

Comparative Literature

Newsletter of the Department of Comparative Literature
University of California, Davis



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Letter from the Chair

This has been a year of remarkable achievements, and some notable departures and arrivals, for Comparative Literature. Professor Kari Lokke, respected Romanticism scholar and a revered mentor of graduate students in the department, retired after twenty-seven years.

Professor Lokke has been an invaluable colleague and served with grace and aplomb as department chair, as graduate advisor, and as an outstanding mentor to her students. She was recognized for her mentoring skills by the Davis Consortium for



Kari Lokke and Juliana Schiesari

Women and Research in 1999. As a dedicated comparatist, Kari steadfastly stood by the tradition of pursuing multiple languages and literatures within the discipline – in her case, German, French and English. She brought path-breaking feminist positions to the study of European Romanticism, at a time when such perspectives were hardly normative. Her work achieved national recognition when Kari received the Jean-Pierre Barricelli Book Prize in 2005 for *Tracing Women's Romanticism: Gender, History, and Transcendence*. She was elected to the advisory board of the International Conference on Romanticism, served as co-editor of a series on Literary Migrations in the Eighteenth Century (published by Pickering and Chatto), and joined the board of directors of the Germaine de Staël Society. Professor Lokke directed numerous dissertations in English, French, and Comparative Literature, and her students now hold positions at major universities in the US and abroad. She has been a most beloved member of our department, and both faculty and students will miss her experience, dedication, and unfailing judgement.

This past year, the department welcomed our new faculty member, Stefan H. Uhlig, who came to us from Kings College, University of Cambridge. Professor Uhlig's scholarship is in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century European literature and the theory and practice of comparative literature. In the Fall, Cheri Ross will join the Comparative Literature department as a faculty member and as undergraduate advisor. Professor Ross comes to us from Duke University, and previously from Stanford University, where she directed

the great books program.

In closing, I would like to welcome our new graduate students who will begin their studies this Fall. They are Carmine Morrow, Tianyia Wong, Sean Sell and Jeremy Konick-Seese. We are looking forward to your joining the department, and wish you much success as you begin your scholarly journey with us in Comparative Literature.

Sincerely,
Juliana Schiesari

An interview with Kari Lokke

by *Chloe-Mai Le Gall-Scoville*

Q: What drew you to the study of literature?

A: I guess I'm like most people who end up in literature: I like to read so much. As a child I remember even before going to kindergarten my parents got me beautifully illustrated books on Russian and Norse mythology, and I still remember poring over those books. I remember my first classic comic book, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and trying to figure out what the character Bottom had to do with Lysander, Titania and Oberon... I just have very wonderful memories of being in love with books.

Q: Did you ever have a period where you wanted to write fiction?

A: Yes, definitely. And then I realized maybe someday, but what I most wanted to do was teach and that's how I ended up writing literary criticism.

Q: Well, maybe now that you're retired?

A: I might. I might do something a little more adventuresome and creative. I'm going to finish my book on enthusiasm first and write some articles.

Q: How did you come to comparative literature?

A: When I had to choose a major at Indiana University, I thought I was going to major in English. Then when I looked at the description of the courses, I was shocked to realize that if you majored in English, you only studied English literature. I couldn't imagine studying literature and not studying, at the same time, other European literatures. So then I looked around in the catalogue and realized that there was such a thing as Comparative Literature. Indiana University had one of the oldest and best Comp Lit programs in the country. I double-majored in Comp Lit and French. I was just lucky to end up as an undergraduate at a university that had a Comp Lit department.

Q: What do you like best about being a professor?

A: Working with graduate students and watching people pursue their own specific interests in literature and related disciplines, and watching their progress from when they come into the program to when they finish

the dissertation and sending them off into the world. As a teacher, it's a wonderful and satisfying experience to help in that process, to be a part of that process. I think that's what I love most and it's been really great here, to be in the UC system because graduate education is valued and it's a really important part of this university.

Q: Are you concerned about the future of the humanities in the public university system?

A: Yes. Of course, I'm very concerned and about the fate of the humanities at Davis due to the predominance of the sciences here. I've done what I could to foster the humanities and the strength of the humanities here so I just have to have faith that the value of what we do will be recognized and supported. It's now up to other people to fight those battles.

Q: What did you write your dissertation on?

A: I wrote my dissertation on aesthetics. I was looking at the sublime and the grotesque and the gothic and the supernatural and trying to sort out those various aesthetic categories and their importance for Romanticism. I'm one of those people who has remained very interested in the subjects that I pursued in the dissertation. I've done courses recently on the Gothic and on the Grotesque. I see enthusiasm – the topic of my current book – as a feminized and politicized sublime. I'm still very interested in the texts that I focused on in that dissertation: I still teach them.

Q: What's been your favorite class to teach?

A: I was afraid you were going to ask that question! I can't pick just one. I like courses for different reasons. I really love teaching the Romanticism course because it's my

specialty and it's exciting to introduce students to aspects of Romanticism that they might not have expected. For example, the degree to which it's really a very political period, the French Revolution and so forth, the abolition movement, the birth of feminism. I love teaching that and really getting a chance to talk about the period that I know best. I really enjoy teaching the women writers course because I still think that there are a lot of courses taught that don't include a lot of women authors and students really enjoy learning about women from all over the world. I do African literature there and Asian, European and American, contemporary. It's really fun to introduce students to a wide spectrum of women writers and I think students are really happy and grateful to have the chance to focus on women authors. A graduate student from a different department suggested to me that there was really no point in doing courses on women writers anymore, but I think that's definitely not the case.

Q: What was the logic behind that?

A: That it was much more useful to integrate them into the curriculum and not single out women as a particular category, but in fact women writers are still absent from a lot of current courses.

Q: What are other ways that you've integrated feminism into your teaching and research?

A: For example, in the course that Seth Schein and I taught on the history of emotion, which was another one of my favorite courses, we wanted to integrate affect theory into that and there are a lot of interesting intersections between affect theory and feminism. A lot of the most

prominent theoreticians of affect are women and are looking at it from a feminist perspective. So when I do theory courses, I generally include feminist theory. It was really exciting to look at the feminist perspective on emotion, and examine how perspectives on emotions have changed from the Stoics, and Aristotle and Plato to the present day.

Q: Any recommendations for summer reading?

A: Everybody should keep up their subscription to *The Nation* and do their weekly reading of the *The Nation*. I'm looking forward to being able to read more fully weekly journals that I get. I try to keep up but they tend to pile up. I'm looking forward to having the time. I recommend nineteenth-century novels or big long novels that you can get lost in: George Eliot, Henry James. I'm going to start with Henry James' *Princess Casamassima*, which is his attempt to portray an anarchist, which isn't necessarily what you think of when you think of Henry James, but I'm intrigued by that novel so I want to re-read it. And my brother just sent me a novel by William Gaddis, *Recognitions*, which is 956 pages. I'm not sure when I'll dive into that one, but he'll probably keep on me till I read it.

Q: Anything else you'd like to add?

