The unification of knowledge (religion, philosophy and science) that was in place during antiquity as a means for the revelation and the contemplation of the eternal essence of the universe while purifying the soul, could be envisioned in the shape of Janus, the double-faced god who could be seen to symbolize two different paths towards enlightenment: one, precise and objective, and the other, intuitive and mythological (Arthur Koestler, *The Sleepwalkers: A history of man’s changing vision of the Universe*, 1959: 21). Due to the centrality of the aesthetic and discursive strand in contemporary thought (Christine Baron, *La pensée du dehors*, 2007), the separation and future specialization of knowledge that happened subsequently as an indispensable condition for the development of modern science, has acquired since the beginning of the 20th century a pendulum movement in the opposite direction towards the transversal unification of epistemological domains.

Since the last big controversy on epistemological transfers between humanities and exact sciences that was provoked twenty years ago by Alan Sokal and Jean Bricmont’s denunciation of “scientific impostures” (*Intellectual Impostures*, 1997) which had shaped most part of the French postmodernist philosophy thought, the crossing bridges on the two shores of knowledge have not ceased to grow in number. It is in the name of a new humanism, or better yet, it is while seeking to urgently redesign the very pillars of humanism, that the new millennium seems to have buried for good the paradigm of the two cultures that caused so much debate during the 20th century. It is what some thinkers like Francisco Fernández Buey (*Para la tercera cultura*, 2013) have called the *third culture*, using the expression made known by the literary agent John Brockman, while citing C.P. Snow’s postulates, and which points to the reconfiguration of the concept of reality and its modalities of apprehension.

Literary theory has played a crucial role in mitigating the former ontological and institutional separation between the different domains of knowledge by reclaiming the specificity of literature as a tool of awareness and of examining the nature of the
epistemological processes. The contribution of Hans-Georg Gadamer’s *Literaturwissenschaft*, of Paul Ricoeur’s literary hermeneutics, of Jean-Marie Schaeffer’s theories of fiction, of Jacques Bouveresse’s epistemology, of cognitive poetics or epistemocriticism have set the foundation of what Christine Baron (2007: 9) describes as a “constant negotiation” between literary and scientific discourse.

From this point of view, epistemocriticism, which was first mentioned in the French academic world by Michel Pierssens (1990), places literature in a relation of proximity and reciprocity to knowledge, in particular – although not exclusively – to science. Epistemocriticism encompasses in its field of study the narrative and figurative forms and structures which are adopted by scientific discourse; with regards to literature, it considers the presence of scientific and technological subtext and intertext in the construction of fictional worlds. Nevertheless, analogy is not the only literary means of encoding specific phenomena related to scientific knowledge in order to account for them. Although rhetoric figures work as agents of transference through symbolization that allow for the scientific knowledge to be inscribed in a text, considering literary projections of science as a one-way transfer from a mimetic strand would mean to ignore a large part of the complex relations between the two domains. This is the main reason why literature often holds a subsidiary position in relation to phenomena it can only aspire to grasp by representation and by assigning them meaning. If these phenomena have been previously apprehended – when not configured – by science, this means that literary figuration can only be a second-degree representation or refiguration. The boundary between science and literature shapes a large and porous net-like space of projections and interconnections which are still to be explored: the projection of literature as science, the projection of literature in science, the projection of science in literature, the projection of science as literature. A common space in which the domains of knowledge would be able to surpass their own limitations as observers of a reality which precedes them and is waiting to be decoded, and that would count as signified entities of an empirical universe.

The implications of the previous considerations are manifested to a high extent in the metadiscourse that usually is intended to justify the necessity of a rapprochement between exact sciences and humanities. As Amelia Gamoneda and Francisco Gozález Fernández point out in the Introduction to the recent issue of *Épistémocritique* magazine (2017) dedicated to the current state of epistemocriticism in the Spanish research field, the debated relation between sciences and humanities is frequently represented by spatial metaphors (mapped as a bridge, a boundary, a territory, a knot etc.). Even González Fernández’s book *Esperando a Gödel: Literatura y matemáticas* (2011) opens with a reference to the Pont des Arts in Paris (the symbolic structure that connects the Louvre Museum to the French Academy of Sciences), echoing Heidegger’s idea that this type of infrastructures are vectors of visualization, symbolization, unification and transformation, which is the same with the creation of space. Following the same phenomenological path, Ortega y Gasset stated in 1924 that metaphor is an epistemological instrument which brings poetry closer to scientific exploration (“Las dos grandes metáforas”), and can originate a new object, injected with the subjectivity of the creator’s self-conscious.

It is the development of the cognitive field after 1980s that put an emphasis on the two-way bridge over the two domains of knowledge and that also highlighted the fact that besides connecting two apparently separated fields of study, its role is to create a new
(mental) space that didn´t exist before. The emergence of a third epistemic domain can be conceptualized as an integrated space generated through conceptual projections between pre-structured experiential and knowledge domains (Pilar Alonso, *A Multidimensional Approach to Discourse Coherence*, 2014: 137). Conceptual blends that articulate the scientific thought turn every scientific discovery in a creative act in which imagination holds a fundamental role (Laurence Dahan-Gaida, “El efecto “Eureka” en la ciencia y en la literatura (siglos XIX-XXI)”, 2018). According to Mark Turner (*The Literary Mind*, 1996), it would be reductive by all means to conceive of literary thought as separated from the scientific one, if we take into account that literary thought constitutes the foundation of all thought. When extended to the level of discourse, the cognitive poetics and narratology have as main object of study the narrative structures of human mind. That is, they try to account for the way human beings build and maintain certain narrative patterns so as to observe and represent the surrounding world. The intentionality of meaning and the effect of the previously mentioned mental structures have been taken into consideration by various research fields in recent years, from the philosophy of the arts (James Grant, 2011), to neuroaesthetics (David S. Miall, 2009) and embodied reading (Marielle Macé, 2011; Pierre-Louis Patoine, 2015).

The international conference *Isomorphism of Knowledge: Scientific Projections on 20th and 21st Century Literature* focuses on an interdisciplinary theoretic approach by placing at the forefront the latest contributions of the epistemocriticism and cognitive theories on figurative language and discourse with the purpose of facilitating dialogue between different research domains in a Hispanic and international framework.

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2. Literary theory as the science of literature in literary texts. Literature and cognition encompassed. Literature and neuroscience. Neuroaesthetics and embodied reading.
3. Philosophy of the arts and literature. The current state of epistemocriticism and cognitive poetics.

**Confirmed Keynote Speakers:** Christine Baron (Université de Poitiers), Pilar Alonso (Universidad de Salamanca), Amelia Gamoneda (Universidad de Salamanca), Francisco González Fernández (Universidad de Oviedo)

Languages of the Conference: English, French and Spanish
Please submit your proposal to the conference email address literaturaysaberes2019@gmail.com. Closing date for applications is **31.01.2019**. The proposals shall include the following information: name, academic affiliation, title of the contribution, a 250-300-word abstract, 5 key-words and a short biography of the contributor. The scientific committee will peer-review all contributions and will consider the scientific adequacy, the methodological and the innovative approach of the proposal.

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