



Figures 1908, Mezhdunarodnye puti soobshcheniya (International communications). © Malala Andrialavidrazana, 2018.

# Decolonising the World Republic of Letters

Translation, Circulation and Intellectual  
Networks across the Global South

23 – 24 May 2024

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# INTRODUCTION

Taking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of Pascale Casanova's field-defining *La République mondiale des lettres* (*The World Republic of Letters*, 1999) as its point of departure, this conference seeks to decentralize the praxis of cultural reading and literary critique that the notion of Paris as the world capital of literature represents. Drawing inspiration from a host of decolonial projects that seek to renegotiate the terms in which we understand the world—a process that Walter D. Mignolo terms “epistemic delinking”—we seek to examine trans-peripheral and counter-hegemonic cultural infrastructures that flourished despite, in resistance to, and in the aftermath of colonial domination. This project is historical, but also oriented toward the present and, crucially, dedicated to rethinking the epistemic assumptions that undergird the study of literature and associated forms of cultural production in the present. For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—or so the story goes—Paris was the world capital of literature: the place where writers from throughout the globe attained literary consecration and via which their work entered the rarified circuits of world literature. Yet, in this same period, Paris also served another kind of centre: a meeting place for writers, intellectuals, and activists from Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia who would spearhead decolonial and revolutionary projects throughout the regions of the world now known as the Global South.

This other Paris was just one node in a much larger network of translation, circulation, and intellectual exchange that extended across what was known as the first, second, and third worlds in the second half of the twentieth century. The Bandung conference of 1955, as well as the emergence of Afro-Asian, Tricontinental, and Third World solidarity movements, marked not only a geopolitical shift, but also a philosophical and symbolic one, further displacing the European city as the centre of knowledge production and political organization.

Taking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of Pascale Casanova's field-defining *La République mondiale des lettres* (*The World Republic of Letters*, 1999) as its point of departure, and with the many debates that

followed in mind (see, for instance, Apter, Cheah, and Mufti, as well as recent monographs published in the “Cambridge Studies in World Literature” series edited by Debjani Ganguly and Francesca Orsini), this conference seeks to further decentralize the praxis of cultural reading and literary critique that the notion of Paris as the world capital of literature represents. Drawing inspiration from a host of decolonial projects that seek to renegotiate the terms in which we understand the world—a process that Walter Mignolo terms “epistemic delinking”—we seek to examine trans-peripheral and counter-hegemonic cultural infrastructures that flourished despite, in resistance to, and in the aftermath of colonial domination. This project is historical, but also oriented toward the present and, crucially, dedicated to rethinking the epistemic assumptions that undergird the study of literature and associated forms of cultural production in the present.

While dominant models of world literature have largely focused on canonical works and formats established by the cultural industry and institutions of the Global North, these rarely account for the oral, indigenous, clandestine, digital, or pirated circulations which constitute key dissemination channels in the Global South. Focus on the book format, sales indicators, awards, and the influence of major publishing houses, moreover, reinforces the centrality of western (or, northern) expression as the measure against which other forms of production are read. Hence, decolonizing the World Republic of Letters requires expanding the epistemic borders against which we conceptualize categories such as “literature.” Here, we understand the concept of “border” both in a political and metaphorical sense: as the borders between nation-states, which impose visible confines on a “free” territory as well as metaphorical borders, which, as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o has argued, constitute cultural “cages” that sustain the imperial order and have an impact on narrative processes, distribution, and visibility. Against this backdrop, a new conception of literature can be inscribed: one increasingly understood as something that can go beyond the “literate” dimension and which benefits from new technological spaces and perceptual hybridizations.

Our aim is, on the one hand, to identify and examine the infrastructure of textual production in and across the Global South, including in-

dependent publishing initiatives, journals, magazines, blogs, “cartoneras,” performance and oral traditions, translations, and festivals, to name a few examples. And, on the other hand, the conference seeks to critically discuss the very definition of literature coined and disseminated from the production centres of western knowledge and aesthetics so that subterranean, anomalous, and counter-hegemonic transactions between different regions of the Global South can be illuminated.

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# PROGRAM | 23 MAY

9:30 - 10:00

## Registration

Welcome words

10:00 - 11:45

## Panel 1 - Decolonising The Press

### **Anna Forné - University of Gothenburg**

The South in the Peripheric North: The Cultural Magazines of the Latin American Political Exile in Sweden

### **David Fieni - SUNY Oneonta**

The Planetary Commons of Fat Cap Letters

### **Lucia Campanella - Open University of Catalonia**

An Anarchist Ur-world Literature? Circulation of Literary Texts in Translation in the Anarchist Press of the Americas, 1890-1910

### **Sijia Wang - Shanghai International Studies - University & Queen Mary University of London**

South-South Cultural Exchange in the Age of Digitalization - On the successful Case of Chinese Web Novels in Southeast Asia

11:45 - 13:00

## Panel 2 - The Caribbean Hub

### **Estefanía Bournot - Austrian Academy of Sciences**

Microhistory of Big Encounters: Afro - Caribbean Entanglements of Third World Internationalism

### **Angela Haddad - New York University**

Indigenism, Migration, and Arab Literary Production in the Caribbean

### **Christopher T. Bonner - Texas A&M University**

Negritude in Red and Black: Antillean Writers, the Global Cold War, and the People's Republic of Letters

13:00 - 14:00

## Lunch

**10:00 - 11:45** | **Keynote Speech**  
**Madhu Krishnan - Univeristy of Bristol**  
Literary Activism in Africa, Networks of Intimacy and the World Republic of Letters

**15:15 - 16:30** | **Panel 3 - Global Africa**

**Bushra Hashem - Univeristy of Oslo**  
Exploring African Representations in Arabic Literature: Maimūna and Celestial Bodies

**Georgia Nasseh - University of Oxford**  
Nationalist Politics, Internationalist Solidarities in Angolan Theatre: Tracing Os Pioneiros do Futuro (1974) from Luan-da to Lusaka to Dar Es Salaam

**16:30 - 17:00** | **Coffee Break**

**17:00 - 18:45** | **Panel 4 - Decolonising Translation**

**Diana Roig Sanz - Open University of Catalonia**  
Institutionally Sponsored Translations in the Global South

**Jaeyeon Yoo - Duke University**  
Pluralizing Translation: The Decolonial Praxis and Aesthetics of chogwa

**Lidia Zhou Mengyuan - The Chinese University of Hong Kong**  
Indirect Translation in Global South Literary Exchanges: The China-Brazil Case Study

**Manuel Pavón Belizón - Open University of Catalonia**  
South-to-South Translation Initiatives in China: The case od the 'Latin American Thought Translation Series'

# PROGRAM | 24 MAY

9:30 - 11:15

## Panel 5 - Decolonising Cosmopolitanism

**Abderrahman Beggar Wilfrid - Laurier University**

Hédi Bouraoui and the Transcultural Pluriversal Project

**Ana María Ramírez & Jorge J. Locane - University of Oslo**

Dissenting Cosmopolitanism: Manuel Zapata Olivella and the Making of a World

**Kyle Wanberg - New York University**

The Extraversion of the Postcolony: Migrancy and Transnational Cosmopolitanism

**Martín Bergel - Universidad de San Martín - CONICET**

In Defence of Cultural Capitals: Rabindranath Tagore in Buenos Aires, or the Wiles of Cosmopolitan Reason

