



FLUID IDENTITIES

Exploring (re)current societal challenges

+
Afterparty

MASTERFORUM DES ROMANISCHEN SEMINARS

19. Juli 2024, 9.30 – 18.00 Uhr

Seminarstraße 3, 69115 Heidelberg

Saal 0.20

MIT:

- Luca Greco
(Université de Lorraine Metz)
- Héctor Álvarez Mella
(Universität Heidelberg HCIAS)
- Emilian Ortega y Feili
(Universität Heidelberg RoSe)
- Ana Cristina Ostermann
(Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul,
National Council for Scientific and Technological Development,
Universität Heidelberg RoSe)

und Studierenden der Kontaktmaster



Since the dawn of time, humans have tried to understand their own essence. Considering that every era has its own unanswered questions, students from the Contact Master programs from the Romanisches Seminar are opening a gate and shining a light on some possible answers. In this occasion, the concept of identity will be discussed as a fluid phenomenon, particularly in a cultural field with thousands of years of history as the Romance one, enriched by its languages, literature and culture.

The Forum's topic "Fluid identities: Exploring (re)current societal challenges" aims to discuss identity as a central concept concerning its dynamic and fluctuating character in times of migration, mobility and globalization. Through an interdisciplinary approach, we will be able to analyse these major societal challenges from different cultural perspectives and multilingual discussions around them.

Considering such a complex framework and the wide range of potential approaches for these debates, two starting points will work as a base: interaction and contact. These two will perform as pillars to understand the influence of sociocultural power structures on identity construction and its fragmentary and heterogeneous character.

We cordially invite you to partake in these thought-provoking presentations of the second-year Master students. The important contributions by keynote speakers, appertaining to different departments and institutions, of their own research subjects with relation to our central topic will furthermore enhance this year's forum both thematically and methodologically.

SCHEDULE

9:30 – 9:45 Welcome:
B.A. Angela
D'Agostino García &
B.A. Sofia Escobedo
Calvo

9:45 – 10:45 Keynote speaker:
Prof. Dr. Luca Greco
**Multi-material
assemblages in
identity construction
practices:
a linguistic, queer
and post-human
perspective**
Discussion with Prof.
Dr. Ana Cristina
Ostermann

Coffee break

Chair B.A. Sina Helber

11:00 – 11:30 B.A. Annika Wüst
**Reflecting on racism and
sexism in Brazil: The
depiction of the role of
black women in the film
"Que horas ela volta?"**

11:30 – 12:00 B.A. Cris Vicario Godoy
**Portrays of the
sexual(ized) self – A post-
pornographic reading of
five short stories of
Roberto Bolaño**

Lunch break

Chair B.A. Zahra Fallahzadeh

13:30 – 14:20 Keynote speaker: Dr. Héctor
Álvarez Mella
**Intergenerational language
variation in bidialectal
families: the dialect of
Heritage Speakers of Spanish
in Germany**

14:20 – 14:50 B.A. Francisca Flores Galaz
**Influence of Spanish-speakers
in migratory contexts: a
sociolinguistic study among
young couples in Heidelberg,
Germany**

14:50 – 15:20 B.A. Theresa Klemm
**Catalan Identity – Language as
a tool for (self-)
characterization in political
journalism**

Coffee break

Chair B.A. Ekatarina Lomovskaya

15:30 – 16:00 B.A. Núria Baltrons León
**Fragmented identities: an
analysis of the unreliable
narrator in Machado de
Assis's *Dom Casmurro***

16:00 – 16:30 B.A. Daniele Migliori
**The demolition of the *Meta
Sudans* – an instance of
fascist artistic identity**

16:00 – 17:00 B.A. Amelie Endres
***El laberinto de la soledad* –
Reflections on a Mexican**

Coffee break

17:10 – 18:00 Keynote speaker: M.A.
Emilian Ortega y Feili
**Identities in contact:
a critique of the
substantialist discourse on
culture in the new right
movements**

