

Panel 1 (Vic Chapel): Femininity, Hysteria, Theatre

Claudia Ludwig, “Resurrecting Ophelia: Bringing Ophelia Back to Life in Young Adult Adaptations of Shakespeare’s Hamlet”

Abstract

Since 2000, a series of young adult novels based on Shakespeare’s Hamlet have been published: *Dating Hamlet* by Lisa Fiedler (2002), *Ophelia* by Lisa Klein (2006), and *Falling for Hamlet* by Michelle Ray (2011). These novels are each narrated by the character of Ophelia, and they all significantly alter her narrative, allowing her to survive her ‘death’ and imagining the directions her story might have taken had she outlived the plot of Shakespeare’s play. These modern adaptations of Hamlet serve as a supplement to the original text, providing explanations for the play’s many unanswered questions: What is the depth of the relationship between Hamlet and Ophelia? Is Ophelia truly mad or feigning madness? Does she really die or, like Juliet, only fake her death?

Focusing on Ophelia in adaptations of Hamlet is not a new phenomenon. Ophelia has been a character of cult-like worship since Hamlet was first performed. The difference is that while Ophelia is often preserved in popular culture as a dead or dying girl, in Fiedler’s, Klein’s, and Ray’s books Ophelia is resurrected and transformed from a meek and tragic character into a survivor, a strong heroine and an independent role model. In doing so, however, these authors remove the very elements of Ophelia that define her character. This paper will analyze the way in which Shakespeare’s Hamlet has been manipulated by modern authors and the effect that these adaptations have had upon interpretations of the original text.

Short Biography

Claudia Ludwig is a first year PhD student at Vanderbilt University. Her research focuses on early modern literature, with a special interest in Shakespeare’s works. She graduated with a BA from the University of Toronto in 2012 and an MA from King’s College London in 2014.

Shu Yang, “Pan Jinlian as Nora: the Femme Fatale Survives Modernity and Becomes Righteous New Woman”

Abstract

Defying the conception of the demise of tradition, the femme fatale is an undead motif that survives China’s modernity. This paper examines how Pan Jinlian, one of the most notorious femmes fatales in the history of Chinese literature, was translated into a new woman in Ouyang Yuqian’s 1928 play *Pan Jinlian*. It seeks to demonstrate how past literary forms survive through, rather than die out, in the new era, and how they come to coexist, converge, and cooperate with new realities. The traditional and negative not only survives, but also transforms to the modern and legitimate.

I read Ouyang Yuqian’s Pan Jinlian a key example of a text in which the author reworks

characteristics associated with traditional shrews and refigures them as positive and empowering aspects of the new woman. Reckoning Ouyang's updating of the Pan Jinlian story a process of rehabilitating rather than a complete reinvention, this paper looks in particular at how some of the traditional vices once associated with this licentious shrew survive and achieve new meanings in the play as they become modern virtues associated with an idealized, Nora-like new woman. Out of this rehabilitation, Ouyang even rewrites the ending of the Pan Jinlian story from a shrew's execution to a martyr's righteous death. Focusing on cultural, political, and sexual strategies that motivated Ouyang's rewriting, the paper reveals how this influential dramatist shifted the boundaries defining the redeemable and unredeemable aspects of the Chinese femme fatale for modern agendas concerning national survival and gender equality.

Short Biography

Shu Yang works on the productive refiguring of the shrew as part of the depiction of the new woman, with a focus on Republican China. Her dissertation "Grafted Identities: Shrews and the New Woman Narrative" looks from the suffragettes, the Nora(s), the new shrewish-wives, to the leftist new women.

Jenn Cole, "Overpainting Surviving Icons of Hysteria"

Abstract

Painted for the salon in 1887, Brouillet's *Un leçon clinique à la Salpêtrière* is an image that haunts our impressions of the history of madness. The painting was widely distributed in print publications in the late nineteenth-century and was well-known to the French populace. In the many novels written about Charcot's lectures, this scene in particular, of a patient collapsed into a doctor's arms in the hysterical sleep of hypnosis, inscribes itself repeatedly, generating a cultural memory trace of the hysteric as a woman subdued by the forces of masculine reason. But why does this image survive? Why is it this image of subdued woman that has scored our imaginations, when we know that the hysteric was also a subversive figure, a woman with a keen sexuality, a woman who screamed in the middle of Charcot's lectures, asserting her right to protest? This paper interrogates the reasons nineteenth-century French citizens found the Brouillet image so compelling, contributing to its survival as the iconic image of hysteria. The paper also seeks to disrupt the continuity of the image's iconic status, adding another painting, one that may better suit the hysterical patient – that of Manet's *Olympia*. Olympia repulsed the French public, who found her to lack the moral dignity and passivity of nudity. Instead, she was naked, looking back at the viewer, expressing sexual autonomy and self-possession. When Olympia enters into conversation with Brouillet's hysteric, what is revealed about nineteenth-century masculine anxieties about women? Can one impressionist image challenge Charcot's hysteria project, a project that nostalgically tried to create a woman who no longer existed in French society?

Short Biography

Jenn Cole is a PhD candidate at the University of Toronto's Centre for Drama, Theatre and Performance Studies. She is interested in inarticulacy, aporia, marginalia and lost things. She is currently working on hysteria in nineteenth-century performance, discursive power in medicine and what screaming can do. She is also an artist, choreographer and dance and movement practitioner.

Panel 2A (Vic 215): The Ends of Narrative

Roberta D'Souza, "The Unheard Voice in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*"

Abstract

My reading of R. L. Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* focuses on Henry Jekyll's *Statement of the Case* and what I believe to be the invasion of the hero's story by an altogether new commentary that functions as an "unheard voice" in the text. This "unheard voice" is an imperceptible and independent autobiographical act situated in and around a traditional fictional narrative system. The "unheard voice" occurs out of what Gerard Genette has termed the autodiegetic technique. Autodiegesis results from the reader's failure to perceive the presence of a voice that works according to "a freer logic and a more complex conception of 'personality'". Genette believes that this narrative technique is what marks an advanced form of a whole modern literature. Jekyll is indisputably the hero of the story he tells, and I reserve Genette's term autodiegetic for Jekyll's weaker presences, noting that "absence is absolute, but presence has degrees." Through a deconstruction of the generic parameters of spiritual and scientific autobiography, my paper will demonstrate how a voice without a body gets lost in the general environment of pessimistic and even demonic representations of voice. My grounding of Stevenson's narrative experiment in these genres of nonfiction will allow me to show how the "unheard voice" disassociates itself from all features that we use to define a unified narrative voice that belongs to the individual body with a set social station, religious position and human attributes. In short, I will argue that a voice goes unheard in Stevenson's text because we, as readers, choose to see but fail to hear.

