



2ND INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE ON LITERATURE AND IMAGE

REVISITING DYSTOPIA IN LITERATURE AND THE VISUAL ARTS

26TH-27TH MARCH 2020, UCAM (UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA DE MURCIA, SPAIN)

After a first edition devoted to the gothic genre, the 2nd Interdisciplinary Conference on Literature and Image will address and analyse -from a variety of perspectives- the **transformations experienced by dystopian fiction** since 1948 up to today within the fields of literature, cinema, TV series and other manifestations of popular culture.

Built around topics such as post-apocalyptic cataclysm, the conflict between ‘appearances’ and ‘reality’ in seemingly stable societies, the risk of **ideological manipulation**, or overwhelming fear of **increasing dehumanization**, these works of fiction provide valuable answers to the anxieties and uncertainties in contemporary society (the boundaries of technological development, the threat of politico-ideological conflicts, abrupt changes in ethical values, the shadow of **biased mass-media**, the obstacles for the construction of one’s identity, etc.). Oftentimes, the discovery of ‘hidden’ truths or the disintegration of social structures force the protagonists in these stories to undergo **traumatic situations of crisis and hostility**, propelling them to run away from the people and places they knew. Their previously ‘ideal’ society turns into a predatory force, chasing those who dare help others escape from the lie they live in: **the lifting of the veil between ‘appearances’ and ‘reality’** reveals the image of an oppressive society that fosters the destruction of human dignity and individual freedom. A sense of spatial and temporal distance enables these literary and visual works to utter heartfelt pleas and warnings **against the instances of dehumanization, injustice, inequality or destruction of ethical values** perceived in the actual societies in which they were created.

Our conference will therefore put a substantial emphasis on the analysis of dystopian fiction as a window opened onto situations of crisis, conflict or destruction which **carry the promise of a new beginning** and (either implicitly or explicitly) advocate for the healing **rediscovery of human values** and an orderly reconstruction of society (in accordance with the basis of **humanistic philosophy and the practice of democracy, civic commitment, sociability and ethics**). In this sense, these works ultimately provide a trusting outlook towards the possibilities of human beings against a backdrop of oppression, exploitation or self-destruction. The Organizing Committee welcomes **proposals for twenty-minute papers** dealing with any of the topics listed below (see next page). Please note that this is a non-exhaustive list and that alternative related topics may also be sent for consideration. Similarly, the literary and visual works shown between brackets should be taken as suggestions -other dystopian works are also welcome. The papers selected for the conference will serve as **examples of the relevance and strength of this genre in contemporary society**, while also inviting us to reflect on its shapeshifting possibilities and enduring fascination.

The Plenary Conference will be delivered by **Prof. María Teresa Gibert Maceda** (Department of Foreign Philologies and their Linguistics, UNED – National Distance Education University).

Contributions may be sent in English or Spanish. The **deadline for submission is January the 15th, 2020**. Selected papers will be published in an edited book or journal. Abstracts (between 300 and 400 words) stating the name, address and institutional affiliation of the participant(s) should be sent via e-mail, together with a separate 150-word biographical note, to bfilhol@ucam.edu

The **conference fee** is 80€ for participants: it includes admission to all sessions, plus coffee & meal tickets. One fee per participant will be charged. The student fee is 30€ (it includes coffee tickets). The conference dinner is not included in this fee and will have to be booked as a supplementary option. **Conference booking opens in late January 2020**: a registration link will be available via the conference webpage, which will be fully operative in forthcoming weeks. Any conference updates, the conference programme plus further details concerning accommodation and transport will be gradually available online.

Thematic areas

Resistance against Institutionalized Corruption, Repressive Violence and Mass-Media Manipulation

(1984, *Black Mirror*, *V for Vendetta*, *Fahrenheit 451*, *Brazil*, *The Trial*, *THX 1138*, *Minority Report*...).

Technological Advances. The Rise of Synthetic Identities

(*Blade Runner*, *Altered Carbon*, *Tron*, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep? A.I. Artificial Intelligence*, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Ghost in the Shell*...).

Running Away: The Rediscovery of Society and One's Self

(*Logan's Run*, *The Running Man*, *In Time*, *The Giver*, *Divergent*, *The Maze Runner*...).

Power Relations. The Effects of Transgression on Our Selves, Interpersonal Bonds and the Social Tissue

(*The Handmaid's Tale*, *Parable of the Sower*, *The Hunger Games*, *The Power*, *Shatter Me*, *Cazadores de luz*...).

Reconstruction Processes: Restoring One's Identity and Transforming Society

(*Dune*, *Lágrimas en la lluvia*, *A Canticle for Leibowitz*, *The Drowned World*, *City of Ember*, *Y: The Last Man*, *Alas*, *Babylon*...).

Moral/Ethical Challenges and Responsibility –Eugenics, Cloning, Genetic Engineering, Trans-Humanism, etc

(*Gattaca*, *The Island*, *Atlas Shrugged*, *Never Let Me Go*, *The City of Lost Children*, *Las hijas de Tara*, *Abre los ojos / Vanilla Sky*...).

Hope in the Wake of Adversity (Illness, Inequality, Stigmatization, Social Degradation...)

(*The Children of Men*, *Blindness*, *Equilibrium*, *The Stand*, *Wall-E*, *Elysium*...).

Re-Assessing the Possibilities of Humans in the Wake of Collective Crisis

(*I am Legend*, *The Omega Man*, *Mad Max*, *When the Wind Blows*, *The Day of the Triffids*, *The Road*, *Fist of the North Star*, *Soylent Green*...).

Virtual or Alternative Realities. Mind-Programming Routines

(*The Man in the High Castle*, *Total Recall*, *Dark City*, *Neuromancer*, *Ender's Game*, *Ready Player One*, *Planet of the Apes*, *Matrix*...).



Organizing Committee

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Research Group 'Literature, Culture and Modern Languages'
(Research Line 1: Interdisciplinary Studies on Literature, Art and Society)