11:15 - 11:30

## Coffee Break

11:30 - 13:00

## Panel 6 - Decolonising Paris

**Fernanda Fischione - Sapienza Università di Roma**

Far from Paris: Maghrebi Writers, Gulf Awards and the New Arabic Geographies of Consecration

**Melanie Shi - École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales**

Foreign Languages Press and Littérature Chinoise, Paris as a hub of Socialist Literary Networks during the Global Sixties

**Roy Palomino - Sorbonne Université / Crimic**

Looking South, Looking at Latin America: Center and Periphery in *La plus secrète mémoire des hommes* by Mohamed Mbougar Sarr

13:00 - 14:00

## Lunch

14:00 - 15:45

## Panel 7 - Decolonising Queerness and Feminism

**Alejandro Adalberto Mejía González Paul Valéry -**



**Montpellier 3 University**

The Body ad Political Territory: Decolonising the Body through Literary Echoes between Equatorial Guinea, Central América and the Caribbean

**Kifah Hanna - Trinity College**

Queer Arabic Literature: Circulation and Network Formation in 21st Century

**Leila Gómez - Univeristy of Colorado at Boulder**

Feminism of the Commons: New Feminist Alliances and Indigenous Languages in the Cinema of Abya Yala

**Paulina M. Barrios - Rutgers University**

Drifting Love and Queer Erotic Possibility in Kenyan and Brazilian Literature

15:45 - 16:45

**Keynote Speech**

**Anne Garland Mahler - University of Virginia**

Redes: Politics and Aesthetics from South to South

16:45 - 17:15

**Coffee Break**

17:15 - 19:00

**Panel 8 - Mapping networks of circulation**

**Jobst Welge - University of Leipzig**

Angola/Brazil: Travel, Transnationality, and Cultural Circulation/Orientation in Ruy Duarte de Carvalho and J. Eduardo Agualusa

**Magalí Armillas-Tiseyra-Pennsylvania State University**

An International Writers' Workshop: The Iowa International Writing Program and the Legacies of the Aesthetic Cold War

**Noemi Alfieri - CHAM-NOVA/FCSH,ASCL - African Studies Centre, U.Leiden; Africa Multiple (U.Bayreuth)**

Atlantic circulations of knowledge beyond colonial borders: Mensagem, cultura, Black Orpheus

**Waïl S-Hassan-University of Illinois Urbana Champaign**

Comparing the Literatures of the Global South

20:00

Closing Dinner

# KEYNOTE MADHU KRISHNAN

## Literary Activism in Africa, Networks of Intimacy and the *World Republic of Letters*

In this talk I trace the history and contemporary state of affairs around literary activism on the African continent. I begin by exploring what we mean by ‘literary’ and ‘activism’ when we use the term. I then situate literary activism on the continent in its historical context, thinking about how its transnational, regional and local alliances and networks of practice operated as a means of forging an Africa-centred world republic of letters, one which, though perhaps less visible, remains critical for literary development as part of the production of the social. In the final section of this talk, I turn to the contemporary period, looking at the work of literary activists in Nigeria, Cameroon and Côte d’Ivoire through the lenses of labour, institutions and intimacy to explore how these impact upon the constitution of a contemporary African literature within the world republic of letters.

**Madhu Krishnan** is Professor of African, World and Comparative Literatures at the University of Bristol. She is author of *Contemporary African Literature in English: Global Locations, Postcolonial Identifications* (2014), *Writing Spatiality in West Africa: Colonial Legacies in the Anglophone/Francophone Novel* (2018) and *Contingent Canons: African Literature and the Politics of Location* (2018). She is currently working on a five-year project funded by the ERC titled ‘Literary Activism in Sub-Saharan Africa: Commons, Publics and Networks of Practice’.



# KEYNOTE

## ANNE GARLAND

### *Redes: Politics and Aesthetics from South to South*

In this lecture, Mahler examines a network of mostly Latin American and Latinx radical activists and artists in the 1920s-30s called the Anti-Imperialist League of the Americas (Liga Antimperialista de las Américas, LADLA), studying the long-term impacts of its political and aesthetic vision. Within two years of its founding, LADLA activists joined with organizations from forty nations at the 1927 Brussels Anti-Imperialist Conference where they interacted with U.S. Black intellectuals and with anti-colonial leaders from Africa and Asia. Through combining the study of archival sources with literary and artistic works in English and Spanish, this lecture explores how these exchanges influenced debates in radical circles in the Americas, specifically on the subjects of Black and Indigenous labor, immigrant rights, and racial policing.

**Anne Garland Mahler** (University of Virginia) is author of *From the Tri-continental to the Global South: Race, Radicalism, and Transnational Solidarity* (Duke, 2018) and co-editor of *The Comintern and the Global South: Global Designs/Local Encounters* (Routledge, 2022). She is an interdisciplinary scholar focused on transnational political and cultural movements, particularly among Latin American, Latinx,



Caribbean, and African American artists, activists, and writers. Mahler currently has two books in progress: *A Wide Net: Racial Capitalism and Political Community from the Americas to the Globe* (under contract, Duke UP) and *The Oxford Handbook of the History of the Global South*.

# PANEL 1

## Decolonising the Press

### The South in the Peripheric North: The Cultural Magazines of the Latin American Political Exile in Sweden

Anna Forné

In this presentation I will examine the role of the cultural magazines of the Latin American political exile in Sweden during the 1970s and 80s in the formation and reconfiguration of transnational intellectual and cultural networks. I will focus on *La Revista del Sur: artes, letras, pensamiento: publicación uruguaya y latinoamericana* (1983-1993) directed by Fernando Ferrando (Uruguay). The aim is to uncover cultural synergies and intellectual constellations between the local (Sweden), the national (Uruguay and other countries), the regional (the Southern Cone), the continental (Latin America), and the global, created through this publication. The investigation introduces a corpus of unexplored, peripheric texts of significance for the intellectual and cultural history of Latin America during the Cold War. Among several other publications, I will centre on this one for the following main reasons: the relative longevity of the magazine, the transnational scope and distribution, the constitution of the editorial board, the variety of collaborators, and its compelling over-all “syntaxis”.

**Anna Forné** is a Professor of Latin American Literature and Culture at the University of Gothenburg. Her research focuses on Latin American cultural production and intellectual history of the twentieth century. Her current research studies the formation and institutionalization of the testimonial genre in relation to the literary prize of Casa de las Américas, and she is also starting off a research project on the intellectual networks of the Latin American exile in Sweden in the 1970s and 80s.

## The Planetary Commons of Fat Cap Letters

David Fieni

This paper intervenes in recent theorizations of world literature by reading them from the perspective of global graffiti networks, with a goal of upending assumptions undergirding concepts of authorship, writing, the literary, and the colonial institution of world literature itself. Through an exploration of intersections and asymptotes between graffiti and literature in a range of writers (Mehdi Charef, Abdelkébir Khatibi, Jean Genet, Henri Michaux, Sinan Antoon, Juan Goytisolo, Julio Cortázar) and graffiti from Palestine, Senegal, Morocco, and the Paris suburbs, this project aims to forge an emerging mode of reading that calls for literacy in the languages of planetary crisis. If Pascale Casanova both historicizes Paris as a capital of the “world republic of letters” and reifies its centrality as a locus of literary consecration, another mode of selfgovernance is operative in the highly autonomous world of those other writers whose work is written on the walls delineating and segregating the “pathways of transnational capital” from “the marginalized poor” (in Chandra Mohanty’s gloss of Arif Dirlik’s remapping of “global north” and “global south”). If literary consecration is a core function of the republic of letters, graffiti responds with the desecration of the universalizing regime of capital. Far from equating literature with graffiti, this paper aims to dwell in, on, and with letters. Graffiti, here, thus serves as a point of departure for a larger project: a grammatology for the twenty-first century that accounts for the banned, censored, and outlawed writing of the immobilized underclass in an age of digital cultural production, where aesthetic writing practices nonetheless circulate instantaneously around the globe.

