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FRENCH

Black Women's Bodies Beyond Slavery Demarginalizing the Intersection between Race and Sex in the French Atlantic World

Zeinab Bakayoko

Advisor: Doyle Calhoun
Major: French

Analyzing the stories of enslaved Black women and the sexual violence they endured during the colonial period reveals not only the profound silences—mystic, ghostlike figures—haunting both the archives and contemporary memory, but also certain truths about black women's everyday acts of heroism and how they defied their oppressors. Facing what Greg Thomas (2003) calls the “sexual demon of colonial power,” Black women have lived through countless shared traumas resulting from colonization and transatlantic slavery in Sub-Saharan African, the Caribbean, and the Americas. By creating without fear and making something from nothing, we can finally learn about and hear the hidden voices of those women who suffered physical, mental, and emotional abuse beyond measure at the hands of colonists. In this thesis, I investigate how the Caribbean authors Fabienne Kanor and Maryse Condé use a range of imaginative methods to represent how enslaved women experienced, resisted, and overcame sexual violence through a close reading of their novels *Humus* (2006) and *Moi, Tituba, sorcière... Noire de Salem* (1986). Turning away from major masculinist historical narratives, Condé and Kanor reinforce the values of Black feminism(s) to continuously challenge, reclaim, and reconstruct the patriarchal representation of the “weaker sex” in literature.

Despite being published almost two decades apart, both novels engage in a conversation about how to reimagine the experiences of enslaved women and help us see them as racialized and gendered subjects instead of merely enslaved bodies. In *Humus*, Fabienne Kanor invites her readers to be bearers of a nuanced collective memory about slavery as witnesses to her heroines' epic: a collective suicide aboard a French slave ship at the end of the eighteenth century. Kanor tells the story of fourteen enslaved women from different walks of life, as well as the abuse and suffering they endured while crossing the Atlantic Ocean en route to France's colonies in the

Caribbean. She attempts a work of memory that is more intimately acquainted with the humanity of the enslaved women, which is a crucial element of their stories and which combats the pre-written narrative that reduced them only to passive victims of their tragedy. The novel exposes the collective and individual traumas of these women, allowing each to share her experience and discuss her pain. Their diverse lives connect and entwine during the brutal shift from freedom to captivity, and they create a chorus of resistance through their diverse cultures, conditions, and perspectives. Tituba and the other female characters in *Moi, Tituba, Sorcière...Noire de Salem*—the titular Tituba, her mother, and Hester—experience constant gendered and racialized violence. Each time a woman attempts to defend her human rights, she is subjected to the worst forms of punishment. In *Tituba*, Maryse Condé brings together a number of potent themes, including sexuality, vengeance, victim guilt, racism, gender.

This thesis explores the numerous complexities between the female narrators' internal problems, issues of intimacy, female solidarity, and the concept of Black feminism. The women in both of these texts cry out against this silence, putting their bodies and voices at the center of processing trauma and freeing themselves from the colonial economy of bodies forced upon them. They convey discourses of resistance by rejecting motherhood while in enslavement and by forming complicated intimate sexual ties as strategies of survival and means of creating their own forms of freedom in the Atlantic world. Black feminism draws attention to and actively addresses the numerous facets of racial injustices as well as gender inequalities. This thesis foregrounds enslaved women as historical actors, showing how imaginative modes center female voices and allow Black women to tell their own stories, all while knowing that we cannot ever fully represent enslaved subjects.

