

Modern Languages, Linguistics, and Intercultural Communication

Faculty and Student Annual Research Day

A.O. Kuhn Library, Room 767

Friday, November 14, 2014

9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

9:00 a.m.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Dr. Denis M. Provencher, Associate Professor of French & Intercultural Communication

Dr. Omar Ka, Chair and Associate Professor of French & Linguistics

Dr. Scott E. Casper, Dean, College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

9:30 a.m.

Defining the “Finest”: A View of Tang Dynasty Literature: From the Northern Song Anthology *Wen cui* 文粹

Dr. Anna Shields, Associate Professor of Chinese

The 100-*juan* anthology of Tang dynasty literature entitled *Wen cui* 文粹 (Literature’s Finest), compiled by Yao Xuan 姚鉉 (968-1020) in the early eleventh century, has long been recognized as a catalyst in the Northern Song *guwen* movement, due to its promotion of Han Yu and other writers associated with the advocacy of “antiquity” as well as for its defense of *guwen* as a new literary category. Unlike the large collections of the early Northern Song (the *Taiping guangji* and its companions) whose contents ranged across dynasties, the *Wen cui* proclaims the Tang as the high point of literary composition in Chinese history and the mid-Tang as the apex of the dynasty. The anthology’s advocacy of *guwen* is matched by its exclusion of regulated *shi* and regulated *fu* and its avoidance of parallel prose in its selections. This paper explores the impact of Yao Xuan’s selection criteria on different generic subsections beyond *guwen* in order to better understand the view of Tang literature represented in the anthology.

Specifically, I contrast the literary standards and practices articulated by the “letters” 書 section, focusing in particular on the interplay of literary theory and social engagement found in two *juan* of letters (j. 84-85). Yao Xuan’s stylistic and metrical tastes shaped the anthology’s representation of Tang literary “excellence” and also deeply influenced his portrait of Tang literary *culture*—the practices, habits, and values that informed literary composition—as one of energetic debate over basic cultural values, a vision that valorized prose at the expense of poetry.

10:00 a.m.

A Restless Innovator: Jean Séguy and the End of Classical Dialectology

Dr. Thomas T. Field, Professor of Linguistics and French

Anxious to document a language that was very much alive but in decline, Jean Séguy began publication in 1954 of a project that could have resembled the many other regional linguistic atlases of France and elsewhere. The central problem was that the first volume of his *Linguistic Atlas of Gascony* appeared at a time when high structuralism cast doubt on the legitimacy of the entire dialectological enterprise. Séguy struggled for twenty years with the limits of the field in the face of orthodox linguistic theory, and by the time he completed the atlas in 1973 he was confronted with an even more militant movement, as early generative linguistics downgraded the external linguistic differences central to his work to trivial status. During this cataclysmic epoch for the field of dialectology Séguy invented new investigative techniques, new interpretive solutions; he moved the project toward the limits of the field and, one might argue, beyond them. The later volumes of the ALG in fact illustrate and foreshadow some of the basic tenets of variationist sociolinguistics, as Séguy unknowingly aligned himself with the emerging work of William Labov and his colleagues. The result is a scholarly work that is valuable today in ways that extend well beyond what one might expect in a dialectological project of the period.

10:30 a.m.

Coffee Break and Poetry Reading

Dr. Robert H. Deluty, Associate Dean of The Graduate School at UMBC

11:00 a.m.

Foucault's blind spot: slavery and civilization

Dr. Zakaria Fatih, Associate Professor of Francophone Studies

It is still puzzling to many critics that a thinker in the caliber of Michel Foucault could have neglected colonialism, race, and slavery. With discursive articulations that revolutionized the study of the humanities and social sciences and theoretically helped frame a cultural discourse on alterity and counter hegemony, one can only make a wild guess about the absence in his work of a serious theoretical articulation about those three issues in particular. My presentation lends much less attention to the reasons that account for the absence than it does to an investigation that unearths strong evidence to support the relevance of slavery to his thesis on madness.

11:30 a.m.

Demystifying Cuba: Revealing the realities of a study abroad program in Havana

Lauren Bostic, Candidate for Masters of Arts in Intercultural Communication

In recent years, President Obama has eased travel restrictions from the United States to Cuba. This illustrates that the relationship between the U.S. and Cuba has started and may continue to change, which will have a great impact on Cubans in the U.S., as well as Cuba's efforts to maintain its national identity. Over the past 54 years, U.S. - Cuban relations have been tense, marked by opposing political ideologies and crises, such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, that have shaped the Cuban experience across generations. Practices of governmental and non-governmental organizations in both countries mirror the cultural values of their respective societies, however Cuban and American perceptions of each other's values have been filtered and narrowed over time. Due to the lack of direct contact between the two countries, media representation became a basis for ideological constructions. American study abroad programs to Cuba attempt to demystify the realities of the Cuban experience. Through my research, I will analyze media texts to expose ideological discourse and review how a study abroad program in Cuba reveals elements of the Cuban experience as well as American identity.

