



## UC SANTA BARBARA COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

UC SANTA BARBARA

### NEWS FOR

Alumni & Friends of Comparative Literature and Translation Studies &  
The Graduate Center for Literary Research

Summer 2019—Spring 2020

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# Comparative Literature

## UC Santa Barbara

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# Notes from the Chairs and Directors

## **Dominique Jullien**

Chair, Comparative Literature



In September 2019, I took over as chair of Comparative Literature, following seven years of Catherine Nesci's superb leadership. This was a hard act to follow; I feel that I learned much, but there is still so much to learn every day. I am immensely grateful to PASC's wonderful staff, whose competence and infinite patience help steer our Comparative Literature Program vessel in these troubled waters. In response to the COVID remote work rules, the staff has been truly remarkable in their resilience and resourcefulness, and I could not have dreamed of a better team to work with. Make sure to read all the exciting Staff news. I am also much indebted to the kindness and expertise of my colleagues, who assist and enlighten me with unfailing generosity. The Comparative Literature Advisory Board has been invaluable in helping me navigate the visit of our External Review Committee and the various initiatives in the aftermath of its report. It is a privilege to work with Eric Prieto, Vice Chair and Graduate Advisor, and Roberto Strongman, Undergraduate Advisor. Thanks as well to Julie Carlson for taking on the job of Diversity Officer, and to Nadège Clitandre who fulfilled that role for several years, and is now taking a much-deserved sabbatical. Most of all, my thanks go to Catherine Nesci, for her expert and helpful guidance in all aspects of the job.

### **External Review**

This year saw the visit of the External Review, which took place in late January 2020. Its six members reviewed the Comparative Literature Program Program, the French and Italian Department and the Germanic and Slavic department all at once. I am pleased to say that the report was very positive, praising the program as a "hidden gem." The External Review Committee also made a number of practical recommendations, which we are beginning to implement. One key recommendation was to streamline the PhD exam structure, with the goal of shortening the timeline and enhancing the professional relevance of the exams. After extensive consulting with the Board, affiliate members and graduate students, we put forth a proposal for a revised exam structure, which was approved by the Graduate Council in June and will begin to be implemented next Fall.

### **Initiatives**

Comparative Literature Program continued to offer a wide range of courses that bring fields and disciplines in conversation. New initiatives are being developed, in particular in the Environmental Humanities. A ground-breaking new summer course on "Storytelling in the Anthropocene" was offered in July 2020, team-taught by an Associate from the Bren School and an Associate in Comparative Literature. A Vegan Studies minor, building on Professor Renan Larue's very successful course offerings on vegan issues, is in the works, as is the addition of the Graduate PhD Emphasis in Environment and Society (IPEES) in Comparative Literature. The annual spring conference of the Graduate Center for Literary Research, on the theme of "Climate Fictions" had to be postponed because of the pandemic and was moved to Winter of 2021. The Critical Memory Studies group continues its lively quarterly meetings, most recently holding a zoom discussion of Jessica Nakamura's book *Transgenerational Remembrance*.

This year is not for the faint of heart. With its multiple challenges, from a viral pandemic and anti-Black racism and violence to economic and climate crises, 2020 truly is an unforgettable year. In the face of adversity, everyone has been intrepidly striving to teach, learn, and administer in this brave new remote environment. As online teaching becomes the norm for the foreseeable future, we are mutating into quite the zoom experts. Stay safe everyone!



## Notes from the Chairs and Directors

### Jean Marie Schultz

Incoming Chair, French & Italian



As the new chair of French and Italian, it will be a pleasure working with all colleagues in Comparative

Literature in an expanded way. In my role as Director of the French Language Program, I have had the privilege of working with graduate students in Comparative Literature for a number of years. My own background in Comparative Literature (PhD, UC Berkeley) has given me insight into the unique needs and professional interests of the graduate students with whom I have worked, particularly in helping them hone their teaching skills and build their CVs in terms of competency in the teaching of languages and of French in particular.

Perhaps my own career trajectory is a good example of the flexible and transferable skills that develop as a result of a “comparative” orientation. My own doctoral focus was on 19th- and early 20th-century French, Russian, and English literature. These foci inevitably took me into other disciplines—history, music, art—of course, as well as linguistics. And, in studying literature written in the original, one cannot help but reflect on language learning. The opportunity to teach in the Departments of French and Comparative Literature at Berkeley were invaluable experiences for me. I will say, however, that it was in learning to teach French from a great master teacher that I really learned how to connect with students and create an interactive classroom environment, one that I was able to transfer to courses in literature. Through twists and turns of fate, I was eventually called on to create a

new, dynamic intermediate French language program at UC Berkeley, one that drew on my experiences learning and teaching languages and on my experiences in literature. This calling then led me into Applied Linguistics, which was an emerging field at the time. Interestingly, my work in critical theory, which was a major emphasis in Berkeley's programs, contributed to my work in Applied Linguistics and distinguished some of my publications from those of other researchers.

The upshot of this is that work in Comparative Literature prepares scholars for a variety of unpredictable undertakings. The words of one of my graduate student colleagues who had a dynamic career at Harvard still rings true. She told me to make the very most of my graduate education, and especially in preparing for the PhD exams. As stressful as the work might be, this is the one time when one can indulge so completely in the study of literature and its interdisciplinary intersections. Once working, even in a college or university, the professional demands eat into this special time.

### Elisabeth Weber

Chair, Germanic and Slavic Studies



In 2019-2020, GSS colleagues continued the long-standing tradition of contributing a significant

number of classes to the Comparative Literature curriculum. A medical emergency and the pandemic prevented us unfortunately from welcoming our annual Kade Visiting Professor from a German-speaking country who usually teaches cross-listed classes, both undergraduate and graduate.

In Fall 2019, Professors Christina

Vagt and Wolf Kittler organized a three-day long international conference on “Modeling the Pacific: Oceanic Research in Science, Technology, and Humanities.” This highly interdisciplinary conference brought together scholars from the sciences and the humanities to explore the history and function of modeling for our understanding of oceans in general, and the Pacific Ocean in particular. It connected scientific and engineering modes of studying oceans and marine life with approaches from Media Studies, History of Science, and Literature. It was a wonderful gathering with exceptionally rich discussions.

In March 2020, Elisabeth Weber organized a day long international conference on “Heidegger and Kabbalah. Exploring Elliot Wolfson's Work on Martin Heidegger and Jewish Mysticism.” Scholars from Israel, England, Turkey, Germany and Poland engaged with Wolfson's path-breaking new book, *Heidegger and Kabbalah. Hidden Gnosis and the Path of Poiesis* which traces with breathtaking erudition a deep connection between Heidegger's thought and the vast corpus of Jewish mysticism, including, but not limited to Italian, Castilian and Provençal Kabbalists, thereby uncovering the profound impact of Jewish mystical thinking on a philosopher most commonly known for his involvement with National-Socialism and averred anti-Semitism.

Our new chair Sara Weld's international conference entitled “Fallout: Chernobyl and the Ecology of Disaster,” planned for Spring 2020, had unfortunately to be postponed due to the pandemic.

We are grateful and proud that our search for an Assistant Professor for the History and Theory of Digital Humanities was successfully



## Notes from the Chairs and Directors

concluded with the hire of Dr. Fabian Offert. Dr. Offert's research and teaching focuses on the digital/computational humanities, with a special interest in the epistemology of artificial intelligence, and its intersection with art and literature. The department is also welcoming a new lecturer in German, Anna Pajak.

During the past academic year, we again were happy to be able to support Comparative Literature graduate students with Kade and Atkins fellowships, providing them with teaching-free quarters dedicated to their research, the Kade travel fellowships to German-speaking countries in the summer had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 crisis. Our department continues to contribute exciting, cutting-edge research, teaching and events to our campus, and we are gladly and wholeheartedly committed to the thriving of Comparative Literature Program's curriculum and intellectual culture.

### Sara Pankenier Weld

Incoming Chair, Germanic and Slavic Studies



Greetings (and welcome) to current and incoming undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff in the

Comparative Literature Program community from the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies! We hope to see Comparative Literature undergraduate and graduate students in our courses and graduate seminars this year and look forward to continued and new collaborations with faculty colleagues affiliated with Comparative Literature.

