Programme
April 26th (11:00–15:00)

11.00 WELCOME

SESSION 1

11:15 Clelia LAMONICA US Accent Perception vs. Production: Results and Discussion
11:40 Zhenya TER-VARDANYAN English-medium Instruction in Armenian Higher Education
12:00 Michaela VANCE Two Versions of Frances Brooke’s opera Marian

12:20-12:40 BREAK

SESSION 2

12:40 Sondos QUTAIT The Mahdist War in British Genre fiction
13:00 Jonathan FOSTER “Stuck in a litter of paper”: Joseph Conrad’s The Secret Agent and the Administrative State
13:20 Joanna WOODS Afrofuturism and Contemporary African fiction

13:40-14:00 BREAK

SESSION 3

14:00 Alice SUNDMAN “Everyplace I went, I got me a rock”: Selected Glimpses of Toni Morrison’s Written Places
14:20 Sanja NIVESJÖ Sexuality as a “transfer point” and as a “site”: what does it mean?
Presented are the results of my dissertation project, which provide insight into the processes underlying our perceptions of regional accents. Following acoustic and attitudinal analyses of differences between accents, results show a combination of certain factors affect overall perception in different manners: Identifiability, Familiarity, Markedness, and Attitude. In particular, judgements of relatedness between accents are argued to involve 1) the perception of acoustic cues (pronunciations), 2) the ability to guess a region of origin for an accent by drawing on its familiarity and identifiability, and 3) pre-existing judgements and associations with the identified accent, which may furthermore override the initial acoustic information.

In recent years, the number of EMI courses has been increasing in the Republic of Armenia, where English is considered to be the second foreign language. With the new demands of the labour-market Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) started to increase the amount of EMI courses, particularly in the discipline “Business and Economics”. Irrespective of the increasing number of English programs, English-medium instruction is claimed to have not received enough consideration in Armenia. There is still a dearth of research on EMI
In order to illustrate the attitudes of students and teachers to EMI courses, this study focuses on email interviews with 10 students and 5 teachers. The results reveal that the obstacles students encounter during EMI lessons account mostly for language problems which, to some extent, are similar to international results. In some cases, teachers’ limited knowledge of the English language gives grounds for complaint among the students (Chung 2010:12), in other cases, subject comprehension is hindered by students’ lower level of English (Airey and Linder, 2008; Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998; Evans & Green, 2007), thus, resulting in the implementation of ‘translanguaging’ strategies for effective communication (Kuteeva et al. 2015). However, in other cases, Armenian students mark a significant increase in language skills, even if the lessons are aimed at delivering content specific knowledge. One distinguishing factor is that using the native language during EMI courses was highly discouraged, which is not typical for EMI practices in some European contexts.

MICHAELA VANCE TWO VERSIONS OF FRANCES BROOKE’S OPERA MARIAN

In this talk I look at two different versions of Frances Brooke’s opera Marian. The first, handwritten version was submitted to the licensing authorities but was, for unknown reasons, substantially revised before it was acted and printed. The acted version is shorter and clearer in its use of names, but also, as several eighteenth-century critics observed, rather thin. As I will show, the passages that were cut from the original
add fascinating depth to the narrative. They reflect Brooke’s lifelong engagement in political and educational debates, with a particular focus on gender and the extent of parental power. These revisions make up a substantial part of my discussion of the opera in the second chapter in my thesis, which focuses on emancipation and migration. Here, I will discuss the differences between the two versions and suggest some possible reasons as to why and when they were made.
SESSION 2

SONDOS QUTAIT THE MAHDIST WAR IN BRITISH GENRE FICTION

I will present an overview of my revised second chapter which previously ranged over a four-decade period but will now only deal with the ten-year conflict between the British Empire and the Sudanese Mahdist movement in the late nineteenth-century. I will focus on the representation of Mahdist fighters in contemporaneous British adventure novels, and contextualise these texts with reference to newspaper reports, memoirs and other non-fiction writing on Britain's involvement in the Sudan. Drawing on recent work on New Imperialism and Masculinity I will argue that British fiction's characterisation of the Mahdists as ‘suicidally brave warriors’ was shaped not just by the outpouring of military and journalistic accounts about the war, but by the late Victorian Masculinity crisis.

JONATHAN FOSTER “STUCK IN A LITTER OF PAPER”: JOSEPH CONRAD’S THE SECRET AGENT AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE STATE

This paper argues that Joseph Conrad’s The Secret Agent (1907) celebrates the epistemology of the novel - specifically Conrad’s proto-modernist “New Form” - against the backdrop of a critique of the epistemology of the administrative state. Conrad’s novel is based on the gruesome death of an anarchist whose explosives detonated prematurely outside the observatory in Greenwich Park. In the preface Conrad suggests that this horrific incident is “impossible to fathom,” but that a novel might approach truths that a crime scene investigation will inevitably fail to uncover.