18:00 – 18:15 Final discussion and closing:
B.A. Annabella
Scognamiglio

Party in the garden
with buffet and live music of Francisco
Estrella



Prof. Dr. Luca Greco

Professor of Linguistics at the University of Metz since 2018, Prof. Dr. Luca Greco is particularly interested in the performative and embodied nature of language. As an expert in ethnographic, interactional and multisemiotic approach to categorisation, he will be the first keynote speaker to start our forum with an insightful talk on identity construction in the prenatal state. Besides cultural and gender studies, his main skills also include discourse analysis, categorisation, multimodality, gender, performance, semantics and conversation analysis. He obtained his PhD in 2002 at the EHESS Paris on interaction, context and cognition and habilitated in 2012 at the Université Lumière Lyon 2 on the Practices of categorisation, gender and interaction.

Multi-material assemblages in identity construction practices: a linguistic, queer and post-human perspective

Based on a fieldwork conducted in a maternity service, in Nancy (France), this paper will investigate the queerness of the fetus, an entity whose definition within the lens of the human is not taken for granted and it represents a real issue in the political controversies about the anti-abortion rights. Situated within an interdisciplinary theoretical and methodological framework, crossing queer and posthuman studies, interactional and multimodal approaches (Greco 2019, 2023), I will show how the fetus presents some ideal-typical characteristics of queer subjectivity in the prenatal ultrasound sessions I videotaped: a body whose intelligibility is severely tested in ultrasound sessions, a subject recalcitrant to showing its «true» sex, a source of fear and surprise.

Understanding the queerness of fetal identity contributes to the construction of a reverse discourse to anti-abortion campaigns that tend to humanize fetuses, which will also be analyzed in the course of this paper. Thinking of fetuses as cyborgs composed of several types of materialities - linguistic, technological, visual - will enable me to propose a sort of third way to the debate between queer and neo-material studies around the material dimension of categories (Barad 2003, Butler 1993). Within a linguistic, multimodal, queer approach, the aim of this paper will be to apprehend fetal corporealities as trans-corporealities, multi-material assemblages, transcending and questioning the boundaries between the human and the non-human, the linguistic and the corporeal, i.e. hybrid forms of life in tension and in movement at the crossroads of the aesthetic and the political.

Barad, K. (2003) Posthumanist Performativity : Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter. In *Signs : Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, vol. 28, n° 3, p. 801-831

Butler, J. (1993) *Bodies that matter*, London, Routledge.

Greco, L. (2023) Gender as a scientific experiment. Some notes for a queer ethnomethodology. In P. Sormani & D. vom Lehn (eds.) *The Anthem Companion to Harold Garfinkel*, London: Anthem Press, pp. 119-138.

Greco, L. (2019) Le genre tactile : repenser les imbrications entre la parole et la matière au prisme de l'imagination et de l'expérience. In *GLAD ! Revue sur le langage, le genre, les sexualités*. <https://journals.openedition.org/glad/1714>

journals.openedition.org/glad/1714

Prof. Dr. Ana Cristina Ostermann

Prof. Dr. Ostermann is currently working as a professor at the Applied Linguistics Department – Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) and as a Senior Research Fellow at the National Council for Scientific and Technological Development. She will not only attend our panel discussions, but will also join Heidelberg University for her research. Her main fields of interest are conversation analysis, applied linguistics, gender studies, critical discourse analysis and social anthropology. Having worked with data similar to the one Luca Greco uses in his presentation, it is an honor that she can do the introduction to this keynote.



Annika Wüst

Reflecting on racism and sexism in Brazil: The depiction of the role of black women in the film "Que horas ela volta?"
Refletindo sobre racismo e sexismo no Brasil através do cinema: O papel da mulher negra em "Que horas ela volta?"