I, Sara Pankenier Weld, am the incoming Chair of Germanic and

Slavic Studies (GSS). I am taking over the role of Chair after Elisabeth Weber, whom I would like to take this opportunity to thank for her many years of dedicated service to the department, as well as to Comparative Literature. I am an Associate Professor of Russian and Comparative Literature with research interests in Russian, Scandinavian, American, and comparative literature, as well as in childhood, Indigeneity, visuality, and the avant-garde. In Comparative Literature, in addition to a range of undergraduate courses and a graduate seminar on Russian literary theorists, I have taught the Proseminar twice in the past several years, which has been a nice chance to get to know incoming Comparative Literature graduate students. I am continuing to serve as the Placement Officer for Comparative Literature in 2020-2021, where I aim to support graduate students in their pursuit of a range of rewarding careers.

Comparative literature undergraduate students also may be interested in an array of courses to be taught in 2020-2021 by Teaching Associates with expertise in Russian, East European, and German literature and culture. Let me flag, for example, Arpi Movsesian's SLAV 117G/C LIT 186G *Dostoevsky*, Margarita Delcheva's SLAV 151C/C LIT 161 *Literature of Central Europe*, and Dustin Lovett's GERM 161 *Romanticism*, which will be taught in Winter 2021. Check out the UCSB Course Schedule for more details and the most updated information about the full array of courses in German and Slavic to be taught in 2020-2021. We appreciate these contributions to our curriculum by Teaching Associates, as well as Teaching Assistants teaching German and Russian language courses.

### Suzanne Jill Levine

Advisor Emerita, Translation Studies Program



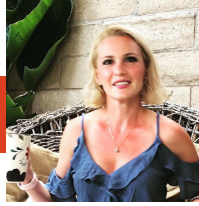
2019-2020 was the last year for Professor Suzanne Jill Levine to teach the core Translation Studies

seminar. Jill, whose brainchild the very successful Translation Studies program was, and who directed it with such panache until last year, will be much missed, as will Prof. Jon Snyder, who also taught the "Art of Translation" regularly, and who also retired last year. But we hope to be able to hire a new specialist in Translation Studies soon, as there is a critical need for all aspects of translation work, both at the Undergraduate level, with its large and growing Translation Studies minor, and at the Graduate level, where a majority of doctoral students are interested in adding the Translation Studies emphasis. Translation Studies sponsored two lectures this year. In February, Oxford University Professor Matthew Reynolds spoke on his ongoing project "Prismatic Translation"; in March, translator Jessica Cohen, winner of the 2017 Man Booker International Prize, gave a talk "On Translating Hebrew." Other good news includes the publication of East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies doctoral student Ursula Friedman's translation of a short story by contemporary Chinese writer Hao Jingfang, "Limbo", as well as the superbly reviewed translations of Argentine writer Silvina Ocampo by Suzanne Jill Levine, Jessica Powell and Katie Lateef Jan.

# The Graduate Center for Literary Research



**Sven Spieker**  
Director



**Christene D'Anca**  
Student Coordinator

Now in its seventh year, the Graduate Center for Literary Research continues to grow and thrive under its current director, Sven Spieker (Germanic and Slavic), and Student Coordinator Christene d'Anca (Comparative Literature). The GCLR's Student Board has expanded to almost 30 members, with students from all humanities departments. Three doctoral students with demonstrated interdisciplinary interests were offered GCLR Recruitment Fellowships upon joining UCSB: Pujita Guha (Film & Media Studies), James-Nate Nichols (Comparative Literature) and Ursula Friedman (East Asian / Translation Studies).

This past year (2019-2020) the GCLR Distinguished Visiting Scholar was going to be Alain Badiou, formerly chair of Philosophy at the École Normale Supérieure, where he still teaches, and founder of the faculty of Philosophy of the Université de Paris VIII. One of the most noted philosophers alive today, Badiou has been involved in a number of leftist political organizations and is a staunch defender of a potential return of communism. We hope to host Alain Badiou in the next academic year.

The theme of the 2019-20 GCLR Graduate Student Conference was Climate Fictions. Preparations were well under way when the COVID-19 crisis began but it, too, had to be postponed. We hope to hold the conference in the Fall quarter 2020. The GCLR also co-sponsored a wide variety of lectures and conferences on campus, such as the Postwar Italian Art Scene in a

Global Perspective colloquium, or events organized by the Memory Studies Group.

This year the GCLR again cooperated with the Harvard Institute for World Literature, which offers students from around the world a month-long session of seminars and workshops taught by a wide range of scholars working across disciplines. 4 UCSB graduate students were accepted by the IWL this year: Olga Faccani (Classics); Sebastian Stratan (Spanish and Portuguese); Marcel Strobel (Comparative Literature); and Aili Pettersson-Pecker (English). Due to COVID-19 concerns, IWL moved all seminars online. GCLR supported the students to allow them to still participate.

In addition, the GCLR continued its mission of providing opportunities for interdisciplinary conversations. Three roundtables brought together student presenters from across the humanities, and two travel grants were awarded to presenters whose papers were subsequently accepted at major conferences. The second award had to be returned since their conference was cancelled due to the pandemic.

Additionally, in Spring 2020, the GCLR hosted its first Graduate Student Dissertation and Prospectus Writing Workshop, which will be held twice a year from 2020/21 on. The featured speaker was Christene d'Anca who introduced her project "Medieval Mausoleums, Monuments, and Manuscripts: Paving the Path of Women's Power Through Patronage."

<https://gclr.complit.ucsb.edu>

## New Hires & New Affiliated Faculty



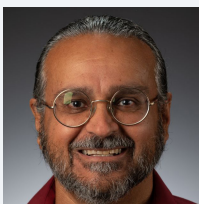
Dr. **Stephanie Malia Hom** joined the Department of French and Italian in July 2020 as Assistant Professor of Transnational Italian Studies. Her research specializations include modern Italy and the Mediterranean, mobility studies, colonialism and imperialism,

migration and detention, tourism history and practice, and modern Italian and Italophone literature. She is the author of *Empire's Mobius Strip: Historical Echoes in Italy's Crisis of Migration and Detention* (Cornell, 2019) and *The Beautiful Country: Tourism and the Impossible State of Destination Italy* (Toronto, 2015). She also co-edited with Ruth Ben-Ghiat the edited volume, *Italian Mobilities* (Routledge, 2016). Her essays and articles have been published in wide range of venues, including the leading journals in the fields of Italian studies, tourism history, urban studies, and folklore. In addition to academia, Prof. Hom has worked as a journalist in the U.S. and Italy and served as a nonprofit executive in California. She is looking forward to meeting and working with everyone in Comparative Literature!



Dr. **Fabian Offert** is joining us as an Assistant Professor in History and Theory of Digital Humanities. His research and teaching focuses on digital/computational humanities, with a special interest in the epistemology of artificial intelligence and its intersection

with art and literature. His 2020 UCSB dissertation work examines artificial neural networks as image making machines. Fabian Offert comes to UCSB from a position as Postdoctoral Researcher in the research project "Synthetic Images as a Means of Knowledge Production" at Friedrich Alexander University Erlangen-Nuremberg and as an Affiliated Researcher in the Artificial Intelligence and Media Philosophy Research Group at Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design. For more details on his research, fellowships, and interdisciplinary projects, check out his website. Fabian Offert will be offering a graduate seminar on *Artificial Intelligence* (GER 200/C LIT 200) in Winter 2021, as well as upper-division courses on *Mediatechnology* (GER 179C/C LIT 179C) and *Media Politics* (GER 108) in Winter and Spring 2021 respectively.



Professor of English **Ben Olguin** became an affiliated faculty for the Comparative Literature program in 2019-2020. We are looking forward to his contributions to our program as well as the guidance and mentoring he will be able to offer our graduate students!



**Anna Pajak** is joining the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies as a Lecturer in German. She will be teaching a range of courses and levels of German language, for which we are very grateful. The Russian and East European Studies parts of our department are delighted

that Anna Pajak hails from Poland, where she started studying German in elementary school. She moved to Germany as a teenager and graduated from a German high school near Berlin (Neuzelle). Since then, she calls Germany her second home. She completed her graduate studies in Germanic Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago. She also participated in a post-graduate research year at Humboldt University in Berlin. Her research interests include curriculum design, second language acquisition, communicative teaching methodology, German-Polish relations, and German post-war literature. Anna Pajak has taught German language at Purdue University Northwest (Coordinator of German program), the University of Chicago (German Lecturer), DANK Haus in Chicago (German American Cultural Center language instructor), and SOFTS (German online instructor). She loves to spend her free time actively with her daughter and son, with whom she speaks Polish and German.



Professor of Feminist Studies **Jennifer Tyburczy** became an affiliated faculty for the Comparative Literature program in 2019-2020. We are very much looking forward to her additional perspective in our program as well as the valuable mentoring she is already providing our

graduate students in Queer Studies, Trans Studies, and Performance Studies!



