



# Women in World(-)Literature

Hybrid Conference  
University of Warwick  
22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022

Organisers: Dr Roxanne Douglas  
Dr Fiona Farnsworth

@WomeninWorldLit #WIWL2022



BCLA | British Comparative  
Literature Association



# Content

Welcome	2
In Person Attendance	3
Online Attendance	4
Day 1 Schedule	5
Day 2 Schedule	6
Panel 1a - Work Cultures - OC1.05/Stream A	7
Panel 1b - Thinking Through Nation and State - OC1.06/ Stream B	8
Panel 2a - Climate and Ecology - OC1.05/Stream A	9
Panel 2b - Voice and Silence - OC1.06/ Stream B	10
Panel 3a - Pen, Patriarchy, and Power - OC1.05/Stream A	11
Panel 3b - Olive Schreiner in the World - OC1.06/ Stream B	12
Panel 4a - Translation - OC1.05/Stream A	13
Panel 4b - World-Literature and Food - OC1.06/ Stream B	14
Panel 5a - Women's Literature, Peripheries and Uneven Identities: Representations of Gender and Race Relations in the Portuguese and Brazilian World - OC1.05/Stream A	15
Panel 5b - Petrofiction - OC1.06/Stream B	16
Day 1 Plenary Roundtable - Social Reproduction Theory, Women, and World- Culture - OC1.05/ Stream A	17
Notes	18
Panel 6a - Space, Place, and Labour (1) - OC0.03/ Stream A	19
Panel 6b - Folklore and Myth - OC0.04/ Stream B	20
Panel 7a - Memoir and Autofiction - OC0.03/ Stream A	21
Panel 7b - Travel - OC0.04/ Stream B	22
Panel 8a - Community and Collective Action - OC0.03/ Stream A	23
Panel 8b - Genres of World Literature - OC0.04/ Stream B	24
Panel 9a - Practices of Reading - OC0.03/ Stream A	25
Panel 9b - World-Literature and Form - OC0.03/ Stream A	26
Panel 10a - Reproductive Labour - OC0.03/ Stream A	27
Panel 10b - Space, Place, and Labour (2) (OC0.04/ Stream B)	28
Notes	29

# Welcome

*Please note that this is a trans-inclusive event.*

“A single but radically uneven world-system; a singular modernity, combined and uneven; and a literature that variously registers this combined unevenness in both its form and its content to reveal itself as, properly speaking, world-literature...”

– Warwick Research Collective (WReC), *Combined and Uneven Development* (2015)

In 2015 Warwick Research Collective (WReC) published *Combined and Uneven Development: A New Theory of World-Literature*. It broke new ground in its invocation of Wallerstein’s world-systems theory alongside the Trotskyist formulation of “combined and uneven development”; and in its thinking through of the cultural and aesthetic implications of a literature of the capitalist world-system. This, they dubbed “world-literature”.

Our question for this two-day conference is this: in “a singular modernity, combined and uneven”, what is specific about women’s experiences; and how are these specificities registered in world(-)literature?

This ‘Women in World(-)Literature’ conference held as a hybrid event at the University of Warwick on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2022, the home of the WReC, is inspired by and in conversation with their work alongside continuing and emergent research in the field of world literary studies. We are delighted to welcome scholars from all over the world to join us in thinking about the gendered dynamics of power in the patriarchal capitalist world-system.

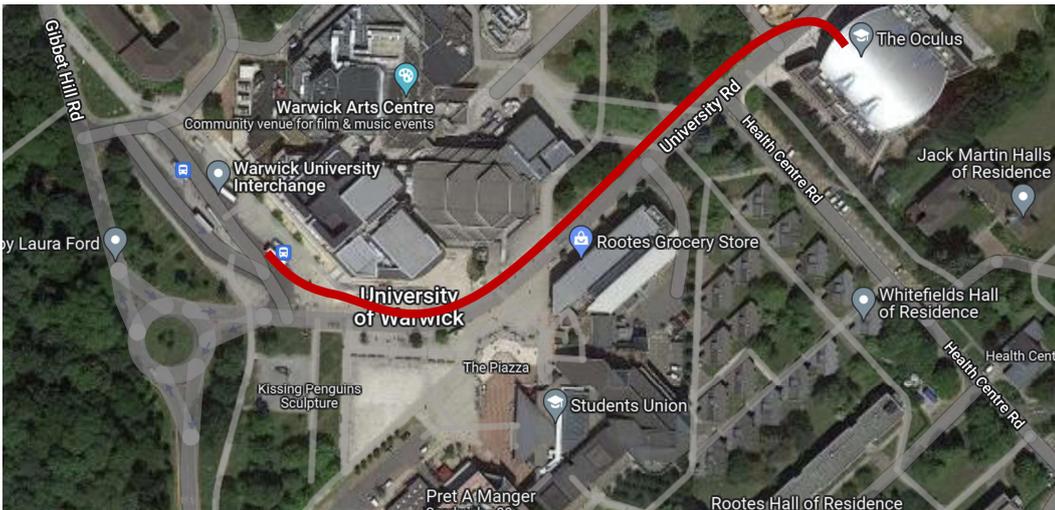
If world(-)literature is a way of thinking about a singular but unequal modernity – a system of cores and peripheries on multiple scales, from the family to the geopolitical stage – then what are the gendered consequences of this, for art and/or analysis? How are women situated in and accounted for within such a system? How do women’s material conditions and experiences – increasingly global in scope – shape their literary and cultural production on the levels of form, narrative, and genre? And what are the (re)generative possibilities of such study for us as we look towards the future?

In line with the intellectual underpinning of the conference, which is concerned with the combined and uneven nature of capitalism and access to capital, including cultural and intellectual capital, our ambition is to make the conference as accessible to international, ECR, and low-income scholars as possible. We believe that these critical voices are required for the conversations that this conference will facilitate. This is to say that we are creating an intellectual space which is necessarily hybrid and international; and which is committed to bringing early career researchers, researchers from the Global South, and other marginalised (“peripheral”) intellectual perspectives into conversation with established (“core”) scholars.

This conference aims to address a critical gap in scholarship around the intersection between gender and world-literature as a nexus of new research ideas. We are thrilled to be able to welcome delegates from all over the world, and join one another in-person and online. We highly encourage our in-person delegates to join the online chat for each stream.

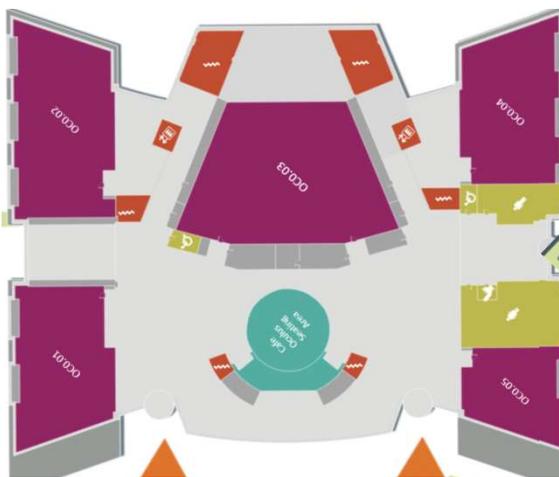
Tweet us @WomeninWorldLit  
#WIWL2022

# In person attendance

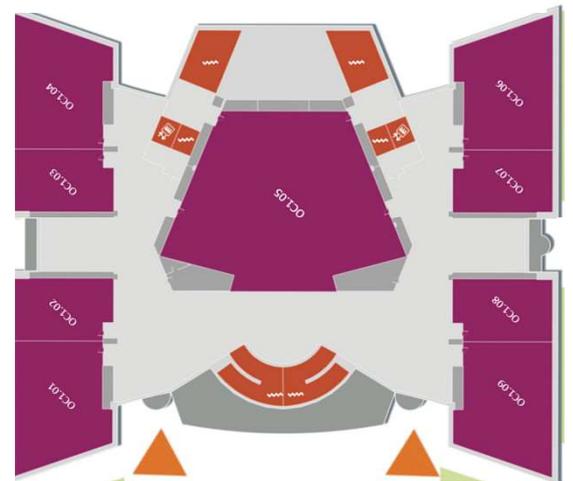


Oculus Building  
Warwick Campus  
The University of  
Warwick  
Coventry  
CV5 7AL

From the bus interchange: walk towards the piazza with the big screen (look out for a welcome notice for 'Women in World(-)Literature too! Tweet a picture to us if you see it!), follow that main road and you will arrive at the Oculus (pictured right). When you arrive, to get in please press the access button near the door and the automatic door will open for you.



Ground floor map



Floor 1 map

On Day 1 we will be in OC1.05 and OC1.06 on the first floor, on Day 2 we will be in OC0.03 and OC0.04 on the ground floor.

Warwick's interactive campus map can be used on any device here:  
<https://warwick.ac.uk/about/visiting/maps/interactive/>

We invite all in-person delegates to join the chat discussions on the Teams channels, too. Please mute your mic on your device. Please do not share links to the Teams meetings, everyone who is registered will have access.

Please also be aware that we will be taking film clips throughout the day. If you do not wish to be in these, please let us know.

# Online participation and social media

We ask that everyone on Teams remains on mute unless they are presenting.

If you have a question in the Q&A either ask via the 'chat' function or 'raise hand' function.

We hope for a lively chat where in person and online delegates can interact: naturally, this space should be a respectful one. If there are any problems, please let Roxanne or Fiona know as soon as possible.

The Teams space has been split into "Stream A" and "Stream B" channels for each day, which will run through the day and which you can join and leave as you like (like virtual 'rooms'). Please feel free to use the 'Women in World(-)Literature' and 'General' channels as a virtual foyer for informal chats and calls, especially during breaks. **Please do not share links to the Teams meetings: everyone who is registered will have access.**

All delegates should feel free to tweet about the conference: please feel free to tag us at **@WomeninWorldLit** or use the hashtag **#WIWL2022**

# Women in World(-)Literature Day 1

Please note all timings are BST

8:00	8:30	Registration and Coffee	
8:30	8:45	Welcome and Opening Remarks (OC1.05/Stream A)	
8:45	10:20	<b>Panel 1a: Work Cultures (OC1.05/Stream A)</b>	<b>Panel 1b: Thinking Through Nation and State (OC1.06/Stream B)</b>
		Chloe Green, University of Melbourne Temp Work as Picaresque: Affective Labour and Burnout in <i>There's No Such Thing as an Easy Job</i>	Durba Mandal, Jawaharlal Nehru University No Third-World Mother: Maternity and Necropolitics in Mahasweta Devi's <i>Hajar Churashir Maa</i> and Megha Majumdar's <i>A Burning</i>
		Jaseel P, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee "Forcibly Normalized Environments": Precarious Japanese Female Worker in Sayaka Murata's <i>Convenience Store Woman</i>	Jingyi Wan, Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis Fleeing from Aestheticization: Women and East Asian Modernity in Han Kang's <i>The Vegetarian</i>
		Marni Appleton, University of East Anglia Girl Bosses?: Confidence Culture, Capitalism and Affective Regulation in Contemporary Women's Writing	Ali M. Alshhre, King Khalid University World Literature Entrance to Saudi Arabia: Turning Saudi Arabian National Literature into a Hybrid Literature
		Zeina Shaaban, Lebanese American University Uneven Development Within the Workplace: Unpacking Gendered Invisible Disability in Profit-driven Offices	Amal Al Shamsi, University of Edinburgh Not Just A Woman Caught in the Cross-Fires of History: Womanhood, Otherness, and the Search for Belonging in Leila Slimani's <i>The Country of Others</i>
10:20	10:40	Coffee Break	
10:40	12:15	<b>Panel 2a: Climate and Ecology (OC1.05/Stream A)</b>	<b>Panel 2b: Voice and Silence (OC1.06/Stream B)</b>
		Khadijatul Kaminy, East West University "She would not need to apologize for how she had spent her time on this earth:" Women and Work in Amitav Ghosh's Fiction	Virinder Kalra, University of Warwick Migrant South Asian Women's Vernacular Writing in Britain
		Sagar Das, Presidency University The Aging Body of Nandini: Gender, Slow Violence and World-ecology in Rabindranath Tagore's <i>Red Oleanders</i> (1926) and Rubaiyat Hossain's <i>Under Construction</i> (2015)	Rochelle Sibley, University of Warwick Yiddish Women Writing on the Periphery: Silence, absence, and assimilation in Esther Kreitman's London stories
		Nour Dakkak, Arab Open University Gender and Race in Women's 'Nature' Writing	Emily Sedlacek, Independent Scholar/North Carolina State University Translating Rape and Silence in <i>Les Mauvaises Herbes</i> by Keum Suk Gendry-Kim
		Irene Bordignon, University of Milan Ecofeminism as a Key in the Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Contemporary YA Fantasy	Tzen Sam, University of Oxford Recovering the Female voice: Ibsen's Early English Translators
12:15	13:15	Lunch	
13:15	14:30	<b>Panel 3a: Pen, Patriarchy, and Power (OC1.05/Stream A)</b>	<b>Panel 3b: Olive Schreiner in the World (OC1.06/Stream B)</b>
		Khedidja Chergui, L'Ecole Normale Supérieure de Bouzaréah Doing it Otherwise: The "Poetess of Qazvin" in Bahiyih Nakhjavani's <i>The Woman Who Read Too Much</i>	Emma Barnes, University of Salford Olive Schreiner and the New Women of Aotearoa New Zealand: Developing the Southern Archive
		Nishtha Pandey, Indian Institute of Technology Madras Women Translating Strangeness in World Literature: The Flâneuse in Valeria Luiselli's <i>Sidewalks</i> and Yoko Tawada's <i>Where Europe Begins</i>	Jade Munslow Ong, University of Salford A Naturalist, A Symbolist and a South African Allegorist: Bloomsbury Modernisms at the fin de siècle
		Enza De Francisci, University of Glasgow Aleramo's <i>Una Donna</i> via Ibsen's <i>A Doll's House</i>	Sanja Nivesjö, University of Salford The Circulation in Sweden of Olive Schreiner's Feminist Writings
14:30	15:45	<b>Panel 4a: Translation (OC1.05/Stream A)</b>	<b>Panel 4b: World-Literature and Food (OC1.06/Stream B)</b>
		Letitica Piger de Silva, Universidade Federal do Paraná <i>Puñado</i> magazine: Translation and Dialogue Among Latin American Women in Brazil	Debadrita Saha, Presidency University The "desirable American woman" or desirable American meat? Reading the capitalist exploitation of environment and women in Ruth L. Ozeki's <i>My Year Of Meats</i>
		Luana de Souza, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina The Translator, Translated: Body and Individual Printed on a Translation	Hannah Gillman, University of Warwick Reading Hunger in Hour of the Star: the Metabolic Rift
		Argelia Peña Aguilar, University of Ottawa The Translation Experience of Feminist Literary Translators in Mexico	Iris Gioti, University of Exeter Food and Generational Relationships in Greek and Armenian Cypriot Literature
15:45	16:00	Coffee Break	
16:00	17:15	<b>Panel 5a: Women's Literature, Peripheries and Uneven Identities: Representations of Gender and Race Relations in the Portuguese and Brazilian World (OC1.05/Stream A)</b>	<b>Panel 5b: Petrofiction (OC1.06/Stream B)</b>
		Ana Raquel Fernandes, University of Lisbon/ European University Uneven Identities in Héliá Correia, Graça Morais and Paula Rego	Bushra Mahzabeen, University of Warwick Petro-sexual Exploitation of Migrant Women's Labour in <i>The Bamboo Stalk</i>
		Margarida Rendeiro, Lusíada University of Lisbon A Roma Woman as an Uneven Identity in Olga Mariano's <i>Pedaços de Mim</i> (2021)	Shadya Radhi, King's College London Speculative Fiction and the Climate Apocalypse in Sophia Al-Maria's "The Silent Verse"
		Federica Lupati, University of Lisbon The Brazilian Indigenous as an Uneven Identity: Reading an Indigenous Woman's Voice in Márcia Wayna Kambeba's Poems	Lenka Filipova, Freie Universität Berlin Gendered Intersections of Oil and Multiple 'Modernities' in Imbolo Mbue's <i>How Beautiful We Were</i>
17:15	18:30	<b>Plenary Roundtable – Social Reproduction Theory, Women, and World-Culture (OC1.05/Stream A)</b> Sharae Deckard (University College Dublin), Kate Houlden (Brunel University London), Amy Rushton (Nottingham Trent University), Daniella Sanchez Russo (University Pennsylvania), Alden Sajor Marte-Wood (Rice University), Myka Tucker-Abramson (University of Warwick/Freie Universität), Rashmi Varma (University of Warwick),	
18:30	18:35	Closing Remarks (Day 1) (OC1.05/Stream A)	
18:35	19:15	Wine Reception	

