



ANNUAL TRINATIONAL EUCOR ENGLISH MASTER AND PhD CONFERENCE

April 5-6, 2019
UHA Mulhouse



ITINERARY

Friday April 5 th	9.30	Check-In: Hotel KYRIAD, 15, rue Lambert (if late, I guess you can also store your suitcases at the SIM)		
	10.30	Conference Venue Friday: <i>Société Industrielle de Mulhouse (SIM)</i> , 10, rue de la Bourse Welcome and Coffee (<i>Salle d'Honneur</i> = <i>salle jaune</i> , next to the reception desk) Note: the <i>Salle Engelmann (salle verte)</i> is upstairs—no wheelchair access!		
	11.00 – 12.30	<i>Panel 1:</i> Man in Trouble Chair: Philipp Schweighauser Room: <i>salle jaune</i>	<i>Panel 2:</i> Things Scottish: identities and borders Chair: Lyndon Higgs Room: <i>salle verte</i>	
	13.00 – 14.30	Lunch Break: <i>Restaurant Sinclair</i> , 2, avenue du Maréchal Joffre		
	14.30 – 16.00	<i>Panel 3:</i> The Environment in Danger Chair: Sonia Arab Room: <i>salle jaune</i>	<i>Panel 4:</i> Women Across Times and Cultures Chair: Miriam Nandi Room: <i>salle verte</i>	
		Coffee Break		
	16.30 – 18.00	<i>Panel 5:</i> Videos and Memes: the latest in digital communication Chair: Craig Hamilton Room: <i>salle jaune</i>	<i>Panel 6:</i> Teaching, Learning, Protesting—across the centuries Chair: Anne-Sophie Foltzer Room: <i>salle verte</i>	
		Change of venue...		
	19.00	Hôtel de Ville, salle des colonnes : <i>Keynote address</i> Anne Bandry (Université de Strasbourg): “From Distant to Close Reading and Back: Advantages and Drawbacks of Corpus Stylistics” & discussion		
	20.00	—followed by a reception offered by the City of Mulhouse and an evening in Mulhouse...		
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Saturday April 6 th	8.30 – 9.00	Conference Venue Saturday: FLSH (UHA), 2, rue des Frères Lumière Welcome and Coffee		
	9.00 – 10.30	<i>Panel 7:</i> War and Conflicts: remembrance and transformation Chair: Pauline Collombier Room 207	<i>Panel 8:</i> Early Modern Britain: polyphony, translation, colonialism Chair: Jean-Jacques Chardin Room 211	
		Coffee break		
	11.00 - 12.30	<i>Panel 9:</i> Black Fiction: where it's at Chair: W. Hochbruck Room 207	<i>Panel 10:</i> The Power of Words: individuals, cultures, theories Chair: Jennifer K. Dick Room 211	<i>Panel 11:</i> Things Irish: from Beckett to globalism Chair: Noëlle Cuny Room 201
	12.30 – 14.30	Lunch Break: Centre Sportif		
	14.30 – 16.00	<i>Panel 12:</i> Crime, Terror, Punishment Chair: Sämi Ludwig Room 207	<i>Panel 13:</i> Vision, Text, Experience Chair: Monica Manolescu Room 211	
	16.00	Final meeting Verre d'amitié, etc.		

Program

FRIDAY, 11.00 AM – 12.30 PM:

PANEL 1: MAN IN TROUBLE

- **Benjamin Corticelli** (University of Strasbourg, Master 2):
“Prometheus Amongst the Furies:
Violence, Myth, and Modernity in the Poetry of Ezra Pound”
- **Francesco Jannetta** (University of Basel, MA student):
Hard-boiled in the Daytime: Sisyphean Behaviour of Proto-typical Patriarchal Masculinity in Ernest Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and Matthew Weiner’s *Mad Men* (2007-2015)
- **Trystan Reynolds** (University of Strasbourg, Master 2):
“The Boundaries of the Human: A Study of Selected Works by Richard Matheson”

PANEL 2: THINGS SCOTTISH: IDENTITIES AND BORDERS

- **Emerence Hild** (University of Strasbourg, PhD student):
“‘Born and bred’: SNP Parliamentary Candidates’ Biographical Notes and the Art of Displaying One’s National Identity”
- **Mariia Evseeva** (UHA Mulhouse, MA student):
“19-year Detox: Tory-free Scootlund is Tory-free No More: After about twenty years in the doldrums, the Scottish Tories are the second biggest party in Scotland”
- **Julia Ditter** (Freiburg University, MA student):
“Negotiations of the (Anglo-)Scottish Border in the New Nature Writing”

FRIDAY, 14.30 PM – 16.00 PM

PANEL 3: THE ENVIRONMENT IN DANGER

- **Anouk Aerni** (University of Basel, PhD student):
“‘There’s nothing living left’:
Manifestations of the Anthropocene in 20th-Century American Postbellum Prose”
- **Eva Rüskamp** (Freiburg University, PhD student):
“Sustainability Processes in Rural Spaces of the US:
An Interdisciplinary Perspective on Governance and Culture”
- **Rebekah Hoeks** (University of Basel, MA student):
“‘Once Upon a Time They Lived in Paradise’:
Disappearance and Displacement in Helon Habila’s *Oil on Water*”

PANEL 4: WOMEN ACROSS TIMES AND CULTURES

- **Lucie Hazard** (University of Strasbourg, Master 2):
“Victims of Fancy?
Conformity or resistance in Fictions by Lennox, Austen and Tomlins”
- **Elise Ottavino** (University of Strasbourg, Master 2):
“Reading Mina Loy”
- **Pius Vögele** (University of Basel, MA student):
“Stargates to Parallel Universes: Yugen Blakrok’s Afrofuturistic Sonic Fictions”

FRIDAY, 16.30 -18.00 PM

PANEL 5: VIDEOS AND MEMES: THE LATEST IN DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

- **Kübra Aksay** (Freiburg University, MA student):
“Reconstructing and Performing Heritage in *Never Alone*” [video games]
- **Kai Kehrer** (Freiburg University, MA student):
“Storytelling in Video Games: A Better Way of Categorizing Video Games”
- **David Laeuli** (University of Strasbourg, Master 2):
“An Introduction to the Study of Memetic Image Macros”

PANEL 6: TEACHING, LEARNING, PROTESTING—ACROSS THE CENTURIES

- **Juliette Misset** (University of Strasbourg, PhD student):
“Lesson Learned and/or Beauty Seen:
Student Responses to Didactic Novels, 1798-1811”
 - **Zahra Maleknia** (Freiburg University, PhD student):
“Meeting the Needs of Syrian Adult Learners in Germany: a Guideline for Teachers to Help Syrian Immigrants to Succeed in their Language Learning Experiences”
 - **Abdelkrim Megrous** (UHA Mulhouse, MA student):
“Protest Songs and the Building of American Counter Culture”
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SATURDAY, 9.00 AM – 10.30 PM

PANEL 7: WAR AND CONFLICTS: REMEMBRANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

- **Nicolas Wolff** (University of Strasbourg, Master 2):
“A Century of Remembrance:
Commemorating the Great War in New Zealand (1918-2018)”
- **Wei Li** (UHA Mulhouse, MA student):
“*The Woman Warrior*—Critical Readings in China and in the West”
- **Isabelle Wirth-Möckel** (University of Basel, MA student):
“Time on Edge: A Close Reading of Ali Smith’s ‘Brexit’-Novel *Winter*”

PANEL 8: EARLY MODERN BRITAIN: POLYTHONY, TRANSLATION, COLONIALISM

- **Cezara Bobeica** (University of Strasbourg, PhD student):
“Hypotexts and Polyphony in Henry Peacham’s *Minerva Britanna* (1612)”
- **Paul Poillet** (UHA Mulhouse, MA student):
“The Early Modern English Translations of Marc-Antoine Girard de Saint-Amant:
A comparative analysis of Saint-Amant’s *La Solitude* (1617) with two of its contemporary translations”
- **Rouaia Boukrit** (UHA Mulhouse, MA student):
“Cromwellian Foreign Policy:
Cromwell's justifications for the beginning of colonial enterprise”

SATURDAY, 11.00 AM – 12.30 PM

PANEL 9: BLACK FICTION: WHERE IT'S AT

- **Sofie Sabbioni** (University of Basel, MA student):
“A Bhabhaesque Reading of James Weldon Johnson’s *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*”
- **Lina Schmid** (University of Basel, MA student):
“Sentimentalism and Beyond—*The Underground Railroad* and Postmodern Affect”
- **Komi Akakpo** (UHA Mulhouse, PhD student):
Madness: Subversion, Denial, and Narrative Building in African Authors
—Ngugi wa Thiong’o and Nuruddin Farah

PANEL 10: THE POWER OF WORDS: INDIVIDUALS, CULTURES, THEORIES

- **Julie Soares** (University of Strasbourg, Master 2):
“A Study of Verbal Interactions In the Sitcom *Friends*”
- **Sébastien Duclos** (University of Strasbourg, Master 2):
“Erasure and Silence in David Markson’s *Wittgenstein's Mistress* (1988)”
- **Michelle Thompson** (Freiburg University, PhD student):
“A Narratological Approach to Anthropological Research?”

