
Americanism and americanization

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ICLA CONFERENCE

The city of Rio de Janeiro (and the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro) is the official site for the XVIIIth ICLA (International Comparative Literature Association) Congress, to be held July 29–August 5, 2007. Please follow the link for more info: <http://icla.byu.edu/www/congress/index.html>

WRITING AMERICAN IN LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH: SPECIAL ISSUE OF CAS

What is the language of American literature? A special issue of *Comparative American Studies* coming out this September (2006) probes this matter and demonstrates, in a number of brilliantly argued essays, that it need not at all be English. Guest-edited by Gönül Pultar, and with an introduction by Werner Sollors, the issue features essays by Michael Boyden and Helder de Schutter, Wolfgang Hochbruck, Holly Martin, Orm Øverland, Peggy Pacini, and poems in Turkish with English translations by NYC-based Turkish-American poet Mustafa Ziyalan, introduced by Murat Nemet-Nejat. While writings in languages other than English have generally been—and continue to be—ignored or neglected in US literary historiography, recent developments in postcolonial theory and the ‘cultural turn’ in literary studies require a fresh look at those few texts that have been acknowledged. The essays of the special issue not only offer interesting new interpretations of such and other texts but also problematize the complex dynamics at work behind writing in non-mainstream tongues, resulting in an insightful, memorable issue.

AMERICANISM AND AMERICANIZATION

Mel van Elteren, *Americanism and Americanization: A Critical History of Domestic and Global Influence* (Jefferson, NC, and London: McFarland, 2006) ISBN 0-7864-2785-X

Informed by a history of relevant developments on both sides of the Atlantic since the early nineteenth century, this volume presents an in-depth critical analysis of the Americanization process. Beginning with a survey of early European preoccupations with things American, the book goes on to discuss European concerns regarding American influence after World War II until the present. The work then looks at Americanism and its influence within the United States itself, especially regarding developments during the New Deal and beyond. This culminates in an analysis of the conservative Americanism that emerged in the 1980s, and today’s new nativism and exclusionism in the U.S. The primary goal of the analysis is the construction of an interpretive framework, allowing for a more balanced approach to the study of Americanism abroad.

Written from a critical, social-emancipatory perspective, the author’s approach blends economic, military, social, political, cultural and psychological dimensions as well as an examination of the ways in which these areas interact. Finally, Americanism is examined as part of a US-style corporate globalization at the turn of the twenty-first century.