

FRIEDRICH SCHLEGEL GRADUIERTENSCHULE für literaturwissenschaftliche Studien

Call for Articles “‘Transnational’: Potential and Limitations of a Concept in Literary Studies”

We are calling for articles for an edited collection entitled “‘Transnational’: Potential and Limitations of a Concept in Literary Studies”. The collection will undergo double blind peer-review and will appear with De Gruyter in the series “WeltLiteraturen / World Literatures” in 2019. It will continue the discussion initiated by the series’ first title, *Approaches to World Literature* (2013) (<https://www.degruyter.com/viewbooktoc/product/225188>).

For some time now, the term ‘transnational’ has been used in various contexts in literary and cultural studies: to characterize globally active artistic movements such as avant-gardes and neo-avant-gardes; to describe literatures of migration that draw on cultural influences beyond nationality; or to analyse trans- and multilingual works of contemporary authors. Our volume wants to interrogate the critical potential as well as the limitations of the term "transnational" in these contexts.

Transnational literatures – to propose a minimal definition – are literatures that implicitly or explicitly transcend the nation-state and/or national language. ‘Transnational’ can be applied in the following contexts:

- 1) the identity and self-perception of literary characters
- 2) the identity and self-perception of authors (e.g., Joyce or Beckett)
- 3) trans- and multilingual works by authors such as Joyce (e.g., *Finnegan’s Wake*), Édouard Glissant, Junot Díaz or Assia Djebar
- 4) the reception of texts (similar to ‘world literature’ as defined by David Damrosch and others: as literature circulating beyond its place of origin)
- 5) a perspective adopted by literary criticism (e.g., Ernst Robert Curtius, Michail Bakhtin, Erich Auerbach, Harold Bloom), which can manifest itself in the academic institutions of literary criticism
- 6) a marketing strategy that capitalizes on the identity of characters and authors

The following issues are at the centre of our collection:

Section I: Transnational Literature / World Literature / Literatures of Migration

The ‘transnational’ has increasingly gained currency next to the ‘postcolonial’, ‘world literature’, ‘cosmopolitan literature’ and “literatures of migration’. Where do these concepts overlap and where do they differ? What, for example, are the advantages and disadvantages of approaching through the lens of the ‘transnational’ literatures that are traditionally discussed under the rubric ‘postcolonial’? We are interested in historical as well as theoretical approaches to the transnational as a category of analysis in literary studies. The boom of the term ‘transnational’ in different fields

of literary studies is also a topic to be discussed in this section. How are the newly awakened interest in transnational literatures and changes in the institutional frames of literary studies related?

Section II: Poetics and Politics of literary genres in transnational literatures

How can transnational literatures be defined in terms of theme and form? Which poetic traditions exist in transnational literatures? How do genre dynamics play out in transnational literatures? We especially welcome contributions treating genres other than the novel, and literatures written in other languages than English or French. We are also looking for articles treating works from earlier than the 20th century.

Section III: Transnational Literary Fields and Markets

Which roles do transnationally active publishers play in today's literary markets? Which roles did they play in the past? Of interest are the politics of selection by publishers as well as the power structures guiding selection; transnationally active authors and publishers outside of Western Europe and North America; the meaning of literary prizes for the transnational careers of authors; and methods for the conceptualization of transnational literary fields.

Section IV: Transnational Literary Histories

In this section, we want to chart possibilities of writing literary history beyond the frame of national literature. What are the potentials and limitations of transnational literary histories in different geographical and temporal contexts? Possible topics include specific literary movements active on a transnational and transcontinental level; African, Latin American and Caribbean literatures; the relationship between literatures of exile, migration and diaspora on the one hand, and European national literatures on the other hand.

Section V: Poetics of multilingualism in transnational literatures

Multilingualism and switching between languages are prominent features of transnational literature. These strategies deconstruct the essentialist nexus of national language and national literature, but also notions such as 'mother tongue', 'foreign language' or 'secondary language'. We are looking for contributions that explore the poetics of multilingualism, switching between languages, translanguaging, etc. in transnational literature, again especially in pre-20th century texts and in 'minor' languages and literatures. Is multilingualism especially relevant for non-European literatures, and does it have to be conceptualized in different terms than those applied to the European context?

Generally, we welcome contributions from all fields of literary studies on pre-20th century literature and in languages other than French or English, although contributions on the latter are also possible. We also welcome contributions that consider the relevance of gender in relation to the analysed phenomena.

The deadline for submissions is 15 January, 2018. Abstracts should be in English and no longer than 3000 characters. They should be accompanied by a short biography (max. 800 characters) and sent to dondorici@zedat.fu-berlin.de AND kai.wiegandt@fu-berlin.de. The authors will be notified on the decision by 1 February, 2018. **The complete articles will be due by 15 June, 2018.**

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