**David Fieni** is associate professor of French at the State University of New York at Oneonta and the author of *Decadent Orientalisms: The Decay of Colonial Modernity* (Fordham U.P., 2020). He has published in *Diacritics*, *Boundary2*, *PMLA*, and *Expressions Maghrébines* and is finalizing a second monograph, *Nomad Grammatology: Migrant Signs, Fugitive Writing*, which explores intersections of writing, graffiti, and mobility.

## An Anarchist ur-world literature? Circulation of Literary Texts in Translation in the Anarchist Press of the Americas, 1890-1910.

Lucia Campanella

In this paper, based on the preliminary results of ARGOT (“The Anarchist Translation Flows and World Literature Project”, funded by MSCA, EU), I propose to examine how the literary supplement of *La Révolte* (1879-1894) and *Les Temps Nouveaux* (1895-1914), edited by the “immobile internationalist” (Bantman & Altena, 2015) Jean Grave, acted as a node connecting authors and readers and as a source for a large number of literary texts circulating in translation in the anarchist press of the Americas at the turn of the century.

The large-scale study I’m carrying out on the press in several cities and in several languages makes it possible to understand to what extent anarchism, despite (or perhaps because of) its lack of material resources and its frequent repression, was able to create a common corpus of literary texts. This corpus is a precarious one, made up of unrecognised translations, or produced in prison or by comrades with little knowledge of the source language, and distributed in newspapers that were often closed down by the authorities or suffocated economically. I will discuss how this “anarchist ur-world literature”, an earlier but equally transnational literary constellation, should be considered alongside the so-called “internationalist world literature” (Schaub, 2021) or “socialist world literature” (Pratt & Yanli, 2022), especially with regard to the forms this phenomenon took in Latin America (Einarsdóttir, 2021a, 2021b).

**Lucia Campanella** is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellow at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (Spain), where she conducts the Anarchist Translation Flows and World Literature Project (ARGOT). Her current research focuses on the intersection of literature and politics, through the study of the circulation of literary translations in the anarchist press in different cities and languages at the turn of the century.



## South-south Cultural Exchange in the Age of Digitalization—On the Successful Case of Chinese Web Novels in Southeast Asia

Sijia Wang

In the digital age of multimedia and information explosion, the Internet has become a virtual space beyond national boundaries where an intellectual access to all types of knowledge is permitted. Subsequently, it witnesses a surge in newly developed literary genres, in which Chinese web novel, a nontraditional form of textual and cultural production, is one prime example that flourishes across the world. Against the backdrop of a rising interest in the phenomenal popularity that Chinese web novels gain in the North American market, its similarly wideranging influence within the geographical area of Global South, particularly Southeast Asia, is what this paper aims to analyze. The ranking and rating, categories of novels and writing contests from “WebNovel,” one of the largest online reading platforms for serialized Chinese web novels, will be evaluated in comparison with “WeTV iflix,” an online streaming platform where drama series and animations adapted from web novels are shown. Apart from these two official websites, some independent sites, forums or communities established by the fandom will be considered due to their self-organized promotion, publication and practical application of MTL (machine translation). Seeing the recent trend of translating Chinese web novels into English and other minor languages like Indonesian and Vietnamese, this paper argues that a mutually beneficial relationship between China and Southeast Asia helps to deconstruct the supreme status of any “capital” of world literature in the post-pandemic era of technological advancement when the former’s web novel writing platform also encourages its audience to start their own creations.

**Sijia Wang** is a PhD student at Shanghai International Studies University in Shanghai, China. Currently, she is also a visiting research student at Queen Mary University of London in the UK. Her areas of research include comparative literature, world literature and Vladimir Nabokov.

# PANEL 2

## The Caribbean Hub

### Microhistory of Big Encounters: Afro - Caribbean Entanglements of Third World Internationalism

Estefanía Bournot

This paper delves into the intricacies of Third World solidarity through a microhistorical lens, examining the impacts of large-scale encounters on personal and intellectual trajectories. Against the backdrop of World Literature, which explores global literary circulation, akin to the scopes Global History, this study proposes a combined approach of macro- and micro scales to better understand the trans-national connections between Cuba and Africa around major festivals and congresses, celebrated within the frame of Third World and anti-imperialist solidarity. The study interrogates what lies beyond conventional archival records and examines how these big encounters influenced artistic, personal, and intellectual paths. It delves into literature as a form of testimony, presenting speculative accounts of the emergence of alternative, trans-peripheral subjectivities within the Global South.

**Estefanía Bournot** is APART-GSK Grant holder and Fellow of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Her project “Forgotten Routes across the Atlantic” unearths overlooked archives of Cold War transcontinental encounters among key Latin American and African intellectuals of the 20 th century. She is the author of *Giros topográficos: (re)escrituras del espacio en la narrativa latinoamericana del s.XXI* (Potsdam UP, 2022), and numerous articles and book chapters. She co-edits the special cluster “Geo-Semantics” at the ASAP/J online platform and a special issue on the geological turn for the *Journal of Latin American Cultural Studies*. Her scholarly work covers trans-regional approaches to cultural expressions of the Global South, with a special focus on South-Atlantic entangled histories, decolonial epistemologies, and critical ecologies.

## Indigenism, Migration, and Arab Literary Production in the Caribbean

Angela Haddad

From the late 1800s to the interwar period, hundreds of thousands of Arabic-speaking migrants from the Eastern Mediterranean boarded steamships to the Americas. So, too, did they bring with them cultural formations born from experiences in the Eastern Mediterranean, at the forefront of which was the Nahda, or Arab Renaissance. Its later years coinciding with the period of emigration, this renaissance was a period of prolific intellectual activity generated by developments in the Arabic printing press, increased contact with Europe, exposure to foreign educational systems, and institutional restructuring prompted by the Ottoman Empire's integration into global capitalism. Though migrants made their homes across the entire American hemisphere, my presentation focuses on the community that settled in the Caribbean. The presentation analyzes the literary production of these migrants to Hispaniola during the United States' occupation of the island in the early twentieth century and compares their engagements with Indigenism, an ideology that sought to define who was autochthonous to the land and structure their relation to the nation-state. While the U.S.'s occupation of Hispaniola led to a renewed interest in Indigenism to assert the right to self-determination and native sovereign rule, I show that Arab migrants to the island sought to negotiate their belonging to the region by narrativizing their indigeneity to the Eastern Mediterranean in the Caribbean press.

**Angela Haddad** is a Ph.D. candidate in the department of Comparative Literature at New York University. Her research focuses on Arab migratory literary production in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean from 1870 to 1950. She is author of "Chronicling 'the Death of the Arab' in Colombian Literature" in *Twenty-First Century Arab and African Diasporas in Spain, Portugal and Latin America* and is also an Arabic to English translator.

