



Pre-workshop Questions

Question 1. What are the chief obstacles blocking migrants' access to cultural production? What is the current status of non-mother tongue writing and of cultural production by second-generation migrants?

Question 2. What resources (educational, legal, etc) are needed to support the range of cultural production by bilinguals and multi-lingual migrants?

Question 3. What are the obstacles currently encountered by researchers and practitioners in seeking EU support for collaborative research in these areas?

Session 1

Dr Sharon Alghasi

Research Profile:

Pre-workshop submission:

To avoid reductionist tendencies has always stood as a major concern within social science and humanities. This concern is quite present when inspecting different fields of inquiries in a historical perspective. My contribution focuses on the field of media and audience studies and reflects on how the phenomenon of migration --and the migrant subject-- have historically been approached and treated within the field. I argue that the historical challenges within the fields of social science and humanity, and attempts to avoid reductionist tendencies are quite traceable within the field of audience-migrant.

Migration, in addition to stand as a major challenge to audience studies, also activates the historical challenges within the field. In fact migration as a socio-cultural phenomenon gives the historical challenges and dilemmas in the field a new dimension. Summarising the challenges within the field, as well as the new dimension caused by migration, I claim that the social theory of Bourdieu may be a fruitful approach to employ within the field of audience studies and indeed should be taken more seriously. The claim here is that there is a field of relations in Bourdieu's understanding of the term which migrants in Norway, not least Iranians, find themselves within. They enter this field when they enter Norway. This field is governed by a logic again, in Bourdieu's understanding of the term constructed around the dichotomy of us and them. This logic is historically and processually produced and reproduced. With their own forms of habitus and capitals, Iranians enter the field and their cultural productions, constructions, positionings, actions, and choices (their media consumption and reception among others) should be perceived as constructions, positionings, actions, and choices within this field of relations. In this sense, speaking of media studies or audience studies is indeed a question with significant sociological importance.

Dr Gavin Titley

Research Profile:

Dr Gavan Titley is Lecturer in Media Studies in the School of English, Media and Theatre Studies in the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, and formerly the Subject Leader for Media Studies. Previous to NUIM he taught in the University of Helsinki. His research interests currently centre on the political, cultural and mediated dimensions of multicultural crisis and attendant projects of 'integration' in Europe. With Alana Lentin (Sociology, University of Sussex) he is currently completing a monograph for Zed Books entitled *The Crises of Multiculture*, and they have also co-edited a special edition of *The European Journal of Cultural Studies* on the same topic. This broader analysis of political and discursive transition stems from an earlier collaboration examining the development of post-multiculturalist ideas in *The Politics of Diversity in Europe* (Lentin & Titley ed. 2008). Gavan has also recently completed a two-year research project on media and migration in Ireland, funded by the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland, and published as *Broadcasting in the New Ireland: Mapping and Envisioning Cultural Diversity* (Titley, Kerr & O'Riain 2010).

Pre-workshop submission:

Q1. Processes of cultural production cannot be (entirely) abstracted from political contexts. In contemporary Europe, to a variety of extents and intensities, the 'migrant' is a focus of legitimated aversion, recuperative nationalist exclusion, cultural risk, and manifold modes of moral and cultural governance. The migrant in question, of course, is the revived proxy of discontent elucidated by Etienne Balibar in *Race, Nation, Class* as a category that includes *not all* foreigners and *not only* foreigners' (1991: 221). What are the consequences of this climate for not just access to, but also freedom in cultural production? Certain areas of established migrant media production, for example - 'migrant media' and 'ethnic minority media' - have been subject to implicit and explicit pressures to promote the right messages, and the correct discourse. Do these dynamics have equivalents in other fields of cultural production, or does the immediacy and public-ness of media production attract particular anxieties?

Q2. This may depend not only on the mode of cultural production but also the intended audience. It also raises the question of how to develop systems of support that reach minoritized actors while not structuring their work in limiting and commodified ways (world/migrant cinema, inter-cultural relevance, etc).

Q3. The main obstacle in my experience is the preference in EU research on migration for quantitative, large-scale projects examining either downstream socio-economic costs associated with migration and future demographic change, or with specifying and measuring dimensions of migrant integration.

