The Center for International Education is pleased to introduce its 2014/15 Global Studies Research Fellows: Professors Joel Berkowitz (Yiddish Studies), Elizabeth Drame (Exceptional Education), Maria Gillespie (Dance & Choreography), Xin Huang (Women’s Studies), and Andrew Kincaid (English). As the Center celebrates fifteen years of research growth and creativity, we are pleased to share this issue of Intersections with the campus community. Our theme for interdisciplinary research this year is translation. Building on the strengths of Translation and Interpreting Studies at UWM, translation is understood here in its most expansive, transdisciplinary sense: translation as exchange, migration, and mobility, including media circulation and cross-cultural communication within the context of globalization. Historically, Translation Studies was largely normative (telling translators how to translate). But as the discipline has grown and expanded, Translation Studies has borrowed from an array of disciplines that support and inform it: Comparative Literature, Computer Science, History, Linguistics, Philology, Philosophy, Media Studies, Semiotics, and Terminology, among others. While traditionally addressing the movement and history of ideas, languages, and cultures, translation is also a recurring concept in Science and Technology Studies where it invokes the relational agency of humans and nonhumans within actor-networks. On April 23-25th, CIE will hold its annual conference on the theme of translation, and we invite everyone to join us as we take up questions of what is translatable, untranslatable, and by/for whom—in sum, the politics of translation in the widest sense of the term.

Patrice Petro - Vice Provost for International Education

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Yiddish Holocaust Drama: Hiding in Plain Sight
by Joel Berkowitz

“Good luck with the book on Yiddish drama and the Shoah. I doubt that you’re going to find much out there.” Thus came the good wishes offered by a theatre historian during an email exchange about Holocaust drama. He had contacted me not long before with a query about a little-known Yiddish playwright, which led me to mention that I was working on a book examining how Yiddish playwrights grappled with the rise of Nazism, the Holocaust (or Shoah), and the aftermath of World War II.

“I doubt you’re going to find much out there.” Though his prediction was incorrect, it wasn’t unreasonable, given the paltry work that has been done on the subject so far. A number of anthologies of the so-called “Theatre of the Holocaust” have been published in English, containing plays originally written in various languages: especially Hebrew, German, English, and French. A number of those playwrights have enjoyed international success, and in some cases, widespread translation: for example, Joshua Sobol (Israel), George Tabori (Austria), and Jean-Paul Grumberg and Charlotte Delbo, both from France. Yiddish plays about the Holocaust, on the other hand, have been all but invisible to non-Yiddish readers. What is perhaps more remarkable is that they have been almost entirely overlooked by Yiddish readers. And with a tiny handful of exceptions, scholars of both Yiddish literature and Holocaust theatre and drama have barely noticed this subject so far.

At the time of that email exchange, early in the summer of 2014, I had begun working on a planned monograph that was to revolve around the works of several playwrights, each of whom dramatized various aspects of the Shoah in multiple plays. Few if any of the plays were well known to non-Yiddish speakers. Some had once been performed extensively in Yiddish, but have since all but vanished from view. Some were never very well known even in the Yiddish-speaking world. All of the plays I originally had in mind for the book project, though, were written by tremendously talented writers who turned important insights about the Holocaust into the stuff of exciting works of drama that deserve to be better known.

My colleague’s query gave me pause, though. It did not make me consider switching to Israeli Holocaust drama, which he suggested would be more fruitful territory. In a way, he inadvertently sent me in the opposite direction: farther off the beaten path, seeking out even less-well-known Yiddish plays and playwrights. I went there not just for the sake of it, but to tell a more complete story about the role the Holocaust played in wartime and postwar Yiddish drama, and about the place of those dramas in wider cultural contexts, including but not limited to Yiddish culture, Jewish culture more broadly, and the treatment of the Shoah in various art forms, and in many different languages.

The playwright my colleague had initially asked me about was Moyshe (or Morris) Freed, who was born in Lodz, Poland; immigrated to the United States as a young man; and settled in Patterson, New Jersey, where he spent most of the rest of his life. Freed’s work in various genres was published in a number of periodicals, and also he published a volume of six one-act plays, The Survivors3 (1952). All six had been translated into English, which was how my colleague, who does not read Yiddish, could work on them, and the fact that someone from outside of Yiddish Studies was examining this nearly unknown Yiddish writer made me wonder, “What else am I overlooking?”

