

Call for papers
Speaking and Writing about Colours

28-29 Nov-2019, Milan, Italy

Department of Linguistic Sciences and Foreign
Literatures, Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, Milan,
Italy

This conference addresses the representation of the phenomenon of colour in linguistics, literature, philosophy, and arts.

Keynote Speakers:

Prof. Dr. Maria Grossmann, Glottologia e linguistica, Università degli Studi dell'Aquila

Prof. Paolo D'Achille, Linguistica italiana, Università degli Studi Roma Tre

Prof. Christine Mohr, Laboratoire d'étude des processus de régulation cognitive et affective, Université de Lausanne

Dr. Élodie Ripoll, Romanische Literaturen, Universität Stuttgart

The conference languages are English, Italian, French, and Russian (the latter three require an abstract in English). Speakers should be prepared for a 20-minute presentation followed by questions.

“Colour is a power which directly influences the soul”
— Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*

The most exquisite paradox of colour is that it comprises the possibilities of the logical (conceptual) and eidetic (sensorial-figurative) ways of world cognition. For philological studies, this peculiarity of colour is fundamental; once the colour is lexically expressed in a literary text, it transforms non-verbal (eidetic) experience into verbal (logical) coding. At the same time, “colour, in a western technical sense, is not a universal concept and in many languages there is no unitary terminological equivalent” (Conklin 1955).

The referents of colour terms fall into a number of broad general categories of both environmental and cultural importance. A word can either “remember” or “forget”, even “reconstruct” some notions relevant to a speaker’s cultural tradition. Colour can be expressed in a language either explicitly (i.e., by naming directly the colour itself or describing it through another colour) or implicitly (i.e., via naming an object that has a characteristic typical colour assigned by a cultural tradition); this method inspires appearing of associative and connotative semes (Uporova 1995). Colour metaphors are pervasive across languages, very often related with the conveyance of emotional content, yet also very variable in their content association.

When analyzing colour in literature, it is crucial to consider the entire artistic specificity of the text where colour merely makes a part. In this case the study of colour involves an analysis of colour-related poetic figures, the arrangement of colour nuances in the text, and their correlation not only with the strophic and rhythmic organization of the text, but also with other artistic categories, such as space and time. All this allows seeing “how colour resists language and also how it ceaselessly requires and solicits language” (Harrow 2017).

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Papers are welcome on the topics listed below:

1. Semantics & Semiotics
2. Literature
3. Translation Studies
4. Media Studies
5. Arts & Culture

Please send an abstract of no more than 300 words as email attachment in .doc format to colour.unicatt2019@gmail.com by June 15, 2019. Proposals should contain paper title, full name(s), institutional affiliation, and contact details. Notification of abstract acceptance or rejection can be expected by July 1, 2019.

Organizing Committee:

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