

Bringing together scholars from different disciplines such as cultural studies, intermediality studies, translation studies, and comparative literature, the Fourteenth Annual Study Day of the Centre for Literary and Intermedial Crossings offers a new engagement with multilingualism as a theoretical concept, analytical category, textual practice and lived experience in the study of literature.

MULTILINGUALISM AND LITERATURE

14TH ANNUAL STUDY DAY OF THE CENTRE FOR LITERARY AND INTERMEDIAL CROSSINGS (CLIC)

6 DECEMBER 2024

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL

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ORGANIZERS:

Ann Peeters, Eva Ulrike Pirker,
Arvi Sepp, Ceydanur Temurok, Cedric Van Dijck

PROGRAM

OPENING SESSION

ROOM D2.01

- 09:00-09:30** **Welcome and Introduction**
- 09:30-10:30** **Keynote lecture by Jo Angouri and Zeena Faulk** (University of Warwick)
Chair: Ann Peeters
- Disciplines in dialogue: Translation at the Intersection of Literary Studies and Applied Linguistics**
- 10:30-11:00** **Coffee Break**

PANEL 1 TRANSLATING MULTILINGUALISM: PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSLATION AND SELF-TRANSLATION

Chair: Delphine Munos

ROOM D2.01

- 11:00-11:30** **Amanda Murphy** (Sorbonne Nouvelle Université)
- Reading-Translating Between Languages: Experiences with Multilingual Literature**
- 11:30-12:00** **Guillermo Sanz Gallego** (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)
- Multilingualism and the Translator's Voice of the Protagonist in Corazón tan Blanco by Javier Marias**
- 12:00-12:30** **Christopher Mole** (Sorbonne Nouvelle Université)
- Looking For the Self in "Self-Translation": Nancy Huston and Multilingual Aesthetics**
- 12:30-13:30** **Lunch Break**

PANEL 2 TRANSLINGUAL WRITING IN COLONIAL AND POST-COLONIAL LITERATURE

Chair: Cedric Van Dijck

ROOM D2.01

- 13:30-14:00** **Vera Elisabeth Gerling** (Heinrich-Heine-Universität Düsseldorf)
- Rosario Ferre's Translingual Writing Between Spanish and English: Postcolonial De-Configurations**
- 14:00-14:30** **Matthieu Sergier** (UC Louvain)
- Exploring the Role of Literature: Heterolingualism as a Moral Guide in Flemish Colonial and Postcolonial Congolese Narratives**
- 14:30-15:00** **Coffee Break & Room Change (D2.12)**

PANEL 3 LINGUISTIC FRAGMENTATION: MULTILINGUALISM AS A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

Chair: Mantra Mukim

ROOM D2.12

- 15:00-15:30** **Maria Pace Aquilina** (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)
- Multilingualism During the Restoration Era in England: Shaping the Social, Political and Cultural Scene**
- 15:30-16:00** **Iga Nowicz** (VUB)
- Multilingualism and Migratory Masculinities: Ein schönes Ausländerkind by Toxische Pommes (2024)**
- 16:00-16:30** **Beatrice Occhini** (Università Degli Studi di Salerno)
- Unveiling Language Violence: The Shibboleth Perspective in Literary Analysis**

POINTS OF DEPARTURE

Rainier Grutman defines literary “multilingualism” as “the use of two or more languages in the same text” (Grutman, “Multilingualism”, 183). Following on from Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of polyphony, literary multilingualism can also be combined with social language differences and diversity of speech. This is not only a question of language mixing, but first and foremost of various discourses, idiolects, sociolects, as well as dialects and historical varieties of a language whose interplay Grutman called “heterolingualism” in his work on the novel in Québec in the 19th century (Grutman, *Des langues qui résonnent*). These heterolingual differences in the text can correspond to speaker differences by expressing the social and cultural location of the respective speakers (Dembeck, “Für eine Philologie der Mehrsprachigkeit”, 28).