Short Biography

Roberta D'Souza recently completed her thesis on Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. Her primary interest is in deconstructing something written in the Victorian era as not actually Victorian. A registered nurse who works with critically ill patients at the Montreal Neurological Hospital, she lives in Montreal with her two sons, Malcolm and Merrick.

Kaila Rose, "Survival and Autobiography: Byron's Ruination of Poetic Subjectivity in Childe Harold"

Abstract

Whether it's Keats's undead "living hand," Shelley's bursting phantoms and rotting Rousseaus, or Wordsworth's childlike self who will forever be haunted by his own death, the figure of the Romantic poet exhibits a particularly interesting—and problematic—textual body for addressing issues of subjectivity and survival. Autobiographical poetry becomes a unique site for working through anxieties associated with mortality. Coupling Neil Hertz's idea of the third-person narrative voice that acts as a guide through autobiographical poetry—some "other being"—with Paul de Man's discussion of prosopopoeia in the poetry of Wordsworth, I intend to argue that the use of this linguistic abstraction emphasizes the incompatibilities between a poet's attempt at self-expression, the text's solidification of the expression in language and print, and the reader's imaged idea of the relationship between those identities. The fragments of memory and experience remaining within a poem complicate a notion of poetic survival, as the textual self-representation often becomes a substitution for the poet himself. Nowhere is this more notable than in the texts of Lord Byron. Specifically, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* III and IV push the boundaries of autobiographical voices beyond their limits. Eventually desiring to stand "a ruin amidst ruins," Byron attempts to bridge and uphold the link between his voice and the text's "I." However, finding physical embodiment impossible, for himself or his personae, Byron turns his phantom-like "other Being" into a "tyrant spirit"—"his" voice that will remain within the printed lines of the text—whose "haunts" will share the shadows of ruins and remain, like the Colosseum, only a part of the past whole.

Short Biography

I am currently a graduate student at the University of Western Ontario. I completed my MA at the University of Oregon, taught Composition at the same institution, and I have recently come to Canada to pursue my PhD. I focus on British Romantic poetry and Literary Theory, specifically looking at issues of autobiography, subjectivity, ruination, and transgression.

Reed Clements (Dalhousie University), "Beckett and the Aesthetically Interterminal"

Abstract

Al Alvarez, reviewing Beckett's "trilogy" of novels—*Molloy*, *Malone Dies*, and *The Unnamable*—claims that Beckett achieves "a terminal vision, a terminal style, and, from the point of view of possible development, a work at least as aesthetically terminal as *Finnegans Wake*." Leaving aside the point that Beckett did in fact develop his style further for another thirty years, this claim misses a deeper engagement in Beckett's works with the possibility of the aesthetically terminal. The common narrative of Beckett the terminal minimalist who complements Joyce the terminal maximalist is appealing, but I argue that a closer reading of Beckett's style suggests not a terminal minimalism so much as a frustration with the inherent excess of writing at all. This is to say that any text is maximal insofar as it is entirely arbitrary and excessive compared to the silence that would accompany its nonexistence; therefore, Beckett makes manifest not the silence behind the possibility of language, but the experience of failing to reach that silence.

Thus he writes, in *The Unnamable*, that “The search for a means to put an end to things, an end to speech, is what enables discourse to continue.” Either there is an aesthetic terminus, beyond which experimental writing will not survive, or there is none, and experimental writing has no end to pursue: in this paradoxical space, I argue, Beckett writes about the pursuit of an end that will not come, and the inevitable survival that this futile pursuit ensures.

Short Biography

Reed Clements is an MA candidate in English at Dalhousie University. He works on modernism, experimental prose, and critical theory. He is especially interested in Irish writers, parody, and the representation of science in literature. His main goal this year is to persuade a group of disinterested first-year students that *Waiting For Godot* is hilarious.

Panel 2B (Vic Chapel): Queering the Body – Gender and the Imaginary

Alexander Baldassano, “Finding a place for the homo de utriusque sexus: Reading Through Ambiguity in the Book of Monsters and Beyond”

Abstract

The *Liber monstrorum de diuersis generibus*, a seventh- or eighth-century Anglo-Latin compendium, presents a highly anthropocentric view of the world, as it is framed with “those things which differ by a rather trifling amount from humankind.” Thus, the author proposes a view of the world in which that which is most humanoid is most believable, while increasingly hybrid and non-human bodies remain relegated to the margins of reality, if not totally excised.

Yet, the Liber’s approach undermines that assumed human centrality with its opening presentation of an homo...de utriusque sexus, an individual who has been translated variously as “a man of both sexes,” “an individual of either sex,” and other phrases hinging upon the ambiguities of translation. With this individual’s position at the forefront, the text calls attention to the slippery boundaries between who qualifies as human, with all its privileges and qualifications, and who doesn’t make the cut, thus intimating normative gendering as a primary concern in ordering the various inhabitants of the world.

By the fourteenth century, fragments of intersex lives were preserved in the court cases of John/Eleanor Rykener in London and Rolandinus/a Ronchaia in Venice, providing contemporary readers with tiny glimpses of how those humans might have experienced their own societies. In considering shifting views of the human body in relation to its surroundings, this paper seeks to approach questions of how medieval humans of ambiguous gender presentations not only survived while living in binarily sexed communities, but formed their own subjectivities despite threats of eradication.

Short Biography

I am a doctoral candidate in the English department at the CUNY Graduate Center. My work currently interrogates questions of the representation of ambiguously sexed or gendered individuals in the Middle Ages, and further, how those representations intimate individuals' formations of their own subjectivities.

Joshua Rivas, "The Prosthetic Pleasures of Guillaume Dustin"

Abstract

Recent debates in the academy have challenged the very foundation of the field of literary criticism. Bruno Latour (2004) has famously proclaimed that "critique [has] run out of steam." Thinkers from a wide variety of disciplinary backgrounds have been questioning the epistemological, ethical, political, and affective efficacy of the humanistic ideals at the heart of even purportedly post-humanist interpretative methods.

Guillaume Dustin's autofictional *Dans ma chambre* (1996) offers its reader an unabashed account of its HIV-positive narrator-protagonist's sex- and drug-fueled navigation of gay Paris. Through a "surface" reading of *Dans ma chambre* that draws upon proposed alternatives to "symptomatic reading" and the "hermeneutics of suspicion" (Sedgwick 2003; Ricœur 1970), this paper will argue both for the value of post-critical reading practices and for the rich conceptual promise of prosthesis for queer commentary and politics. A decided move away from the interpretive analytics of trauma, negativity, and lack toward a renewed attention to the roles of materiality, objects, and feeling in embodiment and being will allow for a richer and more productive literary criticism. Approaching the novel in this way will enable us to recognize that, even for the most precarious of subjects, the very rejection of a logic of self-preservation can paradoxically engender potent possibilities for novel modes of vitality, reproduction, and survival.