Exploring various modes of knowing the social world, Conrad's novel depicts the limitations of the official information-gathering...
practices employed by a bureaucratic institution such as the London Metropolitan Police. As James C. Scott argues in *Seeing like a state* (1998), state epistemology is “disciplined by a small number of objectives.” In this paper I build on Scott’s description of the state’s manner of “seeing” the world (through censuses, the cadastral map, etc.), while also expanding on Scott’s analysis by considering non-administrative state practices such as detective work. I find that Conrad’s “New Form,” which harnesses and refines the mimetic epistemology of the realist novel, is valorised and manifested polemically vis-à-vis the symbolic power of the state.

**JOANNA WOODS AFROFUTURISM AND CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN FICTION**

The aim of my presentation is to examine Afrofuturism, as identified by Mark Dery in “Black to the Future” and clarified by writers such as Samuel Delany and Octavia Butler in the 1990s, in terms of contemporary texts by African writers, in order to ascertain its relevance in defining the African speculative fiction genre today. There is a degree to which the term Afrofuturism is best not applied to the context of African literature, entangled as it is with the African American experience and understood largely as a cultural aesthetic that explores the relationship between African diasporic literature/culture and technology. Yet, close reading of speculative fiction from the African continent reveals similar narrative strategies. While this may be true, retaining the term Afrofuturism for such writing arguably obscures how the relationship to the continent informs the writers' engagement with the genre. What is the benefit of drawing points of convergence between diasporic and African futurisms? What might the negative impact be? Amongst numerous other alternatives, including African speculative fiction and African science fiction and fantasy (SFF), what might then be
put to best use in my project considering the history of Africa and the importance of avoiding a frame which positions the continent as a latecomer to the genre. I will explore this with a number of short stories. The presentation attempts to tackle questions about genre in order to launch my project, which I will present in a revised proposal in the HLS in May.
ALICE SUNDMAN “EVERYPLACE I WENT, I GOT ME A ROCK.”
SELECTED GLIMPSES OF TONI MORRISON’S WRITTEN PLACES

In this talk I will present a sketch of what will form the first chapter of my dissertation, where I introduce the reader to Morrison’s writing of place. The first section of the chapter will give a general overview of Morrison’s fictional geographies; that is, a mapping out of her literary places as they correspond to actual geographical locations. In the second section, I will reflect on a few selected moments of written places in her novels with the aim of giving some examples of how her textual places are formed and created.

My dissertation, provisionally entitled *Toni Morrison and the Writing of Place*, explores how Morrison’s fictional places are written. The study focuses on three of her novels, namely *Beloved, Paradise*, and *A Mercy*, but will also give a selective overview of place in some of her other novels.

SANJA NIVESJÖ SEXUALITY AS A “TRANSFER POINT” AND AS A “SITE”: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

One of the tentative conclusions to come out of my dissertation on sexuality and space in South African literature is that sexuality serves as both a transfer point for power relations and a site for negotiating power relations in the novels investigated. The power relations looked at arise in relation to spatial belonging – on different levels from the nation to the slum to the individual body’s placement in space – and particularly a racialised spatial belonging. In this presentation I want consider what sexuality as a “transfer point” and as a “site” mean for my project.
Firstly, I will briefly summarise previous ideas on the matter. Foucault argues that sexuality is an “especially dense transfer point” discursively and materially for “relations of power” (*History of Sexuality* vol. 1 103). Andy Carolin has identified sexuality as a “site of transgression and disruption” for “exposing the instabilities of the Manichean logic on which apartheid ideology was based” in novels by Zakes Mda and Gerald Kraak (“Apartheid’s Immorality Act and the Fiction of Heteronormative Whiteness” 112).

Secondly, I will extend and drill down on Foucault’s and Carolin’s arguments in relation to examples from my own work. The examples I will bring up, from R.R.R. Dhlomo’s *An African Tragedy* (1928) and Bessie Head’s *The Cardinals* (written 1960-2, published 1993), cover different time periods but are both concerned with gender relations and heterosexuality in a racialised urban environment of South Africa.

In thinking about sexuality as a “transfer point” and as a “site” I will particularly focus on the spatial dimensions of the words “transfer point” and “site” and consider how that relates to the intertwined regulation of spatial belonging and of sexuality through much of South Africa’s modern history.