The processing of linguistic differences in literature often also means the dismantling of a national language ideology and the highlighting of linguistic-cultural border crossings in the text. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s *Kafka. Pour une littérature mineure* refers to how Kafka, as a German-speaking Jew from Prague, incorporates the foreign-language elements - Czech, Yiddish - in his literary texts. Against the background of the First World War and nationalism in Europe, the combination of national language and collective identity is also radically questioned by the historical avant-garde. The international DADA movement takes nationalism ad absurdum by consciously multilingualizing its performances and at the same time deconstructing the alleged ‘purity’ of individual languages by replacing them with a childlike, pre-rational idiom. In postcolonial literature, the adopted colonial language can paradoxically also be used as an idiom of emancipation or subversion, as can be observed not only in Anglophone postcolonial literature, but also frequently in French-speaking Maghreb literature. In this light, the Algerian writer Kateb Yacine therefore describes French as a “booty of war”, a “butin de guerre” (Yacine, *Le Poète comme un boxeur*, 132), to say in French to the French reading public that it is explicitly not French. In an interview, the French-Algerian author Malika Mokeddem claims that the Arabic words in her French texts have a political meaning because she wants to “coloniser le français” in and with her linguistically hybrid literature (Mokeddem in Helm, Malika Mokeddem, 29). Hybridization of the former colonial language plays an important ethical role not only in postcolonial literature, but also in the discourse of postcolonial literary theory. Thus, Gayatri Spivak strives to enrich English with Bengali in her works. According to her, writing in an imposed (e.g. colonial) language comes with the ethical responsibility of drawing on one’s mother tongue in order to hybridise the ‘target’ language through the ethical concept of *matiririn* (maternal debt) (Spivak, “Translation as Culture”, 14-15).

The pronounced linguistic reflexivity in multilingual literature, which goes hand in hand with an emphasis on the fundamental polysemy of linguistic expressions, has an ethical dimension to the extent that it can demonstrate the multiplicity of thought and thus also the diversity of human coexistence. In language criticism (*Sprachkritik*), as found in authors such as Yoko Tawada or philosophers such as Jacques Derrida, the notion of language as ‘possession’ is constantly repeated. Derrida indeed calls into question the relationship between birth and blood on the one hand and language on the other in *Le monolingualisme de l’autre*. Taking this critique further, Yasemin Yildiz frames monolingualism as a dominant paradigm that needs to be overcome (in *Beyond the Mother Tongue*).

AIMS OF THE STUDY DAY

The 2024 CLIC Day will touch on questions of multilingualism from different perspectives, and on their methodological implications for literary studies, first and foremost with regard to literary multilingualism as a political and cultural practice. The aim of the study day is to further our understanding of authors’ experiences of multilingualism, their function, opportunities and problems as cultural mediators. It offers case studies from a broad spatial and temporal spectrum and thus enables comparative assessments across time, space, culture and genre. The case studies offer theoretical approaches to the concept of ‘multilingualism’ in (translated) literature, explore multilingualism as agency and medium of political commitment (issues of freedom, resistance and human rights) and its relevance in and for diasporic communities. They address the influence of multilingualism on canon formation, assessing, for instance, the role of postcolonial studies in relation to multilingualism and translation. Ultimately, they also explore the hegemonic field in which multilingual literary practices are situated, touching on questions of censorship and possibilities of writing back.

The language of the conference is English. A publication of the proceedings with selected contributions is planned in the Journal for Literary and Intermedial Crossings (JLIC).

KEYNOTE LECTURE BY JO ANGOURI AND ZEENA FAULK

DISCIPLINES IN DIALOGUE: TRANSLATION AT THE INTERSECTION OF LITERARY STUDIES AND APPLIED LINGUISTICS

ABSTRACT:

This keynote explores a theoretical and methodological dialogue among translation, applied linguistics, and literary studies. Drawing on past and ongoing research, we show how a multidisciplinary perspective can provide tools for unlocking different layers of meaning that enable the analyst to position text in context and also to apply it in real life settings.

We zoom in on one project to illustrate our position; using datasets from the context of postwar Iraq, we adopt Clive Scott's (2000) notion of reading and Boase-Beier's (2004, 2006, 2011) cognitive stylistic approach to translate 5 Iraqi-Arabic blogposts as short stories. We then use our translated short stories as prompts to interview 13 U.S. military veterans who served in Iraq after 2003. The Iraqi blogosphere became active suddenly in 2003 just before the invasion of Iraq as numerous Iraqis began blogging in English and Arabic to cater to local, regional, and international audiences. We will show how Iraqis and U.S military servicemembers reconstructed each other in these the blogposts and the interviews, and the inferences possible for the analyst taking a multidisciplinary approach.