Short Biography

Joshua Rivas is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of French and Italian at Princeton University. His research interests lie in twentieth- and twenty-first-century French and Francophone (Canadian and Québécois) literatures, cultural studies, and feminist, queer and transgender theories, politics and cultural production and their intellectual histories in a transatlantic context.

Adina Balint-Babos, "Survival in Contemporary Writings on Art (from Didi-Huberman to Mavrikakis and Delvaux)"

Abstract

Georges Didi-Huberman's book *Survivance des lucioles* (*Survival of the Fireflies*, 2009) alludes to Walter Benjamin's concept of the "loss of experience" (p. 9), that was provoked by the repetition of collective catastrophes of the 20th century, which have transformed the present into a "minefield of ruins" (p. 12). Didi-Huberman suggests elevating this fall from grace with individual creativity, to new beauty, by turning this

decline into a vital resource. For, “closing oneself in the mourning of the archaic can paralyze the survival of the present” (p. 32). From Didi-Huberman’s reflection on what remains of our past, and on how we can preserve even what seems doomed to extinction, I will explore the question of survival in two contemporary essays on art and the AIDS period of the 1980s.

In April 2014, the Quebecois writer Catherine Mavrikakis published *Diamanda Galas*, a tribute to the American artist performer of Greek origin, Diamanda Galas – at the Montreal Publishing House Hélio trope, inaugurating a new collection, “Guerrières et Gorgones” (Warriors and Gorgons). At the same time and in the same collection, Martine Delvaux published a tribute to the American photographer Nan Goldin, in an eponymous essay. “What survives from/through artists who are prophets of the contemporary?”, inquires Mavrikakis. Acting on the tragedy of history and transgressing it, how can literature and art play with experiences of “survival” without necessarily working “to fix” them? What is at the heart of this link between anger, politics and the imagination, reaffirmed by Didi-Huberman in *Survivance des lucioles*? These are some questions that I will analyze in my talk.

Short Biography

Adina Balint-Babos (PhD 2009, University of Toronto) is an Assistant Professor of French Studies at the University of Winnipeg. Her academic research explores the intersections of modern and contemporary literature, cultural studies and the arts. She is working on a project entitled *Resonances in Contemporary Literature and Visual Arts in Eastern and Western Canada*.

Panel 3A (Vic Chapel): The Politics of Resistance

Claris Figueira, “Voices of the Undead: Mourning and Identity”

Abstract

This paper uses Judith Butler’s essay “Violence, Mourning, Politics” (2003) to discuss the interplay between issues of identity and mourning that arose in the aftermath of Argentina’s ‘Dirty War.’ First I examine how the physical and psychic torture of political prisoners under military dictatorship exploited their social vulnerability and constituted an attack on their identities. Prisoners were also denied personhood on a political level; they were officially ‘disappeared,’ occupying a spectral status that denied both their lives and their deaths.

Secondly, I use Butler’s concept of grievability to explore how the familial mourning of the *desaparecidos* resonates with a public sense of loss, and how this loss is crucial to a discourse of individual and national identity. The work of human rights groups, in particular the Mothers and Grandmothers of the Plaza de Mayo, takes loss as the starting point for transformative political action. Essentially two connected forms of loss are experienced; the loss of identity experienced by the *desaparecidos*, and the loss of a loved one experienced by their families. Butler writes that in mourning we experience not only the loss of the loved one, but a loss of ourselves as beings constituted

in part by that (now severed) relation. Nowhere is this experience more complex than it is for families of the disappeared, who partake in a mourning that is never finalized, in which the disappeared are never found. Through their campaigns the Mothers and Grandmothers engage the question of both personal and national identity in the wake of this loss, in a critical but constructive discourse rejects closure. Essentially, they ask the irresolvable question: “who are we, without them?”

Short Biography

I am an undergraduate student studying contemporary thought at the University of King's College in Halifax, NS. I recently published a paper on madness and literature in *Gnosis*, the journal of philosophy based at Concordia University, and am currently working on my undergraduate thesis. I grew up in British Columbia and love to write, snowboard, and play guitar.

Fouad Oveysy, “The Coffins: Sensory Deprivation and Surviving Prison in Iran”

Abstract

Throughout the 1980s the Iranian government resorted to a novel means of breaking down political prisoners who exhibited extraordinary resistance to ordinary methods of torture. This method was referred to as “the Coffins” and consisted of confining the existence of the prisoner to sitting inside an open coffin throughout the day – with eyes and ears covered from sight and sounds – and to sleeping inside it at night. Few prisoners survived the Coffins, with some of them enduring it for years before eventually falling apart. One of the survivors, in a recent unpublished PhD dissertation entitled 'Ethics of the Resistant Subject,' refers to the Coffins as “sensory deprivation chambers” and grounds the will to resist them in a desire for the survival of the “Other.” Ironically, sensory deprivation chamber is also the scientific name for a popular, technological component of the New Age culture commonly called a “float chamber,” which is used for relaxing the body throughout spiritual journeys.

In my paper I will examine surviving the Coffins in relationship to the journey inside a float chamber, often described by its proponents as a tool for surviving the onslaught of the modern, technological lifestyle. Working with Emmanuel Levinas’s concept of “There is...” that seeks to explain the embodied experience of the vanishing Cartesian subject of cogito, I will compare the biopolitics of either sensory deprivation chamber. I will demonstrate that in contrast to the “for-Self” experience of float chambers that ultimately reify the sovereignty of technology, it was precisely the political prisoner’s “for-Other” mode of resistance that allowed her to survive the vanishing and maddening experience of the Coffins.

Short Biography

Fouad Oveysy is a PhD Candidate at the Centre for Comparative Literature. Fouad is interested in the ethical and political implications of AI-augmented social media

technologies, such as the Google Glass. He seeks inspiration for his research in the works of Orhan Pamuk, Gertrude Stein and Francis Bacon.

Victoria Cate May Burton, “Responsibility for What We Cannot Control: Gunther Anders’s Ethics in Light of the Inevitable”

Abstract

“Hors limites pour la conscience” is the correspondence between philosopher Gunther Anders and Claude Eatherly, the pilot who surveyed the atmosphere of Hiroshima and gave an all clear for the atomic bomb to be launched. Anders suggests to Eatherly that his unshakable remorse shows there is hope that all other human beings have the capacity to recognize their agency in the deployment of complex technological systems where they are used as instruments of what I will call the machine-industry-military complex. Anders argues that technology has the function of distancing our actions from our sense of personal responsibility and works seemingly autonomously from human agency. If we accept these premises, then nuclear weapons are not within a society’s power to resist deploying indefinitely. Anders demonstrates his commitments to the world and to life by advocating for increased consciousness of these dangers with the goal of delaying what he theorizes to be inevitable: a global nuclear catastrophe. I propose to interrogate the kind of responsibility that is at work in this on-the-brink-of-annihilation philosophy. It is unusual in that it does not make a claim to requiring willpower or ethical norms. I will then relate Anders’ prophecy of inevitable doom and human responsibility to the threat of climate change today. We cannot say whether history now bears out Gunther Anders’ theory of the inevitability of nuclear weapons, but we can apply the lessons from his generation to our current judgments and our own prophecies of the future.

