



WHEN I DARE TO BE POWERFUL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

21 June 2023

Nottingham Trent University

Nottingham, UK

Lead Organiser

Patricia Francis

Co-Organisers

Amir Kaur Aujla-Jones

Trang Dang

Valentina de Riso

Mahasen Nasser-Eldin

Brodhie Molloy

Viola Nassi

Ramisha Rafique

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PROGRAMME

9:00 Registration

10:00 Welcome Remarks

10:15 Keynote Speaker
Chair: Patricia Francis (Nottingham Trent University)

Filmmaker Mania Akbari	
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11:45 Panel 1A: Voice in Artistic Practices
Chair:

Javed Sultan (De Montfort University)	Women Resistance: Reading Photographs of Shaheen Bagh in the Political Participation
Melanie Welaratne (Nottingham Trent University)	'Tell us about your lived experience'
Tamsin Greaves (Nottingham Trent University)	Art Cares?
Sharon Monteith (Nottingham Trent University)	Their Voices, Their Words

11:45

Panel 1B: Voice as Acts of Resistance

Chair:

Laura Woolley-Núñez (University of Warwick)	Sites of Resistance in the Translation of María Teresa León's Anti-Fascist Memoir
Abíódún Abdul (Nottingham Trent University)	Undoing the Silence: Life-Writing on Race
Patrick Williams (Nottingham Trent University)	Talking to the Settlers: Articulating Resistance in Mahmoud Darwish's <i>State of Siege</i>
Marge Strong (Wake Forest University)	Bad Bitches Have Bad Days Too: Megan Thee Stallion, Vulnerability, and Complicating the Schema of the Strong Black Woman

13:15

Lunch

14:15

Guest Lecture

Chair: Mahasen Nasser-Eldin (De Montfort University)

Professor Rabab Abdulhadi (San Francisco State University)	
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15:45

Panel 2A: Voice as Expressions of Agency and Marginalisation

Chair:

Bob Jackson (Munster Technological University)	Based on a True Story: Cinematic Approaches to the Past
Crystal L. Edwards (San Francisco State University)	From Which I Draw My Strength: Audre, Eartha, and Frida
Riham Samaneh (Palestine Encyclopedia)	The Voice of Change through Artworks in Palestine and the British Banksy's Artworks as a Case Study

15:45

Panel 2B: Voice as (Dis)embodied Expressions of Dissent

Chair: Trang Dang (Nottingham Trent University)

Malini (University of Edinburgh)	Voicing the Silences: An Ecofeminist Reimagining of Female Experience in Ntozake Shange and Jennifer Nansubuga Makumbi
Neeraj Bunkar (Nottingham Trent University)	BLACK and BLUE, the Colours of Resistance, Reading Kaala: An Alternative Voice
Yaqi Xi (University of Warwick)	'Giving voice to my translation': Towards a Praxis of the Literary Translator's Vocal Empowerment
Arya Suresh (Nottingham Trent University)	Identifying and Representing the Voices of Minority Women in Policies – An Intersectional Study

17:15

Concluding Remarks

18:30

Film Screening

ABSTRACTS & BIOGRAPHIES

Panel 1A: Voice in Artistic Practices

Women Resistance: Reading Photographs of Shaheen Bagh in the Political Participation

Abstract:

In 2019, the Indian government enacted the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and announced plans to establish a National Register of Citizens (NRC), which made religion a criterion for citizenship and excluded Muslims. The CAA and NRC have the potential to render Indian Muslims stateless and devoid of political relevance, reminiscent to the Anti-Semitic Nuremberg Laws of 1935. Thus, over two hundred million Indian Muslim have been reduced to the subject of contested patriotism, identity and belonging.

These segregating and Islamophobic law caused widespread concern among minority communities, leading to a national discourse on citizenship and belonging. In response, Muslim women of Shaheen Bagh in the southeast district of Delhi organised a peaceful sit-in protest, calling for the repeal of the discriminatory law. Led by working-class Muslim women, Shaheen Bagh movement became a symbol of dissent and a testament to secular nationhood and democratic values.

Through my photographic presentation of the leaderless Shaheen Bagh movement, I aim to illustrate how these predominantly Muslim women assert their identity, patriotism and belonging in the public sphere. These images of Shaheen Bagh could be read as the representative of secular nationhood and democratic values which has taken a permanent place in India's contemporary political landscape, cultural and social memory of dissent.

