

Literatures in European Languages in a Post-European World

Research Committee Panel at the ICLA congress 2025

Chairs:

Stefan Helgesson, University of Stockholm, stefan.helgesson@english.su.se

Helga Mitterbauer, Université libre de Bruxelles, helga.mitterbauer@ulb.be

Abstract:

Languages are mobile, continents stay where they are. This makes the notion of ‘European’ languages questionable, given the global spread of English, Spanish, French and Portuguese. The former ‘core’ nations have reduced influence. We are living in a post-European world.

From a literary point of view, the situation is complex and exciting. Writing in European languages, especially in the global south, continues to grow. Intra-European dynamics (and crises) have in turn injected new vitality into the literatures of the continent, where publishing and reception infrastructures remain robust and to some extent internationally dominant. Migrant writing, ‘Afropean’ writing, Eastern European literatures, small literatures—all of these are currently multiplying the many facets of European-language literatures.

With this in mind, ICLA’s Committee on the [Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages](#) invites papers that address aspects of this evolving, global literary landscape.

Questions to be discussed include:

- What theoretical models are needed to account for the post-European condition?
- How can we rethink literary history in the light of this development and, conversely, what can history teach us about our present situation?
- What different (and even contradictory) cultural policies are at play in this plural field?
- Can the global and local dimensions be considered together, or are they incommensurable perspectives?
- Has linguistic difference as a literary quality been superseded by the hyper centralism of English and social media, or has it been revived?

Key words:

Literatures in European Languages, Post-European World, Migrant writing, ‘Afropean’ writing, Eastern European literatures, small literatures

Bibliography:

Stefan Helgesson, Mads Rosendahl Thomsen: *Literature and the World*. London, New York: Routledge 2020.

Theo D'haen: *A History of World Literature*. London, New York: Routledge 2024.

Helga Mitterbauer, Carrie Smith-Prei (eds.): *Crossing Central Europe. Continuities and Transformations, 1900 and 2000*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017.

We would be very pleased if you would contribute to this debate with a paper and submit a proposal by 31 January 2025:

<https://icla2025-seoul.kr/en/abstract-submissions/abstract-submissions>