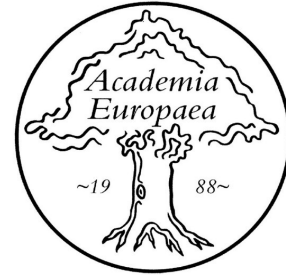




Departamento de
Filología Inglesa
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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

KEYNOTE LECTURES

• CHEYETTE, BRYAN

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“The Contemporary Novel, Reality Hunger and the Memory Boom”

This lecture will explore the tensions between historical understanding and memory studies with particular reference to the Holocaust and decolonization (under the sign of the post-1990s “memory boom”). After the exhaustion of “postmodernism” and “postcolonialism” as master signifiers of the contemporary, recent influential narratives —such as David Shields’ “reality hunger” or Michael Rothberg’s “multidirectional memory”— may, I will argue, unwittingly reinforce long-standing binaries between memory and history, fluidity and rigidity, subjectivity and objectivity, the real and the imagined. The lecture will be illustrated from the fiction, memoirs and histories of a wide range of imaginative writers, memoirists, and intellectuals in a bid to both bring together new comparative histories and show how the “memory boom” has made such comparative work particularly challenging.

• EAGLESTONE, ROBERT

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“Telos and Trauma”

The cluster of ideas around trauma, violence and testimony mark one connection between literature, the past and ethics. Recent research in the field has explored both the frequent elision of the world outside Europe in these debates and the ways in which “memories are mobile ... [and] histories are implicated in each other” (Rothberg). The aim of this, in turn, has been the hope that these aspects will “open up to the possibility of a more just global future and, in so doing, remain faithful to the ethical foundation of the field” (Craps). But what *was* “the ethical foundation of the field”? And how might these wider senses and representations of trauma in literature change our understanding not only of trauma but of ethics?

While the concept of *telos* (and the linked ideas of closure and “the sense of an ending”) are central to ethical thought in the Aristotelian (or Virtue) ethics tradition, it also plays a role in other understandings of the ethical (including “postmodern” ethics). Trauma, through its disruption of the narratives that shape teleology, makes these understandings of the ethical more problematic: indeed, by re-envisioning work in trauma studies, this lecture will investigate the possibility that there is no “ethical foundation to the field” outside something like “trauma”. That is: rather than suggesting that our ethical commitments are, as it were, “honed” by an understanding of trauma, this paper suggests that our profoundest ethical commitments are themselves shaped by (something like) trauma.

• **GANTEAU, JEAN-MICHEL**

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"The Powers of Vulnerability: Memory and the Restorative Uses of Elegy"

Elegy is complicit in revisiting troubling memories and apt at modifying the past, extolling the virtues of the departed while refashioning the past according to the principles of afterwardsness. In this respect, it is apt at producing fictions of memory, essentially concerned with individuals though not incompatible with the manufacturing of collective truths. According to Ramazani, contemporary elegy is characterised by its inability to favour mourning and its fidelity to what he calls “melancholic mourning”. And it has to be admitted that some representatives of the mode, in its narrative form, like John Banville’s *The Sea* (2005), John McGregor’s *Even the Dogs* (2010) or Nicholas Royle’s *Quilt* (2011) seem to conform to this pattern. Still, contemporary elegy keeps fulfilling its traditional restorative functions and helps question what has been defined as a culture of victimhood. I intend to concentrate on the ways in which the secular restorative function of elegy is still at the heart of contemporary narrative elegies that process painful memory so as to convert separation into a striving for union. I will concentrate on the ways in which contemporary elegy, while retaining some fidelity to the past and the lost, moves beyond the trauma paradigm by replacing an ethics of melancholia with an ethics of mourning. By concentrating on the narrative mode of elegy, I address the way in which vulnerability, yet another category at the heart of contemporary culture, may be converted into a strength, along the traditional lines of empowerment.

PANEL SESSIONS

• **AKTARI-SEVGI, SELEN**

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“And beyond these, there is unrest’: The Role of Shame in Reconstructing Memory in Julian Barnes’s *The Sense of an Ending*”

In *The Sense of an Ending* (2011), Julian Barnes presents a sixty-year-old divorced man, Tony Webster, who looks back on his schooldays and takes the reader on a suspenseful journey through an unreliable narrative to the secrets of his past. Declaring that the best he can manage in his narrative is to be true to the impressions the facts have left because he cannot be sure of the actual events anymore, Tony foreshadows a false account of memory at the

very beginning of the novel. While showing how our personal histories are based on our continuous constructions of memories for and of others, *The Sense of an Ending* also underlines the destructive effect of encrypted traumatic experiences on memory. This paper will analyze the novel in the light of Silvan S. Tomkins's the "Theory of Affects" presented in his seminal work *Affect Imagery Consciousness* (1962) and the studies contributed to the application of it in literature by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Sara Ahmed and Jennifer Biddle with an emphasis on shame. Since shame is regarded to have an ontological characteristic that signals who the self is rather than what the self has done, it provides fruitful interpretations for an attempt to make sense of Tony's "wrong kind of record-keeping" (59) and the trauma that lies beneath his "instinct for survival, for self-preservation" (131). In addition, focusing on the definition of shame as reflecting a failure of the ego to reach its ego-ideal, this paper further explores Tony's sharpened low self-esteem due to his failure in reaching his ego-ideals and his avoidance of feeling pain resulting from shame, which has urged him to reconstruct his past, therefore his self, anew.

• **ALIAGA LAVRIJSEN, JESSICA**

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"Pan Am Flight 103: Trauma and the Crave for Justice in James Robertson's *The Professor of Truth*"

The novel *The Professor of Truth* (2013), by Scottish writer James Robertson shows the reader that grief by someone's final parting might also take away something in ourselves. This is clearly the case of The Professor's protagonist, Alan Tealing, a lecturer in English literature who lost his wife Emily, 28, and his daughter Alice, 6, in the bombing of Pan Am 103 Flight —the Lockerbie air disaster, which caused the death of more than 270 people, in 1988— twenty-one years before the time of narration. The novel focuses on Tealing's painful struggle with the effects of the terrible event and on his quest for truth and justice. His emotional fallout leads to some kind of fragmentation of his personality and he decides to adopt the name of the "Professor of Truth" from then on and to devote all his energies to the analysis of "The [Lockerbie] Case", as he strongly believes that the man convicted for the atrocity, Khalil Khazar, was not a perpetrator of the terrorist attack, but rather a victim of justice. It is the aim of this paper to analyse how memory, the crave for truth and justice, and mourning are related in this narration of Lockerbie's traumatic event, the first British novel so far dealing with it. Tealing's quest offers a unique perspective on one of the most traumatic terrorist attacks in the UK, but also a rich reflection on the nature of terrorism and justice, as well as on truth and healing.

• **ALLWORK, LARISSA**

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"'Memory Frictions': Negotiating Cosmopolitanism and Postcolonialism in Three Post-Cold War Essays by Tomas Venclova"

Lithuanian poet and essayist Tomas Venclova was a child during the Nazi occupation of Lithuania, an inhabitant of Vilnius during high Stalinism and a Soviet dissident intellectual in the 1970s. Since his emigration to the West (1979), Venclova has become a prominent diasporic thinker on the 'memory frictions' of Cold War and post-Soviet Europe and the Baltic States. Starting with three prose essays read in English that Venclova composed in the 1990s, this paper will identify three 'memory frictions' which feature in Venclova's essays written during the Soviet Empire's collapse: first, 'Nation then/Nation Now' ('On the Choice between Democracy and Nationalism', 1990); second, 'Time then/Time Now' ('Poems Melted into Ice', 1991) and third, 'Language then/ Language Now' ('Odo et Amo', 1991). In these essays which

reflect on events which can be interpreted through the paradigms of individual and collective trauma, Venclova can be seen as simultaneously 'cosmopolitan' (supportive of Western human rights and peaceful understanding) and postcolonial (critical of the Soviet Empire, attendant to struggles for Lithuanian sovereignty and the protection of national culture and language). While a purist 'decolonizing' trauma theory might question the capacity for Venclova's orientation to the politics of Western human rights to be fully 'postcolonial', I would argue that it is because of the friction generated by his cosmopolitan/postcolonial position that he can be considered essential in challenging and complicating what Stef Craps would call a 'decolonized trauma theory'.

• **AMFREVILLE, MARC**

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“A Korean ‘Apocryphal’ Island: *Once the Shore*, by Paul Yoon”

New-York City-born, South-Korean American writer Paul Yoon delivered in 2009 a collection of linked short stories, *Once the Shore*, related by their common location on a South Korean island. Accounts of individual lives, confronted with history in the shape of American bombings during the 2nd World War, nuclear tests after 1945, more recently the disruptive presence of American soldiers in the fifties or, later even, that of tourists, bring about a reflection on the nature of trauma, in its paradoxically simultaneous poetics of breaking through and excess on the one hand, loss and silence, on the other. Yoon's fiction imaginarily going back to a country and various moments of history that he never actually knew summons up spectral presences that waver between the representation of individual and national trauma. With remarkable sparseness and a poetic quality that both screens and reveals the ever-present outsider's violence, these short stories bridge the gap between the intimate and the universal. This paper thus proposes to question the double analogical movement that leads from personal to collective trauma and from historical back to the most intimate wounding. Memory, fragmented as a result of repeated inflicted shocks, thus *belatedly* emerges as an archipelago of texts that finally reconstitute a unique human island. Stemming from Freud's *Moses and Monotheism*, this study will also draw on Cathy Caruth's 2014 *Literature in the Ashes of History*.

• **ANDERMAHR, SONYA**

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“Revising Cultural Memory: Alternative Narratives of 1940s Britain in Andrea Levy's *Small Island*”

Recently, fiction writers have begun to address and revision under-represented aspects of wartime and post-war experience to focus on the lives of the unacknowledged 'many', such as women, the working classes, and Black migrants. This paper focuses on one of these 'alternative narratives', Andrea Levy's prize-winning novel *Small Island* (2004), which provides four interconnected accounts of the Second World War and its aftermath from the perspective of its protagonists, Hortense, a Black Jamaican woman, Gilbert, a Black Jamaican Man, Queenie, a white British working class woman, and Bernard, a white British man. Utilising the resources of trauma theory and narratology, I examine Levy's use of a variety of literary techniques including analepsis, prolepsis, multiple narration, and temporal dislocation in order to enact a decentring of orthodox history and narrative in the face of traumatic events. In this way, the text registers the impact of war and its aftermath on characters' psyches and, paradoxically perhaps, enables the reader to come to an empathic understanding, through such narrative manoeuvres, of how public events and personal stories are intertwined. Moreover, in foregrounding the processes of storytelling, the novel testifies to the importance

of historical reconstruction and cultural memory. It arguably functions as a self-reflexive act of remembering and forgetting, exploring the gaps, silences, and contradictions, the 'memory frictions', in accounts of British wartime experience. As a result, *Small Island* evinces a desire both to record untold or overlooked aspects of collective British history, and to intervene in History by giving symbolic and narrative shape to previously marginalised Black and working class experiences.