Dr Jennifer Burns

Research profile:

Jennifer Burns is an Associate Professor in the Department of Italian at the University of Warwick. Having published in 2001 a monograph on notions of political commitment in contemporary Italian narrative, she developed from this an extended programme of research into the literary works of immigrant writers appearing in Italy since 1990. She has published a number of articles and essays on ethical, thematic, and stylistic issues in this emerging area of Italian literature. Recent work focuses particularly on questions of language choice and language use by migrant writers, investigating the political, literary, and affective implications of the choice to write in Italian, and how. A further and related area of current inquiry is engagements with physical space in texts by migrant writers, investigating the complex impact of everyday experience on the construction of individual subjecthood as figured in these texts. She is currently completing a monograph in this broad area, entitled *Migrant Imaginaries: Figures and Themes in Italian Immigration Literature*, as well as continuing to work collaboratively with Loredana Polezzi on wider projects in the area of migration culture in the somewhat particular 'Italian case'.

Pre-workshop submission:

Q1. In Italy, narratives of migration to and through Italy written in Italian by non-native speakers of the language constitute a relatively recent area of activity within the panorama of Italian cultural production (1990 onwards). Early texts were mostly marked by the presence of two authors or collaborators - one 'native' Italian and one not - and this speaks of an implicit necessity for the 'outside' Italian-speaking voice to be somehow mediated or hosted by an 'insider'. Though the majority of 'migrant writers' (terminology is contested and will doubtless be discussed at the seminar) in Italian from around 1995 onwards publish as single authors, the dependency on mediation of some sort persists, albeit in less overtly instrumental ways. Publishers of migrant writers tend, for instance, to be specialists in the area and often to be small (with the result that print-runs are short and distribution limited); broader cultural associations with interests in intercultural activity hold festivals and events, and organize prizes and publications, which afford but also delimit an area in which migrant writers might operate; academics in the field can establish a position whereby they grant access to the publishing industry and to critical reception, thereby forming the 'canon' of 'Italian migration literature'. Such mediation is clearly of significant value to writers and readers, and to the wider, intercultural profile of contemporary cultural production in Italy, but it comes with the risk (or might it be a benefit?) of rendering non-mother tongue writing in Italian permanently an 'alternative' mode or area of literary activity in Italian. Exceptions naturally exist: there are 'migrant' writers who have published with major publishers, achieved 'bestseller' status in terms of sales, and won prestigious, mainstream literary prizes. The prospect of, for example, the major quality publisher in Italy - Einaudi - systematically publishing non-mother tongue writers, or indeed dedicating a series to these writers, remains, however, remote. Language itself is rarely an obstacle to access to cultural production, from the writer's point of view. Most migrant writers in Italian write in a prose not visibly or audibly disrupted by another language, and where it is (particularly in the case of writers identified as 'second generation'), this can generally be identified as a textual and cultural strategy. From the perspective of reception and readership, language might well be identified as an obstacle, in the sense that there is evidence that non-mother tongue writing in Italian estranges mother tongue readers of Italian. Texts by a range of foreign writers translated into Italian sell well in Italy, and tend to have a presence in real and virtual bookshops equal to, if not more prominent than, those by native Italian writers. Texts written in Italian by non-mother tongue writers from those same areas and ethnicities simply do not, however, have the same sort of presence and cultural cachet.

Dr Borbála Faragó

Research Profile:

Borbála Faragó was an IRCHSS Post-Doctoral Fellow 2007-9 and a research assistant in the Irish Virtual Research Library and Archive (IVRLA) Project in University College Dublin until the end of 2009. At present she is working on a research project "Us and Them: Discourses on Foreignness by Irish and Galician Women Writers (1980-2005)" funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science. She is the author of a number of articles on contemporary Irish poetry and is in the process of preparing a monograph on the work of Medbh McGuckian for Bucknell University Press. A collection of essays, co-edited with Moynagh Sullivan, entitled *Facing the Other: Interdisciplinary Studies on Race, Gender and Social Justice in Ireland*, was published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing in 2008. Together with Eva Bourke she has also edited an anthology of Irish immigrant poetry entitled *Landing Places: Immigrant Poets in Ireland* published in 2010 by Dedalus Press.

Pre-Workshop Submission:

The main obstacle to migrants' access to cultural production in their own right resides in what might be termed "the trajectory of homogenisation" that takes place in most European countries. To a great extent a migrant's main identifier continues to find expression in terms of nationality: most migrants wear labels of dual nationality: the Nobel-prize winning Herta Müller is described for example as Romanian-born German, Kata Tisza is Transylvanian-Hungarian, Hugo Hamilton German-Irish. Confined in such descriptors these writers' migrant identity is in danger of becom-

ing eclipsed by the dialectic of nationality. Further complications arise when, as in the case of Müller or Tisza, the migrant writer is a member of an ethnic minority “returning” to the “home-land”, although the experience of mobility for these people might be very similar to those from a different ethnic background.