Short Biography

Cate May Burton is a Master’s student at Mount Saint Vincent University in Women and Gender Studies. She researches Freudian psychoanalysis and feminist thought, with emphasis on the work of Julia Kristeva. Her academic interests include French feminism, philosophy of community and modern literature. She loves to talk about the TV show *Girls*.

Gabriel Quigley, “‘Everyday I’m Capuling’: Parody and Subversion in Gezi Park”

Abstract

In an age wherein state control is increasingly regulated by discursive regimes of power, the survival of dissentious voices very often lies in the ironic or parodic subversion of the discourses that determine their marginality. This can be seen in the Gezi Park protests that began in 2013 after a small group of environmental activists sought to prevent the development of one of Istanbul’s last surviving green spaces into a shopping mall. The protest soon grew into an uprising that responded to a variety of concerns with the current party’s increasingly totalitarian control. The work of Bakhtin in his essays “Discourse in

the Novel” and “Forms of Time and Chronotope in the Novel” are helpful for analyzing the discursive machinery that enables parody to subvert dominant discourses. In these essays, Bakhtin begins by asserting the conflict of the utterance, that it is a “battlefield of different voices,” and that parodying dominant or “official” utterances permits the destabilization of their centrality. By also considering the role of the public space that Bakhtin articulates in these essays, his analyses can help understand the parodic rhetoric emerging from the Gezi Park uprising. The protestors, who adopted the term “capuler” after Prime Minister Erdogan’s accusations that they were “vandals, thugs”, also appropriated the penguin as a symbol for the movement after state media refused to cover the protests by playing documentaries about penguins on all television channels instead. By referring to other examples emerging from the uprising, I believe that a Bakhtinian account of the Gezi Park protests provides a model for understanding how voices of resistance can survive against the domination of official discourse.

Short Biography

Gabriel is currently completing his MA in Comparative Literature at the University of Toronto after completing his BA with Honors at the University of British Columbia studying English and Philosophy. Previous to this, Gabriel lived in Istanbul, Turkey for fourteen years. Gabriel’s research interests include queer theory, deconstruction, satire.

Panel 3B (Vic 215): Le testament de l’écrivain

Christiane Kègle, « Écrire en exil, survivre aux totalitarismes: Imre Kertesz »

Proposition

L'espace géopolitique de l'Europe de l'Est est marqué par deux formes de totalitarisme, le communisme et le national-socialisme, dont Tzvetan Todorov étudie les traits constitutifs, idéologiques et politiques dans *Le siècle des totalitarismes* (2010). Pour sa part, Imre Kertész, écrivain hongrois vivant en exil à Berlin, cherche à témoigner de son double traumatisme de l'effraction et de l'oubli engendré par ses deux expériences totalitaires : internement en camp de concentration et exil post-communiste. Bien que son œuvre narrative et essayistique soit marquée par le nihilisme, l'écrivain nous propose de réfléchir à l'expérience d'Auschwitz comme culture. Son internement au camp de Zeitz, (Être sans destin), son refus de la postérité (Kaddish pour l'enfant qui ne naîtra pas), ses difficultés à retrouver in situ, après des décennies les traces de l'expérience concentrationnaire (Le Chercheur de traces), son impossible non-oubli (Le Refus), tout cela interroge, à l'aune du spectre de l'Autre de la survie, le sens même de l'écriture testimoniale. Les thèmes abordés à partir de l'œuvre kertézienne seront les suivants : survivre à sa survie, traverser le désaveu de sa propre communauté d'appartenance, affronter l'exil, procéder à son « autoliquidation ». Notre lecture de l'écriture de la survie en exil chez Kertész s'appuiera sur l'herméneutique (Ricœur), l'analyse du discours (Benveniste, Kerbrat-Orecchioni) et la sémiotique narrative (Bertrand). Nous accorderons une attention particulière à l'effraction de la trace, de même qu'aux catégories sémantiques : /savoir/ vs /non-pouvoir/, /pouvoir/ vs /non-savoir/, dont les modalités

renvoient paradoxalement à une négativité positive et, inversement, à une positivité négative de la survie post-totalitaire.

Notice biographique

Christiane Kègle est professeure titulaire au Département des littératures de l'Université Laval, responsable du Groupe de recherche sur les récits de survivance (GRERÉS) et directrice de la collection «Mémoire et survivance» aux Presses de l'Université Laval. Elle enseigne les littératures française et étrangère des XXe et XXI siècles.

Kristopher Poulin-Thibault, « Le commerce (trans)sexuel : la survie d'une identité et d'une économie »

Proposition

Peu importe les lois mises en place par chaque nation pour la limiter et la contrôler, force est de constater que la prostitution perdure à travers l'espace et le temps. En effet, la profession la plus vieille du monde est toujours bien vivante aujourd'hui. Mais est-il temps de se poser de nouvelles questions? Les métarécits mettent de l'avant la prostituée qui parcourt les rues, déchues telle Marie-Madeleine qui attend son sauveur, vision quasi-rassurante pour la société. L'identité prostituée ne retire toutefois pas l'aspect binaire des genres présentés dans le commerce du sexe, bien au contraire : il en est souligné sans relâche puisque le sexe est le produit commercialisé, vendu et consommé. C'est ainsi que les travailleurs et travailleuses du sexe transgenres déstabilisent l'économie genrée du commerce sexuel bien ancrée dans la binarité traditionnelle du système genre-sexe.

Les personnes transgenres viennent ajouter leur voix, sous forme de leurs services, à une industrie établie depuis des millénaires, ce qui constitue un changement majeur dans l'histoire, puisque leur genre ne s'inscrit pas ou mal dans le système genre-sexe. Ce changement s'accompagne évidemment de plusieurs répercussions sur les personnes mêmes qui l'ont instigué. Il s'agit d'explorer, en combinant des analyses socio-historiques et des productions artistiques, quelques aspects de l'intersection entre le transgendérisme et le commerce sexuel. Certains de ces éléments incluent un risque exponentiellement accru à la violence et à une variété de crimes, un ostracisme double, une fétichisation, ainsi que la nécessité de payer pour des frais médicaux extrêmement élevés. Plusieurs personnes transgenres se tournent vers la prostitution comme seule option, pour leur survie et la survie de leur identité genrée, et en retour leur genre sexuel est influencé par la vente de leur sexe, formant un cycle inéluctable. Il s'agit donc ici d'une dynamique complexe centrale à cette analyse.