• **ANTOR, HEINZ**

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“Memory Frictions, Trauma and the Re-Construction of Female Immigrant Identity in Eva Sallis’s *Hiam*”

In her novel *Hiam*, published in 1998, the Australian novelist Eva Sallis describes the contexts women immigrants to Australia live in and the potential problems arising from the clash of different cultural traditions such women may be confronted with. The novel tells the story of the eponymous heroine Hiam Sharif, an Arabic immigrant whose husband has committed suicide after being told that his daughter intends to marry a white Australian. She then leaves her family in order to drive North straight through the centre of Australia. The narrative gradually turns into a more general investigation into the consequences of migration, into trauma and identity (re-)construction in a multicultural society. At the same time, Sallis in her novel confronts us with a diagnosis of the harrowing consequences of memory frictions by describing the memories of suffering and loss endured by her female protagonist, but she also probes the possibilities of overcoming trauma, of developing a new resilience and of allowing new affects to grow in order to overcome the ruptures of migration, intercultural conflict and deprivation in an attempt to vanquish grief and find a new orientation in a totally changed environment. The novel also explores human cognitive strategies such as pattern-building and narrativization as tools for the overcoming of disparate, undomesticated and painfully frictional memories and experiences. The novel can thus also be read as a narrative about a process of the transformation of painful memories, of trauma, chaos and disorientation into a new sense of identity, purposefulness and directionality in the intercultural contexts of a postcolonial immigrant nation such as Australia.

• **ARIZTI, BÁRBARA**

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“The Holocaust in the Eye of the Beholder: Memory in Carmel Bird’s *The Bluebird Café* (1990)”

I here intend to analyse Carmel Bird’s novel *The Bluebird Café* following Rothberg’s theory of the multidimensional quality of memory in order to prove that the remembrance of one history of trauma, far from erasing other traumatic histories from view, contributes to their articulation and visibility. This is particularly the case with the extermination of the Tasmanian Aborigines, a less known instance of genocide and the backdrop against which Bird’s novel unfolds. In *Homo Sacer* (1995), Agamben put forward the disturbing view that the concentration camp —the icon par excellence of the Nazi genocide— is not “an anomaly belonging to the past” but “the hidden matrix and *nomos*” of the political space we still inhabit, “whose metamorphoses and disguises we will have to learn to recognize”. The central symbol of *The Bluebird Café* invites reading through Agamben’s lens. The Historic Museum Village of Copperfield in Tasmania is an almost exact replica of the original town, built under a huge glass dome and known as the “Disneyland of the Antarctic”. Like Auschwitz and other death camps today, it attracts hordes of tourists, intrigued by its copper mine, the old cottages, the scenic railway, the casino, the convict ship, the Bluebird Café and The Temple of

Eye of God, which exhibits, among other curiosities, the skull of the last surviving member of the race of Tasmanian Aborigines.

• **BAACKMAN, SUSANNE**

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“How Many Degrees of Separation? Reconfiguring the (Child) Witness in Recent Memory Work in Literature and Film”

This paper examines how the figure of the child witness inflects and modulates an engagement with the perpetrator perspective in recent fiction and film about the legacy of National Socialism. At the center of my reading will be Rachel Seiffert's *The Dark Room* (2001) and *Lore*, the cinematic adaptation by filmmaker Cate Shortland (2013). This inquiry about representations of child witnesses in recent memory work echoes urgent questions posed by Marianne Hirsch about our relationship to victims of genocide. Her term 'postmemory' registers the simultaneity of proximity and distance to catastrophic events experienced by subsequent generations and is concerned with dialectical connectivities between the legacy of survivor and perpetrator memories. This paper explores how differences between 'familial' and 'affiliative' postmemory are transposed in Seiffert's and Shortland's work. The 'child witness' is an interesting figure in that it complicates the relationship between reader/viewer and character, infusing the mnemonic regime with both affective proximity and rational distance. As an aesthetic reconstruction, the "child" is a charged site of projection, mobilizing an affective regime based on notions of 'innocence' and 'vulnerability'. In fact, representations of child witnesses are problematic since they invite an identificatory reception that tends to universalize the victim perspective. Yet what if the child witness opens up an unpalatable perpetrator perspective as in *Lore*? How do Seiffert and Shortland engage with an affectively charged perspective that registers at once generational distance and inadvertent emotional proximity to the events portrayed?

• **BAELO ALLUÉ, SONIA**

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“Traumatic Memory and Time Travel Science Fiction: John F. Kennedy's Assassination in Stephen King's Novel 11.22.63”

This presentation deals with Stephen King's *11.22.63* (2011), a science fiction novel about Jake, an English teacher that time travels to the late 1950s and early 1960s with the objective of preventing John F. Kennedy's assassination. In terms of genre King's book clearly falls within time travel science fiction, a genre that provides interesting narrative possibilities to represent traumatic memory. Traumatic experiences resist traditional narrative structure and are difficult to integrate in normal consciousness. Thus, when they return they are often not recognised as memories and are experienced in the present, breaking the connections between past, present and future. Time travelling provides this blurring of past and present and offers the possibility of re-experiencing unassimilated traumatic events. Each journey into the past makes Jake go back to the same day in 1958 and, in the same way as traumatic memory is experienced through repetitions, flashbacks and nightmares, Jake has to "act out" the national trauma by reliving the same events leading to 1963 and Kennedy's death. Rather than accept the past and "work through" it, Jake wants to rewrite it but the past is obdurate and the historical adjustments that result from meddling with it do not always lead to the reconstruction of national identity. This presentation will explore these and other possibilities that time-travelling as a genre provides in the representation of traumatic memory in fiction.

• **BATTISTI, CHIARA**

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“Negotiating Diaspora: Media Constructions of Cultural Difference and Mobility”

Today the new currencies of the term diaspora in global discourses fuse and confuse the once clearly demarcated social parameters of national identity, geography and belonging. "Diaspora community" seems increasingly to be applied to expatriate minority communities, being used as metaphoric designations for several categories of people. Diaspora, diasporic and diasporization are contested terms, the meanings and multiple referents of which are currently being debated. Recent theorizations of diaspora have been marked by the ambiguities of the term diaspora itself – a term that denotes (and on an historical level, negatively) communities of people dislocated from their homelands through migration, immigration, or exile as a consequence of colonial expansion, but that etymologically suggests the (more positive) fertility of dispersion, dissemination and the scattering of seeds. Among the many attempts to readjust the meaning of this concept, I believe that it is important to analyse the role and the social implications of the so called diasporic "mediascapes". Therefore my aim is to face issues concerning the politics of difference by highlighting how the media influence and shape the memories, knowledge, and behaviour of Western citizenry with respect to contemporary migration, and to analyse the interesting link between the media and the creation and maintenance of transnational communities.

• **BERMÚDEZ DE CASTRO, JUANJO**

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“Organic vs. Digital Memory: Memory Representation in British TV Series *Black Mirror* (2011)”

Due to the insights of the post-structuralist revolution and the debate surrounding False Memory Syndrome, it has become self-evident that both personal and collective memories are narrative constructions in which the same rules applied to any other narrative can be applied: there's a narrator – which can be reliable or not – that organizes a set of characters and actions into a – usually chronological – plot by using a particular medium, our minds. However, what happens when new media technologies interact with our organic memory to either prove, disprove or even replace our narrative recollections?

Emmy-award-winning British TV series *Black Mirror* (2011) explores the dark side of technology in relation to the way we live now. Two particular episodes, “The Entire History of You” and “Be Right Back” are devoted to the analysis of memory. The former portrays a future society very similar to ours except for the fact that every single action that a person makes is recorded and may be played back thanks to a chip implanted on a hard drive in the brain. The latter also depicts a near future in which an application allows people to communicate with their deceased loved ones by using information from all their online communications and social media contributions. This article analyses the digital vs. organic memory debate and how it is so interestingly explored through the fictional British TV series *Black Mirror*.

• BYRD, BRANDI

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“A Cluster of Conflicting Images’: Investigating Counter-Narratives in Contemporary Irish Detective Fiction”

Richard Kearney, drawing from Lyotard’s collapse of the Grand Narrative, argues that “[t]he Official Story presents itself as *the* Official History. A narrative imagination introduces justice, by contrast, in that it deconstructs History into the plurality of stories that make it up” (*Poetics of Imagining* 205). Kearney highlights the ethical imperative to recognize a multiplicity of memory narratives, but there are also arenas —as in tribunals or in courts of law— where multiple and conflicting narratives are an impediment to truth and justice.

Read through the lens of memory studies, the detective novel offers a creative perspective on the complex interconnections of memory, narrative, and the search for truth. The literary police detective, operating both as a representative of the State and as a protagonist with whom the reader is encouraged to identify, provides an opportunity to rethink the relationship between the Grand Narrative and counter-narratives. Through analysis of Tana French’s *In the Woods* and Brian McGilloway’s *The Nameless Dead*, as detective novels which signify their sensitivity to the difficulties of remembering through engagement with the complex legacies of various traumas in recent Irish history, this paper will demonstrate that contemporary Irish detective fiction not only illustrates the ethical necessity of balancing biased individual memory narratives through empathetic collaboration, but also addresses the problematics of “remembering” a past that is not one’s own.

• CANTILLO LUCUARA, MAYRON ESTEFAN

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“Healing the Past in the Face of AIDS: Memories of Familial Suffering in Colm Tóibín’s *The Blackwater Lightship*”

Colm Tóibín is a sonorous voice in contemporary Irish narrative. His work is abundant: it ranges from novels, short story collections, essays, anthologies, and academic editions. Most of his fiction converges upon such common intersections as the refiguration of Irish history, the exploration of homosexuality, the raw depiction of loss and trauma, the portrayal of hard lives in exile, and the preoccupation with familial dysfunctions and, more specifically, with maternal issues. Many of these themes intermesh in his fourth novel, *The Blackwater Lightship* (1999). It tells the story of a broken family that reunites in the face of the pending death of a relative. Declan suffers from AIDS. His life has little time left. His wish is to spend his remaining days at his grandmother's house. His family joins him, but the past weighs heavily on their shoulders. It is a past of loss, abandonment and lack of love that imperatively requires forgiveness to be overcome. One crucial question arises in this regard: How can one negotiate forgiveness with those who have done us harm? To answer this, the present paper examines the intricate representations of suffering, loss and trauma that Tóibín constructs in his descriptions of Declan’s body, history and environment. The ultimate aim is threefold: to account for such representations in line with recent epistemologies of trauma and affect, to interpret the languages of physical pain and emotional failure that the Irish novelist objectifies through his rich characterisations, and finally, to assert that the bodily presence of suffering and death demands emotional negotiations, dilates the muscle of forgiveness, dispels the thick shadows of the past, and defeats traumatic feelings and memories by imposing union and reconciliation. Declan passes away, but his family recovers. His death seems to cure them.