Despite facing frequent vilification, organized attacks, and a major communal riot in the capital, the hundred-day protest in Shaheen Bagh served as a defense of the constitution and a bridge between secular and liberal democracy in the face of rising majoritarian democracy.

The Shaheen Bagh model inspired similar protests across India and around the world, as Muslim women mobilized for the first time in independent India to reclaim their place in the public sphere and participate in national politics. Through their actions, these women not only cemented their voice in the national politics but also challenged societal and political stereotypes within the patriarchal structure of Indian society.

Bio:

Javed Sultan (he/his) is a Photographer and currently a Ph.D. student in Photographic History Research Centre at De Montfort University, Leicester funded by Midlands4Cities, AHRC. His research focuses on the mid-twentieth century news photography, democratisation, and visual culture in independent India. Javed received several photography awards, and his photographic work has been featured and exhibited globally including Victoria & Albert Museum, Sharjah Art Foundation, Goethe-Institute,

Pathshala, Peckham24, GIFT Hong Kong, Angkor Photo Festival, Goethe Institut, Centro Cultral La Moneda, Getty, The Economist, TIME, SAGE, Duke University Press, and VICE. Javed's work cuts across multiple photographic genres and truly interdisciplinary in nature.

'Tell us about your lived experience'

Abstract:

My passion for race equity, decolonial knowledge production and social justice started as a Fine Art student. The interest came with the pressure and plea to share my lived experience. I was naively excited about this...at first.

Through my Master's and more experience working in HE, I realised that people might not directly ask me to 'tell us about your lived experience' anymore, but I still felt surrounded by the invisible expectations of sharing my lived experience when it suited the sector. I knew that I wasn't alone in feeling the pressure to be involved in challenging the boundaries and hierarchies that obstruct the structurally marginalised part of our identities.

To process this, I wrote a pros and cons list. The pros were that by sharing my lived experiences I was able to be more authentic, open and honest with the people I was working with or presenting to. The con side of the list was full of unpleasant words like reliving the trauma, pain, dismissal, rejection...being scared.

My list made me realise two things:

- a) I choose why I share my lived experience. Sometimes I want to and sometimes I don't, and that's my decision to make.
- b) I choose how and who I share my lived experience with.

The sector might not stop asking me that question directly or indirectly but what I can control is why I share, how I share and who I share my lived experiences with.

My 15 min presentation will illustrate my lived experience of sharing my lived experience in a sector that sometimes expects it, labels it and abuses it. The presentation will showcase a series of self-produced artwork/drawings that reflect my story, narrated by myself, ending with a reminder that our lived experience is ours to tell.

Bio:

Melanie Welaratne (she/her) is currently an Educational Developer for Nottingham Trent University. Her work focuses on supporting schools to address disparities in student attainment, progression and outcomes through equitable learning and teaching approaches. Melanie's area of focus and passion centres on race equity, intersectionality and decoloniality within Education. She has recently completed her Master's in Development Education and Global Learning at UCL, where her research explored the intersections between decolonial education and global learning.

Art Cares?

Abstract:

What role can creative practices play in wellbeing? How can museums become spaces of care for those who have experienced trauma? Drawing on creative workshops at Mansfield Museum in the UK this paper will explore the benefits for vulnerable women, and builds on interdisciplinary research in museum studies, wellbeing, care, including Foucault's concept of self-care, (Foucault and Rabinow 1991). Mansfield Museum is a community centre with a collection. A porous space, it is embedded in and caringly serves, its varied communities, offering multiple doorways to engagement. A three-minute film documenting the project in the women's voices will preface a discussion of the role of social justice in the museum within a framework of positive psychology.

I suggest that participation in such workshops can contribute to the wellbeing hexagon proposed by Lee, (Lee 2021), comprising: positive and negative emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and accomplishment. The paper examines the phenomenon of active absorption in a physical task described as 'flow' by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (Csikszentmihalyi 2014) combined in a safe space for conversation with others of shared lived-experience of trauma. The lack of separation of minds and bodies in creative activity and peer connections appears to dispel intrusive thoughts and promote positive feelings.