# Women in World(-)Literature Day 2

Please note all timings are BST

8:15	8:45	Registration and Coffee	
8:45	8:50	Welcome and Day 2 notices (OCO.03/ Stream A)	
8:50	10:25	<b>Panel 6a: Space, Place, and Labour (1) (OCO.03/ Stream A)</b>	<b>Panel 6b: Folklore and Myth (OCO.04/ Stream B)</b>
		Taniya Neogi, Mugberia Gangadhar Mahavidyalaya A Woman's Place: Negotiating Gender, Geography and Class in Thrity Umrigar's <i>The Space Between Us</i> and Meher Pestonji's "Class"	Audrey Chan, City University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Metropolitan University The Unrepresentable Female Body: Persian Miniatures and Myths in <i>Persepolis</i>
		Sara Pallante, University of Salerno, and Margherita Nocerino, University of Cassino and Southern Latium Periphery and Dependency in Katherine Mansfield: The Cases of "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" and "The Garden Party"	Rajni Jaimini, Lingayas Vidyapeeth Woman in Folk Theatre: An Analytical Study of Select Saangs of Lakhmi Chand
		Priyadarshini Mishra, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee Revolting Labor: The Quest for Emancipation of Surrogates as Mother-Workers in Amulya Malladi's <i>A House for Happy Mothers</i>	Aishani Pande, Presidency University Shakchunni to Bulbul and beyond: Feminism, Folklore and Gender Violence in South Asia
		Clémence Scalbert Yücel, University of Exeter; Farangis Ghaderi, University of Exeter; Yaser Hassan Ali, Nawroz University Gaining voice, creating a safe space: women writers in the Bahdinani Kurdish literary field	
10:25	10:45	Coffee Break	
10:45	12:00	<b>Panel 7a: Memoir and Autofiction (OCO.03/ Stream A)</b>	<b>Panel 7b: Travel (OCO.04/ Stream B)</b>
		Martha Swift, University of Oxford Autofiction as World(-)Literature: on writing women and cosmopolitical genre in Ruth Ozeki's autofictions	Andreea Moise, University of Bucharest Gendered Heterotopias: Queering Uprootedness in Olga Tokarczuk's <i>Flights</i>
		Umar Shehzad, University of Edinburgh Disjunctive Simultaneity: Poetics of Time and Space across the Striated Margins	Francesca Placidi, University of Salamanca The "Whereabouts" of Translingual Women Writers in "The Other Language": Jhumpa Lahiri and Francesca Marciano
			Sheelalipi Sahana, University of Edinburgh Train Travel as a Site for Unravelling Hegemonic Modernity: Indian Muslim Women's Writing
12:00	13:15	Lunch	
13:15	14:50	<b>Panel 8a: Community and Collective Action (OCO.03/ Stream A)</b>	<b>Panel 8b: Genres of World Literature (OCO.04/ Stream B)</b>
		Shreyashi Mandal, Jadavpur University Feminism and the Politics of Difference	Agnibha Banerjee, Adamas University "Jostling into a Jigsaw Puzzle": Decolonial Ontologies of Posthuman Feminism in Priya Sarukkai Chabria's <i>Clone</i>
		Reeswav Chatterjee, Calcutta University Women who cook, solve crimes too: Illusion of Feminist Subjectivity in Bengali Detective Stories	Patrycja Podgajna, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University Women of/in the future: the posthuman body and gender dynamics in Ros Anderson's <i>The Hierarchies</i> (2020)
		Puja Sen Majumdar, King's College London Mahasweta Devi's Women in World Literature: the Subject and the Collective	Ayse Circir, Erzurum Technical University Sevim Burak's Feminist Writing as Globalgothic: Abject Prospects in <i>Yanık Saraylar</i> [Burnt Palaces]
		Maddie Sinclair, University of Warwick Short Fiction Poetics and the International Women's Strike	Noelle Darling, Rutgers University Gender, Genre, and Amplifications of World(-Literary) Inequality in Nalo Hopkinson's <i>Midnight Robber</i>
14:50	16:05	<b>Panel 9a: Practices of Reading (OCO.03/ Stream A)</b>	<b>Panel 9b: World-lit and Form (OCO.04/ Stream B)</b>
		Aakanksha Singh, University of York Queerness and Women in World Literature	Yeşim Kaya, Bilkent University Adding a New Fractal to Graphic Novel Genre: An Analysis of Turkish Graphic Novels
		Charlotte Spear, University of Warwick Defining a Space for Women's Rights: World-Literature and the Aesthetics of Combined Unevenness	Emily Foister, New York University Margaret Tait: Master, Makar
		Liani Lochner, Université Laval Reading Zoë Wicomb's Women	Vida Owusu-Boateng, Governors State University A Question of a Woman's Place: Medea in South Africa and Cuba
16:05	16:20	Coffee Break	
16:20	17:35	<b>Panel 10a: Reproductive Labour (OCO.03/ Stream A)</b>	<b>Panel 10b: Space, Place, and Labour (2) (OCO.04/ Stream B)</b>
		Hannah Pardey, Leibniz University World-Literature 2.0: The Gendered Dynamics of Emotional Labour in the Digital Literary Sphere	Chandrica Barua, University of Michigan Love, Labor and Capital: The Filipina Body and its Diasporic Contingencies
		Athira Unni, Leeds Beckett University Dystopian Hyperbole and Reproductive Labour in Margaret Atwood and Mahasweta Devi	Ijeoma Daberechi Odoh, Princeton University "The "Half-Room" as a Site of Enunciation and Productivity in Buchi Emecheta's <i>Second Class Citizen</i>
		David Buchanan, University of Pennsylvania Midwifing Racial Capitalism, or Domestic Reproductive Labor in <i>Small Island</i>	Sumati Dwivedi, Columbia University No-Woman's Lands, Present and Future: The Woman's 'Place' in Genres of Conflict and Collapse
17:35	17:45	Closing Remarks (OCO.03/ Stream A) followed by Wine Reception	

# Panel 1a: Work Cultures (OC1.05/Stream A)

8.45am – 10.20am

Chloe Green, University of Melbourne

## Temp Work as Picaresque: Affective Labour and Burnout in *There's No Such Thing as an Easy Job*

In Kikuko Tsumura's 2020 novel *There's No Such Things as an Easy Job* (translated from Japanese by Polly Barton), an unnamed protagonist flits from one temp job to another. This protagonist, who repeatedly finds her job postings lacking and moves onto another promised to be less "weighty and involved" (69), has been taking such temp roles after having to leave her career. It is only in the novel's final pages that the cause of this resignation, and those which follow it, is revealed to be the protagonist's experience of burnout stemming from her previous career in social work. This paper will examine how Tsumura's novel establishes a dialogue between precarious labour and affect, particularly in its depiction of the emotional labour of work, and how this dialogue comments on emerging medical condition of burnout syndrome in the global East. Furthermore, it will argue that Tsumura's use of the quest narrative, which is one of Arthur W. Frank's narrative typologies of illness narratives discussed in his seminal text *The Wounded Storyteller* (1995), challenges the simple equation of this narrative trope to one of restitution or health; while the protagonist only reveals her condition at the end of the novel, it drives her search for suitable employment, and each of her series of temporary jobs offers a new suite of possibilities through which her emotional capacities can be stretched and engaged. Accordingly, as I will elaborate, *There's No Such Things as an Easy Job* exploits the variation encoded within the picaresque to explore a range of possible futures for its protagonist, filled with different affective relations and modes of capitalist valuation.

Jaseel P, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee

## "Forcibly Normalized Environments": Precarious Japanese Female Worker in Sayaka Murata's *Convenience Store Woman*

The socio-economic progress of Japan took a massive hit after the economic recession of the 1990s. A country known for lifelong jobs and financial security for its workers is now replaced by policies that enable irregular temporary employment. This also led to the birth of the precariat. Precariousness may refer to an ontological condition driven by anxiety and insecurity, and it has become a distinguishing word for the 21st century. Women in Japan, with expectations of being housewives and child bearers combined with a significant gender wage gap, occupy a more marginalized and vulnerable position. Sayaka Murata's *Convenience Store Woman* tells the story of such a 'freeter', Keiko. She is unmarried, unambitious, unconventional and asexual. She has been working as a part-time employee for 18 years since she graduated college. Societal pressures to conform and reproduce conventional gender roles are reflected in her character, apart from struggling to continue a part-time job with an insufficient salary. She has to imitate a gender performance to ensure her survival. The textuality of her workspace parallels the world outside of it, making the convenience store a microcosm for the capitalist world after globalization, where women are doubly marginalized. With Judith Butler's studies on gender performativity and precariousness, and textual analysis of the novel, this paper studies how anxiety-ridden precarious living conditions can also become a foundation for alternative performances troubling gender categories.

Marni Appleton, University of East Anglia

## Girl Bosses?: Confidence Culture, Capitalism and Affective Regulation in Contemporary Women's Writing

The figure of the "girl boss" represents the melding of individualism, feminism and capitalism, in which women are encouraged to take up roles in the workplace to project empowerment and to increase their own personal value. A wave of feminist-adjacent (or postfeminist) movements have emerged in relation to this imperative, including Sheryl Sandberg's "lean-in" feminism and the more recently coined "girl boss" or "choice" feminism. Work, success and the drive to progress and achieve more and more have become glamorous symbols of the ideal postfeminist woman's ability to do it all – and do it all with a smile on her face. However, despite the optimistic and "relentlessly upbeat" promise of "girl boss" feminism, the feelings that emerge in response to this imperative to achieve and "shine" are curiously flat and hollow. In this paper, I explore the ways in which this imperative has been configured affectively in contemporary women's writing. I draw on Shani Orgad and Rosalind Gill's work on confidence culture, as well as the work of affect theorists such as Sianne Ngai, Sara Ahmed and Lauren Berlant to explore the dissonance between the bright affective promises of the "girl boss" and the flat feelings it produces. I consider a range of recent texts by women writers, including Natasha Brown's novella 'Assembly' and Emma Cline's 'Los Angeles' to examine how the "girl boss" promise fails women across racial and economic lines. I argue that it doesn't matter whether success is achieved or not; ultimately, the promise of the "girl boss" leaves everyone disappointed.

Zeina Shaaban, American University in Beirut

## Uneven Development Within the Workplace: Unpacking Gendered Invisible Disability in Profit-driven Offices

Understanding the importance of identities, not as social markers, but as the underlying social structures that constitute identity significance, is a precursor to this analysis. Moreover, centring the analysis on disability theory and the neurodiversity paradigm, the paper explores the lived realities of employed autistic adult women, particularly from the Global South. In doing so, the intersections of gender, class, race, and neurotype are examined within employment. It is significant to note that the social model of disability, which the neurodiversity model was built upon, originally developed as a Marxist critique of capitalist modes of production. As such, while not the sole cause of inequality, capitalism crystallises the inequality in question. The paper begins with a literature review on disability and neurodiversity within the workplace in late-stage capitalism, followed by in-depth interviews, sensory autoethnographic accounts of work-induced overstimulation and burnout, and an online survey. This paper delineates the structural unevenness that caters to neurotypical and able-bodied individuals (namely, men) for maximizing productivity and profit. Even in social enterprises and non-profit organisations, ethical considerations seem extended only to beneficiaries of the organisation, not the workers within it. By contributing to the literature on gendered invisible disability and neurodiversity, the paper furthers the conversation on the harms of the current hegemonic social and economic model. It also opens the door for further research as well as posits imagined futures of equal and even social structures.

Chair: Virinder Kalra

# Panel 1b: Thinking Through Nation and State (OC1.06/ Stream B)

8.45am – 10.20am

Durba Mandal, Jawaharlal Nehru University

## No Third-World Mother: Maternity and Necropolitics in Mahasweta Devi's *Hajar Churashir Maa* and Megha Majumdar's *A Burning*

In my proposed paper I will try to explore the category of the third-world woman and her venture into motherhood through two powerful socio-political novels from India: *Hajar Churashir Maa* or *The Mother of 1084* (1974) by Mahasweta Devi and *A Burning* (2020) by Megha Majumdar. Although written a few decades apart, both the novels, set in Bengal, depict mothers whose children have been declared as enemies of the state. In Mahasweta Devi's classic, the protagonist Sujata deals with the consequences following the execution of her son Brati who was actively involved with the notorious Naxal movement. In Majumdar's novel, the protagonist Jeevan finds herself in trouble after her innocent Facebook post links her with a terrorist attack in a fictional fascist state. Her nameless mother has to deal with the consequences of her daughter becoming political fodder. It is interesting how, even though coming from very different class positions, one being an affluent upper-class upper-caste educated housewife and the other being an illiterate poverty-stricken Muslim woman from the lowest strata of society, they both remain equally helpless when it comes to saving their children from omnipotent instruments of the state. But then their experiences remain starkly different not only because of the gap in timelines, but also because of the spaces they occupy in the social hierarchy and the power they siphon from their respective stations; one is allowed to choose her political position by the end, the other isn't exactly allowed such subjectivity. My goal is to use the affective experience of motherhood as a key to destabilize the myopic category of the homogenous third-world woman, as I note how the varying experiences of the tragic mothers in these two novels, in their very different yet similarly feminine ways, become acts of defiance and assertion against what Mbembe terms as "Necropolitics".

Jingyi Wan, Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis

## Fleeing from Aestheticization: Women and East Asian Modernity in Han Kang's *The Vegetarian*

In "Ghostly Comparisons: Anderson's Telescope", Harry Harootunian posits that Asia has to haunt Europe. Asia's modernity is "always the place of the haunting" and "the scene where the past comes onstage as ghosts demanding to be placated" (Harootunian 148). Seen through an inverted telescope, Asia is always a miniaturized copy of Europe in European eyes. To form a knowledge of Asian modernity does not consist in ridding a Euro-centric perspective through an inverted telescope. It does not consist in forming an alternative Asia-centric perspective that posits modern Europe as a ghost in the form of commodities. It consists in precisely letting Asia haunt Europe, because the factual present – in which Euro-American imperialism and colonialism eats away at local Asian lifestyles, customs, and economies – and the absent past – standing for "pure" essentialist Asian cultures – can not co-exist with each other without antagonism. In East Asian modernity, there always exists, on the one hand, an aestheticization of the disjunction between essentialized "Eastern" traditions and to-be-formed "Westernized" life practices, and, on the other hand, an aestheticization of the retrieval of an imagined past that has yet to be contaminated by "the West". Taking this double aestheticization as a theoretical starting point, I will look into Korean female writer Han Kang's novel *The Vegetarian* and investigate how the novel, by way of a focus on the female protagonist's movement from her husband's home, through an apartment of her own, and finally to a psychiatry, both features and questions this double aestheticization. If one holds true Thomas Lamarque's argument that the resulting image of East Asian modernity is always "one of nationalism ever on the verge of empire" (27), East Asian women's radical flight from one space to another captures the crevices and abysses that form the glued-together universalism that always underpins nationalism.

Ali M. Alshhre, King Khalid University

## World Literature Entrance to Saudi Arabia: Turning Saudi Arabian National Literature into a Hybrid Literature

Different European and American literary works have entered Saudi Arabian national literature through translation, thus making translation a very important element in globalizing literatures to gain readership across the world. More specifically, this paper focuses on exploring and examining how Saudi Arabian female writers have been exposed to read these translations enabling them to employ different themes from these translations into their literary works that were written in Arabic. Therefore, the process of hybridizing Saudi Arabian national literature has begun. To analyze this process of hybridization, three points should be discussed. First, how world literature entered Saudi Arabia. Second, how different themes from translated works were taken from Saudi Arabian female writers to employ in their literary writings. Third, the paper will introduce the consequences of this hybridization whether they are positive or negative including some proposed solutions presented to the negative consequences. This paper might call for a balance employment of themes taken from translated novels into Arabic to not influence and deconstruct the "original themes" which Saudi Arabian national literature has taken from the Saudi Arabian culture (such as from the Saudi folklore, poetry, novels... etc.)