PANEL 11: THINGS IRISH: FROM BECKETT TO GLOBALISM

- **Balazs Rapzscak** (University of Basel, PhD student):
“‘Mysterious affair, electricity’: Samuel Beckett’s Media Theatre”
- **Bahar Un** (Freiburg University, MA student):
“Wasted Lives: Representing Female Migrants in the Context of Ireland’s Globalisation”
- **Kamel Igoudjil** (UHA Mulhouse, PhD student):
“Cultural Hybridity in John McGahern’s Fiction”

SATURDAY, 14.30 PM – 16.00 PM

PANEL 12: CRIME, TERROR, PUNISHMENT

- **Tara Akbari** (Freiburg University, MA student):
“Reflecting (on) Absence: A Study of the National September 11 Memorial”
- **Sabiha Ait-Rahmane** (UHA Mulhouse, MA student):
“The Discourse of Radicalization and Terrorist Recruitment in Yasmina Khadra’s *Wolf Dreams* (1995)”
- **Laura Housay** (University of Strasbourg, Master 2):
“From ‘tough-on-crime’ To ‘smart-on-crime’:
Making Sense of Georgia’s 2013 Juvenile Justice Reform”

PANEL 13: VISION, TEXT, EXPERIENCE

- **Anne Wurz** (UHA Mulhouse, MA student):
“The Painter Robert Motherwell as an Art Writer”
- **Emmanuel Büttler** (University of Basel, MA student):
“Painting Time – Exploring the Limits of Narrativity in the Pictorial Arts”
- **Adeline Murat** (UHA Mulhouse, MA student):
“Vicarious Trauma: *Shooting Ghosts* (2017) with war photographer Thomas J. Brennan”

Presenters and Titles of Their Talks (in alphabetically order)

Sabiha Ait-Rahmane (UHA Mulhouse, MA student)

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“The Discourse of Radicalization and Terrorist Recruitment in Yasmina Khadra’s *Wolf Dreams* (1995)”

Advisor: Craig Hamilton

What can make a handsome and a brilliant young man a terrorist? How can a young man of twenty-five years, dreaming of Hollywood and Cannes, become a rapist and a ruthless killer, who slaughters babies and shoots intellectuals without feeling any guilt? This is what the Algerian author Yasmina Khadra tries to show in his novel *Wolf Dreams*, published in French as *A Quoi Rêvent les Loups* in 1999 and translated into English in 2003. “Yasmina Khadra” is the pen name of the Algerian author Mohammed Moulessehoul, who used a female pseudonym composed of the two first names of his wife to avoid military censorship. He was an army officer and uses his own military experience to create the main character, Nafa Walid, who becomes an easy prey for Islamic fundamentalists due to his social and financial difficulties.

This presentation demonstrates how the jihadist discourse uses religion and politics to give lost and hopeless young people a sense of identity, furnishing them with meaning and a sense of purpose. I will show how this discourse uses ideological principles inspired by the interpretation of religion to shape the identity of these young people, and how they finally submit to and act according to the principles set by this discourse and its power holders.

Keywords:

Jihad, discourse, ideology, manipulation, fundamentalism, religion, politics, identity, power

Bio:

Sabiha Ait Rahmane obtained her first Master degree in Comparative Literature at Mouloud Mammeri University in Tizi-Ouzou (Algeria). She is now an M2 student in English at the UHA, Mulhouse. Her Master’s thesis is entitled *The Jihadist Discourse in the Process of Radicalization and Terrorist Recruitment in Yasmina Khadra’s Wolf Dreams (1999), Alaa al-Aswany’s The Yacoubian Building (2002), and John Updike’s Terrorist (2006)*.

Komi Akakpo (UHA Mulhouse, PhD student)

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Madness: Subversion, Denial, and Narrative Building in African Authors —Ngugi wa Thiong’o and Nuruddin Farah

Advisor: Sämi Ludwig

As Himmelmann highlights in “Madness in African Literature: Ambivalence, Fluidity, and Play,” the world as portrayed in postcolonial literary works can be full of contradictions. One way people can handle them would be, like Ngugi’s character Matigari of the eponymous novel (1989), to accept the reality of their situation and fight the best they can to restore truth and justice. However, so corrupt is the world, and so resilient the people, that asking for truth and justice is seen not as an act of courage, but as a sign of lunacy. For this and other reasons, the majority of the populations, including their leaders, live in denial.

Denial is another means whereby some people deal with adverse situations. Depending on the motive for their denial, humans have the tendency to escape the pain of reality by building narrative structures (Casey 89). In this talk, we suggest that denial in postcolonial

world and literature can be looked at from three vintage points: self-preservation by way of conformity, self-interest by way of hypocrisy, and self-aggrandizement by way of delusion.

Our last objective in this presentation will be an attempt to psychologically assess “The Ruler” in Ngugi’s *Wizard of the Crow* and “The General” in Farah’s trilogy *Variations on the Theme of an African Dictatorship*. For example, as we discover in the latter pages of *Close Sesame* that “Khalif the madman” is actually a high-ranking officer pretending to be mad to gather information, we are compelled to second-guess the sanity of both the mad and the seemingly sane protagonists.

Keywords:

Africa, Bible, Nuruddin Farah, Literature, Madness, Denial, Subversion, Ngugi wa Thiong’o

Bio:

Komi AKAKPO is a PhD student at Université de Haute-Alsace. He is working on post-colonial African literature. His thesis is centered on the representation of dictatorship in selected books by Ngugi wa Thiong’o and Nuruddin Farah. Komi also teaches English part-time at his university as part of his doctoral training. In 2018, he has given a talk entitled “Ngugi and the battle for African Languages in African Literature” at the Zurich Conference on *Colonial and Postcolonial Language Studies – Changes and Challenges*. His latest publication, « Entre Patrimoines précoloniaux et héritages coloniaux: politiques linguistiques et littératures de l’Afrique postcoloniale » offers an overview on the linguistic dilemma of African countries at the dawn of their independences.

Tara Akbari (Freiburg University, MA student)

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“Reflecting (on) Absence: A Study of the National September 11 Memorial”

Memorials are established to remind people, through representation, of a person or an event in the past. Since building memorials is one of the oldest and most common commemorative practices, it is likely to take these cultural phenomena for granted, as “innocent” representations of the past, and disregard what ideological functions they might conceivably have. In studying memorials, the question of what is represented often overshadows how representation takes place. While there might always be something of political significance about the content of what a memorial is supposed to represent, the truly significant political question—how certain ideologies govern selective processes of cultural commemoration—reveals itself only when we consider a memorial’s form of representation vis-à-vis what it represents.

In this paper, I investigate the ideological significance of the National September 11 Memorial, named “Reflecting Absence.” I explore the ways in which the aesthetics of Reflecting Absence is in accordance with the political narratives surrounding the momentous event of the 9/11 attacks. In doing so, I discuss, in detail, the architectural attributes of the memorial in order to show how the memorial, as a whole, could be seen as a symptom of America’s recent “therapeutic culture.” I will argue that not only Reflecting Absence fails to reflect the absence of the 9/11 victims, but also, more crucially, fails to let its visitors reflect on their absence.

Bio:

I hold a BA in English Language and Literature, and I will soon complete my MA degree in British and North American Cultural Studies at the University of Freiburg. During my studies in Freiburg, I developed an academic interest in exploring the link between the aesthetic and the political in a variety of cultural objects. Also, I became increasingly interested in social

work. I learned that engaging with other human beings in real life is as equally important (if not more) as engaging with the humanities.

Kübra Aksay (Freiburg University, MA student)

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“Reconstructing and Performing Heritage in *Never Alone*” [video games]

Over the last decade, the popularity of video games and modern technology in interactive entertainment industry have helped the emergence of new methods of preserving and reconstructing cultural heritage. In addition to representing objects with computer graphics, digital games can also reconstruct actions through interactive gameplay. Video games can be entertaining, but they can also be educational, and serve as an effective way of conveying heritage from one generation to another. That is why Cook Inlet Tribal Council, a non-profit organization based in Anchorage, Alaska, chooses the medium of video games in order to share their cultural heritage with new generations of the Iñupiat and the rest of the world. *Never Alone* (2014) was developed by Upper One Games in collaboration with Cook Inlet Tribal Council and E-Line Media, another group of developers working on game-based learning products.

Never Alone is interesting to study for many reasons: it is a digital heritage reconstruction, it is a puzzle-adventure game, unlike many other historical action games with war settings. However, the most important reason to choose *Never Alone* for an academic study is its collaborative development process. The Iñupiat community helps the game developers choose the story, the characters and any other content during the development.

In this study, I aim to explore how *Never Alone* offers a performance of cultural heritage through a combination of content and gameplay. The involvement of the local community in game development and its effect on authenticity, the choice of content, the video game narrative and interactivity are the main aspects that I analyze in my paper. I also compare the level of interactivity and accuracy in the chosen medium and product to other, more traditional methods of heritage reconstruction, such as displaying objects in museums and historical reenactment.

Bio:

Kübra Aksay is a graduate student in the Master of Arts in British and North American Cultural Studies programme at the English Department, ALU Freiburg. Her research interests include film studies, popular culture, heritage studies and sociolinguistics.

Anouk Aerni (University of Basel, PhD student)

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“‘There’s nothing living left’: Manifestations of the Anthropocene in 20th-Century American Postbellum Prose”

Even though anthropogenic climate change and, more generally, anthropogenic changes to the planet’s overall ecology are scientifically provable, terming the era we are living in the Anthropocene remains a topic of debate. Throughout the 20th century, our collective but nevertheless not entirely consensual ecological awareness has inarguably grown. Focusing on a selection of 20th-century American postbellum prose, this talk traces how literature negotiates the human-nature relationship. A comparative reading of novels from different periods such as William March’s *Company K* (1933) and Kurt Vonnegut’s *Slaughterhouse-Five* (1969) yields how our perception of and attitude towards nature may have changed over time.

