



# CHIASMI

## Perspectives on Italian Difference Italian Differences in Perspective Expressions and Repressions of Hybridity and Otherness Harvard-Brown Graduate Student Conference in Italian Studies

*Not an Arab people, not a Balkan people, not an ancient people  
but a living nation, a European nation:  
and what are you?*

Pier Paolo Pasolini, *To My Nation* from *The Religion of My Time*

*Difference is resistance,*  
Toni Negri

We invite proposals for contributions to the 2018 edition of **CHIASMI**  
**Perspectives on Italian Difference -**  
**Italian Differences in Perspective**  
to be held at Brown University  
on the 6th and 7th of April 2018.

De-centered, de-territorialized, fragmented, divided. From its very origins, Italy has found itself confronted with multiple fault lines inscribed in its historical and cultural identities. In the pamphlet-manifesto *The Italian Difference* (2005) Toni Negri draws attention to the importance of those philosophies of difference that, in his rereading of 20th century Italian philosophy, offer a critical approach capable of challenging the anaesthetization of contradiction in which postmodern thought seems to have precipitated. Moving from criticism surrounding the terms *different/hybrid*, this edition of Chiasmi proposes to probe the validity of such reasoning, exploring the modalities in which Italian culture has built, or has failed to build, a representation of these differences and, in parallel, their incessant hybridization.

From the re-emergence of citationist practices as a defining element of postmodern literature to the willful ambiguity of auto-fiction, from the polyphonies of migrant writing to the new intermedial contamination of the digital humanities, that which Bruno Latour has effectively defined as a “proliferation of hybrids” results in a constant practice of redefinition of identities and borders of literary discourse. The incidence of such dynamics of contamination suggests a critical reconsideration of some of the fundamental structures of literature – oppositions like those between fiction and nonfiction, prose and poetry, written culture and visual culture, high culture and counterculture, tradition and innovation. Difference and hybridity may thus represent interpretive categories to re-read the complex evolution of Italy’s difference(s).



The themes and methodological perspectives in which it would be possible to articulate proposals can include (but are certainly not limited to):

1. **Cultural differences, cultures of difference**
  - Writings and visions of migrant subjectivity
  - Experiences, narratives, memories of Italian (post)colonialism
  - A culture of *dispatrio*: policentrism, particularism and fractures of the Italian identity
  - Borders, margins, liminality: spaces of difference, spaces of Hybridity
2. **Gender: diffractions and deconstructions**
  - Construction, deconstruction and representation of gender difference
  - Feminisms, proto-feminisms and gendered writing in the history of Italian culture
  - Beyond the binary: sexual differences and queer representations
  - Matrilineality and critique of patriarchy in Italian literature
3. **The suffering of the other: marginality, deviance, repression**
  - Discipline and punish: ideologies of the repression of difference
  - Towards a history of madness in Italian literature
  - 1938-2018: critique and representations of Italian racism eighty years from the Racial Laws
  - *Libertini, inetti, scapigliati, corsari*: the misfits in the Italian intellectual tradition
4. **"Proliferations of hybrids": figures, structures, genealogies**
  - Hybridity of forms: contaminations of genres, codes, structures
  - Contemporary and traditional plurilingualism
  - Translation, transmediality and transculturation
  - The *pastiche*: evolution and archeology of a genre
  - The human animal: anthropomorphic representations

Presentations are not to exceed 20 minutes and may be given in either Italian or English. Please send abstracts of 300 words and a brief bio to [chiasmi@brown.edu](mailto:chiasmi@brown.edu) by 15 January 2018. The title of the paper, presenter's name, affiliation, and email address should appear on a cover sheet, as well as any requests for technical equipment.

#### The organizing committee of Chiasmi 2018

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