

Diaries in 20th Century: Testimony, Memory, Self-Construction
University College Dublin, 8-9 December 2023

Abstracts

Keynote

Leena Käosaar (University of Tartu, Estonia): *The Versatile Vernacular Genre*

During the period of emergence and consolidation of autobiography studies, the diary was considered a genre of minor value concerning “autobiography proper” – a status ascribed, on the one hand, due to the volatile and unpredictable nature of the diary and, on the other, due to excess of predictability through its’ repetitive nature and focus on mundanity that, in turn, supported a view of the diary as a feminine genre. At the same time, multiple variations of the diary that confirm its most basic conceptual parameters extend back in time for thousands of years. They are still actively pursued today in various formats, including those of different social media. Diaries have been authored by outstanding literary, intellectual, and public figures but, just as notably, by ordinary individuals, confirming the genre’s centrality in grassroots life writing and testifying to its vernacular character. As a resource of cultural, social, and aesthetic value, diaries of all kinds have been considered worthy of collection, archiving, and publication. Though contributing to the public status of the genre and advancing its’ scholarly study, published diaries and diary archives alike can be considered missing an integral feature of the diary – its manner of assuming and maintaining its existence processually, or as Philippe Lejeune, one of the most prolific scholars of the diary whose insights continue informing and shaping the field today has formulated it, its’ status as “only secondarily a text or a literary genre [but] first and foremost an activity” (2009: 153).

In the current life writing scholarship characterized by a widening range of increasingly interdisciplinary studies devoted to the diary, not merely transcending its once secondary status, the diary has become one of the most actively studied life writing genres today. Are there new theoretical paradigms of life writing particularly suited to the study of the diary? Should the diary still be approached from the perspective of generic concerns, and how has the study of the diary changed the conception of a (life-writing genre)? How have the methodological premises of studying the diary evolved, and how have these developments contributed to dealing with the limits and challenges of studying the diary? Taking as my starting point my work on different kinds of 20th-century diaries, in my presentation, I wish to explore my research trajectories with a focus on the theoretical, generic, and methodological concerns outlined above.

Panels

1a. Observing the World

Pietro Dalmazzo (Durham University): *Giovanni Comisso within the Adriatic. Self-Construction and National Identities*

The paper investigates some of the issues related to the construction of the self through travel diaries, focusing on the role played in this process by the encounter between the author and a national otherness in Giovanni Comisso’s ‘Gente di Mare’. Comisso was one of the most successful Italian travel – writers of the first half of the 20th century. During the 1920s, he spent part of the summers on a fishing vessel of Chioggia, on which he travelled between the two sides of the Adriatic composing the notes from which he wrote ‘Gente di Mare’. The text is a collection of short tales articulated into two sections: the first describes the attitudes of the people living nearby the Adriatic. The second has a diaristic style and narrates the happenings that occurred to Comisso during his experience on the vessel. The diaristic section develops various themes, and it documents the encounters between the author and a national otherness, the Yugoslav one, living on the eastern side of the Adriatic, a geographical space subjected to Italian expansionist interests. The paper aims to look at the identity issues that surface from these descriptions in two ways. Firstly, it will provide insights about how Comisso represented himself in the Adriatic, and the role played in it by the Yugoslav otherness.

Secondly, it will work on historicizing the text, trying to understand if and how the identities that Comisso articulates for himself and the Yugoslavs were coherent with the Italian-state expansionist project towards the area.

Elisa Russian (University of Zurich): “Esercizi di osservazione”: Geneviève Makaping’s Ethnographic Diary

This paper analyzes the relationship between the literary genre of the intimate journal and the ethnographic practice of taking field notes in Geneviève Makaping’s *Traiettorie di sguardi* (2001; *Reversing the Gaze*, 2023). An Italian-Cameroonian anthropologist and journalist, Makaping has for years called attention to different forms of structural racism unfolding in everyday situations. Her “diario non molto personale” (“not very personal diary”) is an anecdote-based text that relies on a “thin description” of the social world (Heather Love), as opposed to the traditional method of ethnographic “thick description” (Clifford Geertz), for this autobiographical narrative foregrounds patterns of visible phenomena over subjective interiority and individualized contexts. As she engages in her “esercizi di osservazione” (“observation exercises”) and records several “piccoli atti di razzismo quotidiani” (“small acts of everyday racism”), Makaping embraces a politics of affective detachment. I argue that, rather than being an attempt to free herself from feeling in a quest for objectivity, this detachment is created by emotion—ranging from anger to grief and frustration—and thus represents a critical response to the systemic inequalities the author has experienced. I further suggest that, through her dated entries, Makaping confronts readers with forms of discrimination so widespread and diluted in their familiarity that their indictment does not produce shocking revelations, but rather offers modes of recognition, which bring into focus the power of ideology and habit to numb subjects to blatant injustices.

Mark Pendleton (University of Sheffield): Fragmentation and Futurity in HIV/AIDS Diaries from Japan

Prior to the mid-1990s development of combination antiretroviral therapy that made HIV a manageable condition, the future for positive people and those that loved them appeared bleak. Small-scale acts of immediate documentation – from graffiti to handheld audio recorders – became a means of enabling the “weight of image and sensation” of their historical moment and lived experiences to come out, as artist David Wojnarowicz has argued. As part of a project on HIV and AIDS in Japan before 1996, I have begun to research such documentation, including diaries, which Philippe Lejeune has described as ‘antifiction’ in contrast to more structured narrative forms like autobiographies and histories, which are ‘contaminated... [with] fiction in their blood.’ In the context of Japan, however, self-writing has its own genealogies, popular engagements, and publishing histories, complicating Lejeune’s construction. In this paper I discuss several published and unpublished diaries that relate to HIV in Japan and work across language and genre – including from friends of the artist Furuhashi Teiji, who died of AIDS-related illnesses, and from Stephan D. Michael, an American who was brought up in Japan before contracting HIV and documenting in private diaries the last years of his life in the USA. These texts respond to the foreclosure of futurity in the pre-antiretroviral moment but also contain fragmentation of genre and language itself. I suggest that to analyse diaries in the 20th century, we need to understand them as both transnational texts and grounded in the local and historical conditions of their production and reception.