## Négritude in Red and Black: Antillean Writers, the Global Cold War, and the People's Republic of Letters

Christopher T Bonner

Antillean writers associated with the Négritude movement figure significantly in the growing field of Cold War literary studies (Popescu, Kalliney, Tolliver). Yet much of what is said about Caribbean literature in this context focuses on nonalignment and, at the limit, Left anticommunism. However, if we look beyond nonalignment—as recent scholarship on 20th century socialist internationalism in the Global South has helped us to do—it becomes clear that Antillean literature was internally contested to a much greater degree. I argue in this paper that the consensual narrative of mid-20th century Antillean literary aesthetics, centered around modernism and Négritude as the dominant paradigm, ignores a significant Marxist counterpoint that defined itself in contrast to Négritude, targeting not only attitudes within the Négritude movement towards race but also the movement's existentialist and surrealist substrates. Focusing on an analysis of theoretical and critical writings by René Depestre, Jacques Stephen Alexis and René Ménéil, this intervention traces an alternative politico-aesthetic tendency of anticolonial black writers in French who remained, critically but nevertheless irreducibly, aligned with the global communist project. Understanding literary discourse as a proxy battlefield within which Antillean writers argued for different visions of an emancipated Caribbean modernity in alignment with the broader world, this intervention demonstrates how socialist-aligned Antillean authors developed original aesthetic responses to the Cold War that creolized a diverse array of global Marxist literary tendencies.

**Christopher T Bonner** is Assistant Professor of French at Texas A&M University—College Station. His research is concentrated on the French Caribbean and focuses on the relationship between literature, ideology, and political economy. He is the author of *Cold War Négritude: Form and Alignment in French Caribbean Literature*, published by Liverpool University Press in 2023. His current book project analyzes symbolic economies of debt in representations of Haiti from the 1825 indemnity through the 21st century.

# PANEL 3

## Global Africa

### Exploring African Representations in Arabic Literature: *Maimūna and Celestial Bodies*

Bushra Hashem

In academia, the term ‘Arab/Islamic world’ typically encompasses cultures and civilizations ranging from the tribes of the Arabian Peninsula to the Ottoman Turkish Empire. However, often overlooked in this cultural tradition are regions like West Africa, Eritrea, Zanzibar, and Darfur, despite their significant Arab Sultanates, where Islam and Arabic were prevalent. This paper aims to examine two Arabic novels that establish a connection between Arab and African literature, exploring the liminal cultural space bridging these regions. One of the novels, “Maimūna” by Saudi Arabian Black author Mahmoud Trawri, chronicles the migration of a West African family to the Hijaz. On the other hand, the Omani novel “Celestial Bodies” by Jokha al-Harithi, serves as the first novel by an Omani woman translated into English. Despite the contrasting receptions they experienced, both novels explore themes of migration and slavery, as well as delve into the complex perceptions of race and blackness within Arab societies. This study aims to provide valuable insights into the dynamics of South-South cultural encounters. The research will delve into the novels themselves, their publication contexts, and the narratives they present to represent an African ‘other’ culture within the broader Arab cultural narrative.

**Bushra Hashem** is a doctoral research fellow specializing in Arabic literature and cultural studies at the University of Oslo, Norway. She earned her Master of Arts in English and comparative literature from the American University in Cairo, and a graduate diploma in Arabic and Islamic studies from the same university. Her research now focuses on the intersection between Arabic and African cultures as well as perceptions on race and depictions of slavery in modern Arabic literature.

## Nationalist Politics, Internationalist Solidarities in Angolan Theatre: Tracing *Os Pioneiros do Futuro* (1974) from Luanda to Lusaka to Dar Es Salaam

Georgia Nasseh

This paper takes *Os Pioneiros do Futuro* as a way into a wider discussion of the converging histories of African national liberation and the Cold War as they intersect with and impinge upon the performance arts in the African continent and the Global South at large. More specifically, this paper charts, through *Os Pioneiros do Futuro*, the central tension between African independence from the mid 1950s to the late 1970s and contemporaneous configurations of interdependence within, across, and beyond liberation movements. Expanding on the recent work of Monica Popescu (2020) and Rossen Djagalov (2020), which draws connections between internationalism and postcolonialism, this paper conceives of the theatre not merely as a space of representation, but also as a physical space which makes possible networks of transnational co-laboration. While Performance Studies has long been concerned with the question of ‘presence’ (cf. Derrida 1967, Garner 1994, Power 2008) in its thinking about the theatre as, on the one hand, a space of media-ated ‘immediate’ experience, or on the other, as ‘a space of embodied, collective, here-and-now reception’ (Jarcho 2017: 13), this paper argues that specific performance contexts, such as that of *Os Pioneiros do Futuro*, allowed emerging national and transnational political movements a means of experimenting with an embodied internationalist solidarity.

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**Georgia Nasseh** is Departmental Lecturer in Brazilian and African Portuguese at the University of Oxford. Her PhD research was concerned with issues of multilingualism, translation, and ethics in Angolan literature from the 1950s to 1970s, with an emphasis on the work of José Luandino Vieira. Her wider research is concerned with the Global Sixties, anti-colonial and liberation movements in Portuguese-speaking Africa, and Cold War aesthetics. She is also Co-ordinator of the Oxford Comparative Criticism and Translation (OCCT) Research Centre, based in St Anne’s College, Oxford.



# PANEL 4

## Decolonising Translation

### Institutionally Sponsored Translations in the Global South

Diana Roig-Sanz

This paper will analyze to what extent diversity and trans-peripheral relations are fostered through the translation programs of a small and representative sample of national institutes of culture or transnational programs from the Global South: Latin America, and Southeast East Asia in a specific time frame. By doing so, I aim to reassert the role of public actors in the global literary space (Sapiro 2016, Sapiro and Heilbron 2018) and to reconstruct their translation policies (Meylaerts 2011) at different scales (local, national, regional or global) (Roig-Sanz and Rotger 2022). In this respect, the paper takes 2001 as a critical date, by considering the UNESCO Declaration on Cultural Diversity as a fundamental milestone for contemporary cultural development, that was followed by the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (2005), or the Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger (2010), also published by UNESCO. By applying a big translation history approach (Roig-Sanz and Fóllica 2021), a soft power perspective (Carbó-Catalan and Roig-Sanz 2022) and the concept of global translation zones (Roig-Sanz and Kvirikashvili, forthcoming), I will study how translation flows and translation policies may enlighten under-explored cultural ecosystems and respond to similar environmental challenges.

**Diana Roig-Sanz** is an ICREA Full Professor and ERC StG holder at the IN3-UOC, in Barcelona. She is the coordinator of the Global Literary Studies Research Lab (GlobalS) and the PI of the project “Social Networks of the Past. Mapping Hispanic and Lusophone Modernity, 1898–1959.” Her research interests deal with global and cultural approaches applied to literary and translation history within a digital humanities approach.