The initial idea for my book was to focus on several playwrights and their Holocaust dramas; these writers’ personal stories are all compelling. One, the Polish-born Alter Kacyzne, was a talented playwright, fiction writer, and photojournalist who addressed conflicts between Jews and Christians throughout his oeuvre. He was one of the first Yiddish playwrights to begin, in the mid-1930s, exploring the implications of the rise of the Nazis to power. And he himself fell victim to them, dying in a Nazi-orchestrated pogrom in Tarnopol, Ukraine, in 1941. Another Polish-born writer, Haim Sloves, emigrated to Paris as a young man, and became a successful lawyer there. Surviving the Nazi occupation, he began writing plays during the war. His plays were probably more widely produced in the 1940s and 1950s than those of any other contemporary Yiddish writer.2 And then there was H. Leivick, one of the towering figures of modern Yiddish literature. Twice imprisoned as a young man for his radical political activities, Leivick escaped from Siberia, made his way to the United States in the early 1920s, and went on to become a prolific, and highly respected, poet, playwright, and critic.

Other dramatists, about whom much less is known, also figured prominently in my idea for the book—and they still do. But realizing that there might be far more Yiddish drama written about Nazism and the Shoah than I, or anyone else, had been aware of, I went back to the drawing board. From this research came, in the form of a book that would become my guide for much of the rest of the summer: Ezra Lahad’s Yiddish Dramatic Works, Original and Translations: A Bibliography. Lahad (1918-1995) was born in Minsk, educated at a secondary school in Vilnius, and then emigrated to Palestine in 1935. He served in the Israeli Defense Forces for a number of years after Israeli independence, and ultimately became editor of the Israeli navy’s official bulletin. After leaving the military, he edited a periodical published by the city of Haifa.4

2 Some were also produced in French, translated by the author himself, as well as in German and Hebrew.
Lahad’s lasting contribution to Hebrew and Yiddish letters are several bibliographies of material published in each of those languages (and sometimes the two combined; for example, in Yiddish and Hebrew Literary Works in the Ghetto).5 Among these is his magisterial guide to every Yiddish play ever published. (Such is its purpose, in any case; for what it’s worth, I have yet to come across a title he missed.) Lahad not only includes bibliographic information for some 2,800 titles, but also sets out to include every edition of every play. If, for example, Play X was first published in a literary journal in 1907, then in its author’s collected works in 1928, and yet again in an anthology of Yiddish plays issued in 1962, Lahad lists each version under a single number: e.g. 52a, 52b, 52c. Lahad is the great sherpa of published Yiddish drama, and had guided me through this terrain more than once before.

Now I returned to Lahad with a couple of new questions: Had enough Yiddish Holocaust plays, beyond what I was already considering, been published to lead me to broaden my scope? And if so, how many more? The answer to the first question would quickly become an emphatic “yes.” A precise answer to the second will have to wait a few years, but the provisional answer is “more than anyone ever realized.”6 In the meantime, it is clear that this body of dramatic literature is sufficiently large for me to take my monograph in a dramatically different direction. No longer focusing on just a handful of writers and their work, I plan to paint on a much broader canvas, attempting to characterize the scope, variety, achievements, key themes, and significance of Yiddish Holocaust drama.

Reaching just this point took a number of weeks of shuttling between Lahad and a few other fundamental resources. To start with, I began making my way through every entry in the bibliography published in or later than 1933, when Adolph Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany and the Nazi Party began to attain real power. Everything published from 1933 onward would be considered possibly relevant to my project, unless and until I could determine that it was not. Of the couple of hundred plays published during that period—a number of them one-acts, including many plays written for children, and many full-length works—I was able at the outset to rule out a couple of dozen with which I was already familiar.

By the same token, of course I was already familiar with some plays that could definitely be ruled in. A handful of others could be immediately included by virtue of their titles: for example, Gershon Aynbinder’s In a Nazi Prison (1937), Moshe Katz’s The Nazi’s Jewish Daughter (1946), or Sarah Davidowitz’s Hitler’s Victims (1969). So much for the truly low-hanging fruit, though there were still some branches within reach if I stretched a bit. Much of the initial work of trying to figure out how large a body of work I was dealing with involved flipping back and forth between the list in progress and three resources: Lahad’s bibliography; the Yiddish Internet Archive;7 and the WorldCat database, where I could locate, and then order via interlibrary loan, any titles not available to me online.