1b. Editing and Self-Editing

Dorota Kownacka-Rogulska (Polish Academy of Sciences): *The diary as a tool of manipulation and creation. The case of Paula Modersohn-Becker and moral dilemmas*

Paula Modersohn-Becker died prematurely. Her paintings gained fame. This great loss has sparked interest and curiosity about her promising future. Someone else had to continue telling her story, but it could happen by using her own words. It was worth the risk. Her friend, Rainer Maria Rilke was invited by Gustav Pauli, publisher of numerous books on art, to cooperate on painter’s legacy. He was initially delighted and agreed to edit her writings, mainly her diaries. During this work poet became gradually sceptical. Honoured by his role in legitimising her memory and cementing her fame, he soon realised how difficult this task may prove to be. After detailed reviewing the materials, he finally refused editing Paula’s notes, explaining that the thoughts they contained were not mature and deep enough, and the visual artist was undeniably far more

independent, creative and unique than the author of the diaries. In order not to create negative image of her, he would have most willingly abandoned the publication of the notes. Although his judgement was not objective, as he found several unflattering remarks about himself in diaries, he wondered above all, how the humble written word would have affected the reception of the artist's painterly output. Rilke was a diligent reader of artists' diaries, although he believed that a true painter does not write, he expresses himself in only one medium, nevertheless was ready to make concessions in this case, because he was aware of how confessions could affect or diminish the value of someone's work.

Deborah Lewer (University of Glasgow): *Confessions of a Lapsed Dadaist: Hugo Ball's Flight out of Time Reconsidered*

In 1927, shortly before his premature death, Hugo Ball published his heavily edited diaries under the title *Die Flucht aus der Zeit (Flight Out of Time)*. Ball was the founder of Dada at the Cabaret Voltaire in Zurich in 1916 but broke with the nascent movement not long afterwards. The widely translated book's account of his experiences before, during and after his involvement with Dada have significantly shaped histories of the avant-garde. This paper examines the sources and conceptual models that informed Ball's strategic retrospective structuring of his diaries and papers for publication. It traces his deeply invested concern to present his personal and intellectual development in terms of theological, psychological, and political concepts of conversion. The paper asks how such preoccupations also underpin Ball's account of Dada as it appears in *Die Flucht aus der Zeit*. It explores the particular implications of Ball's close reading of a quintessential conversion narrative – the *Confessions* of Augustine of Hippo – at the time that he was preparing the manuscript. In so doing, it addresses the complex methodological challenges to researchers in dealing with the contingent forms of witness such texts present.

Matilde Piu (University of Pisa): *Gombrowicz Looking for Gombrowicz. A Comparison between Gombrowicz's "public" and "private" diaries*

After reading André Gide's *Journal* in 1952, Witold Gombrowicz (1904-1969) wrote to Jerzy Giedroyc – editor of *Kultura* – that he wanted to start a diary of his own, meant to be published on the periodical. Gombrowicz states in that letter that «Ce n'est pas exactement que le Journal de Gide m'ait inspiré, il m'a plutôt démontré la possibilité de contourner une difficulté essentielle (car j'avais toujours cru que le journal devait être privé, et lui m'a montré la possibilité d'un journal à la fois public et privé)». While he was writing the three tomes of the *Diary* (1957, 1962, 1966) for *Kultura*, however, Gombrowicz started another journal, a “private” one that he named *Kronos* (2013) and that was published posthumously by his wife Rita Labrosse. *Kronos* and the *Diary* have a very different outline; indeed, the former was seemingly drafted to remain private and then edited by his wife (who admitted having had some doubts about publishing it as it was, or altering some bits in which she was mentioned), whereas the latter has been regarded as a fiction: a literary autobiography written with the aim of self-creation and meant for publication. But is everything that straightforward? How can we label these works? And to what degree Gide's *Journal* influenced Gombrowicz? This paper aims to present some ideas on the interpenetrations and the differences between “private” and “public” (or “real” vs “fictional”) diaries with respect to this peculiar activity carried out by Gombrowicz of writing and re-writing his own biography – e.g. the different representations of his bisexuality. The study will also pose some questions about Rita's role (and her decisions) as editor and publisher of her dead husband's “private” journal.

2a. Diaries and Self-Exploration

Paula Vene Smith (Grinnell College): *Reverse Prism, Capacious Hold-All, or 79-Cent Therapist? Metaphors of the 20th Century Diary*

Why do people writing about diaries always reach for a metaphor? Whether Ira Progoff, Kay Adams and Ryder Carroll promoting their diary methods, Thomas Mallon and Alexandra Johnson summing up the genre, or Anaïs Nin, Joan Didion, bell hooks and Roland Barthes offering personal testimony, all rely on metaphor to define diary. Though their plethora of imagery quickly bewilders, I've identified two dominant types that most frequently recur. The first metaphor has three variants—therapist, technician, and gardener. It depicts

a relationship (of healing, engineering, or growing) that engages both halves of the diarist's "split self"—one a broken/unformed subject to work upon, the other a skilled agent of change. Writers may create a spatial rendering of this process as unfolding in a rarefied enclosure: sanctuary, workshop/lab, or garden. Yet the alternative metaphor, articulated by Virginia Woolf when calling her diary a "capacious hold-all," resists intentional self-fashioning; instead, the returning diarist reads sense into an old collection of apparently random fragments. Can metaphor theory resolve these two accounts? The late 20th century saw a surge in metaphor research: Lakoff and Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) spurred a generation of scholars to examine the workings of metaphor in philosophy, linguistics, and cognitive science. While controversies abound in this new field, it is generally agreed that metaphors enable their users, by extrapolating from direct embodied and social experience, to navigate abstract concepts of time, memory, history, and the multi-faceted modern self. Given how closely this language resembles recent discourse on the diary, what can metaphor theory offer to 20th century diary studies?

Kathryn Carter (Wilfrid Laurier University): *Dreams of War: the Cultural Precedents and Generic Affordances of Dream Diaries*

Diaries which record dreams have precedents from as early as Swedenborg's 1747 diary (first translated into English in the 1860s). However, a variety of factors conspired to make the dream diary more prevalent after the early 20th century. For one thing, the turn to psychology in the early 20th century meant that diary content could draw on a vocabulary of the interiorized "self" in a way that contrasted sharply with public-facing diaries of the 19th century. Simultaneously, psychologists of the early 20th century turned to diaries as a way to access the inner life of its subjects, regarding such documents as "soul portraits" much like dreams, which were similarly thought to offer unmediated access to the psyche. Freud famously offered a preface to *A Young Girl's Diary* in 1915 stating that her diary invited "us to see clearly into the soul of a young girl." There are also generic affordances that make the diary a particularly hospitable format in which to record the disjointed plots of dreams. Like dreams, the diary traffics in incomplete narrative structures. As Philippe Lejeune notes, diary writing is an "art of the fragment." The proposed paper will explore the cultural precedents and generic affordances of dream diaries with a focus on dreams of war: those solicited by the Mass Observation project during World War 2, E. M. Martin's 1915 published diary entitled *Dreams in War Time* (about the Great War), and a more recent project soliciting dream diaries from students in Lviv during the recent Ukrainian war.

Eirini Kotsovili (Simon Fraser University): *On Selfhood and Politics in Modern Greek Life Writing*

This paper examines selected published diaries of female Greek authors produced during, and after, the Greek military dictatorship years of 1967 to 1974, which serve as loci for: (i) reflections on the identities of self and others; (ii) exploration of personal traumatic experiences - memories; (ii) the individuals' socio-political critiques during times of censorship and oppression.