I am exploring the impacts of creative workshops on individual participants from a micro-perspective using a mixed methodology which includes surveys, peer-to-peer conversations, semi-structured interviews, observation, and image documentation to triangulate the data. I carry out this research by delivering creative workshops to women self-referred from domestic and sexual abuse services alongside art practitioners and an art therapist. I am interested in the power of women to use their voices collaboratively to support each other through the medium of a shared creative experience. The 'active self-transformation' described by Audre Lord (hooks 2014), resonates with my experience at Mansfield Museum and I will make the argument for working with this community in the museum space.

Bio:

Tamsin Greaves (she/her) holds a role at Mansfield Museum where she runs the Art Power project funded by the Esmée Fairburn Foundation. Following a career as secondary art teacher in state schools, she completed an MA Museum and Heritage Development at Nottingham Trent University in 2021, winning the outstanding contribution award. Her final research project titled, 'The Real Thing' compared pupils' experience of art online to in-person visits. She published an article in the Journal of Education in Museums 42 and a short submission in the Museological Review 26. Her current research explores the contribution to wellbeing of collaborative creative activities for vulnerable women in a museum context.

Their Voices, Their Words

Abstract:

This paper focuses on creative and artistic practices in which other people's voices figure and are configured, and in which their words often feature verbatim. My focus is how innovative African American women artists have conceptualized their practice. If they are storytellers in the way that philosopher and cultural critic Walter Benjamin described when asserting, "it is the great ones whose written version differs least from the speech of the many nameless storytellers," their artistic practice is honed in, with, and for communities. Focusing on Bernice Johnson Reagon, and Anna Deavere Smith who has said, "I am trying to put myself in other people's shoes by putting myself in their actual words," this presentation explores how voices other than the artists' are shared, their words memorized, ventriloquized and amplified, and the extent to which the speakers may be disembodied and re-embodied in the process.

Bio:

Sharon Monteith (she/her) is Distinguished Professor of American Literature and Cultural History at Nottingham Trent University. Her research has been supported by the Leverhulme Trust, the British Academy and the Arts and Humanities Research Council in the UK, and in the US by the Rockefeller Foundation and the Center for Southern Studies at the University of Mississippi. She has published widely on social justice and multiple forms of activism, including grassroots and community organizing, and literary activism. In 2022 her book SNCC's Stories: The African American Freedom Movement in the Civil Rights South won the American Studies Network Book Prize awarded by the European Association of American Studies (EAAS) and the C. Hugh Holman Book Award presented by the US-based Society for the Study of Southern Literature (SSSL).

Panel 1B: Voice as Acts of Resistance

Sites of Resistance in the Translation of María Teresa León's Anti-Fascist Memoir

Abstract:

This paper will explore the anti-fascist voice of Spanish feminist writer María Teresa León (1903–1988) through my experience translating León's memoir, *Memoria de la melancolía* (1970). The memoir is not available in English translation despite being described as one of the key testimonies from this period. This project contributes to filling the gaps in the history of women writers during the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) and Franco's dictatorship (1939–1975). It responds to a feminist interest in women's experiences of oppression, dictatorship and exile transcending national and class boundaries. The transnational nature of this interest requires translation. León's life-writing is a site of resistance to the rise of fascism in Europe in the first half of the 20th century, and to the deeply patriarchal socio-political context in which León lived. However, the patriarchal noise can also seep into her writing and self-perception. My translation practice explores existing translation strategies I will adopt to

make the feminine visible. In my role as a mediator of transnational and intergenerational dialogues across two disparate geopolitical and sociocultural contexts, I pay special attention both to translating ‘the feminine’ features that are explicitly present in the source text, and making León visible whenever she makes herself invisible in her writing. My presentation will first briefly situate and contextualise María Teresa León and *Memoria de la melancolía* (*Memory of Melancholy*). This will be followed by a reading of a short excerpt from the memoir that highlights León’s voice in her life-writing as a site of dissent and resistance. This paper will showcase an excerpt of a key feminist testimony of the Spanish Civil War and life in exile during Franco’s dictatorial regime.

- [Excerpt](#) of the translation.
- The Guardian [article](#) about León and *Memoria de la melancolía*.

