

INVITATION

Invitation to submit contributions to the first annual *February Lectures* conference, held in February 2018 at UNISA, and to a March 2019 special issue of *Journal of Literary Studies*, on:

Repositioning Koos Prinsloo: South African queer, engaged literature(s) in/and the World Republic of Letters

In her book, *The World Republic of Letters* (2004), Pascale Casanova details the exigencies experienced by authors working from the global periphery. These constraints include, but are not limited to, the forces associated with market conditions, translation methodologies, political pressures and the globalisation of English. Casanova proposes that the literary universe, although not entirely free from the limitations imposed by nation-states, has its own republics, capitals and provinces – in other words, its own central and peripheral spaces defined primarily by the literary capital and literary value of a language. This literary capital can also ‘increase’ through what she terms the “consecration” or “litterisation” (2004, 126) of literatures – which takes place mainly when translation processes aid the visibility or “genuine literary internationalism” (2004, 172) of smaller languages (such as, for example, Afrikaans). The opposite implies that literature(s) that are not translated remain relatively obscure.

The fiction of Koos Prinsloo (1957-1994) is a good example of how such literary capital works, since despite a renewed interest in his writing, which has led to the publication of Gerrit Olivier’s *Aantekeninge by Koos Prinsloo* (2008), as well as a 2008 omnibus re-issue of *Jonkmanskas* (1982), *Die Hemel Help Ons* (1987), *Slagplaas* (1992) and *Weifeling* (1993), scholarship on his work remains confined to the relatively insular field of Afrikaans Literary Studies. This stands in stark contrast to recent remarks by Leon de Kock, in which he hails Prinsloo as “the inaugurator of postmodern fiction *in any language* in South Africa” (Jackson & De Kock 2015, our emphasis). Prinsloo’s fiction is firmly situated in the patriarchal and segregationist (body-)political actualities of 1980s South Africa and, as such, can be repositioned as a form of *littérature engage* – following Sartre that artists have a social responsibility to engage politically through their craft. This, in addition to translating his work into English and Dutch, might offer ways of increasing his standing in the world republic of letters, leading to new audiences, re-introductions, and re-imaginings.

To address how such a repositioning might be attempted, the *February Lectures* conference conveners invite both academic and non-scholarly contributions on the following **strands** – each riffing on the varied meaning(s) of ‘repositioning’:

- **Re-imagining:** New articles on repositioning Prinsloo
- **Reassessment** of critical work (seminal articles and monographs) on Prinsloo
- **Remembering/’Musings’** section: More personal, non-academic contributions
- **Reinterpretation:** New translations/adaptations of Prinsloo’s fiction

INVITATION

In addition, submissions are welcomed that situate Prinsloo's work within the following **frameworks**:

- (Queer) translation praxis
- Postmodern ethics – form, esthetic(s), violence, (literary) betrayal
- Gay lives/queer living in 1980s South Africa
- Afrikaans as peripheral world language
- Translation(s) that opens up new cultural interpretations and new readerships
- Mapping/repositioning South African queer, engaged fiction

February has been designated LGBT History Month, and the *February Lectures* conference series was initiated to encourage academic engagement with both queer theory and the South African LGBTQI* *lived* experience. As such, we are especially interested in creating a space for discussion on new queer writing in South Africa. Questions to be considered: *How are new queer fictions incorporated into the world republic of letters? Is there a distinguishable trajectory of South African queer, engaged literatures that can be mapped? What has been accomplished since Prinsloo's time, and what remains to be done?*

For any further enquiries, please contact *JLS* special issue guest editors Chantelle Gray van Heerden (Institute for Gender Studies, Unisa) at evheercg@unisa.ac.za, and Wemar Strydom (Department of Afrikaans and Theory of Literature, Unisa) at strydwj@unisa.ac.za.

a) Paper/presentation/panel abstract for a 2-day conference, scheduled for February 2018

The special edition will be preceded by a conference on both Koos Prinsloo and queer, engaged literature(s) in South Africa, to be held at UNISA in February 2018. All interested in participating should send an abstract of 250 words to evheercg@unisa.ac.za and strydwj@unisa.ac.za by 15 December 2017. *While we encourage authors to join the conference before submitting articles, this is not a prerequisite for being considered for the special issue.*

b) Submission procedure for March 2019 *JLS* special issue

Authors are invited to submit full articles for *JLS* special edition consideration between 01 November 2017 and 01 April 2018. Articles of an academic nature should be between 5,000 and 8,000 words; non-academic contributions between 1,000 and 2,000 words. Articles should be formatted according to the *JLS* style guide, available here: <http://authorservices.taylorandfrancis.com/formatting-and-templates/>. Articles are to be submitted directly to the *JLS* site, with registration details available at the following link: <http://tandf.msgfocus.com/k/Tandf/insights>. (Remember to choose the 'special issue' option when submitting.)

Texts Referenced

CASANOVA, P. 2004. *The World Republic of Letters*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

JACKSON, J-M & DE KOCK, L. 2015. *Is Afrikaans Literature a World Literature? New Notes on an Old Field*. Accessed: <http://www.litnet.co.za/is-afrikaans-literature-a-world-literature-new-notes-on-an-old-field/>