12 noon – 1:30 p.m.

Lunch Break (on your own)

1:30 p.m.

The Importance of Family: The Gap Between Western AIDS Health Discourse and Face Negotiation for Sub-Saharan Africans Immigrants Living In the West With HIV/AIDS

Kathryn Barrett, Candidate for Masters of Arts in Intercultural Communication

African immigrants with HIV or AIDS receiving treatment in Western countries do not relate completely/entirely to Western discourse or Western values when discussing the disease. These patients often choose not to reveal their illness to their family and entourage for fear of rejection by and bringing shame and dishonor to the group, reinforcing African collectivist values. This often leaves the medical personnel confused and frustrated as they view disclosure as an opportunity to improve prevention of the diseases and provide relief to the patients in the form of a support system. The discourse used by the patients reveals various techniques used to negotiate the positive and negative face of the patient and his/her family, and sometimes even of the medical staff. They seek ways to frame their illness in normative terms using politeness strategies and positive and negative face negotiation.

2:00 p.m.

Listening to the Pain of Others: Transnational Trauma in Isabel Coixet's *The Secret Life of Words* (Spain 2005)

Dr. Erin Hogan, Assistant Professor of Spanish

The past is truly another country (Hartley in Mazierska 2011: 1) for the exiled Croatian protagonist and Catalanian director of *The Secret Life of Words* (Spain 2005). Isabel Coixet's film, primarily set on an oilrig, dramatizes its hearing-impaired main character's struggle to overcome the trauma of the Balkan wars. Coixet's approach begs the comparison of the consequences of the Yugoslav Civil Wars (1990s) to the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) considering the "strikingly similar mechanism[s]" of Spanish and Croatian Nationalist terror (Graham 2012: 3). The displacement of a traumatic past—from Spain to the Balkans—echoes in the disembodied voice of Hanna's pain. My discussion of trauma in *The Secret Life of Words* will be primarily vococentric (Chion 1999: 5) since Coixet explores Hanna's suffering through the voice rather than the image: Hanna's voice, the haunting acousmatic voice of her trauma, and that of her temporarily blind American burn victim patient Josef (Tim Robbins). I will argue that listening otherwise (Lipari 2009) in the film supports an ethics contrary to the shock-value of images of war and torture that Susan Sontag discusses in *Regarding the Pain of Others* and that *The Secret Life of Words* advocates a transnational practice of listening to the pain of others with the hope of individual and national redemption.

2:30 p.m.

Coffee Break

2:45 p.m.

Politics, Sex, and Literature in Two Bourbon Restorations (1874, 2014)

Dr. Jack Sinnigen, Professor of Spanish and Intercultural Communication

As a young writer, Benito Pérez Galdós (Las Palmas 1843-Madrid 1920) was a prolific and accomplished journalist and a fledgling novelist who would become the most famous Spanish writer of the nineteenth century. His *Doña Perfecta* was composed in serial form and published originally in five installments between March and May of 1876 in a leading liberal magazine and shortly after as a complete novel. A hybrid text, at once journalistic and novelistic, *Doña Perfecta* commented directly on the end of the Carlist war in February of 1876 and the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy in 1874-1876. The story is a romantic tale that is a national allegory in which love and sex are woven together with political analysis. As the story unfolds, the apparently passive romantic heroine becomes an active protagonist in the rebellion against the Catholic oligarchical order symbolized by her mother. All of Galdós's works are driven by socio-historic and psychosexual forces, and my analysis focuses on the representation of these forces in this text. His novels typically read as commentaries on contemporary issues in Spain, and not just on the historical period he novelized. *Doña Perfecta* is particularly relevant in 2014 in the midst of a severe economic and political crisis and yet another conservative restoration of the Bourbon dynasty.

3:15 p.m.

“We’ve Done Beautiful Work Here”: Resource Conservation as Intercultural Process in Mojanda, Ecuador

Dr. John Stolle-McAllister, Associate Professor of Spanish and Intercultural Communication

While it might be common to think of natural resource conservation as a primarily technical endeavor, people’s relationships to nature and to their communities facilitate and constrain not only what policies might or might not be effective, but also what might or might not even be considered a resource. In the highland areas around the Mojanda Lakes in northern Ecuador, Kayambi and Otavalo communities used both “western” and ancestral knowledge and practices to identify problems and solutions in maintaining a safe and reliable source of water for the region. I examine some of their efforts to change harmful, and promote beneficial, practices in terms of how these communities and their leaders are shaped by and help to shape ongoing intercultural processes in the country.

3:45 – 4:00 p.m.

Wrap Up

Thank you for participating in the

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