Ultimately, the aim is to stage a reconsideration of the relationship between humanity and the environment by exposing the root of our dichotomous misconception of the world and offering an alternative, less anthropo- and more ecocentric point of view, developed on the basis of close readings of modernist and postmodernist literature from three major post-war periods (WWI, WWII, Vietnam War). Regarding today's ecological situation, it is crucial for us to rethink our axioms and to reevaluate our position in the context of the world. Literary negotiations of the relationship between humanity and nature afford rich opportunities to do so.

Bio:

Anouk Aerni completed her MA in Literary Studies at the University of Basel in 2017. She received a start-up grant from the Doktoratsprogramm Literaturwissenschaft at the University of Basel in 2018 and was subsequently awarded a 3-year fellowship from the eikones Graduate School, where she is currently working on her PhD project "A Farewell to Anthropocentrism in 20th-Century American Postbellum Prose" under the supervision of Professor Dr. Philipp Schweighauser. Her main research interests include American literature, particularly modernist and postmodernist prose, and Ecocriticism.

Cezara Bobeica (University of Strasbourg, PhD student)

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"Hypotexts and Polyphony in Henry Peacham's *Minerva Britannica* (1612)"

Advisor: Jean-Jacques Chardin

Often described as a minor author with disputable artistic skills, Henry Peacham is nonetheless a singular figure among the emblematic milieu of the early modern era. A typical work of the emblematic genre, *Minerva Britannica* (1612) is an original combination of Peacham's emblematic version of King James's *Basilikon Doron* (1599) and his own experience of the court. *Minerva Britannica* stands out as a multi-layered work, thus testifying to the kaleidoscopic and palimpsestic specificity of the emblematic genre. In this regard, Henry Peacham is very much a *bricoleur* as evidenced by the heavy hypotext which accompanies almost all of the 206 emblems. The gloss poems need to be studied in relation to the quotations in the margins which not only shed a particular light on the main text, but also invite the reader to constantly situate the text into its cultural context. I intend to investigate the interplay of voices created by the printed marginalia and its effects on the poetic voice. To support my argument, I will use Levi-Strauss's notion of *bricolage* as well as Antoine Compagnon's study on the effects of the quotations on the poetic voice in order to show how the persona, whose voice seems to be strategically located outside the main text at times, perpetually evades identification. Skilfully interwoven with other voices, the poetic voice seems to inhabit the margins. This makes us wonder where to look for Peacham's voice in *Minerva Britannica*.

Bio:

Cezara Bobeica is working on Henry Peacham's emblem book *Minerva Britannica* (1612) under the supervision of Professor Jean-Jacques Chardin. She obtained my Master's degree at the École Normale Supérieure in Lyons in 2014 and successfully passed the Teaching diploma (Agrégation) in 2015 and from then on, she taught English Literature and Language in high school. In September 2018 she started teaching at the University of Strasbourg.

Rouaia Boukrit (UHA Mulhouse, MA student)

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“Cromwellian Foreign Policy: Cromwell's justifications for the beginning of colonial enterprise”

Advisor: Laurent Curelly

During the Cromwellian era, the maintaining of a well-balanced government and a worldwide portrait of greatness depended to a great extent on the preservation of overseas possessions. This widespread concept haunted most of the European governments during the seventeenth century, particularly after the discovery of the western hemisphere. Greed, rivalry and dominion (sovereignty and territorial governance) were the basic motives that characterized the western explorations and settlements by European superpowers such as Portugal, Spain, France and England, who rushed towards what was then called “The New World” hidden behind the development of commercial enterprise.

Even though England's domestic situation did not help to enlarge its overseas possessions due to the uncertainties about the establishment of a new political regime, the Protectorate could maintain a strong foreign policy in order to handle overseas relationships and settlements. Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector, was motivated by his strong belief in maintaining God's order on earth and justified his actions as if they were a “fulfillment of God's purpose” despite the fact that revolution wreaked havoc in Britain. His rivalry with Spain and permanent search for glory urged him to adopt a colonial policy not only to support territorial expansion but also to plant the English flag amongst those of the great European powers. This paper will study the commercial, political and religious contexts through which Cromwell sought to justify his policy of colonization. My analysis will be conducted through the assessment of his speeches and letters which convey his foreign policy concerning the colonial enterprise.

Keywords:

17th century Britain - Cromwellian era - Cromwellian Foreign policy - Caribbean dominion - Cromwellian colonization - colonial enterprise

Bio:

Rouaia Boukrit obtained her master degree in Anglo-Saxon studies from the English department in the University of Algiers 02. She's currently a MA2 student in English at the university of Haute-Alsace, Mulhouse. Her Master's thesis is entitled “The Formation of the British Empire: political debates on Barbados and Jamaica during the interregnum (1640-1660).” Her research focuses on the reading of Cromwell's letters and speeches as well as his foreign policy to form the colonial enterprise in the Caribbean and the West Indies.

Emmanuel Büttler (University of Basel, MA student)

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“Painting Time – Exploring the Limits of Narrativity in the Pictorial Arts”

The main goal of this paper is to show to what extent the pictorial arts display narrative structures. Since painters and authors enjoyed the same rhetorical education, at least until the nineteenth century, it is plausible to assume that they were trying to realize rhetorical elements in their productions. There is a paradox between a painting which fixes a specific moment in time and a narrative text which can represent time much more dynamically. The objective of this paper is to reduce this fundamental discrepancy. We will focus on paintings that are inspired by a literary text or that re-enact a scene. Pictorial references to literary texts create narrativity primarily either by indexing or by inducing storytelling. Such an intermedial

approach is particularly appropriate for “Shakespeare’s painter” Henry Fuseli who produced a number of works with an explicit literary, particularly theatrical, reference. In Fuseli’s paintings narrativity is realized on the formal, the semantic, and the content level. Thus, the movements and gestures of figures can induce narrativity, and action can be indicated by implementing moments of foreshadowing. We will trace similar issues in the works of William Hogarth, who can be said to have painted time in many details. Places, actions, and desires of the represented figures are easy to identify. The scenes painted in the series *Marriage A-la-Mode*, for example, are obviously representing then contemporary London. In addition, the sequentiality of the paintings – they have a defined sequential order – enables a narrative reading of Hogarth’s art.

Bio:

Emmanuel Büttler received his bachelor’s degree in German and French philology and is currently a second-year MA student in Literary Studies at the University of Basel. His main research interests are modern French literature with a particular focus on realism, novel theory, and Francophone African literature.

Benjamin Corticelli (University of Strasbourg, Master 2)

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“Prometheus Amongst the Furies: Violence, Myth, and Modernity in the Poetry of Ezra Pound”

Advisor: Andrew Eastman

“He must live by craft and by violence. His gods are violent gods.”

When Ezra Pound articulated his understanding of the role of the modern artist in 1914, he was not alone in applying a discourse of aggression to the realm of culture. Five years prior, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti had launched the Italian Futurist movement, declaring: “We wish to glorify war, the sole cleanser of the world;” Wyndham Lewis encouraged a similar rhetoric amongst the London Vorticists, in whose company Pound would begin to slough off the archaizing sensibility of his earlier writing.

Both Lewis and Marinetti would fight in the Great War which broke out six months after Pound’s comments. The modernist era saw the confluence of widespread warfare with a discourse and an artistic posture by which violence was authorized, exercised and often celebrated. It is this idiom of violence which the present paper seeks to apprehend and explore through the poetry of Ezra Pound. By examining the nature and function of violence as an informing aesthetic of a selected corpus of Pound’s writings, from his earliest poetry to *The Cantos*, it is hoped that this paper will edify and elucidate aspects of his work and his era which have heretofore evaded intensive discussion.

Bio:

Born in the suburbs of Paris, Benjamin Corticelli spent much of his early youth abroad before returning to his home country in order to pursue his studies. After a misguided attempt to learn mathematics, he earned a Bachelor’s degree in English at the University of Strasbourg. He now lives at an undisclosed location with his two cats and his fiancée; his interests include, but are not restricted to, boxing, flowers and sometimes the poetry of Ezra Pound.

Julia Ditter (Freiburg University, MA student)

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“Negotiations of the (Anglo-)Scottish Border in the New Nature Writing”

In this paper, I will analyse the representation of the Anglo-Scottish border in two novels of the New Nature Writing genre, namely Sarah Hall’s *The Wolf Border* (2015) and Mandy Haggith’s *Bear Witness* (2013). In paralleling the rewilding of wolves and bears with an alternative reality of Scottish independence as the two main strands of their respective plots, the novels manage to connect environmental and devolutionary politics through a joint discussion of the topographic borders that structure the British Isles. By creatively re-establishing one of the oldest internal topographic borders in Britain, namely the Anglo-Scottish border, the novels show that borders are not as easy to dispense of even in a time that claims the world to be increasingly borderless. The novels envision alternative versions of the borders around Scotland that are not based on a reactionary return to isolationist nationalism but rather treat the border as a dynamic and renegotiable bridge.

Bio:

Julia Ditter is a Master student in British and North American Cultural Studies at the University of Freiburg. Her Master’s thesis entitled “Debatable Lands: Border Dynamics in Contemporary British Nature Writing” deals with the literary representation of borders and the environment. She will soon begin her PhD in British Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Freiburg. Her doctoral dissertation will continue the theme of borders and ecology with a focus on Scottish literature since 1800. Her research interests include ecocriticism, border studies, animal studies, feminism, as well C20 and C21 British literatures.