Bio:

Laura Woolley-Núñez (she/her) is a first year PhD student in Translation and Transcultural Studies at the University of Warwick funded my Midlands4Cities. Her research is supervised by Dr Olga Castro and Professor Maureen Freely. Laura’s practice-based thesis uses translation to recover María Teresa León’s antifascist voice. Her current work focuses on which feminist translation strategies are most fit for the purposes of recovering Spanish lost anti-Francoist women’s voices and presenting the historical context to a new target audience.

Undoing the Silence: Life-Writing on Race

Abstract:

This presentation looks at memoir-polemics focusing on racism. Recent examples include journalist Reni Eddo-Lodge’s *Why I’m No Longer Talking to White People About Race*, journalist/lawyer Afua Hirsch’s ‘Brit(ish): Race, Identity and Belonging’, rapper/social commentator Akala with *Natives: Race and Class in the Ruins of Empire*, as well as my upcoming autoethnographical addition *Stained Glass Eyes: A Memoir on Race, Family and Multiculturalism*. Like these other life-writers, it has been a journey bringing my racist experiences to the fore. It started with xenophobia experienced at school being actively silenced by pupils walking away from conversations about racism; actively silenced by teachers squashing any complaints (mentioned in Akala’s *Natives*); and passively silenced by family who were going through their own struggles with racial abuse and me not wanting to pile onto them. The next stage was university studies and trying to bridge the knowledge gap of racism’s existence and execution brought over from my gagged childhood leaving many questions unanswered. However, whilst higher education was enlightening in some areas, the experience evoked even more questions than it answered (mentioned in Afua Hirsch’s *Brit[ish]*).

In my working life, after hearing too many stories of racial bigotry overlapping with my own, I decided to write *SGE* to expose racism and drive social change towards ethical parity. But self-censorship still tempted my gumption, tentatively changing all ‘controversial’ truth to red font for later omission. My text’s colour coding was apparently pandering to the same

white fragility informing my speech's colour coding from school days. No, these stories encapsulating the plight of Black people should all be in black font, the controversy held within being the audacity of racism, not the audacity of me to voice it (infused in Reni Eddo-Lodge's title 'Why I'm No Longer Talking to White People About Race').

So, like these other life-writers/change-makers on race, watch this space to hear me undo the silence...

Bio:

Abíódún 'Abbey' Abdul (she/her) is a Yorùbá-Nigerian writer and [UNESCO Cities of Literature Global Poetry Slam Winner 2022](#). Fascinated by how grammar could be bent to facilitate new meaning and enhance creative expression, she has worked for several years in higher education as an English Language Lecturer & Assessor across the globe, including NTU. Her expressive writing includes life essays and autoethnographical memoir-polemics encompassing her schooling across Africa, Europe and Asia. She also writes Yorùbá-centred short stories and poetry on social justice and topics celebrating our common humanity. Her work has been published in anthologies and she [presents/performs](#) at literary festivals and conferences.

Talking to the Settlers: Articulating Resistance in Mahmoud Darwish's *State of Siege*

Abstract:

Mahmoud Darwish, who died in 2006, was arguably the most important poet of the 20th century writing in Arabic. Known widely as 'the national poet of Palestine' and 'the poet of national resistance' he was, however, increasingly unhappy about such labels, as he was about the assumption that his poetry would respond immediately to political demands. Despite that, in 2002 Darwish found himself under siege in Ramallah in the Israeli campaign 'Operation Defensive Shield', and felt compelled to respond in poetry. His response consisted of the last of his 'Trojan' epics, his ongoing attempt to give voice to history's marginalised and silenced groups. Whereas previous topics had ranged from Indigenous peoples of North America to the Muslims in Granada in 1492, he now focussed on his own people under siege, both in the moment in 2002 and as part of a condition of occupation and oppression stretching back more than half a century.

State of Siege is stylistically different from the other epics, consisting as it does of 25 pages of short stanzas and disconnected fragments, indicative of the discontinuous and fragmented nature of life under siege as well as the difficulty of turning that life into a coherent form. Importantly, however, the poem includes a wide range of voices—some 15 or more—speaking out against the situation they find themselves in.

Drawing on recent theorising such as Howard Caygill's *On Resistance* and Darweish and Rigby's *Popular Resistance in Palestine*, the presentation will examine the various ways in which Darwish voices Palestinian resistance to the Israeli siege, ranging from armed defence to verbal confrontation with Israeli 'guards' and 'killers', to demonstrations of the moral failure that Israeli oppression represents, to statements of the classic Palestinian stance of 'sumud'—the resolute refusal to give up, surrender, or disappear as the Israelis would ideally like.