Professor of East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies **Hangping Xu** also became an affiliated faculty for the Comparative Literature program in 2019-2020. Since he was trained as a comparatist, we are looking forward to including such a new perspective to our

program and are welcoming the work he has already been conducting with our graduate students in Queer Studies, East Asian Studies and Crip Theory!

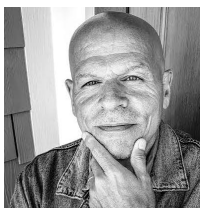


## Updates from Affiliated Faculty



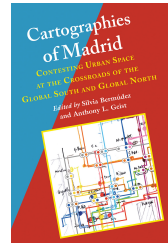
Professor of English  
**Bernadette Andrea** published *Travel and Travail: Early Modern Women, English Drama, and the*

*Wider World* along with co-editor Patricia Akhimie in volume 10 of the Early Modern Cultural Studies Series (University of Nebraska Press, 2019). The series includes an introduction co-written by Professors Andrea and Akhimie and a chapter by Professor Andrea, "The Global Travels of Teresa Sampsonia Sherley's Carmelite Relic." Professor Andrea also published several chapters in *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical History Volume 13 Western Europe (1700–1800)* edited by David Thomas and John Chesworth (Leiden, Brill) including "Mary Pix" (pp. 115-25) and "Delarivier Manley" (pp. 126-35). In addition, she wrote a chapter on "Sherley, Lady Teresa Sampsonia" in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (Online) published with Oxford University Press (2019) and a review of *Geoparsing Early Modern English Drama* by Monica Matei-Chesnoiu in *The Journal of Early Modern Cultural Studies*, 18.4 (2019): 155-61. In 2019, Professor Andrea gave several talks including "'A swarthy group of strangers': Shakespeare, Islamophobia, and Race" at the Shakespeare Association of America and "Looking Forward: New Directions in Early Modern Race Studies" in Washington, DC (April 19, 2019).



Professor of Environmental Studies **Rick Benjamin** has been hard at work on his fourth book, a forthcoming collection of poetry titled *Some*

*Bodies in the Grief Bed* expected to be published in April 2021 by Homebound Publications, Connecticut.



In the past year, professor of Spanish and Portuguese **Silvia Bermúdez** published *Cartographies of Madrid: Contesting Urban Space at the Crossroads of the*

*Global South and Global North* along with co-editor Anthony L. Geist (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2019), and "Violencia de género en la España Constitucional: Cronología evaluativa de propuestas culturales, resoluciones legales y Pacto de Estado para intervenir en lo social (2005-2018)," a chapter in the EBook *La violencia de género en la España contemporánea* under the coordination of Sara Fernández Medina (Alcalá de Henares: Fundación General de la Universidad de Alcalá). She also gave two talks: "Propuestas sonoras contra la intolerancia: La Orquesta Àrab de Barcelona y la música popular como texto histórico para los Estudios Culturales," MLA 2020 in Seattle and "Migration and the Politics of Belonging in 21st Century Barcelona: Musical Stories as Counter Memory," Invited Lecture Transnational Soundscapes: Literary and Sonic Cultures Across the Americas and Iberia Symposium, Duke University, February 2020.



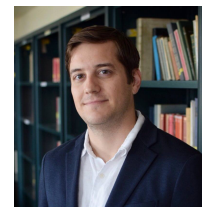
Visiting Professor of Germanic and Slavic Studies **Matteo Bertelé** published *Arte sovietica alla Biennale di Venezia (1924-1962)* in 2020 (Mimesis, Milano) and was the recipient of the Marie

Sklodowska-Curie Global Fellowship (2018-2020) granted by the European Union. On the book cover: Aleksander Deineka, *The Race*, 1930 © Archivio Fotografico - Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia



In 2019-2020, Professor of Classics **Dorota Dutsch** published *Pythagorean Women*

*Philosophers: Between Belief and Suspicion* (OUP, Fall 2020) and the *Blackwell Companion to Plautus*, coedited with G.F. Franko (March 2020). Professor Dutsch also delivered a talk titled "Pythagorean Women and Inclusive Philosophical History" at the Fifth Braga Colloquium in the History of Moral Philosophy – The Cannon Revisited: Women Philosophers in Braga, Portugal.



Professor of East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies **Thomas Mazanec** remained active during an unusual academic

year. He published one major article in 2019, "How Poetry Became Meditation in Late-Ninth-Century China" in *Asia Major*, and has a second forthcoming, "Admonitory Epigrams in Medieval China: Right-hand Inscriptions from Cui Yuan to Guanxiu" in *Tang Studies*. Most significantly, he completed his book manuscript, *Poet-Monks: The Invention of Buddhist Poetry in Late Medieval China*, which is currently under review. He continued to teach courses and advise students in Chinese literature and translation studies and developed a new graduate seminar on the poetry found among rare manuscripts unearthed at the Silk Road town of Dunhuang.

## Updates from Affiliated Faculty

He is currently working on several large-scale translations of medieval Chinese poets, as well as his second monograph, tentatively titled *Beyond Lyricism: Chinese Poetry in Other Modes*. In January 2020, his second child, a son, was born.



Before the pandemic, when traveling was still possible, Professor of French & Italian **Dominique Jullien** was invited to the

U of Bergen, Norway, to take part in a doctoral defense on Proust, "Staging Perception: Theatricalities in Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu*" (September 2019). She also gave several presentations here and in Europe, on her recent book, *Borges, Buddhism and World Literature: a Morphology of Renunciation Tales* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019). In Paris, she gave the opening lecture in Sandra Laugier's and Alexandre Gefen's Séminaire de Recherche de Paris-III, speaking on "Dialogues de l'ascète et du roi: l'exemplarité ambiguë des récits de renoncement chez J.-L. Borges." In London, she was invited to present her book at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, giving a lecture entitled "Wandering Kings and Traveling Tales in Borges" (September 2019). She also presented her new book at the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center's Humanities Decanted Series (UCSB, December 2019). In February 2020, in collaboration with UCSB colleagues Peter Bloom (Film and Media Studies) and Sowon Park (English), she organized an international conference at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles, *Narration and Perception in the Archive of Optical Mediation*, presenting a paper on "Optical Devices, Spectrality, and Modern Cognitive

Tropes". Large conferences (such as the ACLA) were all canceled after March, but publications continued apace. Four new essays by Jullien came out this year: 1) "Traveling Tales: Jorge Luis Borges and the global circulation of renunciation legends" appeared in *Global-e*, volume 13, issue 5, 30 January 2020; 2) an entry on Orientalism, "Leaning Toward the East," was published in *A Companion to World Literature*, edited by Kenneth Seigneurie, 6 volumes, Wiley-Blackwell, 2020; 3) her article "Healing by Exempla: Political Therapy in the Nights' Hypertext" appeared in *The Thousand and One Nights: Sources, Transformations, and Relationship with Literature, the Arts and the Sciences*, edited by W. Granara and I. Akel (Brill, 2020); and 4) most recently, another essay, "Vernacular, unacknowledged multilingualism, and esoteric code: Failed revelations in Jorge Luis Borges's 'Averroës' Search' and Rudyard Kipling's 'The Finest Story in the World'" was published in *Textual Practice*, 2020. She looks forward to virtual conferences and other zoom-fueled intellectual exchanges.



In addition to teaching and her service as the director of graduate studies in the department of East Asian

Languages and Cultural Studies and as the co-director of East Asia Center, Professor **Xiaorong Li** was professionally very active in the year 2019-2020. She was invited to present at "Crossing Boundaries: An International Symposium on Chinese Literature and Culture" held at Indiana University and in the Chinese Language and Literature Zoom Lectures organized by the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She was a discussant at the workshop,

"An Emotional Revolution: Loves and Loyalties in Imperial Japan, 1868-1945," held at UCSB. She also published a research article, "Locality, Gender, and 'National Essence': The Politics of Local Poetry Anthologies in China (1767-1919)," in *Nan Nü: Men, Women, and Gender in China* 22.2 (2020). Her new book, *The Poetics and Politics of Sensuality in China: The "Fragrant and Bedazzling" Movement (1600-1930)* (Cambria, 2019), has been well received with many positive reviews in prestigious journals. She is now working on her next book on anthologizing and intellectual trends in the Qing and Republican China, along with other ongoing projects.