Our research findings suggest that literary translation surpasses its traditional function as a tool of interlingual rendition to become an enabling framework that helps explore complex phenomena of interest to applied linguistics and literary studies. In contexts related to wars and conflict, translation can thus be utilised as a contextual approach to prompt conversations that may lead to reconciliation and closure.



Jo Angouri holds a Chair of Sociolinguistics at the University of Warwick. Since finishing her PhD, she has gone on to break new ground in terms of theory, methods, analytic approaches and produced a veritable storm of publications, reaching the status of full professor and senior academic leader in a remarkably and truly impressive short time. She published over 80 peer-reviewed papers, four special issues, two monographs, four edited volumes, two conference proceedings volumes, five book reviews and approximately 100 peer-reviewed conference papers in the field of multilingualism, language policy, migration and language, intercultural communication, innovative and multilingual pedagogies, internationalisation of the curriculum, language gender and sexuality and healthcare. In academic year 2023-2024 she held the Jeanne Lonnoy Chair for Multilingualism at Vrije Universiteit Brussel. Jo Angouri is also a visiting professor at Aalto University in Finland and at Monash University in Australia, an associate researcher at the Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand. Finally,

she is doing very impactful work as a member of the SCOPUS Content Selection and Advisory Board as well as the FWO Panel for Linguistics. On top of her world-leading experience in the field of multilingualism and sociolinguistics, she also built an extraordinary experience when it comes to leadership. Last year, she was promoted, with immediate effect, to the Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor for Education and Internationalisation at the University of Warwick.



Zeena Faulk is an Iraqi-American literary translator and a researcher of post-2003 Iraq and Iraqi literature. Faulk holds a PhD in Translation Studies from the University of Warwick, an MA in Arabic Translation from Kent State University, and an MA in Journalism from Point Park University. Faulk has translated several Iraqi and Libyan short stories and numerous poems for prestigious journals and print publishers. She has also been an active researcher of post-war Iraq, focusing on the intersection between translation, applied linguistics, and literary studies. Her areas of interest include translation and war/conflict, the visibility of the translator during wars and conflicts, and women translators' ideologies in translation practices, as well as translation and temporality/spatiality. Faulk has 16 years of experience in non-academic posts, including her current position as Center Director of the Ettihad Cultural Center at Oregon State University and managing editor positions with both Mayo Clinic and Cleveland Clinic. She had also worked as an on-site interpreter for criminal courts throughout the United States.

PANEL 1

TRANSLATING MULTILINGUALISM: PERSPECTIVES ON TRANSLATION AND SELF-TRANSLATION

AMANDA MURPHY (SORBONNE NOUVELLE UNIVERSITÉ)

READING-TRANSLATING BETWEEN LANGUAGES: EXPERIENCES WITH MULTILINGUAL LITERATURE

ABSTRACT:

Reading is the first step in translating, but what happens during the transition between reading and translation? There is a moment when the reader-translator sees or hears the text in (at least) two languages, perhaps calling on his or her own relationship to languages in order to first receive and then re-imagine the text in another language, culture and space. This moment is, we propose, similar to what happens when reading a bi-, multi- or heterolingual text. Seeing, hearing, thinking between languages leads to a kind of untethering of the reading experience from its habitual anchoring within the borders of a language (or linguistic space), one of the defining characteristics of a bi-, multi- or heterolingual text, we would argue. As Myriam Suchet has shown, it is indeed less about the number of languages at play, than about their effect on readers.

This paper will consider various theoretical propositions with respect to the reading experience of multilingual texts before turning to the empirical data collected from my 2016 reader reception study on the perception of multilingual texts. We will ask questions such as, who are multilingual works intended for? Where are we when we read them? And where do they take us?

It will be a matter of considering the poetics of multilingual writing, in the sense of a general theory of literary forms, as well as in the sense of poesis, or what multilingual writing does – to readers, as well as to our conception of reading and translation.

Amanda Murphy is Maîtresse de conférences (Associate Professor) of English and Translation Studies at the Sorbonne Nouvelle University in Paris. She holds a PhD in Comparative Literature from the same university. She is the author of *Écrire, lire, traduire entre les langues: défis et pratiques de la poétique multilingue/ Writing, Reading, Translating: the Challenges and Practices of Multilingual Poetics* (published by Classiques Garnier in 2023). She is also an independent translator and writer.

