



WAR AND WORDS

CALL FOR PAPERS

WROCLAW, SEPTEMBER 26–27, 2014

From the epic poems of Homer and Virgil to the comic strips of Art Spiegelmann, war has been a recurrent theme in literature. Moreover, it has frequently been a crucial factor in determining the shape of different literary movements, such as Romanticism, propelled by the outbreak of the French Revolution, or Modernism, influenced by the tragic experiences of the Great War. In her introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to War Writing*, Kate McLoughlin notes that every military conflict appears to have its own “poesis,” if not its own genre. Whereas the First World War favoured poetry and the Second – the novel, the film appeared best suited to depict the horrors of the Vietnam War and the blog – to report the so called “war on terror.” Despite this vast body of texts inspired by warfare, war literature seems perpetually haunted by the notion of unrepresentability. Conveying through language the unspeakable atrocities of war without trivializing or sensationalizing the experiences of its casualties continues to pose a challenge today. The year 2014, the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, seems an opportune moment to comment on the complex relationship between war and words. The ambition of our conference is to provide a space for such critical considerations.

We invite papers on various ways in which the worlds of warfare and textuality interrelate. We are interested both in contributions to the various genres of imaginative literature and in those exploring writings that have documentary value: ephemeral texts, private diaries, letters, leaflets and journalism.

Varied aspects of the relationship between literature, ephemeral writings and war are listed below. However, we are open to new proposals, providing they represent a perspective on the interplay between words and war, texts and military conflicts.

Potential topics might include, but are not limited to:

- (1) **Ideology & rhetorics of war:** propaganda, metaphor, frames, domestication of war, concepts of nationhood, nationality, patriotism, pacifism, militarism, anarchy, religion, the role of literature (literature as a political act)
- (2) **Postmodern perspectives:** virtual war, fear and absence, posthumanism, war as simulation, aesthetics of disappearance, unreason

- (3) **Genre:** songs, ghost stories, lyrics, films, biographies, autobiographies, diaries, journals, poems, graphic novels, etc.
- (4) **Cultural landscapes & psychology & society:** ethnicity, identity, corporeality, spatiality, intimacies, emotion and affect, trauma, memory, facets of fear
- (5) **War and gender:** masculinity, reassessment of the canon, women's writing, queering the war
- (6) **Children's and YA literature:** child's perspective

Interested individuals are asked to submit **an abstract in English of up to 200 words** with complete contact information (name, institutional affiliation, mailing address, and telephone number) to war.and.words.conference@gmail.com.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

Prof. Anna Budziak
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CONFERENCE VENUE:

Institute of English Studies, University of Wrocław, ul. Kuźnicza 22, Wrocław

IMPORTANT DATES:

Closing date for submission of abstracts: **15 June 2014**
Notification of abstract acceptance: 30 June 2014
Conference: 26-27 September 2014

Please note that the organizers do not provide accommodation for the conference participants.

CONTACT DETAILS:

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