Racism and sexism are structural forms of violence in Brazil and a result of colonization and slavery which have a tremendous impact on black women in Brazil in particular and oppress them. Nowadays, these problems are not only revealed by femicides against (black) women or police violence against black people, which represent the highest form of racist and sexist violence, but also by more subtle forms of discrimination. Gilberto Freyre used a romanticized approach to the role models of black women in his work. For example, the role of the Mãe Preta is still present in Brazil today, as can be seen from the fact that most empregadas domésticas and babás in Brazil are black women. This issue is also addressed in cinematic works such as "Que horas ela volta?" (Muylaert, 2015).

The aim here is to analyze the film "Que horas ela volta?" in terms of the stereotypes of black women in order to illustrate the power structures and oppression of these women. To this end, it will first be outlined what the terms sexism and racism mean, how these problems relate to each other from an intersectional perspective and how these problems manifest themselves in Brazil. The historical circumstances that have contributed to the current situation of (black) women and black people in Brazil will also be discussed. Subsequently, the role models of black women in Brazil will be analyzed in particular. The methodological framework for the analysis will be the work "Racismo e Sexismo na Cultura Brasileira" by the author Lélia Gonzales as well as the literature analysis from a feminist perspective, in order to subsequently analyze how the characters are portrayed over the course of the film.

Cris Vicario Godoy

Portrays of the sexual(ized) self - Post-pornographic reading of five short stories of Roberto Bolaño.

Retratos del yo sexual(izado): una lectura post-pornográfica de cinco cuentos de Roberto Bolaño.

Post-pornography as an artistic and activist movement seeks the subversion of hegemonic stances on gender identity, sexuality and body policies. Through feminist and queer reinterpretations and appropriations of porn, dominating conventions of the form and content of this medium are overthrown, enabling new ways of portraying sexual identities.

Chilean author Roberto Bolaño often experiments with other genres and media in his literary work, such as the press, cinema and pornography. This presentation analyzes five of his short stories, “Compañeros de celda”, “Joanna Silvestri”, “Vida de Anne Moore”, “Prefiguración de Lalo Cura” and “Putas asesinas”, from a post-pornographic literary perspective. By studying the different focalization and narration types, the interfaces between reality and fiction, the depiction of sex scenes, desire and pleasure, the use of gendered stereotypes and the interplay between the personal and the political, the narrative and sexual agency of the characters will be construed. The work will, for one, highlight the importance of finding new, breaking ways of sexual representation in line with post-pornography and, for another, reveal whether Bolaño’s literary work could and should be considered part of this movement.



Dr. Héctor Álvarez Mella

After completing his Master’s degree in Philosophy and Sociology of Science (University of Oviedo) and in Translation Studies (University of Heidelberg), Dr. Héctor Álvarez Mella completed his doctorate at the University of Heidelberg in 2020 with an interdisciplinary thesis on the function of language mediation in the internationalization of culture and trade. As a research associate at Heidelberg University, he is particularly interested in cultural and social science analyses of multilingualism, education, internationalization, interculturality and demographic dynamics. He will present his work about intergenerational language variation in bidialectal families remaining within the perspective of sociology and cultural studies.

Intergenerational language variation in bidialectal families: the dialects of Heritage Speakers of Spanish in Germany.

The work discusses the processes of intergenerational language variation in bidialectal families with Spanish-speaking immigrant back-

grounds. The discussion is based on the analysis of interviews with Spanish-speaking families of different origins living in Germany. The focus is on the language transmission dynamics within the three main socialization spaces of heritage speakers (family, education and community) that contribute both to the appropriation of features from their varieties of origin and to convergence towards more neutral or standard varieties. The methodology proposed for the study is based on the narrative-ethnographic approach, which makes it possible to understand the construction of multilingual repertoires based on life history and life experience. The analysis explores whether and how families discursively address dialectal convergence and divergence dynamics in their family language policies. The analysis offers both new perspectives on the development of the deterritorialized Spanish of heritage speakers and a critical examination of the combination of methods from the family language policy approach and perceptual dialectology. The analysis of intergenerational language variation is also relevant for understanding the formation of heritage languages and processes of language change in the migration era.

