Call for papers

International Conference

Italian and German Literature compared (1945-1970): Literary Fields, Polysystems, Translations

Istituto Italiano di Studi Germanici, Rome
Humboldt Universität zu Berlin
Università La Sapienza, Rome

Rome, Villa Sciarra-Wurts sul Gianicolo
November 15th-17th, 2012

The interdisciplinary conference aims at investigating the relationship between Italian and German literature between 1945 and 1970 by comparing these two literary systems through the analysis of translations and literary transfer.

International scholars will be drawing upon two theoretical approaches which have never been extensively applied to the comparison between German and Italian literature so far: Pierre Bourdieu's "theory of literary field" and Itamar Even-Zohar's "polysystem theory". Both Even-Zohar and Bourdieu claim that the existence of literature and the progress of literary time cannot be explained only by taking into account literary texts. The investigation of literature should also deal with material conditions (i.e. geopolitics and publishing) and the symbolic structures determining the production and the circulation of literature. Moreover, both Bourdieu and Even-Zohar acknowledge the crucial role played by translated literature in the genesis and transformation of literary systems.

Despite being framed in different historical contexts, Italian and German literature during the years 1945-70 established a remarkable mutual influence. This influence was shaped not only by authors and texts but also by the artistic-cultural and socio-political background, by cultural institutions and by the specific dynamics of the "system" of translated literature. The notion of "German literature" includes, of course, the literary production and systems of all German speaking countries in the given period: FRG, GDR, Austria and Switzerland.

The main purposes of the conference are:

- Investigating the specific features of Italian and German literature as literary fields/polysystems;
- Analyzing the role played by translated literature within the Italian and German literary field/polysystem;

- Examining the mutual influence between Italian and German literary field/polysystem.

The theoretical background will be closely examined and several case-studies will be discussed, among which the influence of Bertolt Brecht as an intellectual model in Italy or the role played by some publishing houses in importing German literature in the 50s.

The conference will include five different sessions: 1) Theoretical approaches (Key-note and discussion); 2) The German literary system 1945-70; 3) The Italian literary system 1945-70; 4) Transfer and interference between both systems 1945-70; 5) Presentation of the first outcomes of the project *German Culture in Italy in the 20th Century* going on at the Istituto Italiano di Studi Germanici and final discussion.

The three-day conference (November 15th-17th, 2012) will be held in Rome at the Istituto Italiano di Studi Germanici. A wide board of international scholars will contribute to the creation of a research-network on German-Italian literary transfer in the 20th century. A publication of the conference proceedings, edited by Irene Fantappiè and Michele Sisto, is foreseen for May 2013.

Papers should be held in German or Italian and should last no more than 20 minutes, leaving time for discussion after each of them. Proposals from doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers are welcome. Travel and accommodation expenses will be covered.

Please send proposals of up to 300 words (in German or Italian) and a short biography to Irene Fantappiè (irene.fantappie@hu-berlin.de) by 9th July 2012. Speakers will be notified by July 31st, 2012.

Conference Board: Fabrizio Cambi (Istituto Italiano di Studi Germanici), Irene Fantappiè (Humboldt Universität zu Berlin), Camilla Miglio (Università La Sapienza), Michele Sisto (Università di Torino).

The conference is sponsored by the Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD) and the Istituto Italiano di Studi Germanici in Rome.