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Photograph courtesy of WikiCommons

A car burns on the Grande Rue de Sèvres during France’s urban riots of 2005. France has seen civil unrest in the banlieues (suburbs), where citizens of North African descent live.

FRANCE’S MULTILINGUAL SPACES

by Annie Dimitrova, PhD Candidate
Department of French and Italian, University of Pittsburgh

Over the past 100 years, political shifts and wars in Europe have triggered migration, displacement, and exile. My broad research interests are in Francophone literature and cinema that depict these conflicts. Specifically, I am interested in the so-called “contact zones,” a term I borrowed from Mary Louise Pratt’s Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation (1992). Pratt defines contact zones as “social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination-like colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today.” I explore additional contact zones, Francophone spaces where Slavic Eastern European culture battles with the West. Working on Marcel Carné’s 1930s films prepared me for this project. I examined the language of France’s marginalized worker in two of Carné’s films, and thanks to a travel grant from EUCE/ESC, I presented a research paper, “Words as Weapons in Port of Shadows and Daybreak,” last spring during the 14th Annual Craft Critique Culture: “(Mis)Leading,” an Interdisciplinary Graduate Student Conference at the University of Iowa.

My contact zones work concentrates on the language of three marginalized groups that have lived in France and Québec for over 50 years. One such group, the beurs, are of North African descent and reside in the banlieues (suburbs). Postcolonial

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On Dec. 2, Dr. Gabriella Saputelli presented a lecture titled, “The Evolution of EU Citizenship in the European ‘Federalizing’ Process.” Dr. Saputelli, an EUCE/ESC Center Associate and researcher for the Institute for the Study of Regionalism and Self Government of the National Research Council in Rome, considered EU citizenship in light of the finding by the European Court of Justice that it “is intended to be the fundamental status of nationals of the Member States.” Pictured above left: EUCE/ESC Director Ron Linden presents Dr. Saputelli with a gift.

On Oct. 24, Dr. Michaël Aklin gave a lecture titled, “Sustainability Policies in the US & Europe: A Comparison of Sources and Outcomes.” Dr. Aklin, an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Pittsburgh, explored the sources of renewable energy policies both across continents and vertically within the European Union and the U.S. Focusing on international and comparative political economy, Dr. Aklin is a fellow at the Christopher H. Browne Center for International Politics, University of Pennsylvania, where he focuses on international and comparative political economy. His work has appeared or is forthcoming in American Journal of Political Science, International Studies Quarterly, Ecological Economics, Global Environmental Change, Environmental Science & Policy, and Environmental Economics & Policy Studies.
INVISIBLE BY DESIGN: RESEARCHING ART NOUVEAU AND THE CINEMA

by Lucy Fisher, Distinguished Professor
Film Studies Program, University of Pittsburgh

For several years, I have been engaged in a scholarly project that entails research in various West European nations. Specifically, it will result in a monograph that is now under contract with Columbia University Press and will investigate the role of the design movement Art Nouveau, which also is known as Jugendstil in Austria, Germany, or Modernisme in Spain, in the history of cinema. The movement was an international one that gained popularity after the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris and encompassed architecture; interior design; fabrications in glass, ceramics, wood, and metal; sculpture, fashion; and jewelry. To assist with my research in such places as Paris, Barcelona, Brussels, and Amsterdam, I have benefitted from travel grants from the EUCE/ESC.

In my research, however, I have found numerous relevant films to consider. For example, the early magic or trick films of Spaniard Segundo de Chomón, produced by Pathé in France, were made during the era of Art Nouveau’s ascendency (1890s-through the early 1920s). Others, however, followed somewhat after the movement’s heyday but still during the silent film era: The Thief of Bagdad (1924), Male and Female (1919), The Affairs of Anatol (1921), or Madame Peacock (1920). In all these works, an Art Nouveau aesthetic attaches to the films décor and costume, often drawing on Orientalist themes. Furthermore, these films are either works of fantasy (consonant with Art Nouveau’s valorization of the imagination) or about the upper-middle-classes (the stratum in which artifacts of the movement initially circulated).