A: One of the things that was incredibly valuable about being here at Davis was the chance to teach at Lund in Sweden for two summers. I just hope that people take advantage of the opportunities to teach and study abroad because I think that's so important. I'm also very grateful for the chances I've had to do conferences abroad. Sheldon Lu and Michelle Yeh organized a

conference in Beijing that was really wonderful. I got to travel a little bit around China then with a student Sheldon recruited as a guide and that was a great experience. Archana Venkatesan and Brenda Schildgen organized a conference in Pondicherry, India, which was also wonderful. I really loved doing both of those. Recently, I went to Neuchatel, Switzerland where Patrick Vincent, who got his Ph.D. here, had organized a NASSR conference. Those were really great experiences made possible by all the connections that Davis has as a university with an international scope.

Q: Any other tips for grad students and/or aspiring professors?

A: People try to plan their lives, but my experience has been that things worked out without necessarily planning them and you just have to have faith that if you follow what you really love and want to do, you'll find a kind of satisfaction and success that may not be what you predicted but that is very fulfilling. Other people may need to be in control and to plan things. But I think fate and chance play a big role and you can't really control those things.

Chloe-Mai Le Gall-Scoville is a doctoral candidate in the Department.

UC Davis Summer Abroad Program in Florence

by Leonardo Giorgetti

From June 26 to July 25 2014 I had the pleasure to work as instructor for UCD's Summer Abroad Program in Florence.

The Program, titled *Italy and the Birth of Modern Europe*, consisted of two undergraduate upper division courses (COM 180S & COM 198) introductory to the study of the major political, artistic and literary figures of the Italian Renaissance (from Michelangelo to Machiavelli). The most exciting part for my nineteen students was the time they spent exploring the world outside the classroom, visiting the art and the monuments of the majors squares and museums (such as the Uffizi and the Accademia Gallery), as well as historical towns like Lucca and Sant'Andrea in Percussina, where Machiavelli was sent in exile.

It has been a particularly rewarding experience for me, both personally and professionally, to observe how this experience has changed my students' opinions about Italian culture and customs; their natural curiosity was the fuel to ignite stimulating

class discussions about diversity, stereotypes and multiculturalism. But, most importantly, they have all been able to "survive" their first Italian experience!

Leonardo Giorgetti is a doctoral candidate in the Department.



Leonardo Giorgetti (center) and participants of the 2014 Summer Abroad in Florence

NEH Summer Institute on Dante's *Divine Comedy*

by Monica Keane

Last summer, distinguished professor Brenda Schildgen lead an extraordinary group of college and university instructors in a National Endowment of the Humanities Summer Institute, titled "Dante's *Divine Comedy*: Poetry, Philosophy, and the City of Florence," that was dedicated to close reading the entire medieval masterpiece in Florence. There had not been a NEH Summer Seminar on Dante in decades, and there had never been one in Florence. We had over 130

applications for the 25 places in the program, in itself signaling the need across the country for teaching development designed especially for college-level instructors of great books.

The Institute involved intense study of the *Divine Comedy* and a flurry of lectures by leading scholars of Dante, medieval history, art history and philosophy. Together with her co-director, Peter Hawkins, Professor of Religion and Literature at Yale University, Brenda lead close readings of each canto in our classroom at the University of Florence.

The roster of visiting faculty who also lectured and directed institute discussions included Giuseppe Mazzotta, Sterling Professor in the Humanities for Italian and chair of Italian Studies at Yale, Professor William Franke from Vanderbilt University, and Lino Pertile, Carl A. Pescosolido Professor of Romance Languages and Literatures at Harvard University and director of the Villa I Tatti. There were additional talks on medieval ethics and politics by Professor David Ardagh, a Senior Research Fellow at the Australian Research Council's Center for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics in Australia, and on Franciscanism and Giotto by Professor Chiara Frugoni, emerita of the University of Rome and author of award-winning books on Saint Francis.

In their four weeks in Florence, participants gained a knowledge of the *Divine Comedy* that could not be appreciated without

experiencing the winding streets of a city that is still shaped by the civic, artistic, religious and technological developments of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A private afternoon visit to the Uffizi Gallery with Professor William Cook (emeritus at SUNY Geneseo) included a rare tour of the Vasari Corridor, a passageway built by the Medici family in the sixteenth century connecting the Uffizi to the Pitti Palace via the Ponte Vecchio. The tour was made possible by the Friends of Florence, a non-profit dedicated to



Tanya Marcuse, no. 549, *Fallen Folio* (inspired by canto XIII of *Inferno*)

preserving the artistic heritage of the city. After the tour, participants were invited to an *aperitivo* at the home of Karen Pritzker, a member of the Friends of Florence and benefactor of the arts, to meet students from her philanthropic academy in rural Cambodia. The following afternoon, participants visited the Baptistery of San Giovanni under the guidance of Alessandro Bicchi, deacon of the

cathedral, who lectured on the spectacular mosaics that cover the baptistery ceiling. We were also treated to a tour of the Piazza del Duomo that highlighted civic landmarks and institutions originating in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, such as the Misericordia, a charity still in existence that began during the Republic of Florence. The whirlwind first week concluded with a tour of Santa Maria Novella with architect Donatella Donatini, an expert on historical architecture and preservation, who directed us towards the fourteenth-century frescoes in a back corner of the church that depict scenes from the *Divine Comedy*. A highlight of the following week was a visit to the Biblioteca Laurenziana to view four fourteenth-century illuminated manuscripts of the *Comedy*. Personally, it was a huge thrill to see manuscripts in person that I had previously shown in a slideshow to students in COM 2! Our final special tour in Florence was a visit to San Minato al Monte, a Benedictine monastery where we learned about monasticism and listened to Gregorian chant.

We also visited cities that were significant in Dante's life and work, especially given his 1302 exile from Florence. Professor William Cook returned to lead our group through Siena, guiding us through the Opera del Duomo and the Palazzo Comunale, an outstanding example of the civic architecture and secular art of Tuscan republican governments. In Assisi we received a Franciscan guided visit to the Basilica of San Francesco with special attention to the frescoes of the Upper Basilica by Giotto – the revolutionary artist whom Dante praises in *Purgatorio*. Lastly, we visited Ravenna, Dante's final resting place, but more importantly, the

site of early Christian monuments and exquisite Byzantine mosaics that were the inspiration for many of the visions of *Paradiso*. We toured the city with Cetty Muscolino, director of the National Museum of Ravenna, who offered deeply knowledgeable and detailed histories of the mosaics.

While this NEH Institute on Dante will help foster current and future research projects, its goal was above all to improve the teaching of the *Comedy* in secondary institutions across the country. Our hope, already coming to fruition, was that institute participants would have regional, national and international impact on the teaching of Dante. While the *Comedy* has become a staple in the humanities classroom, the last two thirds of the work are often neglected due to the daunting preparation and classroom time required to teach the entire text. However, this exclusive emphasis on the *Inferno* (and frequently on only a handful of memorable episodes) frequently leads to an incomplete and sometimes misleading sense of Dante's vision. In our seminars, Brenda Schildgen and Peter Hawking emphasized the importance of teaching the *Comedy* "vertically," i.e. incorporating discussion of parallel *canti* from *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso* to provide a more complex perspective on a work that is so often taught in fragments. For the final week and a half of the institute, participants presented their own "vertical readings" of *Paradiso* to the group as a whole. Since many of the participants were master teachers, it became an inspiring display of different pedagogical approaches to the *Comedy* and also a practical workshop on teaching the humanities.

