



10th LITERATURE IN ENGLISH SYMPOSIUM
13.04.2014

‘Las palabras no se caen en el vacío’ [Words do not fall into the void]¹:
On imagination, borders and friendship

“The imagination creates reality rather than imitates it,” says Hanif Kureishi in his unpublished essay entitled “Anarchy and the Imagination.”² Yet, he continues “[t]here is no interesting consensus about the way the world is. In the end, there is nothing out there but what we make of it, and whether we make more or less of it is a daily question about how we want to live and who we want to be”.

The voice of an artist reaches and touches the world as well as the lives of his/ her readers. The words of writers can stir social unrest but they can also pacify the crowds. Literary works are instrumental in preserving national identities, and Poland’s troubled history during the Partitions can serve as the epitome of the authority of literature. Writers, however, are equally revered as they are persecuted for the statements they dare to utter. “The Word is always risky, and it should be,” says Hanif Kureishi in the already quoted essay, stressing the challenges as well as responsibilities of writers, whose work is never entirely their own once it is given to the world. Stories traverse boundaries, carry their readers beyond the limits of their realities; even when censored, forbidden, and sometimes destroyed, they reappear in other countries at other times.

Such is the work of our illustrious guest: the novelist, playwright, screenwriter, short story writer and essayist **Hanif Kureishi**, whose literary output forever changed not only the face of literary criticism and postcolonial studies but also the position of British cinema. The **10th Literature in English Symposium (13th April 2014)** will celebrate the powers of imagination and friendship across borders, across languages, across time.

We welcome papers about the works of Hanif Kureishi, but also connected with the migration of motifs related to the wider theme of the conference. Thus, against the much debated outcry (Jacques Derrida from Aristotle via Michel de Montaigne) *mes amis, il n’y a nul ami* [O my friends, there is no friend], we believe in the possibilities of friendship and the powers of the writer’s artistic genius. It is not true that verses do not visibly alter the world; they do, and literature repeatedly helps us, less auspicious mortals, see our lives in a different way.

The topics include, but are not limited to the following:

- Hanif Kureishi's works and themes
- Imagination, inspiration and the power of words
- Writing, story-telling and the idea of crossing borders
- Migration of motifs
- The (re)creation of political/social reality in literary texts
- Literary friendships and alliances

¹ It was Pauline Melville, a writer and actress and the lover of the magic of words, who repeatedly mentioned Alejo Carpentier’s work. The motto for this conference is a motto borrowed from his seminal work *El siglo de las luces*, rather unhappily translated into English as *The Explosion in the Cathedral*.

² All quotations come from this 2013 unpublished essay.

The deadline for abstract submissions is **December 20th 2013**. Please send your proposals and a short bio to **both**:

Conference Organiser

Professor Liliana Sikorska(sliliana@wa.amu.edu.pl)

Head of Department of English Literature and Literary Linguistics, Faculty of English, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland

&

Conference Secretary

dr Katarzyna Bronk (kbronk@wa.amu.edu.pl)

Department of English Literature and Literary Linguistics, Faculty of English, Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, Poland