But, in my research, I have not limited myself to films made in the era of Art Nouveau or shortly thereafter. Rather, I have looked for evidence of the movements’ influence in more contemporary cinema. In one case, I have focused on the idiosyncratic design of the Spanish architect Antoni Gaudí because there are a plethora of films that draw on the sites of his buildings or parks in Barcelona (e.g. The Passenger, Gaudí Afternoon, Vicky Cristina Barcelona, etc.) With a travel grant from the EUCE/ESC, I was able to visit Barcelona to explore the buildings in person as well as go to several other museums or architectural sites that were part of the Modernisme movement in Spain.

Since France is seen as the birth place of Art Nouveau (and several of the films I will consider are French), it was crucial to travel to Paris and visit the Musée des Arts Décoratifs as well as a museum housed in the historic restaurant Maxim’s. This coming summer, I will also visit the Musée Carnavalet, which has rooms reconstituting the famous shop of Art Nouveau jewelry designer Georges Fouquet, and Brasserie Julien, a famous Art Nouveau café that still exists intact. One of the French films I intend to consider, Summer Hours (2008), tells the story of a French ancestral country house that is being sold. Its contents are either given to relatives, put on the market, or donated to museums. A central object in the narrative is a desk by Louis Majorelles, a French Art Nouveau furniture designer from Nancy. In the film the desk is given to the Musée D’Orsay in Paris, and I intend to visit that museum to see its Art Nouveau collection. But in the past, I was able to visit Majorelle’s home town of Nancy which was the center of an entire school of Art Nouveau design involving such glass artists as Émil Gallé and the Daum family. In fact, there is an entire museum dedicated to the School of Nancy.

This coming summer, I will extend my research by travelling to Brussels where I will visit the historic Art Nouveau sites of architects Victor Horta and Henry van de Velde, as well as see jewelry designed by Philippe Wolfers. I will also travel to Amsterdam to tour one of the only Art Nouveau movie theaters still in existence (for a chapter on such venues): The Pathé Tuschinski, built in 1921. Like much of my earlier research travel, this trip will be funded by the EUCE/ESC.

There is precious little research monies available to most humanists and even less to scholars of a “newer” field like Film Studies. For this reason, the grants from the EUCE/ESC have been extraordinarily helpful to my research on Invisible by Design and on earlier projects, like my book Designing Women: Cinema, Art Deco and the Female Form (Columbia, 2003), which also required international travel.
Upcoming Deadlines

Course Development or Enhancement Grants
The EUCE/ESC is happy to announce the availability of course developments funds to faculty working on Europe or the European Union. Grants of $1,000-$4,000 are available and can be used for library research, travel, student assistance or other expenses related to the substance of the course. All full and part time TS and NTS faculty affiliated with the Center are eligible to apply. For more information, please contact Allyson Delnore (adelnore@pitt.edu). Deadline: March 1, 2015.

Klinzing Grant Competition in European Union Studies
The EUCE/ESC is proud to announce this year’s dissertation and pre-dissertation grant competitions, named in honor of former Vice-Provost of Research, George Klinzing. Grants are meant to facilitate graduate study on topics related to post-World War II European integration, broadly conceived. More information about the grants and application process can be found online. For more information, contact Allyson Delnore (adelnore@pitt.edu). Deadline: March 6, 2015.

Alberta Sbragia Fund for Graduate European Studies
The Alberta Sbragia Fund for Graduate European Studies was established in 2011 in honor of Dr. Sbragia’s commitment to education and mentoring of young scholars. Applications will be accepted from Pitt graduate students – currently ABD – for dissertation assistance, research or publication support, or travel to and research in relevant European countries. Applications for the Alberta Sbragia Fund can be submitted starting on February 15. For more information, contact Allyson Delnore (adelnore@pitt.edu). Deadline: March 15, 2015.

Francophone communities have long associated the French with colonization, and this perception has been reflected in the cultural conflicts between the banlieues and the middle and upper classes of French society. Another marginalized group consists of Eastern Europeans who migrated to France after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Compared to citizens in the banlieues, Eastern Europeans have played a much different role in France, mainly due to their linguistic assimilation and drive to be accepted culturally and economically in the new Western setting. For this group, during the Cold War, France was associated with the freedom to be found on the other side of the Berlin Wall.