• **CARPI, DANIELA**

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“Cultural Mobility and Diaspora: The Case of Philip Roth’s *Operation Shylock*”

My view of diaspora involves its cultural consequences and focuses on the problem of cultural mobility. Studies on diaspora and cultural mobility must be able to account for the tension between individual agency and social limitation in a new way. One can speak of creative tensions in religious, sexual, and specific cultural contexts in which the static quality is only an unstable moment because it is inscribed in a dynamic process which may experience moments of destruction of the existing and moments of creation of the new.

Philip Roth’s *Operation Shylock* (1993) is an example of how literature deals with the concept of Diaspora, cultural mobility, and law, though from a subverted perspective. *Operation Shylock* is a case of the psychological examination of stolen identities. In this novel Roth discusses a fundamental historical problem in a paradoxical and ironic way, using a recurring figure in his novels, that of the doppelgänger. The problem of what kind of law should be applied pervades the novel. In fact the “real” Philip Roth would like to sue his double for being an impostor and he is meditating on what charge he can bring against him. Such a problem is also created by cultural mobility. If the cultural roots of each single Jewish group forming the State of Israel are called into question by the idea of resettlement, then the legal roots are part of the problem.

• **CHIN, RACHEL**

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“Contrary to Popular Belief: Memory and Mythmaking of Wartime Britain in Contemporary Fiction”

The continued popularity of historical, and particularly wartime fiction, such as Markus Zusak’s *The Book Thief* (2005) or contemporary classics like Erich Remarque’s *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1929) shows no sign of abating, and indeed can offer a valuable contribution to the present popular and scholarly narrative. However, contemporary fiction, in this case within the context of British memory in the 1940 Blitz, often confirms oversimplified ideals of national greatness and heroism. My paper will take a multidisciplinary approach, employing rhetorical analysis from both an historical and sociolinguistic perspective to understand how social norms and historical myths such as inherent greatness, have built up, distorted, and perpetuated the relationship between memory and experience in 1940s Britain.

Utilizing both empirical as well as sociolinguistic approaches, it will compare literary representations of the 1940 ‘battle of Britain’ in the duo of science/historical fiction books, *Blackout* and *All Clear* (2010) by Connie Willis with contemporary historical responses to the same event in the form of mass media/political publications. I argue that oversimplified categories of war that define a winner and loser under the labels of good/bad and moral/immoral, encourage(d) a sense of inevitability to the eventual British victory, often backed up by the use of historical tropes. The current perpetuation of images of plucky Brits who made jokes under pressure and revelled in acts of heroism demonstrate not only the strength of this wartime narrative, but also a strategic forgetfulness.

• **COLLADO RODRÍGUEZ, FRANCISCO**

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“Erasing Trauma as Information: Terrorism and the Web in Pynchon’s *Bleeding Edge*”

In the second half of the 20th Century the bases for a new understanding of the human being were set. By the 1990s beliefs in a new post-human understanding of being already played an important part in the Humanities. Norbert Wiener’s earlier attempt to reproduce in computer technology the categorical way in which humans codify information had successfully resulted in binary languages that made it possible for artificial intelligence to function. New cultural icons of beings as ever-lasting, half-technological entities (cyborgs) proliferated. By the beginning of the 21st Century the attraction for the cyborg became replaced by the more attractive figure of virtual wo/man, an almost perfect informational pattern capable of perpetuating itself.

However, what is to be done if the information flow constitutive of the (post)human being is disrupted by acts of terror that bring about collective traumas? What can be done, according to my reading of Pynchon’s *Bleeding Edge* (2013), is to mitigate human suffering by restoring the informational flow. But problems lie in who is in charge of the restoration and by which means such restoration is achieved. This paper proposes a brief analysis of Pynchon’s novel centred on the understanding of terrorism as a traumatic disruption in the flow of information that constitutes being, and on the addictive dangers of the Internet, a false refuge that plays with the notion of technological immortality while hiding the control the new “realtors” of virtual reality exert on us.

• **CROISILLE, VALÉRIE**

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“‘Rasslin’ with ghosts’ in Phyllis Alesia Perry’s *A Sunday in June*: The (Im)possible Negotiation of Family and Historical Traumatic Memories”

The prequel to Phyllis Alesia Perry’s most famous novel *Stigmata, A Sunday in June* (2004) recounts the destinies of three sisters from the early to middle 20th century (Eva, Mary Nell, and Grace), probing into their complex and ever-evolving relations, as a traumatic family history weighs down on their mental balances and lives. The injustices and cruelties of personal history —the rape of Eva by her brother-in-law, her subsequent pregnancy, and the kidnapping of her child by her own sterile sister— add up to the impossible integration of the memory of slavery by Grace, who is invaded by a chaotic, swelling sea of voices and visions, as she is possessed in a continual martyrdom by the spirit of her belated grandmother, brought from Africa to the New World to become a slave. This story about victims and perpetrators is also to be read as a poignant story of women, whose fate has largely been manipulated by men, plunging them into horror and scarring their body, psyche, and memory. My presentation will envisage this double dimension of trauma, by studying the possible strategies to negotiate both collective and personal memory. Considering the novel as an illustration of the tension between truth-telling and truth-masking, silent suffering and restorative justice, resilience and renouncement, it will reflect on the (im)possibility to get healing, reparation and reconciliation after going through unthinkable, unbearable and unlivable dramas that are inexorably imprisoned in memory.

• CUCARELLA RAMON, VICENT

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“Reimagining the Social Death: The Traumatic Outcome of Racist Stereotypes in Bernice L. McFadden’s *Gathering of Waters*”

The haltingly dark past of the United States has proved to be utterly decisive in the formation of an unalloyed epistemology for African Americans. The blatant racism relegated them to the margins of the young nation ever since its foundation. Thus, trauma and sorrow have evolved into challenging concepts which overlap taking into account the transnational and transcultural memory of a considerable part of the African American population. Drawing on the concept of trauma as proposed by critics such as Cathy Caruth, Dominick LaCapra and Shoshana Felman, this essay analyzes Bernice L. McFadden’s novel *Gathering of Waters*, published in 2013, as a literary account of the aftermaths that result from the traumatic experiences that African American population have historically had to put up with. Namely, I seek to study how the racist stereotypes of the lustful Jezebel and the myth of the ‘buck’ as a violent and virile black man have a direct impact on the tragic destiny that falls upon the main characters Tass Hilson and Emmett Till respectively. I submit that Tass’ meandering into madness and the eventual assassination of Emmett Till are blunt results of the interiorization of the racist stereotypes that white America created to justify the violence impinged on African Americans. Laden with Gothic overtones, the novel totters beautifully and tragically on the precipice of the traumatic past to explain the racial nightmares of contemporary North America and nurtures readers to digest the broken soul of black Americans.

• DOKOU, CHRISTINA

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“Of Terrible Mothers and Wayward Sons: Resisting Diasporic Memory Trauma in Jeffrey Eugenides and Christos Tsiolkas”

This paper aims at a comparative examination of Jeffrey Eugenides’ 2002 *Middlesex* and Christos Tsiolkas’s 2005 *Dead Europe* in terms of chronicling each novel’s confrontation with traumatic diasporic memory. Although comparisons between these two authors are rare,¹ the two texts share significant similarities in exploring transgressive sexuality as a metaphor for troubled minority identity. Both novels employ Greek myth and folklore to indicate Greekness as both dubious distinction and/or outright curse, mostly centered on a Jungian Terrible Mother(-Culture) figure: Eugenides’ protagonist Cal embodies in his biological hermaphroditism a cursed genetic family secret that is resolved when his grandmother confesses her incest; Tsiolkas’s gay Isaac is bodily possessed by a ghoulish creature created by an evil anti-Semitic ancestress, and redeemed only by the self-willed damnation of his own mother. However, the struggle of each protagonist to affirm his precarious manhood by exorcising ancestral burdens enforced via matrilineal flesh-and-blood imperatives is transgressive and unapologetically *jouissance*-laden: a gender-informed and myth-analytic approach will show how these proposals for diasporic re-membering privilege individual self-affirmation over the stereotypes of the Romantic tormented artist or the post-Shoah stern guardian of past memory.

¹ Sophie Coavoux, “Greek Diaspora and Hybrid Identities: Transnational and Transgender Perspectives in Two novels: *Loaded*, by Christos Tsiolkas (Australia) and *Middlesex*, by Jeffrey Eugenides (USA),” *Transtext(e)s Transcultures: Journal of Global Cultural Studies* 7, 2012. Online. <http://transtexts.revues.org/451>.

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“Memory and Identity in Atkinson’s Jackson Brodie’s Series”

Throughout the Jackson Brodie series, Kate Atkinson has been modelling his main protagonist’s identity on the different elicited memories each of the criminal cases in the four novels deal with. *Case Histories*, *One Good Turn*, *When Will There Be Good News?*, and *Started Early, Took My Dog* deal, at some point, with issues of memory and the processes of remembering. From the early private detective to the outcast at the end of the series, Jackson Brodie’s identity seems to be forged and constructed by the different cases as an unwilling repository, as a living archive, of the violence he has been involved with. As both a victim and a perpetrator, Brodie seems an unlikely recipient as the archive which contains the cases of gender abuse that model his identity throughout the series. Taking into consideration that memory seems an important piece to shape identity, it is my contention that Brodie’s tasks during the series remodel his own identity by the act of remembering those criminal cases, which are not officially written as social memory, and at the same time, make him the representative of the official archive and memorial so that what he has witnessed does not go forgotten.

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“‘A Garden of Her Own’: Towards a Wilful Politics of Hope in Shani Mootoo’s *Out on Main Street*”

Shani Mootoo’s *Out of Main Street* (1993), a collection of short stories dealing with a legacy of painful memories and violence at the heart of colonialism, racism and lesbophobia, can be defined as an archive of feelings and emotions that overwhelm the lives of the protagonists: depression, nostalgia, fear, alienation, repulsion, guilt, shame, self-destruction and loss, to name but a few, are frequent psychological states which alienate them and make them more prone to being victims of violence. Drawing upon affect theory, this paper will explore the ways in which the protagonists’ will, resilience and hope can pave the way for the articulation of more productive sites of existence. In order to understand such feelings as a source for epistemological and political action, I will also rely on philosophical paradigms that convey a wilful politics of being and living in a world torn off by racial, gendered and sexualized violence. While most characters in *Out of Main Street* have accepted their condition of cultural bastards, thus underlining their state as non-white, non-straight and non-human, their wilfulness also attests to their capacity to survive.