Amal Al Shamsi, University of Edinburgh

## Not Just A Woman Caught in the Cross-Fires of History: Womanhood, Otherness, and the Search for Belonging in Leila Slimani's *The Country of Others*

Leila Slimani's *The Country of Others* follows a fictionalized ethnography of her family's personal history amidst the pivotal movement towards Moroccan independence in the late '50s. The central character, Mathilde, moves to Morocco for love after falling for a Moroccan soldier, Amine, but soon discovers her compromised position as a French woman between growing political tensions. However, the novel's form and language encapsulate how Mathilde is far from a woman caught in the crossfire. Her whole being interferes with the political struggle of 'us' in opposition with 'them', as her acquisition of the Arabic language and culture, along with her Moroccan-French children, embody both sides. The novel negates Mathilde's disempowerment, as while she is confined to the domestic sphere, she creates a home in unlikely places without ever wavering in her own convictions. In an interview about the novel, Slimani claims, "I need to have secrets. I cannot be a mother all the time." Similarly, her work captures how children and housekeeping become vehicles for redemption, while secret lives and imaginings become ways to transgress restrictive social positions. Within this work, Slimani rejects simple retellings of the political uprising in Morocco. At first glance, the novel seems to perpetuate the dismal outlook of life beyond Europe. However, underneath it, Slimani packs an irony that the dismal lifestyles and "cruel" realities of the characters are perpetuated by enforced differentiation between two cultures. The essay will bring together the elements of gender and migration to emphasize the underlying pressures for women of colour to represent idealized heritages and experiences of womanhood in order. Such pressure exists as a retaliation to the predisposed notions of the liberal West and oppressive others. Slimani's retelling captures a story beyond that as her work carries the nuances of social belonging beyond binaries as non-Western cultural belonging and being a woman are complicated beyond that.

Chair: Athira Unni

## Panel 2a: Climate and Ecology (OC1.05/Stream A)

10.40am – 12.15pm

**Khadijatul Kaminy, East West University**

**"She would not need to apologize for how she had spent her time on this earth:" Women and Work in Amitav Ghosh's Fiction**

This paper considers the depiction of women's work in selected fiction of Amitav Ghosh. The settings of Ghosh's fiction, being eco-centric, provide enough scope to analyze the gendered division of labour. Ghosh points out the disparity in the prevalent work system in patriarchal society by highlighting the reproductive, domestic and emotional labour that women are obliged to provide unconditionally. Situating Ghosh's realist body of novels in postcolonial and ecofeminist context, this article will focus on intersections between labour and gender. This paper shows how the vital and crucial work of women in reproductive, domestic and emotional sphere go undervalued and even unrecognized. This study takes three selected novels of Amitav Ghosh: *The Glass Palace*, *The Hungry Tide*, and *Sea of Poppies* to find the gendered division of labour in them. Ghosh is a world renowned author with his works continuously having nature as their centerpiece, however, the unfair gendered division of labour as portrayed in his fiction has not been a conspicuous part of scholarly research on Ghosh's oeuvre. Therefore, this paper aims to address this gap present in the discussion of Amitav Ghosh's literary work.

**Sagar Das, Presidency University**

**The Aging Body of Nandini: Gender, Slow Violence and World-ecology in Rabindranath Tagore's *Red Oleanders* (1926) and Rubaiyat Hossain's *Under Construction* (2015)**

The sociological turn in Ecocriticism makes it necessary to move beyond the understanding of nature as pristine and shifts the ecocritical attention to the material and political realities of the urban spaces. At the same time, focusing on environmental crises and their impacts on human communities, Rob Nixon has pointed out the general neglect towards the "slow violence" that posits a more complicated structure of causal relationships, making violence "spectacle deficient". Following the sociological potential of Nixon's conceptualizations, this paper aims to relocate and redefine the notion of "slow violence" into the socio-economic framework of neo-liberal/colonial industrialization and urbanization to theorize the nature of violence against women in the South Asian context. In so doing, this paper elucidates various imageries of "slow violence" in Rabindranath Tagore's play *Red Oleanders* and Rubaiyat Hossain's film *Under Construction*. The critique of industrialization and its impacts on the relationship between Nature and humans in *Red Oleanders* has already provided opportunities to revise the text through ecocritical and ecofeminist lenses. In the neoliberal context of increasing global interconnectedness, Bangladeshi film *Under Construction* reinvents Tagore's play in modern-day Dhaka injecting an intersectional feminist tone within the narrative that attempts to interrogate Tagore's formulation of the character Nandini, the symbolic representation of Nature, youth, and hope in the play. The comparative intertextual trope in the film also makes space for a critique of the neo-liberalization of South Asia, wherein the readymade garment factories become the site of slow violence of women labor. Thus, by utilizing the ecocritical framework of "slow violence," the paper intends to establish an interdisciplinary approach towards understanding the capitalist world-system as a world-ecology, interrogating the relationship between neo-liberal forces and the ecology of the urban space and how it forms new realities of gendered violence in South Asia.

**Nour Dakkak, Arab Open University**

**Gender and Race in Women's 'Nature' Writing**

The term 'nature' has long been associated with racism, sexism, colonialism and many other forms of exclusions. Yet, there has been a number of emergent Other voices in the growing genre of the so called 'new nature writing' that are calling for a more just and inclusive approach to 'natural' landscapes. Such works invite a closer examination of the politics of exclusion and belonging in different environments. The aim of this paper is to explore a variety of writings by Other women as they experience the 'natural' landscapes in environments where they feel alienated or displaced because of their gender, ethnicity or nationality. Works such as *I Belong Here: A Journey Along the Backbone of Britain* by Anita Sethi, *Wonderland* by Jini Reddy and "Oman is Mars" by Priyanka Sacheti are some examples that raise questions about the ways in which humans' material relationship to place is determined by systematic racial and gendered politics of exclusion. I aim to trace similar tropes and themes that characterise such writings where walking in and getting in touch with different kinds of landscapes offer those women solace in the materiality of nature which becomes a space that offers a sense of belonging that the inhospitable immaterial aspects of nature, whether these are social, cultural and/or historical, fail to achieve.

**Irene Bordignon, University of Milan**

**Ecofeminism as a Key in the Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Contemporary YA Fantasy**

My paper supports the idea that fantasy novels written for children and young adult people are crucial to give our growing generations the ecological expertise they will need to face environmental challenges. It is then important to look at what views of nature are actually conveyed in them, involving a pure dissemination of knowledge about flora and basic environmental protection from an ecofeminist point of view. I chose to analyze the novel *Odinsbarn (Odin's Child, 2013)* by Siri Pettersen by giving meaning to what message lies in it with regard to nature and how the reader understands it, basing my analysis on ecocriticism. This fantasy novel supports the belief that a deep knowledge about botanical elements and plants is typical of a more sensitive and feminine approach, and can be shared through an active interaction with the natural world. Nature is then gradually transformed into an educator, until the gap between humans and nature becomes intangible and indistinct. Literature can certainly influence our behavior and our attitudes towards nature in real life; however, at the same time every cultural work is always the result of human actions and ideas by involving also gender considerations. My analysis is therefore conducted following two imaginary axes in which cultural expressions can be discussed in relation to a vertical continuum that passes from a celebration to a problematization of nature, and to a horizontal continuum that goes from an anthropocentric to an ecocentric view of nature, which emphasizes the intrinsic value of the interrelationships between humans and non humans at the same level.

## Panel 2b: Voice and Silence (OC1.06/ Stream B)

10.40am – 12.15pm

**Virinder Kalra, University of Warwick**  
**Migrant South Asian Women's Vernacular Writing in Britain**

Studies of diasporic fiction in British academia are now fairly established and proportionate in many ways to the substantive output of Anglophone writing that has emerged since the 1980s. What is striking on examining this corpus is the almost complete absence of any mention of writing by South Asians in vernacular languages. The addition of the word Anglophone or English language in the preface to this scholarship does give some indication that there may be some other literature to consider. However, this is scantily explored, if at all, and then only in relation to a bygone era of immigrants confined to their own language communities and in relation to vernacular newspaper publications and theatre groups. Though there are a number of reasons for this lacunae, instrumental among them are government policy and the role of the literary establishment (publishers and agents) who adjudicate over the appropriateness and authenticity of the cultural outputs of racially minoritized groups. The various shifts of cultural policy since the 1960s can be characterised and summarised linguistically in the transitions from assimilation to integration to multiculturalism to diversity. However, in practice all of these policy contortions rely on minority racialized groups adjusting and adopting to majority racialized praxis. Agency in this sense is always maintained by the majority and change mostly required from the minority. When this comes to literature a particular nexus of ideas becomes apparent, where we observe a symbiosis between social policy positions and thematic discourses which tend to normalise narrations of liberal subjectivity. The move to Britain or being born there is often for the litterateur presumed to be one of liberation, the space to write and therefore to exist, unfettered by tradition and oppressive culture. Thus any writing not in English is merely a representation of patriarchal tradition and a past to be shorn. This kind of presentation chimes well with social policy concerns, articulated especially in relation to the South Asian woman, where oppressive Asian culture was the cause of domestic violence (Wilson, 2020). This paper will offer some biographies and tentative themes of migrant South Asian women vernacular writers allowing their voices to write back against their exclusion.

**Rochelle Sibley, University of Warwick**  
**Yiddish Women Writing on the Periphery: Silence, absence, and assimilation in Esther Kreitman's London stories**

Yiddish literature challenges accepted definitions of World Literature since its diasporic nature does not easily conform to the dichotomy of centres and peripheries. However, the short fiction of Esther Kreitman (1891-1954) illustrates how women writing in Yiddish were often highly engaged with the dynamics of marginalization in relation to class, gender and ethno-religious identity. The London-based stories in Kreitman's collected volume *Yikhes* (Blitz and other stories) narrate the tensions experienced by protagonists who occupy peripheral spaces within English society as they try and fail to assimilate into the cultural and economic centre. However, rather unusually for a female Yiddish writer, the majority of Kreitman's stories concentrate on male rather than female protagonists. This paper argues that Kreitman's comparative lack of representation of female experiences in these peripheral spaces is a reflection of and a challenge to the patriarchal nature of Yiddish literary culture. Yiddish's status within Ashkenazi society as a "feminine" language of the domestic sphere meant that publishers were often concerned about alienating male Yiddish readers. Yiddish women writers, themselves constrained by the patriarchal system of literary patronage, needed to balance the demand for stories that had broad appeal and the need for self-representation and free creative expression, a tension that Kreitman experienced first-hand. In response to these external limitations, Kreitman's London stories seek to amplify female experiences of the periphery by emphasizing their omission as a negative space in the narrative. While the alienation of her male protagonists is a source of outrage, Kreitman challenges the reader to confront the even more precarious spaces occupied by their wives, mothers, daughters and sisters. In so doing, Kreitman demonstrates the far-reaching restrictions on female autonomy and self-determination, using these women's silence and absence to critique London's Ashkenazi diasporic culture and defy the limitations it placed on women's identities.

**Emily Sedlacek, Independent Scholar/North Carolina State University**  
**Translating Rape and Silence in *Les Mauvaises Herbes* by Keum Suk Gendry-Kim**

In a discussion at the 2011 American Comparative Literature Conference, David Damrosch and Gayatri Spivak expanded on some of their "productive disagreements" pertaining to the relationships between Comparative Literature and World Literature (Damrosch and Spivak 455). The thread that ties the discussion together is a fervent concern about the potential flattening of complex texts as they are embedded in global circulation and function widely in translation. This flattening pushes singular texts to stand for entire cultures and histories as irresponsible textual engagement attempts to locate elements of the "universal" human experience, rather than the textually, culturally, and historically singular. While this experience of flattening spans numerous texts of that fall into the category of "world literature," texts of world literature that prioritize women and women's experiences are doubly flattened. This is especially the case when much of writing surrounding women's experience is tied across various nation-states, cultures, economies, and legal policies to sexual violability and sexual violence. *Les Mauvaises Herbes* (2018)—titled in English as *Grass*—details Granny Lee Ok-Sun's enslavement as a "comfort women" for the Japanese Imperial Army during WWII. In my presentation, I will analyze pivotal scene in *Les Mauvaises Herbes* (the scene where Japanese Imperial soldiers rape Granny Lee for the first time) in the French and English translations. In addition to physical and sexual violence, what characterizes the experience of the comfort women are pervasive silences on personal, national, and global scales. In looking at these incredibly different translations, we can begin to understand the ways that translation radically alters understandings of experience and how women are often forced to doubly bear the burden of representation for the source and receiving cultures. Most importantly, I hope to discuss how making room for silence in translation can help us better interact with "women's texts" in their creation, translation, and circulation.

**Tzen Sam, University of Oxford**  
**Recovering the Female voice: Ibsen's Early English Translators**

As Tymoczko and Genzler tell us in *Translation and Power*, the act of translation enables translators to participate in the dialectic of power, to interrogate or intervene in ongoing political discourse and to instigate strategies for social change. While all translators live and negotiate between two cultures, 'women translators live between at least three: patriarchy being the omnipresent third' (von Flotow 1997:36). Studying the work of female translators thus provides us with a particular insight into the gendered dynamics of power in a patriarchal society. Eleanor Marx was one of Ibsen's first English translators. Born in London as the youngest daughter of Karl Marx, she grew up imbued with his political philosophies. In 1886, reflecting on previous attempts by Karl Marx, August Bebel and Friedrich Engels to grapple with the question of a woman's place in the family and society, Eleanor Marx published 'The Woman Question: From a Socialist Point of View' co-written with Edward Aveling. This paper considers how Eleanor Marx's assessment of the mechanisms of domination and subversion in a capitalist and patriarchal society found expression through her translations of Ibsen's plays. Focussing on her translation of *The Lady from the Sea*, I show how Marx presents Ibsen as powerfully advocating the need for change in the current state of marriage and gender relations. Marx's translations of Ibsen, like those of Catherine Ray and Henrietta Frances Lord, have been largely forgotten about today. In my conclusion, I consider the impact of this historical forgetting of Ibsen's female translators on the classic Ibsen reception narrative in late-Victorian England. In seeking to recover these texts, I highlight the way female translators have weaponised their 'peripheral' positions by treating them instead as sites of possibility, from which they 'might launch countercultures and generally conduct political or cultural activism' (d'Amico 2017:103).

Chair: Ana Fernandes

## Panel 3a: Pen, Patriarchy, and Power (OC1.05/Stream A) 1.15pm – 2.30pm

**Khedidja Chergui, L'Ecole Normale Supérieure de Bouzaréah**  
**Doing it Otherwise: The "Poetess of Qazvin" in Bahiyyih Nakhjavani's *The Woman Who Read Too Much***

Known as the "poetess of Qazvin", the female heroine in the Iranian novelist Bahiyyih Nakhjavani's novel *The Woman Who Read Too Much* (2016) dared to assert her freedom of expression and sense of individuality amidst a complex cycle of religious, political and social forces. Set in 19th century Tehran and in an intricate setting of male monarchs, mullahs and ministers, the novel tells the story of the Iranian poet and theologian Tahirih Qurratu'l-Ayn. Beyond the Shah's court, portrayed in the novel as one overwhelmed by intrigues and conspiracies, news spread like wildfire of a woman whose ideas were considered subversive and heretical. Endowed with intelligence and great eloquence, she was the first woman in her time to decide to defy the norms of the day through proposing to help other women get educated and through deciding to remove her veil. To accomplish this, Tahirih had to confront the secular and religious powers through pushing her male opponents into polemic debates, armed as she was by her wide knowledge of the sacred texts. Fascinating both her supporters and detractors, admired by diplomats and travelers who wrote about her, she was convicted of rebellion and strangled to death in Tehran in 1852. Reading the novel against the backdrop of the social, political and religious realities which informed its plot, this paper examines how Bahiyyih Nakhjavani brilliantly interweaves the threads of history, religion, art and the female condition in order to spotlight a topic of universal concern which is the struggle of women for freedom and dignity as opposed to political powers and religious dogmas. *The Woman Who Read Too Much* can be read as a tribute to the bravery of Tahirih Qurratu'l-Ayn and all other women who resorted to the power of the pen and knowledge to challenge the norms which oppressed them. To put it in more simple terms, this novel makes us understand how women who read and know so much are feared and challenged because knowledge means power and authority, and the ability to claim one's position in society.