Notice biographique

Kristopher est à la première année du doctorat en littérature comparée à l'Université de Toronto. Sa recherche principale traite de représentations du commerce sexuel dans l'autobiographie contemporaine, à travers une perspective d'études du genre sexuel et queer.

David Azoulay, « L'œuvre de Maurice Blanchot en héritage: la pensée et l'écriture de la survivance »

Proposition

Par-delà sa disparition, Maurice Blanchot aura laissé, au sein du siècle qu'il a parcouru, la trace d'une figure mythique, celle d'un écrivain, qui, écrivant, se reconnaissait déjà comme mort. C'est à partir de cette scène centrale de *L'instant de ma mort*, où le narrateur-auteur évite de justesse d'être fusillé, que l'on peut retracer l'origine d'une telle posture spectrale : « Seul demeure le sentiment de légèreté qui est la mort même ou [...] l'instant de ma mort désormais toujours en instance. » Loin d'être simplement un moment d'extase face à la mort, cet instant-limite est aussi le lieu d'une stase temporelle à partir de laquelle s'ouvrira, pour Blanchot, un passage vers l'écriture littéraire. Écriture qui, vouée au désœuvrement, ne sera plus une représentation de la vie, mais bien plutôt l'expérience infiniment suspendue du mourir, de la *sur-vie* (ou encore de la *démourance* comme le conceptualisera Derrida).

Mais encore, s'il est possible de lire l'œuvre blanchotienne comme l'écho infini d'une *agonie interminable*, elle peut aussi se comprendre comme la mise en scène d'une poétique de l'écriture qui, justement, se déploie dans l'espace signifiant de la *survivance*.

Notre présentation individuelle aura pour but de mettre en relief la spécificité de la posture blanchotienne en regard de la poétique de la *survivance* qu'il invente à travers son écriture. Plus précisément, nous tenterons de saisir la spécificité de celle-ci à partir de ce Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe nomme la *patience amnésique*, à savoir cette manière particulière que prend Blanchot pour s'affranchir de sa mort déjà advenue.

Notice biographique

David Azoulay est un diplômé de l'université Mc Gill. Son mémoire de maîtrise portait sur le mythe d'Orphée comme modèle de l'écriture fictionnelle de Maurice Blanchot. Il poursuit ses recherches académiques sur la poétique et la politique de l'anonymat chez Maurice Blanchot en vue d'études doctorales.

Panel 4A (Vic Chapel): Melancholy Poetics and Redemptive Visions

Kevin Godbout, "Survival and the Archive: Walter Benjamin's Parisian Melancholies"

Abstract

The last decade of Benjamin's life was lived in exile. The archive was his home, both in terms of his time at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, but also of his preparation of the Passagenwerk materials. We do not know, or rather are never quite sure, how to categorize Benjamin's work: philosophy, art history, literary criticism, theology. His style as a prose writer and essayist betrays his unfulfilled literary/artistic aspirations. In the last years of his life, Benjamin was perhaps simply an archivist, but of a special type and disposition. Benjamin's melancholy objects were quotations and commentaries about

nineteenth century life in Paris, and his work was often frenzied and desperate. Both the survival of this nineteenth century life and Benjamin's own survival hung in the balance. Benjamin, as we know, did not make it past 1940. But in the ruins of his *magnus opus* and in the ruins of Benjamin's vision of Paris, one might find something which survives, something of an alternate prophecy for European history. Benjamin's nostalgia-laced reaching into the past, through the archive, served as a means to ward off a terrible present and perhaps assure the possibility of a future after the dark days of the Second World War. Benjamin's melancholy would not have been solely the theme, and effect, of these investigations and ruminations, but also the mental power and vehicle through which those investigations were made possible.

Short Biography

Kevin Godbout is a PhD Candidate in Comparative Literature in the department of Modern Languages and Literatures at the University of Western Ontario. His dissertation project is on melancholy and modernity, which includes readings of William Blake, Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin.

Mazalit Haim, “‘Melancholy Redemption’: Surviving the Pain of Disillusionment”

Abstract

The title of my paper is taken from a poem found in the archive of the Kabbalah scholar, Gershom Scholem. Expressing a “Zionist despair,” this poem was written but several years after the German-Jewish scholar immigrated to Palestine where he became a professor at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

Scholem who was called a “master of disenchantment,” and asserted himself as “one without illusions,” nevertheless, projected onto “Zion” a messianic desire of the utopian return of the Jewish people to their land, attaching a redemptive quality to the homecoming of the Jewish people. What was redemptive referred not only to aspects of nationality, but more importantly for him, reflects a personal preoccupation with narratives of self-return and coming of age.

However, when encountering Palestine of the 1920s and 1930s as a material reality, Scholem became increasingly disenchanted. This disenchantment led him to lose hope for divine intervention and was replaced by melancholia, a “utopian pessimism” as a way to survive a powerful disenchantment that mostly engendered by a narcissistic attachment to the place of “Zion.”

Reading Scholem’s poems and diaries, along with his major essays on Jewish messianism, I will trace the process of this disenchantment and its melancholic outcomes, and will meditate upon the attempts to survive when experiencing the pains of disenchantment. My reading will be mediated by theological thinking and the use of psychoanalytic concepts such as mourning, melancholia, narcissism and desire that can

serve to illuminate narratives of return, destruction and redemption in Jewish thought and literature.

Short Biography

I am a third year PhD student at the Hebrew and Judaic Studies Department at New York University, focusing on modern Hebrew literature and psychoanalysis. In my research, I deal with the relationship between a subject and a Place, and employ psychoanalytic concepts, such as narcissism, mourning and melancholia, especially in the context of Jewish thought.

Saharnaz Samaienejad, “Earthly Verses: Forough Farrokhzad’s Aesthetics of Eschatology”

Abstract

Reza Barahani in his article, *Joghrafiay e Zaval* [The geography of decadence], defines the catastrophic images of Forough Farrokhzad’s poem, *Ayehaye Zamini* [Earthly Verses], as images that scale the total vacuity of time, measure the weight of unbridled despair, and through an eschatological vision testify against the terrifying reality of decadence. This article seeks to show how the juxtaposed images of *Yawm al-Qiyāmah* [the Day of Resurrection] with fragmented historical images of present in *Ayehaye Zamini* [Earthly Verses], creates a new assemblage that focuses is on the idea of a perceived crisis in history while providing a modality of survival.

The proposed paper will argue that Farrokhzad’s melancholic poetic practice, like so many intellectual and artistic products of her time has a direct link to an actual historical catastrophe: The 1953 coup d’état in Iran. The coup d’état immediately created a kind of national inferiority complex, a permanent sense of melancholy, and sent shock waves throughout all cultural and political domains of Iranian society.

Through the analysis of *Ayehaye Zamini* [Earthly Verses], I will argue that Farrokhzad’s modernism involves a new kind of time-consciousness linked to destruction and catastrophe that deals with the crisis of modernity as a form of temporality. Here emerges a poetic form that has lost faith in Pahlavi’s myth of marching forward, registers a different configuration of a past, rather than a future, and translates the promise of Pahlavi’s modernization and its dominant political form into the urgent promise of political redemption.

