

Literature, Culture and Nostalgia

Invited speaker: Antonija Primorac, University of Rijeka

Section coordinator: Slađana Stamenković, University of Novi Sad

Contact: elaltconference@gmail.com

As time rushes forwards, the mind turns backwards, yearning to recapture a glimpse of feelings, ideas, thoughts, situations or desires long past. That enterprise works in mysterious ways, and its results are as unpredictable as they are hopeful (or hopeless). At times, this wistfulness is an almost palpable longing for the things of yore; at others, it takes the form of yearning for something that might not have happened at all. Whether manifesting as nostalgia, *Sehnsucht*, *hiraeth*, *saudade*, or even *FOMO*, the emotion connected to the idea of *missing* is a powerful tool of creativity, sometimes pointing the artistic self towards escapism and sometimes towards critique. As a mix of the personal, the social and the political, nostalgia glides along the scale of contemplation, and acts accordingly, with its intent and consequent impact ranging from forlorn rumination to weaponised commentary.

The new roaring twenties—an inherently nostalgic term—seem to have brought about both a new appreciation for and a new re-examination of the past. From such cultural staples as repeats of fashion and pop-cultural trends from two decades ago (present even in mainstream aesthetic artefacts like Disney's recent feature-length animated films), to a fervent ache for a less uncertain, pre-pandemic state of affairs (which in turn gives rise to a desire for a less online-dominated life, or at least a less consumerist, pre-Web 2.0, version of the Internet), the current era is bursting with nostalgia, oftentimes not even the nostalgia for the past, but for the future that now might have been irrevocably lost. This results in different ways of negotiating the temporal gap—both in literature, via nostalgic genres, styles or topics, and in culture, through an examination of the notions of ephemerality, eternity, contemporaneity and their many combinations.

With that in mind, the topic of this year's literature and culture workshop of ELALT conference is nostalgia. We invite papers that will focus on its many manifestations in literature and culture, and the ways that artists employ it in order to tell their stories about our present, our future, and our past.

Topics include but are not restricted to:

- 🚦 literature and nostalgia (interpretations, critical approaches, historical contexts)
- 🚦 literature of nostalgia (themes, genres, language, style)
- 🚦 cultural nostalgia (as criticism/escapism/satire)
- 🚦 technology, culture and nostalgia

- ✚ popular culture and nostalgia
- ✚ social and/or political nostalgia in literature and culture
- ✚ neo-Victorianism, cultural afterlives, revisitations and reinventions
- ✚ nostalgia and/in children's literature
- ✚ nostalgia and material culture, retromania, heritage industry
- ✚ imperial nostalgia in political and cultural discourse
- ✚ cultural memory, narratives of loss and trauma, nostalgia and affect
- ✚ nostalgia and exile, migration, rootlessness, diaspora
- ✚ spaces of nostalgia, psychogeographies, ruins

Abstracts should not exceed 250 words.