

Founded in November 2009, The Albanian Society for the Study of English (ASSE) is devoted to the promotion of English and American studies in Albania. **in esse: English Studies in Albania**, a refereed scholarly journal, is part of the Society's activities. Its aim is to bring to the fore original work in linguistics, literary and translation studies and language teaching by scholars working in Albania and abroad.



*in esse*

# English Studies in Albania

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# Logomachia



## Introduction

This volume contains two issues of *in esse: English Studies in Albania*—the first one, the Spring issue, is entitled “Logomachia”, whereas the second, the Autumn issue, is entitled “English Studies in Albania.”

For the title of the first issue we were inspired by the Greek word *logomachia*, which means “war about words.” The word has often been used as a metaphor to refer to the debatable nature of the humanities. Although initially we expected linguists to be attracted by the idea of *logomachia*, to our surprise, the topic attracted more scholars working in the field of literature and cultural studies.

Whereas for the second issue we decided on a simple but meaningful title “English Studies in Albania” in order to challenge scholars in Albania and abroad by calling their attention to the latest tendencies, perspectives and developments in the study of literature, language, and culture of English-speaking countries.

The contributions making part of the “Logomachia” issue are divided into two sections: *Cultural Studies* and *Literature*. The first section comprises one article, whereas the second three articles. This issue opens with Stankomir Nicieja’s “Basking in the fading glory: Latest narratives of Western triumph and decline”, which revisits the concept of “the West” in the light of new realities, intellectual and financial. More particularly, it takes into consideration two recent publications, Niall Ferguson’s *Civilisation: The West and the Rest* (2011) and Ian Morris’s *Why the West Rules—For Now: The Patterns of History and What They Reveal about the Future* (2010) as two examples of new definitions of “the West” and of the Western cultural dominance. What is more, in the author’s view, these books also address the Western anxiety of the loss of influence and marginalisation.

Sonja Vitanova-Strezova in “*Logomachia*: Conrad’s unique style in *Lord Jim*” chooses Joseph Conrad’s novel *Lord Jim* to read *logomachia* as a battle of meanings. For the purposes of this analysis, the author draws on the semiotic approach, the semantic potential of words to create new meanings as well as on Marlow’s unreliable narration, all of which apart from creating new meanings eventually give way to new interpretations.

Valentina Stîngă in “The figurative dimension of terrorist violence:



Literary approaches” discusses terrorism, more precisely physical violence as a communicative act that conveys a certain message. The author focuses on two novels, Don DeLillo’s *Falling Man* and Ian McEwan’s *Saturday* in order to look into how this message has been decoded by these writers in the new context of the so-called ‘9/11 culture’.

Artur Jaupaj in his “*Logomachia* in E. L. Doctorow’s *Welcome to Hard Times*” discusses E. L. Doctorow’s *Welcome to Hard Times* (1960) as one of the best representations of *logomachia*, a novel which attempts to read the Western, more precisely to reveal or question the truth about it through the exploration of language, time, memory, and narrative.

The second issue contains two sections: *Language* and *Literature*. There are four contributions altogether making part of this issue, three on language and one on literature.

The first section opens with Olsa Xhina’s article entitled “Effective reading as a learning strategy in English language teaching.” In this article the author discusses some of the problems students face in their language learning process, more particularly problems which have to do with reading comprehension and text analysis activities. To argue about these problems, the author has conducted some research with the students of English at “Aleksandër Moisiu” University. The author also discusses some effective reading strategies to be used in the English language classroom such as: pre-reading activities, while-reading exercises, post-reading, and follow-up exercises.

In her article “English and Albanian grammar teaching from a historical perspective”, the author Lindita Kaçani seeks to trace the course of the teaching of the grammar of the English and Albanian languages as native languages and how this has had an influence on the teaching of English as a foreign language.

The last paper in this section is about homonymy. The author Suela Mangelli in her article “Comparing sources of homonymy in English and Albanian” uses the comparative approach to investigate the linguistic phenomenon of homonymy in both English and Albanian. More precisely, the author tries to look into some of the sources and ways of homonymy in both languages. A lot of examples of homonymy are brought from both languages in order to identify the sources of homonymy shared by both languages.

The literature section comprises one article, Rabindra Kumar Verma's "Semiotics and Gender Discrimination in Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*" which offers an analysis of the language of the play as indicative of issues such as class and gender. The author draws on a semiotic analysis of the language of the play to argue that Shaw's engendered language reflects class and gender discrimination.

Finally, we would like to thank all our contributors for sharing their perspectives and ideas in this volume. A special thank you also goes to our reviewers for their tireless work in selecting and reviewing the contributions for this volume.