Bio:

Patrick Williams (he/his) is Emeritus Professor of Literary and Cultural Studies at Nottingham Trent University, where he taught courses on postcolonial theory and culture, film, diaspora, and race and nation. His publications include *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory*, Columbia University Press, 1993; *Introduction to Post-Colonial Theory*, Routledge, 1996, *Ngugi wa Thiong'o*, Manchester University Press, 1999; *Edward Said*, Sage, 2000; *Postcolonial African Cinema*, Manchester University Press, 2007. He is on the editorial boards of *Theory, Culture and Society*, and *Journal of Postcolonial Writing*.

Bad Bitches Have Bad Days Too: Megan Thee Stallion, Vulnerability, and Complicating the Schema of the Strong Black Woman

Abstract:

Black women in media are quickly forced into a unidimensional schema of super or sub-human and therefore deserving of or specially equipped to handle misogynoir. These schemas of misogynoir can be seen in various stereotypes of Black women. Specifically, the strong Black woman schema. This schema has three primary characteristics: nurturing of family, emotion regulation or self-containment, and independence or self-reliance. Black women are encouraged to be caretakers for those around them, particularly family, be calm and in control at all times, and never need help from anyone under this schema. This paper argues that narratives of vulnerability from Black women humanize Black women, challenging these schemas that serve to flatten them. Specifically, this paper will look at Megan Thee Stallion's vulnerability amid physical and rhetorical attacks on her amid the aftermath of Tovey Lanez shooting her and how she seeks to complicate the narrative of the strong Black woman. I argue that Megan's vulnerability adds to the traditional narrative of strength, helping alleviate dangers of the strong Black woman schema. This will include a timeline of events starting at the shooting of Megan Thee Stallion in the summer of 2020 through her 2022 performance and hosting of *Saturday Night Live*.

Bio:

Marge Strong (she/her) is a master's student at Wake Forest University (North Carolina, USA), studying communication. Her area of focus is the intersection of popular culture feminism, and hip hop. Marge received her bachelor's degree from Michigan State University (Michigan, USA) in mathematics. In her spare time, Marge coaches competitive debate.

Panel 2A: Voice as Expressions of Agency and Marginalisation

Based on a True Story: Cinematic Approaches to the Past

Abstract:

In the early 17th century, Ireland became the cradle where the nascent English, and later British empire, perfected a model of conquest which would lay the foundations of a global empire.

At around the same time, on the other side of the Atlantic, the tiny island of Barbados, became the most profitable of all English colonies in the Americas. As an insatiable appetite for sugar exploded in England during the 17th century, Barbados became a mercantile ‘laboratory’ where an approach to profit maximisation took on a quasi-religious zeal. Capitalism and exploitation had long been established elsewhere, but never to such a profitable extent.

Barbadian planters pursued profits through the relentless exploitation of both human and material resources. Fortunes were made through the suffering of an estimated 387,000 African slaves, and also of a far smaller number of indentured servants, as well as political prisoners from Ireland (and elsewhere). Curiously, many people among a marginalised community on the east coast of Barbados, known as Redlegs, believe themselves to be the descendants of Irish indentured and forced labour. They are a living legacy of the colonial history of the Caribbean. This creative practice documentary explores the testimonial narratives of a marginalised community cast aside by a colonial system once they had served their purpose.

As well as focusing on marginalised histories, this documentary sheds light on the little-known acts of resistance organised between Irish indentured servants and African slaves during the 17th century. This research also addresses the contested history of the Redlegs of Barbados, exploring the way in which the ‘white slave myth’ has emerged over the last two decades. This is popular in the US, where it has been weaponized to argue that the first slaves brought to the Americas were white and Irish, as a means of undermining the scale and legacy of the African slave trade. It is a phenomenon fuelled by a potent mix of bad history, false equivalence, and conspiracy theories spread online and via social media.

- Documentary teaser [link](#).

