

Editor's Note

The 2025 edition of *Cultural Intertexts* brings together contributions from academics and researchers from eleven countries, spread across four continents. They all share interest in cultural metamorphoses and representations, carrying out scholarly investigations of worlds in words and (moving) images, tackling topical issues like the (re)construction of truth, the common ground where poetics meets politics, myth-making and myth-breaking processes, memory and revisitations of history, identity formation and (re)interpretation, narrative structure and textual architecture, rewriting and adaptation – to name only a few. The cultural texts placed under the lens of scrutiny include novels and short stories, feature films, documentaries, whiteness studies and critical race theory, contemporary media, 3D digital art, cult systems, and textbook choices of historical events.

Annie Proulx's *The Shipping News* (1993), Lisa See's *The Island of Sea Women* (2019), and Witi Ihimaera's *The Whale Rider* (1987) are read to highlight a particular type of feminist poetics, informed by oceanic spaces and the associated maritime myths. Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing* (1950) is analysed with the devices provided by geocriticism to indicate the impact of spatial and cultural displacement on women – resulting in liminal crises. Laurie Halse Anderson's *Wintergirls* (2009) is selected to show how food as cultural language and community consolidator becomes its polar opposite in contemporary American society and its representations in YA fiction. Bret Easton Ellis's *Glamorama* (1998), focusing on celebrity culture and consumerism, is interpreted along the lines of filmic techniques, supporting the narrative scaffolding and carrying content-related valences. Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* (1996) is discussed as an exponent of rom-com and chick lit, mostly in connection with its satirising feminist discourse and negotiating gendered perspectives. Dorothy L. Sayers and Robert Eustace's epistolary novel *Documents in the Case* (1930) is considered in terms of intertextuality and reader response, with the metaliterary component shown as capturing the spirit of the age. Franz Kafka's *A Crossbreed* (1931) is approached via aestheticism, psychology and ethics to address disturbing contemporary pet keeping tastes and practices, subverting the trend of readings animal stories as anthropomorphic critiques of the human condition. Andrey Kurkov's sequel to the diary series *Our Daily War* (2024) is revealed as literary text, cultural manifest and historical document – placing the war in Ukraine under the spotlight and thus capturing history in the making.

The feature films analysed showcase: the coming of age and self-discovery against an intricate, deliberately woven web of symbolically-charged forms and functions of horses (*Heartstone* – 2016, directed by

Guðmundur Arnar Guðmundsson); the influence of the French Nouveau Roman on film and the ensuing shift to self-reflexive representation (*Hiroshima, Mon Amour* – 1959, directed by Alain Resnais, screenplay by Marguerite Duras, and *Last Year at Marienbad* – 1961, directed by Alain Resnais, screenplay by Alain Robbe-Grillet); rewriting the (re)written or accessing the successive layers of the literary palimpsest informing today's cinema (*Prospero's Books* – 1991, directed by Peter Greenaway, and *The Tempest* – 2010, directed by Julie Taymor). The two documentaries taken into account are HIV/AIDS specific; they are addressed from the standpoint of frame theory in view of foregrounding the public-private, integration-isolation dichotomies, as well as the power of their cinematic representation (*5B* – 2018 and *Desert Migration* – 2015).

The scholarship of Peter Kolchin, Toni Morrison, Steve Martinot, Veronica Watson, Matt Wray, Nancy Isenberg, and others is reread to argue that whiteness is a cultural and ideological construction, entangled with power and generating conflict.

Various media renditions of twenty-first century warfare are also part of the present collection of articles, with the warrior cyborg figure and the hero-defender motif emerging as prominent in Ukrainian narratives on the Russian aggression. Added is a study on audiovisual brand campaigns rearticulating cultural myths in the digital age, with emphasis on the particular case of marketing Portuguese products, services and tourist sites.

Diversity of media, discourses and tools for imposing, representing and/or deconstructing multiple realities also results from the essays on: artistic display and 3D formation of virtual spaces – whereby digital techno art builds new expectations of engaging with (alternative) realities, thus potentially changing the way in which readers interact with more traditional art forms; cultic belief-systems – and their mechanisms of truth control, construction and dissemination, with particular references to The Branch Davidians (David Koresh), The Rajneesh Movement, and Heaven's Gate; education promoting British colonial identity in the West Indies – with the case of Edward W. Daniels's colonial era three-volume series of 'West Indian Histories' (1936) and two historical events (the Atlantic slave trade and the Second Maroon War) at the core of the investigation.

Two book reviews round up the selection: *A Student's Guidebook to Textual Detective Work* and *Ascensiunea autorului în epoca globalizării digitale* [*The Rise of the Author in the Age of Digital Globalisation*].

As always, the editorial team is grateful for the professional involvement of and the support granted by all contributors and fellow researchers.

Michaela Praisler