Sébastien Duclos (University of Strasbourg, Master 2)

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“Erasure and Silence in David Markson’s *Wittgenstein’s Mistress* (1988)”

Advisor: Monica Manolescu

In his 1988 novel *Wittgenstein’s Mistress*, American writer David Markson put philosophical theory into practice by using two radical propositions from Ludwig Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* as driving aesthetic principles: “What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence” and “There is indeed the inexpressible. This *shows* itself.” In order to show the inexpressible through writing, he created a writerly text by discarding what was planned to be the first part of the novel and by having Kate -his novel’s narrator- only state facts and anecdotes, altering her sanity and silencing any of the emotions he had her express in “Healthy Kate”, a short story published in 1986. Thus, by partially erasing his novel and his narrator’s mental health, Markson provides the reader with an unsteady, negative text, which only manages to vaguely outline an uncanny human shape. But in order not to leave the reader helpless, he also interweaves seemingly unrelated yet explicit intertextual references and anecdotes within Kate’s narrative, clues which allow the unexpressed inexpressible to “show itself” and be accessed. Bridging gaps between artistic genres, Markson therefore proposes the reader to go on an atypical yet accessible reading experience in which the text at hand is meant to both be read as a conventional narrative and be explored as an atlas in Aby Warburg’s sense.

Bio:

Sébastien Duclos is an agrégé English teacher working in the International High School of Pontonniers in Strasbourg. He has never really stopped thinking about David Markson’s *Wittgenstein’s Mistress* after his initial reading of the novel in 2015 and his

preparation of the agrégation in the University of Strasbourg in 2016 encouraged him to attempt to solve -or at least to expose- its mysteries.

Mariia Evseeva (UHA Mulhouse, MA student)

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“19-year Detox: Tory-free Scootlund is Tory-free No More: After about twenty years in the doldrums, the Scottish Tories are the second biggest party in Scotland”

Advisor: Laurent Curelly

In the last twenty years, the Scottish Conservative Party could hardly call itself Scottish. Unpopular policies of the late 20th century showed it from the worst perspective possible: the party was seen as English, not Scottish. It has been called “anti-Scottish”, “toxic” and “irrelevant” by the media and some political opponents. Since 1997, the party has been in the doldrums. The 2014 Independence Referendum was, however, a chance to generate support from pro-Unionist Scots and show voters the party cared about that issue. Since the “No” vote victory, Scottish people seem to have changed their opinion on the Union with the rest of the United Kingdom as support of the Scottish National Party, the main advocate of Scottish independence, decreased in the years following the referendum. The Scottish Conservatives were back again with a vengeance in the 2016 Scottish Parliament election. The hope of a Tory-free Scotland the Conservative Party’s opponents had been nourishing for the last 20 years was shattered.

This paper looks into the Scottish Tories’ official position during the campaign against Scottish independence in 2012-2014. It analyses the role of the 2014 Independence Referendum in the Conservatives’ political rebirth and looks at the Scottish Tories’ position in the context of a potential second independence referendum in the wake of Brexit. Thus, at a time when the whole British nation seems to be divided, the Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party is probably the only party that is able to prove that Scottishness contributes to Britishness, making “Better Together” an attractive option.

Key words:

Scottish politics; Conservative party; Scottish independence; Referendum; Brexit; Union;

Bio:

Mariia Evseeva obtained her B.A. in English studies at the University of Upper Alsace and is now completing her MA degree at the same university. Her main focus is centred on the modern Scottish political and cultural history. She teaches English to adults in training centres and in the Superior School of Arts in Mulhouse.

Lucie Hazard (University of Strasbourg, Master 2)

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“Victims of Fancy?”

Conformity or resistance in Fictions by Lennox, Austen and Tomlins”

Advisor: Anne Bandry-Scubbi

When Charlotte Lennox’s *The Female Quixote* and Jane Austen’s *Northanger Abbey* came on the market in 1752 and 1817, they were both read as parody against the female reader seen as a victim of fancy. However, rereadings of these novels, especially by feminists, showed that Lennox’s and Austen’s positions were more ambiguous and may be understood as forms of

resistance to defend female fiction. The aim of this paper is to use these rereadings as a starting point to understand Elizabeth Tomlins's *The Victim of Fancy* published in 1786.

At first sight, Tomlins seems to share more common points with the traditional condemnation of the female reader in the 18th century since her narrative does not comply with the horizon of expectations Austen's and Lennox's novels have created.

But the reading of Austen and Lennox has taught us to read beyond appearances: reading Tomlins with their novels in mind, the reader may find clues of a re-appropriation of female Quixotism used as a smokescreen to deal with the representation of women.

Reading Tomlins through Austen and Lennox leads to ponder on the intertextual web and the game of influences between the three novels. This reflection bears out the conception of a female counter-tradition with texts in dialogue throughout the 18th century.

Bio:

In 2016 Lucie Hazard obtained a Bachelor's degree in English from the University of Strasbourg before starting a first year of Master's degree in English literature. She worked on the reader in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*. After a year abroad in England and Ireland, she is now finishing her Master's degree with a thesis on the 18th century female reader.

Emerence Hild (University of Strasbourg, PhD student)

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“‘Born and bred’: SNP Parliamentary Candidates’ Biographical Notes and the Art of Displaying One’s National Identity”

Advisors: Christian Auer and Hélène Ibata

Biographical texts, regardless of length and purpose, are privileged means for people to reveal how they conceive of themselves as individuals, to convey their sense of “self-identity”. They select and arrange personal details to create a biographical narrative. By doing so, they are prompted to rely on and give prominence to certain categories of identification, such as gender, class or religion for instance. In this context, it may seem logical that identification with a particular national identity should be prioritized by nationalists, in an attempt to link their personal sense of national consciousness to a political project that revolves around the notion of a national community. In order to verify this assumption, this paper will look at a selection of biographical notes included on campaign leaflets published before general elections in the United Kingdom by Scottish National Party candidates between 1970 and 2015. Through the examination of these short biographies, we aim to reveal patterns of continuity and change in the ways candidates mobilise different identity markers (1) that betray their identification with Scottish national identity. Furthermore, we suggest that these patterns should be viewed in relation to the electoral trajectory of the party and to the ideological shifts in the SNP’s discourse about national identity over the period.

- (1) We use the term “identity markers” as defined in Richard Kiely et al., ‘The Markers and Rules of Scottish National Identity’, *The Sociological Review* 49, no. 1 (1 February 2001): 33–55.

Bio:

Emerence Hild is a third year doctoral student at the University of Strasbourg. Her research focuses on the issue of Scottish national identity from a political and nationalist perspective. In relation to her work she has published an article on the 2014 Scottish independence referendum in the journal *Etudes Ecossaïses*.

Rebekah Hoeks (University of Basel, MA student)

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“Once Upon a Time They Lived in Paradise”:

Disappearance and Displacement in Helon Habila’s *Oil on Water*”

In the 1950s, multinational corporations first undertook oil extractions in the Niger Delta. Oil protests and local communities demanding environmental justice marked the 1990s, after which armed conflict in the region became most pronounced in the early 2000s. In his notion of slow violence, Robert Nixon (2011) brings together environmentalism and postcolonialism. The term captures a violence that occurs gradually and silently, with an impact that is delayed and dispersed across time and space. In the particular instance this paper focuses on, the victims of such violence are the people living in the area of oil extraction; the villagers who are forced to leave their homes in search of safety and better living conditions under the pressure of oil companies, of the military, and of rebel groups. They are discounted as political agents and become invisible as the violence inflicted upon them often also remains unseen and unspectacular. Slow violence depends on the social hierarchies and injustice already in place, as the ones suffering from it do not have a voice. When *Oil on Water*’s protagonist, a young journalist, ventures into the dense and murky waterways of the Niger Delta to interview a kidnapped woman, he finds life has disappeared. Nature is suffocating from oil spills and ghost towns line the river banks. In Helon Habila’s novel, the displacement of the people in the Niger Delta and the slow violence inflicted upon them becomes visible precisely through the depiction of disappearance and the expression of voicelessness.

Bio:

Rebekah Hoeks is a graduate student in English and Anthropology at the University of Basel. Her research interests include postcolonial, dystopian, and anthropological narratives. She is currently writing her Master’s thesis on informal saving schemes and their impact on women’s social life in an urban setting of Burkina Faso.

Laura Housay (University of Strasbourg, Master 2)

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“From ‘tough-on-crime’ To ‘smart-on-crime’:

Making Sense of Georgia’s 2013 Juvenile Justice Reform”

Advisor: Ghislain Potriquet

Mass incarceration in the United States is a problem that cannot be ignored. Although the correctional population has declined steadily since 1993, it remains very high: with 2.6% of the adult population behind bars, the US ranks first in the world.

To rid the US of that embarrassing title, reforms have been experimented by State and Federal governments. A particularly interesting case is that of Georgia, a State regarded as a pioneer among southern States. In 2013, the “Peach State” enacted a reform of its juvenile justice system (House Bill 242), an initiative of its Governor Nathan Deal. To use Deal’s own words, Georgia moved from a “tough-on-crime” to a “smart-on-crime” policy. While legislators are usually reluctant to lower sentencing requirements and / or dig deeper into taxpayers’ pockets – with their reelection in mind – the Georgia legislature has worked in a bipartisan spirit, under the leadership of Governor Deal. It succeeded in reconciling fiscal and law-and-order imperatives. The 2013 reform has had encouraging results so far – a 33% drop in number of committed juveniles between 2013 and 2016, to cite but one example. This study shall attempt to account for such remarkable legislative change and its implications for southern conservatism.

Bio:

After completing a Bachelor's degree in English at the University of Strasbourg, Laura Housay worked on the California prison reform for her first year Master thesis. Coming back from a year abroad as a teaching assistant in North Carolina, she's now focusing her thesis research on Georgia juvenile justice reform.