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“Re-membling the Politics of Holocaust Commemoration”

When re-membling the politics of Holocaust commemoration, translation is an issue to consider, for translated discourse stands as a waypoint signposting the shift from silence and amnesia to speech and memory. It acts indeed as a bridge builder between victims’ memory of suffering and loss and other cases of trauma, opening the path for recontextualizing their memory to fashion new meanings. While the particular way in which translations have constructed the meaning of the Holocaust to make it meet ideological, political or moral ends will not be studied in this paper, the field of Translation Studies shall be used to consider the influence of translation practices in the emergence in the 1990s of the Holocaust as a global

phenomenon. Such theoretical framework shall serve to reflect on a gamut of issues related to the preconceptions, priorities and politics that envelope and influence Holocaust commemoration in the contemporary world, for which Caryl Philipps' *The Nature of Blood* (1997) shall be used as a case study. On the basis of the several stories of the Jewish Diaspora narrated in this multi-stranded novel, this paper seeks to give some consideration to the effrontery in making the Holocaust mean something beyond the systematic extermination of six million Jews and other minorities. In this sense, the paper considers the perils involved in the transformation of this event into an unbound "morality" paradigm, where overidentification leads to what Bertolt Brecht (1964) termed "crude empathy".

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"No Redress but Memory': Holocaust Representation and Memorialization in E.L. Doctorow's *City of God*"

Published in 2000, *City of God* is E.L. Doctorow's most ambitious, complex and enigmatic work so far. It is a highly metafictional text that may be best seen as a collection of skilfully interwoven plots and voices that create a kaleidoscopic universe of complementary ontological levels. In spite of the novel's mosaic nature, all the storylines reveal an underlying common concern with ethics and justice. This paper argues that such preoccupation is tightly connected to the problematics of Holocaust representation and memorialisation. This concern, I contend, hovers over the whole narrative and can be felt as a sort of implicit driving force in all the storylines that the novel pursues. Thus, the main focus of the present paper is the novel's treatment and attitude towards the Holocaust. I will assess the author's motivations for attempting to represent the fathomless horror of one of the most despicable events in human history, bearing in mind his own Jewish background. This paper will also explore the novel's self-conscious discussion of Holocaust representation. Finally, I will attempt to establish the role that the Holocaust plays in the novel's wider engagement with good and evil and its relation to the (im-)possibility of religious belief. As a conclusion, I will argue that *City of God* stages Doctorow's metaphysical quest for meaning, revolving around issues of ethics, justice and evil nor merely from a religious but also from a secular perspective.

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"Martin Amis's *The Zone of Interest*, or Writing from the Viewpoint of the Perpetrators as a Way of Negotiating the Collective Trauma of the Holocaust"

In this paper, I purport to investigate Martin Amis's Holocaust novel, *The Zone of Interest* (2014), with a view to highlighting how the novel foregrounds memory as the object of constant negotiation. As she is made to actively collaborate with the perpetrators-narrators in her reconstruction of the diegesis and of the very meaning of the four narratives intersecting in the text, the reader is forced to re-member the dismembered fragments of history sent floating along the four narrators's streams of consciousness. This is performed at a high cost, since re-membling implies the filling in of the gaps in the text's gaping wounds and therefore the active collaboration with, complementation and even supplementation of represented violence.

One of the highlights of this paper will be to show that the blending of facts and fiction in *The Zone of Interest*, evidenced as it is by the novel's «acknowledgments and afterword: that which really happened» section, aims to bear witness to the traumatic import of the war while reconstructing a fuzzy memory of the Holocaust interspersed with a selected number of

scenes of great clarity and violence. The violence of historical events and their impact on social and cultural memories is recorded by Amis in three major different ways: firstly, by figuring them and representing them realistically; secondly, by using deliberately excessive, fragmented forms of narration and representation which violently distort the diegesis; thirdly, by doing violence to the reader through the deliberate use of violent linguistic means including the constant appeal to the language of the perpetrator to minorize that of the victim. Thus, the novel's politics of traumatic memory cannot fail but to impact the reader in a lasting way: both empathy and anger are alternately (and often simultaneously) triggered by the narratives produced both by perpetrators and victims, so that the very unreadability of the historical event itself is rendered evident.

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“Boundaries of Memory in Janette Turner Hospital’s Fiction”

Janette Turner Hospital's works offer a rich panorama of the ways in which memory, trauma and resilience interact. In particular, this paper focuses on *The Last Magician* (1992) and *Oyster* (1996) and their portrayal of both personal and national trauma. A preliminary explanation will show how the different positions involved in the colonial and post-colonial plight (including both the post-coloniser and the post-colonised), which appear so prominently in the case of *Oyster*, are equally present, albeit in a much less obvious fashion, in *The Last Magician*. A deeper analysis of how such positions are articulated will later show how, along with manipulative or unhealthy uses of memory and forgetfulness, there is room in the Australian experience for a more positive conception. The paper therefore offers an analysis of the novels' (direct or metaphorical) portrayal of the mechanisms that rule Aboriginal processes of memory. Some Aborigines appear to be unable to overcome their traumatic experience. Others, however, are able to transform their own by resorting to their ancestral Dreaming wisdom. In order to explain this, my paper briefly outlines the basic points of the Aboriginal concept of the Dreaming, and offers a glimpse of the kinship that can be traced between Turner Hospital's novels and Aboriginal culture. Such similarities are then explored on both the thematic and the structural levels. Thus, it is suggested, the Aboriginal experience establishes a link between memory and resilience, rather than between memory and trauma.

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“Author Hoaxes and Collective Responsibility: The Case of Nasdijj”

Native American voices and personae have perennially been subject to forgery. Through literary and other kinds of performances, African Americans have sought to escape their racial status, and white, middle class people have looked for a way out of a perceived materialist, mainstream existence. This paper investigates a case of such forgery, the three melancholy memoirs (2000-2004) of Native American “Nasdijj,” later revealed to be the works of white social worker Tim Barrus. Importantly, the case of Nasdijj exemplifies how contemporary memoir forgers tend to take on the suffering and trauma of minority groups. This paper will focus on the desire to take on such trauma and suffering through the impersonation of a minority subject. To frame my investigation, I will draw on author experiments that problematize the author-function, investigating how even the fake, or perhaps simulacral, author can aid us in ethically engaging with atrocities and their representations. I argue, finally, that a reconsideration of the author-witness can tilt our conception of witness literature, and underscore the role of fiction as a crucial part of our historical collective memory.

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“So this is a big preventive guilt trip’: Naturalism and Traumatic Memory in Lionel Shriver’s *Big Brother*”

In the final chapter of my recent book *Contemporary American Trauma Narratives* (Edinburgh UP, 2014), I contend that a number of authors of contemporary counterfactual trauma fictions employ this narrative form partly to construct a revised form of naturalism. This form draws on naturalism’s origins as an investigation into human behaviour, here using alternative history scenarios as a control experiment in order to examine real world traumas. This growing subgenre, embraced by a number of highly regarded authors, is based on two suppositions. Firstly, it represents a response to the perceived tired pseudo-experimentalism of literary postmodernism. Secondly, the genre’s implicit measuring of individual responsibility constructs a network of possibilities for the exploration of issues such as trauma, agency and memory in post-9/11 America.

This paper explores a related approach in Lionel Shriver’s novel about a woman’s (apparent) attempt to encourage her morbidly obese brother to lose weight, *Big Brother* (2013). The novel’s second half details an initially successful but ultimately thwarted weight-loss project governed by Pandora, the novel’s narrator, who finally reveals that this portion of the book is a fabrication, covering her actual failure to intervene. Pandora thus reveals that in her role as narrator she has manipulated the memory of her brother’s actual death and re-imagined the events in a way that exonerates her from blame, in other words as her husband comments, as ‘a big preventive guilt trip.’ This paper argues that this novel’s narrative strategies – the ‘denarration’¹ which allows Pandora to conduct a counterfactual neo-naturalist experiment – enable her to load the dice as a means of dealing with the guilt of not actually having intervened with her brother. Despite the novel’s unusual form – using denarration to play with notions of trauma and memory – it is ultimately not an atypical use of naturalism post-9/11, which has often been used in contemporary American writing to establish a kind of false victimhood, and as a way to deny responsibility or agency.

¹ See Brian Richardson, “Denarration in Fiction: Erasing the Story in Beckett and Others”, *Narrative* 9.2 (2001): 168-75.

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“Not Nothing’: Holocaust Representation and Memory in Contemporary British Jewish Literature”

In this paper I will explore how memory might form a bridge between the past and the present; but I shall also suggest that such bridges can create some unsteady crossings. With this in mind, the discussion will draw from contemporary British Jewish literature to explore themes of memory and amnesia, presence and nostalgia, continuity and loss, belonging and dislocation.

Alain Finkelkraut has written frankly about the potential appeal of martyrdom for the post-Holocaust generation, explaining that: ‘I inherited a suffering to which I had not been subjected... Without exposure to real danger, I had heroic stature’ (1994). Howard Jacobson’s novel *Kalooki Nights* (2006) grasps this issue for those post-war British Jews for whom, like him, the Holocaust was relatively distant in geographical terms but rather close in temporal and emotional ones.

Jacobson presents his central character, Max, as being caught in the clutches of an extreme and disturbing hyper-identification with Jewish victimhood. ‘It is not nothing’, he

explains.¹ But, for many contemporary British Jews, Max's overdetermined insistence on Holocaust memory raises some rather serious questions. What is remembered in Britain about the Holocaust? How are these memories processed by British Jews? Where does one draw the line between respectful commemoration, self-indulgent appropriation and morbid fascination? This paper will look some of the ways in which contemporary British-Jewish literature is engaging with these questions.

¹ Howard Jacobson, *Kalooki Nights*. London: Jonathan Cape, 2006, p. 5.

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“Memory that Haunts and Memory that Saves – The Case of Louise Erdrich and Cristina García”

I would like to focus on different trajectories of cultural memory in the novels of Native American (Ojibwe) Louise Erdrich's *The Painted Drum* (2005) and Cuban-American Cristina García's *The Agüero Sisters*. Their protagonists not only have to face individual trauma of the past, but also the collective trauma of their people. Both Faye Travers and Old Shaawano in Erdrich's novel live on the memories of their beloved deceased and this is what they have in common with the protagonists of García's novel Constanca and Reina Agüero and their father Ignacio. In order to face the ghosts of their past, they need to excavate the buried histories of the America connected to some extent with the European conquest and colonization. Through retrospection they find out that the texture of their memories is grafted onto religious syncretism (animistic tradition of Ojibwe and German folklore in Erdrich and santería in García). Only by acknowledging ethnic components of their memories can some characters start to recover. Thus both Erdrich and García are interested in alternative strategies of representing suffering, beyond the Western trauma paradigm; the question is how successful they are. It is also important that in their novels they include both feminine and masculine memories which are contrasted. Other questions Erdrich and García address in their novels are connected with the issues of representation in ethnic memory and transculturation as a counter-policy used against acculturation.

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“‘Life as a fake’: Trust, Memory and Paranoia in the Contemporary Impostor Novel”

This paper will examine the ways in which a range of literary fiction since 1990, including Philip Roth's *Operation Shylock* (1993), Peter Carey's *My Life as a Fake* (2003) and Jonathan Raban's *Surveillance* (2006), has used the figure of the impostor – the person who is not who s/he claims to be – to negotiate the frictions between narrativity and authenticity in the recuperation of historical experience. Although the impostor has a long and distinguished – or rather disreputable – history in western literature, s/he has been given a new lease of life by recent fiction in the context of ongoing debates about performativity, hyperreal inauthenticity, postmodernist historiography and the politics of memory. The person who fabricates a past, spins an autobiography out of sheer imagination or opportunistically hijacks the history of the other and trades on the credulity of the non-impostor – this person is a not simply a villain or bogey-person in these texts; s/he is also a walking, talking personification of anxieties about the narrativization of human experience, the inescapable infiltration of fact by fiction, and the contamination of memory by fantasy – all the anxieties that prey on the contemporary historical imagination.