**Nishtha Pandey, Indian Institute of Technology Madras**  
**Women Translating Strangeness in World Literature: The Flâneuse in Valeria Luiselli's *Sidewalks* and Yoko Tawada's *Where Europe Begins***

This proposed presentation argues for a new ethics of flânerie led by the flâneuse, who affectively engages with the radical forms of alterity around the landscapes she inhabits. Just as the bildungsroman is the symbolic form of modernity and youth its symbolic age (Moretti), the 21st-century flâneuse may be seen as embodying the practice of translation that is immanent to contemporary world literature. An ethical engagement entails the subjects' foregoing of any sense of power when they travel and temporarily settle at particular places. The presentation aims to look at the negotiations of the flâneuse with the continuous threat of estrangement that the 'uncanny' landscape portends. The presentation argues that unlike the flâneur, the flâneuse in world literature has a radically evolving 'counter-gaze' that does not objectify the various others encountered in the cityscapes. This is possible only when the subject negotiates with questions of translation and untranslatability, without imposing their own perceived meanings on encounters with cultural strangeness. Yoko Tawada and Valeria Luiselli's writing, this presentation claims, is symptomatic of such an ethical engagement. A Japanese writer who also writes in German, Tawada's collection of short stories *Where Europe Begins* (2002) displays the estrangement of writing in a foreign language which allows her writing to bring out singular problem of translation. In her essay collection *Sidewalks* (2014), Luiselli's narrator searches for the meaning of the Portuguese word *saudade* in her travel while she ruminates about the slowness of pedestrians and the untranslatability that tourists often encounter. The presentation engages with these texts to illustrate that while modern travel becomes less distinct, the journey across languages are singular, demanding and often, untranslatable. In particular, it shall examine these encounters through the poetics of Hélène Cixous's *l'écriture féminine* as well as study the contingency and the shakiness of the language used to describe these encounters.

**Enza De Francisci, University of Glasgow**  
**Aleramo's *Una Donna* via Ibsen's *A Doll's House***

This paper provides a detailed comparison of Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House* (1879) and Sibilla Aleramo's autobiographical novel *Una donna* (1906), focussing specifically on the similar endings of both works where the respective protagonist walks out on her family in search of emancipation. As Aleramo stated in a diary entry in 1940, Ibsen's heroine exerted a powerful influence over both her life and work as a journalist and writer. The paper begins by examining the various contexts and collaborative networks that enabled the theatre of Ibsen to travel into late nineteenth-century Italy, namely Luigi Capuana's translation of the play, *Casa di bambola*, and early interpretations of the lead role by Italy's star actress, Eleonora Duse, which caught notable critical attention (and arguably the attention of Aleramo). The paper proceeds to offer a close reading of *A Doll's House* and *Una donna*, elucidating how Aleramo's first-person novel is able to expand on key issues which are only dealt with briefly in Ibsen's play. Attention is paid to how Aleramo's own personal circumstances helped to shape her autobiographical fiction. In 1902, after having left her husband and son, Aleramo moved to Rome where she began to write a novel based on her experiences. The episodes in Aleramo's own life therefore closely resembled the events in her novel, including the part depicting the legal battle seeking custody of her son, which reaffirm the gendered dynamics of power in the patriarchal capitalist world-system. It is argued here that, while the protagonists in *A Doll's House* and *Una donna* share a similar tragedy, it is Aleramo's self-reflective narrative technique which essentially fills in the 'gaps' left open in Ibsen's play and offers a deeper psychological perspective into the protagonist following her departure.

**Chair: Shadya Radhi**

## Panel 3b: Olive Schreiner in the World (OC1.06/ Stream B)

1.15pm – 2.30pm

This panel will consider the networks, writings, impacts and afterlives of South African author and feminist Olive Schreiner (1855-1920) in three locations: England, Sweden and Aotearoa New Zealand. Schreiner's literature registers "a singular modernity, combined and uneven" from the perspective of white women in the colonies, and her work facilitates analysis of world literature in relation to the emergence of gendered colonial modernity. Schreiner herself travelled between South Africa and Europe, and drew her influences from these places, however, the impact of her work is not limited to these nations and continents. Her writings are finely attuned to matters of centre and periphery and how they relate to issues such as gender, race, capitalism, and the environment, and it is these issues that reverberate outside her local context of South Africa. This panel explores gender and world literature through Schreiner in relation to form, the world literary system, and exchange of feminist ideas. The three papers will be published as chapters in a forthcoming co-edited collection (ed by Jade Munslow Ong and Andrew van der Vlies) titled *Olive Schreiner: Writing Networks and Global Contexts*.

**Emma Barnes, University of Salford**

### **Olive Schreiner and the New Women of Aotearoa New Zealand: Developing the Southern Archive**

Writing to Edward Carpenter in 1908, Olive Schreiner lamented that: 'South Africa is quite 80 years behind Europe; and a century behind Australia & New Zealand' (1908). The first country to attain voting rights for women in 1893, New Zealand was emblematic of the potential for women's suffrage movements, and the site of an emergent, feminist literary tradition. Yet although Aotearoa New Zealand existed as a source of inspiration for Schreiner's vision of feminist movements, Schreiner was also a muse for emerging New Zealand women engaged in New Woman writing. I analyse the intertextual aspects of work by Edith Grossmann, Louisa Baker, and Jane Mander, suggesting that the emergence of New Woman writing and associated feminist literary cultures was indebted to Schreiner's international reach. Building upon the recent work of Kirstine Moffat (2019), who acknowledges Schreiner's influence across New Zealand's New Woman fiction, I demonstrate how Schreiner's influence reaches beyond the literary and political networks of which she was directly part. I make the case that the impacts of Schreiner's feminist arguments and experimental writing extended to a country Schreiner herself never visited, and that its feminist literary cultures continue to be shaped by the afterlives of her writing. In considering the interrelation of South African and New Zealand literary cultures, I analyse New Woman writing within the context of Sarah Comyn and Porscha Fermanis's 'southern archive' (2021, p.3) of nineteenth-century intercolonial relations across South Africa, New Zealand and Australia. Comyn and Fermanis suggest that literary production from the southern colonies reveals a nuanced form of knowledge exchange that emerges from missionary circuits and settler-Indigenous relations. I build on this notion by considering how Schreiner's literary presence in New Zealand facilitated the formation of another form of knowledge exchange grounded within a white, feminist literary network.

**Jade Munslow Ong, University of Salford**

### **A Naturalist, A Symbolist and a South African Allegorist: Bloomsbury Modernisms at the *fin de siècle***

This paper uses Margaret Harkness's novel *Out of Work* (1888), Amy Levy's poetry collection *A London Plane Tree and Other Verse* (1889), and Olive Schreiner's short story collection *Dreams* (1890) to examine the combined and uneven development of early modernist forms in the context of the world literary system. Though divergent in their philosophies, interests and opinions, all of these writers were personally and politically connected, and developed unique experimental forms associated with Naturalism (Harkness), Symbolism (Levy) and allegory (Schreiner) to express progressive feminist and socialist positions. The paper will explore how and why the writers cultivated distinct aesthetics, whilst simultaneously promoting the co-existence of radical and new ideas and forms that identify them as key forerunners in the development of politically-engaged British and South African modernisms. The writers' similarities as much as their differences therefore help to establish the allegorical forms of South African modernisms as separate from the Symbolist and Naturalist forms of early British modernisms, and yet reveal the importance of cross-cultural connections, reciprocity, conversation, and communities of exchange that enabled the women writers to produce co-determined, yet distinct, emerging modernist forms.

**Sanja Nivesjö, University of Salford**

### **The Circulation in Sweden of Olive Schreiner's Feminist Writings**

This paper considers the impact of Olive Schreiner's writings, literary and political, on Swedish feminism at the turn of the twentieth century. In doing so, it explores how magazines and newspapers circulated global and local feminist ideas, and how these ideas were picked up and transformed in a local context. Schreiner's texts achieved a transnational circulation outside of its Anglophone context. In doing so, it both supported and challenged how local conditions were perceived. Modernity impacted different places differently at the same time, and as such feminist texts that travelled had to be debated for their relevance. Schreiner's texts, in being shaped simultaneously from the periphery and from the centre, could contain such multiplicities of positions. Thus, reading Schreiner's writing as world literature and in the context of its circulation reveals how it grapples with a multitude of feminist positions.

Chair: TBC

## **Panel 4a: Translation (OC1.05/Stream A)**

2.30pm – 3.45pm

**Letitica Piger de Silva, Universidade Federal do Paraná**

***Puñado* magazine: Translation and Dialogue Among Latin American Women in Brazil**

This work aims at analyzing how the Brazilian literary magazine *Puñado*, created by the independent publishing house Incompleta, in 2017, is a decolonial practice of building networks among Latin American and Caribbean women in the region as a way of breaking the cultural imperialism and the sexist logic of the editorial market. With translations of women authors' texts from Spanish, English, Guarani and French, and originals in Portuguese, the magazine has published seven numbers (each one with a selected theme – exile, delirium, family, rites, limbo, journey, and instinct) with texts by 35 writers from 23 countries with the purpose of decreasing the distance between Brazil and its Latin American neighbors, that remain distant despite the linguistic proximity and a common colonial past (Pizarro, 2004). It also publishes biographies of the writers, showing their relevance and journey in the literary system, and interviews with them conducted by Brazilian women, among researchers, translators, writers, artists and activists, about being a woman writer in Latin America, their poetics and their translocal experience. From the concept of network (Devés-Valdés, 2008; Enne, 2004; Jasinski, 2020; Sapiro, 2016) and feminist translation (Costa; Alvarez, 2014; Castro, Spoturno, 2019), the interactions among women in the magazine will be analyzed, since the editorial board formed by women; the translation by women as a political act; the practice of interviewing as a way of decentralizing the literary critique, and the collective practices of reading. From an analysis of the magazine's curatorship and the interviews, the publication may be read as a vortex of enunciation and a translocal translation of knowledges among women in a transnational context, and as a practice of emergences by transforming absences into literary presences, reaffirming literature as bridges.

**Luana de Souza, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina**

**The Translator, Translated: Body and Individual Printed on a Translation**

In the present research, I analyze the translation activity not only in its textual aspects, but as a way of entwining between individuals from different cultures, sharing their experiences. Being the language exercise the main tool of communication, I reflect upon how the act of translation can be, also, besides a interlanguage content transmission, a way of observing the cultural-historical environment, as well as the neurological and body activities of the one who translates. With studies that go from how the brain activity is when exposed to reading, using analysis from Stanislas Dehaene and Peter Mendelsund; going also through philosophical deconstructionist aspects, with Jacques Derrida; using the historical-cultural approach from Lev Vygotsky and the Skopos Theory, from Hans Vermeer, I seek to demonstrate a practical analysis that involves the reading as a sensory-emotional perception and how such perceptions can be imprinted on the translated text, magnifying the individual and, especially, human presence of the one who translates. With this proposed analysis, it is possible to verify and reflect upon how the presence of women in literature, being it as a writer or as a translator, will always be a way of showing the cultural identity and the politics of transmission; this last analysis will be based on studies by Sherry Simon.

**Argelia Peña Aguilar, University of Ottawa**

**The Translation Experience of Feminist Literary Translators in Mexico**

This presentation is the partial result of a bigger research project designed to identify the level of development of feminist translation in Mexico. One of the main aspects to explore was the praxis of feminist translation in the literary field, which led to carry out a survey among women translators who identify as feminists. This study is currently in progress and interviews are being conducted, but is expected to be completed by the end of Winter 2022. In general, this paper will present women translators' perceptions of this field and will outline the experience they report in terms of the handling of texts, inclusive language politics, their relationship with publishers, their ethics for translation and translation as a form of activism. Some questions that will be answered are as follows: How do women/feminist translators deal with the challenges encountered in their work? Do they have stories of subversion, activism or resistance? Have they left traces of their ideology in their literary work?

**Chair: Enza de Francisci**

## Panel 4b: World-Literature and Food (OC1.06/Stream B)

2.30pm – 3.45pm

Debradita Saha, Presidency University

The "desirable American woman" or desirable American meat? Reading the capitalist exploitation of environment and women in Ruth L. Ozeki's *My Year Of Meats*

A December 2000 *Men's Health* article stated that vegetables are for "girls", and if someone's instincts prohibit them from adopting vegetarianism because it sounds not "manly" enough, then the instinct is accurate. Such instinctive tendency for meat-consumption, and labelling it as a symbol of masculine pride, is what Ruth L. Ozeki attacks in her ecofeminist novel, *My Year of Meats* - a work that explores the harmful impact of capitalist American media perpetuating women's exploitation by equating them with meat. Like beef, "tender and juicy", its redness accentuating its presentability, the ideal American wife is portrayed as equally desirable by media, which labels her as "attractive", "wholesome", and "healthy". The capitalist American media's gaze projects White racialised culture of meat-eating over the originally vegetarian Japan which adopted meat-eating post-globalisation. The Japanese-American woman, doubly marginalised by her race and gender, is forced to imbibe the objectifying American culture that alienates her because she hails from another culture that originally practised red-meat abstinence. Redness becomes symbol of commodification, a metonymy for hypersexualised meat advertisements, where both beef and body of the fair-skinned, blushing American woman are split under the male gaze of the dominating Joichi, the Japanese-American executive overseeing the production of the show on meats. He dictates not only cultural dissemination of meat-eating to the Japanese but also subjects his wife to imbibing such cultural amalgamation, hoping that meat-eating will help her conceive. The paper will address the negative impact of mass-breeding cattle and imposing meat-consumption on Japanese women by large corporations as shown in the novel. A project of American cultural capitalism, the media endorsement of meat-eating vouches for mass production of human and non-human "meat" to satisfy its lust for monopoly over nature, in the process rupturing the natural balance of ecosystems, thereby speeding up the demise of planet Earth.

Hannah Gillman, University of Warwick

Reading Hunger in *Hour of the Star*: the Metabolic Rift

Brazilian Literature's complex contextual connection to hunger and food scarcity is unmistakable in Clarice Lispector's *Hour of the Star* (1977): "There was one ad, the most precious of all, that showed in full colour the open pot of cream for the skin of women who simply were not her. Blinking furiously [...], she just lay there imagining with delight: the cream was so appetizing that if she had the money to buy it she wouldn't be a fool. To hell with her skin, she'd eat it, that's right, in large spoonfuls straight from the jar. Because she lacked fat and her body was drier than a half-empty sack of crumbled toast. She'd become with time mere living matter in its primary form." (30) In World-Literature, the Metabolic rift has been a useful tool in identifying irrealist modes of writing in peripheral regions. Michael Niblett's recent essay "World-Economy, World-Ecology, World-Literature" (2018), makes the convincing argument that "moments of the emergence or intensification of the metabolic rift will coincide with [an] eruption into a text – even if otherwise broadly realist – of irrealist elements" (21). This paper will argue that by reading Lispector's novella alongside the theory of the metabolic rift, we can better understand this hunger, not only in the content and form of *Hour of the Star* but in a world-literature-system. By exploring themes of cannibalism and waste, I will engage with social reproduction theory to read Macabéa's othered physical and literary body into the metabolic rift.

Iris Gioti, University of Exeter

Food and Generational Relationships in Greek and Armenian Cypriot Literature

The preparation and consumption of food is an important part of the cultures and inter-generational relationships of the Mediterranean, and this is evident in the literature and poetry of Greek and Armenian Cypriots. In analysing the representation of food in literature and poetry, and the relationship to food the female characters have in the texts, we can understand the creation of identity within a family and the wider community, especially when there is an element of displacement, as is often seen in Greek Cypriot and Armenian Cypriot literature from the long 20th century. Cyprus has suffered greatly in the long 20th century, and this is keenly felt by all the ethnicities present on the island. The island was affected by the Cyprus Dispute of 1974 and the following partition of the island, which for some was the second displacement within living memory. Food is a tangible connection to a culture and their past, and a bonding experience within a familial unit, which is why I will be analysing this aspect of my chosen texts. I will be looking at two novels by the Greek Cypriot author, Eve Makis: *Eat, Drink and be Married*, and *The Spice Box Letters*, and two poems by the Armenian Cypriot poet, Nora Nadjarian: "The Blue Pear" and "Egg." I will be arguing that inter-generational relationships and community identity is invoked in the form of food by the women in the texts, and it is through the preparation and consumption of food that the displacements and exiles are felt by the reader. For this research I will be using Social Reproductive Theory and Trauma Studies. The importance of food within a culture and its literature is a crucial part of the development of an individual's identity, their connection to their ethnicity, and their family.

