

## **Location and Dislocation of Myth in the Colonial and Postcolonial Anglophone World**

The research group on Modes of Representation in English studies, CEMRA EA 3016, from University Stendhal-Grenoble 3 is pleased to announce the organisation of an international conference on “Location and dislocation of myth in the colonial and postcolonial Anglophone world” to be held at University Stendhal on April 10 and 11, 2014.

Drawing on the tension between the universality of myth and its cultural and territorial location, this conference proposes to examine the role played by antagonism, protest, insurrection, rebellion, conflict and war in the history of the English-speaking countries that have gone through both colonial and postcolonial experiences leading to forced migration, diaspora, displacement and exile. Be they the imperial, metropolitan centre or the resisting, local margin, territories are represented in tight connection with their supposed archaic origins. They have also often been defined by battles that were either lost or won by conquerors and gave rise to myths that aimed at strengthening identity and giving a purpose to an entire nation, even in the critical context of globalization. Alongside Mircea Eliades’ and Northrop Frye’s work, myths can be understood as narratives that best reflect the human endeavour to place oneself in the world and explain one’s nature and destiny in a bigger universe. Myth also creates and names territories, aiming to cement a community, a nation, and to hold the colony or country together.

Territories come in different forms and sizes, ranging from the distant and geographically isolated island to the apparently boundless territories of Canada, India or Australia. Focusing on the dynamics of mythic territories, through the examples of specific types of space (the island, the frontier territory, the metropolis), the conference will also survey the centrifugal and centripetal movements induced by the myths of inclusion or exclusion. Not only do national myths define territories, but they shape them into imaginary spaces and discourses involving resistance against the conquerors who wished to mould the colony into a mere replica of the homeland, thereby stripping its culture of its unique nature and language. As a result, social, ideological, political, philosophical and artistic conflicts have originated from the clash between those who are included in the national myth and those who are excluded from it. The crucial concept of the border that exists only to separate and therefore define territory can be the material representation of the mental divide that brings entire communities into conflict and ultimately to war.

We will welcome papers dealing with the historical, political and ideological uses of myth in specific territories (such as the 1857 Rebellion in India, the Morant Bay Rebellion in Jamaica, or Bloody Sunday in Ireland), or about the ability of myth to recreate and rewrite history in grand narratives. The issue of myth and territory is of course relevant in the field of literature, raising questions about the nationness (Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*) of a text, its contribution to a cultural and mythic framework, or its power to reshape territorial representations. Papers dealing with all visual arts, including cinema and television, are also welcome, in so far as they address the modes of illustration of territories and myths and the impact of artistic representations of national myth on the general public. The angles suggested here are, of course, non-exhaustive. Hopefully, as a result of this conference, we will see more clearly into the liminal moments that have given shape to a nation or changed it altogether.

Submissions for papers including an abstract (300 to 500 words) and a short bio-bibliographical note should be sent by the end of May 2013 to the organisers Elodie Raimbault ([elodie.raimbault@u-grenoble3.fr](mailto:elodie.raimbault@u-grenoble3.fr)) and André Dodeman ([andre.dodeman@u-grenoble3.fr](mailto:andre.dodeman@u-grenoble3.fr)).

Acceptance of proposals will be notified by September 2013.

All papers must be delivered in English and a selection of the proceedings will be the object of an international publication.

Registration fees: 45 euros