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“Settling the Score on the Victimisation Trope in the Works of Ronnie Govender”

The victimisation trope perpetuated by many South African Indians denies any agency to the people and enforces the history of this particular diaspora as one of traumatic loss and permanent alienation. It is true that the life experiences of those officially classified as “Indians” are tinted with the histories of social place and ‘race’ in South Africa but the Indian community was and is anything but homogeneous. Ronnie Govender, a prolific playwright, novelist and short-story writer has delved into the complexities of his community in an attempt to reconstruct the history and cultural identity of Cato Manor, an area closely associated with some of the first Indian settlements in South Africa.

In his short story collection, *At the Edge and Other Cato Manor Stories* (1996) and his life narrative, *In the Manure. Memoirs and Reflections* (2008), Govender critiques the treachery, backbiting and self-flagellation of his compatriots, while at the same time paying tribute to the small acts of personal heroism and solidarity that often emerge among the poor and downtrodden. This paper proposes to read a selection of Govender’s short stories through his life narrative, which is written in the third person, thus allowing him to “get [his] own back” (2008: 10) and dispute the status of perennial victimhood that the South African Indian community has wallowed in for too long.

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“Wendy Law-Yone’s *The Road to Wanting*: The (Im)Possibility and (Un)Willingness of Remembering the Way Back Home”

Place can be seen not only as fundamental in providing a locus of identity and sense of belonging among those who inhabit it, but also, like memory, as a phenomenological experience rooted in the body, and in particular the senses, which play a crucial role in resurrecting the past, since they act as a repository of remembered locations and recollections of all kinds. On the other hand mobility, all the more so when this is traumatically forced upon the individual, can weaken and even destroy traditional ties to place, to the point that the individual can end up losing, not only her/his sense of belonging, but also her/his own self-esteem and identity. Na Ga, the main character in Law-Yone’s novel, is a good example of this. Systematically betrayed by the people who should have protected her, Na Ga must leave her home in Burma when she is only a child and go from one unfriendly unknown place to another, to end up working as a prostitute in a Thai brothel. Once she manages to leave that hell behind thanks to unforeseen circumstances, she is forced to confront her compulsion to commit suicide, is haunted by very few, vague, and fragmented memories of her family and village and is, above all, severely paralyzed by shame and fear to go back to Burma. However, Na Ga’s final involvement with people who actually care about her eventually allows her to muster enough courage to cope with her past and start off her convoluted way back home.

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“Alternative Ways of Negotiating Trauma: White Man’s Law and Native Justice in Louise Erdrich’s *The Round House*”

Louise Erdrich’s latest novel, *The Round House* (2012), winner of the National Book Award for fiction, delves deeply into the serious problems that conflicts of sovereignty and jurisdiction still cause on many Indian reservations today. The author points out in the afterword that “1 in 3 Native women will be raped in her lifetime (and that figure is certainly higher as Native women often do not report rape); 86 percent of rapes and sexual assaults upon Native women are perpetrated by non-Native men; few are prosecuted.” Erdrich’s narrative reveals the effects that a brutal sexual assault on a Chippewa woman, Geraldine Coutts, has for herself and her family. Although her husband is a tribal judge and a man of substance, he soon realizes that bringing the most likely suspects to court will be rather impossible, given the intricacies of applying different legal codes in certain areas of the reservation. Geraldine’s husband and son, Joe, the narrator of the story, try hard to seek justice and to relieve the victim from her pain, but the whole pursuit becomes at least as devastating as the crime itself. However, while Joe recalls their mostly fruitless efforts to use conventional law to bring justice and peace to his mother, he also tells about the stories that his grandfather, Mooshum, passes down to him, offering alternative ways of dealing with “wiindigoos” and of providing partial reparation. Eventually, the narrator will decide—against his parent’s will—to follow the way of his ancestors, despite the inevitable moral costs.

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“The End of Theory, the End of Trauma? Jeffrey Eugenides’s *The Marriage Plot* and the Resistance to Trauma Aesthetic”

Although Jeffrey Eugenides’s latest novel is molded on pathology, namely, manic depression, its driving force is no longer trauma and traumatic memory but the demise of critical theory. Postmodernist aesthetics, prominent in the author’s previous novels, gives way to a “more relaxed style,” as Tóibín puts it (2011), inspired in realist characterization, transparent style of writing, and a traditional subject matter: the love triangle. The aim of this paper is twofold: to ponder over the reasons for relinquishing the trauma paradigm in *The Marriage Plot* (2011), and to explore how memory is construed as a large net of connections among characters, texts and intertexts. The characters’ deeds, feelings, and memory are affected heavily by the discourses of the 19th-century marriage plot, deconstruction, and theology which threaten to do away with reality and ensnare the individual in a semiotic tower. In opposition to *The Virgin Suicides* (1993) or *Middlesex* (2002), this third novel appears to define experimentation as literary exhaustion, to echo John Barth: it mocks deconstruction reducing it to a mere fad or a commodity. As one critic pointed out, in *The Marriage Plot* “contemporary realism has its revenge on Theory” (Dames 2012: 164), and, by extension, on trauma theory. But while intertextuality can be interpreted as the expression of connective memory, it also suggests claustrophobic discursivity. Remembrance is, thus, conceived as a product of the individual’s knowledge of discourse, which he or she manipulates “in order to be happy/unhappy—not in order to understand” (Barthes 1990: 217).

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“Remembering as Rewriting: Deception and Artistic Power in *Atonement*”

Atonement not only addresses the topical questions of the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries – war, trauma, memory, redemption, artistic power – but also demonstrates the process of revision and reformulation of memory in action. Beneath this obsession with memory is a treacherous narrative that is driven by the overriding need to control, stage-manage, manipulate reality. The narrator, seeking atonement, is also the false witness, and the perpetrator of the trauma at the heart of the novel. As the author struggling to retain control over reality, the narrator first attempts to coerce her impressions of half-seen half-guessed events into a coherent story which congeals into a semblance of truth that imprisons her; immediately, she struggles to free herself from this fixture by rewriting her memories, producing subsequent versions of the same tale over and over again. And while these overlapping fictions of the past are fabricated, the readers are bewitched into seeing precisely the reverse: the process of peeling off layers of palimpsest, of gradual restoration of the truth. This paper will attempt to reread the novel once again, questioning the narrator’s final “revelation” and focusing attention on the numerous indications of her insatiable desire for power as the underlying cause of the endless rewritings of the past. The act of atonement becomes in this novel an attunement of the delicate instrument of recollection, a refinement of suffering into a work of art, silencing the dissonances of the past, until the very idea of memory is lost in the whirlpool of drafts and versions.

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“Meddling with Memory: Simulacrum of Cultural Identity in Julian Barnes’ *England, England*”

When John Locke took up the question of human consciousness, he came to the conclusion that it is memory which serves as means of preserving one’s personal identity from one moment of time to another. A similar processes can be traced in a broader sense of national identity. We may justly give prominence to memory in this respect, because of the intricate ways it functions at various strata of our collective awareness. Yet, what is remembered on a national level is, precisely due to its scale, prone to misconception and outright manipulation. What if the things we value most from our country’s cultural heritage were to be suddenly employed for the sole benefit of some evil genius? In the novel *England, England*, Julian Barnes allowed us to watch this scenario executed from an amusing beginning to a devastating end. The original England disintegrates and falls into disgrace, like a jigsaw puzzle smashed under the great jackboot of the unscrupulous postmodern visionary. Its kitsch replica prospers, feeding the public imagination with ridiculous falsifications of history and memory.

This paper will investigate Barnes’s approaches to collective memory and postmodern uneasy relationship with history. The peculiar tension that characterizes the attempt to maintain our cultural identity through remembrance of the past on the one hand, and the realization that none of its versions may be taken for granted on the other, serve as the dynamic subject of this novel and provide an ample opportunity to analyze the relationship between history, memory and identity.

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“Holocaust Memory and Social Justice in Joseph Kanon’s *Alibi*”

Joseph Kanon’s 2006 novel *Alibi* explores willed forgetting and the suppressed memory of complicity in the Holocaust by members of the upper middle class society of Venice against its Jewish community. The novel’s protagonist Adam Miller and his Italian Jewish girlfriend Claudia Grassini murder the doctor who sent Claudia’s father to his death in a concentration camp. Their motive is clear. The suspicions of the detective investigating the case fall upon them, but they are never caught.

Martha Nussbaum suggests that literature can be thought of as a type of moral philosophy. The paper considers fiction on Nussbaum’s terms and asks if the murder that Adam and Claudia carry out in *Alibi* is blood vengeance, or if are they morally justified in murdering a man who would never be brought to justice for his role as a Holocaust perpetrator? If it is the latter, then *Alibi* is a work of moral philosophy, for the killers are never caught, and consequently they never become subject to legal justice. However, their relationship breaks the strain of what they have done. The ending of their relationship becomes the justice administered against them by the novel.

In allowing the couple to evade capture, the novel subverts the conventions of detective fiction. This means that in *Alibi*’s logic moral justice takes precedence over legal justice. What Adam and Claudia have done is legally wrong, but morally right. The moral justice administered by their crime is a means towards healing the open wounds of traumatic memory.

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“Memory Between Perception and Projection”

Conflicting memories exist on many levels and, hence, also the negotiations they require and the politics they generate or are influenced by. But for any friction or conflict of memory to emerge and take effect a memorial space will first have to be created where conflicts are possible, maybe even unavoidable, and negotiations made useful, maybe even necessary. The basic question of my paper is whether conflicts are constitutive of the creation of a memorial space or imposed upon it? We need literature and other processes of imagination to address such questions for the very simple reason that we do not remember how remembrance became part of our human capacities, in the same way as we do not remember how we acquired our first language once it is there. The emergence of memory is not part of our memories, which is why most theories of memory have an axiomatic point of departure: the mind is like water, a *tabula rasa*, open to unfiltered perceptions, a selective filter for perception, a mechanism of necessary repressed and re-occurring experiences, etc. My claim is that 1) this emergence has to do with a dialectics between perceptions and projections of sense experience and 2) that the memorial space has a conflictual constitution. To make my point, I will briefly investigate passages from two novels to indicate to processes leading to the emergence of a memorial space, Andre Brink’s *An Instant in the Wind* (1976) and Richard Flanagan’s *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* (2007).