When I asked institute participants for updates, their responses were overwhelmingly enthusiastic. Amplifying the work begun at the institute, Jennifer Holberg at Calvin College in Michigan is organizing a special

In the field, many of our participants are teaching courses on the *Comedy* and have successfully incorporated Dante into their core classes, using their increased knowledge of the poem and medieval culture from their



Tanya Marcuse, *Last Suppers* (prototype – inspired by canto XIII of *Inferno*)

issue on teaching Dante for *Pedagogy: Critical Approaches to Teaching Literature, Language, Composition and Culture*, a journal published by Duke University Press to improve college teaching of the humanities and to recognizing the often unsung work required for success in our classrooms. Essays in the Fall 2016 issue will focus on “vertical” teaching of the *Comedy*, emphasizing the connections between parallel cantos of *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*. Many institute participants are contributing to the volume, which will include essays on the challenges of teaching Dante and vertical readings of at least five different cantos. Since the institute, Akash Kumar has been continuing his work as the managing editor of Columbia University’s *Digital Dante* (<http://digitaldante.columbia.edu>), one of the oldest scholarly websites on the internet that has recently been revised and improved.

experiences in Florence. Jessica Wilson at John Brown University in Arkansas reports that she taught *Purgatorio* last fall, using what she learned in the seminar, and she is pushing for a conference on teaching Dante in 2017. Alexis Nelson, an instructor at Spokane Falls Community College in Washington, reports that her incorporation of parallel cantos when teaching *Inferno* was “thrilling” and an unquestioned success during her work as part of a three-faculty learning community devoted to Medieval to Early Modern history and literature. David Miller plans to include Dante in a special topics course devoted to epic this fall at Mississippi College. After fielding a question on translations of Dante during an English Literature survey course at Lincoln College in Illinois, Marilyn Button ended up directing an independent study on Dante for the student and one of her World Literature survey course students dedicated

his senior project to creating illustrations of the *Inferno*. She also says that as visiting faculty for the upcoming NEH Summer Institute, “Monuments of Rome in English Culture,” she will certainly include Dante’s influence in her lectures. After a year researching a project on the *Comedy* that was begun at the institute, Andrew Hui will teach Dante in translation this fall at Yale-NUS in Singapore. While he is already using many of the resources from the seminar when teaching the history of medieval Christianity at Harvard University, Kevin Madigan plans to teach a freshman seminar on Dante the year after next. Tanya Marcuse at Bard College in New York hopes to create a course

on Dante and visual culture in the future, and has been working on two projects incorporating *The Divine Comedy* into her artwork: large-scale photographs that engulf the viewer in dantesque landscapes and *Last Suppers*, inspired by Dante’s descriptions of gluttony in *Inferno* VI, which involved photographing a year’s worth of leftover food.

The Davis Comparative Literature Department has much to celebrate as we look back on this past year, not least the influence it had through its support of last summer’s NEH Institute in Florence.

Monica Keane received her PhD from the Department in 2014.

Teaching Israeli and World Literature

by Kfir Cohen

My COM 147 course, Introduction to Israeli Literature and Film, took an historical approach to the development of Israeli literature from the late 1940s to the present.

Unlike post-Zionist and (Israeli) postcolonial approaches that work with a static opposition between nationalist and humanist/liberal texts, stressing explicit thematic content, we focused on the historical shift in Israeli state formation (moving from a statist state to a neoliberal one), and stressed the formal properties of novels and films. Affecting this displacement from nationalism to state formation, from themes to forms, two new objects of inquiry stood at the heart of our class: on the one hand, the development of civil imagination, and on the other, literary space-time. Avoiding the mimetic/reflection tendency, we

joined hands with Kant and thought of such social processes as “conditions of possibility,” social categories, as it were, that set limits to social life and imaginative writing rather than fully determine them. Thus, our question was not how such social transformations are expressed in novels and films, but rather how the latter respond to such conditions, what forms writers invent in order to contend with political limits, and especially with the question of freedom and autonomy.

To my surprise, almost no student had read an Israeli novel or watched an Israeli film, so much of the first two sessions was dedicated to historical context. Once we framed our broad question, we moved chronologically from the statist period to the neoliberal, or global, one. At first, we watched a classical cinematic rendition of one of the most

important Zionist novels, the 1947 *He Walked in the Fields* by Moshe Shamir. The cinematic imagery worked very well in both enticing students into the class and visualizing how life in Israel was imagined in the 1970s when the film was produced. We then moved to *Midnight Convoy*, a 1959 long novella by S. Yizhar, a Zionist-humanist writer and a long-time member of parliament in the ruling party whose writing sought to find a solution to Zionist violence in natural imagery. Our third text, *Living on the Dead*, a 1965 dark humorist novel by Aharon Megged, was the students' favorite in this period. Not burdened so much by the pathos of Shamir and Yizhar, Megged allowed himself to create a truly wicked character that was a pleasure to read. Here we examined how Megged is trying to imagine a liberal stance against Zionism through the legal language of artistic freedom. Some of the courtroom scenes are among the most hilarious in this period.

We opened the next neoliberal period with Fredric Jameson's robust 1984 article about postmodernism. Not an easy task, but I am happy to say that helped by diligent close readings and extensive group work this was one of the most meaningful experiences the students had in the class. Intimated at first, they rose to the challenge and genuinely engaged the text both in class and in their papers. This was a good rejoinder to the oft-mentioned anxiety about coupling theory and undergraduate minds! We continued with Ari Folman's 2008 film *Waltz with Bashir*, a unique animated documentary about the 1982 Lebanon War. We coupled the film with Benny Morris's historical account of the war and compared between the genres of historical omniscience and the privatized first

person narrative of the war. We then took up Assaf Gavron's 2006 *Almost Dead*, another darkly humorous novel about Palestinian suicide bombings and Israeli hi-tech. Here we compared between the older statist humanism and the new neoliberal version. We concluded the class with *Shuru*, a 1990 comedy by Shabi Gavizon about urban night life in Tel Aviv. The students were relieved to take a break from politics as was Israeli cinema at this time.

In my COM 180 course, Writing for the World: World Literature and the Modern Novel, we surveyed a few contemporary theories of world literature and examined their adequacy in the cases of James Joyce, Sean O'Casey, William Faulkner, and Ghassan Kanafani. Opening the class by asking what we mean by "world literature," I was fascinated by the fact that some students indeed believed that it meant the European canon, or what one is "supposed to read." Set up as a perfect foil, we began frustrating these general notions by turning to Pascale Casanova's *The World Republic of Letters*. Reading Casanova's structural chapters, we shifted away from the natural value of the European canon by asking how some literary works become "worldly" and others never do. Most of our sessions here focused on the questions of aesthetic autonomy and heteronomy and the way in which Casanova explains their emergence vis-à-vis the system of nation states. To examine Casanova's theory we compared between Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, what Casanova would consider an autonomous text and O'Casey's *Juno and the Paycock*, a play Casanova categorizes as heteronomous in that it is subservient to Irish politics. Very quickly

we problematized Casanova's theory by noticing that although O'Casey references Irish politics, his humanist position takes up a broader universal meaning that cannot be adequately captured by Casanova's category of heteronomy. We then moved to broaden Casanova's concept of autonomy by turning to Jameson's "Beyond the Cave: Demystifying the Ideology of Modernism." Here we discussed the emergence of autonomy as a social form of life rather than solely as a property of texts. Although very challenging, the text's claims were of great interest to the students.

We then moved to Franco Moretti's theory of world literature and discussed how the themes and forms of Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* are emulated and articulated anew in Kanafani's *All that's Left to You*. Here we compared the temporal structure of the two texts as well as their depiction of masculinity. We noticed how the separation in Faulkner of

the private and public sphere, enabled through the focalization on Benjy's and Quentin's point of view, is patched back together in Palestine when Hamid confronts the realities of colonialism.

Overall, my year in Davis was very meaningful in every way possible, but especially in terms of teaching; I am very grateful to have had the freedom to teach my own classes and the intelligent and committed students that attended them. I was encouraged by their willingness to take up the challenge of complex texts and heartened by the fact that they will rise to any challenge as long as it is presented to them with care, and their efforts are dignified by serious debate.

Kfir Cohen received his PhD in comparative literature from UC Berkeley in 2014. In 2014-15, he was a Postdoctoral Fellow in History and a Visiting Scholar in Comparative Literature at UC Davis.

Amy Lee Prize

Each year, the Department awards a prize for an outstanding undergraduate essay in memory of Amy Lee, who was a graduate student in Comparative Literature from 2005-07. This year's winner is Tim Kontje for his essay "Politics, Gender, and Gods in *Antigone* and *The Bacchae*," reproduced below. Tim was nominated for the prize by Chloe-Mai Le Gall-Scoville, his instructor for COM 1. Tim is a Film Studies major who graduated this Spring.

Politics, Gender, and Gods in *Antigone* and *The Bacchae*

by Tim Kontje

Sophocles' *Antigone* and Euripides' *The Bacchae* are both set in Thebes and deal with similar themes of politics, gender, and divine power. In both plays, the gods employ female or feminine proxies to subvert male rulers as a means of reinforcing divine law and critiquing the violent, stubborn aspects of traditional masculinity. However, the plays' gendering of politics ultimately leads to markedly different stances on the rule of the gods. *Antigone* endorses the importance of following divine rule, while *The Bacchae* is critical of it and suggests that even the gods can go too far.

The Bacchae and *Antigone* feature traditionally masculine rulers in Creon and Pentheus, who are undermined by the feminine characters of Antigone and Dionysus as a way for the gods to reassert their rule. Creon discovers that Polynices has been buried against his orders and wonders “what man would dare” disobey him, assuming that it could only be a man (*Antigone*, 281). When it turns out that it is in fact Antigone who is responsible, Creon says, “There is no doubt that if she emerges victorious, and is never punished, I am no man. *She* will be the man here,” indicating the threat Antigone poses to his masculinity (*Antigone*, 521-23). To Creon, there seems to be almost nothing worse for a man than to be subjected to a woman, as he makes clear during his argument with Haemon. “Don’t throw away your judgment, son, for the pleasure this woman offers,” he cautions, “Better to be driven from power, if it comes to that, by a man. Then nobody can say you were beaten by some female” (*Antigone*, 719-20, 752-54). Creon’s authority is undercut by Antigone’s refusal to obey him – all the more so because she is a woman.

Antigone characterizes masculine rule as violent and stubborn, as evidenced by Creon sentencing Antigone to death for disobeying his edict and his obstinate rejection of wise advice from his son Haemon, the chorus, as well as Antigone herself (*Antigone*, 624-25, 800-05). The play makes it clear that Antigone is in the right: Creon realizes that she has indeed been a mouthpiece for the gods only after she has already taken her own life in response to his sentence. He admits that “there’s no one I can blame . . . I am the only one” (*Antigone*, 1472-74). Creon has “learned that lesson now – in all its bitterness,” and must endure the death of everyone he loves as punishment (*Antigone*, 1408-09). The high price Creon pays works as a subversion of male authority by suggesting that aspects of traditional masculine rule, specifically violence and excessive stubbornness, can lead to terrible tragedy.

Politics are similarly gendered in *The Bacchae*, in which the effeminate Dionysus, like Antigone, acts to critique the violent, stubborn aspects of traditional male rule. Pentheus mocks Dionysus for his feminine appearance, saying “You do not wrestle, I take it. And what fair skin!” (*Bacchae*, 455). By associating wrestling, a physical, violent act, with men, *The Bacchae* draws a parallel between masculinity and violence similar to *Antigone*. The effeminate Dionysus and his female followers empower the city’s women, causing them to leave domestic tasks and run wild in the hills, shunning male rule or control (*Bacchae*, 665). This form of unbridled, active femininity is a danger to Pentheus, Creon’s counterpart as masculine ruler, who complains that “affairs are out of hand if we tamely endure such conduct in our women” (*Bacchae*, 785-86). Indeed, when he sets off to bring back the city’s bewitched women, Pentheus states that he will either enslave them or have them “put to work at [his] looms,” a traditionally feminine, domestic occupation (*Bacchae*, 514-15). Pentheus’s equation of women with domesticity is challenged by Dionysus; under the god’s influence, the city’s women become fiercely violent (*Bacchae*, 734-39). Agave, Pentheus’s mother, even kills her own son and declares, “Behold the trophy of your women’s hunting! Taken not with nets or Thessalian spears but by the dainty hands of women” (*Bacchae*, 1200-06). Given the play’s established parallel between masculinity and violent activity such as wrestling or, in this case, hunting, the women’s violent, active behavior under Dionysus’s spell is essentially behavior that is traditionally masculine. *The Bacchae* does not portray this kind of behavior favorably, as

Agave ultimately comes to regret her violent masculine actions just as Creon does (*Bacchae*, 1282). Like *Antigone*, *The Bacchae* critiques masculinity by equating it with violence and reflecting how it leads to tragedy.

Although the two plays share a similar feminine subversion of masculine rule in order to restore the rule of the gods, they ultimately differ in their assessments of divine law and justice. *Antigone* stresses the importance of respecting the gods' judgment, but *The Bacchae* suggests that the gods are not always fair or impartial. Creon's chief fault in *Antigone* is his failure to defer to divine rule. "What is it you protect by scorning the gods?", Haemon asks him, but Creon refuses to listen (*Antigone*, 823). Creon's lack of respect is countered by Antigone, who disobeys his law in favor of "the gods' unwritten and infallible laws" (*Antigone*, 492). "I'd never let any man's arrogance bully me into breaking the god's laws," she tells Creon, rejecting his man-made edicts and instead acting as a representative for the gods (*Antigone*, 521-22). *Antigone* essentially endorses its heroine's view and is unambiguous about its support for obeying divine law (*Antigone*, 1408-09). By punishing Creon for his failure to respect the will of the gods as Antigone does, the play enforces the idea that the gods' laws are indeed infallible and should always be obeyed.

