

WELTLITERATUR: CROSSING BOUNDARIES

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE ON WORLD LITERATURE

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

MARCH 19, 2010

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Ph.D. in Literature Program and the Nanovic Institute of European Studies at the University of Notre Dame announce a conference entitled “Weltliteratur: Crossing Boundaries,” in tribute to its objective to encourage and develop research on the place of world literature. In the last few years an increasing number of eminent scholars have been drawing attention to the manner in which the institutional division of literatures into an archipelago of disciplines enclosed in national boundaries hampers and even distorts literary studies. The publication of books like Gayatri Spivak’s *Death of a Discipline* and Emily Apter’s *The Translation Zone* demonstrates increasing dissatisfaction with the traditional model of comparative literature, and various alternate approaches to literature have surfaced: “global literature” (Jameson), “cosmopolitanism” (Robbins, Brennan, Appiah), “transnationalism” (Spivak), “world literature” (Damrosch). The motivation for this event comes from Goethe’s idea of *Weltliteratur*: “National literature is now a rather unmeaning term; the epoch of world literature is at hand, and everyone must strive to hasten its approach.” Professor David Damrosch, Chair of Literature and World Literature at Harvard University and author of *What is World Literature?* and *How to Read World Literature*, will be the keynote speaker for the conference.

Goethe’s conception of world literature allows us to recognize that national and cultural boundaries still exist, but that literature circulates across these boundaries, helping to reshape relations among peoples. This conference is dedicated to considering literature as a space that extends beyond historical, linguistic, and traditional disciplinary boundaries and welcomes papers that approach literature as an alternative and/or minority discourse across cultural, political, national, institutional and social limitations. Submissions may address, but are not limited to, the following ways in which literature crosses boundaries: Transmission, Translation, Transference, Transaction, Transgression.

The conference organizers invite abstracts for individual 15-20 minute papers on any related theme in literature ranging from classical to contemporary. 300 word abstracts should be submitted by January 15, 2010 to gbusl@nd.edu. Please include your name, affiliation, and paper title in your email; and attach an abstract with title ONLY in PDF or Word format for blind review.