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“Recollection in Anxiety: Howard Jacobson’s *The Finkler Question* and *J*”

In twenty-first-century Britain, Howard Jacobson is a significant novelist. As David Brauner argues in *Post-War Jewish Fiction* (2001), in many ways Howard Jacobson is the British Philip Roth. Like Roth, Jacobson’s oeuvre since *Kalooki Nights* (2006) has confronted the traumatic inheritance of antisemitism and – as a site of ‘memory friction’ – the Holocaust. This paper addresses Jacobson’s turn towards British Jewish anxiety in two recent novels: *The Finkler Question* (2010) and *J* (2014).

Regarding *The Finkler Question*, this paper considers Jacobson’s anxious constructions of antisemitism and anti-Zionism, and their relationship with contemporary British Jewish culture. It may be no coincidence that *The Finkler Question* won the much-publicised Man Booker Prize, for Jacobson appeared to articulate a common anxiety involving victimhood and shame which resonated within an increasingly anxious civic space for Jews and other citizens of multicultural Britain.

In the more recent *J*, Jacobson takes the theme of anxiety to its logical extreme by depicting a fictional dystopia. In Jacobson’s implicitly post-Second Holocaust scenario, there is denial of both antisemitism and other history.

In sum, both *The Finkler Question* and *J* question whether the choice is between engaging with history only to repeat its dystopian logic of perpetrators and victims, or forgetting history in a postmodern, synchronic and essentially false consciousness. This paper concludes by asking whether a useable synthesis between history and the present, remembering and forgetting, can be constructed from Jacobson’s apparently bleak dialectic.

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“Public Art and Communal Space: The Politics of Commemoration in Amy Waldman’s *The Submission*”

Amy Waldman’s 2011 debut novel *The Submission* may be read as an exercise in alternative history: in 2003, a jury is gathered in New York City to select the design for a memorial commemorating the victims of 9/11. When the chosen designer’s name is finally revealed, his identity as an American Muslim comes to public notice, and controversy ensues about the appropriateness of his submission. The storyline resonates with similar situations in contemporary American history, like the controversies around Maya Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. or the Cordoba House Muslim community center in New York.

The story revolves around the role of public art in the memorializing of collective traumas. As Félix Duque has argued, it is through such monuments that national identity has been traditionally codified as “the public” (167). Waldman’s novel brings to the forefront the complexities of processes of collective mourning and public commemoration, dramatizing the tensions between several interest groups through a polyphonic structure. Following the reactions of about a dozen different characters to the memorial selection process, the narrative explores key issues regarding the politics of commemorating 9/11, which I set out to explore in this paper: the role of public art in the representation of national community, the designation of legitimate agents in the commemorating practices and rituals, the visibility and representation of victims in the public sphere, the political instrumentalization of victims, or the risks of manipulation and appropriation of the public sphere by interest groups.

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“Re-Mapping the Trauma Paradigm: Native American Strategic Representations of Grief”

The recent debates on the trauma paradigm’s adequacy to address the postcolonial experience, together with the problems associated to Western literary theory when approaching the Native American experience call for a cultural-specific indigenous trauma theory to properly account for the articulation of grief in Native literatures. Starting from the premises that the relationship between stories and theories is a contentious but creative one, where Native American stories can also function as theory (Gordon Henry et al. 2009), and that representations of grief are always political and mediated by social context (Granek 2014), this paper looks at the way that Louise Erdrich’s short story “Shamengwa” (2002, 2010) theorizes Native American grief. My analysis outlines a series of elements that will contribute to the remapping of the trauma paradigm: 1) An emphasis on both suffering and healing as communal processes; 2) A focus on the culture-specific nature of these processes which also embraces the hybrid; 3) An idiosyncratic conception of time, where the past, present and future interact and coexist, affecting the way trauma can be overcome; 4) An understanding of space as storied space; 5) An emphasis on post-traumatic growth and healing in spite of suffering. All in all, this representation of grief is political in the way it makes Native American suffering visible, rejecting the social distinction made between “grievable” and “ungrievable” lives (Butler 2009, Granek 2014), and calling us to reflect on —and hopefully, try to change— the wider social forces and conditions that have caused these losses.

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“I Am Malala: Issues on Ethics and Politics of Self-Representation”

In this paper, I aim to discuss 2014 Nobel Peace Prize Malala Yousafzai’s life narrative, published in 2013, analyzing the identity strategies this “autobiography” uses in order to advance a political cause. Malala, a self-proclaimed social activist, has become an icon worldwide, not just because of her story, but, first and foremost, thanks to a carefully planned propaganda campaign by the media and the published work itself, which recreates traumatic events both at a personal and at a national level.

The memoir’s title is problematic: *I Am Malala. The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*, by Malala Yousafzai with Christina Lamb. The fact that there is a co-author makes the reader think of its reliability (Smith & Watson, 2010: 17). Moreover, the use of the third person singular in the title as well as in the story further problematizes the act of self-writing. She cannot have witnessed all the historical events that she mentions. However, the success of her narrative might be comparable to that of other controversial activists (Canby, 1999: 28-33).

Self-representation can “reinforce particular values in ways that may shape culture and history” (Couser, 2005: 129-30). Muslim, Pakistani, female, survivor... Malala is an example of a minority trying to re-write her identity. Itself an act of self-construction, this work raises some interesting ethical issues (Schaffer & Smith, 2004: 8). Empathy plays a key role, urging the reader to act, to move from awareness to actual involvement in the universal human rights arena.

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“From Conflict to Friction: the Negotiating Aesthetics of Grafting in *Model Home* (Eric Puchner)”

Model Home (2010), the debut novel from American writer Eric Puchner, is based on an antagonistic narrative, poised between instability, polyphony and saturation. When the Zillers' house is blown up and Dustin, the teenaged son, is severely injured and burnt, everybody suspects Jonas, the youngest in the family, while attentive readers will have understood the culprit is Hector, a neighbour. The novel therefore opts for contradictory yet complementary constructions of victims and perpetrators, to the point of questioning the reliability of words and experiences. The traumatic event then has to be negotiated, and so, the text turns into some reparative negotiation grounded on the necessary coexistence and cohabitation of opposites to move from conflict to negotiation (P. Ricœur) and friction. The notion of friction will be approached as a cohabitation of conflict and contact, of divergence and convergence. After the accident Dustin's skin is "harvested" from uninjured parts of his body to be grafted onto his arms or face. The aesthetics of grafting in the novel leads to some renewal of the logics of trauma, with the necessary borrowing from other bodies (or, much significantly here, from other parts of one's own body) so as to negotiate trauma and the shift from memory to forgetting. Hence negotiation implies a self-regeneration that has much to do with the logics of stitching and suturing (J.-J. Lecercle). If, to Badiou, the event first signals the emptiness that it is going to fill, here the suture operates afterwards, as the event creates the vacuum that only the graft can fill up and resort to so as to posit prose writing (or prose grafting) as the ultimate negotiation of emptiness and discontinuity (M. Blanchot).

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“Childhood, Memory and the Gothic: Joyce C. Oates's 'Haunted'”

The Gothic is a mode of history and a mode of memory; it seeks an epistemology of the depths, showing that the present is always haunted by a past which, even distant, can continue to work harm. The Gothic explores the remains of the past, foregrounding the difficult access to it and the instability and subjectivity of memory, a difficulty frequently compounded by fragmented texts that revisit the past through the distorting lens of the narrator's present. Undoubtedly, this complexity is intensified when the past invoked is that of childhood, which in the Gothic acquires a sinister significance as a time when lies originate and when evil and cruelty can easily pass unnoticed. Taking these notions as a point of departure, this paper analyses Joyce Carol Oates's tale "Haunted" focusing on the interdependence of childhood, memory and the Gothic in the plot, and on Oates's treatment of it. Significantly, "Haunted" proves to be a haunted tale in more ways than one, inhabited by a variety of Gothic intertexts and by a suggestive but inconclusive ghostliness which gestures to the inaccessibility of the past and the distortions of memory.

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“Narrative Form, Memory Frictions and the Revelation of Traumatic Secrets in Toni Morrison’s *Home*”

Toni Morrison’s novel *Home* (2012) begins with Frank Money’s recollection of a traumatic experience he lived as a child with his sister Cee: the clandestine burial of a man in a field where two horses were fighting. When Cee saw the body, she began to shake. But Frank thought he “could handle it”, and repressed his affects. The result was that he “really forgot about the burial” and “only remembered the horses”. In other words, he created a screen memory, a protective mechanism to keep hidden the murder. This is the first mention of a number of traumatic secrets buried in Frank’s unconscious that he must confront if he is to overcome the loss of communication with his self-observing, internal other. The paper argues that the alternation of chapters written in the first and the third person reflect Frank’s split self and that, for all their inconsistencies and even falsities, they have the healing potential of putting traumatic secrets into words.

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“When the Personal and the Historical Collide: Re-imagining Memory in Penelope Lively’s *Making It Up*”

Penelope Lively is a contemporary British novelist who is especially interested in exploring the relationship between individual and collective memory by questioning chronometric time and setting the emphasis on human time. Being a historian herself but with a wide knowledge of worldwide literature, in her novels, Lively brings together her personal experience with key historical moments of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Drawing on Cathy Caruth’s and Anne Whitehead’s seminal works on trauma literature, this article aims to analyse Lively’s ‘anti-memoir’, *Making It Up* (2005), in which she rewrites key episodes of her life story and her personal history by fictionalising them. Taking the voice of different characters which were actually very important in Lively’s personal and social development, Lively revises each of the eight personal and historical episodes which conform her anti-memoir from the perspective of age and experience, since she was seventy when the novel was published. By distancing herself from her real self through fiction, Lively highlights the unfaithful nature of time and memory together with the constructed nature of narrative when recounting a human life. On the other hand, *Making It Up* also brings to the surface to what extent our experiences and life stories are marked by historical events that many times escape our understanding but that, at the same time, set us within a specific generation with a very particular perspective on events and existence as a whole.

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“‘Salida Definitiva’: Ruth Behar’s Autoethnographic Memory and the Nostalgic Impossibility of Return”

Ruth Behar, Cuban national and Michigan scholar, situates herself among other cultural anthropologists who are “split at the root” when their ethnographic fieldwork takes them “home.” In her autoethnographic memoir, *An Island Called Home: Returning to Jewish Cuba*,

Behar describes her frequent homecomings to perform field work in Cuba as “return visits” which call into question the permanent impermanence of the stamp on her original passport which declares her childhood exile from Cuba’s socialist revolution a “salida definitiva” – “definitive departure.”

With no memories of having lived there, Behar presents her return not as an act of restoring memories, but creating them in the act of “first s[eeing] Cuba again.” Rather than treat the oxymoron of first seeing Cuba again as a nostalgic impossibility of return, Behar examines it as an opportunity for mutually constitutive functions of the present, including self-reflection, self-invention, and self-representation in the act of writing memoir.

I read *Island Called Home* as an act of genealogical memory in which Behar’s overlapping roles as memoirist and cultural anthropologist bring her life as a “Ju-ban” exile into focus as a site of literary and ethnographic study. I argue that it proves to, at once, be the richest and most enabling paradox of her work. Both memoir and ethnography demand that Behar see Cuba in a way she never would be able to remember it.