Kamel Igoudjil (UHA Mulhouse, PhD student)

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“Cultural Hybridity in John McGahern’s Fiction”

Advisor: Sämi Ludwig

John McGahern, one of the eminent Irish novelists, has produced a significant body of literature that has sustained the interest of many literary critics. Based on Bakhtin and postmodern theories, this paper explores the notion of hybridity in McGahern's fiction. While criticism has yet to study his work from a dialogic/hybrid perspective, *The Barracks* reveals two types of narrative discourse: the religious world and the secular world. Writing as a displaced writer—however connected by education, McGahern scrutinizes the socio-cultural predicament of the marginalized in the once colonized Ireland. Thus situated in a Third Space, he resists the dominant culture through subverting its controlling structures using social diversity. McGahern also writes against the postcolonial condition by attributing a dominant position to the subaltern.

Drawing on Bakhtin's theory, I explore the dialogic imagination as a form that works to reclaim a space for the subaltern voice. McGahern, born in Ireland, writes in English not only to answer back to the dominant discourse but also to the oppressive discourse held by the English culture *vis-à-vis* the Irish culture. Like other postcolonial authors, he focuses on the cultural hybridity of the national space, the importance of which must be recognized as an asset to postcolonial spaces. A close reading of *The Barracks* reveals the characters' desire for autonomy in an oppressive society.

Keywords:

Modernism, John McGahern, Dialogism, Mikhail M. Bakhtin, Homi K. Bhabha, Formalism, Irish Culture, Language, Linguistic Hybridity, Postmodernism, Representation, Third Space

Bio:

M. Kamel Igoudjil is currently a full-time faculty member in the Washington, DC Public School System. For the past fourteen years, he has been teaching English/AP Language, Literature and Composition courses. He is a Table Leader for the AP English Language exam. He is also a Graduate Adjunct Instructor at American University. Igoudjil is editor of *The Global Rise of Indigenous Languages Symposium* (Jendouba University, Tunisia, 2015) and *International Conference Proceedings on Creating Myths as Narratives of Empowerment and Disempowerment* (Individual Contributors, 2016). He recently published “Rethinking Multiculturalism: Critical Pedagogy and Critical Literacy in Education” (Cambridge Scholars, 2017). His research and teaching interests are in literary and cultural studies, multicultural studies, modern/postmodern narratives, postcolonial studies, comparatives studies, and critical literacy. He has published extensively on the Algerian and Francophone literature of the twentieth century as well as on Native American literature and contemporary Indian-American literature. He is currently working on a Ph.D. dissertation on “The Poetics of Hybridity in Postmodern Literature: the Case of John McGahern, Anita Desai, and Elizabeth Nunez.”

Francesco Jannetta (University of Basel, MA student)

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Hard-boiled in the Daytime: Sisyphean Behaviour of Proto-typical Patriarchal Masculinity in Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and Matthew Weiner's *Mad Men* (2007-2015)

Recently, the #metoo movement forcefully indicted sexual harassment based on toxic masculinity. Inspired by the movement, Gillette has issued a new advertisement campaign affirmatively addressing the issue by rephrasing its slogan to "the best men can *be*". These are just two recent and particularly salient examples of the ongoing deconstruction of problematic gender norms aiming to establish a more inclusive understanding of gender. At the same time, the demand for "macho" heroes like James Bond and similar characters is hardly on the wane. Indeed, icons of masculinity like Ernest Hemingway, many of his male protagonists, and *Mad Men*'s Don Draper are still subject to male imitation, as a brief Google search will prove. Hemingway, his characters, and Draper are all displayed as prototypical men, fit for emulation.

This paper offers a different perspective on some of Hemingway's male protagonists and *Mad Men*'s Don Draper. While many interpretations depict them as affirming machismo, I contend that they actually offer a critique of toxic masculinity. While Draper and Hemingway's characters appear to construct an image of untouchable masculinity, they also critique this very image and raise questions concerning the nature and effects of machismo and masculinity. For example, Jake Barnes, the protagonist of Hemingway's first novel *The Sun Also Rises*, faces difficulty living a "male life" due to a genital injury suffered in war; and confident Don Draper has to negotiate his male existence based on identity theft motivated by a past personal insecurity. Thus, the stories of Barnes and Draper dissent from common codes of masculinity and reveal machismo as a "supreme fiction."

Bio:

Francesco E.A. Jannetta is currently studying for a Master of Arts degree in English and History at the University of Basel. His research interests are general American literature, indigenous literatures, narrative techniques, and masculinity.

Kai Kehrer (Freiburg University, MA student)

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"Storytelling in Video Games: A Better Way of Categorizing Video Games"

The increasing "importance and complexity" of stories in video games (Domsch, 14) highlights that there seems to be an "elective affinity (rather than necessary union)" between stories and video games (Ryan, 183). The argument is that due to their affinity, the connection of story and gameplay leads to a more meaningful engagement with both. In other words, stories are not necessary for a game, but combining gameplay and story creates an overall better gaming experience. Implied in this argument is an assumption that a video game is better the more story and gameplay are interconnected.

However, not all video games require storytelling. On the contrary, it might even be detrimental to the overall gaming experience. Based on this counter-argument, this paper will present a categorization of different types of video games based on how they use narrative elements to tell stories. It will analyze how narrative elements are used in each of the three categories, with the overall aim of creating an explanation of why a different types of game use different kinds of storytelling. It is also meant to serve as a guide of what narrative elements to expect in these game types, how they are generally used, and what possible issues

may come with each kind of storytelling. It attempts to create distinct categories that are independent of genre and can be meaningfully used for analyses of video games.

This classification will show that while storytelling in video games has a wide spectrum, there are similarities that can be distinctly assigned to different types. Its purpose is to be useful to scholars who want to work with video games, but also be potentially used by game developers to critically discuss what kind of storytelling to use in their video games.

Bio:

Kai Kehrer is an M.A. student in British and North American Cultural Studies at the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg. He holds a B.A. in English Philology and Political Science from the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg. His current research interests include representations of gender and race in video games and video games as narrative media.

David Laeuli (University of Strasbourg, Master 2)

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“An Introduction to the Study of Memetic Image Macros”

Advisor: Lyndon Higgs

Technological innovations have always had a great impact on many aspects of our daily lives, from the way we travel to the way we communicate. More recently, with the emergence of the World Wide Web, new forms of communication have spread rapidly online, capitalizing on the possibilities offered by Information Technology (IT). Among these are Internet memes, a phenomenon that has not yet been fully described. This presentation will begin by attempting to provide a satisfactory definition of the term by confronting its origins with its contemporary developments. Then, using a framework for their theoretical analysis, I will attempt to establish a clear classification of the many subcategories of Internet memes, while highlighting some methodological issues that arose throughout the development of my research. I will go on to show how Internet memes are deeply rooted in popular culture and anchored in communities; more than linguistic and communicational objects, they are social and referential tools. My presentation will end with a brief overview of future perspectives.

Bio:

David Laeuli is currently completing his 2nd year of the Master's Programme at the University of Strasbourg. He spent one year as a language assistant at Lebanon Valley College, Pennsylvania on a Fulbright scholarship. He completed his undergraduate studies in English at the University Lyon 2 and the University of Strasbourg. Before that, he tried his hand at studying medicine. He is interested in internet culture and marginal linguistic forms.

Wei Li (UHA Mulhouse, MA student)

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“The Woman Warrior—Critical Readings in China and in the West”

Advisor: Sämi Ludwig

Maxine Hong Kingston became the first Asian-American writer famous in the field of American literature in the late 1970s and has since been reported to be the most widely read and taught living American author. Her work attracts critical attention in the West because her creative genius challenges many Chinese stereotypes. Meanwhile, for the past 30 years, a hot wave on the study of Asian American Literature has started in China, and Kingston's work, especially *The Woman Warrior*, enjoys the spotlight and a great interest in Chinese criticism.

Though it started late, the development of the study of Kingston has roughly gone through three stages in China, i.e., the first stage from 1980s till the end of 20th century, the

second stage from 2000 to 2004, when 41 articles were written about *The Woman Warrior*, and from 2005 till now, when more than 400 articles have been written about Kingston and her work, raising various questions. For example, in *The Iron Curtain of Language—Maxine Hong Kingston and American Orientalism*, literary critic Lin Jian analyzes the language used in Kingston criticism and urges us to “recognize the institutional power, and also, the historicity of academic discourse in relation to the official discourse—the language our White House uses in conducting our diplomatic dialogue with China and Asian nations.”

In my paper, I will choose some representative articles from the second and third stages which can present the Chinese perspective on Kingston’s work, and compare them with the Western approach so as to elaborate their differences. This leads to a discussion about the critical fashions in both camps based on different ideological backgrounds and about long existing intercultural misunderstandings of both sides on this novel and its author. The varied readers’ responses to Kingston’s work can be studied as a dialogue between two cultures and the differences in critical sensibilities, fashion and ideological domination.

Keywords:

Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior*, American Orientalism, concrete language, Chinese reception, critical fashions, intercultural misunderstandings, ideology

Bio:

Wei Li completed her Bachelor degree in English in China and she is currently a second-year Master student at the University of Haute-Alsace. Interested in Asian-American Literature, she worked on a Korean American writer, Chang Rae Lee, for her first year, and she is now working with her supervisor on Maxine Hong Kingston and *The Woman Warrior*. Her MA thesis is entitled *Critical Readings of The Woman Warrior in China and in the West*.