The Importance of *The Little Prince*: A Story in Progress

Allison Rau

Advisor: Sara Kippur

Major: French

Antoine de St. Exupéry's 1943 book *Le Petit Prince* (The Little Prince), has been captivating audiences for 80 years now. Along with a string of spin-offs in the forms of film, stage productions, and merchandise, the original story remains a top seller and frequently taught in classrooms around the world. But why have the themes of this book persisted while many other stories fall away into history? This project will trace how the lessons and themes of *The Little Prince* have remained relevant to this day, by examining how even as decades came and went, audiences and critics found new ways for the story to inform their lives. It will track the reception of the book by synthesizing newspaper articles, critical reviews, and scholarly analyses of the book. While the more classic themes from the book, like the importance of innocence and fantasy, still ring true to modern readers, more specific nuances can link *The Little Prince* to our lives. *The Little Prince* can be political, literary, or even environmental should those themes identify with readers during a certain time in history. This project demonstrates that as our world has changed and grown in the last 80 years, the way that we interpret this story has as well. It has remained popular and relevant throughout all this time because of its chameleon-like ability to be interpreted in such a variety of ways.

GERMAN STUDIES

Hygiene and Horror - The Ethical Considerations of The National Socialists' Conquest for Health and the Parallels to Contemporary Considerations and Consequences; A Scientific Humanist Perspective

Nicholas Zacharewski

Advisor: Johannes Evelein
Major: German Studies

It is a long-held misunderstanding that evil has exceptional origins. Time and history have proven that evil is banal. An environment of economic crisis, extreme patriotism, and social rejection have all played an essential role in creating some of the greatest atrocities known in human history. The National Socialist (Nazi) party, which controlled the German state from 1933-1945, epitomizes evil. Infamous for its crimes against humanity, however, relatively unknown otherwise, are the origins and etiology of Nazi influence. This essay will investigate, reveal, and discuss the scientific bases of the Nazi reign and continue with the research, experiments, and ultimate discoveries of the national socialists.

Furthermore, this essay will discuss the unethical use, adoption, and exploitation of these scientific factors from seemingly "ethical" or "just" powers to their benefit. The Nazi party was not alone in its radical conquest for scientific progress. It is in the author's interest to discuss not only the national socialist approach to scientific research and discovery but also groups who, on a surface level, appear more "fair" in their ways. This investigation will highlight consequences apparent nearly a century later and allow for meaningful discussions about the complications of scientific research and its implications in the history and future directions of the scientific community.

HISPANIC STUDIES

**The evolution of the contemporary Hispanic American chronicle:
Chile, el golpe y los gringos de Gabriel García Márquez y *La secreta
vida literaria de Augusto Pinochet* de Juan Cristóbal Peña**

Karen García

Advisor: Priscilla Meléndez
Major: Hispanic Studies

Augusto Pinochet's long and devastating dictatorship from 1973 until 1989 was one of the most brutal regimes in history, and it continues to have a lasting impact on Chileans. The use of physical and psychological torture as a means of oppression has created a legacy that many are still struggling to overcome. Additionally, it is crucial to acknowledge the complicity of the United States in supporting Pinochet's rise to power in pursuit of its political and economic agenda: in the first case, against any sign of a socialist or communist posture (the Cold War), and in the second case to bring about conservative economic strategies. The chronicle *Chile, el golpe, y los gringos* (1974) by the world-renowned writer Gabriel García Márquez narrates the lurid details of what took place in the political sphere before the activation of the dictatorship, showcasing his journalistic skills. Although this chronicle is based on historical events, its intentional use of imaginative storytelling prompts the reader to seek an essential truth that transcends the mere veracity of verifiable data while also using novelistic narrative resources, such as the popularized procedures of classic detective novels. By combining his journalism background with these novelistic narrative resources, he was able to uncover the corruption that occurred at the start of the dictatorship. *La secreta vida literaria de Augusto Pinochet* (2013), written by the chronicler, screenwriter, and Chilean journalist, Juan Cristobal Peña, examines the lesser-known facet of former Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet, his relationship with literature and his literary output. Peña analyzes Pinochet's literary oeuvre, including his poetry and prose, and explores how his writing reveals aspects of his personality and political ideology. Peña draws on his background in journalism and incorporates novelistic elements to create a powerful chronicle that reveals Augusto Pinochet's worldview and political beliefs, providing valuable context to the dictatorship. In this analysis, I will examine the different approaches to the same dictatorship by Juan Cristóbal Peña and Gabriel García Márquez, despite their works being written forty years apart. Both writers have utilized the genre of chronicle to explore and expose political issues in Chile, particularly its enduring political and social implications. By examining these two works, we can gain insights into how they use the chronicle to uncover the underlying political themes that continue to resonate to this day.