Many of the plays I came across in Lahad could be found in the Internet Archive, which includes among other things a significant and ever-growing library of digitized texts. Whenever I did locate plays that might be Holocaust-related, the first place to look was the title page and cast of characters. That process added some additional titles. The cast of characters of Leon Bernstein’s The Day After (1946), for example—a play whose combination of title and publication date is suggestive but by no means definitive—announce its setting: the Vilna Ghetto, 1941. Casts of characters that include details like “Fritz and Hans: two German soldiers” are almost certainly a giveaway, though one might eventually learn that the play is set in the first rather than the second World War. Scanning other casts of characters occasionally turned up similarly telling details: characters described as, say, “an inhabitant of the ghetto,” “a Red Army soldier,” etc.

So far, so good. I was gradually unearthing titles of plays I had never heard of, many of them by playwrights who were similarly unknown to me. What of the rest, though? My list, currently containing over one hundred plays I have identified as definitely dealing in some way with Nazism, the Shoah, and its aftermath, still has dozens of titles with question marks next to them: plays that cannot be readily ruled in or out simply by virtue of their title, setting, or cast of characters. But I have already developed a few rules of thumb to suggest where further investigations are likely to lead:

1. If a playwright wrote at least one relevant drama, there is a high likelihood that one or more other works by that playwright will turn out to be relevant.
2. The study will likely include many biblical plays. Certain topics are particularly likely: for example, the stories of Noah (post-apocalypse), Esther (attempted genocide, in this case with a happy ending), and the Maccabees (guerilla warfare against a seemingly invincible oppressor). My working hypothesis is that most of the biblical plays on my list will turn out to be relevant, including quite a few about Saul and David, the first kings of ancient Israel.
3. Rule 2, though, may bring up some red herrings, particularly Esther-themed.

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6 I constantly encounter new examples of the near-invisibility of Yiddish Holocaust drama, even within the key fields of specialization with which it intersects. Take, for example, the recently published Holocaust Literature: A History and Guide, edited by David G. Rokitos and Naomi Diamant (Waltham, MA: University Press of New England, 2012). The authors offer this “working definition”: “Holocaust literature comprises all forms of writing, both documentary and discursive, and in any language, that have shaped the memory of the Holocaust and been shaped by it.” That presumably includes drama, but only a small handful of plays or productions are even mentioned in the book—none of them written or performed in Yiddish. If one turns to the world of theatre studies, the situation is hardly better. The largest directory of Holocaust plays can be found at the National Jewish Theater Foundation’s Holocaust Theater Catalog (http://htc.miami.edu). Of some 550 plays currently listed in the catalog, about half a dozen were originally written in Yiddish. To their credit, the people in charge of the catalog see it as a work in progress, and welcomed my input when I asked them some questions about their selection process (email exchange with Arnold Mittelman and Alvin Goldfarb, Nov. 4, 2014). But the numbers as they currently stand offer a telling snapshot of our current state of knowledge, even among people who are dedicated to identifying, publicizing, and producing Holocaust drama.
7 https://archive.org/details/nationalyiddishbookcenter
children’s plays. Yiddish writers penned dozens of children’s plays, particularly revolving around the festive holiday of Purim. The holiday lends itself to metaphors of persecution and survival, and at least a few of those plays belong in my study. But many, and perhaps even most, Purim plays for children written after 1933 are probably not commentaries on the Holocaust. Sometimes a Purim play is just a Purim play.

Yet even as the list of the plays to include becomes clearer, many judgment calls will remain. Some plays necessarily belong in the corpus of Yiddish Holocaust drama by virtue of their setting and content. This includes plays I originally had in mind, such as Leivick’s *The Miracle in the Ghetto* (1944), a naturalistic though fictionalized dramatization of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, and Sloves’s *Avengers* (1947), a metatheatrical drama about a theatre troupe performing the story of Jewish partisans who carry out a failed assassination attempt on a high-ranking Gestapo officer in occupied Paris. But what about another Sloves masterpiece, *Haman’s Downfall*, which he started early in the war but did not publish until 1949? There is no direct reference to World War II in this lively verse comedy based on the book of Esther, but as Annette Aronowicz, the world’s leading authority on Sloves, has argued, the play can be read in part as a championing of Communist resistance to Fascism. While I find this persuasive, it is not completely self-evident.