A focal part of the paper, are the references to the celebrated, and widely translated, author Margarita Karapanou's (1946-2008) diaries, published under the title "Life is Wildly Improbable" («Η Ζωή είναι Αγρίως Απίθανη») which constitute her final publishing act and cement her engagement with her own life-experiences in Greece and in France. Her diary writing serves as an intriguing auto-psychoanalytical medium for the examination of experiences and thoughts, in relation to identity and gender; a case study of a subject's/diarist's identity formation through an emotionally turbulent life (e.g. revolving primarily around her complex relationship with her mother – famous author Margarita Lymperaki). Her diaries are the articulatory space for her creative ideas, as an emerging novelist, while also revisiting distinguished authors' works; a safe, contemplative space in the aftermath of psychoanalytic sessions, personal struggles, lack of belonging, different forms of violence and trauma within modern society (e.g. during/after 1967-74). The paper also dedicates sections to selected published diaries of other female Greek authors who explore similar themes and undergo challenging experiences during the years of the dictatorship. It argues that each of these writings transforms into the powerful locus of the enunciation of the 'I's of the subject as a diarist, writer, woman, while exploring traumas and memories (bridging the gap between private and public, individual and collective, present and past).

2b. Diaries and Political Evolution

Samuel O'Donoghue (Lancaster University): *Witnessing the Holocaust and Rewriting the Self: Political Disaffection in the War Diary of Dionisio Ridruejo*

This paper posits a link between the witnessing of Nazi atrocities and political disaffection in the diary of Dionisio Ridruejo, a prominent member of the Spanish Blue Division in World War II. Ridruejo was an influential ideologue in the Spanish Falange and served as minister of propaganda during the Spanish Civil War. But he was disenchanted by the Francoist state's co-option of the Falange and in the summer of 1941 enlisted in a unit of fanatical rightists who travelled to the eastern front to fight alongside Nazi Germany. This Spanish volunteer force became known as the Blue Division in view of the blue shirt worn by the predominantly Falangist recruits. Ridruejo joined in the hope of contributing to the realization of a purer form of fascism. But in his 1976 memoir he claimed that the experience unburdened him from his ideological convictions. He was discharged from active duty in April 1942 owing to illness and recanted his fascist ideology in the years following his return to Spain. Ridruejo's diary of his time in Russia was published in 1978, after his death. *Los cuadernos de Rusia* is an important source for understanding how the Falangist political subjectivity was reshaped by the testimony of Nazi atrocities. A close reading of the diary reveals Ridruejo's struggles to reconcile his ideological commitments and political beliefs with the brutalities he witnessed. Examining how Ridruejo negotiated his political self-conception amid his awareness of the Nazis' exterminatory policies, this paper reveals ultimately how the act of witnessing the Holocaust became a vector for political dissidence in Spain.

Elmar Kossel (University of Innsbruck): *Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli's "From the Diary of a Citizen and Other Writings" (1948). The Diary as Political Writing and Historical Document*

Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli's diary appeared only a few years after the end of the Second World War and can be considered one of the fundamental writings for a moral reconstruction of Italian society after fascism and a reflection on German-Italian relations over almost half a century. The notes are therefore far more than the private memoirs of an archaeologist and intellectual. In the writings, Bianchi Bandinelli not only describes his encounter with the abdicated German Emperor Wilhelm II in Dutch exile and his meeting with Hitler and Mussolini during the German dictator's state visit to Italy in 1938, whom he had accompanied as translator and guide through the museums of Rome and Florence, but also his transformation into a communist in the context of the political situation in post-war Italy. Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli (1900–1975) came from a noble Sienese family on his father's side, from which Pope Alexander III also descended in the Middle Ages, while his mother's family came from Germany. Growing up bilingual, the confrontation with German culture remained a central theme. With his transformation into a communist, Bianchi Bandinelli went from being a chronicler to a political activist. However, the writing also shows the limits of this metamorphosis: the attempt to break with the aristocratic milieu of his origins failed. On the one hand, his aristocratic origins could not be negated by a simple declaration of his desire to become a citizen, on the other hand communism offered a too rigid ideological framework for a critical intellectual like Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli.

Rowa Nabil (Cairo University): *Al-Wahat Diaries: Reading the Prison Diaries of a Political Activist*

This paper offers a close reading of Sonallah Ibrahim's *Al-Wahat Diaries*. Ibrahim, an Egyptian leftist activist and author, produced these diaries in secret between 1962 and 1964, while incarcerated as a political prisoner inside the walls of al-Wahat Detention Camp. Written on scraps of papers from used cement bags, cigarette rolling papers, and empty packets, these secret prison diaries are testimonial objects and material witnesses of life inside the political prisons of 1960 Egypt. The paper reads Ibrahim's diaries to explore how experiential realities destabilize genre expectations, highlighting the impulse to keep a diary and engage in diurnal self-talk inside the heterotopic space of the prison, when the diarist is denied access to pen and paper. Embarking from the stance that the diary -as a generic and discursive category- is embedded in the material conditions and sociohistorical realities of its production, this paper addresses the question of how the historical materiality of the diarist's lived experiences in incarceration and under surveillance effects (non)traditional discursive practices onto diaristic self-writing. In addition, the paper reads Ibrahim's prison diaries as self-historicization of his journey to self-becoming as a political activist. As his prison diaries

chronicle the political alliances and intellectual history of the community of the Egyptian Left in the 20th century, they reveal a self-construction that unfolds through a collective authorial presence. His personal memories, affective experiences, and individual reflections are interwoven in collective memory-keeping and archiving attempts, blurring the line between the public and the private presumed in diaristic self-talk.

3a. Literary Diaries

Desirée Henderson (University of Texas at Arlington): *Diary Fiction in Diary Studies: Navigating the Divide*

Does diary fiction belong in diary studies? Does the study of diary fiction dilute a focus on the too-often-marginalized genre of the nonfiction diary, or might it promote and enhance such a focus? Can the two genres – linked formally, historically, and creatively – benefit each other in scholarly or pedagogical contexts? Is diary fiction even worth our time and attention? My talk makes a case for the place of diary fiction within diary studies by demonstrating how genre conventions travel across the fiction/nonfiction divide, infusing some diaries with fictional conventions and some works of fiction with diary conventions. I argue that a fuller appreciation of the transhistorical and global scope of diary fiction may assist diary scholars in explaining and exploring the history and significance of the diary. Diary fiction, often dismissed as a trite and simplistic imitation of the nonfiction diary, is instead revealed to be a productive site of analysis that may help us to be better readers of and advocates for the diary. I contribute further to this conversation by presenting the archive that I've collected while co-editing *Short Diary Fiction: A New Global Anthology* (forthcoming). The numerous works of diary fiction that I have identified promise to provide a new lens through which to understand diary fiction as a global literary tradition. In my presentation, I introduce several specific works of 20th century short diary fiction in order to demonstrate how diary fiction may benefit diary studies as a growing field of scholarship and teaching.