It seems to me there are three factors of great significance which exert influence on a migrant’s access to cultural production: language, ethnicity and visibility. The most important of these is probably language. Smaller European countries with languages of lesser international dissemination will probably absorb an immigrant’s cultural production more readily within the dominant national narrative. In contrast, Anglophone, German, French or Spanish-speaking countries inherently offer a wider scope of accessibility, possibly less restricted by national context, for their migrant artists. A migrant, whose ethnicity is similar to the host country but differing in his/her nationality, may find cultural production linguistically easier but may experience more difficulty in terms of expressing a distinct migrant identity. Migrants who are visibly different from the dominant population of the host culture on the other hand face categorisation as “different” and often remain pigeonholed by their nationality of origin.

In terms of resources and policy, a greater focus on encouraging a kind of “third space” for migrants, distinct from national dialectics, might be beneficial. A European fund for the exploration of migrant identities which surpasses the idioms of “home” and “host” could encourage migrants’ cultural representation in a wider European context.

Session 2

Professor Mary Gallagher

Research Profile:

Mary Gallagher is Associate Professor of French and Francophone Studies at University College Dublin. She has published widely on the Creole background of the French poet, Saint-John Perse and on time, space and displacement in contemporary Caribbean writing in French. Her latest published or forthcoming work includes an edited collection of essays entitled *World Writing: Poetics, Ethics, Globalization* (Toronto University Press), and a co-edited special issue of the journal *Modern & Contemporary France* on 'Empire and Culture Now: Francophone Approaches to Globalization', and a co-edited volume entitled *La Migration à l'oeuvre: repérages esthétiques, éthiques et politiques on contemporary migrant writing*. She teaches courses on Migrant Writing in French at UCD and will be delivering a keynote lecture on this question to the IFK conference in Vienna in October 2010 on 'Certainty Undermined – Life-Worlds and Knowledge in Transition'. She is currently completing a book on the late nineteenth-century Anglo-Irish-Greek migrant writer, Lafcadio Hearn.

Pre-workshop submission:

Q3. One of the thoughts prompted by this question relates to the importance of registering the views and reflections on their needs and situations as expressed by migrant writers and artists in other culturally or migratorially more 'mature' or at least more documented contexts. I am thinking of the reflections of Haitian writers who have established a dispersed migrant community of sorts in Francophone Canada; or of North African or North American or Eastern European writers who have migrated linguistically, culturally, and geographically to work in France. Many if not most of these writers have written compulsively about the 'language question': about writing in an 'adopted' language, about the tensions of their uneasy bilingualism or diglossia. How they represent their situation, its riches and its impoverishment, its losses and its gains, its motility and its marginality, cannot but be instructive for any attempt to imagine the needs or the rigours, the potential or the pain of migrant artists in Ireland. The questions of displacement, of community, of connection, of canonicity, of identity and identification, have all been parsed in the literature of migrancy in French. Edward Said's *Out of place* has also focussed on the question.

My perspective on this question is also shaped not just by my teaching in a university context that is increasingly promoting a monoglot globish-speaking culture, but also by work that I am contributing to a publication project on *Multilingual Europe: Multilingual Europe and Multicultural Europeans: Concepts and Consequences* (Eds. László Marác and Mireille Rosello. *European Studies: An Interdisciplinary Series in European Culture, History and Politics*). It might be helpful to paste in here the abstract of this project, which in many ways mirrors the concerns of our workshop.

This collection of essays addresses one of the issues that affect most of the political and cultural aspects of contemporary Europe: how does a plurilinguist and pluricultural political entity practice and theorize multilingualism? What different types of multilingualism are defined, encouraged or discouraged at the level of official policies, but also at the level of communities (speakers of the hegemonic language as well as minority language speakers, long term migrants and their children, travellers etc.) or individual practices and representations (in film, art, literature and popular culture)?

