

## Call for Papers

### The Myths of Modernism / Modernism and Myths: Then and Now

The year 2022 marks the centenary of the publication of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and Virginia Woolf's *Jacob's Room*. To celebrate this watershed in the history of the English-language literature *The Polish Journal of English Studies* invites papers for inclusion in a special issue titled *The Myths of Modernism / Modernism and Myths: Then and Now*.

As suggested by the title, the project has not only a dual, but a repeatedly bifurcating nature. On the one hand, it centres on the modernists themselves: their love of myths, as well as the myths that now surround them. After all, modernist writers from Joyce and Yeats to Woolf and Lawrence were fascinated by their own literary predecessors, the classics, "the dead poets and artists" whom Eliot mentions in "Tradition and the Individual Talent." At the same time they were driven by the desire to break with the past. Once rebels, even outcasts, some of them authors of outlawed works, they have long been canonised and mythologised. Thus, on the other hand, the project also looks at the generations of writers who have followed the modernists, and have engaged in their own rewriting of ancient scripts and/or have entered into a dialogue with the modernists themselves as pivotal figures within the literary mythos.

Both laudatory and critical/revisionist approaches are welcome. Philip Larkin observed, irreverently:

What I do feel a bit rebellious about is that poetry seems to have got into the hands of a critical industry which is concerned with culture in the abstract, and this I do rather lay at the door of Eliot and Pound... I think a lot of this myth-kitty business has grown out of that, because first of all you have to be terribly educated, you have to know everything to know these things, and secondly you've got somehow to work them in to show that you are working them in. But to me the whole of the ancient world, the whole of biblical and classical mythology means very little, and I think that using them today not only fills poems full of dead spots but dodges the writer's duty to be original.

Is this a fair – or unjust – assessment of the modernists’ supposedly (?) elitist esotericism? How did the modernists approach “the pastness of the past” and “its presence”? What relations did they form with their “ancestors”? What is the use of “this myth-kitty business” today? Does “the whole of the ancient world, the whole of biblical and classical mythology mean very little” to contemporary writers? Or, on the contrary, far from creating the feared “dead spots,” ancient myths can be given a new life in new texts that – exactly by taking us to their distant origins – illuminate the most vital issues of our present moment? Our special issue offers an opportunity to reflect on the above, and other related questions.

Please send a 150-200-word abstract (titled Surname\_PJES\_Myths) together with a short biographical note to [izabela.curyllo-klag@uj.edu.pl](mailto:izabela.curyllo-klag@uj.edu.pl) and [ewa.kowal@uj.edu.pl](mailto:ewa.kowal@uj.edu.pl). The deadline for submission of abstracts is **31 March 2022**. Notifications about proposal acceptance will be sent by 15 April 2022. The deadline for submission of completed papers is **15 July 2022**. Planned publication: December 2022.

The topic of this special issue of *PJES* will be discussed during a panel at the 31<sup>st</sup> PASE conference titled “Transitions,” held by the Institute of English Studies, Jagiellonian University in Kraków, on 1-2 July 2022. Detailed information about the arrangements concerning the PASE conference will be provided at a later date.

Special Issue Editors / Panel Organisers:

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