Francisca Flores Galaz

Influence of Spanish-speakers In migratory contexts: A sociolinguistic study among young couples in Heidelberg, Germany.
Influencia de los habitantes de español en tontextos migratorios: Un estudio sociolingüístico entre parejas jóvenes en Heidelberg, Alemania.

The study of language contact resulting from migration has become a pivotal area in sociolinguistic research. This phenomenon significantly impacts dialectal variation and language change, providing promising insights into sociolinguistic dynamics within multilingual communities, often shaped by power relationships. Through an interdisciplinary approach combining linguistics and socio-cultural studies, this work aims to reflect on the broader implications of these findings for understanding multilingualism, cultural diversity, and identity in the contemporary context of global migration. The migration of Spanish speakers to German cities, such as Heidelberg, presents a relevant case study to explore the effects of language contact on dialectal variation, particularly in a setting where German and English are dominant. The central questions guiding this research are: How does the migration of Spanish speakers in Heidelberg influence Spanish dialectal variation? How does this phenomenon affect the communication of young couples in this context? How significant is the use of Spanish for them, and how do they use it in different areas of their lives? Is the language perceived as a crucial pillar of identity, belonging, and culture? Using qualitative research methods, this study involves two key components: (1) An informal evening gathering of two couples, featuring dinner and games, designed to observe natural interactions, and (2) A focus group discussion where the same participants reflect on their experiences using Spanish and the possible connections between language, identity, and culture, both during the activity and in their daily lives in Heidelberg. The results are expected to provide a better understanding of linguistic diversity by documenting and analysing the linguistic phenomena observed within the Spanish-speaking community of Heidelberg.





Daniele Migliori

The demolition of the Meta Sudans – an instance of fascist artistic identity.

La demolizione della Meta Sudans – un esempio di identità artistica fascista.

This presentation aims to unveil the Italian fascist identity when applied onto the demolition of the Meta Sudans during the construction of the Roman Via dei Fori Imperiali and Via dei Trionfi in 1933. The results of this analysis will be achieved through the methods of art history with architectural as well as ideological groundworks and through the theoretical approaches of monumentalization and spectacularity dealt in Néstor Garcia Canclini's work *Hybrid cultures: strategies for entering and leaving modernity* (2005).

The relevance of this topic is given by the exceptional value of this rather microscopic event and its relationship with multiple identities: here the fascist identity will relate and clash with the futurist identity, with the Italian and Roman identity in the framework of the ideological concept of the "Third Rome", as well as with a pinch of the Republican Italian identity. All these multiple concepts find representation in standing symbolic monuments in the city of Rome to this day, such as the EUR complex and the Vittoriano. While this analysis is still in progress, this presentation aims not only to clarify the means of fascist ideological art policies within this clash of multiple artistic and national identities, but also to have a deeper understanding of the meaning of these findings in the contemporary Italy and Europe.

1 Garcia Canclini, Néstor (2005). *Hybrid cultures: strategies for entering and leaving modernity*. Minneapolis [a.o]: Univ. of Minnesota Press.

Amelie Endres

El laberinto de la soledad – Reflections on a Mexican Identity.

El laberinto de la soledad – Reflexiones acerca de una identidad mexicana.

In his essay "El laberinto de la soledad" (1950), the Mexican writer Octavio Paz reflects on Mexican identity. According to Paz, the reason for the ambivalent identity of the Mexicans lies in Mexico's historical past, in particular in the conquest of the Aztec Empire by the Spanish colonizers, which he also considers to be the starting point of the Mexican people. This presentation aims to concretize Paz's concept of Mexican identity by analyzing his essay "El laberinto de la soledad". Hence, what does he understand by Mexican identity? How have the socio-political events in Mexico's history influenced society and thus perhaps contributed to a Mexican identity?





Theresa Klemm

Catalan Identity – Language as a tool for (self-)characterization in political journalism.

La identitat catalana – l'ús de la llengua com a eina de (auto-)caracterització en el periodisme polític.

