

Institute for Contemporary & Comparative Literature (ICCL)
SEMINAR SERIES
Comparative Literature and...

Semester 2, 2017-18

Comparative Literature and...

Friday 16 Feb. 2018, 5pm Buchanan 216: Thinking comparatively from the Mediterranean. Prof. Lucia Boldrini (English & Comparative Literature, Goldsmiths)

Wednesday 7 March 2018, 4pm Buchanan 216: From duality to mobility: translation, comparison and transnational circulation. Prof. Loredana Polezzi (Translation Studies, Cardiff University) **EVENT CANCELLED DUE TO STRIKE ACTION**

Wednesday 4 April 2018, 4 pm Buchanan 216. Planetary Figurations: World Literature, Indiscipline, and the Future of Higher Education. Dr Florian Mussnug (Italian and Comparative Literature, UCL)

Wednesday 18 April, 4 pm Buchanan 216. Comparative Literature and Petroculture / Energy Humanities. Dr Graeme Macdonald (English & Comparative Literary Studies, Univ. of Warwick).

Tuesday 24 April 2018, 4 pm Quad 30. World-Literature in French: from travel to migration. Prof. Charles Forsdick (French, University of Liverpool)

Abstracts

Friday 16 Feb. 5pm

Thinking comparatively from the Mediterranean

Prof. Lucia Boldrini (English & Comparative Literature, Goldsmiths)

Not so much a sea between three continents but a continent in itself for Halikarnas Balikçisi; “not a civilization but civilizations heaped upon each other” according to Braudel; the place where, for Valéry, European man was born, yet, for Dainotto, the “indispensable internal Other” of Europe – the Mediterranean, with its entwined and separate histories, cultures and languages, provides endless material for anthropological, archaeological, historical, literary and artistic studies. This seminar will offer an opportunity to consider what Mediterranean studies can offer to a modern theorization of comparative literature.

Wednesday 7 March, 4pm

From duality to mobility: translation, comparison and transnational circulation:

Prof. Loredana Polezzi (Translation Studies, Cardiff University)

As cognate disciplinary fields, both Translation Studies and Comparative Literature are built on the tension between similarity and difference, between notions of separation (of languages, cultures, literary canons, ...) and connectedness. Looking at specific examples taken from the history of Italian mobilities, I will examine the way in which recent thinking about translation calls into question the ‘silos model’ of cultural and linguistic interaction, replacing it with a new interpretation of the ‘translation continuum’ and of the way in which translation is woven into the fabric of cultural production.

Wednesday 4 April, 4 pm

Planetary Figurations: World Literature, Indiscipline, and the Future of Higher Education

Dr Florian Mussnug (Italian and Comparative Literature, UCL)

This lecture explores the long history of multidisciplinary approaches in Comparative Literature, from the Bernheimer Report to recent debates about “Indiscipline”. I will suggest that comparison is fundamental to all forms of cross-disciplinary inquiry and that debates about world literature mark a vital rallying point for the Arts and Humanities, beyond traditional disciplinary lines. In this context, I will highlight the growing importance of theories of genre and will argue that attention to transnational genres, far from valorising global sameness, offers a way to foster cultural difference and the specific expertise of Modern Languages subjects vis-à-vis Global English.

Tuesday 24 April, 4 pm

Prof. Charles Forsdick (French, University of Liverpool)

World-literature in French: from travel to migration

The hyphenation of *littérature-monde* – the most common French rendering of ‘world literature’ – is often associated with that in the *Tout-Monde* of Edouard Glissant, and is related as a result with Caribbean thought. It is reminiscent also, however, of an earlier term, *économie-monde*, first proposed by Fernand Braudel in the context of the history of the Mediterranean. The paper considers the emergence of world-literature in French in relation to the regimes of mobility in the spaces of the Mediterranean. It tracks shifts in the *littérature-monde* movement, from early (and predominantly depoliticized) emphases on travel writing in the work of authors such as Jacques Lacarrière to a more recent engagement with contemporary trans-Mediterranean migration in works such as Patrick Chamoiseau’s *Frères migrants*. The paper asks whether such developments constitute a form of continuity regarding the association of literature and mobility, or reflect instead a different form of commitment to literature and human rights.

Wednesday 18 April, 4 pm

Dr Graeme Macdonald (English & Comparative Literary Studies, Univ. of Warwick)

Comparative Literature and Petroculture/Energy Humanities

This paper will consider how the recent rise to prominence of the intersecting fields of Petroculture and the Energy Humanities pose new and vital questions for comparative literary studies. Using a series of examples from international petrofiction, the paper considers how refurbished comparatist rubrics and protocols – in relation to emergent outlooks on world-literature – offer the most effective means to realise literature’s registration of carbon-driven modernity, framed as it is by environmental concern and climate breakdown.