The third marginalized group involves the French-speaking Canadians during and after the Quiet Revolution in Quebec. For the Quebecois, language is a crucial link to “la patrie,” or “la France métropolitaine,” keeping them stronger against any Anglophone influence and danger of assimilation (i.e. the British influence, the American and/or Anglo-Canadian cultural assimilation). Le joual, the common name for Quebecois’ linguistic features, highlights the constant tensions between the English speaking population and the Francophone community, and it has become a mark of identity since the Quiet Revolution. Thus, French language is related in different ways to the three Francophone groups and one can distinguish among banlieue French, Québecois French, and the French of the Eastern Europeans.

These groups share one major characteristic: they all communicate in French in their new milieu in France or in their long-established settlements in Quebec. Since the (French) language of the protagonists in novels and film is marked by the specific time and place where the characters function, I argue that the reason for the differences between the French languages used by the characters from the three

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This month, EUCE/ESC newsletter editor Gavin Jenkins interviewed Evgeny Postnikov, a professor at the University of Glasgow. Postnikov earned certificates in West European and EU Studies from the University of Pittsburgh in 2012. He also worked as the Library Research Advisor for the EUCE/ESC during the 2013-14 academic year while finishing his PhD from the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. A native of Nizhni Novgorod, Russia, Postnikov earned a Master’s degree in International Relations from Jacobs University Bremen and the University of Bremen in Germany in 2006. He received his undergraduate degree from Nizhniy Novgorod State University in Russia. His work has been published in several international outlets, such as the Journal of European Public Policy and the Journal of Common Market Studies.

Q: Growing up in Russia, how did you first become interested in international relations?

A: Everyone in my family was interested in politics, and my childhood coincided with the sweeping social, economic, and political changes in the Soviet Union and then Russia, so I absorbed a lot of what was discussed around me. As a child, I was also always interested in geography and learning about other countries. My two favorite books were the world atlas and the country encyclopedia. So my interest in international relations started very early.

Q: Your dissertation compared the US and EU Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs) with Chile and South Korea. What was doing the fieldwork like?

A: The fieldwork was very challenging but also rewarding. I had to conduct interviews in four different countries – the US, Belgium, Chile, and South Korea – including some with high-profile figures. I discovered I had detective skills, as getting access to the individuals I had to interview wasn’t always easy. The most challenging country for fieldwork by far was South Korea because of vast cultural differences and its traditional suspicion of foreigners. But I was lucky to have South Korean friends I could rely on and also the Pitt alumni network in Seoul. I was very fortunate to have the EUCE/ESC’s support in the form of dissertation and pre-dissertation fellowships for a lot of my fieldwork. But, I also had the Nationality Room Scholarship and some grants from GSPIA, International Business Center, and Asian Studies Center due to the cross-national nature of my research. Pitt is really unique in terms of all the great opportunities it offers to pursue research in almost any part of the world. I don’t think I could have done this kind of work at other institutions. Pitt’s network is truly global and the EUCE/ESC is a great way to get into it.

Q: What were the benefits of being the Library Research Advisor for the EUCE/ESC?

A: By being a Library Research Advisor, I supported myself during the final year of earning my PhD. I was on the academic job market, while also doing things I am passionate about, particularly advising students on their...
OPENING DOORS AT THE WRAB CONFERENCE IN PARIS

by Annette Vee, Assistant Professor
English Department, University of Pittsburgh

On a quiet side street in la Bastille, we stood in the dark outside the Centre de Recherches Interdisciplinaires, staring at its grand and tattered blue doors. I used my phone to navigate to the website where I’d been told I could ring their bell. I clicked the link and waited expectantly, though not quite believing that these prototypical Parisian doors could be coaxed open by pressing a finger to an American smartphone. But within a couple of minutes, our contact opened the huge doors: Bienvenue!