Chair: Fiona Farnsworth

## **Panel 5a: Women's Literature, Peripheries and Uneven Identities: Representations of Gender and Race Relations in the Portuguese and Brazilian World (OC1.05/Stream A) 4pm – 5.15pm**

This panel discusses women's literature and their representations of gender and race relations in particular cases of Portuguese and Brazilian women's literature, extending this discussion to art representations by Portuguese women artists. While framing this discussion within formulations on the cultural and aesthetic implications of a literature of the capitalist world-system, as proposed by the WReC (2015), the three contributors analyse the extent to which these literary and artistic works convey the gendered dynamics of power in postcolonial Portugal and Brazil as part of the patriarchal capitalist world-system. Two contributions focus on works authored by Brazilian Indigenous and Portuguese Roma women and a third one focusses on works by Portuguese novelist and artists. Their aim is to discuss literary and artistic deconstructions of Otherness and Othering that convey a future-oriented view based on the ethics of ecology. This panel is integrated into the FCT-funded project Women's Literature: Memories, Peripheries and Resistance in the Luso-Afro-Brazilian Atlantic (PTDC/LLT-LES/0858/2021).

**Ana Raquel Fernandes, University of Lisbon/ European University  
Uneven Identities in Hélia Correia, Graça Morais and Paula Rego**

In the novel *Um Bailarino na Batalha* (2018), by Portuguese author Hélia Correia, a group of destitute men and women struggle to cross the desert and reach first the sea and after Europe. My aim is to discuss how Correia echoes in her short novel the biblical narrative in order to discuss contemporary migration and diaspora either triggered by conflict or environmental issues. Furthermore, Correia's narrative also focuses on representations of gender, the role of women in society and the depiction of women in literature.

Correia's concern with migration, diaspora and the way it affects humans and animals alike finds a parallel in the work of other artists, namely, the Portuguese painter Graça Morais and the Portuguese-British visual artist Paula Rego. Their work fosters an ethics of care, an empathy and a concern for the other, different ways of life and forms of thought. The analysis of themes, motifs and structures in Hélia Correia's *Um Bailarino na Batalha* together with the work of visual artists Graça Morais and Paula Rego allow for a comparative literary and cultural rethinking of what is Europe at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Indeed, these works can be considered as rightful contributors to the common "European' cultural identity" (Klobucka 1997:128).

**Margarida Rendeiro, Lusíada University of Lisbon  
A Roma Woman as an Uneven Identity in Olga Mariano's *Pedaços de Mim* (2021)**

A collection of poems previously published since 2000 and also including a few originals, *Pedaços de Mim* penned by Olga Mariano, Portuguese Roma cultural mediator, poet and activist, published in 2021 signals the presence of a voice that has systematically been absent from the Portuguese literary field: that of the Portuguese Roma. The invisibility of Portuguese Roma literature contributes to the prevailing idea that Portuguese literature is the expression of a taintless Portuguese cultural homogeneity and enhances the widespread misconception that the Portuguese Roma community do not integrate into the Portuguese society and rightfully belong to the periphery of the world-system as social outcasts. This paper argues that the publication of *Pedaços de Mim* is opportune at a time when several Portuguese voices of African descent have also been emerging, thus contributing to showing that Portuguese literature as a reflection of the actual diversity of Portuguese postcolonial society. *Pedaços de Mim* disrupts the apparently homogenous Portuguese memory narrative, that has mainly been grounded upon a white narrative, that erased the memory of the Portuguese Roma experience. Olga Mariano deconstructs stereotypes associated to the Roma community and, more specifically, those associated to Roma women. These poems show the extent to which the Portuguese Roma periphery can be built as a space that warrants the specificity of the Roma experience.

**Federica Lupati, University of Lisbon  
The Brazilian Indigenous as an Uneven Identity: Reading an Indigenous Woman's Voice in Márcia Wayna Kambeba's Poems**

Orality has always been the main channel through which indigenous culture and knowledge has passed onto generations of Indigenous peoples. Yet, today, the need to resist against cultural assimilation or, even worse, annihilation, has led to the creation of new, written materials where indigenous people can speak for themselves by relating their history, defining their identity and their cultural territory. Among these, Brazilian geographer, poet and activist Márcia Wayna Kambeba, of the Omágua/Kambeba people, uses literature as a space where decolonial thought and traditional knowledge meet to build a philosophical, political and poetic view on indigenous identity and on the experience of Indigenous women in particular. This paper discusses Kambeba's works and underpins the relevance and need to examine the specificity of the experience of Brazilian Indigenous women writers as fundamental participants in the periphery of the world-literature to discuss the postcolonial configurations of identities in present-day Brazilian society.

**Chair: Margarida Rendeiro**

## Panel 5b: Petrofiction (OC1.06/Stream B)

4pm – 5.15pm

**Bushra Mahzabeen, University of Warwick Petro-sexual Exploitation of Migrant Women's Labour in *The Bamboo Stalk***

The proliferation of any resource-based economy often marks an influx of trans-national migrant labourers to the extraction zone. This paper will analyse the gender and class-based exploitation experienced by transnational migrant workers in the Kuwaiti oil frontier. Saud Alsanousi's novel *The Bamboo Stalk* (2015) registers the socio-economic transformations in the Kuwaiti oil zone occurring due to the arrival of large numbers of South Asian and South-East Asian migrant workers. In the novel, Josephine, a woman from the Philippines leaves her country, being unable to finance her studies because of poverty and lack of economic security and finds herself in a wealthy household in Kuwait working as a maid. Josephine's dreams of gaining better socio-economic opportunities than her sister, who was forced by their father to become a prostitute, prompts her journey as a migrant worker. However, in the heavily gendered petro-capitalist state, the only work available to a migrant woman like Josephine is that of an underpaid and ill-treated domestic worker. The man of the house, Rashid, is a young writer who repeatedly tries to seduce the maid, finally succeeds by constructing a sham marriage, impregnating her, which destroys her dreams of independence. Alsanousi depicts the uneven and inequal distribution of oil wealth in Kuwait as a catalyst for social and moral degradation that is reflected in Rashid's manipulation of people from lower economic backgrounds, like Josephine. Here, I intend to examine the marginalised Filipino woman's economic and sexual exploitation and her struggle for survival depicted in *The Bamboo Stalk* in connection to relevant critical works by Tithi Bhattacharya, Jason Moore, and Amitav Ghosh among others.

**Shadya Radhi, King's College London  
Speculative Fiction and the Climate Apocalypse in Sophia Al-Maria's "The Silent Verse"**

In the short story "The Silent Verse" from her book *Sad Sack: Collected Writings* (2019), Qatari/American author and writer Sophia Al-Maria portrays a post-apocalyptic Arabian Gulf that has been completely destroyed due to the environmental and political effects of capitalism and oil. The short story is narrated by an unnamed female protagonist who is the sole survivor of a world apocalypse. The narrator recounts the slow decimation of the Arabian Gulf due to climate change resulting from an overreliance on fossil fuels. She portrays the physical effects of climate change in the future such as acid rain falling from the sky, as well as the moral political corruption of this future society like the poaching of the last oryx (Al-Maria 15-16). In this paper, I explore how Al-Maria utilizes the speculative fiction genre, particularly dystopia and estrangement, to portray a specific imagining of possible futures of the Gulf. In so doing, Al-Maria challenges the idea of oil progress by highlighting the repercussions of a patriarchal capitalist world-system as it pertains to women. I argue that the speculative fiction genre provides Al-Maria with the space to freely explore the anxieties and trepidations of the anticipated results of a capitalist world-system. In so doing, this paper explores the role speculative fiction and women's literature plays in underlining and working through these apprehensions.

**Lenka Filipova, Freie Universität Berlin  
Gendered Intersections of Oil and Multiple 'Modernities' in Imbolo Mbue's *How Beautiful We Were***

While 'petrofiction' studies have addressed issues pertaining to oil extraction and consumption and their impact on the environment, the presence of oil in today's worlds is rarely theorised from an intersectional perspective. Recently, feminist critic Sheena Wilson has called for a lens of "critical petro-intersectionality" through which to examine how the inequities of race, class and gender are exacerbated by oil extraction practices, while at the same time being deployed as rhetorical strategies in order to maintain existing power relations (Wilson 2017, 177). By examining the representation of oil extraction in Imbolo Mbue's *How Beautiful We Were*, I question to what extent the narrative challenges the inherently intersectional inequities brought about and sustained by oil, and how it reconfigures the temporalities of these relations. I investigate how emancipatory politics, which has historically relied on notions of visibility and chronology, is re-configured in the novel in terms of postcolonial 'revisionary time' (Bhabha 2004), as well as 'lifelines' and 'fractured time' introduced by Black feminists and African feminisms (Young 2000; Mirza and Gunaratnam 2014, Nkealah 2016). I look at how protagonists of the novel variously live outside the chrono-normative 'oil time', that is a temporality of 'progress' and putative 'modernity', and how they ascribe themselves to genealogies of dispersion and emplacement in movement (rather than simply 'displacement'). I examine to what extent they help us to envisage 'feminist energy futures' of more emancipatory organizations of nature. In this way, my reading of the novel addresses the question of the world understood in the sense of the reconfiguration of relations among individual and collective subjects. As such, it does not posit the world as a spatial container, but rather as "the process of worlding" that, as Pheng Cheah suggests, enacts "the ontological condition of possibility of the normative project of world literature inspired by Goethe" (87).

**Chair: Roxanne Douglas**

# Plenary Roundtable – Social Reproduction Theory, Women, and World-Culture (OC1.05/ Stream A)

5.15pm – 6.30pm

This roundtable will explore how scholars of world-cultural production can deepen their analysis of gendered power dynamics in the patriarchal capitalist world-system by using new articulations of social reproduction theory as carried out by figures such as Tithi Bhattacharya, Nancy Fraser, and Cinzia Arruzza, and more foundational theorisation such as that offered by Angela Davis, Silvia Federici, Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Maria Mies. In the presence of a global intensification of what Federici has called “a true war against women” brought about by neoliberalism’s tendency to squeeze the human capacity of workers when privatising life-producing facilities, by the continued neglect of women’s reproductive rights, and by capitalism’s unceasing destruction of rural ecosystems usually guarded by women, investigating alternative socio-political imaginaries is particularly timely. World-literary scholars already seek to delineate how literary texts and other artistic media understand and propose avenues of resistance and transgression to capitalism’s strategies of accumulation. Here, we ask how such aesthetic analysis might be deepened by considering the appropriation of women’s bodies and women’s labour for the daily renewal of human life. To facilitate an open conversation on this topic, the participants of this roundtable will briefly introduce themselves and their works, before holding a group-discussion based on the following questions:

Can we talk about women and world literature without talking about women's work?

How do social reproduction feminist approaches complement world literary approaches? Are there concerns or limitations to either?

Do particular genres, forms or modes lend themselves to representation of women's labour?

Are there any representational challenges accompanying the banality or ubiquity of women's work?

What are the possibilities for periodizing representation of women's work in different geographies?

Our intended audience includes (but is not limited to) students and scholars from across the Humanities with an interest in Gender Studies, Feminism and Sexualities, Marxist Critical Theory, Postcolonial Studies and World Literature.

**Dr Sharae Deckard** (she/her) is Lecturer in World Literature at University College Dublin. Her research interests include the intersection of social reproduction and ecology in world literature. Her books include *World Literature, Neoliberalism and the Culture of Discontent* (Palgrave 2019); *Marxism, Postcolonial Theory and the Future of Critique* (Routledge 2018), and *Combined and Uneven Development: Towards a New Theory of World-Literature* (co-authored with WReC, LUP 2015). With Upamanyu Pablo Mukherjee, she is academic editor of Palgrave’s New Comparisons in World Literature series.

**Dr Kate Houlden** (she/her) is a Lecturer in Contemporary Literature at Brunel University. Her current monograph in development, *Queering World Literature*, analyses the role of migrant female domestic workers in a range of post-millennial fiction through combining world-literary, social reproductive feminist and queer approaches. She has previously published *Sexuality, Gender and Nationalism in Caribbean Literature and Popular Postcolonialisms* (co-edited), both with Routledge.

**Daniella Sánchez Russo** (she/her) is a PhD candidate in Hispanic Studies at The University of Pennsylvania. She has an MA in Romance Languages by the same university and an MFA in Creative Writing by New York University. Her research interests intersect Latin American 20th and 21st century Literature, social reproduction theory, dependency theories and world-literature.

**Dr Amy Rushton** (them/their) is a Lecturer in English at Nottingham Trent University. Their current research project, “Depressed States: World-Literature and Narratives of Mental Distress”, explores how contemporary literature interrogates current discourses concerning the ongoing global mental health ‘crisis’, as well as providing conceptual groundwork for interdisciplinary approaches to discussing mental distress in a global context. They have numerous publications on African literature and contemporary cultural representations of mental distress.

**Dr Alden Sajor Marte-Wood** (he/him) is an Assistant Professor of English at Rice University. He specializes in Asian Anglophone and Asian American literatures, Marxist literary criticism, social reproduction theory, political economy, and postcolonial thought. His current book project, “Philippine Reproductive Fictions: Culture and its Gendered Divisions of Labor,” establishes a longue durée continuity between martial law-era crises of social reproduction, the state-sponsored export of care work, the contemporary outsourcing of digital intimacy, and Philippine cultural forms.

**Dr. Myka Tucker-Abramson** (she/her) works at the University of Warwick. She is currently a Humboldt Fellow at the JFK Centre at the Freie Universität.

**Dr Rashmi Varma** teaches English and Comparative Literary Studies at the University of Warwick. She is the founding editorial collective member of the journal *Feminist Dissent*.



## Panel 6a: Space, Place, and Labour (1) (OCO.03/ Stream A)

8.50am – 10.25am

Taniya Neogi, Mugberia Gangadhar Mahavidyalaya

**A Woman's Place: Negotiating Gender, Geography and Class in Thrity Umrigar's *The Space Between Us* and Meher Pestonji's "Class"**

The paper aims to study the representation of domestic servitude in Parsi fiction of Thrity Umrigar and Meher Pestonji and its role in configuring gender and class identity and their intersectional relation with what constitutes postcolonial urban modernity of India. The Parsis were the colonial elites of Bombay, who collaborated with the British in the nineteenth century and flourished economically. The culture of employing servants in elite/ affluent domestic households has a colonial/zamindari(feudal) legacy, underscoring how spatiality and sociability of elite homes were constituted. In this paper I will try to examine how the institution of domestic servitude, a role performed by mostly female servants, is continued and reconfigured in the closer spatial proximity afforded in the modern apartments of urban India. The paper would probe how the mistress-servant hierarchical equation which accommodates gendered intimacies and solidarities, and class resentment and envy is the domestic embodiment of how the macrocosmic cityspace is spatially segregated along class and gender axes. In this context, I will use the theoretical framework of Peter Bourdieu's 'Habitus', meaning a sense of one's place and a sense of the other's place. I intend to argue how domestic servants play a paradoxical role in facilitating and dismantling the 'habitus' of the upper class, a paradox that is the defining principle of postcolonial urbanism. The domestic servants are an embodiment of a class that is both the feared and exploited as the abject Other. This politics of otherisation which informs the social and gendered practices of the urban and the domestic space will be crucial aspect of scrutiny.

Sara Pallante, University of Salerno, and Margherita Nocerino, University of Cassino and Southern Latium

**Periphery and Dependency in Katherine Mansfield: The Cases of "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" and "The Garden Party"**

In the context of a singular modernity governed by constant unevenness, Katherine Mansfield represents a relevant example of what it means to be a woman writer in a patriarchal capitalist world-system. Isolation and marginality were central aspects of her life, also because of her New Zealander roots, which placed her in a peripheral position compared to the advanced core represented by England. Nevertheless, it is her production that seems to better reflect both formally and thematically such reality. In *Uneven and Combined Development* it is stated that the novel is "[the] literary form in which combined and uneven development is manifested with particular salience, due in no small part to its fundamental association with the rise of capitalism and its status in peripheral and semi-peripheral societies as an import". However, if we consider modernity as "the world-literature's subject and form", the short story could be regarded as another example of literary registration of the world-system because, as Hunter affirms: "the short story form is somehow specially amenable or adaptable to the representation of an increasingly fragmented social character under the conditions of technological, industrial modernity".

This intervention aims to investigate isolation and marginalisation in the short stories "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" and "The Garden Party" from the collection *The Garden Party and Other Stories* (1922). The first work shows two sisters deprived of their identity and autonomy who are still subject to the dominant figure of their father, even after his death, while "The Garden Party" deals with social unevenness and how it affects human relations. In our essay we postulate that such themes could be easily reconducted to Wallerstein's concepts of core and periphery constituting the world-system. Through the analysis of these short stories, we intend to shed light on how dependency and marginalisation could also be interpreted in a different key, where the male and female roles but also social disparity collocate in the core and periphery of a capitalist and patriarchal world.