Professor of English **Alan Liu** published "Toward a Diversity Stack: Digital Humanities and Diversity as Technical

Problem," *PMLA* 135.1 (2020): 130-151. His 2013 article "The Meaning of the Digital Humanities," originally published in *PMLA* 128, was translated into Spanish: "¿Qué significación tienen las humanidades digitales para las humanidades?," *Revistes científiques de la Universitat de Barcelona*, no. 23 (2020).



Professor of Spanish and Portuguese **Juan Pablo Lupi** co-edited *La futuridad del naufragio: Orígenes, estelas*

y derives along with Cesar A. Salgado (Leiden: Almenara Press) [The Shipwreck's Futurity: *Orígenes, Wakes and Drifts*] and contributed to the aforementioned volume with "Crecida de la ambición (po)ética: Vitier, Diáspora(s) y el arte de una teleología insular." Professor Lupi was also the editor of special issue of

## Updates from Affiliated Faculty

*Studia Iberica et Americana* titled “Las otras modernidades de Venezuela” [Venezuela’s Other Modernities].



Professor of French & Italian **Catherine Nesci** is pleased that the volume she worked on with Anne Marcoline, a graduate alumna

and now Associate Professor at the University of Houston is now out online: *Feelings, Sensations, Perception. On Emotion in the Writings of George Sand and Women Writers of Her Time. George Sand Studies*, edited by Anne Marcoline, with Catherine Nesci as Associate Editor, vols. 37–38, 2018–2019, 253 pages. Another piece on George Sand include: “Le rire ‘Trans-Sand’. George Sand fumant dans la caricature et la ‘fan fiction’.” *George Sand comique*, edited by Olivier Bara and François Kerlouégan, UGA éditions, 2020, pp. 335–55. She completed an entry on Sebald’s *Austerlitz* for a volume on Medical Humanities and Literature: *Médecins, soignants. Osons la littérature. Un laboratoire virtuel pour la réflexion éthique*, edited by Maria Cabral and Marie-France Mamzer, Sipayat, 2019, pp. 106–08. She was pleased to present “Pierres de mémoire: Temps éthique et temps historique chez Hélène Cixous” at the Contemporary French Civilization Conference (University of Arizona, Tucson, August 29–31, 2019), and “Caring (for) Literature: World Writing, Precarious Fiction, and Ethics” at the ICLA Congress (Macau, China, July 29–August 2, 2019).



Professor of French & Italian **Eric Prieto** published a chapter on “Mapping World Literature from Below: Tierno

Monénembo and City Writing” (pp. 107–121) in *Francophone Literatures as World Literature*, co-edited by Christian Moraru, Nicole Simek and Bertrand Westphal. Professor Prieto also published an entry on “Space” in The Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature as well as two chapters in *The Edinburgh Companion to Literature and Music* titled “Nelson Goodman: An analytic approach to music and literature studies” and “Beckett, Music, and the Ineffable.” Professor Prieto served as Chair of UCSB’s Undergraduate Council as well as Vice-Chair and Graduate Advisor of Comparative Literature. In addition, he also served as a co-editor of Palgrave-Macmillan’s Literary Urban Studies list.



Professor of Religious Studies **Dwight Reynolds** has a book in press with Routledge/Taylor & Francis titled *The Musical*

*Heritage of al-Andalus* that deals with music in medieval Iberia from the Muslim conquest in 711 CE to the final expulsion of the Moriscos (Muslims converted voluntarily or involuntarily to Christianity) in 1609–14. This volume documents the various cultural exchanges around the medieval Mediterranean that eventually led to a new musical tradition that has been performed for over a thousand years among Muslim, Sephardic Jewish, and Christian communities of the Middle East. A second book is nearing completion titled *Medieval Arab Music and Musicians* (Brill Publishers). This volume consists of annotated translations of three of the most important medieval texts on music. Two of the texts are lengthy biographies of musicians, including the biography of Ziryab, the most famous musician of al-Andalus, and the third text is a treatise on music

theory. He is also working on a co-edited volume with Heather Blurton (English, UCSB) titled *Reading the Middle Ages: The Changing Medieval Canon* (Manchester University Press) that examines the odd disparity between the modern popularity of works that have survived in only one manuscript copy (Beowulf, El Cid, the Oxford Roland, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, Ibn Hazm’s Neck-ring of the Dove, etc.) and the corpus of texts that were wildly popular in the Middle Age, extant in dozens of manuscript copies, but are rarely taught or studied in the modern academe. The volume as a whole poses the question: Why do we teach and study medieval texts that were not widely read and ignore those texts that were?



Professor of Black Studies and Comparative Literature Undergraduate Advisor **Roberto Strongman**

published his new book *Queering Black Atlantic Religions: Transcorporeality in Candomblé, Santería, and Vodou* in May 2019 and joined Professor Jennifer Tyburczy (Feminist Studies) for an enriching dialogue at the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center in January 2020. In *Queering Black Atlantic Religions*, Roberto Strongman examines Haitian Vodou, Cuban Lucumí/Santería, and Brazilian Candomblé to demonstrate how religious rituals of trance possession allow humans to understand themselves as embodiments of the divine. In these rituals, the commingling of humans and the divine produces gender identities that are independent of biological sex. As opposed to the Cartesian view of the spirit as locked within the body, the body in Afro-diasporic religions is an open receptacle. Showing how trance possession is a primary aspect



## Updates from Affiliated Faculty

of almost all Afro-diasporic cultural production, Strongman articulates transcorporeality as a black, trans-Atlantic understanding of the human psyche, soul, and gender as multiple, removable, and external to the body.



Professor of Germanic and Slavic Studies **Christina Vagt** is pleased to announce her newly published book *Action at a Distance*, co-authored with John Durham Peters and Florian Sprenger (Minnesota Press, 2020). Professor Vagt wrote a chapter on "Physics and Aesthetics: Simulation as Action at a Distance" (pp. 51-77). *Action at a Distance* is a book about media and physics, where and when they intersect, and how their relation affects the materiality of communication, the symbolization of matter, and the aesthetics of technology. The three authors share a mutual interest in the epistemology and the history of media and science. The book is part of a media theory series and a cooperation between Minnesota Press and the German Open Access publishers Meson Press. Professor Vagt was also awarded the 2020/2021 Senior Fellowship at the MECS, Leuphana University Lüneburg.



In 2019-2020, an interview that Professor of Germanic and Slavic Studies **Elisabeth Weber** conducted with

Emmanuel Levinas was published in its Spanish translation: «La humanidad es bíblica», Emmanuel Lévinas, translated by Rafael Stockebrand Gómez in *Anales del Seminario de Historia de la Filosofía*

(2019). In 2019, Professor Weber was also the initiator of "Humanists and Social Scientists 4 Future: Statement by humanists and social scientists in support of global youth uprising for climate action." In December 2019, she contributed a video-statement on "The Humanities' unique role in addressing the climate crisis" at a side event entitled "Enhancing the Paris Ambition: Universities, Science, Humanities and Arts Interfaces 4 Future Life" at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 25, Madrid December 2019.



Professor of Germanic and Slavic Studies **Sara Pankenier Weld**, published "The Silencing of Children's

Literature: The Case of Daniil Kharmis and the Little Old Lady" in *Barnboken – Journal of Children's Literature Research* (Vol. 43, 2020, pp. 1-18). Professor Weld also published "Sámi Selves in the Northern Landscape: Nomadism and Indigeneity in Swedish Classics for Children" in *Barnlitterært forskningstidsskrift* (11.1, 2020, pp. 1-12) as well as "Deti kak subyekty v literaturovedenij" translated by Alexandra Kasatkina in *Antropologicheskii forum* (42) in September 2019 (pp. 35-43). In addition, she wrote "Obrazy Ameriki v rannikh sovetskikh knizhkh-kartinkakh Marshaka i Lebedeva" in *Detskoe chteniia* (12, 2019, pp. 257-279) and "Visual and Verbal Self-Referentiality in Russian Avant-Garde Picturebooks," published in Vol. 42 (2019) of the *Barnboken – Journal of Children's Literature Research* (pp. 1-23). Last but not least, Professor Weld published a chapter on "Unnatural Selection: A Natural History of Early Soviet Picturebooks" (pp. 49-71) in the *Brill Companion to Soviet Children's Literature and Film*, edited by Olga Voronina (Brill, 2019).