Parir es Partirse: The Effects of Motherhood on the Identity of Contemporary Latin American Women

Abigail Lambert

Advisor: Priscilla Meléndez
Major: Hispanic Studies

Over the past 50 years, feminist writers have stressed the importance of the study of motherhood to understand the socio-political pressures that women face. Furthermore, motherhood is categorized as an example of identity politics, as a result of how maternalism has been used to further women's rights in society. However, it is also necessary to understand the subjective experience of mothers. My research project investigates two contemporary Latin American chroniclers whose texts focus on the theme of women, specifically in circumstances related to motherhood. This thesis examines the collection of chronicles by Puerto Rican journalist Ana Teresa Toro that appear in the second part of the book *Parir es Partirse* (2020). These chronicles describe the author's personal experience of the pregnancy of her child during the pandemic. She details the physical and emotional changes that occur during the different stages of maternity, as well as the loss of her sense of self when becoming a mother. Additionally, I will analyze the chronicle "El Barrio de las mujeres solas" (2010) by Josefina Licitra, an Argentinian journalist who recounts her experience visiting the San Juan neighborhood in Antofagasta, Argentina. This neighborhood includes a living community of single mothers who have learned how to live independently from men because of the abandonment by the fathers of their children. All of these chronicles describe the social expectations of women in motherhood. This thesis will analyze the ways motherhood affects the identity of women, and it will examine the role of maternalism in contemporary Latin American society.

Sex Trafficking in the Mexican Culture: Prostitution through the writings of Laura Castellanos

Erin Miceli

Advisor: Priscilla Meléndez
Major: Hispanic Studies

Around the world, sex trafficking is a very prominent aspect of different countries and their cultures. One country in particular, Mexico, has an entire subsection of their economy that relies on this illegal industry. This essay works with several chronicles written by Mexican author, Laura Castellanos, to develop a deeper understanding of the business of sex trafficking and how the political history of Mexico has encouraged and maintained a social and political environment in which this type of trade could thrive. Castellanos' pieces, "Código rojo", Mexico armada (1943-1981) (2007) and Crónica de un país embozado (1994-2018) (2018) give firsthand accounts and historical timelines of life in Mexico following years of political instability during the twentieth century which is reflected in her work, all written within the last twenty years. Castellanos explains how this lack of security has created a dangerous cycle of sex trafficking all over the country. Together, these pieces speak up against the powers that continue to allow the world of sex trafficking to continue within the Mexican borders.

Journalism and Fiction: Rereading García Márquez' *Doce cuentos peregrinos*

Taive Muenzberg

Advisor: Priscilla Meléndez
Major: Hispanic Studies

Colombian author Gabriel García Márquez (1927-2014) would go on to produce an impressive corpus of notable works that includes novels, short stories, and journalistic writings. Although he gained much of his notoriety for his novels and short stories, García Márquez was an experienced journalist who established in 1994 the *Fundación para un Nuevo Periodismo Iberoamericano* which praised the rigor and quality of works which journalists produced and provided a platform to create a network of writers for ideological exchange. This respect for and involvement with journalism applied directly to García Márquez's work with the chronicle, a genre which merged the literary techniques of the novel with the informational and time-oriented agenda of journalism which is considered an innovational force with contemporary Latin American writing. Gabriel García Márquez's *Doce cuentos peregrinos*, published in 1992 yet written over the course of two decades prior, compiles twelve snapshots of the lives of a variety of Latin American individuals, generally of middle or upper classes, during their travels to Europe. The title of this collection is translated for publication as *Strange Pilgrims*, yet it literally translates to "Twelve Pilgrim Stories". Using definitions of the Latin American chronicle provided by authors such as Ignacio Corona, Aníbal González, and Viviane Maheux, and twentieth century perspectives on art written by Walter Benjamin in his piece *The Work of Art in in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, this project will work to showcase that these twelve "stories" are indeed powerful examples of the chronicle. Concentrating on three of them - "Buen viaje, Señor Presidente", "La Santa", and "El rastro de tu sangre en la nieve"— is evident that García Márquez produced a collection of chronicles which serve as political critiques of the suppressive Colombian government connected by a series of dates and periodical installments to display the evolution of characters from 1976 to 1981. By creating periodical installments which report upon the lives of these individuals external to Colombia, by coinciding the voice of the author with the voice of a separate narrating character within the work, and the blending of fantasy with reality within *Doce cuentos peregrinos* allows for it to fluctuate between the two genres: the short story and the chronicle.