This is not the case in *The Bacchae*, which instead questions the validity of the gods' laws and judgment. Upon hearing Dionysus' final condemnation of those who have offended him, Cadmus tells him that "you punish us too harshly" and complains that "gods should be exempt from human passions," suggesting that the god has gotten carried away with his revenge (*Bacchae*, 1346, 1348). Dionysus does not deny this and simply states that "long ago my father Zeus ordained these things," essentially confirming Cadmus's accusation (*Bacchae*, 1349). Dionysus has earlier argued that "wise men" like himself "know constraint: our passions are controlled" (*Bacchae*, 642). His behavior at the end of the play openly contradicts this, however, and Cadmus' assessment that Dionysus has judged Thebes "justly – yes, but excessively" rings true (*Bacchae*, 1250). Unlike *Antigone*, *The Bacchae* questions the righteousness of the gods and ultimately finds them as capable as humans of overreaction and poor judgment.

This view of the gods constitutes a major difference between *The Bacchae*'s and *Antigone*'s more wholehearted endorsement of divine law and judgment. While they arrive at opposite conclusions regarding the importance of the gods' rule, however, both plays use feminine characters to represent it and to undermine the violent, stubborn aspects of traditional masculinity. Dionysus' and Antigone's essentially successful defiance of male authority is by no means an outright cry for female rule or the abolition of male governance, but it subverts the idea that masculine rule is infallible.

Works Cited

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 Sophocles, *Antigone*, trans. Robert Bagg (New York: HarperCollins, 2004)

Undergraduate and alumni news

Congratulations to our recent graduates! Citations for exceptional work in comparative literature were awarded to Jeralynn Betts, Rebecca Bloom, Tatyana Bodrug, Arielah Dreksler, Kamila Kudelska, Anne Dieu Nguyen, Rae Mcglennon, Caitlin Tremblay, and Allison Tzeng. Warm congratulations also to Tim Kontje, whose COM 1 essay on “Politics, Gender, and Gods in *Antigone* and *The Bacchae*” won this year’s departmental Amy Lee Prize.

Samantha Solomon

is a recipient of the Marc Blanchard Study Abroad Award. Samantha is finishing her first year as a Comparative Literature major and is studying abroad in Cuba this summer.



Samantha Solomon

School (a college prep school) in Santa Cruz, CA.

As I write, I am on my honeymoon, having gotten married just this last Saturday, May 30, in Mill Valley, CA. My wife’s name is Alexa. She is a paper artist who sells at festivals and on Etsy (WhimsySpotDesigns), and she works for Kuumbwa Jazz Center in Santa Cruz, a music and performance non-profit celebrating its 40th year.

Tatyana Bodrug

I graduated this year with a Bachelor’s degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and Comparative Literature. I will be taking a year off to work as a junior specialist here at UC Davis in a lab that focus its research on microtubules and microtubule related proteins. I will be applying for graduate schools in the meantime where I hope to further my studies in structural biology.

Jason Brooks

I graduated from Davis with a BA in comparative literature. This last year has been a full one for me personally and professionally. In October I defended my doctoral dissertation in Comparative Literature at Penn State, writing on the feminist reading embedded in an early twentieth-century Russian translation of Euripides’ *Medea*. I was hooded in December. I am currently a lecturer of Classics at Penn State and I am an English and History instructor at Kirby

Anne Dieu Nguyen

I just graduated from UC Davis with a BA in comparative literature and a BS in cellular biology. I am pursuing a PhD in molecular biology at USC this Fall. Also, I will continue working on my novel that I started last year. I plan on finishing it in the next seven to ten years or so. Right now I’m traveling back to my home country Vietnam, which I left eleven years ago. I would like to thank the Comp Lit department for being truly supportive and generous. I was very lost during college, and the professors in this department have been so kind and insightful. Even though I am pursuing a PhD in science, the things that these professors taught me equipped me to be a generally more thoughtful and appreciative human. And for that I cannot thank the Department enough.

John Farrar

I just finished my first year of teaching: fourth grade at Lincoln Elementary School in

Oakland's Chinatown – an incredible school! I frequently used Comp Lit lecturer Sal Alosso's *Guide to Writing about Literature* to teach my students, and we ended the year by studying Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories*, including a comparison of sources: Lewis Carroll, *The Wizard of Oz*, and the *1001 Nights*. I first encountered *Haroun* in one of Brenda Schildgen's courses, and was happy to adopt Prof. Schildgen's teaching style – joining my class by sitting in a student desk for discussions! Watch out, UC Davis, for this upcoming generation of comparative literature students!

Jiayan Mi, who is Associate Professor of English, World Languages & Cultures at The College of New Jersey, edited *Poetry Across*

Oceans: Anthology of Chinese American Diaspora Poetry, published in October 2014 by Beiyou Press of Literature and Arts in China. This 500-page anthology is the first full-scale collection of Chinese American diaspora

poetry selected from twenty three Chinese American poets (eleven male and twelve female poets). This voluminous anthology for the first time offers exceptional insights into the critical issues of race, identity, and immigration in Chinese American literature and the Chinese diaspora. The poems selected in this anthology actively engage with what it means to be a Chinese

American in the age of multiculturalism and globalization. See <http://tinyurl.com/qhxtj6w>.



Graduate news

Several doctoral candidates completed their studies this year. Covering the globe in their interests, from medieval to modern periods and from China and India to Europe, Africa, and Latin America, our newly minted PhDs include Myha Do, Kristen Bergman Waha, Ted Geier, Pamela Heestand, Monica Keane, Elizabeth Lore, and Nick Sanchez. The department is proud to see so many of our job candidates placed in tenure-track and postdoctoral positions this year. Kristen Bergman Waha will begin this Fall as an assistant professor of English at Grove City College, a four year liberal arts college in Pennsylvania. Giovanna Montenegro starts a tenure-track position in Comparative Literature at Binghamton University (SUNY Binghamton) in New York. Ted Geier has been awarded a prestigious Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship for the 2015-16 Rice Seminar on "After Biopolitics" at Rice University. Chris Tong continues in a three-year postdoctoral fellowship at Washington University in St. Louis. Shannon Hays was

hired by Stanford's innovative Online High School as an English instructor. Natalie Strobach (ABD) has been hired as Director of the McNair Scholars Program at the University of Wisconsin, River Falls.

