SECOND CALL FOR PAPERS

THE INTERNATIONAL VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

DISCURSIVE FORMS.
EVOKING THE PAST AND DEALING
WITH CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Bacău, Romania: 27th – 28th April 2023
Online Plenary Sessions and Panels (Microsoft Teams Platform)

This conference is organized by the **Interstud** and **Cetal** research centres, at the **Faculty of Letters**, **Vasile Alecsandri University of Bacău**, Romania, **in collaboration with:**

University of Lorraine, Research centre for mediations (France)
University of Messina (Italy)
University of Rome Tor Vergata (Italy)
University for Foreigners of Siena (Italy)
Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen (Bulgaria)
University of Lleida (Spain)
Atatürk University, Erzurum (Turkey)
The French National Research Agency AIÔN Project – *Socio-anthropology of the imaginary of time. The case of alternative leisure activities* (France)
The Francophone University Agency
The Association for the Development of Francophone Studies, Bacău (Romania)

The past and the present are inevitably interconnected. Their relation often enables us to formulate adequate ways to welcome and cope with the future. The past often assists our understanding of the present, while trying to seek solutions for its problems and challenges. It is perhaps one of the reasons why numerous forms of expression evoke the past, reinterpret and revisit it, with the aim of revealing, criticizing, and seeking to make amends to contemporary issues of great relevance and impact. In the light of the most recent events in the global and European history, coping with crises on multiple levels has become crucial. On the background of Sir Winston Churchill's belief that "difficulties mastered are opportunities won", it is all the more imperative to address the significance of the bond between the past and the present, while looking optimistically towards the future. This online conference provides a very broad platform for discussions on the various discursive ways and forms of evoking the past, the numerous global issues and crises which have affected and still affect us today, and on how these have been reflected, communicated and altered in the mainstream and social media through the employment of mis/disinformation strategies. In addition, the conference also attempts to analyse and provide some answers or solutions to the problems resulting from the global crises in the fields of media and communication, linguistics, literature, and culture. We encourage conference proposals in the areas of linguistics, discourse analysis, literary studies, communication studies, cultural studies, sociology, philosophy, arts, journalism, etc. Article proposals are invited on the following topics:

Reception of myths
Numerous products of the cultural industries have renewed their interest in old mythical stories such as the Greek, Egyptian, Nordic myths, the Arthurian legends and many others, as testified by the various books, films, games, comics, or TV series featuring the pantheon of these mythologies, their gods and their heroes. They show a certain interest in narrative materials often associated with the past of our contemporary society (Di Filippo, 2020). In so doing, they also participate in constructing images and visions of those stories which do not always correspond to what the sources tell us (Di Filippo, 2019). These histories are sometimes seen as founding narratives in a romantic vision, or even serve some neo-romantic or far-right political ideologies. The use of ancient stories can also assist the evocation of current social or political problems. In his popular work *Ragnarok*, the Danish author Villy Sørensen employs Nordic myths to render the opposition between the two blocks at the time of the Euromissile crisis during the Cold War. The same Scandinavian medieval story of the end of time serves today as reference for evoking ecological problems in the recent Norwegian TV series *Ragnarok*. Issues such as feminism and the place of women are equally evoked, for example through the rewriting of some Greek myths, in which the authors put a greater emphasis on feminine characters (Martigny, 2022). Hans Blumenberg (2005 [1971], 1979, 2016 [2014]) calls the transformation of myths over time "work on myth". In this section, interest will be taken in the ways in which myths and mythologies are employed as evocations of past stories, allowing at the same time the reconstruction of images of ancient times and the tackling of issues of our contemporary society.

Medievalism
Recent decades have equally witnessed the growth of interest in the medieval period (Besson, Blanc, Ferre, 2022), rendered in works using multiple media supports. These reconstructions of the medieval period can take the form of more or less accurate historical accounts or of fantasy worlds, like those of *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien, which has been adapted numerous times, that of *A Game of Thrones* by R.R. Martin or the universe of many video games like the recent Elden Ring produced by FromSoftware studio. The interest in the Middle Ages can also be seen in the medieval reconstructions or the Historical European martial arts – HEMA (Tuaillon-Demesy, 2013). This phenomenon, termed by researchers as "Medievalism" and in use since the end of the 1970s (Ferre, 2010; Utz, 2017), can be found in the case of erudite productions as well as in the case of cultural productions

reaching back to the imaginary or to popular cultures. The reinterpretation of the Middle Ages can equally be political (di Carpegna Falconieri, 2015), employed with a pejorative meaning, like that of barbaric times, or with a positive one, in opposition to the technological progress and its effects on the environment. This section will thus approach medievalism as a "complex phenomenon, both political and literary, equally economic and social or cultural" (Besson, Blanc, Ferre, 2022: 5). In their *Dictionary of the Imaginary Middle Ages*, the editors underline the spatial and temporal variations that medievalism can take across the world. In line with this idea, this conference welcomes proposals particularly related to the French, English or Romanian medievalism.