Bio:

Bob Jackson (he/his) is a filmmaker, author, and lecturer at the Munster Technological University, Ireland. He is working towards completion of a PhD Film & Screen Media (Creative Practice) at University College Cork, in December 2024. He is currently working on a live action drama series with the support of Screen Ireland. He previously produced a feature length documentary (2015) and wrote a book (2016), both titled ‘*A Doctor’s Sword*’. *A Doctor’s Sword* (documentary) had a seven-week run in Irish cinemas, was nominated for an IFTA award (2016) and has been broadcast throughout the world via RTÉ, PBS, Sky Arts, Discovery Channel Asia, and Amazon Prime.

From Which I Draw My Strength: Audre, Eartha, and Frida

Abstract:

Historically, women of color have been denied our humanity, woman-ness, and value. From the exploitation and sexual violence perpetuated during enslavement and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, to the continued psychological damage done through harmful media messaging, erasure, and appropriation, women of color have continued to resist throughout time and space. This article highlights the unique ways Audre Lorde, Eartha Kitt, and Frida Kahlo utilized their voices to not only challenge social structures and power dynamics, but to overcome them and create the lives that they desired. With specific focus on the themes of self-care, self-advocacy, self-definition, and self-love—all topics explored in the women’s commentary, writings, and artistic expressions—the article will discuss the implications for navigating marginalisation and asserting agency. In addition to the themes, the article will also address the following questions:

- How does queerness—as a space/lens of social alterity—empower and inform the women in their social justice advocacy and activism?
- How did the women’s view of radical love—for both self and others—impact their work and aid in their pursuit of social change?
- How does self-identity and “defining oneself for oneself” lend itself to doing social justice work?

The article will close by presenting auto-ethnographical research that discusses the experience of a Black, queer, woman, academic in America navigating marginalization and asserting agency both in and out of academia, by implementing the teachings and drawing strength from Audre, Eartha, and Frida.

Bio:

Dr Crystal Edwards (she/her) graduated from the Department of Africology with a Ph.D. in Africana Studies and a graduate certificate in Educational Policy from the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. Generally, her work centres the subjective experience of African descended people throughout the Diaspora, specifically the in the United States. Specifically, her work seeks to make visible the intersectional realities of African American women and girls, in their own voices. Dr Edwards is an Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator in the Africana Studies Department at San Francisco State University.

The Voice of Change through Artworks in Palestine and the British Banksy’s Artworks as a Case Study

Abstract:

As a woman living under the Israeli occupation surely my life is quite challenging, but this is not limited to women here, as every person who lives here, in Palestine, is exposed to many challenges every single day. All of us share the same suffering, we try to resist through different means in pursuit of a better life, and we strive so that our voice can reach the whole world.

We do not have enough power or money to defend ourselves, that is why I truly believe it is important for people to have myriad ways of expressing themselves, ways that do not depend on money or power to execute, like through words, or images. Moreover, it is important to share these expressions in hope that others may have a better understanding of the situation and perhaps they will find a bit of their own voice in the art as well.

In my presentation for this conference, I want to discuss the voice of change via artwork in Palestine and the UK, and so I will focus on Banksy's artwork because he displayed his artwork in both Palestine and Britain. Based on that I will analyse some artworks by Banksy to analyse and answer several questions:

- Can the artworks be separated from habitus?
- Is Banksy trying to expose injustice by amplifying silenced voices?
- Does Banksy's artwork present the victims around the world?
- Is the right way to change and reconstruct the world based on cosmopolitan principles?
- How does the artwork reconstruct the world according to the cosmopolitan systems?

I deconstructed and analysed these questions to examine if the voice of artwork is able to change or impact the world and how we can touch that. Also, if we consider the artworks a repository of society's collective memory and marginalization resisting via symbolism representing the past, then how does art destroy the prevailing systems and impose alternatives to replace them; these alternatives may be opposing systems. Furthermore, is Banksy able to implement that by focusing on visual language communication, and how to manipulate symbols, pop culture metaphors and universality to create a powerful and collective message?

Bio:

Riham Samaneh (she/her) is a researcher at the Palestine Encyclopedia until 2023. And she was a researcher in the Policy & Conflict Resolution Studies Centre at the Arab American University until 2022. She has studied Intercultural Communication and Literature in Palestine (MA at AAUP, MA at Birzeit University, and BA Al Najah National University). Her research interests lie in museology and exhibition. She had training in "Reconciliation in the Middle East and North Africa" at Friedrich Schiller University Jena, German. She has led and coordinated multi-partner cross-border research and innovation projects. She has papers and conference presentations and publishes monthly articles in different magazines.