GUILLERMO SANZ GALLEGO (VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL)

MULTILINGUALISM AND THE TRANSLATOR'S VOICE OF THE PROTAGONIST IN CORAZÓN TAN BLANCO BY JAVIER MARIAS

ABSTRACT:

Multilingual literary works have traditionally posed a major challenge for translators. The dynamics of code-switching in the source text can vary, and, accordingly, the reproduction of multilingualism in translation can also adopt various forms – allegedly, there are four possible scenarios (Grutman 2018)¹. Indeed, such an analytical framework is workable for research on the translation of multilingual texts. Yet, the analysis may become more complex once we add an extra perspective to the experiment. In particular, we refer to the work *Corazón tan blanco* (1992) by Spanish author Javier Marías, in which the protagonist's voice is that of a professional translator whose discourse primarily consists of constant reflections on languages, translation, multilingualism, and intercultural mediation throughout the novel. We believe that the added metatranslational perspective of this work by Marías allows us to revisit the phenomenon of translation of multilingual texts, to explore the dynamics of code-switching in translation, together with possible analytical frameworks and methodologies for research on the Translator's Voice in translation. We aim at exploring these research questions by focusing on two translations of this work by Marías: the English translation, *A Heart so White* (1995) by Margaret Jull Costa, and the Dutch translation, *Een hart zo blank* (1993) by Aline Glastra van Loon. Drawing on Herman's model to analyse the Translator's Voice (1996), we intend to highlight how the different approaches adopted by the translators have had an influence in the protagonist's voice and discourse. In order to provide an answer to these questions, we will focus on passages in which the Translator's Voice becomes visible in the form of what Hermans calls 'performative self-contradiction' (1996), i.e., cases of orientation towards an Implied Reader, cases of self-reflexiveness and self-referentiality, and cases of 'contextual overdetermination'.

Guillermo Sanz Gallego is Professor of Translation Studies at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), where he teaches Translation Studies and research methodology, and literary translation, among others. He is member of the CLIC research group (VUB), and of the International James Joyce Foundation. He has co-edited journal issues and published numerous articles and book chapters on Joyce's studies, on the translation and retranslation of literature and historic texts, as well as on the influence of ideology and censorship in translation. Together with Kris Peeters (University of Antwerp), he coordinates the James Joyce in Translation Centre (www.uantwerpen.be/JJTC).

LOOKING FOR THE SELF IN “SELF-TRANSLATION”: NANCY HUSTON AND MULTILINGUAL AESTHETICS

ABSTRACT:

Translingual author Nancy Huston has written a number of novels, plays, and critical essays in both English and French, yet is most renowned in the Francosphere for her literary prose. We know from essays and interviews though that the author systematically self-translates her literary prose (and some essays) between English and French. In fact, Huston produces (and often publishes simultaneously) both French and English publications of her novels in a dynamic back-and-forth writing process (Falceri 2016; Mole 2024), meaning that traditionalist translation concepts of original and translation are problematised, rather pointing towards an intricate multilingual aesthetic within and between versions. Specifically, Huston translates her own work, often returning (and translating) texts several times before publication, which reveals a somewhat prismatic (see Reynolds 2019) translational process. Not only do the multilingual texts belong to a large collection of works that have dismantled the problematic (and misleading) monolingual paradigm of contemporary literature (see Walkowitz 2015), but when it comes to “self-translation” as a poetics, there are questions to be asked surrounding the “self” in self-translation. Indeed, the initial writing process involves translating oneself to oneself and then oneself to others in the interlingual translational process. This paper then hopes to explore the role and place of the “self” in the process of self-translation. Huston argues that she is “the same in both languages” (Huston 2007b, 159–60) and her voice(s) permeates her novels, provoking a multilingual articulation of self through multilingual fictional characters.

Christopher Mole is a PhD candidate and teaching and research fellow at the Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris. His research focuses on Nancy Huston’s self-translations and specifically on musico-literary intermediality in her novels as a way to explore her transnational and translational aesthetics. He co-founded the “Literary Dislocation(s)” international research network which organises monthly seminars on literary representations of the theme of “dislocations”. He is also a member of the Franco-Belgian research project “Mapping performative writing and the page as an expanded field (1966- the present): experimental, exophonic and ecstatic literatures in transcultural Anglophone spheres”. He is the author of several studies that explore code-switching as a narrative tool in Huston’s translingual novels (Mole 2024), the fractality of translingual writing and musico-literary intermediality (Mole 2024, forthcoming), as well a chapter in the forthcoming volume of Translation Studies and Relational Thinking (published with Palgrave, 2024).



