

CORPUS HISTORICUS



University of Silesia in Katowice
Faculty of Philology
Institute of English Cultures and Literatures

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CORPUS HISTORICUS: THE BODY IN/OF HISTORY Sosnowiec, Poland, June 30th–July 1st 2017

CALL FOR PAPERS

The significance of the body in the context of historical narratives has been paramount for the understanding of the contemporary human condition and of the past by which it has been shaped. Our perception of the body and the bodily, seen as both the object and the subject in and of history, has influenced our current understanding of both individual and collective narratives of the past, since, in the words of Donna McCormack, “[f]lesh is woven into history as both the bloody deaths necessary to achieve the desired goals and the skin on which it has become possible to write these new foundational narratives.”¹

Therefore, the conference aims to address the ways in which the body and the bodily have been conceived of in various historical contexts, ranging from past developments in the field of medical study, epitomised in Rembrandt’s *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Nicolaes Tulp*, to the history of futuristic reconceptualisations of the bodily and the human, exemplified, for instance, by *Blade Runner*. Thus, we invite scholars working in various disciplines and fields of study to consider the body as both an instrument and a subject of history, and to engage in a discussion concerning the representations of the corporeal in different media across cultures and centuries.

Dr Richard Sugg (University of Durham) has kindly agreed to be the conference’s keynote speaker. Dr Sugg is the renowned author of *Murder after Death: Literature and Anatomy in Early Modern England* (Cornell University Press, 2007), *Mummies, Cannibals and Vampires: The History of Corpse Medicine from the Renaissance to the Victorians* (Routledge, 2011) and several other books focusing on early modern studies, corporeality and cultural marginality.

¹ Donna McCormack, *Queer Postcolonial Narratives and the Ethics of Witnessing* (London – Oxford – New York – New Delhi – Sydney: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2014), 2.

Our second keynote speaker is **Professor Zbigniew Białas** (University of Silesia). Professor Białas's research focuses on post-colonial and travel literature and he is the author of *The Body Wall. Somatics of Travelling and Discursive Practices* (Peter Lang Verlag, 2006) and *Mapping Wild Gardens: The Symbolic Conquest of South Africa* (Blaue Eule Verlag, 1997). He is also a writer of fiction whose Sosnowiec trilogy (*Korzeniec*, 2011; *Puder i pył*, 2013 and *Tal*, 2015) was acclaimed by both general public and critics. *Korzeniec*, was awarded Silesian Literary Laurels, won the title of Best Polish Prose of 2011 and was turned into a successful theatrical play.

Specific topics may address, but are not limited to:

- ◆ the body in / as history;
- ◆ the body politic / the politics of the body;
- ◆ histories of bodies;
- ◆ the body in historiography and philosophy of history;
- ◆ the body and history in literature and other arts;
- ◆ the body in cultural history;
- ◆ the body as canvas / text / space / territory / map;
- ◆ geography of the body;
- ◆ the body and ahistoricity;
- ◆ the history of medicine (health, disease, pain, pleasure, physiology, body parts etc.);
- ◆ death of the body / the corpse in history;
- ◆ the body and trauma / suffering / memory;
- ◆ ideal / beautiful / liminal / monstrous bodies in history;
- ◆ histories of adornment, modification and augmentation of the body;
- ◆ transhumanism, posthumanism and futures of the body;
- ◆ the body and material culture / the materiality of the body;
- ◆ history and the body at the intersections of the humanities, science and policy;
- ◆ methodologies in body-related history;
- ◆ animal bodies in history / histories of animal bodies;
- ◆ flesh and meat in history / histories of flesh and meat.

We welcome scholars from various academic fields to submit their proposals (ca. 250 words) by 30 January 2017 to **corpus.historicus@gmail.com**. Notifications of acceptance will be sent out by 1 March 2017. A selection of papers will appear in a post-conference monograph.

The **conference fee** is 450 / 350 PLN (105 / 80 EUR) for full fee participants and graduate students respectively. The fee includes a meal, coffee breaks and conference materials.

Further details will be gradually available on

corpshistoricus.wordpress.com

www.facebook.com/events/317548791958147/

Conference Organisers:

Rafał Boryśłowski, Ph.D., D.Litt.,

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