Leanne Bibby (Teesside University): *The Ethics of the Fictional Diary: Margaret Forster's Diary of an Ordinary Woman*

This paper argues that Margaret Forster's 2003 novel *Diary of an Ordinary Woman* functions as a lens through which to think analytically about the role of diaries in the historiography of the twentieth century. The novel works initially and provocatively as a kind of hoax in miniature: its introduction implies that Forster herself has adapted the diaries of a real woman who lived through, and wrote about, key events of Europe in the twentieth century. In the book's final pages – tellingly, after other paratextual materials – Forster includes a very brief author's note in which she admits that she never in fact met the woman and so fictionalised entirely the 'diary' of the title. The book is thus not simply a piece of fiction imitating a diary; it also engages incisively with the nature and place of diaries within historiography itself and how 'history' is constructed from complex configurations of memory, myth, and fiction itself. Importantly, too, the novel asks ethical questions of its own fictional conceit by effectively tricking the unwary reader into believing its contents are true, and therefore evoking the long history of diaries, both real and fabricated, and their entangled involvement in how facts come to be. This paper contends that this novel is an important, metafictional engagement with what historians of the diary form such as Batsheva Ben-Amos and Dan Ben-Amos have theorized as an interaction between "everyday reality" and narrative form that has "no rival in the arts" (2020, pp. 2-3).

Pawel Rodak (University of Warsaw): *Writer's Diary in the 20th Century: From Private Diary to Literary Diary. The Polish Case*

This paper proposes an analysis of the diary through the prism of a conception of the diary in which it is treated as an everyday writing practice – acting in words – according to which the newly composed text is only one element of it; the remaining elements are performative-functional (the place the diary occupies in the writer's life and its functions) and material (the diary's supports, its material structure, appearance). Using the three categories (practice, material, text) paper gives a thorough characteristics of personal diaries, every time paying special attention to the peculiarity of writers' diaries. Light is shed on the important role of motivation for diary writing and on the function the diary performs (e.g. recording one's writing, a chronicle of a creative work, the writer's creative workshop, *l'atelier d'écriture*, creative archive, creation of a literary text). I pay attention to the function of a diary supports (e.g. copy-books, notebooks, loose pieces

of paper) and to an important practice of rewriting and amending of notes in some writer's diaries – an evidence of changing a personal writing into a literary text. In my paper I analyse the most important diaries of Polish writers in the XIX and XX century (Zeromski, Nalkowska, Dabrowska, Herling-Grudzinski, Gombrowicz). I show the process of transition of the writer's diary from the private diary, through the private-literary diary to the literary diary. In each case, I point out the specific features of the three types of diaries.

3b. Diaries and Female Selves

Aurora Sturli (University of Cambridge): *Creating the Self. Diaries and Girlhood in Post-Unification Italy: Grazia Pierantoni Mancini's Impressioni e ricordi (1906)*

In 1906, almost at the end of her literary career and life, Grazia Pierantoni Mancini (1843-1915) published her teenage-years diary, *Impressioni e ricordi*, in the periodical *Nuova Antologia*. Two years later she published it as a book in Milan with the publisher Cogliati. In her youth, Pierantoni Mancini found herself at the very heart of the social and political turmoil of the early post-Unification period, being part of a circle of intellectuals and politicians: her parents' home in Turin was a meeting point for political exiles of the time opposing the Bourbon kingdom and supporting Unification under the Kingdom of Sardinia. This lively intellectual and political environment comes to light in Pierantoni Mancini's diaries, which are therefore both an interesting historical and cultural source of information and a means for her to create memory. Applying Philippe Lejeune's analysis (1993) of diary-writing for young girls to the Italian context, and specifically to Pierantoni Mancini's work, this paper investigates the writer's self-fashioning process through her memoirs. In her *Impressioni e ricordi* Pierantoni Mancini applies and enacts models of conduct deemed suitable for nineteenth-century bourgeois young girls, while also creating and constructing her own sense of self, in a mirroring activity of self-definition and self-expression. This paper will contribute to drawing attention to Pierantoni Mancini's life and work, an author who has been the object of some recent scholarly studies (Cagnolati, 2012, 2013, 2021; D'Antuono, 2008), but who is still very much in need of further investigation.

Charlie Knight (University of Southampton): *The Envelope and the Kontobuch: The Writings of Clara Licht, 1939-40*

As studies of, and public discourse about, the Holocaust increasingly move into the 'post-witness' age, an increasing number of families are discovering long hidden treasure troves of documents and other material pertaining to individuals and families whose experiences were perhaps lost to history or confined to family collective memory alone. The papers of the Licht/Königsberger family are an example of such, containing letters, documents and photographs pertaining to various members of the family. In August 1939, Clara Licht and her husband Saly 'Sem' arrived in London to be with their daughter Alice and her family after fleeing Berlin. Living with them was Alice's nephew, Klaus. Missing were Klaus's parents, Ernst and Ilse, who had been initially been unwilling to leave Berlin, but were later unable to. In an attempt to compartmentalise her thoughts and fears pertaining to her son and daughter-in-law, Clara penned a number of quasi-diaristic documents designed as an outlet to the tumult and grief around her.

This paper will focus on the various private documents written by Clara, as well as our access to them now, noting the positionality and reflexivity of the researcher in viewing such ego-documents. The methods in which Clara chose to write will be discussed alongside the contextual details surrounding Ernst and Ilse, and their fates. Written in notebooks and prayer books, and on scraps of paper, Clara Licht's diary provides us not only with an insight into individuals experience of the Holocaust but also how one woman negotiated her family separation and fracturing.

Emma De Pasquale (Roma Tre University): «Scrivo la sera, come Valeria»: *Intermedial Perspectives on Alba De Céspedes' Quaderno proibito*

Diaristic writing has developed into a distinguishing mark of De Céspedes' work, since the author conceives it as a literary, safe space for characters to speak out their truth. If in *Dalla parte di lei* (1949) [*The Best of Husbands*, 1952] the narration overlaps the protagonist's apologetic memoir, the elaboration of diaries as a literary device of self-construction and liberation reaches its apex in *Quaderno proibito*, published by

Mondadori in 1952 [*The Secret*, 1957 / *Forbidden Notebook*, 2023], in which the narration is completely entrusted to the diary entries written by the protagonist Valeria, who explores her will and identity as a woman out of gender roles through some secret, self-reflective diary confessions. Since its first publication, the novel proved to be particularly suitable to different intermedial adaptations: starting from its theatrical *mise-en-scène* (*Quaderno proibito. Commedia in due tempi*, 1962), from which are drawn a serial illustrated narration on the feminist magazine «Noi donne» (1962) and a radiophonic play (1975), ending with a TV screenplay in four episodes (1980). Considering diaristic writing as a recurring pattern in De Céspedes' work, this paper aims to investigate the ways in which Valeria's diary is differently portrayed according to the chosen medium and the different rate of audience engagement they imply; furthermore, through the analysis of *Quaderno proibito*, the study will focus on diaries as a means to shine a light on the socio-cultural instances of the second post-war period, particularly related to the emancipation of women and the overthrow of patriarchal relationships.