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PANEL 2

TRANSLINGUAL WRITING IN COLONIAL AND POST-COLONIAL LITERATURE

VERA ELISABETH GERLING

(HEINRICH-HEINE-UNIVERSITÄT DÜSSELDORF)

ROSARIO FERRE'S TRANSLINGUAL WRITING BETWEEN SPANISH AND ENGLISH: POSTCOLONIAL DE-CONFIGURATIONS

ABSTRACT:

Rosario Ferré (1938-2016) is a bilingual author, composing novels and poetry in Spanish and English. Her work is often regarded as a result of self-translation. However, particularly her poetry diverges from classical notions of authors translating themselves. Instead, within her bilingual poetry collections, we encounter a multifaceted exploration of the diversity of languages and cultures. The texts in both languages intertwine, challenging or enriching each other in a continuous dialogue. Her texts can thus be read as reflections of a specific situation marked by colonialism in Puerto Rico. Only traces of the indigenous Taíno people persist, as they were largely eradicated by violence and disease throughout colonial history. Puerto Rico, alongside Cuba, remained one of Spain's final colonies until 1898; hence, Spanish is predominantly spoken by the population. Nevertheless, English and Spanish are both official languages in this country, which as an "unincorporated territory" of the United States, assumes a hybrid identity, despite its inhabitants being U.S. citizens who gained suffrage rights in 1952.

In my presentation, I will focus on the poems featured in the bilingual anthology *Language*

Duel / Duelo del lenguaje (2002). They will be analyzed as examples of how Ferré intermingles linguistic, cultural and historical phenomena. For Ferré, each language embodies a distinct manner of thought and linguistic expression:

To be a bilingual writer doesn't mean just to be bilingual. A bilingual writer is really two different writers, has two very different voices, writes in two different styles, and, most important, looks at the world through two different sets of glasses. (Ferré 2003: 138)

By perpetually traversing languages and cultures, Ferré's oeuvre can be characterized as embracing an aesthetics of transcultural language crossings, questioning the monolingual paradigm. She never speaks solely from one vantage point, one language, or culture; thus, her poems establish a third space where overlapping languages are moulded and reshaped. Language never appears as given, but is consciously set in motion, constantly moved by translation processes. In doing so, Ferré cultivates an awareness of established definitions of nation, identity, and power relations. Her translingual writing can also be comprehended as a political statement, an aesthetically grounded exploration of the fraught relationship between Puerto Rico and the USA, and also between the global North and South.

Works cited:

Ferré, Rosario. 2002. *Language Duel / Duelo del Lenguaje*, New York: Vintage Books

Ferré, R. (2003). "Bilingual in Puerto Rico". In S.G. Kellman (Ed.), *Switching Languages: Translingual Writers Reflect on Their Craft* (S. 137–138). Lincoln, NE, & London: University of Nebraska Press.

Prof. Dr. Vera Elisabeth Gerling teaches literature and cultural studies with a focus on Spain, Latin America, France and African contexts as well as literary translation at the Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf. She focuses on cultural translation studies as well as on transcultural and transmedial memory.

MATTHIEU SERGIER (UCLouvain)

EXPLORING THE ROLE OF LITERATURE: HETEROLINGUALISM AS A MORAL GUIDE IN FLEMISH COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL CONGOLESE NARRATIVES

ABSTRACT:

Belgium's relationship with its former colony has been fraught with ambiguity from its inception. While Belgium was preparing, alongside Congo in Brussels, for Congolese independence on June 30, 1960, it is widely acknowledged that Belgium bore partial responsibility for the assassination of the first Congolese prime minister, Patrice Lumumba, in January 1961. Moreover, a mere two months after independence was declared, Belgium supported the secessionist movement in the Congolese province of Katanga. Despite King Philippe's expression of "deepest regret" for the colonial regime on June 8, 2022, his apologies lost their credibility six months later in the wake of the Belgian parliamentary commission's failure to adequately address the colonial past. To sidestep the need for official apologies, the Liberal parties subsequently abstained from participating in the final vote.