During the 2019-2020 academic year, Professor Weld also delivered several papers at major conferences including "Theodicy and Faith in an Ethical Universe: Dostoevsky and Nabokov on the Suffering Child" at the ASEES Annual Convention in San Francisco, November 23-26, 2019; "Of Mirrors, Mentors, and Models: The Tales of Catherine the Great in Transnational Context" at Books for Children: Transnational Encounters, 1750-1850 at Princeton University, October 31-November 2, 2019; "The Silencing of Children's Literature: The Case of Russian Writer Daniil Kharmis and the (Little) Old Lady" at the International Research Society for Children's Literature (IRSL) 2017 Congress in Stockholm, Sweden, August 14-18, 2019; "Through Nabokov's Looking-Glass: Nabokov's Transfigurations of Alice from Ania to Ada" at the Slavic Department, Stockholm University in Sweden on May 8, 2019; and "People without Borders: Indigeneity and Nomadism in Classics of Swedish Children's Literature" at Borders, Territories, and Transitions in Children's Literature, Stockholm University in Sweden, April 5, 2019. Professor Weld was also named a Fellow of the International Youth Library in Munich, Germany, 2019 in addition to being elected to the International Research Society for Children's Literature (IRSL) Executive Board Mentorship Lunch Organizer where she was coordinating a 240-person event matching 80 mentors with 160 mentees for the IRSL Congress in Stockholm, Sweden from August 14-18, 2019. In Fall 2019, Weld was a participant in the University of California Women's Initiative (UCWI) for Professional Development.

## Updates from Affiliated Faculty



Trained in Comparative Literature, Professor of East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies

**Hangping Xu** was excited to become an affiliate in the Comparative Literature program as soon as he arrived at UCSB. He had a very rewarding first year as an Assistant Professor despite the dramatic turn of events. After receiving his PhD from Stanford in 2018, Professor Xu

taught for one year at Middlebury College before moving to UCSB. His publications on modern Chinese literature and culture and theories of world literature have appeared (or are forthcoming) in such venues as *Transnational American Studies*, *International Comparative Literature*, and *Chinese Poets Since 1949*, *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. Professor Xu received competitive fellowships to support his book project, *Broken Bodies as Agents: Disability Aesthetics and Politics in Modern Chinese*

*Culture and Literature*, which he is currently completing. Among these fellowships were a Junior Faculty Career Development Award and an Interdisciplinary Humanities Center Faculty Fellowship. Supported by another IHC research grant, Professor Xu joined a collaborative effort to bring disability studies and crip theory to greater prominence at UCSB. He taught a graduate seminar "Queer China, Crip China" in which he had the pleasure of working with two Comparative Literature graduate students.

## Newly Graduated



In September 2019, **Jeff Bellomi** successfully defended his dissertation on darkness, which combines media studies, philosophy, and literature. His languages included French, German, Russian, and Japanese. Dr. Bellomi was subsequently hired at UC Santa Barbara in 2020 to teach in the Comparative Literature Program.



In February 2020, **Deepti Menon** successfully defended her dissertation on "Travel through the Foreign Imaginary on the Plautine Stage" under the guidance and mentorship of Professors Dorota Dutsch (Classics), Francis Dunn (Classics), Jon Snyder

(French and Italian) and Claudio Fogu (French and Italian). Bravissima, Dr. Menon and all the best for your future endeavors!



**Bozhou Men** completed her dissertation in June 2019 under the direction of a doctoral committee including Xiaorong Li (co-Chair, East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies), Michael Berry (co-Chair, Asian Languages and Cultures, UCLA),

and Yunte Huang (English). Her doctoral dissertation is entitled "Lands of Daughters: Literary Evolutions of the Chinese Garden as a Space of Female Consumption (from Late Imperial to Early Republican China)." Dr. Bozhou Men accepted a two-year Postdoctoral Fellowship in the Department of Chinese Language and Literature at Fudan University, Shanghai, China. As Bozhou writes: "There will be no teaching workload during the whole 2-year hiring

period; all that is required is to publish 4 academic papers in 'core journals.' [...] My research is on the freak shows in early-twentieth century Shanghai, the rich literature surrounding such performances, its origin in and revisions of the genre of the Chinese 'zhiguai xiaoshuo (the novel of the supernatural),' as well as its cultural and political significance against its historical background." She also adds: "In the future, if any grad student in our department is interested [in a postdoc position in China], I will be more than glad to help him, her, or them, with the application process (the process can be complicated and confusing, as things usually are in China). After all, it is just two years, and one can still explore the world afterwards."



In June 2020, **Ali Rahman** successfully defended his dissertation "Digital Rhetoric and Gatekeepers of Knowledge: Islamic Authority in America" under the guidance and mentorship of Professors Dwight Reynolds (Religious Studies), Ahmad

Atif Ahmad (Religious Studies), Alan Liu (English) and Kathleen Moore (Religious Studies). His dissertation consists in a masterful analysis of different modes of religious authority through the lens of digital rhetoric, coupled with critiques of neo-liberalism and the online production and transfer of knowledge. The result is a rich examination of Islamic schools and websites, the role of online "superstar sheikhs," along with figures who straddle the roles of academics and community figures, and concludes with an exploration of how young Muslims are using the internet in their search for answers to questions about religion and identity. Dr. Ali, as he now calls himself, recently accepted a position as Lecturer in the Critical Writing Program at UPenn, and we wish him every success.

## News from Our Alumni



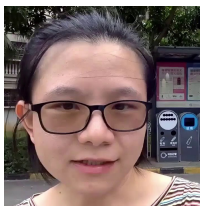
In April 2020, **Karen Elizabeth Bishop** published her book *The Space of Disappearance: A Narrative Commons in the Ruins of Argentine State Terror* (SUNY, April 2020), which examines the evolution of disappearance as a formal narrative and epistemological

phenomenon in late twentieth-century Argentine fiction. Karen Elizabeth Bishop was appointed Assistant Professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Rutgers University in 2012. She was formerly a New Faculty Fellow of the American Council of Learned Societies (2010-2012) and Lecturer in History & Literature at Harvard University (2008-2010). She earned her doctorate in Comparative Literature from the University of California at Santa Barbara with specializations in nineteenth- and twentieth-century literatures in Spanish, English and French. She spent a year as a researcher at the École normale supérieure in Paris, and four years teaching and working as a translator in Sevilla, Spain.



**Claudi Yaghoobi** (PhD. Comp Lit, UCSB, 2013) received tenure at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and was promoted to the rank of Roshan Institute Associate Professor in Persian Studies and Persian Coordinator in the Department of Asian Studies. Dr.

Yaghoobi is a remarkably productive academic and this is a very well-deserved recognition of both her scholarship and teaching!



In Fall 2020, **Inez Xingyue Zhou** will begin her new tenure-track position as an Assistant Professor of English Literature and Culture at the School of International Studies at Sun Yat-sen University, China, where she will also participate in the development of

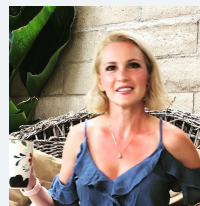
the fields of literary translation and Portuguese. Before that, Inez was a junior fellow at the Society of Fellows in the Liberal Arts, Southern University of Science and Technology, China, as well as a postdoctoral fellow in the Interdisciplinary Humanities Center at UCSB. Inez graduated in 2017 with a doctoral emphasis in Translation Studies. Her research interests include modern Anglo-American poetry, modern Luso-Brazilian poetry, Sino-Western comparative poetics, philosophy of language, waste aesthetics, and environmental humanities. Inez

had carried out research in Lisbon and São Paulo, respectively under Calouste Gulbenkian Fellowship and Haroldo de Campos Fellowship. With a research grant from the Ministry of Education of China, she is working on the project "Chinese Ideogram and Brazilian Concrete Poetry." She is also preparing her monograph developed from her dissertation, entitled as *Slippage: Abjective Perception between Garbage and Language*.

## New Doctoral Candidates



**Ghassan Aburqayeq** successfully defended his prospectus in March 2020. His dissertation topic is "Contemporary Arabic Fiction: Cultural Trauma, Taboos, and Dystopia" and his dissertation committee is Professors Dwight Reynolds (Religious Studies), Bernadette Andrea (English) and Elisabeth Weber (Germanic and Slavic).



**Christene D'Anca** recently became ABD in January 2020. The defense took place on January 6th. Her dissertation topic is "Medieval Mausoleums, Monuments, and Manuscripts: Paving the Path of Women's Power Through Patronage"

and her committee is Professors Cynthia Brown (French and Italian), Heather Blurton (English) and Cynthia Skenazi (French and Italian).