## Pluralizing Translation: The Decolonial Praxis and Aesthetics of *chogwa*

Jaeyeon Yoo

Can destabilizing the authority of the translator, as a singular entity, become a praxis for decolonial translation? In translation studies, the figure of the translator has remained just that: the translator, singular and often invisible—even as postcolonial scholars, such as Lawrence Venuti and Rey Chow, have established translation as a non-neutral, interpretive practice rooted in colonial ideologies of power. Using the Korean-English e-zine *chogwa* as a case study, this paper argues that the translator's invisibility can be disrupted by pluralizing translation—of expanding the solo translator into a visible collective. I also explore this disruption's potential link to decolonization. Founded in 2019 by translator-poet Soje, each issue of *chogwa* begins with one Korean poem in Hangul. It then presents English translations of the poem from at least ten different translators, tied together with editorial commentary on each translation. The focus on the translations' differences highlights the non-neutral nature of English in translation. By drawing attention to English's status as this dominant, yet constructed linguistic norm, *chogwa* helps us question the status quo of Anglophone imperialism. Following Walter Mignolo and Catherine Walsh's cue, who view decolonial theory and praxis as inseparably linked, I suggest *chogwa*'s pluralization of translation is not just an aesthetic choice but also a theory of decoloniality—one that can, in turn, inform a praxis of other decolonial literary movements.

**Jaeyeon Yoo** is a PhD student in Literature at Duke University. Her research interests include Asian diasporic literature, postcolonial theory, and translation studies. She has a forthcoming book chapter on Mitski, co-written with Rachel Tay, which will be published in *Techno-Orientalism, Volume II* (edited by David Roh et al). Her writing has also been featured in public-facing literary magazines, such as *Words Without Borders*, *Asymptote*, and *The Carolina Quarterly*; she is a contributing writer for *Electric Literature*.

## Indirect Translation in Global South Literary Exchanges: The China-Brazil Case Study

Lidia Zhou Mengyuan

In the field of world literature, the interplay between semi-peripheral languages is often underrepresented or marginalized, as highlighted by D'haen (2012: 153). This oversight is particularly evident in the reliance on indirect translation, a practice that has become increasingly common in the exchange of literary works among semi-peripheral language systems, primarily due to a scarcity of skilled translators and significant commercial considerations. Although previous studies (Alvstad 2017; Pięta 2018; Schwartz 2018; Ivaska 2020) have shed light on indirect translation practices across various European language pairs, there remains a significant gap in research focusing on the Global South, particularly in the exchange of literary systems between regions such as Latin America and East Asia. This study aims to bridge this gap by examining the role of indirect translation in the circulation of Chinese literature into Brazilian Portuguese from 2000 to 2022. By doing so, it offers a comprehensive overview of how major languages, particularly English and French, influence this literary exchange through commercial, political, and academic lenses.

**Lidia Zhou Mengyuan** is a Lecturer in the Department of Translation at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK). Her main research interests include literary communication and exchange in the Global South, Image of China in Lusophone countries and Chinese-Portuguese-English translation/ interpreting studies, with a strong focus on digital humanities, sociological approaches in translation studies. She had published several articles in international peer-reviewed journals, including *Babel*, *Diacrítica Journal*, *East-West Poetry Journal*, *Macau Studies*, among others.

## South-to-South Translation Initiatives in China: The case of the ‘Latin American Thought Translation Series’

Manuel Pavón-Belizón

In this presentation, I will analyze a case of counter-hegemonic intellectual circulation that involves the translation and circulation of Latin American thought in the People’s Republic of China: the “Latin American Thought Translation Series”. Edited by Teng Wei and Wei Ran, this series started in 2018 with the translation into Chinese and publication of Mexican thinker Samuel Ramos’ *El perfil del hombre y la cultura en México* (The Profile of Man and Culture in Mexico), and has to date published a total of three volumes translated from the original Spanish. My aim is to examine the intellectual agenda at the foundations of this initiative through the reading of paratextual materials that have been produced surrounding the publication of these volumes, and on the other hand, understand the dynamics (interpersonal and/or institutional) that underlie the publication of this collection. This case provides an example of emerging counter-hegemonic intellectual, translational and editorial practices that connect different contexts in the global South. Besides, it offers a more complex picture of China’s intellectual scene and the engagement of Chinese scholars and intellectuals with peers beyond hegemonic settings of cultural production.

**Manuel Pavón-Belizón** is associate lecturer in Chinese-Spanish translation at Pompeu Fabra University (Barcelona), lecturer in Chinese studies and translation at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, and member of the ALTER research group at the Open University of Catalonia. He holds a PhD in Information and Knowledge Society from the Open University of Catalonia with a thesis on the translations and circulation of contemporary Chinese thought into English and Italian. As part of his pre-doctoral project, he was a research fellow at Peking University. His research interests are translation in the humanities and social sciences, the sociology of translation and the intellectual history of modern and contemporary China. He is also a translator of Chinese thought and literature into Spanish.

# PANEL 5 - Decolonising Cosmopolitanism

## Hédi Bouraoui and the Transcultural Pluriversal Project

Abderrahman Beggar

The purpose of this paper is to engage in a dialog between two theories born in the Global South, decoloniality, and transculture (or “transcultural” as per its creator, the Cuban Fernando Ortiz) through the works of Hédi Bouraoui (1932- ), a Tunisian writer living in Toronto, Canada. I will explore how Hédi Bouraoui defends the idea of a pluralistic universe by underlining the necessity to decentralize literary work. One of the fundamental ideas in Hédi Bouraoui’s “philosophy of composition” is the strong belief that, in the name of a healthy questioning of the center, one has to engage in a transcultural reading of the world. In a nutshell, my project consists in discussing how the decolonial pluralistic ideal cannot happen without engaging in a transcultural approach to culture. At the same time, this approach is in itself a call to decolonize not only the Global South but also the North through a new reading of history and memory.

**Beggar Abderrahman** is a Full Professor, Chair of the Department of Religion and Culture at Wilfrid Laurier University, and a Fellow at the Tshepo Institute for the Study of Contemporary Africa. He specializes in Latin American societies and Arab-Muslim diasporas in Europe and the Americas. His research deals with Decolonization, Transcultural Theory, and Cultural Memory. Some of Beggar’s works are translated into Arabic, English, and Spanish. He authored seven books and edited two volumes. Together with Dr. Stacey Wilson-Forsberg, Beggar is conducting a research project funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Consortium on Life stories by stranded sub-Saharan migrants in Mexico and Morocco. He is also engaged in a second research project on the memory of Muslim deportees in New Caledonia.

## Dissenting Cosmopolitanism: Manuel Zapata Olivella and the Making of a World

Ana María Ramírez & Jorge J. Locane

The term cosmopolitanism has a long history. It was coined in ancient Greece and since then often rephrased. The most widespread modern definition associates it with metropolitan habits, of supposedly universal scope, as opposed to the provincial habits of the peripheries. This paper proposes to return to the debate on cosmopolitanism from a critique of its liberal and Eurocentric essence. Based on the terminology of Jacques Rancière, we propose the concept of dissident cosmopolitanism as a formula that allows us to circumvent consensus and open up an alternative critical horizon. As a case study, the paper deals with the work of the Colombian writer and anthropologist Manuel Zapata Olivella (1920-2004) who strongly contributed to constructing an Afro-Colombian identity with links to Africa and Asia. It is argued that, in this way, Zapata Olivella elaborates a world, that is, an alternative to the world, as the hegemonic global design.

**Jorge J. Locane** studied at the University of Buenos Aires and got his PhD from the Free University of Berlin. Currently, he is a Professor of Literature and Culture in the Spanish-speaking World at the University of Oslo. His research work focuses on contemporary Latin American literature. He published two monographs, *Miradas locales en tiempos globales. Intervenciones literarias sobre la ciudad latinoamericana* (Iberoamericana/Vervuert in 2016) and *De la literatura latinoamericana a la literatura (latinoamericana) mundial* (De Gruyter, 2019).