Zahra Maleknia (Freiburg University, PhD student)

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**“Meeting the Needs of Syrian Adult Learners in Germany:
a Guideline for Teachers to Help Syrian Immigrants to Succeed in their
Language Learning Experiences”**

Migration is a large-scale, global phenomenon, with growing numbers of people leaving their home countries. There are a great number of reasons intensifying this trend and consequently making immigration a more everyday phenomenon and subject. One of the countries that has recently accepted rather a large number of immigrants, specially Syrian war migrants, is Germany. Considering the point that these immigrants come from a rather different cultural, religious and social background, to help them integrate faster cooperation of the respective forces in society is elementary. The education system plays perhaps the most significant role. This paper tries to help general and special educators to better relate to Syrian immigrants by bridging cultural and learning style gaps. The main aim of the paper is to identify the educational needs of these immigrants specifically in language learning settings. An understanding of immigrants’ learning needs based on cultural and learning style differences help teachers develop practices facilitating learning processes. Interviews and questionnaires are used for needs analyses. There is also an attempt to offer a number of suggestions for assisting Syrian immigrants in reaching their full academic and social potential while promoting a self-assured cross-cultural sense of identity.

Bio:

Zahra Maleknia is a master student at university of Freiburg majoring at British and North American Cultural studies. I have done my master thesis in the area of heroism in disaster

situations. My areas of interest include – but are not limited to – visual Culture, cultural diversity (East -West dialogue), cultural psychology and emotional perception across cultures, migration studies , race, gender and migration studies, interdisciplinary fields of media , culture and education .

Abdelkrim Megrous (UHA Mulhouse, MA student)

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“The Role of Protest Songs in Building the American Radical Left in the First Half of the Twentieth Century: Joe Hill and Woody Guthrie”

Advisor: Sämi Ludwig

Music has long been a means to raise awareness on social, political and cultural issues. Yet, the influence of songs on the collective mind has been all but neglected in academic research and teaching—as opposed to visual art, for example, which is gaining more interest.

During the twentieth century, singer-songwriters have played an important role in America not only as ideological influencers but also in recording history and culture in their verses. Joe Hill and Woody Guthrie are critical figures whose songs transcended and continue to transcend time. Both of them wrote protest songs for different reasons and according to the actual circumstances: for Hill it was workers’ unionism while for Guthrie it was the Dust Bowl.

My interest is not just to provide a description of these events through song lyrics but to discuss the literary and musical content and context which made these protest singers major contributors to the popular counterculture of the Left in the United States and made them influence many other song writers worldwide. Thus the definition of a “protest song” seems somehow reductive because, according to the above cited songwriters, it is not just the result of observing an outside phenomenon, and then writing verses and delivering them with a melody for the purpose of mobilizing people; it is also the other way around, that is, a matter of introspection connected with their lives and personal experiences, of writing down ideas and proposing them to the outside world, with the purpose of building a way of thinking...

Keywords:

Protest songs, Joe Hill, Woody Guthrie, counterculture, rhetoric, social movements, lyrics, introspection, Marxism, poetry, left-wing

Bio:

Abdelkrim Megrous obtained his MA degree in “English for Specific Purposes” from the University of Béjaia in Algeria in 2011 and started teaching in a private language school. Four years later, he moved to Alsace in France. At the moment he is a Master 2 research student at UHA. He plays the guitar and is interested in folk music.

Juliette Misset (University of Strasbourg, PhD student)

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“Lesson Learned and/or Beauty Seen: Student Responses to Didactic Novels, 1798-1811”

Advisor: Anne Bandry-Scubbi

The act of reading has received much scholarly attention in the past decades in a variety of research disciplines such as cognitive science and education, which tends to agree on the difficulty of studying reading in all its complexities. Sociological studies of groups of readers with the aim of investigating so-called “real readers” also exist (Radway 1991, Swann and

Allington 2009), focusing on how participants process and respond to texts that may or may not be literary. This paper will present a study of written responses to literary texts of first-year students enrolled in a general British literature class in the fall of 2018 as part of their Humanities program requirements. The study forms part of a doctoral dissertation on a corpus of 18 didactic novels published between 1778 and 1814 in Britain and aims to investigate students' reception of the didactic mode in passages from three British novels of the turn of the nineteenth century deemed didactic by critics at the time of their publication, Maria Wollstonecraft's *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman* (1798), Hannah More's *Cælebs in Search of a Wife* (1808), and Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility* (1811). Whereas much critical work since the nineteenth century suggests that unequivocal didactic intent in a literary text is an impediment to aesthetic value, at this stage, findings suggest that these students, who unlike literary critics are "novice" readers of literature (Peskin 1998), were able to recognize straightforward didacticism in a text and still have strong aesthetic responses. Conversely, they found it more difficult to engage aesthetically with texts that are aesthetically charged but are otherwise more equivocal in tone and intent.

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Bio:

Juliette Misset is a second-year PhD candidate at the University of Strasbourg, where she also teaches. She is working on a dissertation entitled *Reading the British Didactic Novel, 1778-1814*, supervised by Pr. Anne Bandry-Scubbi. Her research focuses on the manifestation and reception of the didactic mode.

Adeline Murat (UHA Mulhouse, MA student)

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"To Hell And Back :

the journey of war photographer Finbarr O'Reilly in combat."

Advisor: Jennifer K. Dick

War never really ends for those who have lived through it and soldiers aren't the only ones who suffer from trauma and are made vulnerable by what they do and witness. Photo-journalist and war correspondent Finbarr O'Reilly testifies about his own experience of war when he was assigned to a US Marines squad in Afghanistan in 2010 and 2011 in the joint memoir *Shooting Ghosts*, co-written with his US Marine friend Thomas J. Brennan. O'Reilly recounts the struggles he encountered while working in a combat zone, where he risked his life as much as the soldiers he was photographing and had to carry the weight of photographing people brought to their most vulnerable.

Based on O'Reilly's testimony about the nature of war today and the long shadow it casts on everyone involved as well as the nature of his job, this talk will show that war is as much a traumatic experience for photo-journalists as for soldiers, even if war correspondents aren't active participants, because of the heavy emotional toll it takes on them and also because of the traumatic events they're forced to witness while being unable to help.

Key words:

war photography – Finbarr O'Reilly – trauma – Afghanistan – testimony - witnessing

Bio:

Adeline Murat is 22 years old. She decided to work on something related to the military and combat because it is a topic that has always interested her and that she's always felt close to since a member of her family used to be in the army. This year, she wants to focus on war correspondents rather than on soldiers in order to explore something new and a bit less heard of. Other than that, she also enjoys drawing and music in my free time.

Elise Ottavino (University of Strasbourg, Master 2)

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“Reading Mina Loy”

Advisor: Andrew Eastman

“The blank space is not merely an element in a graphic code, in which it would reliably signify silence.” This statement, formulated by Jed Rasula in an article entitled “Understanding the Sound of Not Understanding,” seems particularly meaningful in the context of Mina Loy’s poetry. Blank spaces are one of the most recognizable features of her work as they fragment language in a way that destabilizes the reader and interferes with the deciphering of the poems. In a broader sense, Loy’s typographical practices cannot be overlooked; they disrupt the fluent reading of the poems.

In Mina Loy’s poems, the reader is confronted with gaps of various types. The spaces on the page, along with other syntactic ambiguities, not only make oral recitation problematic, but also create conceptual gaps, challenging traditional reading processes.

These gaps draw attention to the very act of writing. In Loy’s poems, typography creates new ways of meaning that lead to new ways of reading on the reader’s part. More than simply undermining the reader’s ability to read the poetic text, the gaps expand the semantic values of the poetic texts to make multiple levels of reading possible.

We could suggest that what is at stake with Mina Loy’s typographical practices is reconceiving the activity of the reader. Consequently, this paper will look at how Mina Loy subverts the space of the page in order to reassign roles.

Bio:

In 2016, Elise Ottavino completed two Bachelor’s degrees, in English and in Italian, from the University of Strasbourg, before starting her first year of Master’s degree with a thesis project on Mina Loy. After a year abroad in Worcester, Massachusetts, she is now finishing her thesis on the same author.

Paul Poillet (UHA Mulhouse, MA student)

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“The Early Modern English Translations of Marc-Antoine Girard de Saint-Amant: A comparative analysis of Saint-Amant’s *La Solitude* (1617) with two of its contemporary translations”

Advisor: Laurent Curelly

In the late 1610s, young French poet and musician Marc-Antoine Girard de Saint-Amant traveled to Belle-Isle to stay with one of his most notable patrons, the Duke of Retz. There, at the age of twenty-three, he wrote *La Solitude*, an allegorical perambulation of two hundred lines through a dream-like countryside. Though written early in his life, it became one of his most famous pieces. This pastoral demonstration of his talent for lyricism is an ambivalent anticipation of his future personal style, which was worldlier, molded by his travels around

Europe and his growing passion for feasts, fights, and alcohol. Later in his life, this prominent “poet-drinker” of Early Modern France went on to become a Gentleman of the Polish Queen and one of the very first members of the *Académie Française*.

Over forty years after its publication, two English translations of Saint-Amant’s *Solitude* were simultaneously composed by Lord Thomas Fairfax and Lady Katherine Fowler Philips as part of their writing routines. The translation of the retired general of the British Civil War, along with Fairfax’s taste for melancholic poetry, escaped public knowledge until his manuscripts were unearthed in the Bodleian Library in Oxford in 1858. As for the English poetess, also known as “Matchless Orinda,” she spent most of her adult life writing verses until her untimely death at the age of thirty-three. She used *La Solitude* as an exercise for her later translation of Pierre Corneille’s *La Mort de Pompée*.