In December 2019, **Wendy Sun** successfully defended her dissertation prospectus "Besieged in Shanghai: History, Memory, and Transculturation of the Hongkou Jewish Ghetto 1933-Present." Her committee consists of Professors Xiaorong Li

(East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies), Wolf Kittler (Germanic and Slavic) and Yunte Huang (English). After advancing to candidacy, Wendy finished her first chapter in June 2020 and is now working on her following three chapters.



## Welcoming New Graduate Students



**E. Solaire Denaud** completed her MA degree in the doctoral program of France's National Museum of Natural History/Sorbonne University, where she studied philosophy and Environmental Humanities. Her research includes the Environmental Humanities,

Animal Studies and Black Studies in Francophone and Anglophone medias. She is particularly interested in the ways 'non-human' and 'sub-human' are represented in children's media. Her picture was taken by the photographer Marion Letessier.



**James-Nate Nichols** completed his MA degree in literature at UC Santa Cruz, writing on the thematics of exile and return in the films of Raúl Ruiz. Previously, he completed his bachelor's degree in literature with a minor in education from UC Santa Cruz, as

well as two AA degrees, in Spanish and liberal arts, from Cabrillo College. At UCSB his research explores the vast ecologies of the exilic, including literature, art, theater, protest music, and film. His broad interests include critical theory, translation theory, la vanguardia chilena, Psychoanalysis, and film and media studies.



**Maximilian Seijo** holds a B.A. in Economics & an M.A. in Film & Media Studies from the University of South Florida. His work sits at the intersection of the environmental humanities, heterodox political economy and German theory/philosophy. He is also

a research fellow at the *Global Institute for Sustainable Prosperity* (GISP) & has published in *Liminalities: A Journal of Performance Studies*, *Journal of Environmental Media*, *Boundary 2 Online*, *Monthly Review Online*, and *History News Network*. He is also a junior board member of a non-profit, the *Modern Money Network's Humanities Division* (MMN-HD), and a co-host of the *Money on the Left* and *Superstructure* podcasts.



**Marcel Strobel** earned his M.A. (*Staatsexamen*) in English and French literature and linguistics from the University of Mannheim, Germany, with a specialization in second-language teaching. His research interests include

urban studies, queer studies, queer geographies and spatial literary studies. Marcel is particularly interested in the relationship between queer identities, space and place, and how literature in general and the press in particular act as producers of spatial sexual imaginaries and as producers of physical space for queer communities in the past and present. He is currently working on analyzing spatiality in German and French queer magazines from the interwar period in Berlin and Paris.



A festive potluck dinner among the newly admitted graduate students (from left to right: James-Nate Nichols, E.Solaire Denaud, Marcel Strobel, Maximilian Seijo, and East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies Graduate Student Ursula Friedman) to celebrate the successful end of the proseminar in Comparative Literature with Professor Sara Pankenier Weld in fall 2019.

## Other Graduate Student Updates



### **Ghassan Aburqayeq**

completed his third field exam on Arabic literature in December 2019.

He also defended his prospectus in March 2020. In May 2020, Ghassan was awarded the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Grant for his dissertation research. He also published "Nature as a Motif in Arabic Andalusian Poetry and English Romanticism" in *Journal of Critical Studies in Language and Literature* (JCSLL) in 2020.



In January 2020, **Margarita Delcheva** presented the collaborative performance work "Harmonic Drops"

at UCSB Art Department's Kairotic Residue Performance Art Festival. In December 2019, she also performed the site-specific "Bulgarian Water" for a mini-conference in Professor Leo Cabranes-Grant's seminar "Animals, Rocks, and Robots."

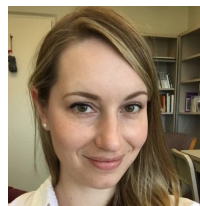
Margarita facilitated the community meditation group Isla Vista Zen in Fall 2019 and Winter 2020 at St. Michael's University Church. In Spring 2020, Margarita defended her last exam in Performance Studies, Dance Studies, and Feminist Theory, titled "The Faulty Materiality of Absence and the Somatic Semiotic: Writing and Re/constructing Dance." The exam committee consisted of Professors Ninotchka Bennahum (Chair), Leo Cabranes-Grant (Spanish and Portuguese), and Sven Spieker (Germanic and Slavic). Margarita's Spring 2020 Eastern European Art class curated an online exhibition of quarantine-themed mail art, titled "[IsoMailArt](#)," which showcases original student work, inspired by historic mail artists. In addition, Margarita received a Max Kade

Grant in Summer 2019 to conduct dissertation research in Germany. She also participated in the journalist project "Berlin Beyond Borders" along with students from UCSB and Professor Nomi Morris. Margarita's reporting focused on queer and gender politics of Berlin's tango scene and on the transformation of the historic Tempelhof airport into a public park.



Despite only being a first year graduate student, **E.Solaire Denaud** has been very active on campus – during the 2019-2020 year,

she became involved in both the Black Graduate Student Association (BGSA) and the Queer and Trans Graduate Student Union (QTGSU). She is the Events Coordinator for the QTGSU and in September 2020 will start her new position as the Graduate Student Assistant for the Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity.



**Rachel Feldman** successfully passed her last qualifying exam on contemporary children's literature in Hebrew under

the guidance and dedication of the members of her committee: Sara Pankenier Weld (Germanic and Slavic), Russell Samolsky (English and Jewish Studies), and Jin Sook Lee (Education).



In the Fall, **Elena Festa** delivered a paper entitled "Digital Cultural Remembering" at the Epistemologies of Memory

Conference at King's College, London. Her research on the interplay

of social media and cultural memory was also scheduled to be presented at the ACLA Conference in the Spring, which was unfortunately cancelled due to COVID-19. In May 2020 she took her second field exam in Italian literature and culture and investigated the memory(ies) of Colonialism in Italian Postcolonial Literature under the guidance of Professors Claudio Fogu (French & Italian, UCSB), Lucia Re (Italian, UCLA) and Maurizia Boscagli (English, UCSB). During Summer 2020 she had the rewarding opportunity to teach as an Associate ITAL2, ITAL20X and FR154G, thus greatly enriching her teaching experience.



**Sage Freeburg** has successfully defended her MA thesis, entitled "Dreaming through Snow: The Arctic Imaginary

in Nineteenth-Century European Literature" under the guidance of Professors Eric Prieto (French & Italian), Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook (English), Christina Vagt (German and Slavic), and Renan Larue (French & Italian). Sage intends to continue working on Arctic environmental humanities for her dissertation. Sage is also currently working on her first publication, an article titled: "Animals and Energy: *Angry Inuk*, Oil Extraction, and the Nuances of Animal Conservation in Areas of Subsistence Hunting."



In 2020, **Mariam Lmaifi** was awarded a Max Kade Fellowship to conduct research on her project "When Paratopia

Breeds Creation: a Psychoanalytic Study of Filiation in French Intranger Rap Music."

## Other Graduate Student Updates



**Daniel Martini**  
co-organized  
the Scriptworlds  
Conference with  
Prof. Sowon Park  
(English) at UC  
Santa Barbara in

June 2019 for international scholars who are part of the Prismatic Translation project based at Oxford, funded by the British Arts and Humanities Research Council. He also began mentoring undergraduate students in interdisciplinary research methodologies through the UCSB and National Science Foundation funded Unconscious Memory project. Daniel joined the new Medical Humanities certificate program (offered through UCSB's Professional and Continuing Education) as core faculty. Finally, he studied and developed innovative pedagogies through the Mellon Engaging Humanities project. Collectively, he co-developed and taught on two entirely new interdisciplinary GE courses. Daniel also gave a talk this year: "The Cognitive Affordance of Lettrisme: The Importance Of Schizotypal Personality Type" with Madeleine Gross (Psychology & Brain Science, UC Santa Barbara), at a conference entitled "Cognitive Futures," University Mainz, June 22, 2019 and received the UCSB Academic Senate's Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award in Spring 2020.



Accomplishments  
from the last  
year include the  
forthcoming  
publication of  
**Maxximilian Seijo's**  
journal article in

the *Journal of Environmental Media* titled "Governing Media Information through a Green New Deal: History, Theory, Practice," a special issue on Maximilian's *Money on the Left* podcast in *Liminalities: A Journal*

of *Performance Studies*, and the monthly syndication and publication of *Money on the Left* in *Monthly Review Online*. In addition, in the last year Maximilian presented at the 3rd International Conference on Modern Monetary Theory at Stonybrook University in September, 2019, and the International Confederation of Associations for Pluralism in Economics (ICAPE) at the University of California, San Diego in January 2020.