Priyadarshini Mishra, Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee

**Revolt Labor: The Quest for Emancipation of Surrogates as Mother-Workers in Amulya Malladi's *A House for Happy Mothers***

Amulya Malladi's fiction *A House for Happy Mothers* (2016) is based on the backdrop of medical science's remarkable and miraculous conception, i.e., surrogacy. Sheila Lewenhak believes the primitive socio-capital set-up of the women began as matriarchal. From being valued laborers to the strugglers for their labor rights, the history of women's revolution in the workspace has reached a long way. This paper adheres to Amrita Pande's view of surrogates as mother-workers, acknowledging the aspects of their labor. Metaphorically quiet revolt of surrogates in Malladi's narrative commits itself to Franz Fanon's conceptual and structural framework in *The Wretched of The Earth* (1963) which defines the nature of a revolt. From the surrogate's standpoint, this paper channels the motives of the revolution. It begins its address from the concept of escape/negligence of oppression to the emancipation of the revolutionaries via a heightened dilemma. The present paper plans to deploy Karl Marx's thought of 'Ideology' to show how Malladi's sketches of the surrogates as mother-workers within the surrogate hostels/houses achieve ways to emancipate their labored self. The article encompasses Marxist 'Ideology' at length, dragging Eagleton's LMP (Literary Mode of Production) and GMP (General Mode of Production) as the binary ends throughout.

Clémence Scalbert Yücel, University of Exeter; Farangis Ghaderi, University of Exeter; Yaser Hassan Ali, Nawroz University  
**Gaining voice, creating a safe space: women writers in the Bahdinani Kurdish literary field**

Women writers have been highly marginalized/invisibilised in Kurdish literary history. Except for a few works (Ahmadzadeh 2008; Hassan 2013; Ahmad 2016), very little is known about Kurdish women writers' place(s) and role(s) in the Kurdish literary field, as well as their role in voicing women's experiences and claims. With this work, we follow Kréfa's urge to take gender into consideration as one of the key elements structuring inequalities and power relationships in the *World's Republic of Letters* (Kréfa 2014). Doing so, we address how the erasure of women's writing in Kurdish literary history is directly linked to the sociological phenomena on the ground, which have constrained the expression of women writing in the public sphere. Based on field research and interviews carried out in the Bahdinan region of Iraqi Kurdistan in 2020, this paper aims at unpacking the circumstances and conditions under which women have entered the Kurdistan's literary field. In a first section we will discuss the dynamics that have supported and/or, sometimes concomitantly, impeded the visibilisation of women's voices in the Kurdish literary field. If the local literary institutions have often been dismissive of women writers and of their literary production, allyship (within the NGO sector, the family, friendship and intellectual circles) seem to have been instrumental in women entering the literary field. Yet, women's voices have also been covered by some of these "allies". Hence, these women writers have also negotiated safe literary places of their own – either by choosing a solitary path, distant from the literary institutions, or by integrating other literary circles, beyond the borders of Kurdistan, often online and in various languages.

Chair: Fiona Farnsworth

## Panel 6b: Folklore and Myth (OCO.04/ Stream B)

8.50am – 10.25am

**Audrey Chan, City University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Metropolitan University**  
**The Unrepresentable Female Body: Persian Miniatures and Myths in *Persepolis***

Considering Satrapi's departure from Iran and her education in francophone comic art, this proposed paper argues that Marjane Satrapi appropriates the older tradition of Islamic art, Persian miniatures in particular. Such an appropriation challenges the reception of the whole of Iran as a collectively repressed female body in Europe and the female body in Iran in her graphic novel *Persepolis*. Satrapi alludes to the discrete nature of Persian miniatures to offer her graphic narrative the freedom to portray female figures as equals of male bodies. Satrapi echoes her own figure with the myth of Gord Afarid by making the floral pattern on her nightgown worn by the child version of her identical to the heroine's in her illustration of the myth project for the amusement park. Compared to the portrayals of male/female encounters in other Shāhnāme illustrations, those from the 17th-century Berlin Staatsbibliothek collection show Gord Afarid as "the first Amazon in the Iranian national epic" who is a warrior strong as her male counterparts (Khaleghi Motlagh 42). Such is represented by the equality in stature, physical position and size shared between Gord Afarid and Sohrab. Therefore, Satrapi's allusions to Persian miniatures can be read as a "cross-culturally aware reading practice" (Whitlock 970) as she reconstructs the Iranian female body from a transnational perspective. Moreover, according to Marie Ostby, Persian miniatures are closely associated with the unrepresentable as the restrictions on depicting human forms, especially that of the Prophet, were historically less enforced in miniatures due to their private means of circulation (565-566). By presenting the 'unrepresentable' female body in the Persian art form in the popular medium of comics, Satrapi dismisses the binary divisions between "East-West, feminist-antifeminist, civili[s]ed-uncivili[s]ed" (Maggi 105). Extending on her play between the two art forms, this paper explores the complex nature of her cultural negotiations with Iran and Europe as a woman.

**Rajni Jaimini, Lingayas Vidyapeeth**  
**Woman in Folk Theatre: An Analytical Study of Select Saangs of Lakhmi Chand**

The world has never been a singular entity. There have always been groups that lived a powerful, privileged existence and it is their experience that has passed down the generations as literature, as the core narrative of human existence at a given time. Folk literature, which was marginalised for long to the peripheries, is now increasingly being recognized as an archive of vernacular knowledge systems. It is to be noted, however, that folk performances cannot be merely designated as 'archives of knowledge' but rather are a living tradition of dynamic exchange. Saang as a form of folk performance tradition has been the source of or a defining influence on the various forms of Folk performance traditions of North India. Taking it as a representative form of North Indian folk performative tradition, my paper attempts to analyse issues of gender representation and sexuality on folk stages. The paper, while giving an overview of congruous folk forms, would focus on some selected Saangs of Lakhmi Chand (1905-1945). Lakhmi Chand is known as the greatest exponent of the Saang form and is often referred to as the Shakespeare of North India. His Saangs invariably represent the values and experiences that formed the core of the society of his times, often concentrating on experiences that were pushed to the peripheries under traditional Sanskrit theatre. The paper seeks to deal with a knotty question of discovering voices of women in the predominantly male oriented folk theatres. While, undeniably, there are a lot of female characters in Saangs; as a male discourse before a predominantly male audience, the folk form caters to male tastes and often voices male ideology. I attempt to analyse in my study the muted female voices as well as the constrictions imposed on female voices due to sociological and cultural stereotypes within the performative space of Saangs, predominantly in reference to some selected Saangs composed and performed by Lakhmi Chand.

**Aishani Pande, Presidency University**  
**Shakchunni to Bulbbul and Beyond: Feminism, Folklore and Gender Violence in South Asia**

Folklores with their associations of local, national, and ethnic identities are positioned in a conflicting relationship with the phenomenon of globalization which posits complex structures of interconnections between centers and peripheries. In the Neoliberal South Asian context, recent developments in literary and artistic productions trace a tendency to reframe old folktales produced and circulated during previous eras of decolonial and nation-building projects. Thus, establishing the Trotskyist notion of "turning inside out of old forms", this paper utilizes the comparative methodology which focuses on reading and interrogating the transmission of folklore on digital platforms across culture, time, and space. Therefore, this paper examines the evolving nature of gendered existence through a comparativist study of the character of Shakchunni in the nineteenth-century Bengali folklore collection Thakurmar Jhuli (1907) by Dakshinaranjan Mitra Majumder and how this image of the female ghost has been remodeled into a narrative of women empowerment in the film Bulbbul (2020) by Anvita Dutt, premiered on a trans-national platform like Netflix. By revitalizing the old narratives of suppressed desire within the feudal patriarchal system, Bulbbul, set in 19th-century rural Bengal, creates a space for projecting the current condition of women in today's capitalist world-system of the Global South along with the normalization of marital rape and domestic violence in the inner quarters of the culture. The trope of folk-horror and deformity in women in the old Bengali folklores that positions them outside the accepted space of domesticity has been adapted by the film Bulbbul to posit them as liberated characters who reclaim their agency through revenge. However, following this uneven translation of folkloric literary devices into the fabric of the film-text, this paper aims to address the question of cultural homogenization, embedded in globalization while showcasing how the image of the "avenging woman" often problematizes the progressive narrative of woman empowerment with the question of justice and violence in the context of South Asia.

Chair: Roxanne Douglas

## Panel 7a: Memoir and Autofiction (OCO.03/ Stream A)

10.45am – 12pm

Martha Swift, University of Oxford

### Autofiction as World(-)Literature: on writing women and cosmopolitical genre in Ruth Ozeki's autofictions

Autofiction, leveraging both fiction and autobiography, has been used by several contemporary women writers to address fragmentary and coerced experiences of participation in the capitalist world-system. This paper proposes an investigation of these autofictions as world(-)literature that responds to the combined, uneven and interconnected conditions of literary and subjective production in the twenty-first century. Taking as a primary case study the autofictional novels of Japanese American author Ruth Ozeki, *A Tale for the Time Being* (2013) and *My Year of Meats* (1998), it examines the genre as an emerging site of representation for female and minority subjectivities either illegible or unrepresentable within established institutions and literary forms. Where autofiction in English has largely been theorized in the context of the, typically male, postmodern author's attempts to reassert authority over the text (Marjorie Worthington, 2018), Ozeki reinvents the genre by distributing narrative authority and rejecting the possibility of a stable, enunciating self. Drawing on recent studies of autofiction from both the Anglophone and Francophone traditions, this paper argues that such a rejection is both a response to women's coerced participation in the patriarchal, capitalist world-system and a literary strategy for surviving it. That is, by restaging the reading process as a collaborative act of literary and hermeneutic production that unfolds in the interactions between reader, writer, and character, Ozeki not only questions the patriarchal conventions and hierarchies of literary production but also presents autofiction as a cosmopolitical practice that facilitates the creation of lateral, equitable literary community. Reading Ozeki's autofictions as examples of world(-)literature thus offers an exploration of the way genre is being used to reclaim discursive authority over gendered identities, and asks, ultimately, how the 'co-authored' female subjectivities emerging in contemporary autofiction can be a model for resisting the uneven distribution of risk and power under the capitalist world-system.

Umar Shehzad, University of Edinburgh

### Disjunctive Simultaneity: Poetics of Time and Space across the Striated Margins

Sara Suleri, Azar Nafisi and Fatema Mernissi, three feminist writers of life-narratives, come from places that share a lot and yet so little. With their uneven colonial experience, Suleri from Pakistan, Nafisi from Iran and Mernissi from Morocco are the classic exemplars of what Neil Lazarus calls "combined and uneven modernisms". The three writers share their Muslim background apart from their peripheral-ized status as cultural subaltern in the West and as women. Their writing is also conjoined by the baggage of migration to the Western countries necessitated by their scholarly pursuits. The scope of their writings inevitably encompasses the positioning of gendered subjectivity between the home and the host spaces but negotiates this "difference" in their uniquely personal ways. While Sara Suleri remains broadly engaged in the coolly epiphanous descriptions, the mood of Nafisi's writing oscillates between that of romantic elation and political indignation, and Mernissi's approach is characterised by passionate engagement with the implicit cultural biases that mark her encounters at the home and the host spaces. The spatio-temporal praxis of their writing is inflected with the anxieties over "the room of [their] own" – a concern that helps situate their writing within the global feminist discourse. Through politicisation of the aesthetic moment, they push against the cumulative tyranny of time and space. Chronicity of time and the boundedness of the national space are understood as the dimensions of the despotic patriarchal ethics in their work that appears to stage a standoff between ethics and aesthetics, particularly pitching personal aesthetics against the collectivistic ethics. Their resistance, however, does not take the form of an unmixed disavowal.

Their ambivalence to the linear/multiple temporalities and local/global spaces is underpinned by their distrust of both and shaped by the very material conditions of singular and yet differentiated modernity. The paper focuses *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi, *Meatless Days* by Sara Suleri and *Scheherazade Goes West* by Fatema Mernissi for the analysis.

Chair: Yeşim Kaya

## Panel 7b: Travel (OC0.04/ Stream B)

10.45am – 12pm

**Andreea Moise, University of Bucharest**  
**Gendered Heterotopias: Queering Uprootedness in Olga Tokarczuk's *Flights***

Olga Tokarczuk's *Flights*, translated into English by Jennifer Croft, is a "constellation novel" (according to its author) enmeshed in a web of gendered connections that weave reality and render it fluid and uprooted in spite of its travelling through determined space. The unnamed female narrator communicates through stories and anecdotes that function as narratives of time rather than space, as they attempt the relocation of the author within the sphere of the audience, as well as the substitution of the act of novelistic describing with an ambiguous process of non-linear (double) translation. Centred on travelling, Tokarczuk's novel nevertheless resists conventional travel literature, "a scourge, an epidemic" which by "describing something. . . it destroys" (75). *Flights* ascribes to Michel Foucault's understanding of the mirror in his essay "Of Other Spaces", as both a utopian "placeless place" (24) which exerts a double presence, in a here and a there, as well as a heterotopia which underscores an inherent absence here for the sake of a presence there. Throughout the novel's heterotopological spanning of places – the airport, the hotel room, the boat, the museum, among others – the traveller is doubly displaced, neither "at the point I departed from" nor "at the point I'm headed to" (52), forever unstable, global, mobile. Tokarczuk reinterprets world-travelling in a distinctly feminist key whereby the traveller's continuum of movement and fleeing of places materialise anti-panopticism and the constructedness of gender, a vision of motion which obscures the pretence to pinned-down identifications. In this way, flights through time that extend beyond claims to rootedness become an active act of queering gender and its heterotopic manifestations within the context of the world's dynamics of power.

**Francesca Placidi, University of Salamanca**  
**The "Whereabouts" of Translingual Women Writers in "The Other Language": Jhumpa Lahiri and Francesca Marciano**

This paper adopts a transcultural and translingual view that considers the increasing interconnectedness in a transnational world of hypermobility. Within this current scenario, investigating "writers who choose to write in an adopted language or to self-translate" (Wilson, 2020: 2013) is considered a particularly interesting area of study. Moreover, within the umbrella concept of translingual literature (Vidal, 2021; Kellman and Lvovich, 2021) women writers, who find themselves travelling, changing languages, shaping their identity and reflecting their life journeys in their literary work are gaining increasing visibility. Therefore, we borrow some key concepts from the theoretical framework about migration, feminism(s) and translation in order to approach the literary work of two women writers and translators who move between Italy and the United States: Jhumpa Lahiri and Francesca Marciano. Following Wilson's research (2020) and those of Kellman (2016; 2017), we propose an approach to these authors from a perspective that is not only translingual, but also transnational and, specifically, based on the theories of Transnational Feminist Translation studies (Castro and Spoturno, 2020). We also intend to reflect on the role of self-translation as a transcultural mediation (Dagnino, 2019) in the case of these two translingual women writers by analysing the construction of gender subjectivity in literary self-translation (Spoturno, 2019) and by paying special attention to the role of translation as a mediating agent in the migratory context.

**Sheelalipi Sahana, University of Edinburgh**  
**Train Travel as a Site for Unravelling Hegemonic Modernity: Indian Muslim Women's Writing**

In the decades leading up to India's independence and the decades that followed in the post colony, the anxiety surrounding the future of a new nation translated into the consecration of a "new modernity" through a "new patriarchy" (Partha Chatterjee). A dichotomisation of spheres into private/public tasked (Hindu) women as keepers of the home's "essence" while men commanded the material terrain of the world outside. Muslim women were left out of this hegemonic nation-building process due to their perceived "nonmodern" status which effaced their subjectivity and excluded them from the modern nation. However, women challenged these spatial boundaries by crossing them as "participants in a dialogic process" (Priyamvada Gopal) with enforced modernity. This presentation will analyse the ways in which Muslim women wrote and conceptualised their 'encounter' with modernity. In the short stories of Ismat Chughtai and Rashid Jahan, members of the Progressive Writers Movement, this paper will find the train (an iconoclastic image of modernity in the colony) to be a site for the aforementioned 'dialogue'. By travelling on the train (in a zenana compartment), the women in the texts perform their vehicular gender to assert their discomfort with hegemonic nationalism. The train becomes a "contact zone" (Mary Louise Pratt) between tradition and modernity, with women as active participants in configuring an alternate, vernacular modernity. This 'contact' through train travel denotes a resistance to bhadralok (genteel) society's neo-colonial agenda to keep women inside the material space of the home. By writing and publishing these stories, Jahan and Chughtai contested the patriarchal genre conventions of travel writing that were Eurocentric and male-centric. These narratives contributed to a feminist mode of travel writing facilitated by a locomotive site for this modern encounter. I will argue that Muslim women's travel narratives (largely neglected) provided scope for envisioning an alternate modernity that was gender-inclusive.

