Abstract

The thesis discusses affinities between physical and psychical spaces in selected works of D. H. Lawrence, Virginia Woolf and Wyndham Lewis in connection with the main philosophical and aesthetic problems posed by the changes in modernist representation of character with respect to space and place. In doing so, the argument assesses the “in-human humanism” of D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf which manifests itself in the interrelation between states of mind and material universe, the way in which the consciousness accommodates various material “admixtures” and how subjectivity “escapes” from subject to its own outside.

Using the conservative thought of Wyndham Lewis as a vital source of comparison, the thesis examines how the interaction of these newly constructed modernist subjectivities with space changes and challenges traditional ideas of unity of self, personal identity and autonomous agency. Drawing on a number of themes from visual arts, the discussion connects these psychical factors with the notions of solidity and fluidity/stability and instability of material reality and individual objects, moving bodies or things in space. As a part of this, the thesis incorporates a detailed discussion of Italian Futurism, especially F. T. Marinetti’s and Umberto Boccioni’s theories of physical transcendentalism, force-lines, ambiente and technological sensitivity.