Although from an outside observer's perspective, the Catalan aspirations for independence and the unremitting conflicts in Spanish territory appear to be fought in the form of a political trial of strength, it goes far beyond. This presentation shall provide a sociolinguistic analysis of how language is used for the (self-)characterization of the Catalan community in the context of the troubled relation between Spain and Catalonia.

First, following the notion of states as political institutions and the interdependence of political autonomy and national identity supported by Catalan philosopher R. de Ventós, the catalysts for the Catalan independence movement shall be examined. Based on this approach, special attention will be paid to the significance of language not only as an identity-forming tool, but also as a weapon against a community's linguistic vulnerability. The methodical approach will be the specific investigation and comparison of a selected number of Catalan and Spanish newspaper reports, referring to the 2017 Catalan independence referendum on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to the current public atmosphere regarding of Spain's Congress of Deputies granting amnesty for Catalan separatists. The intention is to show how and to what extent political situation and power balance are tangibly represented in the public use of language and influences self-identification and the characterization of others.

Núria Baltrons León

Fragmented identities: an analysis of the unreliable narrator in Machado de Assis's dom casmurro.

Identidades fragmentadas: un análisis del narrador no fiable en Dom Casmurro de machado de assis.

This presentation addresses unreliability as a literary strategy for the construction of the narrator's identity in "Dom Casmurro" (1899), a work by the nineteenth-century Brazilian writer Machado de Assis. Bento Santiago, the narrator, eager to convince the reading public of a story over which he holds a narrative monopoly, fails to blur his untrustworthy nature. Consequently, there is a tension between identity and difference: the identity the narrator portrays, based on his self-awareness, does not align with the reader's interpretation of that identity. Bento's inability to appear consistent with his self-description is revealed through a persuasive game that



ultimately encompasses deceptive and inconsistent writing, often supported by intertextuality as a narrative tool.

Given this scenario, the subsequent analysis aims to highlight the unreliable discursive elements, in order to discover how they have been constructed in relation to the narrative voice. The results will demonstrate the crucial role of intertexts with respect to the formation of the narrator's own identity through other characters' identities. At the same time, the examination of specific intertextual references to be found in the novel – from Faust through Genesis to Dante and Montaigne – reveals how this device serves as a key resource for the construction of unreliability. The intention of examining the narrator's unreliability and its effect on the critical reader is to show how the creation of a fictional identity is linked to certain discursive practices and how it influences the contact of one's own perception with external expectations and perceptions.

M.A. Emilian Ortega y Feili

In his position as PhD student and research assistant at the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Heidelberg, in the field of Ibero-American literature and cultural studies, he specializes in Latin American cultural philosophy, the points of contact between literary and philosophical discourse, the critical theory of the Frankfurt School and ideas of modernity in Latin America. In his presentation, he will introduce us to a critique of the substantialist discourses on culture in the new right movements.

Identidades en contacto: una crítica a los discursos substantialistas de la cultura en los nuevos movimientos de extrema derecha.

¿Pueden las identidades en la cultura contactarse? ¿Pueden abrirse a la estructura de la reciprocidad, darle presencia en sí a lo otro y entonces modificarse autoafirmativamente o implica esto necesariamente introducir en sí una diferencia que las niega en cuanto identidades?

Este problema de “teoría de la cultura” ha estado, sin embargo, en el centro de la construcción de sujetos políticos y culturales en la civilización moderna y, particularmente en nuestra era “globalizada”, entra en crisis. En especial la extrema derecha, salida de la gran derrota de la Segunda Guerra Mundial y con la necesidad de renovarse, ha aprovechado desde los años setenta del siglo XX este nivel de construcción del discurso político moderno para radicalizar su carácter excluyente y afirmar sus proyectos políticos, culturales e ideológicos con un grado de efectividad y peligrosidad que hoy resultan evidentes no sólo en Europa sino en todo el mundo.

En esta presentación indagaremos, a partir del concepto de identidad evanescente de Bolívar Echeverría, la posibilidad o imposibilidad del contacto profundo y recíprocamente afirmativo entre las identidades culturales.



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