Contemporary global issues and crises
A number of crises have beset the global world scene in recent times, ranging from the world of politics, economy and finances to social aspects, health, environment and education (Lomborg, 2009; Cottle, 2009; Reifer, 2014). Recent global history has witnessed interconnected wide-scale problems and challenges related to migration, discrimination, war and displacement, terrorism, (geo)political instability and crisis (Cottle, 2009; Davis Cross, 2017), social or economic issues and worries (like food scarcity, hunger and poverty, unemployment, violence and conflict, the problem of diversity and belonging, (the lack of) empathy and solidarity), the treatment of minorities, the ecology crisis, gender inequality, psychological crises, pandemic outbreaks and their effects, humanitarian crises, the relation between culture and climate change (Douglas & Fardon, 2013), even cultural crises, ultimately leading to an identity crisis affecting people on multiple levels. Even though these crises have plagued a large number of people, they can sometimes be a "necessary driver for (…) development" (Lehne, 2022). Decades ago, Jean Monnet, one of the architects of the EU, unveiled the "creative" potential of crises, arguing that "people only accept change when they are faced with necessity, and only recognize necessity when a crisis is upon them" (Lehne, 2022). This section invites contributions reflecting on the causes, forms and characteristics, as well as on responses and solutions to these global issues, as reflected in a variety of discourses in the humanities and social sciences.

(Mis/Dis)Information. Communication. Media
Crises, as described above, are phenomena that can (negatively) affect people locally and/or globally and thus create experiences that can be transferred and shared and/or related to. Very often, especially in cases that lack hands-on experience, people learn about phenomena through communication, i.e. through the process of exchanging ideas orally or in a written form. This process of informational exchange is dynamic in nature as it can transfer, create, or change realities (Paltridge, 2021; Fairclough, 1992, 2017). Thus, people who have never experienced a tsunami, for example, come to know about this event by participating in this process of informational exchange either in person or through intermediaries using various sources of information. The media are defined as information thoroughfare by some (Paltridge, 2021), while by others, they are considered the Fourth Estate, thus endowing them with the power to create, alter or annihilate realities (Fairclough, 1992, 2017; van Dijk, 2006, 2013; Chomsky, 2002). Most of what we know has reached us via the media or, even more so, via the social media. We form our ideas about the world on the basis of what we hear or see and often our viewpoint is distorted as media serve powerful elites (van Dijk, 2006, 2013) who dictate what gets published and what is left out, thus willingly mis– or disinforming society. The distinction between the two is mostly related to intent, i.e. the former is primarily associated with false or inaccurate information, while the latter, with the deliberate resort to malicious content that aims to scare people and is frequently associated with propaganda (Chomsky, 2002). Both mis- and disinformation tend to create negative images and steer public opinion in a particular direction. We have seen this very tangibly used in denigrating particular ethnic minority groups and presenting them as scary, uncivilized and backward (Said, 1979). This section invites contributions related but not restricted to the power of the media, forms of (mis/dis)information encountered in

mainstream or social media, fake news and their regulation, media representations of various phenomena, discourse studies, while exploring problems and, respectively, offering solutions within the broad field of media and communication.

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Article proposals may be written in English or French and will be peer-reviewed (double-blind review). A selection of accepted articles will be published in the following indexed journals: *Interstudia* (https://interstudia.ub.ro/pages/about), *Cultural*

Perspectives (https://cpjournal.ub.ro/), *Studies in Linguistics, Culture, and FLT (SILC)* (https://silc.fhn-shu.com/index.html), and *Lyuboslovie* (https://www.shu.bg/faculties-fhn/publications/lyuboslovie/).

Please fill in and send a .doc or .docx registration form, by email, to **formesdiscursives2023@gmail.com**, by **15th February 2023**. The registration form must include:
     1) Author information
     2) Submission proposal

     1) Author information
     – Name and surname:
     – Academic title:
     – Affiliation:
     – Personal research areas:
     – Representative publications (max. 3):
     – Email address:
     – Telephone:
     – Regular/mail address:
     2) Submission proposal
     – Title:
     – Language of presentation:
     – Language of publication:
     – Topic (the conference topic in which the proposal could be included):
     – Five key-words:
     – Abstract (250 words):
     – Necessary equipment (if applicable):

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Deadlines

Second call for papers	**20th February 2023**
Proposal submission	**15th March 2023**
Notification of acceptance	**31st March 2023**
Conference programme dissemination	**20th April 2023**
Online Plenary Sessions and Panels (Microsoft Teams Platform)	**27th–28th April 2023**
Paper submission (*authors should choose one of the journals from the call, conform to its publication norms and send the paper to the email address given on the journal's website; authors are kindly advised to make sure the paper falls within the aims and scope of the journal; the editors reserve the right to guide authors to the other journals in case there are too many submissions).	**15th September 2023**
Paper publication	**December 2023**