Call for Papers

According to the *Collins English Dictionary*, *licence*, or (US) *license*, can be defined on the one hand as “official permission to do something” and “formal permission,” and on the other hand as “liberty of action or thought,” “excessive freedom” and “licentiousness.” *Licence* can, therefore, both *restrict* and *liberate*. These two contrasting definitions frame many debates and dialogues in literature, culture studies, and linguistics.

The individuals or groups who wish to set rules and establish an environment in which permission is required—whether at local, national, regional or global levels—often collide with those who wish to break free of rules and regulations, who believe that liberty and freedom of action and thought are their rights. However, freedom for one group may not produce freedom for all; it may even be a cause of oppression and a restriction of liberty for others, just as regulation for some may cause liberty for others. Moreover, among the advocates of regulation, discussion over who should have the prerogative to set restrictions and grant authorizations has become increasingly vociferous, with established Western powers and assumptions being increasingly challenged by both new powers in the East and radical movements in the West.

Artistic creation seems to have, over the ages, dwelt upon and developed within and across the interface of the paradoxical conceptions of liberty and licence. How innovative or conventional is the artist? Can art exceed Nature, the model? From imitating reality and nature in a lifelike manner to de-legitimizing the presence of a copy, Art has gone a long way in revolutionizing its own praxis. In this respect, the conference will address, among other issues, the canonical, the nonconventional, the inter-generic, the hybrid, the iconoclastic, the politically “correct,” the politically committed, the ethical, borderline experience, historicity, textuality, “trace,” “erasure,” representation and misrepresentation, mainstream culture, and subculture.

Is freedom of choice a reality or a myth? Or is there some sort of pressure which constrains social, political and linguistic alternatives? Some would argue that the individual’s discursive practices are often influenced by peer pressure, and that the liberties and licences attributed to the members of a particular community are generally reflected in the choices that they make and in the roles that they opt for within their group, as they attempt to comply with rules and conform to social/cultural norms. These norms are said to be set to “regulate” individuals’ practices in a variety of domains, including language use, language learning, language acquisition, and teaching.
The steering committee welcomes panel/paper proposals from a wide array of disciplines, including:

- Anthropology
- Art History
- Comparative Literature
- Culture Studies
- Gender Studies
- History
- Linguistics
- Literary Theories
- Pedagogy
- Philosophy
- Political Science
- Religious Studies
- Translation

Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- Liberty and licence: visions and revisions
- Artistic licence, avant-gardism, experimental literature
- Decency, value, censorship, the literary rake
- Literary genres and theories
- Temperance, transgression, casuistry
- Authority, authorisation, power, (de-) legitimisation
- Human rights and freedoms
- Globalisation, free exchange, protectionism, trade barriers
- Economic freedom and the protection of the environment
- Legal/illegal immigration: national failure, global responsibility
- International law, national sovereignty, deconfliction and the ‘right’ of interference
- Mediating the ethics and freedom of writing in social networks
- Social media: hyper-liberty, cybercrime
- Individual and social boundaries in language use
- Acceptable vs. unacceptable language varieties
- Necessity, liberty and discursive formations
- Controversial ‘liberty’ in translation
- Academic liberties and the ethics of research
- Liberty and discipline, ethics and licence

The deadline for submissions is 1 January 2016. Abstracts of up to 300 words should be sent as anonymised e-mail attachments, along with a separate biography of up to 200 words, to <libertylicencesousse@gmail.com>. Papers should be no more than 20 minutes in length, and should be presented in English. Because up to 30 minutes per panel will be devoted to discussion, the number of selected papers will be limited. Researchers submitting abstracts are encouraged to raise questions that engage with the current debates on ‘liberty’ and ‘licence,’ and to come up with new perspectives that can enhance our understanding of their complex relationship. Participants will be notified whether their abstracts have been accepted by 14 January 2016.

Scientific Committee: