The Place of Memory in diasporic cultures

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Abstr Acts
Letizia Alterno, Manchester University

“Waves of Histories and Memories: Commonwealth Pasts and Futures in Amitav Ghosh’s Sea of Poppies and Raja Rao’s The Serpent and the Rope and The Cat and Shakespeare”

This paper, addresses the significance of the metaphor represented by the binary construct sea/history, suggesting ideas of temporal, spatial and memorial circuit journeys but also turbulence, destruction and rebuilding in the work of two Indian authors from different generations: Raja Rao (1908-2006), who lived the experience of and operated within a preindependent India, and Amitav Ghosh (1956-) a post-independence born author writing about India’s contemporary histories and cultures. I will argue that the sea/history currents metaphor is strategized by these authors in connection with untold and traumatic colonial pasts and more recent violent postcolonial histories of India. Rao’s entire work is substantially informed and constructed around the never openly unveiled significance of the Advaitic wave-symbolism, signalling traces of subaltern memories and broken and retold currents of historical pasts of (Hindu) India. In Ghosh’s Sea of Poppies, the sea becomes symbolic of ideological turbulence, cultural transition and change, simultaneously functioning as a discursive cultural circuit towards regenerating historical possibilities.

Isabella Archer, University North Carolina at Chapel Hill

“Fighting for a Frenchness Denied: North African Identity and Memory in Rachid Bouchareb’s Indigènes”

“La France, c’est nous” (“We are France”): This paper explores the significance of Indigènes, a 2006 film by Rachid Bouchareb that tells the story of the “forgotten history” of colonial North African soldiers who fought to liberate France during World War II. The film, released with the English title Days of Glory was nominated for an Oscar (Best Foreign Language Film) and won the 2006 Cannes Film Festival prize for best ensemble cast in addition to accolades for its cinematography and composition. In this paper, I demonstrate how Bouchareb uses the medium of film to create a compelling visual narrative that effectively communicates the complexities of a forgotten war story. In Indigènes, Bouchareb asserts the rights of not only colonial soldiers but post-colonial minorities born and living in France to be recognized as contributors to French history and national identity. One of the most influential recent films depicting French North Africa, the film has been cited for influencing then-French President Jacques Chirac’s decision to adjust pensions for North African veterans of WWII and contributed to the 2000s debates about the teaching and memory of colonial history in French high schools. This paper critically analyzes the film’s narrative, cinematography and exploration of the disparaging label of “indigène” as well as its making and reception in France and North America.

Claudine Armand, English Department, Université de Lorraine, Nancy

“Re/memorying, Mis/remembering: Memory and Diasporic Experience in the Multi-Media Practices of some Contemporary Native-American and African-American Artists”

This paper discusses the effects and impact of Diasporic experience as lived by and reflected in the works of young contemporary Native-American and African-American artists living in the United States. It focuses on the multi-media practices of young artists belonging to two distinct communities who, though operating in the past at different time periods and in different geographic spaces, have shared similar experiences of uprootedness, removal, and dispersal, one from the homeland, the other within the North-American continent. Questions pertaining to the legacy of such traumatic experiences of separation and fragmentation immediately come to mind. Moreover, what kind of memories do they trigger? What are the links between geographical, social, cultural displacement and identity in contemporary America and in today’s globalized world? This paper examines a selection of works that address those issues while highlighting the various appropriation strategies and approaches used by those artists whose main concerns revolve around history, memory and its transmission as well as around the intermingling of past and present occurrences. Taking up and deconstructing recurrent motifs, tropes, and deeply-entrenched stereotypes that are directly related to their identity and cultural heritage, their multi-media art practices aptly resonate with Stuart Hall’s understanding of the Diaspora experience defined “not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity: by a conception of identity, which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by hybridity.” (Stuart Hall, “Cultural Identity and Diaspora”. Identity: Community, Culture, Difference, (ed) Jonathan Rutherford. London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1990. 235-36)

Kathie Birat, Université de Lorraine

“Making sense of memory in the writings of the Caribbean diaspora”

I propose to look at two dimensions of « sense » which underlie much of the fiction (and nonfiction) produced by writers belonging to the Caribbean diaspora in Great Britain, one of which relies on the senses, the other on an attempt to integrate the past into patterns of collective memory which make the past comprehensible in terms of larger patterns of movement. While Sam Selvon’s The Lonely Londoners can be seen as an early example, with its cocky and musical voice, the pursuit of both a sensual and sensible voice can be observed in the work of writers like Andrea Levy and Caryl Phillips. I propose to focus on Levy’s Small Island and Phillips’s A Distant Shore as two somewhat different approaches to the same concern.

Florence Cabaret, Université de Rouen

“Memories of the Partition of India in Earth: 1947 by Deepa Mehta (1998)”

This paper addresses the question of the evolution of memory when it is re-worked by time, fiction, changing scientific patterns of how to approach history, official history and contesting versions of that history. I will thus analyse the ways Deepa Mehta, an Indian-born female filmmaker currently living in Canada, has chosen to articulate the nationalist Indian representation of 1947 as the birth of independent India with a more complex and nuanced depiction which not only borrows from Bapsi Sidwah’s 1988 novel but also from recent academic researches known as Partition Studies (deriving themselves from Trauma Studies) combined to her own diasporic viewpoint as she sees the Hindu BJp party accessing national power in India for the first time in 1998 and as she becomes aware of the growing success of “Bollywood cinema”, to which this film does not belong. Through this example, I would like to show how, as India had just celebrated its 50 years’ anniversary, the film contributed and still contributes to a reappraisal of this so-called gentlemen’s agreement between Indian and British leaders as a civil war, a notion that has been gaining prominence in the field of contemporary world history. I will also analyse how the choice of the romance film and of its double and marginal narratorial instance (a young Parsi girl living in Lahore in 1947 and the 50-year-old woman she has become and who remembers that very same year) shows once again that fiction “from below” has its share in the re-evaluation and appropriation of counter histories and official history by reaching other audiences than scholarly works.
Antara Chatterjee, Calcutta, India

“Remembering Bangladesh: Tahmima Anam and the Construction of a Bangladeshi National Narrative”

