

(NEO-)VICTORIAN 'ORIENTATIONS' IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

University of Málaga (Spain)

May 15-17, 2019

Under the auspices of the Research Project "Orientation: Towards a Dynamic Understanding of Contemporary Fiction and Culture (1990s-2000s)" (ref. FFI2017-86417-P), funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness, this conference addresses past, present and future orientations of (neo-)Victorian literature and culture.

Ann Heilmann and Mark Llewellyn's acclaimed *The Victorians in the Twenty-First Century, 1999-2009* (2010) offered insight into how neo-Victorianism had evolved as a historical sub-genre in the first decade. Now, nearly two decades into the twenty-first century, neo-Victorianism has consolidated into a literary genre and cultural phenomenon that continues to gain both in popularity and critical appraisal, and current trends in neo-Victorianism continue expanding and diversifying. Thus, we perceive that we have reached a point of reflection and, therefore, we wish to explore new paths and intersections of (neo-)Victorianism.

This conference examines (neo-)Victorian diversifications into the twenty-first century exploring the notion of 'orientation', a dialogical concept itself because it indicates one's position *in relation* to something or someone. We aim to conceptualise the current interest in dynamic processes, notions of becoming, fluidity and multilayering in the neo-Victorian mode through the lens of 'orientation'. We would like to develop this idea in close relationship to the dynamic interplay between the past and the present, the Victorians and us. This way, this notion bears similarities to the "polytemporality" of the trace in that it underlines the "*dynamic* interplay and interrelations between past, present, and future as modes of temporal *orientation*" (Victoria Browne). In addition, Sarah Ahmed's concept of 'orientation', inspired by Maurice Merleau-Ponty's philosophy, has explored the spatial quality of the term in relation to queer phenomenology and embodied situatedness. Therefore, we wish to examine 'orientation' as place, habitation and space in different senses in that it directs itself towards the space in between bodies and objects, but also in the sense of the individual's orientation towards the Other. Ultimately, we would like to address the concept 'orientation' from these interrelated perspectives (1) 'orientation' as an apt critical tool to analyse time, as the *passage* of the 'trace', polytemporal and dynamic, and (2) 'orientation' as a spatial notion, which serves to address questions of mobility, movement, and the in-between space that exists between bodies and objects, in phenomenological terms, as well as the I-you relationship that emerges in the encounter with the 'other'.

We welcome proposals for 20-minute papers in the following topics (but not limited to) on (neo-)Victorian 'Orientations':

- Theoretical approaches and conceptualisations of "orientation"

- Passages, processes and the dynamic continuums between the Victorian past and the contemporary period.
- (Neo-)Victorianism oriented towards the past, the present and the future
- Time and temporality in neo-Victorian fiction; (multiple) temporality; Polytemporality
- Future incursions into the nineteenth century
- Situatedness, embodiment and the senses
- The Victorians Unbound
- Spatial orientations: spatial conceptions, dynamic spaces, geographical orientations
- Neo-Victorianism and the ethical encounter with the 'other'; Orientations towards Otherness and the Other
- Neo-Victorianism and queer orientations
- Neo-Victorian orientations and orientalism; cultural cross points
- Multicultural, cross-cultural and global neo-Victorianism
- Neo-Victorian literature oriented towards Children and Young Adults
- New orientations towards the Victorians: digital humanities and (neo-)Victorianism

Confirmed Keynote Speakers:

- Professor Ann Heilmann (University of Cardiff, UK)
- Dr. Marie-Luise Kohlke (University of Swansea, UK)
- Professor Susana Onega (Universidad de Zaragoza, Spain)

Main Organisers: Professor Rosario Arias and Dr Lin Pettersson

Please send a 250-word abstract to orientationliterature@gmail.com by 15 October 2018. Abstracts should include a short biographical note. All submissions will be peer-reviewed.