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“False Memories, False Foods: Eating, Cooking, Remembering in *Tastes Like Cuba* by Eduardo Machado”

This essay explores the relationship between memory and food in *Tastes Like Cuba: An Exile’s Hunger for Home* (2007) by playwright Eduardo Machado, where he narrates his exile from Cuba to the US after the 1959 revolution. I read Eduardo Machado’s displacement in light of the uses and abuses of memory that Paul Ricoeur in *Memory, History, Forgetting* classifies under three headings: blocked, manipulated and obligated. I link memory with food because eating and cooking with others produce memories and reproduce identities. I argue that Machado’s childhood in Cojimar offers an instance of the forgetting, unconsciousness and the obliteration of psychical traces that Ricoeur associates with blocked memory. The Cuban foods he eats at this time immerse him in a reverie of self-sufficiency delivered from reality and the tyranny of need. During his first years in the US Eduardo Machado’s mother manipulates the memory of her children by cooking foods that look like Cuba in the attempt to ensure that they remember the island. The distortion of reality that ensues from manipulating foods comes to an end when the narrator starts to cook. By cooking foods that do not taste like Cuba he obliges to the duty of memory.

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“Race, Trauma, and Natural Disaster in Richard Ford’s ‘Leaving for Kenosha’ and ‘Everything Could Be Worse’”

Recent cases of racial disharmony put us in mind of Sabine Broeck’s (2014) coinage of the term “enslavism” to account for the oppressive legacy of slavery in the United States. In the 2008 short story “Leaving for Kenosha” and the 2014 novella “Everything Could Be Worse”, Richard Ford explores racial tension in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Sandy, respectively. The scars left by Katrina and Sandy add to the weight of centuries of systematic marginalization in the national experience.

On the one hand, these natural disaster narratives illustrate the connection between racial and spatial issues highlighted by social geographies of race; on the other hand, they chronicle the emergence of race-specific traumatic memories after a collective disaster. Ford adopts the perspective of a middle-class, suburban, white male, only tangentially affected by loss. His protagonists are observers and commentators, halfway between the witness and the

therapist, while black characters are doomed to silence due to their marginal position. They become an uncanny presence as the ghost of slavery, which according to Ron Eyerman (2004) became a national trauma in the 1960s, haunts the quiet existence of Ford's white everymen.

I argue that Ford's fiction exemplifies how slavery is differently experienced and remembered as a traumatic event by black *and* white Americans. My approach to Ford's fiction places his work in the wider issue of the representation of slavery and its aftermath. "Leaving for Kenosha" and "Everything Could Be Worse" serve as two thought-provoking case studies for discussing whether a white writer has the tools –and the moral right– to investigate the African-American psyche.

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"Drawn from Postmemory: Graphic Ethics in Joe Kubert's *Yossel: April 19, 1943*"

Narratives about non-indexical recreations of trauma are gaining more visibility through the works of theorists of "postmemory" (Marianne Hirsch), "prosthetic memory" (Alison Landsberg) and "multidirectional memory" (Michael Rothberg). Hirsch conceptualizes a post-memorial generation keen on discovering a sense of themselves through their response to distant traumas. She describes inherited memory as postmemory, one of the strategies of the second generation to cope with the presence absence of the Holocaust: "postmemory is [...] a structure of inter- and trans-generational transmission of traumatic knowledge and experience" (2008: 106). Hirsch uses the term in the context of autobiographical works by second generation writers and visual artists.

Although inspired by history, Joe Kubert's graphic novel *Yossel: April 19, 1943* is a fictional memoir, a reflection on 'what would have happened if' he and his family had not left Poland in 1926. *Yossel* (2003) may be treated as a narrative of postmemory that recreates the Holocaust itself without resorting to dubious interpretations that falsify the genocide. Kubert explains his motivations in the introduction: "It is a work of fiction, based on a nightmare that was a fact". Kubert prosthetically takes on, via his textual *alter ego* (an adolescent comic artist), the memories of those who were present at the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

I will begin by exploring the ethical implications inherent in an act of creative re-imagination that often accompanies a post-memorial witness's encounter with the *Other*. I will then examine how the notion of an approachable *other* articulates a moral position for the "generation after" disaster. In the final part of my paper, I will turn my attention to some of the graphic novella's stylistic features: the inscription of subjectivity (the multimodal construction of the experiencing "I" and the narrating "I"), its innovative page layout and uncommon visual presentation, its formal dis-closures and frame structure.

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“Of Love and Silence: Memory F(r)ictions and Emotional Survival in Contemporary Black British Fiction”

When not buried deep down in the memory of those who have suffered them, traumatic events are negotiated through silences or passed down from generation to generation through hushed half sentences. Fiction has often proved a fruitful means of conjuring back emotions and words persistently left unuttered in official history or in more orthodox narratives of traumatic events such as slavery or war. This paper will examine two novels and a short story by contemporary Black British women writers who in their works depart from memory f(r)ictions in order to create alternative representations of extreme traumatic events; namely, the devastating civil war in Sierra Leone and slavery in the Caribbean. In this paper, I shall examine Joan Anim-Addo's "Daughter and His Housekeeper" (2008), Andrea Levy's *The Long Song* (2010) and Aminatta Forna's *The Memory of Love* (2011) as literary works that do not disclose a trauma aesthetics of despair and aporia so characteristic of narratives that revisit sites of extreme suffering and loss. By contrast, it is my contention that all three of them focus on the enabling possibilities of emotions. Forna's, Levy's and Anim-Addo's works depict strong female characters who refuse to present the readers with harrowing tales of misery but choose to highlight emotional wealth at times of traumatic events. Hence, I propose to examine how the characters' route towards recovery is directly connected to their abilities to open alternative emotional spaces in order to counter the devastating real spaces surrounding them.

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“Foreign Histories, Home Traumas: Reading Empire in Zadie Smith’s ‘The Embassy of Cambodia’”

Zadie Smith's short story, "The Embassy of Cambodia", opens with a rhetorical question: "Who would expect the Embassy of Cambodia?" (1). Set in London around the time of the Olympic Games of 2012, it narrates the story of Fatou, an immigrant from Ivory Coast who works as a domestic servant for an Arab family in Willesden. Fatou's working conditions are quite close to those of modern-day slavery. Her life-story as a migrant and a "slave" is present throughout the story. Yet, the narrator repeatedly draws attention to the fascination that the Embassy of Cambodia originates in the neighbours of Willesden and to the genocide in Cambodia. In addition, the story makes reference to other atrocities that took place in the twentieth century and to the suffering of some communities in the present.

This paper will analyse why Smith's short story resorts to the traumatic history of Cambodia and other genocides for the narration of the story of an immigrant in contemporary London, a story that is also traumatic. Furthermore, I will consider the traumatic histories in relation to migration and the aftermath of the loss of empire. This paper will rely on the discourses of collective and individual trauma, as well as on those of memory and forgetting. Thus, I will show that Zadie Smith's "The Embassy of Cambodia" tells the story of a contemporary postcolonial reality that is sometimes overlooked and overshadowed by other traumatic histories.

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“Memory Frictions and Reconciliation: Neo-Victorian Gothic and Gender Violence in Katy Darby’s *The Whores’ Asylum* (2012)”

Katy Derby’s first novel, *The Whores’ Asylum* (2012), is an attempt to deal with the issue of prostitution and rescue work in Oxford in the 1880s. The protagonists, Stephen Chapman –a brilliant medical student–, Edward Fraser –a Theology student–, and Diana –the woman who runs a refuge for fallen women– are the three angles of a triangle where friendship, desire and secrets meet at the heart of Victorian England. Their aim is not only to keep order in this working-class suburb, but also to find the way to show sympathy for the deaths and suffering of the “prostituted other”. At the same time Darby makes use of the Neo-Victorian Gothic to recover aspects of the Victorian archive which provide the setting to discuss issues of morality, sexual exploitation and reform so important for the Victorian mind but also of relevance in our contemporary societies. Similarly, the novel’s commitment to the memoir style represents an attempt at the restoration of justice for those neglected by past and present communities and whose suffering does not deserve any political consideration. Following Judith Butler’s theories of gender, violence and mourning, this paper aims to discuss issues of the Victorian neglected other and contemporary concerns about the deaths and suffering of the victims of sexual exploitation.

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“‘Worlds in Collision’: The Representation of Multidirectional Memory in Gail Jones’s *Black Mirror*” (2002)

The settler colony of Australia was founded on the discourse of *terra nullius*, that is to say, erasure, and forgetting. The 1992 Mabo decision, and the publication of the *Bringing Them Home Report* in 1997 challenged the nation’s foundational myth that the Australian colonization had been a peaceful process, and that justice and equality were the prevalent pillars on which the nation relied. This paper seeks to explore how Jones’s *Black Mirror* (2002) contributes to this questioning of Australia’s collective memory. Bearing in mind Foucault’s notion of “heterotopia” (1976) and Rothberg’s multidirectional model of memory (2009), this paper will argue that the novel’s main denunciation of Australia’s shameful past arises from its characters’ overcoming of national borders, and the criss-crossing of their personal traumatic stories. For this purpose, the paper will analyze the anachronistic and symbolic links that the novel establishes between its characters’ traumatic memories and will look at the novel’s representation of the British museum as a site of both forgetting and remembering.

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“Aminatta Forna’s *The Memory of Love*: Trauma and the Impossibilities of Forgiveness in a Non-Western Context”

Emmanuel Levinas argues that forgiveness “acts upon the past, somehow repeats the event, purifying it” and “adds something new to being, something absolutely new” (*Totality and Infinity* 283). However, in Levinasian philosophy, “there are levels on which an offense would be unforgivable” (*Nine Talmuc Readings* 23). Starting from this premise, this paper proposes a

reading of Aminatta Forna's *The Memory of Love* (2010) as a telling example of trauma narrative which demonstrates the impossibilities of forgiveness in Sierra Leone. Elias Cole, an elderly, self-interested history professor, relates his past to Adrian Lockheart, a British psychologist working voluntarily in Sierra Leone. Elias betrays his friend Julius and his daughter Mamakay but he justifies his actions by refashioning his traumatic memories of the political chaos, whereby he absolves himself of his wrongdoings. Mamakay, however, never forgives her father for what he has done. At the same time, Kai Mansaray, an orthopaedist, is incessantly disturbed by nightmares after being raped by the rebels while Agnes, a survivor of the civil war, suffers from fugue, and Adecali, a perpetrator during the civil war, is unremittingly haunted by his atrocities and never forgives himself. Drawing on the predicament of these victims and perpetrators, this paper contends that *The Memory of Love* is a narrative that challenges the possibilities of forgiveness after traumatic experiences.

