Professor Dragoş Ivana, University of Bucharest
Associate Professor Andreea Ghiţă, University of Craiova
Senior Lecturer Andreea Bratu, University of Craiova
Senior Lecturer Elena Butoescu, University of Craiova
Senior Lecturer Claudia Pisoschi, University of Craiova
Senior Lecturer Vlad Preda, University of Craiova

The organising committee:

Antonio Pinna, University of Sassari
Loredana Salis, University of Sassari
Andreea Bratu, University of Craiova
Elena Butoescu, University of Craiova
Andreea Ghiţă, University of Craiova
Claudia Pisoschi, University of Craiova
Vlad Preda, University of Craiova