**Ana María Ramírez Gómez** is a research and teaching fellow in the department of Literature, Area Studies and European languages at the University of Oslo. After receiving a bachelor's degree in literature studies from the Faculty of Social Sciences at Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in 2014, she pursued further studies in China, where she was admitted to the M.A. programme in Foreign Languages and Literatures (Beijing Jiaotong University) in 2016. Her research focuses on the representations of China and the Chinese in the Latin American travel writing.



## The Extraversion of the Postcolony: Migrancy and Transnational Cosmopolitanism

Kyle Wanberg

Starting from Samir Amin's economic analysis of extroversion in the Global South in *Unequal Development*, the idea of "extraversion" has traveled into the humanities, informing Beninese philosopher Paulin Hountondji's treatises on African-centered knowledge production. Drawing on Hountondji's ideas, my paper seeks to explore how relations of power are reinforced by audience and reception. There is a disjuncture between arenas of reception, where awards, publishers, and critics predominate, and spaces of cultural production. Just as Pascale Casanova identified a world system grounded in a network dominated by Western European cultural institutions of literary recognition, the concept of extraversion articulates the orientation of many non-European writers towards the institutions and audiences they gain access through. While the academy pivots towards discourses stressing the decolonization of scholarly thoughts, habits and ways of seeing, writers seeking global marketplaces and audiences are oftentimes operating and thinking quite differently. My paper explores the forms of diversity that can be represented through disciplinary changes in the academy, locating the questions of audience and address as central to a critical understanding of how certain representations of politics may be sanctioned by institutions of higher learning, others foreclosed.

**Kyle Wanberg** is Associate Professor in Global Liberal Studies at New York University and author of *Maps of Empire* (University of Toronto, 2020). His Ph.D. was in Comparative Literature from the University of California, Irvine. Wanberg has published work in *Research in African Literatures*, *The European Journal of English Studies*, *Comparative Literature Studies*, *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*, *Journal of Literary Theory and Comparative Literature*, among others. His research focuses on cultural studies of migration and globalization, African literatures and cinemas, and is currently working on a project dealing with representations of financial imperialism in Africa. He is currently living in Spain, and teaching at NY Madrid.

## In defense of cultural capitals: Rabindranath Tagore in Buenos Aires, or the wiles of cosmopolitan reason.

Martín Bergel

In critical dialogue with some of Pascale Casanova's propositions in her *The World Republic of Letters*, this paper argues about the function of cultural capitals as spaces of cosmopolitan universalization and critique of the identity fixations that limit emancipatory impulses. It does so on the basis of the case of Buenos Aires as a cultural capital of the periphery, and of the canonical encounter that took place there between Victoria Ocampo and Rabindranath Tagore, with lasting effects on the diagramming of alternative routes in global cultural circuits. If Tagore's visit to Buenos Aires in 1924 has been read as a fortuitous episode of his planned trip to Peru, an accident mainly due to Ocampo's dazzlement by his figure, another reading can be made from a perspective that contemplates more broadly the material and cultural conditions of existence of the Argentine capital as a space favorable to the mobility of literary and cultural references, and of reception and diffusion of world literatures. Ultimately, if on the one hand cultural capitals condense and reproduce power relations, on the other they create the conditions for their own provincialization and for the knotting of new terms within universal horizons of emancipation.

**Martín Bergel.** PhD in History (University of Buenos Aires). Researcher of CONICET and the Center for Intellectual History of the University of Quilmes (Argentina), where he directs the Master's Program in Intellectual History. Professor of Contemporary Latin American History at the University of San Martín and the University of Buenos Aires. He was postdoctoral researcher at Harvard University (2012) and at the Freie Universität Berlin (2015). He was also Research Fellow at the Center for Advanced Latin American Studies (CALAS, 2019-2020); Mercator Fellow of the Global Intellectual History program at the Freie Universität Berlin (2022); and George Forster Senior Fellow of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (2023-2025). Among other books, he published *La desmesura revolucionaria. Cultura y política en los orígenes del APRA* (2019); and *José Carlos Mariátegui. Antología* (Siglo XXI, 2020).

# PANEL 6

## Decolonising Paris

### Far from Paris: Maghrebi Writers, Gulf Awards and the New Arabic Geographies of Consecration

Fernanda Fischione

In my presentation, I will discuss how Paris is not the centre of consecration par excellence for Arabophone writers from the Maghreb anymore. Today, the English language has become more and more popular in the Maghreb (Sadiqi 1991; British Council 2016) and new cultural actors have emerged in the Gulf, where the so-called “petrostates” have been trying to disenfranchise themselves from oil extraction and diversify their economies, investing in artistic and cultural endeavours (Elshehtawy 2017) among which several literary awards find a place. My presentation will explore the new patterns of circulation of the Arabic novel from the Maghreb. Analysing the role of the Gulf literary awards and elaborating on interviews with writers, publishers, and other cultural operators, I will show how old peripheries have turned into new centres and how writers and other cultural operators from the Maghreb must negotiate new strategies to gain more symbolic (and material) capital in the pan-Arab field.

**Fernanda Fischione** is a tenure-track researcher and a Marie Skłodowska-Curie post-doc research fellow (2021-2024) at Sapienza University of Rome with the project *Transnational Maghreb and the International Prize for Arabic Fiction*. She has carried out two smaller research projects about rap and protest music in the SWANA region in the aftermath of the 2011 uprisings, and nationalism and the novel in Jordan. She worked as a guest lecturer at the University of Macerata and the Université Internationale de Rabat. Besides her academic activities, she is a literary translator from Arabic into Italian and founder and editor of the magazine “Arabpop. Rivista di arti e letterature contemporanee”.

## Foreign Languages Press and *Littérature Chinoise*, Paris as a hub of socialist literary networks during the global Sixties

Melanie Shi

My paper examines the material socialist literary networks during the Cold War via collaborations between communist publishing houses in China and the ex-Soviet bloc and their confluence in 1960s Paris. I study the publication of Chinese books and their worldwide diffusion during the 1960s to 1980s, centred on the central publishing house of China, the *Foreign Languages Press* (FLP, or Presses en Langues Étrangères), which exported books about communist China to non-Chinese readers along with state-sanctioned publishing houses in the ex-Soviet bloc. The texts translated by the Foreign Language Presses promoted the image of a unified revolutionary socialism countering the West based on a network of socialist cosmopolitanism, that which converged in Paris. Proponents of a global socialism went to Paris to participate in the fervent of revolution in the 1960s, thus it served as a connecting point between Chinese-Soviet networks and socialist decolonialist thought in Africa and in Latin America. Beyond the consequences for Europe, I show how the diffusion of literature via Paris connected the Chinese communists with writers from the Global South through the review *Littérature Chinoise*, which posited China as an ally to anti-colonial struggles in the ex-Francophone empire, including Vietnam, North Africa, and Congo, and Latin America.

**Melanie Shi** is pursuing a postgraduate degree at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Paris, France, and previously studied at Columbia University and at Peking University. She previously has written on Sino-French exchanges and been nominated (twice in the USA) for her work in rare book collection by which she became interested in the collecting books and modes of writing history via material textual exchanges, especially reviews and magazines, and is interested by South-South exchanges in all facets.

