



CALL FOR PAPERS

Interdisciplinary Conference

« Mauvais genre » : l'énergie noire du système littéraire

'Bad Kind': The Dark Energy of the Literary System

Amiens (France), Logis du Roy, 15-17 mars 2018

Organisation

The [Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur les Contacts Littéraires et Linguistiques](#) (CERCLL, EA 4283), Université de Picardie Jules Verne.

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Bad literature is damned to oblivion. Focused mostly on valuable texts, our academic knowledge of the literary world is restricted to an extremely exclusive selection among its potential objects of research. Invariably, good taste filters literary materials in spite of its proven versatility in the course of history, and in spite of the instability not only of the canon of 'great texts', but also of the institutions in charge of its transmission. Consequently, texts of different sorts are discarded into darkness: failed and amateur works, venal writing, as well as literary forgeries and transgressions such as plagiarism. Bad literature includes most often pulp and popular literature (*paraliterature*) as well. Nevertheless, what if the rejected 'bad taste' was in fact similar to dark energy, which is invisible but probably predominant in the Universe?

The literary space allows a plurality of possibilities of existence, circulation and creation of value which are fundamental to the aims and scope of this conference. In sharp contrast to the well-established monumental landmarks of the High Literature, amorphous masses of neglected, despised or forgotten texts fall into darkness. However, 'good' literature seems to depend on the 'bad kind', at least as the necessary background –a dark, anonymous and heteroclitic one– to exist and be valued. Besides this obvious role in the creation of value, what are the functions of bad literature in the whole economy of the literary system? Concerning our aesthetic criteria, which rely chiefly upon the available literary tradition, to what extent they are not the result of our predecessors' judgements?

Suggested Topics

Bad literature

- 'Bad genres': pornography, pulp, teenager literature, best-sellers, *chick lit*, etc.
- Historical evolution of offenses and literary transgressions: plagiarism, forgeries, ghost-writers, testament betrayals, etc.
- Individual case studies: rejected manuscripts, *auteurs maudits*, epigones, literary folly (*fous littéraires*), failed texts, minor works...

Bad literature uses

- Bad literature uses within the strategies developed in the literary field: polemical, critical, rhetorical, ideological, etc.
- Bad literature uses in literary taste formation and writing learning.
- Bad literature as caution and boundary of literary norms and standards.

Bad literature values

- Historiographical gaps and forgotten territories: discourses/ literatures/ authors/ periods vanished, banned, ignored by literary history.
- (Re)valorisation of bad literature: revision of literary values, (re)discovery and (re)valorisation of 'literary detritus', procedures of recovery in literary historiography.
- Relationships between bad literature, the Canon and the literary institutions.

Abstracts in English or French (up to 500 words) are to be sent to mauvaise.litterature@gmail.com by September 30th 2017.