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“‘What if?’: Counter-history and Pseudo-memoir in Philip Roth’s *The Plot Against America*”

In the laboratory of creation memory is not the only proprietor. (Aharon Appelfeld)

In the guise of a memoir, Philip Roth's novel *The Plot against America* (2004) renders in plausible detail a fallacious history of the US between 1940 and 1942. In the novel's alternate history, Franklin Roosevelt is defeated in his third bid for the presidency by the famed aviator Charles Lindbergh, who historically was also an anti-Semite, isolationist, and white supremacist. *The Plot against America* revolves around a “nexus event,” a moment in time, an action or a detail that brings about the splitting off of the fictional from the historical past.¹ By combining false memories and fiction, Roth invents another “counterlife” for himself and places it within a counter-history, that of his own family's everyday life in a fascist America. As both counter-history and pseudo-memoir, *The Plot against America* marks the apotheosis in the writer's exploration of the relationship between fiction and (auto)biography. Roth's uchronia, this “timeless time” in which “we are torn between two fleeing horizons” (Ricoeur) enables the writer to probe historical causality and to question, from a postmodern perspective, the contingencies of history and memory, the frictions and fictions they give rise to.

¹ Karen Hellekson, *The Alternate History: Refiguring Historical Time*, Kent State University Press, 2001.

• **SHARRAD, PAUL**

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“Gough who? Memory and Legend from Australia’s Coup”

Former Prime Minister Gough Whitlam died in November 2014. His state funeral and the media produced a flurry of nostalgia and argument over the legacy of his three years of reformist Labor government, 1972-5. As another PM, Paul Keating, said: ‘There was Australia before Gough, and there was Australia after Gough’ and the historical divide was also socially divisive, not least because of the circumstances of Whitlam's dismissal from power by unilateral fiat on the part of the British Queen's Governor General, supported by a change of patronage on the part of a global media baron who eventually took American citizenship.

It is not too fanciful to talk of trauma in relation to the social effects of this overthrow on a generation, or too ethereally abstract to relate the sedimenting of Gough's rule into legend to concepts of ‘post-memory’ and repressed memory. The paper will consider how

these ideas apply to two novels depicting Whitlam's overthrow: Peter Carey's *Amnesia* (2014) and Nicholas Hasluck's *The Dismissal* (2011).

• **SINGER, SANDRA**

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“Multidirectional Memory, Multi-ethnicity, Globalization, and Surviving ‘The Troubles’ in Colum McCann’s *TransAtlantic*”

This paper focuses on ethical implications of the convergent structure of *TransAtlantic* (2013). Identifying the transatlantic geographical space as the preeminent site of global power, McCann's novel is told from the perspective of historical figures and generations of fictional mothers.

Cross-cultural and multidirectional arcs are productive. The novel is divided into four interwoven parts. Preceded by an epigraph reflecting the present time of the storyworld, Part 1 concerns actual male principals of historical importance and Part 2 stories of fictional women impacted by these historical figures. In a “zigzag line” across time, which is how the narrator describes the historical account, the narrative configures a recovery operation by braiding gendered versions of three traumatic histories together. The three strands of navigators Alcock and Brown, Frederick Douglass, and US Senator George Mitchell are interwoven with three women's fictional life-stories. The outcome is not tragically inevitable as one may think following from Caruth and others' notion of the gap between the traumatic wound and its representation as symptom. Instead, the narrative convergence of individual, historicized stories has enduring, multidirectional significance while catalyzing social change.

Memory is future-oriented in this contemporary story saturated with the past. The ending, Part 3 dated 2011, the only section in first person given by the narrator, a fourth-generation mother related to the previous three, signals change when she sells the family cottage to a Kenyan-Irish couple, Manyaki and Aoibheann, with two sons. The new family no longer reflects Irish inner colonization, on which Manyaki lectures at Dublin University. The novel's epigraph, dated 2012, signals renewal in the brief account focalized through Aoibheann, a fifth mother, about her multicultural family settling into the cottage in Northern Ireland that was formerly inhabited by two of the mothers represented in Parts 2 and 3.

• **VICE, SUE**

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“Memory Frictions in British Holocaust Novels”

In this talk, I will examine the representation of the Holocaust in contemporary British fiction, revealing the tension between memories of the war with those of genocide. In these examples, the British national myth of heroic wartime struggle against evil is shown to be at odds with knowledge of the murder of European Jews which Britain could not prevent.

I will start with several novels representing the possibility of British complicity in Nazi racial policy. C.J. Sansom's *Dominion* (2013) is a counterfactual thriller imagining the consequences of Britain's surrender to Nazi Germany in 1940, and the nature of Britain as a satellite nation in relation both to political history and the fate of the Jews. However, its generic conclusion means that the question of a genocidal British state is effectively sidestepped.

Both David Baddiel's *The Secret Purposes* (2004) and Alison MacLeod's *Unexploded* (2013) represent the notion of camps located on British soil, in their focus on the historical phenomenon of interning 'enemy aliens'. Here, the plot device by means of which a non-

Jewish protagonist falls in love with an imprisoned Jew, smoothes away the uncomfortable implication of an equivalence between Britain and Nazi Germany. Rhidian Brook's *The Aftermath* (2013) scrutinizes British self-conceptions of wartime moral superiority in Hamburg in 1946, where the roles of German aggressor and British victim are reversed, at the expense of representing the Holocaust at all. It is, perhaps surprisingly, Martin Amis's recent novel, *The Zone of Interest* (2014), which is most clearly centred on the Holocaust, in its reimagining Rudolf Höss, the Commandant of Auschwitz.

In conclusion, I will ask what is specifically British about these novels, the role that the Holocaust assumes in each, and what this suggests about the future of novelistic representation of this kind.

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“Journey into the (Un)Selves: Memories of Conflict, Conflicting Memories in Molly Antopol's *The UnAmericans* (2014)”

In her debut collection of short stories, *The UnAmericans*, published in 2014, American writer Molly Antopol explores a variety of both individual and social, or at least interpersonal, conflicts whose origins are to be found in past traumatic experiences involving twentieth-century wars or political tensions. In these stories personal entanglements and History are closely brought together by means of a writing which aims to decipher how the original traumas have been handled by memory, both individual and collective, to determine specific walks of life or behaviours.

Jewish children in the Second World War, political refugees, outcasts all collide in these short stories to achieve a consistent portrait of conflicting selves, lost in dismembering and re-membling past images and beliefs and struggling to get to grips with present situations. In the midst of this chaos or 'empire of destruction' (to quote and translate Georges Didi-Huberman's phrase in *Génie du non-lieu*), what is captured by the subtle narrative devices at work in the texts is a series of intimate investigations into no-time, no-place areas of the self which eventually turn out to be fertilizing soils, paving the way for a new definition of identity and (self-)identification that our contemporary times and cultures are fully concerned with. My paper will examine how the vision of these blurred areas of the self conveyed by the narrative voices brings to the fore such issues which in turn lead to question the performative dimension of fiction, and even more so ourselves as 'storytelling species' (Nancy Huston) having to deal with such intricate material as one's and his/her-story.

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“Retrospective Voyeurism. The ‘Peephole Motif’ in Contemporary Holocaust Cinema”

The peephole in the door of the gas chamber is a recurring motif in contemporary Holocaust cinema, appearing across the whole spectrum of film genres, from Hollywood historical melodrama (*Schindler's List*) to horror film (*Apt Pupil*), from documentary (*Mr. Death*) to didactic film for youngsters (*The Devil's Arithmetic*), from European auteur film (*Kornblumenblau*) to exploitation cinema (Uwe Böll's *Auschwitz*). In most cases, the peephole is shown through the eye of an SS guard, thus associating the spectator's position with that of the perpetrator. The recurrence of this motif seems to reconfigure vicarious witnessing as «retrospective voyeurism», and can be considered from three intertwined perspectives. First, there is the question of the intrinsic voyeurism of the cinematic gaze, explored by feminist film studies. The debate on the «shower scene» in *Schindler's List* shows that the spectatorial

voyeurism has deeper ethical implications when confronted to the atrocity of the Holocaust. Besides, there is the issue of the limits of representation and the cultural codification of the gas chamber as a «no trespass» area of the gaze. This question was at the core of the Godard/Lanzmann debate on the alleged existence of gas chamber footage in Yad Vashem, and on the hypothetical choice to show it. Lastly, the recurrence of the peephole motif can be seen as a byproduct of the sacralization of the Holocaust. The ambiguous tabooization, fetishization and even eroticization of the gas chamber has attracted both the *sacré de respect* and the *sacré de transgression* (Caillois), which can take the form of «retrospective voyeurism».

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“Memory F(r)ictions: Penelope Lively’s *The Photograph* (2003)”

Penelope Lively’s *The Photograph* (2003) typically dissects the theme of memory using deceptively simple prose and realistic middle-class characters, associated to a complex use of time and of multiple narratives.

Glyn is forced to completely review his perception of his dead wife Kath when he discovers an old photograph. The novel relates how he tries to discover the truth about her, illustrating how present discoveries can radically undermine one’s memories of the past and how the comfortable fictions constructed through selective and false memories have to be reviewed in the light of newly discovered realities.

The novel also offers an interesting twist to the relationship between memory, experience and personal identity, as the whole narrative is created around a dead character that lives on as long she is remembered. Moreover, Kath goes on being constructed and reconstructed posthumously, as the different memories the other characters have of her clash and contradict one another to create an ambiguous, fluctuating and plural identity untethered to a specific moment in time. The new picture of Kath in turn transforms their perception of the past and their own sense of identity. The role played by memory in personal identity is thus limited by the fact that identity is relational and the script of a subject’s life is opened up to an alterity that was not constitutive of itself.

Glyn being a historian himself, the novel self-consciously performs what it represents, offering a reflexion upon the relationship between personal memory and both collective and historical memories. This poignantly rendered family story thus highlights the limits of memory that tends to clash with reality to create its own fictional worlds.

• **YEBRA, JOSÉ MARÍA**

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“Pat Barker’s *Regeneration*: Revisiting First World War Memory and the Poetry of Owen and Sassoon”

Pat Barker’s *Regeneration Trilogy* (1995) gained its author international acclaim. Many factors explain the success of the trilogy. However, for John Brannigan, it is the fact that few of the First-World-War combatants survived in the nineties to celebrate the Remembrance Day service that “meant that the subject was ripe for valedictory fictional representation” (2005: 93).

With Brannigan’s stance in mind, and when acts of remembrance for the victims, heroes and veterans of the Great War recur, my paper delves into *Regeneration* as a postmodern, trauma-inflected literary reappraisal of the conflict. It is a historical trilogy; yet, the events recalled are both so close and so far (their first-hand witnesses being dead) that our identification with the victims is as powerful as our disengagement from a world not our own

any more. Dominick LaCapra's "empathic unsettlement" as a desirable stand that avoids overidentification with victims of traumatic events is, the paper demonstrates, particularly useful in Barker's text since the traumatic episodes recalled are (mis)represented as a liminal territory for current readers.

Focusing on the first part of Barker's trilogy, this paper aims to explore whether what mattered in the 1990s when representing the Great War still holds today. I contend that Barker's text needs re-reading in view of first-centenary revivals of the Great War, particularly when it comes to anthologies (*The War Poems*, 2014) and biographies of poets like Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon.

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