This paper intends to examine the fiction of Tahmima Anam, the Britain-based Bangladeshi author, to analyse how she recuperates a distinctive Bangladeshi national consciousness and cultural identity from a diasporic location. I will focus on Anam’s debut novel, A Golden Age (2007), to demonstrate how Anam, despite her diasporic distance from the geographic location of Bangladesh, constructs herself as a Bangladeshi author and her fiction contributes to a Bangladeshi national narrative. The novel memorialises the liberation war of 1971, the historic moment which marked the country’s birth, the transition from Pakistan to Bangladesh for the Bengali Muslims of East Pakistan. I argue that through recuperating the pivotal moment in the formation of the Bangladeshi national narrative, a moment which crystallised a national consciousness for the Bengali Muslims of the region, Anam’s novel contributes to a national conversation about 1971 and its emotionally-fraught legacies. The novel thus enables me to examine the construction of nationhood through collective memory, through remembering a defining moment of conflict and trauma for the nation. Some important questions that my paper seeks to uncover are whether Anam’s physical distance from Bangladesh motivates her to configure her Bangladeshiness through a nostalgic narrative about it, and if that distance also helps in dealing with difficult, traumatic memories. It will reveal how cultural discourses evoking the birth of a nation and the legacies of that formative historical moment, construct the nation in discursive and memorial ways, providing alternative, non-official narratives that explore underlying complications often elided in official discourses. The paper will thus shed light on some of the conference’s themes like the powerful presence, within diasporic subjectivities, of past events and traumatic memories which define the homeland, memory as an ‘active process’ of remembering that homeland and the crucial relationships between memory and history and transnationalism.
Cathy Coussens, İpek University, Ankara, Turkey

“Reconstructing Irish History and Reuniting the Diasporic Self in Nuala O’Faolain’s My Dream of You (2001)”

Nuala O’Faolain’s My Dream of You is one of a number of novels written since the millennium which engages with the 1990s project of re-examining historical memory in Ireland. The novel is set in 1999, during Ireland’s commemoration of the 1798 rebellion and two years after the end of the government-sponsored commemoration of the Great Famine, which, academics and social commentators suggested, remained an open wound in Irish memory that a virtual historical silence had allowed to go unhealed. The novel explores a common theme in Irish women’s writing: escape from Ireland’s repressively patriarchal society and a problematic (here temporary) return home. A successful travel writer, Kathleen de Burca has fled Ireland for England thirty years before. Kathleen’s awareness that ‘England saved [her] from Ireland’ is complicated by the fact that she has been forced to engage in her ‘own Anglo-Irish war’, subject to political and cultural prejudice and sexual abuse, and the subsequent sterility of her emotional and sexual life. Kathleen’s disillusionment with her life of ‘hotel’ sex and constructing upbeat travel narratives in lands blighted by exploitation and poverty leads her to abandon her job and return to Ireland to research a 19th century scandal surrounding the passionate affair between an Anglo-Irish landlord’s wife (Marianne Talbot) and an Irish servant during the Famine. The journey forces Kathleen to confront her own famished childhood as an unloved child and her self-imposed silence about her mother’s life and early death from cancer of the womb after Irish Catholic authorities refused to sanction an abortion. Kathleen’s rediscovery of passion with a married Irish expatriate leads her to reconstruct the scandal from a female, fictional rather than historical perspective, challenging both the patriarchal hegemony of Victorian England and the one-dimensional masculine narratives of Irish nationalism which dominate the commemorations. As her own contemporary dilemma comes to inflect the histories she tries to (re) construct, Kathleen is eventually able to reconcile her Irish and English selves, while Ireland and England must retain their contested, divided identities.

Anca Cristofoveci, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie

‘Pictures that make a difference : displacing photographic memory’

In its early days, photography has contributed to the construction of the non-Western imaginary much like the art history canon, that of painting in particular, namely, as an exotic elsewhere. As that elsewhere has come into visibility under a variety of forms in recent photographic artwork and archive research, new issues crop up that challenge not only the geographic and cultural scope of the mainstream historical narrative, but also basic notions of critical discourse. Prompted by artwork from such photographic “no image” lands as Palestine, Mali, or South Africa in which photographic genres and imaginaries interact in extremely stimulating ways, this paper explores aesthetic strategies ingrained in culturally specific issues and how they resonate with new approaches in art history.

Mohar Daschaudhuri, Visiting Fellow at the Department of French, University of Sheffield.

“Reconstructing memory: creation of a fantastic ‘third space’ in the writings of Ying Chen and Linda Lê.”

By creating an imaginary fantastic double, or by dissolving the body which could be seen as the final ‘paternal home’, subjected continuously to patriarchal norms, treatments, the protagonists in the novels of Ying Chen and Linda Lê, transgress their corporal limitations and inhabit anachronistic worlds. Facing inescapable physical realities, either oppressive psychological environments, or unexpected events such as death and exile, the protagonists rise above their physical situations, and adapt a fluid state of consciousness which intermingle past and present, physical and material consciousness. As the codes of realism break down, the line between realism and the fantastic become indistinct. However oppressive the original ‘home’ symbolized as the mother or the mother country, it is also a source of history and memory. Desire for the lost territory and tradition, as well as the search for new paradigms of thought and cultural freedom from those very traditions, create a movement of attraction and repulsion, a flux between the past and the future, between reality and fantasy. I shall adopt the theory of ‘hybridity’ and ‘third space’ of Homi K. Bhabha. According to Bhabha, the hybrid moment of political change lies in the ‘rearticulation, or translation, of elements that are neither the One (unitary working class) nor the Other (the politics of gender) but something else besides, which contests the terms and the territories of both.’

In this paper I propose to examine the ways in which Chen and Lê, immigrants from South East Asia, portray this in-between space which is not bound to physical reality. I shall try to define the notion of the ‘fantastic’ with the theories of Tzvetan Todorov and Rosemary Jackson. What changes come about in the narrative perspectives after the subject is liberated from the limits of the body? What are the characteristics of this ‘third space’ between the fantastic and the real? How are memory and history evoked from this de-centered position of the subject? These are some of the questions I shall try to answer through the reading of: La Mémoire de l’eau, Les Lettres Chinoises, L’Ingratitude, Immobile, by Ying Chen and Les Trois Parques, Pêranno, and Autres jeux avec le feu by Linda Lê.

Lena Englund, Abo Akademi University

‘…..whether I like it or not, I am home’ – Memory and Transnationalism in Peter Godwin’s Memoirs Mukiwa and When a Crocodile Eats the Sun

In this presentation I will discuss the place of memory in Peter Godwin’s two memoirs Mukiwa (1996) and When a Crocodile Eats the Sun (2006). Godwin was born in Southern Rhodesia in 1957, lived through the UDI and Bush War as a young adult, received his education in England and later moved to the USA. A transmigrant as defined by Basch et al. (1997) is greatly involved in both country of origin and host country, and this label can be applied to Godwin, residing in New York but travelling frequently to Zimbabwe. Godwin’s statement “For whether I like it or not, I am home” effectively sums up Godwin’s ambivalent relationship to his country of origin, with its unstable politics and the financial disaster it has experienced during the last decade.

My paper discusses Godwin’s memoirs with a focus on memory and its functions in the past and the present. Memory cannot be said to be solely grounded in the past; it also plays a significant role in the present and even the future (Olney 1972, 1998). Olney also suggests that a memoir works as a metaphor of the self at the time of writing. Thus the question what the past means in the present needs to be asked (Hodgkin & Radstone, 2003). Godwin’s memoirs are a prime example of this negotiation between the past (Rhodesia) and the present (Zimbabwe, USA) in three specific areas concerning his transnational status, family matters and the political reality of Zimbabwe. The place of memory is located in this negotiation and memory acts as the element that binds the past, present and future together.