Chronicles about women in ESMA: Violence in Argentina during the National Reorganization Process

Jasmine Parras

Advisor: Priscilla Meléndez
Major: Hispanic Studies

The period of the National Reorganization Process between 1976 to 1983 marks a dark era in Argentina's history in the last quarter of the twentieth century through its horrible and terrifying actions against anyone who opposed the military dictatorship. Many innocent people were murdered, tortured, and disappeared for having an opposing political view from that of the government or for knowing someone who opposed it. The Escuela de Mecánica de la Armada (ESMA), a clandestine detention center that operated from 1976 to 1983 imprisoned people who belonged to militant organizations or to anyone who advocated against the government. In 2004, the ESMA was renamed to EXESMA to repurpose the space to preserve the memory of those who died in the civil military dictatorship. The written works analyzed in this essay focus on a collection of testimonies and poetic texts that are part of the 2022 exhibit "Ser mujeres en la ESMA II, tiempo de encuentros." This exhibit is a joint research project to characterize the machismo and patriarchal traits that women had to face while being persecuted and violated by the military dictatorship in power. These texts were collected by the EXESMA museum to promote the women perspective of the events that took place in the ESMA during the military dictatorship with the purpose of representing how women were affected differently compared to the men in the clandestine detention centers. I will examine three texts from this exhibit. "Cuerpos" by the American Professor Barbara Sutton, who studies women's gender and sexuality in Latin America and the ways in which she advocates for women who have been sexualized in the ESMA. Her writing is based on interviews conducted in 2010-2015 with eleven women who were detained and tortured during the dictatorship. She characterizes their experiences through the over sexualization of the body. "Las Formas diversificadas de apropiación de los cuerpos" by Pilar Calveiro, who is a political scientist and a survivor held in the ESMA, narrates her experience when she was kidnapped in 1977. Lastly, I will examine "Hablar para reordenar el mundo" by Laura Sobredo, an Argentine professor who studies human rights and advocates for women's rights. She bases her writing on conducted interviews of survivors of the Argentine dictatorship to present the importance of preserving and understanding memory. These writings help represent the unimageable horror and torture women endured in the ESMA through either their own experience or by conducting interviews that portray women's perspective.

The Birth of Black Consciousness: An Analysis of Biography of a Runaway Slave by Miguel Barnet and Black Cuban Woman I Had to Be by Sandra Abd' Allah-Álvarez Ramírez

