



NORLIT 2011

Conference on literature and politics

ROSKILDE, AUGUST 4.-6. 2011

Invitation to the 2011 NorLit conference to be held at Roskilde University (RUC), Denmark, August 4-6, 2011.

Conference theme: Literature, politics and society.

Organizers: The literary studies departments at The University of Southern Denmark, Aarhus University, University of Copenhagen, Aalborg University and Roskilde University, the latter is hosting the conference.

Literature has always been intimately connected with the social and political, also when it turned its back on these wider areas – either in protest or in celebration of individualism. Readers have always used literature as a means of meditating on relations between the individual and the social. However, literary studies have not always focused on these relations and have at times adapted to more exclusive ways of conceptualizing the core areas of literary studies.

Recent years' increased involvement in societal questions on a global scale accentuates the need to reconsider literature in its connection to society and politics. The aim of the NorLit 2011 conference is to establish a platform for thematizations and discussions of this development and its prospects, focusing on literature in its diverse contextual relations to society and politics.

The focus on the contextualisation of literature opens up a broad field of research angles. 'Literature and globalization', for example, questions the biased interest in European or Western literature. Migration and new forms of literature set new agendas, not only politically and aesthetically but also in terms of research. This expanded field of study pushes questions of distribution to the fore: Censorship is quite common outside the Western cultural sphere but here too we experience restrictions, though often disseminated in more subtle ways. Consequently, another contextual field to investigate is the ways writers themselves expand on their understanding of the literary by incorporating performative strategies in their works.

Contextualization includes questioning the ways in which society and politics appropriate and interact with literature on an institutional level. E.g. how can we understand the ways in which cultural institutions manage literature and how do we understand the position attributed to literary studies in educational institutions and in the media. The increased focus on experience economy intensifies the tension between, on the one hand, literature understood as commodities and, on the other hand, literature as voices in their own right in the political and social sphere.





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In short, there is a need to view literature within broader frameworks. The aim of the conference is both to focus on 'literature and politics' in a historical perspective and to examine the variety of political and social dimensions, which, to a large extent, conditions contemporary literature. So contextualization may include topics such as literature and popular culture, literature and aesthetics, literature and social theory, literature and philosophy and literature and modernity studies.

We are pleased to announce the NorLit 2011 keynote speakers: Professor Kjersti Bale, Department of Literature, Area Studies and European Languages, University of Oslo and Professor Sara Danius, School of Culture and Communication, Södertörn Högskole, Stockholm.

Deadline for submission of abstracts (2400 characters with spaces) is March 1, 2011. Participants will receive notice of acceptance from the organizing committee no later than April 1, 2011. The organizing committee will furthermore inform participants of the session themes on the conference website; all sessions will be chaired and the appointed chair will be in charge of session members' communication before the conference and make sure that all deadlines are kept.

The NorLit conference in Stockholm in 2009 managed successfully to post all papers on the NorLit website before the beginning of the conference. Thus, all participants were given the opportunity to read all papers before attending the conference and presentations of papers could then be minimized in favour of more elaborate discussions. NorLit 2011 wishes to make this a tradition; hence, deadline for submission of full papers is June 15, 2011.

There is no official conference language. It will be multilingual; some sessions will be in English, whereas others will be in Scandinavian languages, in French or German.

If you wish to submit an abstract or simply keep yourself updated on NorLit 2011, please send an email to norlit2011-adm@ruc.dk and we will add you to the conference mailing list. When the website is ready for submission of abstracts and registration, you will receive an email notification.

The conference is sponsored by The Danish Council for Independent Research, Humanities (FKK) and The Danish Association of Masters and PhDs (DM).

Organizing committee: Anker Gemzøe (AAU), Mads Rosendahl Thomsen (AU), Leif Søndergaard (SDU), Peter Madsen (KUA), Erik Svendsen (RUC).