## Looking South, Looking at Latin America: Center and Periphery in *La plus secrète mémoire des hommes* by Mohamed Mbougar Sarr

Roy Palomino

The novel by Senegalese writer Mohamed Mbougar Sarr, *La plus secrète mémoire des hommes* (Philippe Rey, 2021), winner of the Goncourt Prize in Paris, openly claims the influence of Chilean writer Roberto Bolaño, not only through the novel's title, inspired by a fragment of *The Savage Detectives*, but also through a similar narrative structure: the search for an almost forgotten but mythical author, T. C. Elimane, who becomes the plot's central focus. Latin America and its literature are thus the central base of Mbougar Sarr's novel, and the geographical spaces evoked in it hold special significance. This communication aims to analyze the contrast between Buenos Aires-Argentina and Paris-France, as models of periphery and center through the designation (Laborde-Milaa and Paveau, 2004) of writers and intellectuals, literary criticism, and the geographical spaces mentioned in Mbougar Sarr's novel. The goals are to analyze the differences between the two countries presented in the novel and to question the notion of the center (Casanova, 1999) as an absolute axis of literary consecration, accumulation of literary capital, and universalization since *La plus secrète mémoire des hommes* suggests that these characteristics could be present in different regions during the same period.

**Roy Palomino** has a PhD in Hispanic Studies, specializing in Latin American Literature, from the Sorbonne University of Paris, where he held the position of Lecturer between 2021 and 2023. He is a member of the Centre de recherches interdisciplinaires sur les mondes Ibériques (CRIMIC) and the Latin American Studies Association (LASA), in the Europe and Latin America section. His research topics focus mainly on analyzing the literary relations between Latin America and the West and how these determine their internationalization and their reception in the so-called World Literature. He is currently working on a project that maps the limited diffusion of Andean literature in Europe through the work of the writer José María Arguedas and through the question: Can Andean literature be universal?

# PANEL 7 - Decolonising Queerness and Feminism

**The body as political territory: decolonising the body through literary echoes between Equatorial Guinea, Central América and the Caribbean**

Alejandro Adalberto Mejía González

This work proposes, through a decolonial and transatlantic perspective, a reflection on the concept of “body as political territory” within literary discourses which echo from South to South. The starting point is found in what the Equatorial Guinean writer Justo Bolekia Boleká calls “literatura hispano-negroafricana”, a notion that challenges the cultural and sociopolitical order of Hispanism by reactivating certain transatlantic literary articulations between Equatorial Guinea, the Caribbean and Central America. We consider that the cultural diagonals that join these geographical points share certain discourses around the body, mostly seen as a space of dissidence. Hence, our analysis considers the body as a basis for reflection to bring dissident voices together which seek to break the hegemonic patterns that strip the body away of itself from the story, the novel or the essay.

**Alejandro Adalberto Mejía González** holds a Ph.D. in Hispanic and Hispano-American literature (XX and XXI centuries) from the University Paul Valéry - Montpellier 3 since 2019. He is Temporary Research Assistant and member of the Institut de Recherche Intersite en Études Culturelles (IRIEC) at the same university. His research focuses on contemporary Mexican literature from the perspective of spatial studies. More specifically, he works on spatial representations derived from migratory experiences and transcultural memories. He is currently investigating the connections of the transatlantic space between Central America, the Caribbean and Equatorial Guinea, this last in order to explore representations of the body as a political territory from the perspective of decolonial studies and relational ontological concept.



## Queer Arabic Literature: Circulation and Network Formation in 21st Century

Kifah Hanna

This paper explores new modes of forming intellectual networks by queer Arab writers and artists in the twenty-first century. I examine three pieces published in three different forms of productions: Hashem Osseiran's non-fiction piece entitled "Only When We" which appeared in *Rusted Radishes: Beirut Literary and Art Journal*; Hamed Sinno's piece "Separation" which appeared in the online publication *The Derivative*, and two different essays published by author Saleem Haddad on his personal Patreon website. In this paper, I maintain that these new independent forms of production allow the queer Arabic letters to break through what Tarek El-Ariss terms the "repetitive cycle of the Arabic novel". El-Ariss understands this cycle as a product of the dialectical engagement with the west and Europe during the Arab Enlightenment, the nahda. Furthermore, I build on Amir Mufti's critique of English as a "global" literary language to demonstrate how Haddad, Osseiran, and Sinno deconstruct English language in their productions to decentralize queerness as inherently western phenomenon. This paper suggests that by forming such cultural networks independently from Eurocentric publishers, queer Arab writers and artists redefine the center of intellectual production in the twenty-first century from within the margins.

**Kifah Hanna** is an Associate Professor of Arabic and the chair of the department of Language and Culture Studies at Trinity College in Connecticut, USA. She earned her MSc and PhD in Comparative and General Literature and Middle East Studies at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, the UK. She is the author of *Feminism and Avant-Garde Aesthetics in the Levantine Novel* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). Her research interests broadly include twentieth and twenty-first century Arabic literature, gender and sexuality, queer theory, (trans-)cultural studies, cinema studies, postcolonial theory, war literature, comparative literature, and world literature. Her scholarly work has appeared in edited volumes and peer-reviewed journals.

## Feminism of the Commons: new feminist alliances and Indigenous languages in the cinema of Abya Yala

Leila Gómez

In this presentation I seek to revisit the scope of feminist concepts such as “intersectionality”, “sorority”, “alliance”, “coalition” and “solidarity practice” in two films by Northern Argentine director Daniela Seggioro, *Nositaliaj* (2012) and *Husek* (2021). These films include the Wichí language and stories and focus on the hierarchical differences not only of race, sexuality and gender but also class and coloniality. Like others contemporary films, *Nositaliaj* and *Husek* highlight the economic asymmetries of the colonial legacy as fundamental factors that separate anti-patriarchal alliances, insisting on the fundamental connection between racial and economic justice (Barbara Ransby). Along these same lines, this presentation aims to discuss, for example, to what extent “intersectionality” nourishes coalition and alliance praxis as argued by Avtar Brah (*Decolonial Imaginings*), or if, as Oyeronke Oyewumi discusses, following bell hooks and Audre Lorde, we must move away from the assumed sorority that nullifies the insurmountable differences of race, class, nationality, otherness, etc. (*African Women and Feminism*). The Wichí language is at the center of the discussion as an indication of incommensurability and transitory alliances and as a reminder of the limits of translations between Western and non-Western epistemes.

**Leila Gómez** is professor of Women and Gender Studies at the University of Colorado Boulder. She is the author of several books and articles on travel writing and cinema in Latin America. Among them are “Impossible Domesticity: Travels in Mexico” (U of Pittsburgh Press 2021) and “Darwinism in Argentina” (Bucknell UP 2011). She is currently writing a new book on Indigenous women and land issues in Abya Yala. Gómez is the founder and director of the Quechua Program, and leads the Seed Grant project “Global Indigenities and Land Struggle” at CU Boulder.

## Drifting Love and Queer Erotic Possibility in Kenyan and Brazilian Literature

Paulina Barrios

In this paper I will argue that queer feminist decolonial love allows female characters to generate loving intimacy and care across hostile contexts in the urban realities of Kenya and Brazil. Specifically, I will be analyzing two short stories: “Pub 360” by Kenyan author H W Mukami and “Baila” by Brazilian author Laila Oliveira, both published in anthologies that bring together queer authors. These stories trace an anticolonial topography of both fictional and urban space, creating a dynamic map that crosses national boundaries and the confines of genre. This mapping of a feminist decolonial love across queer experiences and urban realities shows love as a revolutionary response to pain and violence. The female characters in these stories have confidently and consciously decided to generate a loving queer space between them. However, neither one of the stories offers a closed ending, we are left as readers with the possibility of what is to come. Through a comparative close reading of both texts this paper evidences the importance of generating queer spaces of belonging and a feminist decolonial approach to queer love.