To put it slightly differently, in order to fully answer the question “Which of these are Holocaust dramas?” one must first answer the question, “What is a Holocaust drama?” Both questions and many related ones, will occupy me as my research progresses.

8 A favorite title is Pinkhes Berniker’s *Hitlerschtum* (1944), a startling pun on “homentashn”—the delicious, fruit-filled cookie associated with Purim, named after the villain of the story, Homen or Haman (depending on one’s pronunciation). “Homentashn” means “Haman’s pockets.”

9 That event took place just a year earlier, making Leivick was one of the first writers, in any language or genre, to turn that event into a work of literature.

**International disability policy, discourse and Critical Disability Theory**

Critical disability theory (CDT) is a perspective that allows scholars and practitioners alike to confront the inequities created when a group of people are viewed as less able and less capable than others (Pothier & Devlin, 2006). CDT challenges society to critique the deficit lens that colors language, discourse, images, and actions towards those who do not fit societal norms about ableness. Critical disability theory can serve as a tool for examining well-intentioned international policies intended to support the human rights of individuals with disabilities, but which could have the opposite effect. Disability is viewed as a social construct rather than an innate, predetermined reality resulting from some type of impairment. As such, CDT seeks to dissect the language, attitudes, and values of societies, among other factors, which result in systemic inequities.

Focusing on four key themes, Pothier and Devlin (2006) provide a strong theoretical framework for this critical examination. The themes included within this framework are: a) language, definitions, and voice; b) contextual politics and the politics of responsibility and accountability; c) philosophical challenges; and d) citizenship/dis-citizenship. Words and images used to describe or label disability have a strong and enduring influence on conceptions and perceptions of disability and the status people with disabilities occupy in society. Even when attempts are made to use alternate, non-stigmatizing labels, there is still the risk that the discourse around disability results in disempowerment, devaluation, and dehumanization. To preserve the social rights and equality of people with disabilities, the reinforcement of the social construction of disability on a foundation of deficit-oriented labeling, attitudes, values, and discourse needs to be challenged, particularly in national and international policy.

Susan J. Peters conducted a critical examination of international disability policy mandates in 2007, operating from the perspective that policy could be viewed as capturing critical discourse rather than solely as a neutral representation of official decisions. This discourse—captured in the language of key policy documents—communicates historical shifts in power relationships. Discourse codified in policy language are value-laden; they can and should be deconstructed to understand underlying subtexts related to disability rights. In particular, Peters examines how different interpretations of key terms (e.g. “appropriate”) embodied in policy language can be used to justify specific actions that may or may not infringe on the basic human rights of people with disabilities.

Peters traces historical changes in the discourse around disability evident within the context of international policy documents between 1960 and 2007. This time period chronicles a movement from a welfare-oriented view of disability, where people needed caretakers, to a human and social rights-based approach. Within the educational arena, she examines the shift to preventing and eliminating discrimination in education by providing access to educational environments, even though they were separate. Subsequently and in tandem with the civil rights movement, Peters highlights the change in policy language from access to separate-but-equal educational facilities to a focus on the individual’s need for specific potential-oriented services as a means of ensuring integration to the all aspects of life (family, economic, employment, recreation). This policy shift represented a change in consciousness about disability, reflecting increasing awareness that disability is an experience that all people can have and that dis/ablement should be viewed as part of normal life experience.

The change in focus shifted the onus from the individual to an examination of systemic contextual factors such as attitudes, resources, and physical environments, all of which impact the life outcomes of people with disabilities. At times, conflicting international policies were simultaneously developed in different contexts, muddying the waters of progress. For example, in 1989, the Tallinn Guidelines began the discourse on continuum of educational placements for children with disabilities in schools (e.g. general education, resource, separate classes and/or schools) and recognized that diversity exists within the population of persons with disability (e.g. deafness, gender, culture, language). In contrast, Peters states that the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990 shifted the policy discourse back to a medical, deficit-oriented model focused on individual shortcomings. At the same time, the 1990 Education for All movement stressed a social model of disability mandating equal educational access, with educational organizations accountable for providing resources and funding to ensure access and equity. The Salamanca Statement, referenced prior, emphasized human difference as part of a normal continuum. This document placed a strong focus on abilities rather than disabilities and promoted a broader conception of disability existing across the life span.

