

Invitation from the School of Languages, Linguistics and Film  
to the 5th Centre for Catalan Studies Annual Lecture

# Memory, Mothers and Mourning in Mercè Rodoreda and Maria-Mercè Marçal

Dr Montserrat Lunati, Reader in Catalan and Spanish Studies  
School of Modern Languages, Cardiff University

The Centre for  
Catalan Studies



Queen Mary  
University of London



**Thursday 10 March 2016 at 6.30pm**  
ArtsOne Lecture Theatre, ArtsOne Building,  
Mile End Campus



Memory is mourning, mourning and malaise, mourning and language. This lecture explores the relationship between memory, mothers and mourning as they are represented in the short story 'Nit i boira' ['Night and Fog'] (1947) and the novel *La plaça del Diamant* [In Diamond Square] (1962), by Mercè Rodoreda, and the posthumous collection of poems *Raó del cos* [The Body's Reason] (2000), by Maria-Mercè Marçal. I suggest a close reading of these texts (and I offer a glimpse into various others) as mourning narratives that articulate the (im)possible task of freeing the mother figure from controversial approaches to it such as the classical psychoanalysis patriarchal rupture of the alleged plenitude of pre-Oedipal mother-child bond, or the effects of a Western culture that, as Luce Irigaray claims, 'repose sur le meurtre de la mère.' The lecture draws also on Freudian and post-Freudian interpretations of 'mourning' and 'melancholia' to read texts in which affect and loss get inevitably entangled with history and politics.

**Dr Montserrat Lunati** is Reader in Catalan and Spanish Studies at Cardiff University. She has published extensively on contemporary Catalan and Spanish literature, with a particular interest in women's writing. She researches on the social and textual construction of illness, mourning and historical memory in Catalan and Spanish cultures. She is the author of *Imma Monsó: la narrativa de la ironia i la diferència* (2007), and is currently writing a monograph on narratives of mourning. She occupied the Joan Coromines Chair of Catalan Studies at the University of Chicago during the Fall Quarter of 2012 and is co-founder and co-editor of *Tesserae, Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies*.

**A reception will follow the lecture**

## Ticket Information

This event is free to attend, but you must book tickets online in advance. Please click the button on the right and follow the instructions to make a booking. You will then be emailed an e-ticket and you should bring this with you on the day.

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## Map and Directions

This event takes place at our Mile End Campus. Please click on the icon below for the map and directions:



Mile End Campus



The nearest tube stations are Stepney Green and Mile End

ArtsOne Lecture Theatre,  
ArtsOne Building,  
Mile End Campus

## Further Information

If you have any questions regarding this event please contact the Events Office via [events@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:events@qmul.ac.uk) or telephone 020 7882 5895.