

CENTER FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH OF RELATIONS BETWEEN ORAL AND WRITTEN TRADITION
UNIVERSITY OF WROCŁAW

invites to

**The International Interdisciplinary Conference:
CHANGES IN NARRATIVE STRATEGIES IN CONTEXT OF THE SPECIFICITY OF THE ORAL AND
WRITTEN TRADITION
4th-6th of December 2019 Wrocław (Poland)**

Call for Papers

You are invited to join the International Interdisciplinary Conference on changes in narrative strategies in context of the specificity of the oral and written tradition that will be held in Wrocław (Poland) on the **4th-6th of December 2019**. The conference is organized by the Center for Interdisciplinary Research of Relations between Oral and Written Tradition at University of Wrocław.

Keynote speakers:

Prof. David Elmer (Harvard University)

Prof. Ruth Scodel (University of Michigan)

Prof. John M. Zemke (University of Missouri)

Prof Casey Dué-Hackney (University of Houston)

A narrative strategy is an easily recognizable issue in written compositions. The author always tries to organize his or her composition and to give it a form which will make the text legible and appreciated by readers. Good composition requires integrality of all parts of the work. Usually, authors of written texts also follow certain patterns, but these patterns often get altered or remodeled, because the primary aim of great writers is to show their originality and individuality. Quite frequently they do it at the expense of established forms of composition.

As regards oral compositions, they were for a long time believed to be free from any rules giving them compactness and integrity. Many researchers could not see an oral work as a complete whole. The reason for it is a widespread difficulty to understand the fluidity and multi-formity of oral compositions.

The fundamental/basic purpose of text of oral compositions is the evocation of tradition, but no less important is how a tale is narrated. It involves the issue of how a performer understands a given tale and how it should be understood by the audience according to his or her intentions. In this context, the interaction with the audience becomes very important. On the one hand, the performer tries to affect emotions and intellectual capabilities of the audience. On the other, the audience affects the quality of performance by their behavior, for example by the extent of their interest in the presented tales, their sensitivity or involvement in the story etc. The oral audience should be perceived rather as active than passive. The transmission of an oral work is not only a question of the capability of human memory.

Therefore, what seems to be particularly interesting is to find out how the strategy of composing orally narrated texts is modelled in comparison to the strategy of composing written texts. No less interesting is the question of how the use of writing tools influences changes in works based on oral tradition (oral-derived texts). All these issues can be observed in various cultures and various genres.

The planned conference will give an opportunity for discussion to philologists, Bible scholars, historians, anthropologists, researchers of religion, of culture, of rhetoric, of theatre and film, and representatives of other disciplines.

Possible papers topics may include the following issues:

- What are kinds of utterances in oral tradition? How does the performance affect their content?
- How does an oral performer attract attention of his/her audience? How do the strategies to affect the listener affect his/her narrative? What kind of strategies does he/she take to present his/her story or to convince the audience? What are the relations between convincing the inner public by a character and the outer by the narrator?
- What is the proportion between the known and the unknown in oral tradition? What are the expectations of both sides of the performance?
- How does the audience join the performance? What is the listeners' influence on the content of the tale, how do they react to what they hear etc.?
- What is the role of gestures, music, objects functioning as attributes of the performance? How do these items support the meaning of narrative?
- Which features of style should we regard as signs of purely oral tradition and which ones as marking the transition to the written one? How does the narrative change in view of the possibility of using writing?
- What are various forms of transition from the oral into the written? What circumstances give impulse for writing down oral utterances?
- Which are possibilities of affecting oral composition by written texts; which possibilities on improving texts are provided by writing;
- How does the narrative change when the other forms of transmission are involved: theatre, film etc.? What is the role of vividness in transmitting a story?

Deadline for Abstract: June 30st, 2019

An abstract/proposal between 300 to 500 words for papers of **25-30 minutes** in length, should be submitted before the deadline. Please send abstracts to: **oral.written.2019@uwr.edu.pl** The committee normally reaches its decision within three weeks after abstract submission. All abstracts must be submitted in English.

The language of the conference: English.

More information about the conference will be made available after 25 March on the website: <https://uni.wroc.pl/centra-naukowe/centrum-interdyscyplinarnych-badan-relacji-miedzy-tradycja-oralna-i-pismiennicza/>

Conference organizer: Center for Interdisciplinary Research of Relations between Oral and Written Tradition at University of Wrocław. Director: Prof. Karol Zieliński.

Secretary of the conference: PhD. Małgorzata Zadka.