We were at Fabelier, a “makerspace” lab sponsored by the Centre de Recherches Interdisciplinaires and informally populated by computer and electronic hackers. I traveled to Paris to attend an international writing conference, Writing Research Across Borders (WRAB), hosted by the Université Paris-Ouest Nanterre La Défense. An EUCES/ESC grant helped support the trip, and visiting Fabelier became one of the highlights of my time there. I’d found Fabelier online through their website (fabelier.org) and had emailed with one of the lab’s leaders to arrange a visit for myself and colleagues from West Virginia University, George Mason, and the Oslo School of Architecture and Design. These kinds of labs are all over the world, sometimes affiliated with educational institutions, but more often not (Hack Pittsburgh in Uptown might be our local equivalent). Fabelier was interested in projects that they could learn from, projects that would hone their coding or wiring skills or teach them more about the city. Some interesting projects they described while we visited included one on building a device for individuals to keep track of water usage, in accordance with some recent regulations in Paris — and in defiance of the devices that were issued along with those regulations. And, bien sûr, we also learned how the doorbell worked.

I’d presented at the WRAB conference once before in the States, but this was its first European iteration. Attendees traveled from across the globe, and there was a huge contingent of French writing researchers. Presentations were required to be accessible to both French and English speakers. I presented in English, but had slides and handouts in French. I was eager to talk with European researchers about what concepts and practices of writing and literacy looked like to them.

My presentation was on Computer Programming as a New Form of Literacy, and I presented with a panel of researchers describing the “material turn” in writing studies. My argument in that presentation and in my book in progress is that literacy studies offers a useful historical and conceptual lens through which to look at computer programming. Presenting this work to a European audience allowed me to reconsider some assumptions I’d made about literacy based on Anglophone literacy research, which is more expansive. While European work tends to concentrate on qualitative and quantitative studies of textual practices, cutting-edge literacy work in English often focuses on literacies beyond reading and writing, especially digital literacies. While at the conference, I was able to connect with a couple of French literary scholars with affinities in their work.

I visited the Archives Nationale while in Paris, as well. My interests in the materiality of writing and literacy history made this visit fascinating, particularly since I was able to arrange a private viewing of some of the old archival boxes. I saw boxes stacked up against a sunny window (certainly not sound archival practices!), gilt boxes from the Renaissance, and 18th Century boxes reinforced with medieval parchment. The palimpsest of writing technologies was beautifully demonstrated in these boxes and my English graduate class on the Materialities of Writing thrilled at the pictures I brought home from this visit.

Through the WRAB conference and my trips to Fabelier and the Archives Nationale, my visit to Paris renewed my scholarship and interest in writing and literacy technologies across a long range of history. I am grateful for the EUCES/ESC grant and Hewlett funds that helped to support that visit.
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projects related to Europe. I also enjoyed being a part of the Center and being able to contribute to the important work it is doing. I really miss it!

Q: What classes or events at the EUCE/ESC stand out in your mind as helping you the most?

A: There were so many good ones! The EUCE/ESC is an intellectual hub for anyone doing work on Europe and I always tried to attend as many events as I could. Conver-sations on Europe video-conferences were on some of the current hot topics in EU affairs and were always great, all the guest speakers, some of whom were stars in their field, were a huge asset, and the graduate conference that I was involved in for four years was a tremendous professional opportunity. I always saw it as a great advantage to listen to the foreign diplomats invited by the Center. This is something that all aspiring international relations scholars should be really taking advantage of.

Q: What are you teaching at the University of Glasgow, and how do you like Scotland?

A: I am currently teaching an MSc course titled, “Chal-lenges in IR,” and team-teaching an undergraduate course, “Intro to IR.” I am also hoping to teach an honors course, “International Political Economy,” next year, and I will be the International Relations module con-venor in our joint MSc program with Nankai University in China, teaching “International Relations Theory.” The University of Glasgow attracts some of the best students from all over the world, and I am very excited about the opportunity to teach in China. I also had a chance to accompany our students on a trip to the EU institutions in Brussels last semester, which was a great experience. I really enjoy being in Scotland, especially during such an interesting time, and I find its natural beauty quite stunning. Glasgow reminds me of Pittsburgh in terms of its history, size, vibe, and livability. It is also great to be close to so many exciting places in Europe.