Professor Loredana Polezzi**Research Profile:**

Loredana Polezzi's research interests are in translation studies, comparative literature, and the history of travel writing. With Jennifer Burns, she organized a series of workshops on 'Mobility and Identity Formation: An Interdisciplinary Approach to the "Italian Case"', sponsored by the Arts and Humanities Research Council under its Diasporas, Migration and Identities programme (2006-07). Her publications include *Translating Travel* (2001) and, as co-editor, *Borderlines: Migrations, Borders and Crossings* (2003; with Jennifer Burns) and *In Corpore: Bodies in Post-Unification Italy* (2007; with Charlotte Ross). She edited a special issue of the journal *The Translator* devoted to 'Translation, Travel, Migration' (Autumn 2006) and contributed an entry on 'Mobility' to the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (2nd edn, revised and extended; London: Routledge, 2008). She is currently completing a study of late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century Italian travellers to Africa and the images of the continent they disseminated, and is also working on polylingualism and self-translation in the contemporary Italian context.

Pre-workshop submission:

Migrant cultures are dialogic in nature: if 'migrant culture' means anything this is the attempt to connect and re-create locations, timelines, practices – starting with the adoption of language strategies which are often polylingual and polyphonic.

This is one of the reasons why rigid labels do not work. The slipperiness of conceptual frameworks is a fact we have to work with – but strong awareness of this slipperiness is needed, beginning with definitions of 'migrant', 'migrant culture', 'migrant writing'. These formulas are both opaque and over-determined. And they are usually imposed by national authorities, the cultural industry, academia.

The dialogism of migrant culture is also a reason for looking at production and reception as joined-up processes, creating a map (conceptual and procedural) in which agency is shared at both ends of the process. Migrants produce *and* consume culture, in spite of attempts to channel voices through pre-constituted routes acting as instruments of containment ('migrant literature' seen in opposition to 'national literatures'; 'exotic products' offered to 'home audiences' envisaged as linguistically and culturally homogeneous).

Self-translation is a pervasive practice in migration phenomena. Within it, cultural translation emerges as a set of practices in which translation in its narrower linguistic sense plays a crucial part, stressing the role of language difference in encounters between cultures, while also denouncing the fallacy implicit in any vision of individual cultures as self-contained, monolingual and coherent systems.

Once we "bear things across", they rarely stay the same. Change occurs in translation. And it does not actually stop once the translation act has taken place: a good translation continues to live-on, becomes productive, gets appropriated and, thanks to that appropriation, 'bounces off' in all sorts of directions.

Because of this capacity for change, acts of self-translation can result in cultural products with unsettling qualities: they address and interrogate multiple audiences, and they can upset the assumed monolingualism/monoculturalism of the reader/spectator. Self-translation does not only testify to change in the 'migrant', it also makes any fiction of homogeneity visible, denounces it as a lie.

Cultural products marked by mobility and self-translation require a re-thinking of cultural maps based on national traditions. They also invite us to look at multiple modes of mobility, including peripheral and ex-centric cases which do not fit the dominant post-colonial/neo-capitalist models – the ones based on strong centre-periphery hierarchies, or on the binary opposition of local versus (ex-)colonial language. Italy is a case in point. Ireland is another.

The gap between dominant frameworks (still formulated in terms of national audiences, monolingualism, cultural homogeneity) and the polyphonic forms of migrant cultural production can constitute a barrier when accessing production/distribution mechanisms. Or it can become an am-

biguous opportunity for visibility through ghettoization. Acknowledging the widespread nature of self-translation phenomena can contribute to dismantle these mechanisms and the expectations on which they are based.

We also need to ask ourselves whether the continuing dominance of established models (of culture, cultural industries, distribution channels, reception mechanisms) is an obstacle in devising research projects and conceptual frameworks which go beyond national paradigms and 'national interests'.

Dr Alan Grossman

Research Profile:

Pre-workshop submission:

Session 3

Dr Ann-Sofie Persson

Research Profile:

Ann-Sofie Persson holds a Maîtrise in Comparative Literature from the University of Paris III and a Ph.D. in French from the Ohio State University, USA. Her dissertation, *Tracer l'enfance. Poétiques autobiographiques chez Maria Wine, Patrick Chamoiseau et Nathalie Sarraute* (2001), investigates the literary techniques used in autobiographical childhood narratives. Her research interests are autobiographical writings, French and Francophone/migrant 20th and 21st century literatures and gender studies. She has published on Simone de Beauvoir, Marie Cardinal, Maryse Condé and Nina Bouraoui, and is currently working on epistolary practices of migration in the correspondence between Leïla Sebbar and Nancy Huston. Since 2001, she teaches French, Comparative Literature and Gender Studies at Linköping University, Sweden. Several of her courses focus on autobiography, both in Swedish and French, including migrant authors such as Theodor Kallifatides and Mustafa Can in the Swedish context, and J-M.G. Le Clézio, Nina Bouraoui and Leïla Sebbar in the French.