This much is clear: mere access is not sufficient. Policies like these can open the doors and provide seats in a school, but do not result in equal opportunity to learn and grow within that space. Tracing the implications of shifting perceptions embedded in the discourse in international policies related to the rights of individuals with disabilities, as well as the resulting impact on how these individuals are treated, viewed, and included, is one approach to critical reflection using a CDT lens.

**Inclusion in Senegal, West Africa: reality or dream**

When the impact of one international mandate, Education for All, is examined within the context of Senegal, West Africa, clear challenges are evident. Aslett-Rydelbjerg (2003) reported findings from a study funded by the Nordic Development Fund as part of the Special and Inclusive Education arm of the Quality Education for All Program (EQPT) of the World Bank. The research examined existing and lacking resources for the effective implementation of an inclusive education model in Senegal. Initial findings indicated a major challenge in establishing the actual need for inclusive education, given the lack of credible and reliable data on the number of
children with a disability due to the stigma attached to disability labels. A related challenge was the accuracy of diagnosis, again tied to conflicting social and medical understandings of disability, and the appropriateness and relevance of available diagnostic tools.

In addition to the above challenges, limited local, regional, and national public education options for children with disabilities were viewed as a significant barrier to the education of children with disabilities. Meaningful inclusion was hindered by the physical inaccessibility of buildings, classrooms, and materials. Professional development of educators, both general and special teachers, toward effectively implementing pedagogical strategies fundamental to effective inclusive education models was identified as a high area of need. Aslett-Rydbjerg proposed a model of capacity building which relies on developing a system of inclusive pilot schools with specific supports (e.g. teacher training, building modifications, materials and resources, awareness campaigns), which could become models and resources for the surrounding schools. Principles of inclusion should undergird learning pedagogy in all schools for all children rather than being a separate add-on. These kinds of changes require the development and implementation of national policies grounded in the human rights of all citizens including those with disabilities.

**Conclusion**

Growth in the number of people with disabilities due to different reasons (war, disease, poverty, etc.) is increasing exponentially in the African continent. Addressing disability is a significant part of reducing poverty and should be an impetus for change. The systematic exclusion of people with disabilities has far-reaching social, moral, and economic implications. The realities of children at the margins of society reflect the unsatisfactory level of progress being made on the implementation of international conventions. The language in international conventions related to disability is confused and sometimes contradictory and reflects the lack of consensus on a medical or social model of disability. For inclusive education to be a reality, focus is needed on increasing schools’ capacity to reach and teach all children (included in the Education for All framework for action) and on building an inclusive society (included in Salamanca Statement’s Framework for Action). Lack of resources, understanding, and capacity should not be used as excuses for inaction. A good first step is to begin a conversation at all tables, in homes, in schools, in markets, in government buildings. Beginning a discourse about disability with the individuals who have disabilities at the center of this discourse can begin the process of destigmatizing and demystifying disability, as well as the meaning of true inclusion.

**Works Cited**


Translating Metaphor Through Embodiment: 
Choreographing a transdisciplinary discourse for moving knowledge among embodiment, language, and culture 

by Maria Gillespie

How does a dancing body create and communicate meaning? My experiences as an educator and performer in the US, Mexico, and China have provoked me to look closely at how bodies convey information that shapes language and thought. Working with international dancers, I was fascinated with the speed at which a movement becomes a part of a transnational lexicon. How does a dancer transform linguistic understanding into the intelligence of the body in performance? I was initially intrigued by the catch-22 of finding a solution when there is no rule for arranging the order of the communication of languages and the movement of communication. Is movement a language? And if it is, is each dancer’s language discrete, legible, and translatable? As I watch performing bodies dart, stare, and nest, convulse, or laugh, I am witnessing the performers translate ideas into action. As a witness, I observe and translate the performers’ actions into language. These reciprocal modes of witnessing and translation occur in dance performance. I build my thesis upon the work of performance studies scholar Diana Taylor to examine how embodied performers create, reform, and deliver their stories. Do dancers take language and spin it through their bodies like a centrifuge or let it settle like a slow, systemic drip? At either speed, this metaphor allows me to elucidate that as we dance, we are moving archived knowledge into circulation.