Tiana Sharpe

Advisor: Priscilla Meléndez
Major: Hispanic Studies

This thesis aims to explore Black reality within a Cuban context and validate Black testimonials as valuable knowledge sources within academia. Historically Black and Brown voices have been ignored or simplified to support the delusions of the colonial lens. Rather, this study centers on two texts from distinct Cuban authors from very different Black realities but share a similar understanding of Blackness. Biography of a Runaway Slave by Cuban anthropologist Miguel Barnet in 1966 reconstructs a *crónica* from the oral testimony of a Cuban runaway slave, Esteban Montejo. Montejo, born in 1860, is a powerful witness to Cuban history in the first half of the 20th century and articulates his understanding of Blackness, racism, and power developed through lived experience. The second text, Black Cuban Woman I Had to Be, originally took the form of online blog posts by Sandra Abd' Allah-Álvarez Ramírez. In 2019, after 13 years of exploring Black womanhood, motherhood, and Cuban politics Abd' Allah-Álvarez Ramírez compiled her testimonials into a book. Although the narrators of these stories come from different eras and identities, their work is in conversation with other Afro-literature works throughout the global Black diaspora. Their work breaks the conventions of Western literature to reflect the complexity of Blackness truthfully. These texts balance the collectivist story of Black consciousness and their individual investigation of self amidst systems of oppression. I find that it is vital to study Black storytelling to uncover a missing portion of history, the profound complexity of Blackness, and the white supremacist constructions that awaken Black consciousness as a form of resistance.

The Orientalist Imaginary in the Chronicle *Dios mío: un viaje por la India en busca de Sai Baba* from Martín Caparrós

Gabriel R. Sorondo Guirola

Advisor: Priscilla Meléndez
Major: Hispanic Studies

As India's global perception fades away from the mythical and the subaltern, its presence as one of the largest cultures and countries in the oriental world make it a point of continuous cultural interest and curiosity. India, having a myriad of languages, cultures, subcultures, groups and castes reflect intricacies larger than some regions of the world. Through the examination of *Dios mío: un viaje por la India en busca de Sai Baba* (1994). I seek to understand the ways in which an Argentine author, Martín Caparrós (1957), portrays the cultures and population of the country whilst reverberating orientalist ideas such as portrayals of poverty, the ignorance of the general Indian public and a fanaticism linked to religious beliefs. The ideas reverberated by Caparrós represent, overall, the perception of the Western world upon a misunderstood and totalized culture such as the Indian one. This senior thesis serves, then, as the exploration of the ways in which the construction of the orientalist imaginary occurs in the Latin American chronicle and how the Global South presents each other in their cultural productions. Ideas of orientalism will be explored in relation to language, images and descriptions given of the places which are explored as Caparrós trails behind Sai Baba's religious figure and following. Alongside, anecdotal accounts from the author will serve to contrast Caparrós' viewpoints with what was observed in his two years of living in the country and create a conversation between imaginaries and experiences in India.

The Root of Everyday Crises in Colombia: Drug Trafficking Through a Chronicle by Juan José Hoyos

Lucy Wilson

Advisor: Priscilla Meléndez
Major: Hispanic Studies

Narco trafficking and drug wars plague many realms of the world today. One of the main roots of trafficking and highly talked about narco traffickers and cartels in the Americas is Colombia and the Medellín cartel belonging to key figure, Pablo Escobar. News outlets and political conversations heavily highlight and report on the effect of drug trafficking and the rates of overdose within US-borders. Nevertheless, this essay will center on the major effects of these activities within Colombia's borders as reflected in a chronicle written and published by Juan José Hoyos (1953) a Colombian journalist from Medellín. His chronicle relays and converses from the first-person perspective on the violent and repressive reality that the journalists and citizens of Colombia faced in the late 20th century. The chronicle, "Un fin de semana con Pablo Escobar" (2003), is an interview conducted by Hoyos with cartel lord Pablo Escobar and illustrates how the vast effects of narco trafficking have to this day shaped a way of life in Colombia. Outside sources including a highly regarded novel by Hoyos, *El cielo que perdimos* (1990) that highlights the experience of being a journalist in Medellín through a fictional lens as well as academic journals on Colombia's government and peace keeping efforts, historical pieces on drug trafficking, and interviews of Hoyos by editorials and newspapers provide context to analyzing the chronicle and understanding its role in the 21st century. Conjoining the analysis of "Un fin de semana con Pablo Escobar" with the contextual sources paves the way to understanding the daily crisis, lasting effect of drug trafficking, and an overall struggle with the feeling of loss in Colombia today.

Chronicles of the Innocent: The Effects of the War Against Drug Trafficking in Mexico in the New Millennium

Citalli Zavala

Advisor: Priscilla Meléndez
Major: Hispanic Studies

In 2006, Felipe Calderón became Mexico's 63rd president, and within 11 days of his presidency, he declared a "War on Drugs" to combat drug-related violence that has been pervasive for more than 17 years. His plan was to send out thousands of military troops to the states most affected by narco-trafficking and violence. However, the number of homicides, kidnappings, and extortions surged dramatically during his 6-year term and his alleged "war." Three years later in 2009, the Spanish journalist Judith Torrea, moved to Ciudad Juárez to document the experiences of those who daily suffered the most as a consequence of their city's militarization: the innocent civilians. Homicides had tripled from a total of 10,452 in 2006 to 27,213 in 2011. Torrea found that a lot of the violence was perpetuated by the military, and she transformed those findings into her crónica *Juárez en la sombra: crónicas de una ciudad que se resiste a morir* (2011) and wrote it using a first person, journalistic approach. Daniela Rea, a Mexican journalist, did something similar: she moved to Mexico and interviewed civilians on their experiences with the military and the surge in violence during Calderón's "war on drugs." *Nadie les pidió perdón: historias de impunidad y resistencia* (2015) recounts these horrific stories using a third person narration. In my thesis, I analyze the way in which both of these crónicas relay their information about the quotidian life and the consequences of narco-trafficking in their midst, meanwhile this project attempts to examine where to place the responsibility for the suffering of innocent people in Mexico.

**HISPANIC
STUDIES
&
ARABIC**

A Terrifying Love: The Gothic in Mariana Enríquez' Travel Chronicles Through the American South

Aiden Chisholm

Advisor: Priscilla Meléndez
Major: Hispanic Studies & Arabic

In 2012 the Argentine writer Mariana Enríquez, who has frequently been called “The Princess of Horror,” traveled through the South of the United States, recording her journey in two crónicas later published in 2015: “Un viaje espeluznante al sur del río Ohio” (“A Horrifying Trip to the South of the Ohio River”) and “Blues, pobreza, y vudú y la tierra de Elvis” (“Blues, Poverty, and Voodoo and the Land of Elvis”). Coming from a tradition of the Latin American Gothic and a self-proclaimed lover of the Southern Gothic, Enríquez implements these two styles of terror and the uncanny into the already hybrid genre of the crónica, which in the Latin American context has been succinctly defined as narrative journalism. Through this monstrous amalgamation, Enríquez brings her audience’s attention to the many and continued social-political failures of the American South and their similarities to Argentina’s. Despite her criticisms, Enríquez also uses the Gothic to express her complex, and terrifying, love for the American South. This project seeks to add to the minimal, yet growing, scholarly interest in and conversations about the importance of the Gothic to Latin American literature and journalistic writing.

ITALIAN STUDIES

The Emigrants Experience: Max Corvo, Fascism and World War 2

Taive Muenzberg & Molly Menounos

Advisor: Dario Del Puppo

Major: Italian Studies

Biagio “Max” Corvo immigrated to the United States in 1929 at just ten years old with his mother and sister. As an anti-fascist activist, his father had previously fled Sicily to the United States. The Corvo family settled in Middletown, CT where there was a burgeoning community of other immigrants from their hometown of Melilli, Sicily. When the U.S. entered WWII after the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, many military age men volunteered or were drafted into the fight for their country. Relatively little attention has been hitherto paid to Italian Americans who contributed to the U.S. war effort and, in particular, to the military officers who helped turn the tide against the Axis powers. Max Corvo was one of these officers who made a difference in the struggle. He was a leading figure in the nascent intelligence movement (the OSS, a precursor of the CIA) and helped build the antifascist resistant in his native Sicily in preparation for the U.S. military landing there. Our research is based on the Max Corvo Archive (in the Watkinson Library, Trinity College). Besides learning about Corvo's remarkable life and also about the early days of the American intelligence community, we seek to understand what Corvo's journey and life story tells us about Italian Americans and their attitudes towards Italy during WWII, Italian nationalism both internal and external to the peninsula, as well as their motivations for fighting for the Allies in the war. Our study relies on primary archival sources, but also on the histories written about WWII in Italy and in particular about Sicily.