The objective of this research is to compare Saint-Amant’s original poetry with the translations carried out by his contemporaries and to offer interpretations of their deviations. These stylistic choices can be analyzed and classified according to the identities of the English translators as poets and artists. Hence, this research offers an *interpretative* view of translation rather than approaching it as a rational, mechanical process.

Keywords:

Marc-Antoine Girard de Saint-Amant, *La Solitude*, translation theory, Early Modern period, linguistics, history of ideas

Bio:

Paul Poillet is a post graduate student and amateur writer from the English department of Mulhouse who studies internet culture oft he alt-right, translation theory and early modern poetry.

Balazs Rapzscak (University of Basel, PhD student)

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“‘Mysterious affair, electricity’: Samuel Beckett’s Media Theatre”

This paper outlines a case study of a Beckett piece that has fallen into relative critical neglect, *Rough for Theatre II*, to ask questions about the specific potential of theatrical forms in observing the operation and withdrawal of media. The play, which revolves around a suicide, has mostly been praised for its vaudeville humour and thus leaves much to be said. Instead of a hermeneutic reconstruction, however, which the play itself parodies, I will respond to the script’s invitation to look at the historical context of its genesis. While unfolding the implicit juridical and angelological discourses of the piece, we will touch on issues such as the technical history of lighting, the changing configuration of human, animal, and machine languages during the early years of digitization, the first artificial intelligence projects of the CIA and the NSA, and questions concerning worldwide energy supply in the context of the catastrophic imagination of the late 1950s. The talk will attempt both to demonstrate the relevance of these seemingly disparate elements and to establish a connection between them, while reading the play as a complex reflection on the media ecology of its time.

Bio:

Balazs Rapzscak is a PhD candidate in Anglophone Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Basel, writing a dissertation on the Beckettian media play. He is co-editor of *Beckett and Media*, forthcoming with Manchester University Press in 2020.

Trystan Reynolds (University of Strasbourg, Master 2)

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“The Boundaries of the Human: A Study of Selected Works by Richard Matheson”

Advisor: Monica Manolescu

In the 1950s, the Cold War had set in and the rise of technology and science was at the centre of human progress. This is the background to the literary career of American science-fiction author Richard Matheson. In this thesis, I examine how Matheson sees the human condition and considers the boundaries beyond which humankind becomes something else.

In this paper, I will propose an interpretation of four of Matheson’s works: the novel *I Am Legend* (1954) and the short stories “Brother to the Machine”, “Steel” and “Lazarus II”. My analysis will explore the various genres such as the Gothic and science-fiction Matheson draws inspiration from, and the manner he reworks them for his own creations. I will then investigate the association between Matheson and the concept of the posthuman, taking in consideration the projection of society and the interaction men have between themselves and the new forms of Otherness. Finally, I will present the vision of the characters and how they experience the relationship between man and “evolved” versions of himself, depicting the boundaries that exist between Man, his body and his psyche.

The aim of this paper is to examine how Matheson presents progress as a device that will lead to the uncontrollable transformations of man. The paper also contributes to a modern approach of science-fiction texts, by showing how the Gothic genre merges with the more contemporary concept of posthumanism.

Bio:

Trystan Reynolds has been studying at the University of Strasbourg since 2012 and spent a year in Leeds, England as a French assistant in 2016/2017. He wishes to become an English teacher and is interested in representations of the human in 20th century science fiction and fantasy literature.

Eva Rüska (Freiburg University, PhD student)

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**“Sustainability Processes in Rural Spaces of the US:
An Interdisciplinary Perspective on Governance and Culture”**

Rural spaces are exposed to the same world-spanning challenges of climate change, economic overturn, demographic changes, and their impacts on the resilience and well-being of communities (cf. Barton, Brown, and Swanson 2003). Yet, they are not regarded as places from which solutions to these arise. But rural communities are working to conserve the countryside as a home to vital as well as socio-culturally, economically, and environmentally distinctive communities. As such, they are part of sustainable development, a process – sometimes called the great transformation in a reference to Karl Polanyi’s work – which challenges the institutional foundations of our society and requires them, as much as cities, to find innovative ways to secure their existence in the 21st century. In fact rural development, particularly in the U.S. South, is a strategic action field (cf. Fligstein and McAdam 2012), whose roots date as far back as the New Deal. In strategic action fields, actors of all societal sectors, equipped with varying types and quantities of power, vie for the control over natural and human resources. Struggle for control of US Southern development has shaped a political landscape in which power and agency are allocated to non-state actors as much as the state and its regional / local representatives. An essential element that empowers actors and legitimizes actions is culture. Thought of as a repository for meaning, it is accessible (to

actors and research) in three different forms: for the amelioration of an actor's position within the field as cultural capital (cf. Kraus and Gebauer 2017); to ascertain an actor's legitimacy for action as cultural authority (in adaptation of Avant, Finnemore, and Sell 2010); and as a resource of rules and practices in form of institutionalized culture. How these play out in the special case of Appalachian regional development will be the focus point of this presentation

Bio:

Funded by the Andrea von Braun Foundation, Eva Rüskamp currently pursues interdisciplinary research in Cultural Studies, Environmental History and Governance at the University of Freiburg. Her work with the German Rural Women's Association adds a practical side to her research. Eva holds a M.A. from the HU Berlin in American Studies and a B.A. from the University of Freiburg. She has studied abroad in France and the US, including a recent Visiting Scholarship with the Department of Sociology at the University of Tennessee, which reinforced her passion for ecojustice and education. Starting in summer term 2019, Ms. Rüskamp will be teaching at the English Department and take on a position as coordinator of the University's Service Learning Program.

Sofie Sabbioni (University of Basel, MA student)

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“A Bhabhaesque Reading of

James Weldon Johnson's *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*”

James Weldon Johnson's *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man* quite overtly subverts the supposedly natural dichotomy between black and white racial identity. The fair-skinned protagonist grows up believing himself to be white and only learns in school that his mother is a former slave and he, in Jim Crow America, thus legally black. This gives him the opportunity to embrace a hybrid identity, a state of what Homi K. Bhabha terms “in-betweenness.” This fluidity is also visible in the protagonist's actions. A professional pianist, he is the first to make ragtime transcriptions of classical music and thus merges European and African American elements into a new musical form. Both his identity and musicality can be read in terms of Bhabha's concepts of “hybridity” and “third space.” Hybridity is the protagonist's means of survival as well as an economic necessity while his music opens up a third space which enables other knowledges to enter the colonial discourse. Both hybridity and the opening up of a third space undermine colonial notions of essentialist and stable racial categories. When witnessing the lynching of a black man by an angry white mob, however, the protagonist realizes that his fluid identity will not protect him from white supremacy. He then decides to pass for white in a mocking and ironic way that closely mirrors what Bhabha calls “mimicry,” a form of resemblance that is menacing and thus disturbs colonial authority. It is because the protagonist eventually ceases to see his passing as a joke and gives up his hybrid identity that he feels he has sold his birthright.

Bio:

Sofie Sabbioni is an MA student in Slavic and Anglophone Literary Studies at the University of Basel. Her research interests lie in postcolonial studies, narratology, formalism, and feminism. She is about to start working on her MA thesis, in which she will compare post-imperial readings of Russian and American literature.

Lina Schmid (University of Basel, MA student)

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“Sentimentalism and Beyond

– *The Underground Railroad* and Postmodern Affect”

Throughout literary history, female writers were often associated with the power and effectiveness of emphasizing feelings in fiction. Yet, such writers, referred to as sentimentalists, were often despised and accused of exaggeration. During the 20th century literary scholars tried to reclaim sentimental literature in order to secure its place in the literary canon. I want to continue this tradition of reclaiming sentimentalism both as an effective literary technique and as a valuable concept for cultural critique. In his recent slave narrative *The Underground Railroad*, Colson Whitehead makes use of sentimentalism and combines it with postmodern irony, which eventually results in a hybrid form that evokes sympathy but also urges the reader to reflect on their emotional investment. The author thus manages to negotiate between a sentimental and a postmodern, ironic representation of slavery. This “reflected sentimentalism” achieves a far more profound questioning of race relations than any straightforward critique would.

Bio:

Lina Schmid is currently completing her BA in English and History at the University of Basel. Her main interests include approaches that combine her two fields of study such as critical race theory and postcolonial studies. In her research, she focuses on contemporary African American literature, the history of slavery, and the Civil Rights Movement.

Julie Soares (University of Strasbourg, Master 2)

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“A Study of Verbal Interactions In the Sitcom *Friends*”

Advisor: Catherine Paulin

Verbal interactions between two or more participants lead either to the transmission of information or to the improvement and sometimes to the deterioration of the social relations between them. The interactional aspect of verbal interactions (Brown and Yule, 1983: 2-3), as opposed to the transactional aspect only is at the core of this study on verbal interactions between the characters in the sitcom *Friends*.

The decision to work on this topic was triggered by the recurrence of certain conversational patterns that engender an improvement of the social relations among the protagonists of the sitcom and a deterioration of their relations with the outside world. In addition, the sitcom provides a large enough corpus for the collection of recurring phenomena and their study in context.

The main claim of this research is that certain linguistic strategies, such as the use of ‘phatics’, which Kerbrat-Orecchioni refers to as conversational gap fillers (1990: 18), or the use of compliments serve a certain socializing aim, which Giles describes as ‘convergence’ (2016: 13). On the contrary, other linguistic strategies, such as the use of negative adjectives and nicknames, referred to as ‘relationèmes horizontaux’ by Kerbrat-Orecchioni (1996: 42), serve the opposite purpose and are the cause of ‘divergence’ (Giles, 2016: 13) between the participants of a conversation.