Short Biography

I received my BA (2006) in Sociology from Tehran University, my first MA (2010) in Middle Eastern Studies from New York University, and currently, I’m pursuing my second master degree in Comparative Literature at the University of Toronto. I work on 20th-century Persian literature, and Marxist critical and cultural theory.

Panel 4B (Vic 215): Posthumous Survival in the Contemporary Novel

Boaz Schuman, “‘Beyond the Zero’: Posthumous Survival in Gravity’s Rainbow”

Abstract

The final section of Thomas Pynchon's "Gravity's Rainbow" deals largely with events following the disappearance (which Pynchon describes as "fragmentation of character") of Tyrone Slothrop. In response, Slothrop's followers build a culture around their late hero, and style themselves "The Counterforce". They seek out opportunities for outrageous public behaviour in imitation of Slothrop, in spite of comprehensive social and administrative attempts to repress these events. Thus after he disappears from the plot, Slothrop's character survives not only in chains of events, but also in official attempts to suppress them.

This survival of Slothrop's character builds on an assertion of Pynchon's that is crucial to understanding "Gravity's Rainbow": namely, that the apparent opposition of survival and thriving on one hand, and suppression to the point of extinction on the other, is a false dichotomy. Once something or someone has been extinguished "beyond the zero" (to use Pynchon's phrase), an imprint of it remains that is akin to a negative image. Survival by notoriety is hence one of the text's proposed views of a sort of afterlife; in this presentation, I explain how this sheds light on a few of the book's more obscure and puzzling passages, taking recourse to the relatively new definition of life provided by the theory of *autopoiesis*.

Short Biography

Boaz Schuman is a first-year PhD student at the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in English, and a second BA in philosophy, from the University of Calgary; and a Master of Arts in Medieval studies from the University of Toronto. He has a long standing interest in American literature in a very broad sense, including even the Old Norse *Vinland Saga*. *Gravity's Rainbow* has been for him a *vade mecum* for the past eight years, as the shabby condition of his personal copy of the book can attest.

Sarah Bezan, “The Persistence of the Post-Mortem: Survival and Preservation in Lydia Millet’s Trilogy”

Abstract

A robust meditation on endangered and extinct species, dead lovers and a reclaimed natural history collection of fossils, bones, and taxidermy animals, Lydia Millet’s trilogy of novels - *How the Dead Dream* (2009), *Ghost Lights* (2011), and *Magnificence* (2013) - dwells upon the lively persistence of the already dead in an increasingly perilous age of environmental collapse and devastation. Amidst the harrowing adventures of the main protagonist, T., who escapes the clutches of a life as a venture capitalist and survives the

death of his lover and nature guide, Millet invites her readers to examine how the dead body persists as a monument to its own demise. Millet's trilogy further ruminates on the significance of being a "final" animal, or the last of one's kind, exhorting her readers to read the deaths of others as a foreshadowing of the collapse of one's own species and way of life on the earth.

In my reading of Millet's Trilogy, I elaborate on the work of Donna Haraway, Rosi Braidotti, and Deleuze and Guattari in order to explore posthumanism's concerns with survival in the era of the anthropocene. Furthermore, my paper will consider how the return to organic matter (as a culmination of the death drive) might inspire new possibilities for thinking through the durability of post-mortem remains and the politics of their persistence.

Short Biography

Sarah Bezan is a doctoral candidate in the English and Film Studies Department at The University of Alberta. Her doctoral project, entitled, "Post-mortem Proximities: Human and Animal Death in Contemporary Literature and Culture" is funded by a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Graduate Scholarship.

Prathna Lor, "Murder and Becoming: Tender Things, or the Obituary's Corpse"

Abstract

This paper takes as its point of departure the concept of murder (including self-murder) as a form of subjective suicide which functions as the narrative mechanism in Gail Scott's *The Obituary*.

Early in *The Obituary* the narrator forewarns the reader: "By the end of our tale, we make likewise be dead~~[strikethrough]~~ -". Shortly after, the narrator writes, "on th' afternoon we are murdered". The collective "we" refers to the narrator's scattered subjectivity compartmentalized into "I/Rosine," "[Face]," "th' fly on th' wall," and a politically correct lesbian historian who inhabits the lower trenches of the page and whose interventions are inaugurated by a heart-shaped footnote. Furthermore, Scott mobilizes a murder-mystery plot to sustain the novel's experimental form and includes references to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and Hitchcock's *Dial M for Murder*.

This paper argues for the conceptualization of the narrator's body as corpse that perverts the genre of autobiography. Generically, autobiography is one of the ways in which one can ensure their mnemonic survival after death. Through a paradoxical impetus of what I describe as autoeulogy Scott's novel mobilizes autobiographical elements through figures of death.

How does the figure of the corpse guarantee the subject's survival? This paper is informed by a theoretical framework which considers forms of psychic self-destruction as generative agency. By examining the presence of dead things in *The Obituary*, the paper turns toward a motif of capillary historical action that takes root in the absorption of life

after death. The paper focuses the ways in which Scott negotiates indigeneity, lesbianism, ghosts, and blocked historical knowledge through the figure of the corpse.

Short Biography

Prathna Lor is a doctoral student of English at the University of Toronto and holds a Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Prathna is affiliated with the Mark S. Bonham Centre for Sexual Diversity Studies, the Centre for Diaspora and Transnational Studies, and the Centre for Ethics.

Panel 5 (Vic Chapel): Last Words

Stephanie Straub, “Last Words: The Death of the Author and Derrida’s Death Penalty Seminars”

Abstract

This paper examines the extent to which the author’s voice may survive in the posthumously published text. I argue that, in spite of the efforts of the poststructuralists, the figure of the author assumes a privileged position in the posthumous text—the text itself represents an act of memorialization and a means of preserving the now-silenced voice. My analysis focuses specifically on Derrida’s 1999 Death Penalty Seminars, recently published as *The Death Penalty*, Vol. 1. I argue that the published text actively channels the reader’s desire for the late author into the political project of the seminars. Derrida claims that no argument against the death penalty can be completely disinterested—that is, that any attempt to save the life of the other is, implicitly, based on the recognition of the self in the other and thus represents an attempt to save one’s own life. When we read these words within the published volume, however, we read them with the full knowledge of Derrida’s death. Derrida thus delivers this argument as both a man who will die and a man who has already died. While I do not wish to argue for the identification of the late author with the condemned, I nonetheless want to suggest that *The Death Penalty*, Vol. 1 sublimates the reader’s desire for the author into the ethical project of death penalty abolition.