Three Women of the Italian Resistance and What Italian Women Today Owe Them

Sophia Sczurko

Advisor: Dario Del Puppo

Major: Italian Studies

The women of the Italian Resistance movement during WWII fought to free Italy from Nazi-Fascism and in doing so they fought to liberate all Italian women. In Italian society and, especially, under Fascism (1922-1943) women were considered primarily for their reproductive and marriage roles that promoted the state's political, social, and cultural objectives. In taking up arms for freedom, they fought against sexism and against traditional gender roles. For this project, I focus on three women: Tina Anselmi (1927-2016) from Treviso, Carla Capponi (1918-2000) from Rome, and Maria Agamben Federici (1918-1984) from L'Aquila. From different regions and language backgrounds, each of them went on to play an important role in the Resistance and also in Italian politics after WWII. Using their published memoirs, biographies, and the scholarly literature about them and their historic struggle, I seek to understand what the experience of armed insurrection was like for them? What inspired them? How were they viewed by their respective families and by others, especially by non-combatant women? What challenges and obstacles did they have to overcome in what was very much a chauvinistic militia? How did these women interpret the greater social and political struggle they were part of? How has history recorded their achievements? And how did these women ultimately help achieve women's right to vote in 1945? What is their legacy for Italian feminism? These are the principal questions I seek to answer. More importantly, studying the women of the Italian Resistance has contributed to my overall understanding of Italian history but it has also given me perspective on the continuing struggle for women's right in contemporary Italy. The past is somehow always present.

**ITALIAN
STUDIES
&
CHINESE**

“You are Meant to be the Best”: Women in Elena Ferrante’s *L’amica geniale* and in Yang Mo’s *Song of Youth*

Natalia Cortes

Advisor: Dario Del Puppo
Major: Italian Studies & Chinese

As a Language and Cultural Studies major studying Italian and Chinese, I am fascinated by the continuities between these two very different cultures. In this essay, I compare the representation of the female protagonists of the Italian novel *L’amica geniale* (2011) by Elena Ferrante with the Chinese novel *Song of Youth* (1958) by Yang Mo. Although written more than fifty years apart, both are historical novels set in and around the same historical period: the aftermath of WWII in Italy and during the Second Sino Japanese war.

Using feminist theory and secondary sources on the history and literature of both countries, I consider how the role of women was shaped by the experience of war and by societal changes. Fiction has the benefit with respect to historical scholarship of portraying the psychology of characters. In the case of both novels, we learn about the fears, hopes, love, friendship, and life plans of women constrained by societal and paternalistic norms. How do they negotiate traditional gender norms with a desire to assert their individual identity? Moreover, as a college-educated student I am particularly interested in the role education plays for each of the protagonists.

JAPANESE
&
RUSSIAN

**Exploring Parallel Themes:
Comparing Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* with
Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's "In A Grove" and "Rashōmon"**

Zuoze Kai Wang

Advisor: Katsuya Izumi
Major: Japanese & Russian

This paper highlights the similarities between Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke's "In A Grove" and "Rashōmon". Through an analysis of the themes of female characters, story design, environment and social background in each work, this paper argues that there are striking parallels between the ways in which the two authors address these issues. By examining the similarities and differences between their works, the paper illuminates how Fyodor Dostoevsky and Akutagawa Ryūnosuke use literary works to show their attitude to their respective contemporary social issues.