4a. Travel Diaries

Eamonn Connor (University of Glasgow): 'Scenes of great animation!': Reflections on the Cruise Diary

In July 1939, a Glasgow woman named 'Kit' boarded the British steam passenger ship S.S. Britannia for an 18-day North Atlantic and Mediterranean cruise. During the journey, she made daily entries in a diary, including photographs and memorabilia. In this presentation, I use this material, located at the University of Glasgow Shipping Archives, to analyse how passenger subjectivity is articulated and co-constituted by the multimedia construction of the shipboard diary. I consider the diary a type of material-discursive practice – emphasising “the entangled inseparability of discourse and materiality” (Orlikowski and Scott 702) – since the keeping of a shipboard diary is itself a way of travelling by sea. I take up the suggestion of Susann Liebich and Laurence Publicover, who argue in the short essay 'Maritime Literary Cultures' that maritime historians should pay closer attention to voyage diaries and other forms of private writing by passengers and crew in order to better apprehend the lives of those who travelled by sea (21). By examining the form of the shipboard diary, I seek to shift attention to the embodiments of leisure cruising during the interwar period, contributing to an emerging discussion of “the corporeal experience of mobility” (Ashmore 596). I argue that Kit's diary does not function as a passive reflection on her holiday, but rather plays a crucial role in shaping her subjectivity as a passenger and her experience of the cruise.

Georgios Katsantonis (Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa): Pier Paolo Pasolini's 'The Long Road of Sand'

In the summer of 1959, Pier Paolo Pasolini traveled the entire Italian coastline behind the wheel of a Fiat 1100. His diary, *The Long Road of Sand*, was published in three installments in the magazine *Successo*. The book partakes of a special category of the diary, it purports to be a record of the 'geography' of his country, not yet devastated by what, in the mid-1970s, he would have called 'cultural genocide'. Through the analysis of his narrative and private writing, this study investigates the evolutionary modalities of a 'diarism' that punctuates 'experience', explores it, rethinks it to the point of recasting it in an inventive and interpretative plot of personal and historical reality. A diaristic poetics is thus delineated as self-awareness and invention, the autobiographical quality of Pasolini's intellectual depth.

Amanda Skamagka (University of Athens): Diaristic Writing as Document and Travelogue: Yannis Ritsos in Italy

Yannis Ritsos, one of the most celebrated and acclaimed modern Greek poets of the so-called 'Generation of the 1930s', travelled to Italy about eight times after the restoration of democracy in Greece. During his trips to the 'Belpaese', Ritsos wrote diary notes containing his travel impressions, which are unpublished yet saved in his personal archive at the Benaki Museum in Athens, Greece. In his diaristic writing, Ritsos combines personal memory with social and, one could say, ethnographic observation, records Italian habits and customs, recalls historical events, and writes down words, phrases or even verses which would then result in the *Italian Triptych*, a poetic trilogy reflecting his trips to Italy in 1976, 1978 and 1980 respectively. Moreover, some poetic compositions discovered in Ritsos's diaristic writing of year 1981 have never been completed or published in Greece, whereas only two of them have been translated and published in Italy by the poet's translator and dear friend, Nicola Crocetti. In fact, Yannis Ritsos's poetry collection entitled *Italian Triptych*

itself has been often defined as a travel diary, which is rather accurate since it offers to the reader a chronological presentation of the poet's visits to various Italian cities and regions, of his impressions, and his historical reminiscence. However, a comparative study of Ritsos's diaristic writing and the final form of the poems appears to be of great interest to researchers.

4b. Diaries of WWI

Dario Marcucci (City University of New York): *Diaristic Writing as a Shelter from War. Gadda's Giornale di guerra e di prigionia and the Literary Canon*

In *The Great War and Modern Memory*, Paul Fussell describes the British war experience on the Western Front as permeated by a high awareness of literature, rhetoric, and style. Such literariness seeps through war letters, memoirs, and diaries in the shape of constant references to and a high consciousness of the national literature. This paper explores this theme in the context of the Italian Front. Specifically, it investigates the significance and the role of the Italian literary canon in Carlo Emilio Gadda's war diary: *Giornale di guerra e di prigionia*. I argue that, in Gadda's diary, literature serves different functions, among which, it serves as a repository of identity and a tool to bridge the unbridgeable distance between the actuality of war and an elsewhere of peace.

Gianluca Cinelli (Independent Researcher): *Looking at the War through an Explorer's Eyes. Ernst Jünger's War Diaries, 1914-1918*

The Great War gave unprecedented impulse to the proliferation of personal narratives in the form of letters and diaries. These kinds of writing represent precious ways of accessing the sphere of the individual perception of the conflict. In some cases, journals provided the basic structure and data for literary works published after the war. One remarkable example is Ernst Jünger's *Storm of Steel* (1920), a book based on fifteen war diaries (*Kriegstagebücher*) the author wrote between 1914 and 1918 while fighting on the Western Front. In his journals, Jünger records his experiences with great attention to how the technological and mass-scale war impacts the landscape, the human body and the mind. His ability to outline impressions and emotions characterises his journal prose as well as his autobiographical memoir. In this paper, I intend to examine how this form of personal writing constitutes a precious instrument to represent war experience in a direct, unfiltered, and uncensored way that accounts for feelings and emotions by means of different expressive styles and devices such as technical, metaphorical and encrypted languages, and drawings. Moreover, Jünger's diaries disclose his unexpected interest in entomology, hosting tables filled with sketches and anatomical descriptions of insects that the author observed in the countryside, among the ruins of destroyed villages, and in the trenches. Jünger uses his diaries to look at the world and himself almost with the gaze of an explorer as well as an adventure-seeker, which helps one understand why diary represents an effective instrument to record the multifaceted experience of war.

Patrizia Piredda (Independent Researcher): *Ludwig Wittgenstein's Private Notebooks 1914-16. Knowing oneself through the experience of WWI*

Born as the youngest son to one of the richest families in Vienna, Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) decided in 1911 to study Logic in Cambridge with Bertrand Russell. At the outbreak of the Great War, Wittgenstein volunteered as a private in the Austrian army because he believed that such an experience would permit him to understand who he really was. Although this romantic ideal was fiercely challenged by the actual experience of the war, Wittgenstein never gave up his will to remain a decent person throughout the war, even after being taken captive and deported to a concentration camp in Cassino, where he finished his *Tractatus-logico Philosophicus*.