**Chair: Nishtha Pandey**

# Panel 8a: Community and Collective Action (OCO.03/ Stream A)

1.15pm – 2.50pm

**Shreyashi Mandal, Jadavpur University  
Feminism and the Politics of Difference**

In order to locate women-specific experiences in literatures of the world that are regarded as transcultural and comprehensive, it is necessary to understand the power dynamics between genders in the context of texts specific to geographies. In India, the global or western discourse of feminism receives the widest coverage by mainstream media houses. The discourse largely benefits savarna(upper-caste) feminists in maintaining their status quo in a caste society. How could feminist politics eradicate gender inequalities without eradicating other forms of subjugation such as caste? I intend to focus on this politics of difference that alienates Dalit feminists from Upper caste feminists in India and talk about women's experiences with reference to the writings of three Dalit women writers namely Aruna Gogulamanda (Gogulamanda's poetry talks about Dalit women who experienced discrimination based on gender as well as their caste identity), Sukirtharani (Sukirtharani's poems talk about caste and body), and Vijila Chirappad (Vijila dismisses the romantic approach of universalizing women's struggle and focuses on caste privileges). The female body, violence and female sexual desire, when viewed through the lens of these poets, will bring to fore the relationship between caste and patriarchy and subsequently, the mainstream practices to eliminate the indication of caste privileges or caste-based atrocities in India and how it affects the feminist movement in the country and the world.

**Reeswari Chatterjee, Calcutta University  
Women who cook, solve crimes too: Illusion of Feminist Subjectivity in Bengali Detective Stories**

Marginality movements in a particular society and around the world often result into tokenistic representation of certain marginalities in literary works, which assume presence of the said marginality, as necessarily reflective of its political subjectivity. Rosalind Coward in her famous essay "Are Women's Novels Feminist Novels?" depicts the impact of the feminist movement in the west in the form of the rise of novels with female protagonists. Further, she makes a very important intervention by asking if such novels reflect patriarchal ideas, or do not challenge them, can they at all be called feminist novels. Thereby Coward puts forward her concept of approaching marginality positions' connection with marginality politics with a necessary scepticism. This paper would chiefly implement Coward's concept to investigate the (assumed) presence of feminist subjectivity in the Bengali detective novels starring female sleuths. The primary texts under the scanner would be the novels of Manoj Sen, Suchitra Bhattacharya and Tapan Bandyopadhyay. All these novels were written within the time frame of 1970 to 2010, using female sleuths as representative of the Bengali New woman. The Bengali New Woman of the post-colonial India was emerging in contemporary Bengali literature, chiefly under the influence of Marxist feminism--- a theoretical concept that flew to India through the writings of Rosa Luxemburg, Alexandra Kollontai and Simone de Beauvoir among others. The idea of using the Bengali New Woman in the role of the detective, originated from the Marxist feminist concept of breaking the homely woman and worldly man binary. Walter Benjamin in his essay "The Storyteller" clarifies that it's the vagabond observer man on the 19th century European streets who emerges later to be the detective figure. These novels attempted to make the Bengali New Woman someone who belongs to the home and to the world (as the observer) at the same time, along with putting forward ideas like financial independence and paid labour for women. This paper aims to ask:- how much these Bengali New Women (under the garb of all these ideals) were accommodative of the queer woman, how were they approaching the physical and sexual oppression of women? Did the 70s Bengali New Woman actually attempt to damage the structure of Bengali patriarchy, or was she merely assumed a feminist subjectivity, conflating token representation with marginality politics ?

**Puja Sen Majumdar, King's College London  
Mahasweta Devi's Women in World Literature: the Subject and the Collective**

In his book *What is a World?* Pheng Cheah speaks about how theories concerning world literature are associated with ideas of cosmopolitanism and collectivities but often take the 'world' for granted by equating it with circulatory movements across national-territorial boundaries. As a consequence, they deal with the impact of these spatial movements on the production, reception and interpretation of literary texts but not on how literary texts also produce worlds, produce collectivities and communities. Keeping this in mind, my paper intends to look at the prose fiction of Mahasweta Devi, namely the novel *Mother of 1084* and stories such as "Bayen", "Mother India" to see if the marginalized women in these literary works can be read as subjects of political collectivities. Even though the experiences of these women are very specific, there are moments in the fiction where Mahasweta Devi imagines an impossible and undivided world which is also a world of unevenness, marked by difference. In fact, the very context of praxis lies in the events that makes one come face to face with this unequalness. Thus, women who are systematically excluded from communities show us ways of not just relating to the world but also making the world. The questions this paper intends to ask are: Can we think of woman as subject of a political collectivity located in the combined unevenness of the world? Can the specificity of experiences that Mahasweta Devi speaks about teach us anything about the making of the world through literature? Can women occupying liminal and 'local' positions be considered subjects of world literature?

**Maddie Sinclair, University of Warwick  
Short Fiction Poetics and the International Women's Strike**

This paper examines contemporary short fiction emerging in response to the international feminist remaking of the 'strike' in the twenty-first century. It argues that the short story emerges as a world-literary forum of crisis, capturing with immediate topicality the 'moment' of globalized feminist resistance today. Applying a method of literary comparativism, this paper examines selected short stories from collections including *Her Body and Other Parties* by Carmen Maria Machado, *Las Cosas que Perdimos en el Fuego/ Things We Lost in the Fire* by Mariana Enriquez and *Cars on Fire* by Mónica Ramón Ríos. Combining irrealist aesthetics and feminist fabulation, these collections epitomize the 'resurgence of horror' in feminist literary fiction from Argentina and the United States. As Patricia Stuelke argues in an article entitled 'Horror and the Arts of Feminist Assembly', the feminist horror boom is fuelled by the energy and aesthetics of the Argentine and feminist remaking of the strike in the twenty-first century, re-purposing the conventions of the horror genre in order to critique the 'violence visited on women's bodies by neoliberalism'. For each of these writers, the short story form offers an aesthetic strategy, presenting a multi-perspectival critique of violence faced by women and feminized bodies. This paper focuses on the interconnections between aesthetics and politics in contemporary feminist short fiction, showing how these works mirror the collective fabric of communitarian struggle, by encoding in multi-focal narrative structures emergent modes of protest and assembly. The paper will also address the malleable aesthetic of the short story form, discussing its unique responsiveness to the theme of 'female assembly', from neighbourhood assemblies to transnational feminist networks more broadly.

**Chair: Margarida Rendeiro**

# Panel 8b: Genres of World Literature (OCO.04/ Stream B)

1.15pm – 2.50pm

Agnibha Banerjee, Adamas University

## “Jostling into a Jigsaw Puzzle”: Decolonial Ontologies of Posthuman Feminism in Priya Sarukkai Chabria's *Clone*

Recent breakthroughs in biotechnology, genetics, and artificial intelligence have made possible new configurations of embodiment that challenge heterosexist gender norms. This paper locates Priya Sarukkai Chabria's *Clone* in a flux of debates around biocapitalism, feminism, and the precarity of the anthropocene intertwined with the geopolitics of the postcolony. I deploy Achille Mbembe's concept of “the becoming black of the world” to investigate how institutionalised objectification and exploitation of black bodies expand, in Chabria's dystopian India, to encompass the entire planet, with androids, genetically modified humans, and the earth itself functioning as sites of mining and extraction. This is premised on, I argue, drawing on

Judith Butler and Giorgio Agamben, the orchestrated expulsion of the clones beyond the discursive barriers of the human that prefigures the biopolitical instrumentalisation of their material existence and attempts to foreclose the possibility of subversion. Such a commodification of the body, however, I contend, does not exhaust the potential for revolution, for it is in *Clone* 14/54/G, the protagonist of the text, that Chabria propounds her feminist vision of the decolonized posthuman body. I endeavour to bring the works of Gilles Deleuze and Rosi Braidotti in dialogue with the eco- and new- materialist feminisms advocated by Stacy Alaimo and Jane Bennett to trace how such a posthuman body is deterritorialized through its trans-corporeal enmeshment in vital human/non-human networks that rupture anthropocentric logic and provide alternative cartographies of the female body. I conclude with a delineation of the interlaced chronotopes – focalized through critically intimate renditions of Buddhist and Upanishadic epistemologies – in the text which posit a kaleidoscopic interface of decolonial and feminist futurities that go beyond the discourse of negation and toward a fecund horizon of infinite possibilities rooted in the persistent continuum of matter, consciousness, and difference.

Patrycja Podgajna, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University

## Women of/in the future: the posthuman body and gender dynamics in Ros Anderson's *The Hierarchies* (2020)

The prospect of technologization of the human body and the emergence of embodied machines are increasingly examined in the context of contemporary and future gender identities and dynamics. While some critics perceive technology as a potent tool capable of erasing fixed gender categories and liberating women from the confinement of their bodies as a locus of male sexual desire and reproductive functions, some feminist critics, such as Julie Wosk or Judy Wajcman, claim that, as an instrument of male domination, technologies “do not help to erase the limits of gender identities” (Wajcman 126), but they further perpetuate gender inequalities and the objectification of female bodies. Referring to the theory of the posthuman body (Julie Wosk, Anne Balsamo) and technofeminism (Judy Wajcman), the aim of this article is to examine the role of posthuman body in re-evaluating gender relations in Ros Anderson's debut novel *The Hierarchies* (2020). Set in unspecified future, the novel projects a world in which synthetic humanoid female robots, called “Created,” satisfy all male sexual desires and needs, and thus seemingly liberate women from their sexual responsibilities towards men. Narrated by a synthetic sex doll Sylvie.ie who follows four hierarchies when satisfying the sexual pleasures of her Husband: first “Love, obey, and delight your Husband. You exist to serve him”; second, “Honor his family above yourself and never come between them”; third, “You must not harm your Husband, nor his family, or any Human”; and finally, “Make no demands, but meet them, and obey every reasonable Human request”, the novel examines how the artificially constructed ‘customized’ bodies of female humanoid robots, on the one hand, serve as a tool of liberation for Born women and, on the other hand, create new models of inequality and exclusion, problematizing the idea of transgressing gender limitations by means of new technologies.

Ayse Circir, Erzurum Technical University

## Sevim Burak's Feminist Writing as Globalgothic: Abject Prospects in *Yanık Saraylar* [Burnt Palaces]

Sevim Burak's *Yanık Saraylar*, a short story collection published in 1965, is concerned with the otherized figures of the Ottoman Empire as well as the global forces that reshape class structures in the Republican Era. Within the spatial scope and threatened intimacy of the house, and in a nostalgically portrayed Istanbul, Burak shows how national/ist expectations and identifications are challenged as the result of global de-localisation. It is the post-war instabilities, economic insecurities and mobilities, Burak underlines, with which the non-Ottoman other and the Ottoman proper ‘consume’ one another. Burak's female characters who arrive the metropolitan centre from the peripheries of the Empire are trapped and victimized in upper class houses– the palaces of the title – and they become mobile abject assemblages and gothic character clusters. These servant-like *beslemes* [foster daughters] happily and secretly sell elite household items in bazaars and voraciously eat palace food when dead-but-not-buried pashas lay beside them. As in the quote above, the stories show that it is not only the automobile or the yacht that enter into the Turkish market as the result of global transformations, but also the old mother of pearl furniture and the docile servant bodies that darkly and monstrously enter and re-enter and blur the distinctions between global and local. I suggest that *Yanık Saraylar* can be read as a globalgothic text with its representation of spectrality, abjection and uncanniness and my paper offers a critical reading in relation to migration and displacement in the Ottoman and post-Ottoman context.

Noelle Darling, Rutgers University

## Gender, Genre, and Amplifications of World-(Literary) Inequality in Nalo Hopkinson's *Midnight Robber*

Women's speculative fiction allows marginal female experiences to become determinative of narrative worlds and power systems, magnifying gendered embodiment, violence, and cultural production in the malleable worlds built through genre fiction conventions. Nalo Hopkinson's *Midnight Robber* is a fantasy novel which re-scales the local, peripheral, gendered world of its protagonist (as well as its author and locations of production) so that it becomes the exclusive narrative world, excising the “real” outside this particular place. The resources of genre allow Hopkinson to “register” Jamaica's position in the capitalist world-system through an inversion which supposes a technologically futuristic, interplanetary system where Caribbean local language, storytelling practices, and bodies are socially and narratively normative. Tan-Tan, the heroine, repeatedly adopts new strategies for performing power (drawing on Carnival traditions), but her abusive relationship with her father, pregnancy, and exile clearly index the ways gendered power compels such survival strategies. Genre provides the formal scaffolding for a speculative world where Black Caribbean women's bodies, voices, and survival are central, rather than peripheral. In circulation, women's speculative fiction is situated disadvantageously within the uneven distributions of economic, political, gendered, racialized, and generic power. In a single but unequal literary world-system, genre fiction which is explicitly identified as such is less powerful as an aesthetic locus of world-registration or critique, despite its paradigmatic penchant for world-thinking. As mass-market commercial products, though, SFF texts circulate more effectively than more culturally powerful forms like academically-recognized literary realisms. I argue that both within the narrative world of the novel and the world-system which structures its reception, Hopkinson's *Midnight Robber* reveals the prominent role of scale in narrative forms which amplify peripheral bodies, languages, and experiences, while registering through such amplification the multiple orders of systemic situatedness which render them peripheral within the capitalist world-system and the cultural system of world-literature.

Chair: Nora Castle

## Panel 9a: Practices of Reading (OCO.03/ Stream A)

2.50pm – 4.05pm

**Aakanksha Singh, University of York**  
**Queerness and Women in World Literature**

Abha Dawesar's novel, *Babyji*, explores the coming of age of its protagonist, Anamika, against the backdrop of several transnational and national political movements in India. In this paper, I argue that Dawesar queers this coming of age by showcasing the curious intersections of modern transnational (such as opening up of the economy) and more indigenous influences (for instance the ancient Hindu text, Kamasutra) on Anamika. The paper will explore how Dawesar unpacks these various modern influences on the main character and how those influences challenge notions of a singular modernity for queerness. The paper will also argue that though Dawesar builds up a queer subjectivity for Anamika that does not entirely rely upon a transnational flow of queer subjectivity from the Global North, she mires Anamika's identity within a gendered dynamic of power that is deeply rooted in stereotypical masculine conceptions of how desire, love and relationships must be articulated.

World-literature puts the focus on literary works from across the globe yet often these are works that continue to be considered as merely orbiting the canon, and as located on the peripheries of that very Anglo-American canon. World-literature then becomes a paradoxical notion that is both at the core and at the periphery. On a similar level, this paper will argue that the queer subjectivity Dawesar etches out through Anamika is straddling a boundary of cores and periphery where Anamika is simultaneously marginalised because of her queerness and also comes to the fore because of her varying privileges of caste, class and urbanity. This straddling of the boundary is the result of a proliferation of a singular modern conception of the patriarchal capitalist world-system that interrupts a possibility of a more feminist emergence of Anamika's queer subjectivity.

**Charlotte Spear, University of Warwick**  
**Defining a Space for Women's Rights: World-Literature and the Aesthetics of Combined Unevenness**

Does, as Douzinas puts it, 'the universality of rights necessarily [neglect] the specific needs and experiences of women' (2002)?

Or, in Brown's words, would a more specified framework of 'women's rights' 'build a fence [...] likely to encode a definition of women premised on our subordination in the transhistorical discourse or liberal jurisprudence' (2002)? Prominent feminist and human rights critics continue to debate whether a universal or more relativist approach to human rights better supports access to rights for women across the world-system (Gilligan, 1982; MacKinnon, 2000). These debates are also vital because, as multiple critics have pointed out, women become vital to the self-definition of culture and thus to how human rights are both understood and implemented (Peach, 2001; Pinto, 2020).