Megan Ammirati presented a paper titled, "Between Female Impersonators and Actresses: Hong Shen and the Institutionalization of Gender-Appropriate Casting" at the 2014 meeting of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association in Boise, Idaho, and published a review of Siyuan Liu's *Performing Hybridity in Colonial-Modern China* (New York: Palgrave, 2014) in *Theatre Survey*, 56.2. Megan was awarded a UC Davis Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award, a research scholarship from the Chinese Government, a Fulbright Research Grant to China, and a UC Davis Provost's Dissertation Year Grant. She writes:

"This August I will be leaving UC Davis for a ten-month Fulbright research trip to Nanjing, China. My work will be focused on my dissertation topic: the transition from female impersonators to 'modern' actresses in twentieth-century China. This project considers how the introduction of gender-straight casting affected understandings of realism, authenticity, and subjectivity from the early days of stunt casting in the 1910s to the 1950's and 60's when the use of actresses was understood to be the norm. I hope to re-write standard accounts of Chinese theater history by placing an emphasis on actors whose corporeal and ephemeral labor are not always as respected as the intellectual work of male playwrights.

During my year abroad, I will be sponsored by Nanjing University, an institution that specializes in modern Chinese drama, under the mentorship of the Ibsen specialist

Professor He Chengzhou. Much of my time will be spent at the Republican-era archives in the Nanjing Library and in the theater archives in the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Center. However the Fulbright grant also values cultural experiences outside of the purely academic realm and I am embracing that philosophy with vigor. My goal is to spend my days speaking Mandarin, seeing a great deal of theater, and studying Chinese opera and the *erhu*, a string instrument often used in opera accompaniment."

Supported by a departmental travel grant, **Amanda Batarseh** spent the summer of 2014 conducting research and studying Arabic in the city of Bethlehem, West Bank. In March 2015, Amanda presented a paper titled "Narrativizing Loss: Form in the Palestinian Novel" at the 2015 meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) in Seattle.

Kristen Bergmann Waha filed her doctoral dissertation titled *A Cosmopolitics of Conversion: Women's Religious Experience in Victorian British and Colonial Indian Prose* in May 2015 (co-advised by Profs Archana Venkatesan and Parama Roy).

In 2014-15, Kristen published a review of Kiran Keshavamurthy, *Scenes of Abjection: Power, Caste and Sexuality in Modern Tamil Literature in Dissertation Reviews* (January 2015), and presented a paper titled "'Bengali Christian,' 'English lady' or 'Une Amie de la France?': Language Politics, Religion and Transnational Networks in Toru Dutt's *Le Journal de Mlle d'Arvers* (1878)" at the 2014

Pacific Ancient and Modern Languages Association (PAMLA) held at UC Riverside, and one on “Gendering the Indian Christian Convert: Religious Conversion Narratives in Krupabai Satthianadhan’s *Saguna* (1889)” at the 2015 Association for Asian Studies (AAS) in Chicago. She writes about her time at UC Davis:

“It has been a pleasure to work alongside the faculty, staff, and graduate students in this department and others at UCD. When I came to visit the Comparative Literature department as a prospective graduate student, I was especially impressed with the collegiality among the graduate students, and I am grateful for all the support I have had from my fellow Comp Lit grads throughout my time here. Thanks for sharing your teaching tips and materials, for giving feedback on my drafts of conference papers or dissertation chapters, and for exchanging words of encouragement (or commiseration) as we passed in the hall. I am also grateful for exceptional faculty members who spent countless hours helping me to pursue my interests, hone my language skills, and make it through my exams and the dissertation writing process. Kind and helpful staff members kept me moving towards the degree, and my students’ enthusiasm for texts reminded me of the pleasures of reading that brought me to the field and the classroom in the first place.

In Fall 2015, I will start as an assistant professor of English at Grove City College, a four-year liberal arts college in Western Pennsylvania, just north of Pittsburgh. I will be teaching courses in world literature, the European novel and composition. I will also have the opportunity to draw on my teaching

experience in the COM 1-4 series as I teach core (GE) courses in Western literature. The breadth of teaching experience we get as Comp Lit instructors at UCD was something that this particular school told me they noticed and valued, especially since they are a smaller institution. I am grateful for the experience that has prepared me to take on this new challenge.”

In September 2014, **Patrick Cabell** gave a paper titled “The Public/Private University Crisis: New Opportunities at the Twilight of Neoliberalism” at the Annual Conference of the Department of Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. In October 2014, he presented a paper on “Los traidores de peronismo: Public and Private Spheres in Pre-Junta Argentine Cinema” at the Samuel G. Armistead Colloquium in Language, Literature and Culture, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, UC Davis. For the summer of 2015, Patrick has been awarded a Summer Research Grant by the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) to support research in Berlin.

Myha Do presented a paper titled “Otherworldly Consumption: Rethinking Women's Positions Through the Eating Body in Pu Songling's ‘The Magic Sword’ and ‘The Magic Bag’” at the 2014 Pacific Ancient and Modern Languages Association (PAMLA) held at UC Riverside. She published a review of M. J. Trow’s *Brief History of Vampires* (2010) in *Dialogue: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Popular Culture and Pedagogy*, 2.1 (2015). Myha has a forthcoming chapter on “Concubines and Chameleons, Encounters and Consumption in Pu Songling’s and Gordon Chan’s *Painted Skin*” in *Animal Horror Cinema*:

Graduate speaker series 2014-15

November 21

"Defining the 'Real': Hong Shen and the Institutionalization of Gender-Appropriate Casting"
Megan Ammirati

March 12

"Reevaluating the *Ragion di Mercatura* in the *Decameron*: Florentine Banking in the Tale of Alessandro and the English Princess (II.3)"
Monica Keane

March 6

"Spaces for Storytelling, Sites for Self-Reflection: Intizar Husain and the Post-1960s Urdu Short Story in a Transnational Perspective"
Sayyeda Zehra Razvi

April 29

"Triangulating the British-French Literary 'Channel Zone': Toru Dutt (1856-1877) as Indian Poet, French Novelist, and English Critic"
Kristen Bergman Waha

May 13

"Proletarian Aesthetics in the Americas"
Anna Einarsdottir

Genre, History, and Criticism, ed. Katarina Gregersdotter, Johan Höglund, and Nicklas Hållén (New York: Palgrave, 2015).

Anna Björk Einarsdóttir presented talks on "Proletarian Literature in Argentina: A Research Report" at the 2014 Hemispheric Institute of the Americas Summer Research Award Symposium at UC Davis, on "Proletarian Aesthetics in the Americas" in the Department of Comparative Literature at UC Davis, and on "Circuits of Capital's Circulation," for the Reading Group at the Marxist Literary Group's 2015 Institute on Culture and Society. She will lecture on "The Aesthetics of Proletarian Literature in the Americas" at the University of Iceland in August 2015.

Ted Geier writes: "My final year here at Davis was very busy and rewarding. I was in Sheffield, England, for an exceptional animal studies and humanities conference over the

summer, and also organized Davis's own animal studies conference in November, *All Things Great and Small*, co-sponsored by the Department. We had a great turnout, and reviews have been wildly positive. We hope to produce an edited volume in relation to the conference, and I am co-editing a special volume of *International Wildlife Law & Policy* based on several conference papers, forthcoming in December 2015. I was in Riverside in the Fall for the annual meeting of the Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association, where it was nice one day to find a group of Davis Comp Lit folks all standing together in the conference lobby!