Pascale Guibert, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie

‘Displacement: Memory and Creation in Eamonn Wall’s Poetry.’

Born and bred in Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford, in the 1960’s, almost the only departures Eamonn Wall had had to undergo were his weekly train journeys to Dublin, as a student. When, in the 1980’s, Ireland can no longer offer jobs to its young and educated, like thousands of his peers, Wall has to leave Ireland. In the USA, he adds to the numbers of the ‘New Irish’, these Irish emigrants of a new type — educated artists and intellectuals who commute overseas from their new place of residence to their former homeland.

Wall has become a major voice of these new exiles, both through his prize-winning volume of essays on the Irish diaspora, From the Sin-é Café to the Black Hills (1999), and in his six volumes of poetry to date. All explore the processes of departure and return, adaptation and readaptation, and creation, as inextricably linked.

The spectre that haunts Wall’s poetry is not only of Ireland and the past, but, unbound, unlimited in time and space, it announces, by making it, what is ahead. The initial, singular, personal departure and geographical displacements of Eamonn Wall have, from the beginning, been turned into a
blessing insofar as they modelize a condition of contemporary humankind. As such, they have been explored minutely and incessantly by the poe-
its, in their fields of operation and in their workings. Wall’s poetics will thus enable us to interrogate the place of memory as regards these new
exiles — its very placeness, if I may say.

The memory that is there related and relayed is a subterranean river of magma that can upset, scatter and displace icons, clichés, settlements, accepted situations and pre-conceived actions. This conference gives it a chance to be brought to the surface.

Edouard Glissant’s Poetics of Relation and Philosophy of Relation, Martin Heidegger’s « Building Dwelling Thinking » and obviously Jacques
Derrida's inspirational thinking on écriture and the spectre will fuel my work and push it forward.

Egle Kackute, University of Vilnius

“Memory, Gender and Linguistic Amnesia”

In her essay The Mother’s Silence (written in her native Lithuanian and translated into English by the author herself) the Lithuanian born
essayist, translator, and academic Dalia Staponkutė explores a figure of a “silent mother” based on numerous migrant Lithuanian women
round the world “who are unable to talk to their children in their native language”. In the background of prodigious recent emigration
from Eastern European post-Soviet countries to Western European states and the USA, the “silence” of many Lithuanian born mothers
mothering outside their native linguistic and cultural environment, cannot be solely explained by social and symbolic upwards mobility and
their investment in a more prestigious future for themselves and for their children. I see it as a form of linguistic amnesia associated with
difficult and often traumatizing history and intrinsically linked with gender. Drawing on trauma studies, especially the work of Cathy Caruth,
as well as on latest psychological science research in emotions and multilingualism, I will argue that the “silent mother” as portrayed in
Staponkutė’s essays can be interpreted as a figure struggling with historically, socially and gender specific emotional issues resorting to
silence as a means to cope with difficult past and present identity shifts.

Sarah Knor, University of Northampton

“Kala Pani Poetics: Indo-Caribbean Memories”

The idea of “re-turn” has often been named the defining characteristic of all diasporas — “that is, they turn again and again toward the
homeland through travel, remittances […] and by various contingent efforts to maintain other links with the homeland (Tölöyan). However,
in the case of the Indo-Caribbean Diaspora, which dates from the nineteenth-century history of indenture, this “re-turn” takes different form
than it does for many of the more recent diasporas. The ancestral homeland India is no longer directly accessible, not only due to the longer
historical perspective, but also as their dispersal has been marked by the kala pani – the crossings of the black water of the Atlantic –
which radically changed their social formations (for instance, the crossing was equated with loss of Hindu essence such as caste purity; see
Mishra) and produced a rupture in the collective memory. This rupture complicates any nostalgic yearnings for the former homeland and
yet opens the diasporic possibility of “creative amnesia” (Dabydeen). Instead of the Indian motherland, it is the sea-passage itself and
the negatively denoted “Coolie culture” which developed out of the plantation life to which recent Indo-Caribbean narratives turn in order
to gain a sense of a distinctive Indo-Caribbean legacy. However, this traumatic past, tainted with violence, which still haunts the present
resists easy access. How, then, does one retrieve and cope with a heritage which has been shamefully repressed and distorted by later
generations?

With the help of novels such as The Swinging Bridge by Ramabai Espinet and popular discourses such as Calypso and Chutney music,
my paper will analyse how recent Indo-Caribbean narratives produce tales of migration, ships, barracks and the legacy of cane to recreate
their very own collective memory exactly not to restore an ossified past. Instead this Indo-Caribbean diasporic memory is produced to make
sense of the present and negotiate its heritage not just in regard to the specific Indo-Caribbean history and colonialism, but also to the often
dominant African connections.

Sreekanth Kopuri, Sthvenskateswara University

“the diasporic home in the literary map of agha sahid ali’s poetry”

Glocalising the story of tri-cultural controversial indian territory with a ceaseless nostalgic angst that hangs around in cartographies of
evanescence across the transnational borders with a commendable lyrical velocity and parallelly inventing an indo-Persian lyric form on the
other hand, Agha Sahid Ali emerges as a mythical self representing India with a metaphoric identity in Biblical and literary Ishmael. Absence
makes the heart grow fonder. A chronic plight of being an exile has a possibility of an elevation to immortal proportions of art. Existing in
the “The Ghat of the only World” – Kashmir – he alternates between the binaries such as here and there, nativism and alienation, past and
present seeking solace in those “Imaginary Homelands.” Says Edward Said “Exile becomes the necessary precondition for a better state.”
It is Ali’s complex journey into a land, where “India always exists off the turnpikes”, that made him what he is in the diasporic literature. The
haunting imagery of social ostracism obviously reflects his longing for belonging to home torn apart by militant and military force which was
resisted by Azadi in 1980. His poems are tragic records which reflect scores of grim memories of a postmodern Ishmael, the “atravesado”
who historicizes art with a multicultural representation. Experimenting with Gazal his vociferous art form stands as a challenge against the
hegemonic poetics. The deprived state of his self reinvents Kashmir in the spaces of poetic identity as an artistic legacy particularly to
the bereaved souls of kashmiris cleft by the ever sharpening edges of Hindu-Muslim fury that fosters recurring encounters of systematic
vendange. In between stands Ali’s poetry as an implication of a passionate plea in the form of multiple selves. In his odyssey to his
homeland his sojourn includes Sarajevo, Chechnya and Palestine too – the territories of similar discord – the imaginative interstice.

Sabine Laurent, Université de Versailles

“Consuming Memory: The Oneiric Past in Romesh Gunesekera's The Sandglass and Heaven's Edge”

British writer Romesh Gunesekera was born in Colombo. His Sri Lankan heritage is often interwoven in the background of his novels. In
The Sandglass (1988) and in Heaven’s Edge (2002), the diasporic characters he depicts are caught in the turmoil of a violent past that
“choked with wars, disputes, borders as pointless as chalk lines in water.” In both novels, the main character sets out on a time-journey to
put together fragments of his past. In The Sandglass, Prins tries to find out the truth about his father’s death, while in Heaven’s Edge, Marc
retraces the steps of his father back to his homeland.

