

SPECIAL ISSUE OF STUDIA ANGLICA POSNANIENSIA

**DIALOGUES, REINTERPRETATIONS, CRITICAL REPOSITIONINGS
IN LITERARY AND CULTURAL DISCOURSES
OF 21ST CENTURY CANADA**

With the recent celebrations of Canada's sesquicentennial, several new voices have emerged to celebrate and contest the country's political, social, and cultural achievements. Despite its short history, Canada has managed to create space for unique social practices and visionary ideas explored by writers and artists whose endeavors have been stimulated by Canada's history, its relations with Great Britain, France, the USA, and the world. Canada's policy of multiculturalism, its hospitality to refugees, and its anti-Americanism are also examples of the country's outstanding position in the 21st century. At the same time, traditional concepts of nation, post-nation, and national identity have been radically contested in Canada. What is more, a sense of crisis has been recently identified in Canadian Literature and Canadian Studies, which have been defined as hermetic academic disciplines "used to police the boundaries of who counts as Canadian and who does not" (McGregor, Rak & Wunker 2018: 21).

In an attempt to "refuse" the Canadian literary scene, such critical perspectives have also generated new tensions and exclusions. It is thus vital to reexamine and reevaluate Canadian literary and cultural output through the lens of current (re)interpretations of the state's concept of liberty, multi- and trans-culturalism. According to Tessa McWatt, Rabindranath Maharaj and Dionne Brand, "There is a real tension between a homogenizing, stultifying, and reductive national narrative – visible, for example, in the political citizen-making machinery – and the vibrant voices of writers writing today" (2018: x). The questions to be addressed are far-reaching and consider the historical, social, and political paradigms, as well as their projections onto the contemporary discourses created by Canadian poets and novelists, film directors, institutions, cultural activists, and many others.

The articles published in this issue are devoted to various aspects of contemporary inquiry into Canadian culture. They also offer different perspectives, ranging from the cultural, through anthropological and ethnographic, to literary ones. However, they are all written from the 21st century standpoint and offer illuminating insights into contemporary Canadian Anglophone and Francophone prose and poetry. The contributors are renowned and emerging scholars from Canada, the USA, Hong Kong, Lithuania, and Poland, which proves that a vital interest in Canadian studies is shared by people in the academia across national and continental borders.

The varied contributions creatively respond to the question of (re)visioning and (re)positioning of the Canadian social, cultural, and literary scenes, addressing the tension between radical critique and the ethics and aesthetics of celebration. The issue opens with two thought-provoking articles which interrogate the concept of literary traditions and the construction of the Canadian literary canon(s) (Nick Mount), as well as the recent controversies surrounding the boundaries of CanLit (Agnieszka Rzepa). In an effort to reassess the tension between the traditional and the modern, two subsequent articles explore the idiosyncrasies of Jewish-Canadian writings (Norman Ravvin) and Acadian literary production (Anna Żurawska).

The culture of the Central European diasporas features prominently in the issue with a focus on the literary (Dagmara Drewniak), the folkloric (James Deutsch), and the literary-cultural (Weronika Suchacka). The issue also offers innovative approaches to Canadian experimental poetry (Paulina Ambroży), revisions of the road novel (Jason S. Polley), and the heritage of the First World War (Anna Branach-Kallas). Finally, postcolonial, diasporic and Indigenous themes appear in appealing interpretations of recent and acclaimed Canadian novels: Esi Edugyan's *Washington Black* (Ruta Šlapkauskaitė), Kerri Sakamoto's *Floating City* (Joanna Antoniak), and Joshua Whitehead's *Jonny Appleseed* (Julia Siepak). This wide range of scholarly articles is supplemented by two reviews, which include discussions of *Making Believe: Questions About Mennonites and Art* (2020) by Magdalene Redekop (Jason Blake) and *Medievalism in English Canadian Literature from Richardson to Atwood* (2020), edited by M. J. Toswell and Anna Czarnowus (Agnieszka Rzepa). We hope that this special issue of *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia* will encourage reflection on the past, current status, and future visions of Canadian society and culture.

Guest editors

Anna Branach-Kallas
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