I completed several publications this year, including a chapter on contemporary ecotheory and world literature forthcoming in a volume on ecocriticism and geocriticism with Palgrave, and an essay-length review of a key new collection of ecocinema scholarship. I was also privileged to review a new edition

of Farley Mowat's memoir, *Born Naked*, for a Canadian literature and environment journal. This turned out to be a eulogy for Mowat's passing last May and a retrospective of environmental studies and nature writing before and after Mowat's singular comic voice, making the review very hard to write because of how important Mowat's work has been to me and to several family members who also think and write a lot about animals and the world we share. It was a tremendous experience in the end, and it affirmed and clarified for me the complex relationship of critique, literature, and environment.

The biggest news of my year, however, is that I completed my dissertation and found some success in my very broad job search. I will build on some of my dissertation findings while developing projects in critical theory and ecocinema as an Andrew W. Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow for the 2015-16 Rice Seminars on "After Biopolitics" at Rice University next year. I'll be on a special animal studies pedagogy panel at the MLA in Austin, and we are hosting this year's Society for Literature, Science & the Arts at Rice as part of the seminars, so I will stay heavily involved in conference work in 2015-16 while staying as close to home (in Houston!) as possible. Rachel and I are excited to live in Houston for the year and to explore the surroundings as we much as we can. The cat is nonplussed.

I would be in no shape to move into these exciting new professional roles, and hopefully more in the future, without the support and encouragement of UC Davis Comparative Literature, and I hope to always do the Department proud in the future. It is sad that this will be my final newsletter but quite

exciting and welcome to have new challenges and opportunities on the horizon. Thanks to the faculty and my graduate cohort, and I hope we all cross paths often in the future."

In October 2014, **Leonardo Giorgetti** presented a paper titled "Marginality, Gender, and Intertextual Commentary: The Griselda Story from Boccaccio to Petrarch and Christine de Pizan" at the UC Davis conference *Sex in the Margins*. Leonardo also delivered a paper titled, "Beauty, the Gardener and the Groom: Three Cases of Violence and Silence in the *Decameron*" at the 2015 meeting of the American Association of Italian Studies (AAIS) at the University of Colorado, Boulder.

Monica Keane filed her doctoral dissertation titled *The Florentine World of Giovanni Boccaccio's "Decameron"* in December 2014. Since then, she has presented a paper on "Florentine Banking in the *Decameron*: The Tale of Alessandro and the English Princess (II.3)," at the 2015 meeting of the Renaissance Society of America in Berlin, and turned in a review of Paola Nasti and Claudia Rossignoli, eds, *Interpreting Dante: Essays on the Traditions of Dante Commentary* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 2014) for *Comitatus*, 46 (forthcoming 2015).

In the summer of 2015, **Chloe-Mai Le Gall-Scoville** will travel to Harvard University to study an unpublished manuscript by the nineteenth-century French author Claire de Duras.

Sayyeda Zehra Razvi organized a panel on "The Function of Form: Understanding the Importance of Form in Communicating Experience" for the 2015 meeting of the Association of Asian Studies (AAS) in

Chicago. Her own paper for that panel was titled "The Failure of Form: Narrating the Experience of Nationhood in the Work of Intizar Husain."

In June 2015, **Amy Riddle** presented a paper titled "Rethinking Lukacs: Contemporary Naturalism in Global Petro-fiction" at the biennial meeting of the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment (ASLE) at the University of Idaho.

Magnus Snaebjoernsson presented a paper on "Laxness: From Dialectics to Immanence" at the Marxist Literary Group's 2015 Institute on Culture and Society. He published a review of Jorge Luis Borges's *Yfir Saltan Mar*, ed. Holmfriour Garoarsdottir and Sigrun Astriour Eiriksdottir (Reykjavik: University of Iceland Press, 2012) in *Variaciones Borges*, 38 (2014). Magnus was awarded the Thor Thors Memorial Fund by the American Scandinavian Foundation (ASF), and an HIA Tinker Summer Field Research Grant by the UC Davis Hemispheric Institute of the Americas.

In the summer of 2014, **James Straub** participated in a National Endowment for the

Humanities Summer Seminar on the history and memory of World Wars One and Two in France. One week of the program was in Paris, and another three weeks were spent in Normandy. He gave a culminating presentation for the summer seminar on militancy in veterans' organizations in France and Germany in the interwar period. This summer, he is again in Western Europe doing some work on Kleist and Kafka in Southern Germany.

Tori White won a Provost's Dissertation-Year Fellowship in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences for 2015-16. In November 2014, she presented a paper titled "Outgrowing Petrarchan Performances in Shakespearean Drama," at the annual meeting of the Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association (PAMLA) at UC Riverside.

Deborah Young will present a paper on "Narrative Form as Dream-work in Kafka's *The Castle*" at this year's Institute on Culture and Society at Georgetown University, sponsored by the Marxist Literary Group. In September, Deborah will use a departmental travel grant to study German in Berlin.

Faculty news

Gail Finney contributed "The Reign of the Amoeba: Further Thoughts about the Future of Comparative Literature" to the American Comparative Literature Association's current report on the state of the discipline. Gail's essay and the full report are available via <http://stateofthediscipline.acla.org>. Gail also contributed a talk on "Publishing as a Graduate Student" to one in a series of

departmental workshops on the academic and non-academic job market for graduate students in comparative literature.

Linda Matheson reviewed Lynne Hume's *The Religious Life of Dress: Global Fashion and Faith* (New York: Berg, 2014), for *Fashion, Style and Popular Culture*, 2:1 (2015), and her review of Helen Warner's *Fashion on Television: Identity and Celebrity Culture* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014) is forthcoming in the same journal.

Linda contributed "From Draupadi to Dido: The Duties of Dress in Early Epics from India and Italy as Seen in Corresponding Artwork," to *Global Textile Encounters*, ed. Marie-Louise Nosch, Zhao Feng and Lotika Varadarajan (Oxford: Oxbow; Shanghai: Donghua University Press, 2014), and a chapter titled "The 'Age of Enchantment', the 'Age of Anxiety': Fashion Symbols and Brand Persona," to *Global Fashion Brands*, ed. Joseph Hancock, Gjoko Muratovski, Veronica Manlow, and Anne Peirson-Smith (Bristol: Intellect, 2014; distributed in the US by the University of Chicago Press). Linda gave talks on "Reading Appearance in Statius' *Achilleid*," at the Berkeley Ancient Italian Roundtable in 2014, on "The Gestalt of Costume: Performance and Politics in Statius' *Achilleid*," at the Aalto University in Helsinki, and on "The Gestalt of Dress and Popular Culture in Flavian Rome: Performance and Politics in Statius' *Achilleid*," at the 2015 meeting of the Popular Culture and American Culture Associations (PCA/ACA) in New Orleans.