The father-son connection through time prompts the reader to question the way memories are handed down in diasporic families. Remembering
seems to be the result of a compulsion the characters cannot escape. The past needs to be revisited and re- enacted. But mostly, it needs to be fantasized about. This paper will analyze in the ways in which both novels depict remembering as a consuming
process. To cope with the violence underlying their heritage, Gunesekera’s characters escape into reveries that transform the past into
acceptable landmarks for the ways they define their hybrid identities.
Rocco de Leo, University of Salerno

‘The Place one had been years ago.’: memories of space in Michael Ondaatje’s Running in the Family.

Born in Ceylon in 1943 and emigrated to Canada in 1962, Michael Ondaatje is today one of the most acclaimed and appreciated writer for his novels and poetry. However, in 1982 he decided to confront himself with the difficult task of autobiographical writing, and published Running in the Family, an account of two journeys he made back to his birthplace, Ceylon (known today as Sri Lanka), in 1978 and 1980.

Throughout the text, boundaries between facts and fiction are challenged, and the very nature of the autobiography is questioned: in fact, it is more a description of Sri Lankan life at the time when Ondaatje’s parents lived, a search for identity through the memories of their, and his own, past. Ondaatje, then, has to come to terms with a diasporic self which is, in some sense, always ‘other’; and his history of migration raises questions about ethnic and national belonging because he is at home neither in Canada nor in Sri Lanka. This double consciousness doesn’t allow him to determine an identity in a definite and unified space, because the experience of a place is repeatedly processed through the experience of another, different one. Writing with a ‘double vision’, the emigrant Ondaatje describes displacement, because to emigrate is always to dismantle the center of the world, and so to move into a lost, disorientated one of fragments.

In this paper, I will look at the emigrant/immigrant writer Michael Ondaatje who recognizes and considers himself as ‘other’. I will show how his book describes various ‘ex-centric dimensions’, that is to be out of a centre in terms of race, nationality, ethnicity, language, sexual identity, class, or canon.

Christine Lorre-Johnston, Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle

“Alice Munro as Writer of the Scottish diaspora in Canada”

Even though memory is considered a major theme in Alice Munro’s short fiction, it is often considered from the perspective of personal, rather than collective experience: characters are seen reminiscing, reordering and reconstructing events, groping for possibilities of interpretation of the past, in order to better understand their own present. This is accomplished through narrative back and forth movements in time, apparent digressions, and various other techniques that contribute to a re-membering of past events and that structure the narrative. However, Munro’s The View from Castle Rock (2006) casts a different perspective on the motif of memory in her earlier work as a whole, to the extent that this book, which is composed of linked stories, “a curious re-creation of lives” on the Laird law of Munro’s family, “closer to my own life than the other stories I had written, even in the first person” (Prologue), explicitly inscribes its narrator as a descendant of the Scottish immigrants who left the Ettrick valley for the New World in the 19th century.

This paper will aim at revisiting some of Munro’s earlier stories, appraising her implicit status as a writer of what may be considered the Scottish diaspora in Canada. In particular, it will examine the links between colonial and postcolonial aspects of her writing – bearing in mind the question raised by Laura Moss in Is Canada Postcolonial? Unsettling Canadian Literature – as well as the links between place and collective identity, between feminist and postcolonial concerns.

Myriam Moïse, Université des Antilles Guyane

“The Wombs of Memory in the Narratives of E. Danticat and N. Hopkinson: Reproducing Subaltern Histories, Reasserting Folk Memory”

We must look for subaltern histories below the surface of the image, tangled in the roots of trees, close to the ground, submerged in the water” (Sheller 139). This paper aims to demonstrate that diasporic Caribbean authors Edwidge Danticat and Nalo Hopkinson seek to create their own versions of history and often situate them below the waters. In Danticat and Hopkinson’s short stories, the diasporic subject exists beyond the realms of life and death as such and experiences what Wilson Harris calls “the dual death of Man, a cultural death followed by a psychical death as threshold to the savage paradox of re-birth” (60). From trauma and dislocation, their narratives allow healing and relocation, thus proving that the feminine Caribbean diaspora can recreate memory through productive alternative discourses, which can be heard even when originating from below or from the margins. They manage to integrate history, myth and culture into their narratives so that the previously dismissed African Caribbean folk memory is fully acknowledged. In “Nineteen Thirty Seven”, Danticat re-members the traumatic episode of the Parsley Massacre and the river transforms into a sacred space beyond its tragic history, thus embodying matriarchal memory. In Hopkinson’s “Money Tree”, Jamaican spaces are re-membered and interlock with Canadian spaces, as the river metamorphoses into a transcultural swimming-pool, and allows survival and redemption. Hopkinson and Danticat truly offer a re-evaluation of the extent to which traditional folk discourse still influence diasporic people beyond borders, as they constantly infuse their narratives with African Caribbean folk memory, hence history and myth are blurred. Emphasising the link between the individual, the collective and the land, their re-membering appears as intimate through a sort of umbilical connection between the female selves and the geo-cultural spaces that surround them. Their fictional narratives enhance the constant recreation of diasporic subjectivities through the wombs of memory from which different tales may emerge, reproduce and allow “generational continuity”, that is to say “mothers handing down the future to their daughters” (Emecheita 47). Cultural transfers between generations are highly significant in the diasporic context as it is this interconnection of past, present and future that allows the construction of integrated diasporic female selves. Both Danticat and Hopkinson impose their own vision of folk memory and choose to raise the status of the female subaltern character to a resourceful and omnipotent position through ancestral and spiritual interconnection and spatial transcendence.

Delphine Munos, University of Liège

‘Holocaust postmemory and the legacy of un-death in Nicole Krauss’ Great House’

In an interview closely following on the release of The History of Love, Krauss made it clear that, contrary to what some critics had ventured, her second novel was not about Holocaust survivors. “I am the granddaughter of people who survived that historical event,” Krauss pointed out. “I’m not writing their story – I couldn’t write their story […] What interests me is the response to catastrophic loss.”