Panel 2B: Voice as (Dis)embodied Expressions of Dissent

Voicing the Silences: An Ecofeminist Reimagining of Female Experience in Ntozake Shange and Jennifer Nansubuga Makumbi

Abstract:

The longstanding history of Black women's marginalisation and silencing has led to powerful narratives of reclamation offering them the potential to retrieve their stories from the clutches of oblivion. Twentieth century witnessed the emergence of Ntozake Shange as a powerful African-American author who lent voice to the lived experiences of women from her community. In her immensely powerful novel *Sassafrass, Cypress & Indigo* (1982), Shange inverts the narrative of patriarchal and colonial control by offering her unique and ecologically empowered female perspective. She achieves this by invoking the mythical legend of a woman named *Blue Sunday*. This character draws references to the rape culture that Black women faced during the times of slavery, but she is not bereft of power as nature shares in her suffering. Every time the white master comes near her, the seas get fuming and swing whips of salt water around his house. The proximity between this woman and nature functions to empower her leading to the retrieval of her silenced voice from the seas of patriarchal noise.

This paper also deals with a more contemporary author from Uganda: Jennifer Nansubuga Makumbi. Published in 2020, Makumbi's novel *The First Woman* traces the ecological roots of female empowerment through a string of mythical stories told by the village-witch, Nsuuta. The presence of ecological elements contained within references to water and nature metaphors in Nsuuta's myths foreground female agency. Makumbi also explores the role of water/ rains as ecological entities activating female sexual desire. The ecofeminist connotations underlying female empowerment in Makumbi are read parallel to the reclamation of women's voice in Shange, thereby leading to a comparative analysis of the two in terms of ecological voicing of the silenced female perspective.

Bio:

Malini (she/her) is a PhD candidate at the University of Edinburgh. Based in the department of English, her work broadly focuses on the African-American women's writings from the twentieth century. Her research interest lies in the field of ecofeminism and queer studies. She is also a tutor at her university, currently teaching the course on English Literature post 1789. Malini also acted as a reader in judging the James Tait Black Prize in Fiction in 2020 and 2021.

BLACK and BLUE, the Colours of Resistance, Reading Kaala: An Alternative Voice

Abstract:

Colours are integral considerations of any movement, protest, or resistance. For instance, the colour red has always been associated with left-wing political and social movements. Pa. Ranjith, whose strong Ambedkarite ideology was nurtured by

Tamil Nādu's anti-caste movement, directed *Kaala*. He creates narratives that challenge the stereotypical way of portraying Dalits in films. The film presents a new perspective on slum dwellers, challenging the conventional denigrating view of depicting Dalit lives in slums.

By examining the film *Kaala*, I will investigate the significance of the colours black and blue in combating prejudice, dominant myth, and oppressive structure. These two colours are also pertinent in [re]constructing the new Ambedkarite-humanitarian perspective in society, as translated by Pa. Ranjith in his film *Kaala*, which means black in Hindi. He, along with the other like-minded ideologue filmmakers, produced an alternative gaze and phenomenon aimed at challenging the stereotypical gaze associated with Indian cinema, which depicts Dalits in a degrading and subjugated manner.

In the film, black and blue colours emerge as an articulative voice in resisting the dominant ideologies associated with white and saffron colour, bringing the voice of marginalisation to the fore while challenging the conservative notion that considers white colour as 'superior' and 'pure' while painting black colour as 'inferior' and 'impure'. *Kaala* offers a fresh cinematic expression; it depicts the assertion of Dalits with strong will power to fight against the odds and provides us with a new perspective on cinema as a medium to express Dalits' struggle and strategy.

Bio:

Neeraj Bunkar (he/his) is a PhD student at the Department of English, Linguistics, and Philosophy at Nottingham Trent University, Nottingham, United Kingdom, with a specific interest in Caste, Dalit, Rajasthani folklore, Oral History and Cinema. Thesis title- 'Caste and Rajasthan-based Cinema: Depicting Dalit Realities in the Cinematic World'. Prior to joining PhD, he obtained BA(H) in Political Science from Kirori Mal College, University of Delhi, and an MA in Social Work with specialization in Dalit, and Tribal Studies and Action from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai.

'Giving voice to my translation': Towards a Praxis of the Literary Translator's Vocal Empowerment

Abstract:

The diversity of translated literature in the Anglophone book market is diminishing, rather than growing, with 58% of books published in English translation between 2018 and 2022 coming from 'the Big Four languages' (French, Spanish, German, and Italian), compared to 48% from 2008 to 2017, according to the Translation Database. The state of publishing needs to be changed: we deserve a World Literature that showcases diverse voices and does not retrench European hegemony over cultural production, that does not refuse depictions of human experiences beyond the terms and confines it has set for non-Western writing.

To help translators from 'lesser' translated languages garner visibility for their work, I propose that we seek new ways of speaking as and for literary translators. As a translator translating from a minor language in international literature (Chinese, my first language) into English (my non-mother tongue), I am ready to use my source-language-tinted voice, my accented English,

to interrogate and challenge Anglophone notions of what the world is and who has a right to speak in it. With first-hand experience of life in northeast China (the Chinese Rust Belt), I aim to use my English translations and narration of Chinese Rust Belt literature as the site to speak out against the regime of 'fluency', the invisibility/inaudibility of the translator, and the 'unpublishability' of so-called 'low-demand' minor literature in the World Literature Market.

Drawing on critical theories in literary studies, translation studies and performance studies as well as recent scholarship on audiobooks, my research goes on to redefine the possibilities and significance of the creative voice of the translator, both in and beyond the translated text. It offers a poetics of translating, in the era of media convergence, the 'getting-real', 'going-live' voices of the authors, characters, and narrators of literary texts in contemporary creative industries into a praxis of the literary translator's vocal empowerment.

Bio:

Yaqi Xi (she/her) is a PhD candidate at the University of Warwick. Her research focuses on English translations of modern Chinese literature. As a practising translator, Yaqi translates from Chinese to English and vice versa. She is the translator of a forthcoming Chinese edition of 'Golden: The Power of Silence in a World of Noise', a bestseller by Justin Zorn and Leigh Marz (Cheers Publishing, 2023). She is currently working on her PhD project on translating and audio-remediating contemporary northeast Chinese literature, where she seeks to empower literary translators in cultural industries through creative practices of translation and trans-mediation.

Identifying and Representing the Voices of Minority Women in Policies – An Intersectional Study

Abstract:

Every year, 2.4 million people fall victim to Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) in England and Wales. The Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Report (2021) characterises the victims of domestic violence with insecure immigration status as occupying the most precarious positions in the society. The overlapping constraints created by the intersection of structural inequalities like gender, race, culture, class and state policies, the difficulties faced by women in negotiating cultural-religious identity in the context of their belongingness within immigrant communities, and the varying service responses to women from different cultural backgrounds, makes them disproportionately disadvantageous and vulnerable to abuse.

With a policy of No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), the UK denies those with insecure immigration status access to public funds preventing them from accessing a range of support measures, including access to facilities such as refuges financed through public funds, creating an additional layer of economic dependency on the abusive partner, and is a case of 'immigration abuse'. At the dissolution of a relationship due to DVA, only those women on spousal-visa are entitled to apply for a concession to lift the NRPF and to apply for an Indefinite Leave to Remain.

This research looks critically at the distinction made among DV victims based solely on immigration status and evaluates the policy of NRPF from an intersectional perspective of gender, race and immigration status in creating vulnerability. The aim of the project is to bring in the voices of DVA victims from minoritised communities into policy analysis looking deeper into

their lived experiences to reveal how their vulnerability is visualized and represented in policy documents. Understanding the differential impacts of policies on different categories of people and representing their voices is vital to produce socially just outcomes.

Bio:

Arya Suresh (she/her) is the recipient of a fully-funded 2022 NTU PhD studentship and is a Doctoral Scholar at the School of Arts and Humanities, Nottingham Trent University. She is an affiliated Research Fellow at the International Institute of Migration and Development (India). Her research focuses on Intersectionality in the study of immigration policies and gender-based violence in the UK. She has previously been part of the European Commission's EURA-NET research on Temporary Transnationalism and has published papers on Climate Change, Migrant issues in the Middle East and the wage dynamics for unskilled labour in the context of international migration.