In this contribution, I delve into the extent to which a comparative textual analysis of 'heterolingualism' in Flemish colonial and postcolonial novels can enrich our understanding of potential pathways towards reconciliation with the colonial past. The novels under examination include "Black Venus" (1968) by Jef Geeraerts, "Het uur van de rebellen" (2006) by Lieve Joris, and "De mensengenezers" (2017) by Koen Peeters. As articulated by Myriam Suchet, heterolingualism within a literary context "stages" a language as either more or less foreign, depending on a continuum of otherness constructed within a given discourse or text (Suchet 2014). A literary text can thus serve to both reinforce and weaken the perception of otherness through various mechanisms. These mechanisms may include the use of a different alphabet or the inclusion of a glossary, which are formal examples, as well as thematic explorations of otherness within the content itself. Through this exploration, I aim to demonstrate how heterolingual fiction can provide valuable insights into our interactions with the 'other' in the context of post- and decolonial eras.

Matthieu Sergier teaches Dutch literature at UCLouvain Saint-Louis - Bruxelles. He devoted a PhD thesis to the perception of otherness and the ethics of reading in the novels of Frans Kellendonk (1951-1990). An edited version was published by Academia Press in 2012. Following his research on literary experiments in writers' diaries, he published in 2017 *Het 'nouveau journal'. Dagboekexperimenten voor een nieuwe tijd*, also at Academia Press. His current research is on multilingual (so-called 'heterolingual') texts in Dutch literature from an international perspective. He has published on heterolingualism in the works of W.F. Hermans (1921-1995-), Henk van Woerden (1947-2005) and Koen Peeters (1959).

PANEL 3

LINGUISTIC FRAGMENTATION: MULTILINGUALISM AS A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

MARIA PACE AQUILINA (VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL)

MULTILINGUALISM DURING THE RESTORATION ERA IN ENGLAND: SHAPING THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND CULTURAL SCENE

ABSTRACT:

Following the chaotic years of the Interregnum, England underwent a self-redefining period known as the Restoration (1660–1714), which saw the convergence of politics, culture, and language. Multilingualism, particularly the infusion of French into English plays, served as a cultural agency that subtly promoted political and cultural debates. This linguistic synthesis reflected the intricate social structure of the era as England's artistic and cultural scene, particularly the theatre, was thriving. French was used on the Restoration stage as a reflection of the political climate rather than just a stylistic choice as the English nobility had a resurgence of interest in French culture, language, and manners after Charles II restored the monarchy in 1660. French developed a reputation for sophistication, refinement, and cosmopolitanism that influenced society and established a hierarchy of culture. To convey the essence of the upper class, playwrights carefully included French aspects into their works, keeping in mind the preferences of their aristocratic audience. One well-known example is the play by the English dramatist George Etherege, *The Man of Mode* (1676), which depicts the social milieu of the English nobility by introducing French elements.

To set themselves apart from the public, the elite of the Restoration era used multilingualism as a cultural identifier, which is what I hope to illustrate in this paper. It functioned as a linguistic barrier, emphasising the growing distance between the nobility and the general populace. For instance, the inclusion of French discourse on stage served as a political message that upheld the existing power and privilege structure in addition to reflecting linguistic variety. In addition, talks concerning the impact of foreign cultures, the changing character of English identity, and the effects of these cultural exchanges on society values were spurred using French in English plays. Through bilingual banter between characters that reflected the difficulties of a culture in change, the stage became a platform for probing tensions between nationalism, cosmopolitanism, and tradition.

Maria Pace Aquilina is a Post Doctoral Researcher in the Project MERLIT at Vrije Universiteit Brussels (VUB). She is currently researching how dramas of Social Rise, Achievement and Merit are negotiated and shaped during the Restoration era in England. Maria holds a PhD in Tudor and Renaissance Literature from the University of Sheffield. Her passion for English literature is what inspired her to pursue further her research in Restoration drama. Her area of expertise includes, but is not limited, to women's writing of the sixteenth and early seventeenth century.

IGA NOWICZ (VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT BRUSSEL)

MULTILINGUALISM AND MIGRATORY MASCULINITIES: EIN SCHÖNES AUSLÄNDERKIND BY TOXISCHE POMMES (2024)

ABSTRACT:

Research on multilingualism (Yildiz 2012) and translanguaging as a literary practice (Lee 2015) has demonstrated that linguistically heterogenous texts can be an instrument of political critique, since they call into question power asymmetries between languages and oppose the exclusion of speakers of non-dominant languages. Literary texts that utilize code-switching, literal translation and cross-linguistic interference often subvert grammatical, lexical or orthographic conventions, thus disrupting the 'monolingual vision' which is still a dominant force in many European societies (Bielsa 2020), and which often determines individuals' right to political participation.