Great House, Krauss’s third novel, can be seen to further investigate this “response to catastrophic loss” – in a way which makes only tangential and mediated references to the Holocaust. The novel spans eighty years, starting from the near-end of World War 2, and traces the passing-on of a desk of massive proportions. Complete with nineteen drawers, one of which remains locked until it is symbolically revealed to be empty at the close of the book, the desk operates as some kind of trans-historical fetish for most of its successive keepers (and aspiring acquirers). Narrated through a set of five characters whose lives prove overshadowed less by the Holocaust itself than by its felt resonances in the psyches of loved ones, Great House is a polyphonic work that raises questions about the anatomy of ‘Holocaust postmemory’ (Marianne Hirsch), its temporality, but also its reification in conformity with deficit mechanisms that take the form of death-denying fantasies. Here, while turning to the past, some clearly unreliable first-person narrators reveal their lifelong investment in fetishizing memories of themselves and others so as to better keep all sense of temporality and mortality at bay – in a way suggesting that fantasies of un-death have helped them fill in the gap left by the unspeakable horror of the Holocaust, and were later transmitted in lieu of ‘memory proper’. This paper will thus focus on Great House’s rich imagery, and its narrative strategies, in order to investigate Krauss’ representation of the paradoxes of Holocaust postmemory.
Hania A.M. Nashef, American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

‘Remembering and retelling the Palestinian story through film’

In Jabra Ibrahim Jabra’s novel, The Ship, Wadi, one of the main protagonists says, “We spoke the truth till our throats grew hoarse, and we ended up as refugees in tents. We fancied the world community cherished the truth, and turned out to be the victims of our naiveté.” Thus began the journey of the Palestinians in the diaspora. Exiled from historical Palestine and ending up for the most part as refugees in camps in neighboring countries, the people of Palestine were left with their memories to try to understand the implication of their forced exodus, and their newly acquired status as refugees. For the Palestinian, the memory of the homeland is not only one of nostalgia for a lost past or even a perceived distant utopia but is also an essential exercise at recollection, which is vital for survival. For a long time memories remained as stories handed down orally from one generation to the next, resisting documentation. The myth of the land without a people or the more recently the invented people has rendered the task of documenting the memories of the homeland more daunting. The Palestinian story has at once been denied its protagonists and has been usurped by another. With the passage of time, the need to narrate the story assumed some urgency. The Palestinian has to resist being fossilized as the refugee. Signaling 1948 or Nakba (the catastrophe) as the decisive date when the story begins is in itself significant. The loss of the homeland, which is closely linked to the loss of honor, brought along with it humiliation at having been defeated and forcibly exiled. In this paper, I would like to argue how through the medium of film Palestinians have found a space to renegotiate their existence as a people who once existed on their homeland.

Joanna Pasternak, Gdansk University

‘Anita Desai’s Art of Oblivion’

In her last novella The Museum of Final Journeys (2011), Anita Desai draws upon Borgesian ideas and she thematises the poetics of oblivion – understood as the transition from memory (being it individual and collective) to oblivion. The author depicts numerous representations of forgetfulness by means of the rich imagery of disappearance, disintegration and dissolution which are embedded in the central motif of the novella in question, namely: a museum. This museum stands out as a complex and multi-layered metaphor of memories being gradually erased, disused and thus forgotten. At this point, paradoxically Desai seems to defy the very concept of oblivion being equal to the condition of “no-memory”. The author follows Borgesian idea of oblivion that in fact it does not exist - and structures the imagery and motifs in the novella so as to claim that memory of objects and places will never completely disappear and will be handed down regardless of the burden it poses on those who are left as its custodians. This paper will be methodologically based on the works of Jan and Aleida Assmann (collective and individual memories), Paul Ricoeur (forgetfulness and amnesia) and the semantic analysis of imagery and motifs that constitute the poetic fabric of the latest novella by Anita Desai, The Museum of Final Journeys.

Jennifer Randall, Université Paris 8

“Imagined communalisms: disseminating India’s “other” post-colonial history through the diaspora”

Although the Indian subcontinent may frequently be perceived as a frozen “imaginary homeland” by its Western diaspora, its modern reality – experienced daily by some – is of communal tensions, with women as the centrepiece for the acting out of this ethno-religious hatred. Astonishingly, despite the profusion of “Indian” literature on the international market, the Janus-faced history of the Indian subcontinent – its Partition – hardly ever circulates. A body of literature has nevertheless quietly flourished throughout the diaspora, contesting the idea of a digested and therefore memorialized locus, and re-positioning history’s shadowed lines, raped women, both on the national and the international scene. This apparition stems from a fundamental paradox: if Spivak’s subaltern cannot speak at home, how is she to be spoken of and for overseas? Yet the West is the main site of publication for these unseemingly controversial novels, offering a “postcolonial” platform propitious to the combination of “Indian” and “feminine”.

Yet these novels steer clear of feeding into the “oriental feminine” paradigm theorized by Edward Said, which continues to amalgamate womanhood and nationhood for the sake of Western readers. For despite the common postcolonial trope of a nostalgia for the nation, these spectral voices, in a subtle twist, impose rather the degeneration of “Mother India”.

This paradox shall be considered through the convergence of two initially divergent novels written by two diasporic authors, Indo-Canadian Anita Rau Badami (Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?) and Indo-American Meena Arora Nayak (About Daddy). The first considers a vision of Indian “history” exported to the Canadian diaspora, and the second the return of the diasporic inheritor of Indian history to the subcontinent, both through the disturbing figure of the raped woman. This intersecting reflection purposes to interrogate the subversion of an official narrative through the play with the “alieness” provoked by the diasporization of local history.

Elaine Rocha, University of the West Indies, Barbados

‘Undesirable Immigrants in the Brazilian Racial Democracy’

Brazil is a country known for its policies of racial tolerance and it is remarkable that Brazilians have never experienced segregationist or exclusionary laws, or any kind of regulation that would discriminate against individuals based on their racial background. Foreign tourists and immigrants often remark how welcoming is Brazilian society towards newcomers. The reality, however, is quite different from the myth with Black people experiencing discrimination on a daily basis that restricts their social and economic mobility. This situation has worsened since the delayed abolition of slavery (1888) and is still present today. In the early 20th century Brazil received thousands of European immigrant workers, highly valued in Brazilian society in contrast with the low status accorded Blacks and mulattoes. In the same period the northern states reluctantly received hundreds of Black Caribbean immigrant workers brought to the country by British companies between 1900 and 1920. Analysis of the challenges faced by this small group of immigrants to the Amazon in their quest for adaptation and assimilation is new to Brazilian historiography. Today, a century later, as a new group of Black immigrants, Haitians who arrived in the Amazon after the earthquake of 2010, face the same challenges, this study aims to compare the conditions of immigration/emigration and adaptation experienced by these two groups in Brazilian society.

Virginia Sherman, Université de Grenoble

‘In Search of Lost Identity: Re-discovering Self and Identity Through Culinary Memoirs’

A hybrid fruit of the food-writing explosion, the culinary memoir is an emerging literary genre offering a framework for memory retrieval, self-reconstruction and healing to a displaced people in search of a lost identity. Writers reconstruct memories around culinary traditions into a narrative of fictional dimensions, and recalling Rushdie’s assertion that in an urge to reclaim what is lost, fictions or imaginary homelands are built.
Within diaspora consciousness is an underlying notion of displacement, alienation and loss with the need to rediscover a social and cultural identity. Food and culinary traditions embody ‘terroir’ that evoke place, customs and identity. Food inevitably takes us on a quest for identity and inversely, the search for identity takes us to food.

Evoking culinary traditions gives the diaspora writer access to archaic memories through the senses - heralded by Serres as the only effective ‘passeur de memoires’, the unique access to authentic memories. For Levi-Strauss, cuisine is a language articulating a lost identity. It gives sensuous expression to a vanished language. Recipes are part of that utterance, vestiges salvaged from a lost time.

As fragments of that language, recipes – ephemeral, poetic and comforting – play a vital role in anchoring the narrator in the nurturing and reassuring sensuousness of the present moment while allowing him to explore the past, establishing a safe and tangible link with an elusive and charged tradition. “Serious cooking is an essentially optimistic act. It reaches into the future, vanishes into memory…” saving the diaspora from loss of hope and identity, restoring dignity.

Microcosms of a dispersed people, these family tales are also collective memories, evoking ethnic origins where cultural and historical authenticity is subservient to the sensuous authenticity of idealized family memories. The reader, invited to join the intimate circle of the narrator’s family table, suppresses criticism and benevolently embraces the authenticity of the memoirs as diasporic myths of identity.

Laura Singeot, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie

‘The reterritorialisation of Memory in David Malouf’s Remembering Babylon’

From the outset, beginning with its very title, this novel illustrates the controversial relation between place, with the direct reference to Babylon, the biblical city, and memory – conceptualized through the use of the verb remember unusually used in its –ing form, insisting thus on the process rather than on the very memory it evokes.

However, Bakhinte’s chronotope theory which highlights the powerful association of time and place in determining a given action seems to be questioned from the very first scene of the novel. Remembering Babylon opens on a child’s game, which he imagines taking place on the unknown Russian steppes. The novel thus opens on a double displacement – the geographical displacement is underpinned by a more disorienting displacement from reality to the imaginary world of the game itself. This movement simultaneously underlines the instability of the first settlers’ situation, being themselves displaced from England to Australia. Crucially, memory is entirely erased from this first scene. Instead of using his former experience of the Old World in his games, Lachlan, the boy, instead imagines a place he has never been to. Remembering Babylon plays on this disjunction between memory and place throughout, working its way through it, until threads are delicately interwoven to bridge the gap in the end, as I will try to demonstrate in this paper. I will first insist on the notion of nostalgia, showing how Old Europe is evoked as a looming presence throughout the novel. I will also show that the settlers’ occasional attempts to use their former European experience to describe their new life in the settlement are an utter failure. Finally, the construction of a new collective memory emerges as the process at the core of the text, especially through the building of a national identity in their new country: memory is eventually successfully re-territorialized.

Hélaine Ventura, Université Toulouse Le Mirail

‘Bardic Memory: Recycling Norse Sagas and Celtic Minstrelsy in Alice Munro’s Stories’

This paper aims at establishing the centrality of cultural and historical transmission in the works of Alice Munro. Instead of regarding her stories as documenting small town life through a female perspective, it will examine her fiction as a process of recycling Anglo-Celtic and Nordic literary inheritance. It will analyze her appropriation and subversion of antiquarian and nationalist literary developments in Scotland (fragments, ballads, epitaphs) and compare them to her endorsing the role of the skald recounting the founding sagas of the nation, as for instance in the story entitled “The Bear Came down the Mountain”.

In the light of Katie Trumpener’s essay Bardic Nationalism The Romantic Novel and the British Empire (Princeton University Press, 1997) it will lay the emphasis on the cross-pollination of different peripheries in the rise of a vernacular literature in Canada founded upon cultural preservation, under the sign of the bard. Destined to shore up national memory, such fiction is not marked by nostalgia but paradoxically characterized by transcultural cosmopolitanism and colonial ambivalence. As it recycles the Romantic novel of the margins of the English speaking world, it also revisions German and Russian legacies. It constructs itself as a site of annexation of and indexation to imperial ideology, at the same time as resistance and subjection to the traditions and literary genres of the British Empire.
Letizia Alterno, Manchester University, UK
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Isabella Archer, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA
Isabella Archer received her Master’s degree (Romance Languages and Literatures) from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2012. Her research interests include Franco-Arab literatures and cultures, museum studies, and Orientalism. She currently lives and works in Paris, France.

Claudine Armand, English Department, Université de Lorraine, Nancy
Claudine Armand is Associate Professor in the English department, Université de Lorraine, Nancy, France where she teaches mainly American literature and visual art. Her fields of interest are literature and the text-image interaction. She is the author of an exhibition catalog, Anne Ryan: Collages (Giverny, Museum of American Art, Terra Foundation, 2001). She has written several articles on various modern artists as well as on contemporary African-American artists. She has co-edited three collections of essays including one entitled Ancrages/Passages (Nancy : PUN, 2006), one on the myth of Prometheus in the arts and literature, Créatures et créateurs de Prométhée (Nancy : PUN, 2010) and one on London-New York: Exchanges and Cross-Cultural Influences in the Arts and Literature (Nancy : PUN, 2012). She is a member of IDEA (dedicated to the study of interdisciplinary theories and practices) and is currently co-editing a book on “Positioning Interdisciplinarity”. She continues to explore the works of American contemporary artists, in particular African-American and Native-American artists.

Corinne Bigot, Université Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense
Corinne Bigot is assistant professor at the Université Paris Ouest Nanterre. She wrote her PhD thesis on the works of Alice Munro (2007). She is the author of several articles on the works of Alice Munro, with particular emphasis on the poetics of silence. Current research topics include gender and colonial space in the works of nineteenth century Canadian female writers. Her most recent publications are an essay on Alice Munro published in Trauma Narratives and Herstory (Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) and an essay on Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill, to be published in The Journal of Commonwealth Literature in January 2014.

Kathie Birat, Université de Lorraine
An Emeritus Professor of the University of Lorraine, Kathie Birat has published numerous articles on African American and Caribbean writers, Phillips in particular, with special emphasis on voice and the use of effects of orality.

Florence Cabaret, Université de Rouen
Florence Cabaret is a Lecturer at the University of Rouen. She mainly works on Indian novelists writing in English, a central point of interest that she has recently managed to combine with the study of certain ethnic British and American TV series, as well as with the study of Indian films in English. She is also the translator of Hanif Kureishi’s and Chloe Hooper’s latest novels and short stories.

Gwennâëlle Cariou, Université Paris Diderot
Gwennâëlle Cariou is a PhD student at the Université Paris Diderot. She has a degree in art history, museology and history of museums from the Ecole du Louvre, and in American civilization from the Université Paris Diderot. She is currently studying the history of museums in the United States, especially museums devoted to African Americans, and the way African American culture and history are displayed in those museums.

Marcia Carlson, University of Antwerp, Holland.
Marcia Carlson is a PhD candidate at the University of Antwerp. Her research and dissertation focus on transgenerational traumas in the works of Caribbean-North American immigrant activist writers.

Pamela Carralero, University of Edinburgh
Pamela Carralero has completed a Masters in Literature and Transatlanticism at the University of Edinburgh and is now working on a doctoral research dissertation. In February 2013 her first play, Who Is Moloch? (produced and performed by Encompass Productions) ran for two weeks in London.