Pre-workshop submission:

Migrant literatures in Sweden and in France: Sweden and France show a significant production of autobiographical writings by both first and second generation migrants. Given the different historical backgrounds, the status of cultural production by migrants naturally varies. Sweden neither carries the same colonial past as France nor functions as the metropolis France appears to be for her former colonies, attracting many migrants because of the shared history and, in many cases, language and culture. This influences the conditions of production of literary texts and the shape they take, as well as the way these texts are received and perceived by the audience.

However, the sense of living between cultures is shared by migrants from both countries. It is striking how Mustafa Can, who came to Sweden from Turkey with his family as a child, struggles with the same sense of loss of the parents' culture and language as Nina Bouraoui, French-Algerian writer who grew up in Algeria without learning the Arabic language properly (according to her own narrative).

The attention given to these writers, and perhaps especially to their autobiographical texts, by readers, media, teachers and researchers, is often quite impressive. Many are celebrated as precious witnesses of the phenomenon of migration. However, the way these narratives are treated shows an important problem. Are we interested in these autobiographical narratives only because of the writers' background as migrants and do we expect their narratives to charm us, take us to exotic places, explain surprising cultural patterns and complex identity issues? What if they do not? Will we grow disinterested? Will research focus on content, neglecting the literary craft and thus taking away an important dimension of this artistic expression? Is the label migrant literature a mark of distinction or a way to keep these works and writers out of the literary canon?

Dr Rossitza Guentcheva

Research Profile:

Rossitza Guentcheva is Assistant Professor at the Department of Anthropology of the New Bulgarian University in Sofia. She has a PhD in Historical Studies from the University of Cambridge (2001), an MA from the Central European University in Budapest and an MA from the University of Sofia. Rossitza Guentcheva was a fellow of the Wissenschaftskolleg zu Berlin in 2003-4, where she was a member of the Cultural Mobility Group, and a fellow of the Centre for Advanced Studies in Sofia in 2005-6, where she worked in the framework of the "Roles, Identities and Hybrids" Project. Rossitza Guentcheva's interests are in the field of migration and mobility, and social and cultural history of communism. She has researched mobility, travel and controls on movement in

pre-1989 Bulgaria, as well as post-1989 migration to and from Bulgaria. She is currently editing a collection of essays on Contemporary Bulgarian Migrations (*Kritika i Humanizum*: Sofia, forthcoming 2010).

Pre-workshop submission:

In my opinion the main obstacles blocking migrants' access to cultural production are institutional, and are rooted in migrants' often different visions of designing, financing and performing various cultural activities in comparison with the traditions of the host country. In a society, where cultural production, for example, is embedded within a framework of non-governmental institutions, or is made dependent on funds in a project-oriented environment, access to cultural production by migrants who do not master the languages of NGOs or project cycle management might become particularly difficult. This situation may compel migrants to resort to informal channels of cultural production, which in certain contexts might lead to inability to partake in formal cultural activities in the host country. This may bring migrants' isolation and encapsulation from other wide-spread forms of cultural production in the receiving society and failure to further share and disseminate their own cultural products among either non-migrants or migrants from different origin.

At the same time, my opinion is that the resources needed to assist migrant cultural production and the policies devised in this respect should at best be developed on a local level, and tuned to a particular urban context. National, let alone supra-national, support mechanisms might overlook internal divisions and conflicts within the migrant community whose cultural production should be fostered. There is a need of better sensitivity to and research in inter-group dynamics and rivalries among the migrants themselves, which are best captured and understood on a local level. While there might be beyond dispute that the extension of public resources for community cultural initiatives would be beneficial, one need to remember that even the lack of formal organization for cultural activity can be an asset, or that migrants function in multilingual contexts in their everyday life and not only when they write or perform their cultural products. Local policies would be instrumental in shaping measures that will promote cultural exchanges not only of migrants with non-migrants, but also among different migrant communities and groups within them.

Dr Aine O'Brien

Research Profile:

Pre-workshop submission: