

## Call for papers

### Central European Literary Theory: Sources, Context, and Dissemination

Brno, September 2–6, 2019

Questions of what Central Europe is, where its borders are, and how we may characterize it, have been considered for a long time. A lot of prominent writers, historians, philosophers, and literary theorists have joined in debates of these topics in the last years and decades. According to many of them, Central Europe is not just an area spreading from Germany to Russia, and from the Baltic to the Adriatic seas, but primarily it is a space characterized by a specific cultural milieu. The countries, cultures and nations present in this space are connected by something we might call a shared historical memory, a cultural and political experience and, without doubt, shared experience of research activities. This is illustrated by numerous scientific findings, approaches and theories that were produced, developed and disseminated in the Central European space in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Focusing on literary theory and linguistics, which are inseparable in this context, one needs to admit that the Central European space was exceptionally prosperous in creating, disseminating and interconnecting new linguistic and literary theoretical concepts developed by the Vienna Circle, the Prague Linguistic Circle, the Bratislava Linguistic Circle, and others.

The Prague Linguistic Circle in particular was a sort of (Central European) scientific and sociocultural crossroads from its foundation in 1926. Czechs, Slovaks, Germans, Russians, Ukrainians and members of various other nations were present at its meetings. Ideas both domestic and foreign were exchanged. A lot of issues were discussed in the environment of the Circle, such as Ferdinand de Saussure's linguistics and semiology, functionalism, Russian formalism (Roman Jakobson, Viktor Shklovsky, and Yuri Tynyanov), phenomenology (Edmund Husserl, Roman Ingarden, and Gustav Shpet), the arts and culture, as well as findings, theories and methods of various disciplines of the social studies. This was the environment that gave birth to structuralism (Vilém Mathesius, Bohuslav Havránek, Jan Mukařovský, and Felix Vodička), phonology (Nikolai Trubetzkoy), and modern semiotics.

Some aesthetic and philosophical conceptions also played an important role in Central Europe. Among them, the aesthetic formalism of Johann Friedrich Herbart deserves a mention, as it connected Prague with Vienna, as well as Edmund Husserl's phenomenology, and philosophical conceptions of the Budapest School, namely Georg Lukács and his interpretation of Marxism and modern literature. Both Slovak (František Miko and Anton Popovič) and Polish (Michał Głowiński and Janusz Sławiński) schools of interpretation and semiotics have made an impact on the history of literary criticism.

The main aim of the conference *Central European Literary Theory: Sources, Context, and Dissemination* is to provide space to revise some of literary theory and criticism's findings, and for a more general discussion of particular literary theoretical and linguistic conceptions created and disseminated in the Central European space in the 20<sup>th</sup> century despite the complexities of its historical and political developments. The conference also aims to commemorate Roman Jakobson's departure from Brno and Czechoslovakia in 1939; linguistics and literary theory would be different today without his influence, energy, and creative initiative. This holds also outside the Central European space.

## **Possible topics:**

1. Central Europe: The Crossroads of Literary and Linguistic Theories
2. Central European Literary Theory and Linguistics around the World
3. Russian Formalism, Structuralism, and Phenomenology: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow
4. Roman Jakobson: Brno Makes, the World Takes
5. The Legacy of George Lukács in Central Europe and Beyond.
6. Structures and Narratives: Towards a Theory and Methodology of the Study of Literary Narratives

We welcome proposals for papers and panels on all aspects of Central European Literary Theory.

### **Proposals for Individual Papers**

Please submit a title and 300-word abstract of the paper you are proposing; provide your name, institutional affiliation, email address, and a brief description (up to 100 words) of your work and publications.

### **Proposals for Panels**

Please provide a 700-word (max) description of the panel topic and all participants' abstracts; the title of the panel and the titles of the individual papers; and for each participant their name, institutional affiliation, email address, and a 100-word description of their work and publications.

The deadline for submissions is **April 15, 2019**.

### **Further information and important dates**

Panel proposal submission deadline	April 15, 2019
Abstract submission deadline	April 15, 2019
Acceptance announcements will be sent out	continuously, no later than April 20, 2019

Registration fee:

**Basic conference fee: 1500 Kč / approx. 60 €** (includes: 4 x lunch, 1 x dinner, 1x visit to the Villa Tugendhat)

**Full conference fee: 3000 Kč / approx. 120 €** (includes: 4 x lunch, 1 x dinner, 1x visit to the Villa Tugendhat; trip to South Moravia: visit to castles Lednice and Valtice, 1x lunch and transport)

**Fees may be paid online. Instructions for methods of payment will be sent by email.**

The conference is organized by the Department of Czech Language and Literature, Faculty of Education, Masaryk University, Brno, The Czech Republic  
<https://www.ped.muni.cz/en/departments-and-institutes/cjl/about-the-department>

Main conference convenors:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ondřej Sládek ([osladek@centrum.cz](mailto:osladek@centrum.cz))

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## **Contact**

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