After a year at  
Paris-8 in France  
from 2018–19, it  
was a pleasure for  
**John Schrank** to  
return to UCSB  
and serve as an

associate for Comp Lit 100 in Fall 2019 and TA for 30B in Winter 2020. Despite the inimical circumstances of the pandemic, John was pleased and grateful to make significant progress on his research and writing as an IHC Dissertation Fellow for Spring 2020. In Summer 2020, John had the delight to co-teach neurohumanities in Comp Lit 27 for a third time with Juliana Acosta-Urbe, MD (MCDB); given the collaborative exigencies of the era, it was especially heartening to see students embrace interdisciplinary thinking. John also presented "Announcing Relativity: The Train Whistle and the Doppler Affect" at the 2020 MLA Annual Meeting in Seattle, WA



During his first year  
in the Comparative  
Literature  
Program at UC  
Santa Barbara,  
**Marcel Strobel**  
was accepted to

several academic conferences (MSA 2020, Queer Studies Conference at UNC Asheville, EAAS 2020, and *Global Cities: Culture, Ecology, World Literature* at Nanyang Technological

University, Singapore), all of which were postponed due to the outbreak of COVID-19. He was accepted to the translation workshop with Patrick Chamoiseau at UC Irvine in May, which was also postponed due to COVID-19. In spring 2020, Marcel received the "Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award" in the Department of Germanic & Slavic Studies and is actively involved in creating online assessments for the German language program. He taught GER 1, GER 2 and GER 3 during the 2019-2020 academic year.



In addition to  
dissertation writing  
and teaching,  
**Wendy Sun** was  
accepted to  
the annual MLA  
2021 conference,

the annual Holocaust Educational Foundation conference (postponed to 2021), the German Association Annual Conference in 2020, and the Rocky Mountain MLA annual conference (postponed to 2021). Wendy taught as a Teaching Associate in Summer 2020, teaching two undergraduate classes, organizing academic workshops, and getting ready to prepare for and apply to the academic job market.



**Reem Taha**  
successfully  
completed her first  
exam in the field  
of Mediterranean  
Studies, a 50-  
page paper

entitled "Rethinking Leo Africanus: The Mediterranean as a Temporal and Spatial Decolonial Tool." Her committee members included Professors Bernadette Andrea (English) as chair, Dwight Reynolds (Religious Studies), and Edward English (History and Medieval Studies). Reem received a block grant summer stipend for summer 2019, which she used to study Spanish in



## Other Graduate Student Updates

Granada, where she also enjoyed learning about al-Andalus between history and memory in contemporary Spain. She used the opportunity to do research on her dissertation topic at the Escuela de Estudios Árabes.



In the past year, **Jordan J. Tudisco** was extremely active on campus. In Winter 2020, they completed their second

exam in Trans Studies on "Transing Trauma" with Professors Jenn Tyburczy (Feminist Studies), Lal Zimman (Linguistics), and Maurizia Boscagli (English). They also were the instructor of record for two classes – French 101C in the Winter, and C LIT 113 in the Summer. Jordan gave talks at two conferences this year: "Trans Crossings: Gender Transgressions and Modern Mobilities" at the Early Modern Center "Queer Crossings, Unruly Locales, 1500-1800" Conference in Santa Barbara; and "Visual Pedagogies: Teaching Trauma through Comics and Visual Narratives" at the "Drawing Diversity" Comix Symposium at UCSB. Their

third conference talk "TERRRRRs: Trans-Exclusive Radical, Redefining, Reinventing, Reversing, Recasting Feminists" at the 27th Lavender Languages and Linguistics Conference was unfortunately postponed. In addition, they participated in the IHC Foundation in Humanities Prison Pedagogy Program, teaching literature by correspondence to incarcerated students, were selected to teach in this program a second year, and became a Public Fellow for the IHC Public Humanities program. In Winter and Spring 2020, they worked for the Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity (RCSGD) as Graduate Fellow for Education Initiatives and in Summer 2020 were hired for the new position of Graduate Assistant for Education Initiatives. This past year, they served as a graduate representative for both the Comparative Literature Program and the Graduate Student Association (GSA) during a busy year filled by an ERC visit and a graduate student strike, were the Education and Outreach Coordinator for the Queer and Trans Graduate Student Union (QTGSU), and acted as a point of contact between faculty and

students during the COLA movement. In Spring 2020, Jordan was elected President of the QTGSU as well as VP of Graduate Student Affairs for the GSA. They were also awarded two Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards: one by their home program of Comparative Literature and another one by the Academic Senate!



In the past year, **David Vivian** published his first article titled "Eco-epistemology and Eschatology: Examining the

Savior Complex in Jacques Roumain's *Gouverneurs de la rosée* and Patrick Chamoiseau's *Les Neuf Consciences du Malfini*" (Forthcoming, *French Forum*, 2020). David was also instructor of record for two classes: French 147D – Literary Translation in Winter 2020 and FR154F – Time off in Paris in Summer 2020.

## Our Grads at the 2020 Institute for World Literature

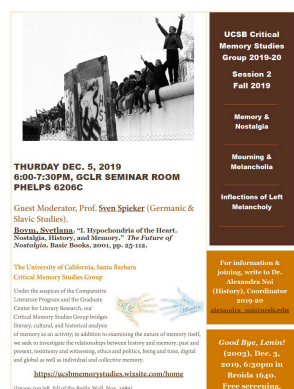
In the summer of 2020, Marcel Strobel from Comparative Literature participated in the first virtual Harvard Institute for World Literature, originally to be held in Belgrade, Serbia where he studied under scholars such as David Damrosch, Stefano Evangelista and Mads Rosendahl Thomsen. Despite the outbreak of COVID-19, it was an illuminating experience where faculty and students from all over the world came virtually together, shared their research projects and created a scholarly communal environment amidst a pandemic. As a first-year international PhD student in comparative literature, Marcel Strobel was truly excited to participate in this year's Harvard IWL and develop his literary skills in a very unique environment. Over the course of four weeks and many early mornings, he participated in two seminars (Stefano Maria-Evangelista's "Citizens of Nowhere" and Mads Rosendahl Thomsen's "Migrant Writing") and

one colloquium on world literature and sociology by Liana Pshevorska. Every week, they had a panel of three students who would present their work to the rest of the group followed by an intensive discussion and feedback circle. The amount of positive and supportive feedback that he received was helpful in determining the future direction of his studies but also in gaining the courage to pursue the research that he pursues. The colloquium provided him with innumerable sources that he can use for his research as well as with a safe space where long-lasting relationships with other scholars could emerge. Marcel Strobel is beyond grateful for the financial and intellectual support that he received from the Comparative Literature Program and the GCLR in particular without which he would not have been able to participate in the institute.

# UCSB Memory Studies Group

Under the auspices of the Comparative Literature Program and the Graduate Center for Literary Research, our Memory Studies Group bridges literary, cultural, and historical analysis of memory as an activity. In addition to examining the nature of memory itself, we seek to investigate the relationships between history and memory, past and present, testimony and witnessing, ethics and politics, being and time, digital and global as well as individual and collective memory.

In 2019-20, we first focused on melancholy and nostalgia. Professor Sven Spieker (Germanic and Slavic Studies, Comparative Literature, History of Art and Architecture) moderated our first session on October 24, 2019. Readings and discussions dealt with memory and mourning in the Russian and Eastern European contexts.





To mark the 30th-anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall in Nov. 1989, we met on Dec. 5 and discussed the first part, "Hypochondria of the Heart. Nostalgia, History, and Memory," from Svetlana Boym's *The Future of Nostalgia* (2001) and the movie *Good Bye Lenin!* (2003). Our Guest Moderator was again Prof. Sven Spieker.

Our third session focused on "left melancholia" and was held on February 12, 2020. After our discussion of Svetlana Boym's rich dissection of nostalgia as post-communist aesthetic and her cross-genre readings illuminating the globalized spread of longing, we turned to the sadness and loss associated with contemporary melancholia by examining left-wing inflections of the affect and ailment: Benjamin's critique of left melancholia in the 1930s, Wendy Brown's take on Benjamin's vision in 1999 and critique of neo-liberal societies, and the recent progressive move by Marxist historian Enzo Traverso and defense of a memory of the future in *Left-Wing Melancholia* (2016). Our session was moderated by Prof. Catherine Nesci (French and Italian, Comparative Literature).

On February 28-29, 2020, our group took part in the international conference, "Memory and Responsibility," organized by Michael Rothberg (the Society Samuel Goetz Chair in Holocaust Studies) at UC Los Angeles; Linshan Jian and Wendy Sun gave papers, and Claudio Fogu and Catherine Nesci participated in the closing roundtable.