Brenda Deen Schildgen served as Vice-Chair of the Letters and Science Executive Committee. With Claire Waters (English) she is co-organizing the 50th anniversary meeting of the Medieval Association of the Pacific in 2016. In 2015, Brenda gave a talk on "Domestic Violence in Dante's *Commedia*" at the 2015 meeting of the American Association of Italian Studies (AAIS), and delivered a plenary address titled, "The Exegetic Imagination: The Visual Representation of the Creation and Expulsion Narratives: 359-1550" at St. Michael's College, University of Toronto. She has the following in press: "Christian Poetics: Dante, Prophecy, and the Urgency of Time," in *Dante's Christian Poetics*,

ed. Domenico Pietropaolo (Ottawa, ON: Legas, 2015), 1-16; "Dante and the Donation of Constantine," in *The Life and Legacy of Constantine from Late Antiquity to Early Modern Memory*, ed. Shane Bjornlie (Farnham: Ashgate, forthcoming 2016); "*Civitas* and Love: Looking backward from *Paradiso* 8 to *Purgatorio* 8 and *Inferno* 8," in *Vertical Readings in Dante's "Comedy"*, ed. George Corbett and Heather Webb, 3 vols (Cambridge: Open Book, forthcoming 2015); and "Teaching the Bible as Literature," *Religion and Literature* (2015).

Jocelyn Sharlet published "Her şey kimi tanıdığınızla ilişkilidir: Abbasi edebiyatında yaratıcı yazarlık ve konuşma özgürlüğü" ("It's All About Who You Know: Creative Writing and Freedom of Speech in Abbasid Literature"), in *Contexts for Texts: Ottoman Textual Studies* ed. Selim Kuru, Hatice Aynur, Hanife Koncu and Mujgan Cakir, Studies in Classical Turkish Literature (İstanbul: Klasik, forthcoming 2015). She presented "Commentary Literature and the Development of Genres by Arabic Poets with Marginalized Religious Identities: 'Adi b. Zayd and al-Akhtal" at the 2015 meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) in Seattle.

Sheldon Lu served as a member of the 2014 Research Assessment Exercise for the University Grants Committee of Hong Kong. The committee evaluated the research output of Hong Kong universities in the last seven years, and made recommendations for future funding. Sheldon gave invited lectures and papers at the University of Zurich, the University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, Beijing University, China Agricultural University,

Tsinghua University (Beijing), Beijing Normal University, Capital Normal University (Beijing), Northwestern University (Xi'an, China), Shanghai University, and the 2015 meeting of the American Comparative Literature Association (ACLA) in Seattle. In 2014-15, he published:

"Genealogies of Four Critical Paradigms in Chinese-language Film Studies," in *Sinophone Cinemas*, ed. Audrey Yue and Olivia Khoo (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014)

"History, Memory, Nostalgia: Rewriting Socialism in Film and Television Drama," trans. Yang Hui, *Cultural Studies (Beijing)* 18 (2014)

"The Question of Reception in Transnational Chinese-language Film Studies: A Rejoinder and Discussion," in *Contemporary Cinema (Dangdai dianying)*, 10 (2014)

"Explorations of the Concept of Chinese-language Cinema," *New Films (Shanghai)* 5 (2014)

"An Examination of the Advent of the Lumiere Brothers' Films in China," *New Films*, 1 (2015)

"Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon, Bouncing Angels: Hollywood, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Transnational Cinema," trans. Charlene Che, *New Films*, 2 (2015)

"Classical Poetry in Hong Kong in the 1950s: Solidarity Club and Lin Bicheng," *Journal of Modern Literature in Chinese*, 12 (2015)

"Re-visioning Global Modernity through the Prism of China," *European Review (Academia Europaea)*, 23 (2015)

"Artistic Interventions in Contemporary China," *China Information: A Journal on Contemporary China Studies*, 29 (2015)

"Commentary: Dimensions of Hong Kong Cinema," in *A Companion to Hong Kong Cinema*, ed. Esther Cheung, Gina Marchetti, and Esther Yau (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015)

"Transnational Chinese Film Studies: Terminology, Status, Problems and Future," *Contemporary Cinema*, 2 (2015)

With Li Huanzheng: "Overseas Chinese-language Film Studies and the Rewriting of Film History: An Interview with Professor Sheldon Lu at the University of California," *Contemporary Cinema (Dangdai dianying)*, 4 (2014); and "Intellectuals in the Humanities and Humanistic Education at the University in the Age of Globalization: An Interview with Professor Sheldon Lu," *Journal of China Agricultural University (Social Science edition)*, 32 (2015)

Seth Schein published "The Scene with the False Merchant in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*," in *Dioniso: Rivista di Studi sul Teatro Antico*, n.s. 4 (2014). He delivered a lecture titled "War, What is it Good For?" in Homer's *Iliad* and Four Receptions" at Amherst College and Bowdoin College in October 2014, and at UC Davis in April 2015. In October 2014, he lectured at Brown University on "A Cognitive Approach to Greek Meter: Hermann's Bridge in the Homeric Hexameter and the Interpretation of *Iliad* 24," and in May 2015 delivered a paper titled, "The *Iliad* as Prince's Mirror in George Chapman's *Seaven Bookes of the Iliades* and Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*" at a conference in Ghent on *Homer and the Good Ruler: The Reception of Homeric Epic as Princes' Mirror through the Ages*. Seth adds: "In Spring 2015, I violated the spirit of my retirement and co-taught a UCD Comp Lit/Critical Theory graduate seminar with Kari Lokke on the history of emotions."

Stefan H. Uhlig completed an essay on "Goethe's Figurative Method" in his scientific work, art criticism, and poetic theory for *The Oxford Handbook of European Romanticism*, ed. Paul Hamilton (Oxford: Oxford University

Press, forthcoming January 2016). He wrote a review for *Comparative Critical Studies* of César Domínguez, Haun Saussy, and Darío Villanueva's *Introducing Comparative Literature: New Trends and Applications* (New York: Routledge, 2015), and participated in a review discussion for *Romantic Circles* with Jon Klancher, Orrin Wang, and Ross Wilson of Klancher's *Transfiguring the Arts and Sciences: Knowledge and Cultural Institutions in the Romantic Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013). The discussion is posted at <http://www.rc.umd.edu/audio>.

Archana Venkatesan presented papers at the University of Wisconsin Madison South Asia Studies Conference and at the American

Academy of Religion (AAR) in San Diego. Her paper at the Madison conference discussed the "Quarrel Festival" at the Vishnu Temple in Alvar Tirunagari, and was part of a panel on the Politics of Love. At the AAR, she was a member of a panel on Indian saints and historiography. She presented on the nineteenth-century Saurashtra poet, mystic and composer, Nayaki Svamikal. Her paper on Nayaki Svamikal, "Making Saints, Making Communities: Nāyaki Svāmikaḷ and the Saurashtras of Madurai" was published in *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* in December 2014. In Fall 2014, Archana Venkatesan was honored as a Chancellor's Fellow. She will hold the title for five years.

Invited speakers 2014-15

October 17

"Multilingual Translation in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance: Forgotten Practices and Unthinkable Texts"

Belén Bistué

CONICET, Universidad Nacional de Cuyo

March 10

"Life (before and) after the Ph.D."

Wendy C. Nielsen

Montclair State University

March 12

"Material Text: The Life and Afterlife of Koda Aya's *Kimono*"

Michiko Suzuki

Indiana University, Bloomington

April 27

"War, What is it Good For?, in Homer's *Iliad* and Four Receptions"

Seth Schein

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