

# THRESHOLDS

Concepts of Rupture, Change and Adaptation

Keynote speaker: **Prof. Caroline Bassett (Cambridge)**



**UCD Humanities Institute PhD Conference**

**25 March 2022**

UCD O'Brien Centre, Theatre E, and Online

## **Thresholds: Contexts of Rupture, Change and Adaptation**

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Keynote Speaker: Professor Caroline Bassett, University of Cambridge, Faculty of English, Director of Cambridge Digital Humanities

The changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic have been so radical and extensive that the concept of 'back to normal' has evolved into that of a 'new normal' in recognition of the fact that there can be no return, only new forms of existence in a new world. This sense of a before and after, and the processes of rupture, change, adaptation, translation and transformation that it entails, are what we seek to critically and creatively engage with through the symbolic vehicle of the threshold. We understand thresholds as representing the movement from one space or state to another, whether this be sudden and cataclysmic or slow and gentle. The 'threshold' also allows for an exploration of 'in-between' or 'in process', i.e. that which is located on or within the threshold, rather than on either side of it. We may be forced to move through a threshold, adapting as best we can to the circumstances on the other side, or we might produce a threshold as part of a process of creativity and discovery. Translators, for example, work within a linguistic threshold, forging something new from a pre-existing piece of textual or verbal expression.

In the context of a world defined by change and flux, nevermore so than in the last eighteen months, the 2022 PhD Conference of the UCD Humanities Institute is seeking proposals from emerging scholars and artists (doctoral candidates or researchers who received their PhD within the last five years) who are engaged, either conceptually or practically, with thresholds of any kind.

We invite proposals for individual papers from the fields of literature, philosophy, history, classics, archaeology, art history and other humanities disciplines suitable for a 15-minute presentation, or 3-paper panel sessions addressing topics that include but not limited to:

- Thresholds of technological, social or political change
- Geographical, political, cultural or religious thresholds as places of division and encounter
- Instances of failed or thwarted attempts at adaptation
- Advantages, disadvantages, and complexities of change, translation, and transformation
- Thresholds between media and within the digital humanities
- Experience of ambivalent agency and liminal identity in migration, diaspora labour exportation, and refugee issues
- Social constraints and the overcoming of imposed limits against thresholds of race, gender, ability, age, or class identity
- Interrogating and problematising thresholds of gender and gender binaries

- Challenges and possibilities of linguistic and cultural translation
- The translation or adaptation of material for new audiences in art, literature, music, film, computer games, and other media
- Transformation and adaptation as a process of preservation
- Transformation between media and genre and the “going through” multiple thresholds; multiple levels or phases of change, adaptation and transformation
- Questions of the exaltation (or not) of the “original” versus the “copy”
- Hierarchies of adaptation. In what context do stories get “reborn”? Why are some stories retold more often than others?
- Gains and losses in the transformation from one medium to another
- Representations of ‘thresholds’ in social discourses in literature, art, film computer games, and other media

Please submit an abstract of 250 words and a bio-note of around 200 words to [hphdconference2022@gmail.com](mailto:hphdconference2022@gmail.com) on or before **Tuesday, 15 February 2022, 5:00 PM (Irish Standard Time)**. All proposals should include your name, email address and academic affiliation (if applicable). Please also include a main subject field plus secondary subject field in the application.

The conference will be held in English. The conference is convened by Resident Scholars of the UCD Humanities Institute. Exceptional papers may be recommended for publication in the blog (<https://tnhphd.network/>) or other venues.

This is a hybrid online and in person conference. We welcome applications from anywhere in the world. Successful applicants who are unable to travel to Dublin for the conference will be invited to present online. There will be a live stream of all presentations available for all registered attendees. We are also aware that due to the pandemic, it may become inadvisable to hold an in-person conference; in case of changes to government restrictions or UCD policy regarding in-person events, this conference will be moved online.

For further information contact HI Resident Scholars Louisa Carroll, Lauren Cassidy, Suchismita Dattagupta, Prolet Decheva, Clare Kelly, Annie Khabaza, and Maika Nguyen, at the above email address.