In my paper, I analyse Wittgenstein's *Private Notebooks 1914-1916*, which he wrote during the war, to investigate his struggle to become and remain a decent, ethical person despite the moral corruption he observed while serving in the army. The *Notebooks* are not merely devoted to noting down facts and thoughts. The *Notebooks* can be divided into two parts: on the right hand, Wittgenstein wrote his philosophical reflections about logic, which were the basis of the *Tractatus* (these notes were published in 1961 with a new edition of the *Tractatus*); on the left hand, he wrote encrypted entries about his war

experiences. In my paper, I will interpret the relation between these two forms of writing from the perspective of Wittgenstein's conception of language. I will also investigate how Tolstoy's *Gospel*, Nietzsche's *Antichrist* and the conception of eroticism as described in Plato's *Symposium* rest at the root both of his personal conception of religion and ethics in order to be a decent person, and the distinction he makes between the "speakable" and the "unspeakable", which constitutes the bedrock of the logic of the *Tractatus*.

5a. Visual Diaries

Teresa Bruś (University of Wrocław): *Composite Diary*

How does a collaborative diary help divert attention away from the internal towards the interrelational, the external? Who is "the third" that emerges from a joined act of diary writing? How shall we understand the inclusion of complex collaboratively created visual material in a textually-led diary? What is the rhetorical and generic significance of such a text? What are we to make of such a form of mediation? And, finally, does the visual compete or collaborate with the thematic development? How does the photographic negotiate its own awkward identity against watercolour sketches? This paper addresses these questions. I will isolate *China Diary* by Stephen Spender and David Hockney. It was produced following their three-week tour to China in 1982. The authors were commissioned by a London publishing house to "write" about it and to "draw" it. The diary of 158 watercolours, drawings and photographs, I will argue, is a composite effect of mutual influence among diary-writers but also, immediately, the effect of the collaboration of arts.

Matilde Manara (Collège de France): "*Le Reste est Croissance de Crystal*". *Co-writing, Drawing and Dictation in Catherine Pozzi's and Paul Valéry's Diaries*

Raised in the upper middle classes of Paris alongside artists, scientists and politicians, Catherine Pozzi (1882-1934) is best known for her diaries, which she kept from 1893 to 1906 and again from 1913 to 1934. Throughout her life, and at least until the 1980s, interest in her work was driven by the intense and tortured relationship she had with Paul Valéry (1871-1945), her intellectual companion and lover from 1920 to 1928. While a number of critics have sought to remove Pozzi's reflections over these years from Valéry's sphere of influence - in particular by trying to show that it is Pozzi who had a crucial influence on the development of Valéry's oeuvre - the question of determining the role played by the two authors (one a woman who was convinced to remain anonymous, the other a man who was increasingly committed to fame) in these areas of their work that were from the beginning intended to be shared remains little explored. No systematic investigation has been carried out of the diaries Pozzi and Valéry wrote together during the central years of their liaison, or of the impact this practice may have had on their individual work.

This paper aims at exploring the issues of co-writing, drawing and dictation in the five unpublished sketchbooks that Catherine Pozzi (1882-1934) composed with Paul Valéry (1871-1945) between July 1926 and January 1928, alongside the writing of her own diary, in order to establish the different stages of their dialogue on subjects as varied as the relationship between body and soul, fluid mechanics and Buddhism.

Barbora Svobodová (Université Libre de Bruxelles - ULB): *Reflection of the Year 1952 in Pictures: The Pictorial Diary of Vladimír Fuka*

The diary form represented a frequent genre in Czech literature of the 1940s and 1950s. It developed especially in connection with the so-called "poetics of everyday life" promoted primarily by artists associated with Group 42 (Skupina 42) or in reverse served to capture the horrors of the Second World War. Later, it found its role in the work of many figures, not only in the cultural sphere, as the best way to reflect on the reality of everyday life in former Czechoslovakia after the communist coup in 1948 and the subsequent establishment of the totalitarian politic regime. The *Diary 1952 (Deník 1952)* by the painter and illustrator Vladimír Fuka, to which the proposed paper will be dedicated, also belongs to this category, along with the works of the poet and artist Jiří Kolář or the writer and translator Josef Hiršal and many others.

Contrary to most of his contemporaries, Fuka's Diary is distinctive in the fact the author did not use written text as the dominant mode of diary records but expressed himself primarily through drawings, collages, and photographs that gradually document and comment on the individual days of 1952. The paper thus intends to present and interpret this collection of four hundred dated and chronologically arranged images, published

in book form only six decades after its creation in 2010, in the context of other diaries created in 1950s, and to relate it to the contemporary historical reality as well as the context of Vladimír Fuka's artistic work.

5b. Diaries and WWII

Federico Sessolo (Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa): *An Intimate Field for Rebellion. The "Antifascist Diary" in Italy (Ferrero, Borgese, Morselli)*

This paper offers a comparative reading of three diaries written during the fascist era by Leo Ferrero (1903-1933), Giuseppe Antonio Borgese (1882-1952), and Guido Morselli (1912-1973). The aim is to determine whether the insurgence of a totalitarian State produced significant changes in the physiognomy of diary as a genre. Traditionally, the concept of diary in the Western hemisphere derives from Rousseau's *Confessions* and Goethe's *Life and Poetry*. Rousseau's work outlined a "private" contemplation centered on the individual, with little to no consideration of political events: this seems to be the model stirring Morselli's diary, in which an intimate narration does not provide any references to the fascist regime. On the contrary, Goethe's work delivered the architype of a "public" autobiography, placing the individual within the social context and fashioning his image according to his accomplishments and failures: Borgese's bilingual diary appears to follow this path. Sure, the threat of a totalitarian authority infiltrated most diaries of the time. However, Leo Ferrero's *Diario di un privilegiato sotto il fascismo* might represent the earliest and most convincing example of a new subgenre: the "Antifascist Diary". Written from 1926 to 1928, this journal does not follow the traditional paradigms of Goethe and Rousseau but rather unexpected ones, such as medieval chronicles and contemporary novels. How should we interpret Ferrero's exceptional diary? How can we analyze his fictionalized narration, enriched with dialogues and theatrical sketches? Does this work represent a tertium among the "private" and "public" outcome of a diary?

Ellen Pilsworth (University of Reading): *Anti-Nazi Refugee "Diaries" for British Readers Before and During WW2*

As part of my research into autobiographical accounts published for British readers by anti-Nazi refugees during the periods of appeasement and war, I have come across two works which employ the diary form. These were the accounts by the Hungarian Jewish journalist Stefan Lorant, (*I was Hitler's Prisoner*, 1935) and the Jewish primary school teacher Kaethe Cohn (pseud. Catherine Klein, *Escape from Berlin*, 1944). Lorant's account of his time spent in 'protective custody' during the early months of the Nazi regime became a bestseller. As a cheaply available Penguin Special, it achieved massive circulation, was published in several editions, and even adapted into a BBC radio play in the early years of the war. Published towards the end of the war, Kaethe Cohn's account received far less interest – though notably, it was the only account of Jewish persecution under Nazism to be subsidised by the Ministry of Information in view of its propaganda value. Both texts exploit the diary form for its promise of unmediated authenticity, yet both texts were undoubtedly highly edited. I will consider, therefore, to what extent the diary form impacted on the texts' reception and anti-Nazi propaganda value within their contemporary context (appeasement, or wartime). Finally, I will consider what these texts and their reception contribute to our knowledge of Britain's responses to Nazism and, later, the Holocaust.