Short Biography

Stephanie Straub is a current graduate student at Vanderbilt University. Her research largely focuses on the posthumous in twentieth century literature; her less morbid interests include paratext, annotation, and Derrida. She completed her master’s at the University of Edinburgh in 2013. She is from Northern Kentucky.

Oisín Keohane, “Testimony from Survivors: On the Anglobalisation of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission Archive”

Abstract

My paper will examine what has happened to the archive of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission in the wake of ‘Anglobalisation’ (the globalisation of the English language). Specifically, it will focus on how the testimonies of the TRC were formed and deformed by the use of English as a so-called bridge language in the original hearings, and how this process has been continued, rather than been overturned, by academic scholars discussing the TRC. My paper, building on Derrida’s reflections on translation and *survivre* (survival or living on), and Antjie Krog’s work on how the TRC process was frequently subject to mistranslation, will examine the degree to which the TRC process and its archive has survived only by submitting itself to ‘Anglobalisation’ and by effacing the question of translation. Accordingly, it will propose that linguistic justice needs to be restored by re-examining the role of translation, or rather, simultaneous interpretation, in the original hearings. In addition, arguing against Jean-Luc Nancy – who wishes to propose that the untranslatable is a form of sovereign exception that suspends the law – I will argue that one way to understand translation is through the courtroom itself. I will thus advocate another model by which to think about translation, namely, linguistic justice.

Short Biography

Dr Oisín Keohane is an Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in the Jackman Humanities Institute at the University of Toronto, and a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Johannesburg. He received his PhD in 2011 from the LSE. Previously, he was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Edinburgh.

Roshaya Rodness, “Queer Survival: The Ever-After of Ira Sachs’s Last Address”

Abstract

What does it mean to survive an event that has not passed yet is subject to an archive fever, to historicization in the face of its ongoing life? What possibilities remain for witnessing the ever-lasting traces of life in a time that insists on its own afterness? The question of queer survival in Ira Sachs's short film, *Last Address* (2010), fills the noiseless moments when the unhurried camera dwells on the last residential addresses of queer artists who died of AIDS-related complications during the height of the AIDS pandemic in North America. The film proceeds without narration or human actors and with an unedited aesthetic, as if the role of the witness and the survivor has been given over to the insentient camera. My paper asks how *Last Address* turns away from figures of agency and subjectivity that witness disaster, and instead dwell with the asubjective and even nonhuman quality of the witness in the context of AIDS and its survival after the height of the pandemic. Does the film itself offer a “last address” to queer artists and the ongoing life of AIDS and of queers in their wake? What is last or lasting about the cinematic image that itself survives the deaths of not only these past residents but of a generation of queer role models? My paper concludes by arguing that in the afterness of “sur”vival, the non-human survivors, such as film and image, are themselves a form of queer life that continue to attest to and grieve that which refuses its own ever-after.

Short Biography

Roshaya Rodness is a senior doctoral student in the Department of English and Cultural Studies at McMaster University. Her dissertation, *From Difference to Queerness: Towards A Non-Philosophical Queer Theory*, brings post-continental philosophy and speculative realism to bear on queer theory. Her work has appeared in *Chiasma: A Site For Thought* and in *Canadian Literature*.

Panel 6 (Vic Chapel): Modernity and the Death Drive

Ariel Weiner, “Walter Benjamin and the Death Drive in Modernity”

Abstract

In part three of the essay, *The Paris of the Second Empire*, Walter Benjamin claims that the only form of heroism available in the modern era consists in the act of voluntary suicide, or else, in the kind of indolence that Benjamin associates with the poetic task of Charles Baudelaire. My aim in this paper will be to demonstrate how Benjamin’s concepts of modern suicide and indolence relate to Freud’s theory of the death drive through a close reading of Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* in connection with selections from Benjamin’s writing on Baudelaire, including *The Paris of the Second Empire* (with special emphasis on part three), *Central Park*, and *On Some Motifs*. I will consider how Benjamin takes up the Freudian concept of the death drive in his treatment of Baudelaire by examining the themes of trauma, self-estrangement, repetition-compulsion, and memory. If, as Benjamin seems to suggest, experience in modernity is marked by the death drive, as opposed to the drive to self-preservation, it becomes necessary to inquire what “survival” itself entails in the modern era, to what or to whom this term can still be applied, and if, in fact, it can be rightly applied at all.

Short Biography

Ariel Weiner is in her fourth year of undergraduate studies at the University of King's College in Halifax where she is completing a combined honours degree in classics and religious studies. Her primary research interests include philosophy of religion, media and communications theory, and continental philosophy.

Adam Stern, “Survivor’s Sin (Rosenzweig’s Jesus)”

Abstract

Manifestly concerned with remnants, witnesses and archives, Giorgio Agamben’s *Remnants of Auschwitz* nonetheless marks a significant engagement with the category of survival. What the camps teach us, Agamben claims, is that “the human being is the one who can survive the human being.” The statement confirms that Agamben’s inquiry into the camps is in fact a general attempt to rethink the human being as such. Accordingly, we now know that a “virtually infinite survival” is the oscillating center of a biopolitical

subjectivity that moves between speaking being and living being, human and inhuman, survivor and Muselmann. Against this biopolitical background, I argue that Agamben fails to read the theological moment linking subjectivity and survival. In order to provide this missing account, I turn to Franz Rosenzweig's 1921 book, *The Star of Redemption* (1921). For Rosenzweig, the other's death forms a crucial moment in the emergence of subjectivity, because it is in the body of the dead that the self first learns to recognize the corpse that it already is. The overcoming of the threat posed by the other occurs only through the experience of revelation, in which the self becomes an individuated "I" and learns "to sur-vive" (*über-leben*) its own corpse. This necessary *Überleben*, however, also turns out to be the original sin of subjectivity. Well before Agamben, I argue, Rosenzweig constitutes the human subject according to a logic of survival that mediates the risk of a life situated between God and corpse. I conclude by suggesting that Rosenzweig figures this theological anthropology (survivor's sin) as a distinctly Christian question.

Short Biography

Adam Stern is a PhD candidate in the Philosophy of Religion at Harvard University. He is currently completing a dissertation entitled "Marks of Survival: Christianity, Judaism, Translation."

Dominik Zechner, "Being-able-to-die: Kafka's Narrative Dare"

Abstract

Abstract "Kann er denn sterben?" *Is he able to die?* Questions concerning finitude, transience, survival, and the traumatic perishability of existence play a central role in Kafka's prose at large, from the novels ("es war, als sollte die Scham ihn überleben," the last words of the *Proceß*), via his correspondence, to the shorter forms especially. The short stories have proven to circumscribe a genuine laboratory for Kafka's reflections on mortality, its aporias and impossibilities, the profound movements of alienation and identity crises it brings about. My talk will explore the theme of dying in Kafka—a dying that is deferred, stalled, displaced, always in danger of not being granted—and how it becomes approximated and calibrated in one of his *Kurzgeschichten* in particular: "Die Sorge des Hausvaters," the famous story confronting us with the monstrous Odradek and his alleged *inability* to die.

