

Introductory note

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This note and the volume of PERLS comes from the joint work of the individual paper authors and the three-person team who organized the titular symposium and then took up the duty to review and edit the volume. The reviewing and editing were performed without involving other peers, and the volume is being published in the in-house press of the institution where all three of us are employed at the moment. The main reason for such a small operation is that both the symposium and the proceedings are part of what is called an Installation Research Project framework, instituted by the Croatian Science Foundation, which founded the overarching research project *Remembering Literature in Everyday Life* (ReLEL or PoKUS in Croatian). One of the main goals of such projects, irrelevant of their topics, is to demonstrate that younger researchers such as doctorate candidates (Luka Ostojić), postdoctoral researchers (Velna Rončević), and those at the outset of tenure tracks (Lovro Škopljanać) are able to master certain academic skills, among which are the organization of a symposium and the publication of its proceedings. The volume before you is therefore the outcome of our endeavor to both provide a relevant and current academic overview on the topic of everyday reading of literature, and to demonstrate our ability to do so on our own as a team.

The *Everyday Reading of Literature* symposium was first announced in September 2024 with the introduction stating that the “most common activity pertaining to literature—being read by real people in everyday settings—has been the least researched when considering its sheer volume, spread and diversity of practices.” Following on this idea of enormous ground that such a symposium may cover, the Call

for Papers invited “presentations dealing with any aspect of reading literature performed by or involving readers in their everyday setting.” (See the EROL section on the PoKUS webpage, <https://pokus.ffzg.unizg.hr/en/>)

We had received and carefully reviewed quite a large number of abstracts, among which 32 were selected for the two days of the symposium, held at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, Croatia, over the first two days of September 2025. The details of the symposium may be found in its accompanying Booklet which is also available on the PoKUS webpage, and it includes the abstracts of all the presentations. The titles and at least one presenter are included in the program summary below, including our two distinguished keynote speakers, Rita Felski and Astrid Erll, who spoke to us on the topic of “Expert Readers / Amateur Readers: Applying the Principle of Symmetry” (Felski) and “Memory Studies in Search of the Reader” (Erll).

Not all of the presenters were able or willing to submit their work for the proceedings volume, but the 19 papers of those who have done so are divided into three roughly equal parts corresponding to the broad aspects of everyday reading which they chose to discuss. Therefore, PERLS deals with 1) historical and authorial (5 papers), 2) affective and emotional (7 papers), and 3) social and technological (7 papers) aspects of everyday reading of literature. Due to the virtual omnipresence of everyday literary reading, some of the papers exhibit a greater degree of overlap between two of the parts, but this categorization is still a decent indicator for anyone wanting to make sense of the multiple discussions which took place at the symposium. Those discussions have been distilled into the individual papers after effectively having been reviewed three times in three different phases—first as abstracts, then as oral presentations, and finally in the written form—but if any mistakes have found their way into publication, they should be ascribed solely to the PoKUS team.

Without burdening you with the trope of false modesty, it is safe to say that this publication is indeed the result of an inexperienced team, who nonetheless did their best to produce an academically sound and satisfying symposium and its accompanying volume of papers for anyone who is seriously interested in the topic of everyday reading of literature. The work presented here should thus be a good indication of the careful thought that the authors have put into researching unknown aspects of the history, emotionality, and technology of everyday reading. Along with the dedicated authors, we have hopefully been able to contribute somewhat to a topic that is as under-researched as it is intellectually demanding.

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