Katherine Roseau (Mercer University): *Family Separation in War and Talking to Loved Ones Through the Diary*

Daniel L. was writing in his diary when he heard footsteps. "It's my turn," he wrote, referring to his arrest. Without skipping a beat, his diary became a letter for his girlfriend. "Hélène my last thought is for you I love you adieu." This entry, written in Paris, was dated November 8, 1942. Some 500 kilometers away, the most famous diarist was writing to Kitty. Daniel's use of his journal upsets the received idea of diary—seen as the adolescent, feminine, and intimate genre. This paper addresses the function of communication of the so-called "private" genre. I argue that, especially in wartime, there is a need to communicate through a diary, as people were deprived of regular communication when letters were impossible. I ground my analysis in scholarship on the diary genre, drawing on the work of Philippe Lejeune (2009), Françoise Simonet-Tenant (2006), and Béatrice Didier (2002). Lejeune writes that the private does not define the genre, and Simonet-

Tenant and Didier have shown that the Other plays a significant role in the diary. Diaries from archives comprise my corpus. I analyze the functions of the Paris diaries of Daniel L. (a Jew whose mother was deported and to whom he speaks in his diary), Reine Klavatz (a nurse who stayed in Paris during the exodus and kept a diary to speak with her absent family), and Germaine Léon (who also wrote letters to her interned husband and whose diary served as communication beyond what she felt capable of telling him).

6a. Diaries and Poetry

Patricia Gillies (University of Essex): *Construction of an Artistic Self: Sophie Gaudier-Brzeska's Poetry Notebooks and Journal*

In the course of my transcription, translation and editing of the unpublished 800 page journal (1915-1922) and 6 poetry notebooks – all in French – of Polish born Sophie Gaudier-Brzeska, I came to realise that journal passages often expressing her agonised struggle for an artistic self are rough versions of poems. Anger, frustration, trauma and mysticism surface in her journal writing as she comes to terms with the wartime death (June 1915) of her companion, the innovative sculptor Henri Gaudier-Brzeska with whom she exchanged names and shared languages and ambitions. Her journal often becomes a place where he lives again both in his beautiful physicality and in their conversations about art. In her journal Sophie Gaudier-Brzeska denounces the horrors of the war, the enmity of his French parents, the cruel exploitation and misogyny of the Modernist elite that they encountered in London. That same elite oppressed and attempted to exploit her as heir to his works, but ill, impoverished and isolated. Both before and after his death, however, Sophie Gaudier-Brzeska realised her lifelong commitment to an artistic identity in the verse entries of her notebooks. The jointness of their artistic project emerges in numerous previously unidentified poems that convoke his presence and her own initials “SGB” on these same pages. If their marriage was prevented by Henri's death, she yet affirms the intimacy and power of their artistic bond in the physical and psychological agon of her poems.

Matteo Anecchiarico (La Sapienza University of Rome / Univerzity Karlovy Prague), *“I'm becoming a laudator temporis acti...”: the Diaristic Dimension of Jan Zábřana's Poetics*

This contribution aims to study the functioning of the diaristic dimension in the poetics of Jan Zábřana (1931-1984), a 20th-century Czech writer and translator, by showing how the writing strategies deployed in some selected poems drawn from his collection *Stránky z deníku (Pages of a Diary, 1968)*, correspond to the ones used in the entries of his diaries, shedding light upon the formal traits they share and, ultimately, demonstrating how the main characteristics of diary writing influenced and became part of his writing style. The polluted cultural semiosphere (Bolton, 2006) created in Czechoslovakia after the establishment of the communist regime and the deployment of the censorship system forced many banned writers to seek shelter in the private sphere, resulting in a rich production of diaristic writing. Zábřana can be considered one of the most meaningful examples of this diaristic need: he first started keeping a diary in 1945 and kept it until the very last moments of his life, which ended in 1984. His diaries represented for him not only one of the few places of artistic freedom he had, but they also contributed to shaping his poetry, resulting in a production which, formally, relies on short forms and fragments, while thematically speaking is built around the harsh description of the hardships of everyday life and of the relentless passing of time, which often brings to a nostalgic recollection of the past.

Tomaž Toporišič (University of Ljubljana): *Srečko Kosovel and His Hybrid Form of (Constructivist) Diaries: From Testimony to Self-Construction*

Our contribution will introduce to international scholars the Diaries of the Slovene avant-garde poet Srečko Kosovel (1904-1926), a contemporary of F. T. Marinetti from the Karst Region of Trieste, which conceived his own version of hybrid constructivist poetry with some clear influences of Italian futurism and Soviet Constructivism. Both Marinetti and Kosovel jotted down their thoughts in the tiny notebooks that followed them almost everywhere. Their diaries cover one of the most dramatic moments of the twentieth century, a period that comprises the experience of the Great War in Italy and Slovenia. However, in comparison to Marinetti's highly political and extrovert diaries about the birth of fascism, Kosovel's diary is very intimate,

conceptual, and lyrical. It comments the political life, but in a highly specific manner combining poetry, essays and other literary forms. Using some examples we will show in which way Kosovel's diaries are not what Hocke names with the term "fictive diaries" and Abbott "diary fiction" but use hybrid forms from autobiographical notes and writings to essay or manifestative forms that one could link to diaries of Nikolay Punin. They nevertheless produce one of the most remarkable perspectives on the cultural and political history of the twentieth century's first decades. The statements in his diaries are of such a kind, as Kosovel would never dare to publish in a review, essay, or a similar objective genre; they can only appear in the diary, where the pressure of language and the process of writing immediately begin to change the initially objective position into something that is increasingly fictional.

Pádraig Ó Liatháin (Dublin City University): *Diaries (1940-50): The Forge of Seán Ó Ríordáin's Artistic Path*

This talk will highlight the significance of Seán Ó Ríordáin's (1916-77) diaries, covering the period from 1940 to 1950. These intimate records offer profound insights into the life and creative journey of one of Ireland's most celebrated poets. The diaries are now housed in UCD's Special Collections, and span from 1940-77. Through a comprehensive examination of his diaries, this study explores the themes of illness, memory, and self-construction, shedding light on the complex interplay between personal experiences and literary expression. Seán Ó Ríordáin's diaries serve as a testament to the tapestry of his life, capturing the private struggles that shaped his subsequent artistic vision. Readers can explore Ó Ríordáin's reflections on significant historical moments, in particular World War II, and his perspectives on cultural identity. Moreover, the diaries act as a repository of memories, preserving his private experiences of severe illness as a TB sufferer at a time when there was no known cure, and literary observations from his voracious reading of prose, poetry and historical works in the Irish and English languages. This study underscores the enduring importance of Seán Ó Ríordáin's diaries as a rich source of literary and cultural heritage. By examining their testimonial value, their role in preserving memories, and their contribution to Ó Ríordáin's self-construction, this research aims to deepen our appreciation for the profound influence of diaries in shaping the literary landscape and understanding the human experience.