**Paulina Barrios** is a PhD candidate in Comparative Literature at Rutgers. She holds a B.A. in Comparative Literature with an emphasis on International Relations from Colorado College and a Masters in African Studies from El Colegio de México. At Rutgers her research focuses on feminist theories and methodologies, comparative Latin American and African studies, literature and social movements, translation studies, self-writing, and autonomous publishing. Her dissertation analyzes how urban feminist and queer literary works from Africa and Latin America mobilize literature and performance as a means of protest, affect, love, and survival.

# PANEL 8 - Mapping Networks of Circulation

## Angola/Brazil: Travel, Transnationality, and Cultural Circulation/Orientation in Ruy Duarte de Carvalho and J. Eduardo Agualusa

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Jobst Welge

Recent criticism has increasingly highlighted the intellectual and theoretical contributions from the Global South in a comparative fashion, such as in the axis of Africa and Brazil (Helgesson: 2022). Among Lusophone literary writers from Angola, Ruy Duarte de Carvalho (1941-2010) and the novelist José Eduardo Agualusa (\*1960) are certainly the most significant to have explored the cultural relations between Angola and Brazil. In my talk I want to discuss how the two writers use ideas of travel and cultural migrations/circulations, not least of literary texts, in order to explore similarities and crossings between landscapes and cultural formations in Angola and Brazil. These comparative gestures and practices, I argue, are intended to complement and contradict colonial lines of influence and dependence with a sense of multi-directional forces and historical imaginary.

**Jobst Welge** was trained in Comparative Literature and Romance Philology both in Germany and the US; he received his PhD at Stanford University (2001). He held previous positions at the Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt and at Stockholm University and is currently (since 2018) professor for Romance Literary and Cultural Studies (with a focus on the Hispanic and Lusophone areas) at Leipzig University. He is the author of the study *Genealogical Fictions: Cultural Periphery and Historical Change in the Modern Novel* (Baltimore, 2015) and the co-editor of *Literary Landscapes of Time: Multiple Temporalities and Spaces in Latin American and Caribbean Literatures* (Berlin, 2022), as well as of *Family Constellations in Contemporary Ibero-American and Slavic Literatures* (Berlin, 2024; forthcoming).

## An International Writers' Workshop: The Iowa International Writing Program and the Legacies of the Aesthetic Cold War

Magalí Armillas-Tiseyra

As Kalyan Nadiminti has observed, writers from outside the US—and particularly the regions of the world now known as the Global South—have in recent decades found a “stable institutional home” in creative writing programs in U.S. universities (2018: 375). Such programs have become key nodes in the networks conditioning the international circulation of writers and their work, and this, in turn, has shaped the rise of the so-called global Anglophone novel (displacing the erstwhile “postcolonial novel,” per Nadiminti) and the global novel writ large. This paper focuses on one specific node in these networks of circulation: the International Writing Program (IWP) at the University of Iowa, founded in the late 1960s as a complement to the pioneering Iowa Writer’s Workshop (the first program to offer a Master of Fine Arts degree in creative writing in the United States). Receiving minimal funding from the university, the IWP relied on contributions from private donors and institutions such as the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Farfield Foundation, and the Asia Foundation—all key players in what Peter Kalliney has called the “aesthetic cold war” (2022). Drawing on extensive archival research at the University of Iowa and elsewhere, I will first outline what I call the “Latin American roots” of the IWP and then consider its aesthetic legacies via the work of the Chilean writer Alberto Fuguet, who attended the program in the 1990s.

**Magalí Armillas-Tiseyra** is an associate professor in the Department of Comparative Literature at the Pennsylvania State University. The author of *The Dictator Novel: Writers and Politics in the Global South* (Northwestern University Press, 2019), she has also published numerous articles, essays, and book chapters. She is also a co-director of the digital platform *Global South Studies* and, beginning in the autumn of 2024, will be one of the co-hosts of the podcast *Novel Dialogue*. The recipient of a fellowship for experienced researchers from the Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung, she is currently a visiting researcher at the University of Köln.

## *Mensagem, Cultura, Black Orpheus:* Atlantic circulations of knowledge

Noemi Alfieri

This paper aims to reflect on intellectual displacement, on the mobility of objects and ideas through the transnational networks established within Africa, Southern America and Europe by negritudinalists, Pan-African or anti-colonial writers and intellectuals from the 1950s to the 1970s. It will outline connections, circulations, and translations of printed material - namely literary works - through space in those decades, conditionings to the movement and reception of printed matters and the ideas they vehiculated, such as the institutional censorship or political persecution and incarceration, will be also considered. The study of the connections between publications such as *Mensagem* (Lisbon), *Cultura II* (Luanda) and the environment of the reviews *Présence Africaine* (Paris and Dakar) and *Black Orpheus* (Ibadan) has the intention of reflecting on the racial exclusions and inequalities intensified by the capitalist oppression and its colonial foundation (GILROY, 1993; MBEMBE, 2013), with particular attention to the socio-political context. The cultural and literary production of that period will be understood as a tool of communication, mobility, and transposition from the individual to the collective, in the search of mutual, collaborative, and common paths. The contribution also aims at making a critical problematization of the ways in which those solidarities were built, as well as to analyze its unbalances.

**Noemi Alfieri** is a Visiting Fellow at the ASCL - African Studies Centre (U.Leiden). She is a Contracted FCT CEEC Researcher at CHAM, Centre for the Humanities (NOVA-FCSH, Lisbon) and a Member of the Board of Directors of CHAM, as Subdirector for Graduate Studies and Research. She was a Visiting Fellow at the Africa Multiple Cluster of Excellence (U. Bayreuth, 2022/23). At the ACM, she coconvenes the Postdoctoral Working Group: “Digital Trans\*formations in Africa: A Space for Intellectual and Material Capital”. Former Post-Doctoral Research Fellow of the FCT project Afrolab (U.Lisbon, 2022). She is a Member of the Editorial Board of *Práticas da História* and *Cultura*.

## Comparing the Literatures of the Global South

Wail S. Hassan

A shift in perspective from Eurocentric paradigms, including the vertical North-South axis, to interregional, or cross-regional, South-South relations can, in principle, bypass both the centrality of (post)colonial relations and their monolingual spheres (the Anglophone, the Francophone, the Hispanophone, the Lusophone) to advance the project of decolonizing comparative and world literature. This is not an argument for displacing the postcolonial—something that is neither possible nor desirable—but for opening a space for a trans-regional approach to literatures of the Global South that draws on the philological and polyglot resources of Comparative Literature while disavowing the centrality of Europe. Twenty years ago, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak announced the death of Eurocentric Comparative Literature. The announcement was premature and, as such, aspirational, but one important thing about it is that such death signifies neither the finality of extinction, as in materialist worldviews, nor the passage to another world (the afterlife of Abrahamic religions); rather, it is a reincarnation into another worldly form, a rebirth that permits the best of our discipline to inhabit the body of Area Studies, likewise transformed (or “supplemented” in the Derridian sense). This remade Comparative Literature, which takes with the same philological seriousness and detailed cultural knowledge the cultures of the Global South as those of the North, opens an avenue for what I have been calling South-South comparison as a practice that holds decolonial promise.

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