Q: What is your next research project? Are you still interested in how trade policy is linked to social issues?

A: I am still very much interested in international trade and social issues and have several ongoing projects that are linked to my dissertation research. One explores the role of civil society on EU trade policy-making after the Lisbon Treaty, another one tries to generalize my dissertation argument and compare the impact of EU and US trade agreements on environmental policy reform in the developing world, and the third one examines the diffusion of social standards in South-South trade agreements. I also would like to publish a monograph based on my dissertation. €

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groups is twofold. On one hand, it originates from the actual placement of the protagonists in the present (the actual political, economical and cultural frame of the location where the novel or film is set). On the other hand, the particularities of a character’s spoken French result from past influences (these are more distant contexts consisting of the history of their country and/or place of origin). In addition, although these three French-speaking groups differ greatly by their pasts and the challenges of the present, they share another common characteristic: the fight for survival in a Francophone environment. Thus, the language could be both a barrier for adaptation in a changing world and a basic tool for survival in a new environment. In such a situation, language is a complex indicator that displays the characters’ relations to their surroundings. It is like a prism through which readers and viewers can see the relationship between tradition and present, home and exile/return, adaptation versus exclusion/marginalization, etc. Some of the contact zones authors I focus on are the trans-lingual writers Dany Laferriere (Haitian), Jacques Godbout (Quebecois), Milan Kundera (Czeck), Andrei Makine (Russian). Filmmakers who reflect the contact zones clashes are the Dardenne Brothers (Belgium), Mehdi Charaf (France), and the internationally-acclaimed Polish directors Roman Polanski, Krzysztof Kieslowski and Andrzej Wajda. I am also interested in the Slavic Eastern European filmmakers and writers who have worked in France, or in French, since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. While some parallels can be made between the post-colonial and post-communist “(im)migration,” there are also many important differences due to the complexity of the region’s political and economic history. Although, the migration topic has been explored from various angles, for example in Christie McDonald’s book, French Global: A New Approach to Literary History, much of the scholarly interest in immigration in France has focused on former French colonies in North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, while
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the work of the Eastern European authors writing in French or the Eastern European filmmakers producing in France is not explored in depth. Moreover, much of the scholarship focused on the Eastern European writers and filmmakers focuses on one national context only, an approach that underestimates the multicultural importance of their artistic products.

From this perspective, working on Kieslowski, Polanski, and Wajda is extremely valuable for research. So far, it has been analyzed either from a national perspective, or from the point of view of the Western thought, leaving behind the fact that their films function as cultural bridges between these two worlds. To date, the lack of specific linguistic competence has hindered the work of film scholars in this direction and I hope to fill this gap. A proficiency in Polish is a must, since such linguistic skill is crucial to understanding their films. In order to understand their French films, one needs to look at these directors’ previous body of work in Polish and at archival materials in their native language. Thanks to the EUCE/ESC, which awarded me a fellowship that was funded by the Office of the Provost to support foreign language and area studies, I can continue exploring these topics, particularly the phenomenon of translanguaging. By exploring films in French and in Polish, as well as the films of other Eastern European directors, I will be able to draw conclusions about the social changes in Europe from an Eastern European perspective and compare them to the Western point of view. I hope that such work will contribute to discussions surrounding Eastern European input to French and European Cinema, an understudied area so far.

In addition, this research path will allow me to study the reception of these directors’ French-language films in Poland. I will be able to connect the Western point of view and the Eastern point of view on the Polish film production in France and the ongoing cultural processes in Europe as a whole. Then, I can tackle the complex question why the reception of the same films is different on both sides of the now defunct Berlin Wall. With the support of the Office of the Provost-funded fellowship, I will be able to continue this long term engagement with the Slavic Eastern European authors working in France or producing films in French.

The findings of this research underline that we live in a multicultural constantly changing world with shifting contact zones where languages reflects social clashes and political changes. Since one of the goals of my research is to identify the specifics of three important Francophone contact zones, I hope that my work will add nuance and complexity to current discussions of the multi-lingual literature and trans-national European co-productions in the realm of cinema. €