Close-reading Kafka's story while drawing on concepts developed by Heidegger (Sein zum Tode, Seinkönnen, Verenden), Derrida (*hospitalité, sur-vie, la-vie-la-mort*), Ronell (*finitude*), and Agamben (*forma di vita*), my article will explore the topos of mortality in Kafka as a site of the encounter with absolute alterity, where the sheer form of life is at stake and formulates itself, confronting us not with the facticity of death (especially not of death as property of a subject or Dasein), but with finitude rendered in the obscure terms of a capacitation, a Being-able-to-die, ceaselessly posing an unanswered, and perhaps unanswerable, question: *Kann er denn sterben?*

Short Biography

Dominik Zechner. Hardcore Nietzschean, rogue Heideggerian, orthodox Ronellian. Aufschreiber, Nachdenker, Elender. Studied Theater, Film & Media Studies, and Philosophy in Vienna and New York. Having received his Magister der Philosophie for a thesis on Derrida's notion of the "archive" in 2013, D.Z. joined NYU German in the same year on a mission to tackle questions concerning technology, nihilism, vitalism, mortality, perishability, survival, etc., in 20th century literature and philosophy. He held summer school fellowships at the universities of Basel and Bern, and presented his work in Austria, Switzerland, Taiwan, Portugal, and the US. And has written on illustrious pop cultural figures such as Bob Dylan and Friedrich Kittler (both forthcoming)

Panel 7 (Vic Chapel): Surplus Value and Urban Ruins

Anjo-mari Gouws, "Walking Labour: The Figure of the *Fremde-flâneur* in Man Push Cart"

Abstract

This paper suggests an alternative figuring of Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin's flâneur. It does so specifically in the context of Ramin Bahrani's 2005 film *Man Push Cart*, a film that centres around Ahmad, a Pakistani immigrant selling food on the streets of New York City. This alternative figuring of the flâneur is one where walking through the city is predicated not as leisure, but as labour. Working from David Frisby's claim that the flâneur is a "fundamental[ly ambiguous]" figure (82), this articulation of the working class walker of city streets is grounded as an inflection of the traditional flâneur, bearing traces of Georg Simmel's figure of the *Fremde*, the stranger. Simmel argues that "in the whole history of economic activity the stranger makes his appearance as a trader, and the trader makes his as a stranger" (144), and within the context of *Man Push Cart* this particular being-in-the-city of the labouring flâneur is explored, one which is configured around surviving late capitalism. In particular it highlights the *Fremde-flâneur*'s city as one in which the hidden, inner workings of the urban landscape are foregrounded, presenting the viewer with the underclass whose protracted labour allows the city to function. In keeping with Baudelaire's penchant for the underbelly of the city, the hybrid figure of the *Fremde-flâneur* moves the focus from conspicuous consumption to breadline subsistence. Bahrani offers a New York City in no way rooted in nostalgia or revelry: the director's focus is consistently on aspects of the city that tend to be neglected, aspects illuminated by the labour of the *Fremde-flâneur*. This is flânerie predicated not on Baudelairian intoxication, but on Sisyphean exhaustion.

Short Biography

Originally hailing from South Africa, Anjo-mari Gouws is currently pursuing her Phd in Cinema Studies at the University of Toronto. She has a background in Visual Culture Studies and in Philosophy, and is interested in being-towards-death, contemporary European film, and cinematic iterations of mania.

Paul McQuade, "Surviving Surplus, Après-Coup: Tanigawa Gan and the Rural-to-Come"

Abstract

It is with attention to translation, and the life of the translation, something Walter Benjamin once described as its survival or living-on [überleben], that Gayatri Spivak reverses a certain reading of Marx and the Value-Form, a reading that has underpinned Marx's inheritance as doxa to a generation on the Left. There, in the essay "From Haverstock Hill Flat to U.S. Classroom", Spivak asks: what's left of theory? The question we might ask is not simply what survives the death of Marx, what has elsewhere been taken up as Marx's spectres, but a question of remains: what remains, untouched, at the frontier of capital, and what remains, untouched, within the legacy of Marxist theory. Following Spivak, I attempt to put Marx's early thought on species-being [Gattungswesen] in relation to surplus [Mehrwert], specifically through the temporality of psychoanalysis (Nachträglichkeit). By examining these modalities in relation to the work of the Japanese poet and activist Tanigawa Gan, I will attempt to demonstrate that what lies at the frontier of capital is always-already behind it, as its base [Grundlage], and awaits us there, as its lesson. By logic of the après-coup, I will argue that it is precisely in the rural "past" of capital that one learns, from below, a way to survive it, by way of an ethical relation to what already survives within it: an irreducible surplus of community that remains, behind and in front of, finance capital's spectral operations.

Short Biography

Paul McQuade is a PhD candidate at Cornell University with a specialisation in modern Japanese literature and literary theory.

Paul Earlie, "Specters of Freud: Derrida and the Survival of Psychoanalysis"

Abstract

Resemblances between Freudian psychoanalysis and Derrida's project of deconstruction have often been noted. In exploring the 'survival' of Freud in Derrida's writings commentators have tended to pursue two broad lines of argument. The first considers Derrida as a crypto-Freudian, whose subtle deployment of psychoanalytic notions such as repression and displacement is betrayed by an underlying anxiety of influence, an unwillingness to fully assume his own indebtedness to Freud. The second, by contrast, sees Freud as a proto-Derridean, whose radical conception of discourse, rationality, and truth find their natural culmination in Derrida's strategy of deconstruction. My paper argues that this dilemma is a false one. By developing Derrida's well-known yet little understood concept of *différance*, it contends that this alternative stems from an inadequate understanding of Derrida's treatment of time. The structure of temporality implied by *différance* entails that the meaning of the past is continually reconstituted in its relationship to an ever-evolving present. Far from dissolving the importance of Freud's contribution, this structure allows Derrida to circumvent nebulous notions of 'influence' and 'indebtedness' while still engaging psychoanalysis as a key theoretical resource in his own project of deconstruction. For Derrida, the survival of psychoanalysis

calls us to a difficult, dual responsibility: both towards the legator of an inheritance (that is, towards the textual legacy Freud has bequeathed to us) and towards unforeseeable future contexts in which this inheritance will require transformation. The discourse of deconstruction, my paper concludes, enacts a careful negotiation of these two demands.

Short biography

Paul Earlie is a Wiener-Anspach postdoctoral fellow at the Université libre de Bruxelles. From 2012-2014, he was Laming Junior Research Fellow at the Queen's College, Oxford. His doctoral research, completed in 2013, examined the importance of psychoanalysis for Derrida's theory and practice of psychoanalysis. He is currently completing a monograph based on this research.