But what role does world-literature play in intervening in these discussions? The WReC argue that world-literature 'registers' a combined and uneven modern world-system (2015), thus an aesthetics of both universality and particularity. If this is the case, world-literature has the potential to provide a framework for rethinking and reconfiguring universal vs relativist debates of human rights. How does reading world-literature as an aesthetics of a combined and uneven world-system enable an intervention in feminist debates of human rights? And how does this allow us to reformulate the WReC's initial thoughts to provide a greater space for women in world-literature? This paper aims to explore these questions through a critical exploration of a specifically gendered experience of rights in Orcel's *The Immortals* (2020). In interrogating the above questions through these texts, I argue that world-literature's aestheticization of combined unevenness re-writes the spatiality of women's rights as they are situated in a universal (or 'world') rights system.

**Liani Lochner, Université Laval**  
**Reading Zoë Wicomb's Women**

This paper reads the works of the South African writer, Zoë Wicomb, as subverting the expectations of situated reading in which the postcolonial female author is received as the purveyor of authentic cultural knowledge and her writing merely as responses to colonial and national discourses. Wicomb's objection to the autobiographical reception of her works points to the effects of a reading practice that maintains the figure of the black woman writer as other and her oeuvre as speaking only to sectional, politicized interests. Her works, I argue, dismantle this uncritical positioning of the ostensibly universal reader as essentially white and male, as always reading across culture and gender differences, a reader who continuously places the writing subject in terms of culture and gender – as other – and a reading practice which locates the symbolic value of this writing in how it meets the international literary marketplace's demands for what Graham Huggan calls the "postcolonial exotic." Wicomb's staging of authorship as doubled and deferred dislocates this presumed universal reader and the concomitant desire to recuperate the writing subject for identity politics. All of Wicomb's writer figures are deliberately female, including protagonists like Frieda Shenton in *You Can't Get Lost in Cape Town*, the unnamed narrators of *David's Story* and *Still Life*, Mercia Murray in *October*, and the implied, but not confirmed, narrator of *Playing in the Light*, Brenda McKay. This paper will argue that Wicomb's texts prevent the reader from absolutely locating these writing subjects in terms of positionality; this reading experience defamiliarises the expectations of authorship and foregrounds the reader-critic's role in how gendered and racialised speaking enters the public sphere.

**Chair: Lenka Filipova**

## Panel 9b: World-Literature and Form (OCO.04/ Stream B)

2.50pm – 4.05pm

**Yeçim Kaya, Bilkent University**

### **Adding a New Fractal to Graphic Novel Genre: An Analysis of Turkish Graphic Novels**

In 2015, Özge Samancı wrote *Dare to Disappoint: Growing up in Turkey*—a novel where she narrates the difficulties of growing in Turkey not only as an individual but also as a woman. Through this story, Samancı sheds light on the problems that one may come across in a patriarchal society like Turkey. In other words, graphic novel genre also becomes a tool through which she—as both a Turkish citizen and as a woman—talks against the oppressive systems with the aim of claiming her female identity. Writing approximately five years after Samancı, Aslı Alpar also uses graphic novel genre for similar purposes: she, through writing about her grandmother's story in *Emine Hanım'ın Romanı*, again highlights the problems of being a female individual in Turkey and the problems of being a woman in Turkey. In addition, in her other art works, Alpar moves beyond this and starts using her illustrations to demonstrate the problems of LGBTQ communities in Turkey and claiming their identities. Taking these two novels and some of Alpar's art works as the starting point, this paper will aim to set graphic novel as a form of female and queer mode of writing where the agency of female individuals as well as LGBTQ people are reclaimed. In addition, this paper will highlight how Turkish female author's use of graphic novel can add a new fractal to this genre as is introduced by Wai Chee Dimock in "Genre as World System: Epic and Novel on Four Continents" (2006).

**Emily Foister, New York University**

### **Margaret Tait: Master, Makar**

Margaret Tait (1918-1999) was a medical doctor, British Army veteran and self-styled "film poet" who created in relative isolation, based in her studio in an old kirk on her native Orkney islands. It was mostly on this archipelago in the Northern Isles of Scotland that Tait made 31 films between 1951 and 1982, only two supported by external funding. An inheritance from her grandfather in 1960 freed Tait from a wandering life as a locum, but she still grappled to finance her films "On shoestrings. On hope." With no economic incentive to earn a living on the film market, her particular avant-gardism emerged almost incidentally, uninhibited as her evolution was from mainstream audiences' whims and the constraints of commissioning studios. This unconventional path, however, without jobbing work on sets and the reassuring small talk of the cinema circuit, left Tait without a network of industry peers. This sense of exclusion was compounded by gender: "It's lonely to be a woman writer. There isn't anyone to discuss it with." I will show how, despite her geographical solitude, Tait's work still often centres on connection, which she found in the ecocentric and collaborative relationships of her lived and peopled environments. She uses her work to explore and revisit landscapes, sounds, and people familiar to her since childhood, speaking to a circular economy in her work which posits a distinctly feminine way of making. Tait is one of many mid-century women makers of all kinds emerging in response to the same structure of feeling. They felt called to find original ways to create, free from the constraints of systems devised without them in mind. Divested from any commitment to producing a shiny new object or some tangible proof of work, they are invested instead in the process, in the polishing, the deepening, the pause to return and remap and reimagine.

**Vida Owusu-Boateng, Governors State University**

### **A Question of a Woman's Place: Medea in South Africa and Cuba**

Through close readings of Guy Butler's *Demea* (1990) and Jose Triana's *Medea en el espejo* (1959), this paper offers a comparative literary history of Medea's presence and representation of women's experiences on the Caribbean and African dramatic stage. By foregrounding the story of this ancient female figure into the stories of contemporary African and Caribbean women's struggles for a place, the paper examines Caribbean and African women's stories of struggles for a place as a narrative of un/belonging that is marked by a distinctive relationship to the settler colonial and post-colonial state and the British empire. The paper argues that the incongruity between Caribbean and African women's dreaming of a romanticized home and the reality of recurring traumatic loss of displacement and loss creates a constant dystopic tension that plays out in the two plays as a struggle for one's place. This tension not only implicates the Medea characters in the designs of empire and the modern nation, but also leads to their resistance to the hegemonic nation.

**Chair: Sumati Dwivedi**

# Panel 10a: Reproductive Labour (OCO.03/ Stream A)

4.20pm – 5.35pm

Hannah Pardey, Leibniz University

## World-Literature 2.0: The Gendered Dynamics of Emotional Labour in the Digital Literary Sphere

Algorithms shape the social and emotional lives of innumerable social media users worldwide, including the overwhelmingly female reviewers who regularly turn to Goodreads or YouTube to organise their reading schedules and share their affective experiences with likeminded others. Accordingly, my paper takes the approach of Warwick Research Collective to world-literature into the digital age to interrogate the gender imbalances informing the global Internet economy. Drawing on the findings of my larger research project, which investigates more than 15,000 online responses to the new Nigerian novel with corpus-linguistic software, I put special emphasis on the socio-technical means of building and commodifying community and emotion in the digital literary sphere to ponder the following questions: Why do the digital distribution and reception of world-literary texts primarily address and appeal to female subjects? To what extent does the economic order of the World Wide Web reinforce a division between paid and unpaid (or poorly paid) labour that assigns thoroughly reproductive and caring roles to women? Do the notions of emotional labour and affective care equally apply to the predominantly female authors of Nigerian diasporic fiction, such as Ayobami Adebayo, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Chinelo Okparanta and Taiye Selasi, who seem bound to rehearse commercially successful narrative structures for a self-enforcing world-literary system? Adopting socio-historical and materialist perspectives on the gendered dimensions of online literary discussion, I suggest that the new media economy expands the gender inequalities of global capitalism into the digitised twenty-first century: While US-based and male-led companies like Amazon, Facebook or Instagram gain multi-billion-dollar revenues from providing algorithmic software, they leave the emotional responsibility for online literary communities to the female novelists of the Nigerian diaspora and their ethnically diverse but socially balanced female readers.

Athira Unni, Leeds Beckett University

## Dystopian Hyperbole and Reproductive Labour in Margaret Atwood and Mahasweta Devi

Global markets have only exacerbated the unevenness in capitalist production and led to a wider acceptance of Wallerstein's world-systems theory. This also translates to a singular yet uneven set of concerns about women's reproductive labour across world-systems. In my paper, I examine reproductive labour in two postcolonial literary texts – Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) and Mahasweta Devi's short story 'Breast-Giver' (1997) – examining what I call the 'dystopian hyperbole' as seen in these texts that emphasize exploitative reproductive labour. The Eurocentric focus in utopian studies has denied an opportunity for comparing a dystopian text from a core country with a social realist text from a semi-peripheral country before. Therefore, I propose the dystopian hyperbole as a textual tool seen in Atwood and Devi presenting a common ground for juxtaposing these contemporaneous texts. I use social reproduction theory to analyse the intersections of gender and economics in these texts. I also consider how genre and form, presenting the common theme of surrogate motherhood in these texts, are functions of material conditions of women from respective contexts. An ancillary consideration of my paper will be how post coloniality facilitates the Canadian author to center a white protagonist victim of a theocratic dystopia in a rewriting of the slave narrative genre and for an Indian writer to examine the intersections of caste, reproductive labour and religion in the space of a short story in the social realist mode. Both narratives relate reproductive labour to the body politic. These two texts present women meeting the social function of reproduction and the resultant trauma. The texts themselves define priorities for national literature in Canadian and Indian contexts. Finally, the degree of dystopian hyperbole in these texts is a colonial function and both women writers respond to this differently.

David Buchanan, University of Pennsylvania

## Midwifing Racial Capitalism, or Domestic Reproductive Labor in *Small Island*

This paper explores the entanglements of migrant domesticity and racial capitalism as depicted in two literary works about postwar Caribbean labor migration to Britain. Historical accounts of this period, which is known as the Windrush era that spanned from 1948 to 1971, often characterized this transatlantic reallocation of labor power as beneficial to both the imperial metropole and colonies. Andrea Levy's novel *Small Island* (2004) and Helen Edmundson's stage adaptation of the same name (2019) demonstrate, though, how migrant domestic spaces served as sites of economic exploitation because they were centers of unwaged reproductive labor. Drawing on social reproduction theory and discourses of bare life and bare labor, I examine two scenes that appear in both texts in which women labor: in the first, Jamaican working-class immigrant Hortense toils unceasingly in her small room in a boarding house to reproduce her husband's labor power; and in the second, white middle-class landlord Queenie gives birth to a son, with Hortense as her untrained midwife. These scenes demonstrate the difference between the productive labor of Black migrants that generated wealth and the reproductive labor of white women that preserved wealth intergenerationally. This bifurcation is reminiscent of the appropriations of labor power that occurred in colonial-era plantation houses, connecting racial capitalisms across time. By emphasizing its female characters' reproductive labor, I argue that *Small Island* exposes how the migrant household functions as an extension of the capitalist world-economy that enabled the superexploitation of its immigrant labor force. In discussing both the novel and drama together, I also consider how the interiority traditionally associated with domestic fiction translates on stage, where actors perform the labor that the novel describes.

Chair: Charlotte Spear

## Panel 10b: Space, Place, and Labour (2) (OCO.04/ Stream B)

4.20pm – 5.35pm

Chandrica Barua, University of Michigan  
Love, Labor and Capital: The Filipina Body and its Diasporic Contingencies

Mia Alvar's *In the Country* is a collection of stories about the uniquely contentious and intractable experiences of diaspora for women, especially those moving within the "domestic" from nation to diaspora or back. By "domestic," I mean both the domestic space of the house and 'domestic' professions such as caregiving, housekeeping, cooking, cleaning, etc; in other words, what David Eng terms as "affective labour." Reading across the different forms and narratives of mothering and caregiving in Mia Alvar's stories - a mother and wife's life-long "saintly" servitude in "The Kontrabida," the migrant caregiver's emergent maternal instincts through the emotional association with her amo's child in "The Miracle Worker," and the young mother grappling between idealism and motherhood, nation and diaspora in "In the Country," - I investigate how the understanding of this intensive and demanding physical and emotional labour gets occluded by nationalist and transnationalist imaginaries of what labour and productivity mean. My paper traces how the bodies of these women labourers are transformed into capital and goods in these transnational networks of neoliberalism and globalisation, sustained through histories of colonisation and subjection. The woman's journey from nation to diaspora, then, is also a journey from having objects to being an object herself in a global market; her labouring, mothering body becomes monetized capital and a transnational product. Eunjung Kim defines the condition of "exploitable humanity" as wherein (former) colonised subjects emerge as and are shaped to be the most pliable for extractive invisibilized labour, such that their bodies are replaceable as bodies but essential as/ for labour. This seems to really capture the unique situation of migrant women in domestic professions in the diaspora. This opens up the larger question of what Asian women's bodies, especially those engaged in affective labour, mean to/ for global capitalism. How might these bodies challenge, upend, and push back against systems of work, and how are they repressed, controlled, and made to submit?

Ijeoma Daberechi Odoh, Princeton University  
"The "Half-Room" as a Site of Enunciation and Productivity in Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen*

Buchi Emecheta's *Second Class Citizen*, was one of the few novels written by Black British women during the early postwar period. Although many migrants had anticipated a greener pasture in the postwar era, they were met with hostility and displacements. Work and housing became two major ways through which immigrants experienced their displacement and their treatment as second-class citizens. As James Proctor notes, "it was around housing that the national panic surrounding black immigration tended to accumulate and stage itself in this period. Housing was, more than any other aspect of life in the early postwar period, subject to a 'color bar'" (22). Adah describes the room that her husband, Francis, rented for the family as a half-room that incapacitated her movement. Faced with many challenges arising from her gender identity, immigration, and socioeconomic status, Adah condemns her treatment and calls to question the sociocultural practices that undermine women's potential, including the dominant practices of her patriarchal Igbo society that make the woman an appendage of her husband. However, despite the many challenges associated with this "half-room"—which can be read as a marginal space— I argue that it is from this marginal space that Adah begins her search for identity and voice. When at the end of the narrative Adah finds a room of her own to write, she makes a case for herself and for other black women as she creates a diasporic feminine space that is both transformative and enunciative—it is a feminine space through which she urges women to speak for themselves rather than be spoken for. It is Emecheta's understanding that with different exposures, contacts, and interactions that women are engaged in, they should be able to renegotiate their identities and claim a voice for themselves. Thus, the half-room that Adah is forced to inhabit on arriving England becomes a radical site of enunciation and productivity rather than a limitation of her potential.

Sumati Dwivedi, Columbia University  
No-Woman's Lands, Present and Future: The Woman's 'Place' in Genres of Conflict and Collapse

In the Anglophone literary 'canon', the binary of Home/World shapes the problem of 'placing' women in physical and/or affective spaces. My paper contrasts these 'classics' with literary genres preoccupied, as we are, with global, even planetary crises and the collapse of systems. A selected pair of these genres illustrates the (dis)placing of women in shifting, even crumbling worlds: war writing, which addresses its own time; and science fiction, which imagines the future. War writing, historically, is defined by its splitting of space into 'warfront' and 'home front,' the latter defined by negations and intensely female-gendered. The warfront generates 'war writing'; there is no 'homefront' writing, it is merely the place where 'women's writing' for the war period shelters. I comparatively read Barbara Pym's novel *Excellent Women* (1952) with American, especially Native American women's writing about the Vietnam War, as struggles for literary and ideological space against genre/gender boundaries. Our present age of escalating, global, yet distributed and often 'shadow' wars continues this, as literary spaces for women's bodies, minds and gazes are warped into no-places—into a residual category. Science fiction supplies the second half of my proposition that genres of crisis annex space from 'literature' as the master-genre, and in doing so aggressively dispossess the female/feminine. In its post-collapse future, H.G. Wells' classic *The Time Machine* imagines a newly bi-morphic (post)humanity, the two 'kinds' of human defined through industrial processes, and existing in a predator-prey relation of violent consumption. Atavistic and reductionist as it is, even the biological place of the female of the species disappears in the final social and ecological collapse. Dystopian science fiction by women authors such as Ursula Le Guin reinforces this image of the future as essentially an extinction of woman.

Chair: Vida Owusu-Boateng





We would really like to thank our funders for making this possible:



BCLA | British Comparative  
Literature Association



We would like to thank our volunteers: Alana Gaglio; Caleb Mathes; Isabelle Walker; Jess Noble; Liza Hudson; Molly Smith; Yazhuo Liu.

We are immensely grateful to Nicole Checketts, Siân Moore, Dee Parker, and Heather Pilbin, without whose support this event could not have got off the ground.

Our warmest thanks to the many colleagues and friends who have supported this project – in particular, to the members of the WReC for their intellectual generosity in its early stages.

Finally, our thanks to our speakers for sharing their time, energies, and labours with us.

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