RUSSIAN

Suffering, Isolation, Obsession, and the Triumphant Power of Love: Dostoevsky and Dante in Dialogue

Sam Taishoff

Advisor: Carol Any

Major: Russian

This thesis puts Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground* and *The Brothers Karamazov* in conversation with Dante's *Divine Comedy* and examines overarching themes of suffering, isolation, obsession, and love. The primary focus is Dostoevsky's character, the Underground Man, an intellectual overburdened with an excessive conscience which results in paranoid obsession leading to a life of isolated suffering. The thesis views the Underground Man through the lens of the shades in *Inferno*, obsessing and suffering for their actions or inactions on the Earth. It examines the Underground Man's relations as well as his theories on worldly and philosophical matters such as the limits of reason, the purpose of societal advancement, and the power struggles of control. The other focus of this thesis is the solution to suffering presented by love, displayed through *Purgatorio*, *Paradiso*, and Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. This solution of love, as simple as it may seem, is one which requires constant, dedicated work as depicted by the penitent shades in *Purgatorio* or those at the monastery with Elder Zosima. Without love, an overly conscious man can be little more than a bug, but with love, he is prepared for anything.

**WORLD
LITERATURE
& CULTURE
STUDIES**

Translating Transnational Boundaries: Interviews with Rural Villagers of Hidalgo, Mexico

Karina Amador Olvera

Advisor: Diana Aldrete
Major: World Literature and Culture Studies

While Mexican immigrants are in the U.S. striving to achieve the American Dream and help their families, what is occurring back in their homeland? In the outskirts of Acatlán Hidalgo, Mexico there are a cluster of villages where the majority of people have family in the United States sending back financial remittances. Though people were able to construct their own homes and drastically improve their families' circumstances, the villages themselves have also been affected by the migrants' influences. In the summer of August 2022, I visited this region to investigate the dynamic that financial remittances have caused to the region, and I conducted 57 interviews in Spanish with the villagers to get their perspective on the financial remittances and the changes to their communities. For my senior project, I have translated three interviews from Spanish into English from people of different villages who discussed how the waves of migrants' departure affected their communities, resulting in the migration of the younger population and an increase in the lack of workers. The first interviewee is Gabriela who has lived her whole life in the village and does not have any family members in the United States assisting her. The second interviewee is Valentín, a dairy farmer, who is a migrant that permanently returned to his hometown and has his own dairy farm business. The third interviewee is Guadalupe who has sisters in the United States that financially help take care of their parents

Love Without Borders? Pinkwashing, Homonationalism, Decolonial Melancholia, and the Queering of the Occupation

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This thesis posits that queerness in Palestine is an essential element of the Palestinian struggle to eradicate Israeli settler-colonialism. It explores how the instrumentalization of gay rights plays out in the context of Israel's settler colonial occupation of Palestine. The Israeli government uses its limited and exclusionary gay rights achievements and existing anti-Palestinian, anti-Arab, and Islamophobic sentiments to divert attention away from and legitimate its ongoing imperial and militarist projects in Occupied Palestine. Drawing on the works of Palestine's most established queer rights organization, *alQaws for Sexual and Gender Diversity in Palestinian Society*, this thesis aims to reveal the political power of being queer in Palestine and argues that an open, feminist, queer space such as *alQaws* is a productive site to think and practice decolonization. By introducing phenomena such as Israeli pinkwashing, homonationalism, and the multidirectional struggle against oppression by queer Palestinian activists, this thesis seeks to answer the following questions: What can a queer perspective bring to our understanding of settler-colonialism in the context of Palestine? And, what are the implications for transnational and internationalist feminist and queer solidarities with Palestine? In what ways does the homonationalistic discourse shape queer Palestinian subjectivities? This thesis concludes by rejecting the "binary model of subordination and subversion" and attempts to articulate a uniquely queer Palestinian subjectivity and politics that do not easily "map onto the logic of repression and resistance." In other words, queer Palestinians strive, not so much in an act of *resistance* as one of *survival*, "to promote new forms of subjectivity through the refusal" of the subjectivities sanctioned by the State and enforced by diverse actors—a subjectivity that insists on its queerness *and* Palestinianness simultaneously, while subtly redefining the contours of both.