6b. Diaries and the Holocaust

Arvi Sepp (Vrije Universiteit Brussel): *The Holocaust Diary as a Genre and a Document: Reflections on Literariness and Facticity*

Whereas autobiographies or memoirs are memory-driven narratives, forcibly oblivious of all the details of quotidian life, diaries are particularly successful in rendering the ephemeral character of the everyday, since they function as quasi instantaneous recordings of colloquial speech. The diary is essentially a first-person account, but the strict adherence to the diarist's empirical observations of day-to-day matters and events and issues, along with an often lapidary style, gives diary writing a representative stature that is in many respects both personal and collective. In this paper, I will show how from a historical point of view, the diary can be seen as a factitious – albeit highly subjective – egodocument, whereas in Literary Studies, the textual and narrative structure as well as the identity construction of the writing subject are highlighted. In order to gauge the methodological tension between these two perspectives, special attention will be paid to Holocaust diaries. Examples of the generic hybridity of the autobiographical genre will be taken more specifically from Victor Klemperer's Third Reich diaries *Ich will Zeugnis ablegen bis zum letzten* (1995). They show the problematic character of the concepts of literariness and facticity with regard to diary writing. Gabriele Schabacher's study *Topik der Referenz. Theorie der Autobiographie, die Funktion ‚Gattung‘ und Roland Barthes' Über mich selbst* (2007) will serve as a theoretical framework to address the question of textual hybridity between factuality and fictionality in the diary. In the first part of this paper, I will present the contours of an interdisciplinary theory of the diary which is based on cultural theory and literary theory. The second part will shed light on the textual status of the 'diary' and identify its basic features as a genre which can be situated between literary prose and historical document. The third section will elaborate on the different methods literary theory and historiography can adopt to analyze from different angles the diary.

Giovanni Miglianti (Wesleyan University): *University Diary: Lidia Beccaria Rolfi and the Thread of Holocaust Testimony*

Holocaust survivor Lidia Beccaria Rolfi (1925-1996) used to refer to her imprisonment in Ravensbrück as her 'university,' an extreme and paradoxical learning experience. Within the concentration camp, between 1944 and 1945, she managed to keep a diary in the form of two notebooks that were only partially published in Italy twelve years after her death. These notebooks are a rare and poignant testament to the day-to-day routine of the camp, containing seminal reflections on captivity, solidarity, and resistance. The proposed contribution takes Beccaria Rolfi's diary as the founding text of her lifelong commitment to bearing witness to the Holocaust, and especially to the gender-laden experience of women deportees during the Holocaust and in its aftermath. In postwar Italy, Beccaria Rolfi was active as a member of the National Association of Ex-Political Deportees (ANED) and as a cultural organizer. Drawing upon close reading and affect theory, this paper offers the first in-depth analysis of her long-unpublished Holocaust diary, exploring its major themes and showing its impact on the works she published during her lifetime, from *The Women of Ravensbrück* (1978) to *The Thin Thread of Memory* (a 1996 memoir that the author presents as a continuation of her 1944-1945 diary). The tension between the private and public dimension of Beccaria Rolfi's Ravensbrück diary reverberates through her understanding of her experience as a woman, a Holocaust survivor, and a writer. Through her case study, this presentation sheds new light on how notions of gender and affect shape the production and reception of Holocaust testimony.

Peter Lawson (The Open University), *Mihail Sebastian's Journal 1935-44: Reflections on the Holocaust in Romania*

My paper will discuss Mihail Sebastian's *Journal 1935-44* (1996) as a literary-historical document which records and analyses Romanian antisemitism before and during the Holocaust. The Romanian-Jewish writer Mihail Sebastian (1907-1945) was born Iosif Hechter and lived through the antisemitic dictatorships of King Carol II (1938-1940), Ion Antonescu in alliance with the fascist Iron Guard (1940-1941) and finally Ion Antonescu as Conducător (Leader) between 1941-1944. His *Journal 1935-44* charts Romania's role in the persecution and murder of Jews during the Holocaust. Smuggled via diplomatic pouch to Israel by Sebastian's brother Benu in 1961, *Journal 1935-44* was first published in 1996, generating extensive debate in Romania. It has rightly been compared with two other important diaries which chart the European-Jewish experience under Nazism: Victor Klemperer's *I Will Bear Witness: A Diary of the Nazi Years, 1933-1945* and Anne Frank's *Diary*. Yet it has not received anything like the same critical attention, possibly due to its Eastern European provenance. *Journal 1935-44* offers astute analysis of Romanian attitudes and actions towards Jews before and during the Holocaust. It demonstrates the strength of mind which enabled Sebastian to write with calm dignity: 'Here and now I cannot be anything else [but Jewish]. Nor do I think I want to be' (*Journal*, p.452). His courage continued even as Hitler 'threatened the extermination of the Jews' (*Journal*, p.519). Mihail Sebastian's *Journal* charts his social, cultural and political strategies for survival during the Holocaust.

Kathryn Sederberg (Kalamazoo College): *Multilingual Migrants: Jewish Refugee Diaries 1933-1945*

About 282,000 German Jews and 135,000 Austrian Jews emigrated by the end of 1939, fleeing Nazi-occupied Europe to over 100 countries that offered refuge. Despite the challenges of emigration, many refugees kept a diary before, during, and after their departure from home. Their texts detail the preparations for emigration, persecution endured, and the difficulties of resettlement. And as Alexandra Zapruder underscores, Holocaust diaries should also be understood as acts of resistance: "the diary is a cry to hold on to a place in the world in the face of erasure." In some instances, the diary is also an attempt to create a world, to imagine the connection to home, and to build a narrative connecting past, present, and future. This paper first contextualizes the diaries of German and Austrian refugees within the literary canon of 20th-century diary writing, especially highlighting the literary models available to diarists of the period. I show how published refugee diaries have become a part of transnational literature of the Holocaust, albeit at the margins. Second, through examples of diarists who settled in England and the United States, I show how some diarists wrote in both German and English, as they work to construct a new self. Following Philippe Lejeune, I read diaries as both a text and a "practice," and for refugees the act of writing the self is a ritual in and through displacement. Writing thus tethers the diarist to home, while constructing a new home and a new sense of self.