Antara Chatterjee, Calcutta, India
Antara Chatterjee is an Assistant Professor in English at a college in Calcutta, India, where she teaches undergraduate and masters English modules. She completed her PhD from the School of English, University of Leeds, U.K in 2012. Her doctoral thesis traced the constructions of home and identity in Bengali diasporic fiction in authors from India and Bangladesh, currently living in the UK and the US.

Sam Coombes, University of Edinburgh, UK
Sam Coombes is Lecturer in French at the University of Edinburgh. Initially in Sartre studies, he is author of The Early Sartre and Marxism (Lang, 2008), and has been publishing in the field of francophone postcolonial studies since 2009 with a particular focus on the francophone Caribbean.
**Cathy Coussens**, Ipek University, Ankara, Turkey
Catherine Coussens took her BA in English Literature in 1998, MA in Early Modern Studies in 1999, and PhD in English Literature (seventeenth-century women’s writing) in 2004, all at the University of Sheffield, UK. She taught English literature and cultural studies at Cankaya University, Ankara, from 2006-2013, and has now joined a new university (Ipek University, Ankara) which will open in September 2013. She has published papers on early modern literature and contemporary fiction, drama and poetry. She is currently working on a book on contemporary fictional and cultural representations of the Great Irish Famine (1845-52).

**Anca Cristofovici**, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie
Professor of American literature and photography, Anca Cristofovici studied at the University of Bucharest, Paris VII, and Duke University. Her work on photography earned her a Rockefeller Fellowship and she was a visiting Professor at the Center for 20th Century Studies at the University of Wisconsin in 1996-7. Her areas of research specialism include: the construction and perception of the image; the construction of subjectivity; the epistemological novel; and aesthetics in photography in relation to a number of specific research projects- photography and ageing (completed); photography and performance (ongoing). Her principal research focus is recent and contemporary American fiction and photography.

**Mohar Daschadhuari**, Visiting Fellow at the Department of French, University of Sheffield, UK
Head of Department of French, at the University of Calcutta, Kolkata, India since 2009, Mohar Daschadhuari has worked on feminist re-interpretations of mythology in the works of Quebec feminist writers such as Jovette Marchessault (Ph.D. thesis). He has published comparative studies of Bengali and Francophone women writers such as Nicole Brossard (M.Phil), Louky Bersianik and Bengali writers such as Bani Basu, Nabaneeta Dev Sen and Ashapurna Devi. Since December 2012, he has been working as Visiting Fellow at the Dept. of French, University of Sheffield on fantasy and hybridity in immigrant writings of Ying Chen and Linda Lê.

His articles and short stories have been published in Indian and foreign journals, such as- *Mother India, a monthly review of culture*, published by Sri Aurobindo Ashram Press, Pondicherry; *Synergies Inde*, Published by Presses de Zaklad Graftyczny, Poland; and in books such as *Breaking The Silence: Reading Virginia Wooff, Simone de Beauvoir, Ashapurna Devi*.

**Rocco De Leo**, University of Salerno, Italy
Rocco de Leo is currently preparing a doctoral thesis in the field of Literature and Linguistics at the University of Salerno, the provisional title of which is 'The long journey in search of the self: space and identity in some contemporary Canadian autobiographies'.

**Lena Englund**, Abo Akademi University, Finland
Lena Englund is a doctoral student in English Language and Literature at Åbo Akademi University, Finland. Her main research interests are (auto)biographical writing and African literature. She focuses on Rhodesian/Zimbabwean memoirs in her thesis. The working title of her thesis is «White Zimbabwean Life Writing».

**Pascale Guibert**, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie
A Lecturer at the University of Caen, Pascale Guibert’s research interests include contemporary anglophone poetry, Irish literature, the new generation of Irish Americans, and artistic representations of nation- and identity-construction. She is currently preparing her Professorial diploma with Anca Cristofovici and Richard Pedot (Paris X University). She is actively involved in the LSA-ERIBIA and the SERA (Association for English Romanticism) research groups.

**Egle Kackute**, University of Vilnius, Lithuania
Egle Kackute (Vilnius University Gender Study Centre) gained her PhD from the University of Vilnius in 2011. Her monograph *Savi svetimi tapatumai naujausioje brit ir prancz moter literaturoje (Familiar and Strange Identities in Contemporary British and French Women’s Writing)* was published by Vilnius University Press in 2012. She studied English, European Literature and General and Comparative Literature at Vilnius University, the University of Cambridge and Paris Ill-Sorbonne Nouvelle respectively and has been awarded the Open Society Institute, Chevening, French Government, the Lithuanian State Science and Studies Foundation Scholarships and a UNESCO Fellowship. Since 2006 she has lived in Geneva, Switzerland. Her research interests include gender and contemporary feminist theory, contemporary womens’ writing in English, French, and Lithuanian, especially themes of gender and national identity, trauma, motherhood and migration.

**Sarah Knor**, University of Northampton, UK
Sarah Knor studied at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University, Munich (M.A. 2010) and at Royal Holloway College, University of London. She is currently working on her doctorate which examines maternal performativity. Her PhD was originally started at the Free University of Berlin where she was also employed as a research fellow. In September 2012 she transferred to the University of Northampton to accept a Marie Curie fellowship which is part of a wider project on ‘Diasporic Constructions of Home and Belonging’ (Cohab) involving six universities worldwide. She is working under the supervision of Janet Wilson.

**Sreekanth Kopuri**, SriVenkateswara University, India
An Indian English Poet, Sreekanth Kopuri was born in Machilipatnam, India. He obtained his Masters from Andhra University and is pursuing his PhD in the poetry of Jayanta Mahapatra at SriVenkateswara University, India. He has published an anthology *The Shadows*. His poems have been published in India and abroad. He has presented his research papers in many universities including a recent one “Silence as an Emerging Voice in the Poetry of Jayanta Mahapatra” at Oxford University, United Kingdom. His main areas of research are Postmodern poetry, Holocaust Literature, Christian Literature and Silence. Sreekanth presently lives in Machilipatnam, India.
Françoise Král, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie

Françoise Král is Professor of English Studies and Postcolonial Literature at the University of Caen Basse-Normandie (English department). She has published extensively on post-colonial and diasporic studies. She is the author of *Critical Identities in Contemporary Anglophone Diasporic Literature* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009) and has edited two collections of essays Re-presenting Otherness: Mapping the colonial ‘self’/Mapping the indigenous ‘other’ in the Literatures of Australia and New Zealand (Nanterre : Publidix, 2004) and *Architecture and Philosophy: New Perspectives on the Work of Arakawa and Gins* (Amsterdam : Rodopi, 2011) which she co-edited with Jean-Jacques Lecercle. She is currently finishing a book on social invisibility and the diasporic subject (forthcoming with Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

Sabine Lauret, Université de Versailles

Sabine Lauret is PRAG at the University of Versailles. She studied at the University Paris 3 – Sorbonne Nouvelle and the University of Madras. She completed her PhD dissertation, entitled “Voices, languages and discourse: the métissage of the narrative in Amitav Ghosh’s novels” (*Voix, langues et langage: le métissage du texte dans les romans d’Amitav Ghosh,* 2010). Her major research interests are Indian Writing in English and diasporic cultures.

