

Planeta literatur

Global Modernism(s)

Approaches to trans-local / trans-cultural / trans-civilizational dimension of Modernist movements

CALL FOR PAPERS

The familiar vision of Fernando Pessoa at his table in Café Martinho, as well as the Dublin of James Joyce or the Berlin of Else Lasker-Schüler, suggest a localized understanding of Modernism. Still, the gist of the Pessoaan literary endeavor consists in an attempt of radical de-localization of language and imagination in order to transcend the limitations of “placedness.” The same could be said about Bruno Schulz in Drohobycz in the eastern borderlands of Poland. A substantial part of Modernist writings may be interpreted as a response to the frustration of “being there.” No wonder, thus, Modernism's greatest achievements may be synthesized as voices that privilege the margins: Ireland rather than England, Barcelona rather than Madrid, without forgetting the Modernist spaces in Latin America, Eastern Europe, Asia, and Arabic world.

Modernist capitals are many, and their location is often far from obvious. As Melvin B. Tolson wrote in his *Harlem Gallery*, “the listening ear can hear / among the moderns, blue / tomtoms of Benin.” Such hidden roots of Modernism entwine the whole planet. A possible approach to Global Modernism(s) would be, thus, to attempt a cartography of connections that detach themselves from the current geography and merge into an alternative topology of the world in which unexpected dimensions emerge perpendicularly to the spacetime of everyday experience.

The collection of artifacts preserved at the wall of André Breton's cabinet, and similar facts from the cultural history of the avant-garde movements, should be thus interpreted beyond the concept of colonial museum as it marks a longing that transcends the usually admitted understanding of the colonial categorizations. The Modernist esthetic revolution coincides or perhaps brings about the Golden Age of anthropology and ethnology. Consequently, Malinowski, Eliade, and Warburg can be read in the context of the Modernist aspiration of transcending not only one's own local and cultural positioning, but also the finitude of a civilization.

The trans-cultural and trans-civilizational potential of Modernism lies at the roots of our present globalized condition; on the other hand, internal contradictions of Modernism mark the limitations of our present consciousness. This is the reason why it is important to reinterpret Modernism from a planetary perspective. The Modernist literature enters the global ways of circulation and becomes the object of de-localized readings. Our aim in this issue is to gather such readings and foster the debate on how to approach Modernism understood not only as a transnational, but also a trans-cultural and a trans-civilizational movement.

The contributions to this issue of “Planeta literatur” should be submitted before the end of February 2014 to Ewa Łukaszyk, ewaluk@al.uw.edu.pl. The editors will be grateful for any previous notifications concerning the subjects or preliminary abstracts of the articles. Articles in English will be accepted for any focus, however any other languages pertinent to the case analyzed in the article are welcome.

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