In Spring 2020, we held a virtual session with Professor Nakamura (Theater & Dance, UCSB) to discuss her book, *Transgenerational Remembrance* (2020), which deals with artistic production in the commemoration and memorialization of the Asia-Pacific War (1931-1945) in Japan since 1989. Our session was moderated by Prof. Catherine Nesci (May 27, 2020).

Thanks to Dr. Alexandra Noi (History), our Graduate Coordinator in 2019-20, and to Linshan Jiang (East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies), our Web Master.

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# Undergraduate Honors Reception

The annual Comparative Literature award ceremony (which is traditionally held as an end-of-the-year reception at Mosher Alumni Hall) went virtual this year, like everything else. Our students' achievements (remarkable by any measure but especially admirable in these challenging times of anxiety & isolation) were honored on May 18th in a lovely Zoom and PowerPoint ceremony, beautifully designed by Melissa Powell and hosted by Undergraduate advisor Roberto Strongman and Comparative Literature Chair Dominique Jullien. Awards for Comp Lit Majors and Minors, as well as teaching assistant awards were presented against a background of virtual fireworks and balloons. Well done!

**Outstanding Students in a Comparative Literature Lower-Division Section:** Cassandra Bija, Nancy Clarin, Jake Denton, Genesis Taber, Wen Xu.

**Certificates of Excellence for outstanding work in an upper-division Comparative Literature course:** Mina Bamasci, Cassandra Bija, Guillermo Fernandez, Jack Greenberg, Charli Hurley, Sabrina Li, Angel Lin, Cian Martin, Gilbert Nazari, Zilia Nguyen, Julian Sanchez, Mariana Serna, Sarah Webster, Crystal Yu.

**Certificate of Excellence in Translation Workshops:** Guillermo Fernandez (Undergraduate) and Daniel Martini and Ursula Friedman (Graduate).

**Distinction in the Translation Studies Minor:** Maribelle Assaad Boutros, Daniela Jimenez de Anda, Michelle Yuan.

**Distinguished Service to the Comparative Literature Program** was awarded to Naz Keynejad for her work as Lead TA and Social Media Coordinator.

**Distinction in the Comparative Literature Major** was awarded to Angel Lin, and to Jenny Zhang, whose Honors Thesis was accepted for publication by *CLUJ*, UC Berkeley Undergraduate Journal of Comparative Literature.

**Recognition as Distinguished Graduating Seniors** was presented to Angel Lin who also received a Certificate of Excellence.

**Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards** in Comparative Literature were awarded to Daniel Martini and Jordan J. Tudisco.

Similar to the Comparative Literature award ceremony, the annual Germanic and Slavic award ceremony went virtual on May 21st. Hosted and moderated by Professor and Chair Elisabeth Weber, the Department of Germanic and Slavic Studies awarded twenty-two undergraduate and graduate students for their dedicated work as Majors, Minors and teaching assistants in the department during the 2019-2020 academic year. Thanks to Melissa Powell's wonderfully designed PowerPoint, the department was able to honor and validate students' hard work during the difficult times of a pandemic. We congratulate every awardee and thank them for their excellent scholarly achievements! Well done!

**Certificate of Excellence Awards Russian** (nominated by Katia McClain, Sara Weld, Sven Spieker, Jeff Bellomi): Caitlyn Hwang, Ryan Patton, Jessie Wall, Victoria Porter, Anika Temple, Alison Roper.

**Certificate of Excellence Awards German** (nominated by Viktoria Gabriel, Evelyn Reder, Marcel Strobel, Michael Hoffmann, Melissa Sheedy and Kelsey White): Maddie Russell, Julia Tomasulo, Jacob Rodier, Alva Garcia-Solis, Neil Atam, Vanessa Rivera-Herrera, Renee Beverly-Aylwin, John (Jack) Kroesche, Sanchit Saiganesh.

**Harry Steinhauer Award**, presented by Elisabeth Weber, was awarded to Zihua Li.

**Randell Magee Memorial Award**, presented by Katia McClain and Larry McLellan, was awarded to Katie Smith.

**Distinction in the German Major** (presented by Elisabeth Weber & Evelyn Reder) was awarded to Aliza Lee and Ramon Rosas.

**ACTR National Post-Secondary Russian Essay Contest Winners** (presented by Larry McLellan) was awarded to Brooke Horsley and Andrew Zanazanian.

**Outstanding Teaching Assistant in the German Program** presented by Kelsey White & Evelyn Reder was awarded to first-year graduate student Marcel Strobel.



## PASC Staff Updates



**Whitney Ater** joined the PASC Staff team as the Financial and Academic Personnel Analyst on Monday, February 24, 2020. The position was previously occupied by Iryna Zdanovich. In this role, Whitney supports both the financial and academic personnel

units with work task assignments under Iryna's direction. Whitney earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in Cultural Anthropology from UCSB. Whitney has previous UCSB work experience with the Department of Music as an Academic Personnel Assistant and from Psychological and Brain Sciences as a Research Coordinator. Welcome to an amazing team!

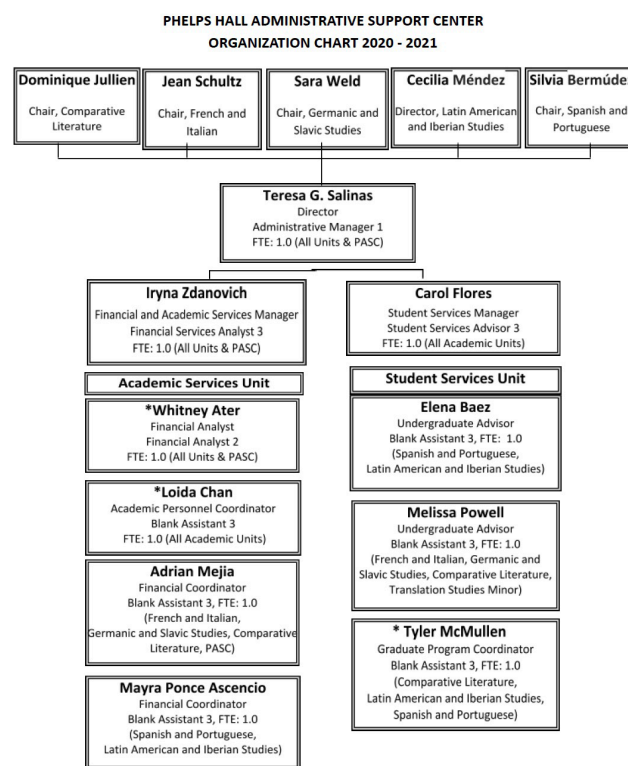


**Iryna Zdanovich** was a Financial Analyst for PASC and has been appointed as PASC Manager for Financial and Academic Services in October 2019. It has been a challenging and exciting year for her as a new manager and a new supervisor, learning new skills and

processes. This year is unique due to remote working. Still, Zdanovich admits that the entire staff was able to manage all the work issues by setting up processes and expectations and keeping constant communication. "Communicate, follow up, repeat – don't let anything slip through the cracks" is their new motto. Zdanovich enjoys working collaboratively with the financial unit members, with the PASC management team and the advising unit. They plan future goals and develop and revise action plans to improve efficiencies, streamline workload, and develop "best practices" to address their customers' needs.

In December 2019 (pre-Covid) the PASC became the first campus unit to allow a Non-Exempt employee to work remotely. **Carol Flores**, PASC Student Advising Manager, learned of the option while in a campus managers meeting (ABOG) where HR presented the topic. Our Undergraduate Coordinator for Spanish and Portuguese/

LAIS, **Elena Baez**, was provided the opportunity, and the transition proved to be successful. Then in March 2020, COVID-19 changed everyone's lives but the transition to work remotely for the rest of PASC staff **Loida Chan**, **Tyler McMullen**, **Adrian Mejia**, **Mayra Ponce Ascencio**, **Melissa Powell**, and **Teresa Salinas** wasn't very difficult since the opportunity to test working remotely was already in practice. So far, PASC has been able to meet expectations of working remotely. There is a limited requirement to go to campus with the exception of weekly mail collection and distribution. They have all become Zoom experts! As a third item, PASC would like to encourage everyone to feel free to contact them if they have any questions about administrative functions and/or building or office space issue. It has been a very different 5 months for the PASC and they believe that they have stepped up to the challenge. We thank all our staff for their excellent and dedicated work during this difficult and uncertain times.



\* NOTE: Provides support services to all departments/programs.

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