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Jean-Jacques Lecercle is Professor of English at the University of Paris Ouest Nanterre. He has recently been awarded the Grand Prix de la Recherche by the French association of English studies for his work which includes 13 books which he has published in the fields of language and literary theory. His books include *Philosophy through the Looking Glass, The Violence of Language, Philosophy of Nonsense, Interpretation as Pragmatics, Deleuze and Language and A Marxist Philosophy of Language.*

Christine Lorre-Johnston, Université Paris 3 Sorbonne Nouvelle

Christine Lorre-Johnston is a Senior Lecturer at Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3. Her research is in the field of postcolonial literature and theory, focusing on Canadian, New Zealand and Australian fiction, in particular the short story.

Myriam Moïse, Université des Antilles Guyane

Myriam Moïse is currently a lecturer at Université des Antilles Guyane and a final-year doctoral student in Literatures in English at Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle in Paris and the University of the West Indies in Trinidad. Her PhD research project is a comparative analysis of the works of contemporary women writers of the Caribbean Diaspora in North America. Ms Moïse has published a number of articles in peer reviewed international journals on diasporic Caribbean women writers, namely M.Nourbese Philip, Olive Senior, Nalo Hopkinson and Lakshmi Persaud.

Delphine Munos, University of Liège, Belgium

Delphine Munos is a F.R.S.-FNRS postdoctoral researcher in the department of English and American literature at the University of Liège, Belgium. She is the author of *After Melancholia: A Reappraisal of Second-Generation Diasporic Subjectivity in the Work of Jhumpa Lahiri* (Rodopi Press, 2013) and is currently guest-editing (with Prof. Mala Pandurang) a special issue of *South Asian Diaspora* entitled “Unrepresented Regions, Unheard Stories: Mapping Diasporic Identities.” She has published in the fields of American and Postcolonial Literature, Diaspora and South Asian Studies.

Hania A.M. Nashef, American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates

Hania A.M. Nashef is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Mass Communication at the American University of Sharjah, United Arab Emirates. Nashef’s PhD was in English Literature from the University of Kent at Canterbury, UK. In addition to her teaching experience, Nashef has had 16 years experience in TV broadcasting. She is the author of *The Politics of Humiliation in the Novels of J.M. Coetzee* (2009), and numerous articles in a diverse range of fields including notably Postcolonial Studies and Media Studies.

Joanna Pasternak, Gdansk University, Poland

Joanna Pasternak has been an academic teacher at the English Studies Department in Pomeranian School of Higher Education in Gdynia since 2006. She is currently studying for a higher degree at Gdansk University, writing a PhD dissertation on the poetics in Anita Desai’s fiction. She has submitted two articles for publication: a review of *The Indian Novel in English* by Geetha Ganapthy-Dore; and a paper on fictional characters in selected novels of Anita Desai, both of which have been accepted and their publication is pending.

Jennifer Randall, Université Paris 8

Jennifer Randall is a former student of the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon and holds an “agrégation” in English. She is currently writing her doctoral dissertation at the Université Paris 8 on women and Partition novel writing from the Indian subcontinent, under the supervision of professors Claire Joubert and Emilienne Baneth-Nouailhetas. She has published several articles based on her work, including “Les voix réfugiées dans les romans de Kamila Shamsie” (*Regards Croisés*, P. U. de Paris Ouest, spring 2014) and “Fidèle au ‘post’: la traduction française de The Empire Writes Back” (*Acta fabula*, issue “Anywhere out of the Nation”, January 2013). A member of the laboratory “Imag’his” at the ENS de Lyon, as well as a recent member of the SAGEF, she is mainly interested in the many strategies, both literary and editorial, through which women write back to centres of patriarchal power, particularly in times of communal conflicts.

Elaine Rocha, University of the West Indies, Barbados

Elaine Rocha is Lecturer in the History of Latin America. She is the author of *Racism in Novels: a comparative study on Brazilian and South African Cultural History* (Cambridge Scholars Publishers, 2010). Her areas of research specialization include racial relations, gender history, social and cultural history.
Virginia Sherman, Université Stendhal, Grenoble
Virginia Sherman is in the first year of doctoral studies at the CEMRA at the Université Stendhal. The title of her thesis is «Diaspora et déplacement: L'évocation des traditions, des origines et de l'identité dans les mémoires culinaires, un genre littéraire émergent» and is being supervised by Catherine Delmas.

Laura Singeot, Université de Caen Basse-Normandie
Laura Singeot is a PhD student at UCBN, and is preparing a thesis under the supervision of Françoise Kral on the the forms and figures of indigeneity in contemporary Maori, Samoan and Aboriginal literatures. The thesis is entitled ‘Regards croisés : réécritures et représentations de l’Indigène dans les littératures contemporaines du Pacifique Sud (maorie, aborigène et samoane)’.

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Héliane Ventura is Professor of contemporary Literatures in English at the University of Toulouse Le Mirail. Her field of research is the short story and the emergence of intermedial forms of narration in the new literatures in English. She has written extensively on the rewriting of myths from Antiquity, the subversion of the epic in the short story as well as literary migrations resulting in the development of transatlantic literatures. More recently she has dedicated her research to narratives from First Nations in Canada. She has published over forty articles on Alice Munro and approximately the same number on other short story writers from Canada, Britain, New-Zeland, the West Indies and the United States.

Janet Wilson, University of Northampton, UK
Janet Wilson is Director of Research in the School of Arts at the University of Northampton where she is also Professor of English and Postcolonial Studies. From 1988-1998 she taught at the University of Otago, New Zealand. Janet Wilson was Research Fellow at the Rothermere American Institute at the University of Oxford (2008-09) and then an Associate Fellow (until 2011); Visiting Fellow in New Zealand Studies at Birkbeck, University of London (2010-11). As Vice-Chair of the New Zealand Studies Network Janet Wilson helps convene and coordinate New Zealand related research events at Birkbeck. She is the editor of The Journal of Post-Colonial Writing and has co-edited Rerouting the Postcolonial: New Directions for the New Millenium with Cristina Sandru and Sarah Lawson Welsh.

Robert Young, New York University, USA
Robert JC Young is Julius Silver Professor of English and Comparative Literature at New York University. From 1989-2005 he was Professor of English and Critical Theory at Oxford University and a fellow of Wadham College. His books include White Mythologies: Writing History and the West (1990); Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Culture, Theory and Race (1995); Torn Halves: Political Conflict in Literacy and Cultural Theory (1996); Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction (2001); Postcolonialism: A Very Short Introduction (2003); The Idea of English Ethnicity (2008). He is also the Editor of Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies and was a founding editor of The Oxford Literary Review.