

CALL FOR PAPERS

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Director Corin Braga

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Literature in the Digital Age

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The present-day development, at extreme speed, of digital technologies open the field of literature and literacy to new forms of literary practice. Just as well, comparative literature and literary theory are to rethink their themes, methods and concepts. Not only theoretical disciplines of literature are subjected to this kind of alteration, but also literature itself, since critics, theorists and the reading public warn against „the demise of literature” in the digital age. The closing of the age of Guttenberg has instilled a very visible anxiety regarding the end of poetry, the end on the novel, the end of theoretical thinking as we know it. As an alternative to this Apocalypse of print, some theorists, critics or artists have already found solutions of „escape”. New forms of literary practice access digital resources and force the boundaries of „literature” to expand to visual, cybernetic, hyper-textual territories. How will comparative literature and literary theory respond to these new practices? Will the theorists and critics consider „old” theories fulfilled by the „empowerment of the reader”? Will they feel the need to forge new concepts and new methods? Or will they seek entirely new perspectives to which traditional methods can be adjusted? Alternative conceptual and methodological discourses emerge in present-day discourses on literature, springing from totally different points of view. The expansion of literature beyond the paper-written support and the expansion of digital media to the realms of literature engage writers and researchers of the literary field in a rethinking of their own creative identity and of their disciplinary approach.

We invite therefore proposals related to comparative literature, literary theory, new literary practices in order to chart and possibly evaluate the current state of area studies. We are not only interested in a meta-textual view, but in two specific levels of literary research:

1. The first level is that of the recent developments of disciplinary „upgrading” in the fields of comparative literature, literary theory, literary critics or even media theory. Entirely new challenges present themselves to academic literary disciplines. How does global expansion of information affect the definitions and concepts of our disciplines? Does network interactivity request a re-appropriation of the writer-work-reader relationships? How are literary disciplines altered by the migration of literature and fiction to media supports? Is there a movement of resistance to these media in literature and how does it function? We hope for answers to this kind of problems, but we mostly encourage addressing them from as many points of view as possible.

2. The second level is interested in the latest practices and alternative theories that do not yet belong to the paradigmatic, traditional description of „literary disciplines” or even to the classic concept of „literature”. Does „digital poetry” assume a definition, is there a digital novel and a digital prose? Will poetry, novel, scientific discourse fundamentally change in this age or will they merely adopt new forms to universal, timeless contents? Where should theorists of the novel or critics of poetry look for tools to define these new genres or to dismiss them completely?

It is our hope that this research will bring together a community of researchers and artists with common interests, catalyzing their communication beyond the restrictive limits of this incidental collaboration. Also, the number of „Caietele Echinox” entitled *Literature in the Digital Age* could turn into the starting basis for further, inevitable debate.

We expect your papers by the 30th of June 2010, in English or French, accompanied by an abstract and a few key-words in English.

Thank you,
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