In my presentation, I want to examine the way in which multilingual practices are used to explore the tension between the dominant Austrian society and its migrant population in the novel *Ein schönes Ausländerkind* by Toxische Pommes (2024), with a special focus on gender and what social geographers have termed 'migratory masculinities' (Donaldson et al. 2009). The novel tells the story of a Yugoslav family who fled their country and settled as war refugees in Vienna. As the author says herself, her intention was to portray a migrant's failed integration through a central father figure and his relationship with his daughter. The characters speak their first language, BCMS (Bosnian/Croatian/Montenegrin/Serbian), which is physically present on the page and accompanied by literal translations.

I will argue that the novel is radical in many different ways: through the unapologetic juxtaposition of German and BCMS and its free use of literal translation, it questions the alleged separateness of these languages and makes German susceptible to crosslinguistic interference. At the same time, in giving voice to a 'failed migrant' living in separation from the Austrian mainstream, the novel opposes the neoliberal understanding of migration, labour and productivity, while also commenting on the fraught relation between unpaid care work and masculinity.

Iga Nowicz got her PhD in German Studies from King's College London and the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. Her interdisciplinary project was awarded the Women in German Studies Book Prize 2018 and will soon appear as *Interrupted Stories. Multilingualism in Post-Yugoslav Literature in Germany and Austria* with Peter Lang Oxford. The book is an examination of three post-Yugoslav authors writing in German: the winner of the German Book Prize Saša Stanišić, the German author Marica Bodrožić and the lesser-known Austrian author Alma Hadžibeganović. Iga's interests include comparative literature, gender studies, decolonial theory, literary translation, and creative writing.

UNVEILING LANGUAGE VIOLENCE: THE SHIBBOLETH PERSPECTIVE IN LITERARY ANALYSIS

ABSTRACT:

In my presentation, I will share my ongoing research aimed at the development of a theoretical and methodological perspective for examining the portrayal and significance of language diversity in literature. This perspective is centred on the concept of Shibboleth and sheds light on the ways literary works emerging from multilingual environments, language intersections, or conflicts reflect the potentially violent nature of language as a tool for exclusion from social communities.

The term "Shibboleth" originates from the biblical episode found in the Book of Judges, where the only feature distinguishing two peoples at war is the pronunciation of the sound /ʃ/, and has resurfaced in the literary and philosophical tradition. It is a metaphor in Paul Celan's poetry, and, in the philosophical thought of Jacques Derrida, it signifies the physical origins of processes of inclusion and exclusion that give rise to linguistic normativity.

In the first part of the presentation the figure of the Shibboleth will be illustrated, starting from the Biblical episode to its poetization in Celan's poems *Schibboleth* (1955) and *In Eins* (1963) and theorization in Derrida's reflections in his essay *Shibboleth*. Pour Paul Celan (1986).

The second part of the presentation contextualizes the Shibboleth-perspective within the scholarship on literary multilingualism, particularly in the context of Critical Multilingual Studies (Gramling/Werner 2011). Building upon Doris Bachmann-Medick's call within translation studies, this perspective seeks to address the conflictual nature of cultural diversity "under the unequal power conditions of world society" (2012: 31).

Finally, examples from the application of the Shibboleth concept as an analytical tool will be presented, including excerpts from a broader analysis conducted on Ilse Aichinger's short story *Meine Sprache und Ich* (1968) and its original context, that is the challenges faced by writers of Jewish descent in using the German language after the Second World War.

Beatrice Occhini is a post-doctoral researcher at the University of Salerno. Her Ph.D. thesis on the Adelbert-von-Chamisso-Preis, defended in 2020 at the University of Naples "L'Orientale", is forthcoming in German with Narr Francke Attempto. She is currently a guest researcher at the University of Antwerp. Occhini has received several research grants, including a DAAD-scholarship at the FU Berlin. She organizes projects on the translation and dissemination of contemporary German and Italian poetry, and she is currently translating Jürgen Trabant's study *Europäisches Sprachdenken*. Her research focuses on literary multilingualism and language ideologies, translational theory and practice, and transcultural literature.