Relying on Grice’s Maxims of conversation, Giles’ Communication Accommodation Theory, and the notions of politeness and ‘face’ developed by Goffman, Brown and Levinson, and Kerbrat-Orecchioni, the objective of this research is to study the types of verbal exchanges that reinforce convergence between the protagonists and those that cause divergence between the protagonists and the outsiders.

Bio:

Julie Soares graduated in 2017 in Strasbourg after a year in Glasgow as an Erasmus student. She decided to continue her studies with a Master's degree and to specialize her research on the field of linguistics.'

Michelle Thompson (Freiburg University, PhD student)

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“A Narratological Approach to Anthropological Research?”

This paper delves into initial questions pertinent to my anthropological research within the graduate school of Factual and Fictional Narration. Using examples from social science research processes and my own fieldwork, I interrogate if, or to what extent, anthropological research can be approached from a narratological perspective. I look not only at the (narratological) analysis of narratives, but also what role(s) narrative(s) play in how (my) research is conducted and presented in the written form. I then discuss the emerging areas of inter-medial and interdisciplinary narratology and their possibilities for anthropological research, paying particular attention to notions of factual and fictional narratives.

Bio:

Michelle Thompson is a first-year PhD candidate and research assistant in the interdisciplinary graduate school of “Factual and Fictional Narration” at the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität in Freiburg, Germany. She is a Canadian scholar and has been living in Germany for the past four years. Her current research focuses on the intersections of narration (stories), imagination, and collective memory with a focus on “Indian” narratives in Canada and Germany from North American Indigenous perspectives.

Bahar Un (Freiburg University, MA student)

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“Wasted Lives:

Representing Female Migrants in the Context of Ireland’s Globalisation”

Towards the end of the last century, Ireland witnessed a remarkable transformation from a homogenous emigrant sending nation to a multicultural society. Many works of contemporary Irish literature respond to the reality of ethnically diverse Ireland, representing migrant characters and their challenges from various perspectives. Also, these narratives reflect concerns and confusions of the Irish people surrounding race, nation and identity. The main argument of this research is that unlike immigration policies through which governmental bodies control and manage diversity in the form of numbers and statistics, literary productions handle the presence of individual immigrants creatively, and at the same time potentially interrogate paradigms of national identity. Especially, the presence of female migrants from Eastern Europe in the Irish state is regarded as a threat to the gendered construction of national identity. In broader terms, my analysis reflects in what ways and for what purposes female migrants are (mis-)represented in the works of Irish authors.

As these narratives focus on the experiences of first-generation migrants in contemporary Ireland, a detailed study of them provides a significant contribution for further research in migrant writing.

Bio:

Bahar Un is a student of British and North American Cultural Studies (M.A.) at University of Freiburg who loves to engage with travel writings, migrant literature and Irish culture.

Pius Vögele (University of Basel, MA student)

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“Stargates to Parallel Universes:

Yugen Blakrok’s Afrofuturistic Sonic Fictions”

This paper explores the work of South African Hip Hop artist Yugen Blakrok. Since her debut *The Return of the Astro-Goth* (2013), in itself an Afrofuturist title, as a return in a debut must come from the future, Yugen Blakrok steadily built an international underground following. She received considerable attention with the appearance on Kendrick Lamar’s soundtrack for the blockbuster feature film *Black Panther* (2018), which brought Afrofuturism into the international mainstream. Her second album *Anima Mysterium* (1 February 2019) is delving deeper into the cosmos and affirms her role as mythic sorceress, which becomes already apparent in song titles such as “Gorgon Madonna,” and is visualized conceptually in the video for “Carbon Form” with the use of veils, dark robes, and a crown of thorns. The ritual setting merges religious attributes from both the African and Western traditions and as such yokes together the ancient with the futurist when directly reflecting upon digital technology in “Picture Box.” The collaboration with *the* Afrofuturist Hip Hop legend Kool Keith on “Mars Attacks” further embeds the album in this tradition. As Afrofuturism is a concept mainly developed in the African diaspora, Yugen Blakrok’s South African perspective yields a distinct approach on all aesthetic levels (the lyrical, sonic, and visual). While all these characteristics are taken into account, the paper primarily focuses on Blakrok’s lyrics as they afford the most thorough basis for an analysis of the features that, despite Afrofuturism’s inherent interplanetary consciousness, distinguish Blakrok’s unique take on Afrofuturism.

Bio:

Pius Jonas Vögele studies Anglophone Literary and Cultural Studies and History at the University of Basel. Currently, he is working on his master’s thesis on Afrofuturism and South African Hip Hop. He is a student assistant at the Center of African Studies in Basel and at the FHNW in Brugg-Windisch.

Isabelle Wirth-Möckel (University of Basel, MA student)

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“Time on Edge: A Close Reading of Ali Smith’s ‘Brexit’-Novel *Winter*”

Exploring contemporary British society in her novels, Scottish writer Ali Smith approaches issues of society with a unique and multi-layered writing style. *Winter*, one of a series of four so-called “Brexit-novels”, engages in discourses of society not in a blunt but a more subtle way: while political issues surrounding Brexit and Trump’s presidency are expressed through the voice of the characters and could simply be pointed out as straightforward statements the novel makes, a close reading through the “lens” provided by one of Smith’s other works, *Artful*, helps uncover a more complex story of (individual as well as collective) identity, family and friendship, memories, and the blurring of time.

Artful describes what it calls “Edges” as disruptive, literary elements, and how readings of “Time” are possible beyond the linear. These descriptions point towards moments in *Winter* that provide a deeper sense of English society a few months after the Brexit-vote: time is fluent in the mind of an elderly lady being visited by a ghost and reminiscing about her past and present; lively discussions pierce through a silent and frozen winter landscape.

Moments like these constitute edges that break up the comfortable fluidity of time and space and are integral to how this novel contributes to what new historicists would call a “poetics of culture”: in its weaving through dreams and realities, *Winter* is a study of cultural and social practices in novel form leading to an understanding of contemporary dynamic political currents. In this sense, contemporary novels like *Winter* are not separate from current discourses in society; rather, they mirror, shape, and reinforce societal discourse at large, including discussions about political issues.

Bio:

Isabelle Wirth-Möckel is a second year Master’s student of English and Media Studies at the University of Basel. Her main research interests are British contemporary literature and how political issues are reflected in literary works.

Nicolas Wolff (University of Strasbourg, Master 2)

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“A Century of Remembrance:

Commemorating the Great War in New Zealand (1918-2018)”

Advisor: Pauline Collombier-Lakeman

On 11th November 2018 leaders from almost seventy countries attended the hundredth anniversary of the Armistice of the Great War in Paris. Governor-General of Australia Peter Cosgrove attended the ceremony but New Zealand, despite having fought alongside Australia during the war, was not represented. While some nations only joined the war effort after 1914 or left it prematurely, New Zealand fought it in its entirety, with its first operation occurring in Samoa in late August 1914 and its last intervention at the Belgium fortress town of Le Quesnoy in early November 1918. This extended period of fighting resulted in an enormous loss of lives and New Zealand suffered the highest casualty rate among all of the warring countries. I intend to study the prisms through which war remembrance has been undertaken over the century in New Zealand by relying more specifically on scholarly works such as Pierre Nora’s seminal *Lieux de mémoire*, first published in 1984. I will also examine local newspapers and letters exchanged between soldiers and their families as primary sources. The aim of my thesis is to look at the legacy of the Great War in New Zealand by exploring the ways in which the country remembers and commemorates the “war to end all wars” and how the conflict shaped national consciousness and memory.

Bio:

Nicolas Wolff is a Master's student at the University of Strasbourg in the English Department. After having completed a full academic year in Ireland as an Erasmus student, he returned to France to complete his degree on the History and Culture of the British Empire. His first year Master's thesis is entitled Examining the Battle of Passchendaele in the New Zealand press and he is currently working on Great War remembrance in New Zealand.

Anne Wurz (UHA Mulhouse, MA student)

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“The Painter Robert Motherwell as an Art Writer”

Advisor: Craig Hamilton

Often considered the most articulate and intellectual of the Abstract Expressionist artists, painter Robert Motherwell was a tireless spokesman for modern art. Through his association with Surrealist refugees in New York during the war years and his involvement as a book

editor and a contributor to numerous avant-garde magazines, Motherwell candidly transgressed borders and spaces framed by the ancient thought that artists know best and by the absence of critical and public recognition in which American abstract art developed from the late 1930s to the early 1950s. He made major writings by European modern artists available in English, reviewed exhibitions, taught and lectured, but his eloquent proselytizing would eventually generate complaints from peers and intellectuals alike, ranging from the reproach of “writing himself into history” to the observation that precisely his lucid analysis of Abstract Expressionism and modern art would preclude other interpretations.

This paper aims to showcase Motherwell’s oscillations between words and images as well as his activity as an advocate of American abstract art. Yet for all his love of poetry and literature (especially the French and Spanish arts), it seems that he never wrote poetry or unsolicited pieces, and that more personal writing projects were shelved and never completed.

Keywords:

Robert Motherwell – artists’ writings – Abstract Expressionism – modernism – painting – avant-garde magazines

Bio:

Anne Wurz is a second-year Master’s student at the UHA. After working many years as a graphic designer in the Upper Rhine trinational region, she decided to refocus on painting and to brush up her English. She studies the writings of American postwar painters, a research grounded in firsthand knowledge of American art in its original setting.

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