Dance and choreography are often viewed as interpretations of language or even illiterate modes of communication. My research opposes the notion that embodiment is a subset to spoken language or an incoherent expression that requires translation into language. The scope of this project is to explore how dancing bodies are always making meaning. And my research explores this knowledge production as conscious and inadvertent, quotidian and poetic, traditional and hybridized. I would like to demonstrate how performing and dancing selves are culturally and linguistically specific engines for embodied communication. My research focuses on how embodied language is a coherent, complex system of signs and symbols that works alongside, with, and against spoken language. The language of the body is both culturally specific and entirely legible, though sometimes untranslatable. My choreographic research in three countries lets me the bridge the gap between understanding symbols specific and entirely legible, though sometimes untranslatable. My choreographic process and produce legible and translatable knowledge. Other times the legibility or meaning within embodied experience is implicit and more challenging to discern linguistically. Still other times, the dancer and the dance operate in separate but equal realms of knowledge production and experience, which do not request or require lingual translation. This variety of approaches and results presents challenging hypotheses to uphold for scholars who need to know what a dance mean and for scholars who assert that dance does not need to either iterate or transcend language. This statement then begs the question: If knowledge is produced through dancing, and that embodied knowledge is culturally specific, then what exactly is being translated and into what is it being translated?

Translating Metaphor Through Embodiment, is a two-year choreographic project, which looks closely at how language circulates through dancing subjects in performance. I am engaged in collaborative investigations and performances in which I seek to illuminate the literal and poetic ways bodies are transcultural, living archives of embodied experience and authors of language. These explorations involve cross-cultural dialogues with an array of collaborators and performance partners based in Beijing, Guangdong, Mexico City, Milwaukee, and Los Angeles. In Translating Metaphor, I design my time-based explorations to investigate how the dancing body creates and communicates meaning. My work involves developing choreographic methods (and their aesthetic products), to explore the specific ways embodiment, memory, and languages are translated through a dancers’ system of signs. Over the course of my project, each choreographic work will show continuity while establishing its own unique initiatives.

At the outset, I recognize that dancing subjects are producing embodied experiences and expressions, which are cultural products, constructed from their own lives. I am interested in knowing how a dancer’s movement choices are based in the cognition of their personal history and how they translate experience into movement. By focusing on metaphor, I am able to explore translation vis-à-vis corporeal experience and poetic exchanges in a theatrical context. By choreographing metaphor, I reframe how corporeal knowledge can link to language. I witness dancers construct new knowledge by accessing and redirecting meaning as they move nimbly through multiple epistemologies. I use metaphor in movement so that I can explore the literal and evocative ways dancers know as well as how they demonstrate knowledge. My work begins from the position that dancers are not repositories of referent meaning, but authors of their own knowledge base.

At times, a dancer’s individual history and thus experience are explicit in the choreographic process and produce legible and translatable knowledge. Other times the legibility or meaning within embodied experience is implicit and more challenging to discern linguistically. Still other times, the dancer and the dance operate in separate but equal realms of knowledge production and experience, which do not request or require lingual translation. This variety of approaches and results presents challenging hypotheses to uphold for scholars who need to know what a dance mean and for scholars who assert that dance does not need to either iterate or transcend language. This statement then begs the question: If knowledge is produced through dancing, and that embodied knowledge is culturally specific, then what exactly is being translated and into what is it being translated?
Performance is, in effect, the transfer of lived experience, which Taylor says is archived knowledge transferred into movement, which is, repertoire. This transfer is then understood via the performance through a viewer's language and culture. I look at the ways dancers transfer expressive and quotidian movements that are language-based as a specific method to know how a dancer apprehends meaning through corporeal experience. This method is a choice for narrowing the scope but does not presume that all dance invites translation or expression of words. Rather than reiterate the antiquated notion that dancers are referring to or representing words and ideas, I continue to explore how translation may be a productive metaphor for understanding how dancing is moving ideas—through the body, in rehearsal, and on the stage.

As I explore the transfer of ideas into actions, it is necessary for me to articulate how I will manage the epistemological problems of translating and deploying theories between disciplines through corporeal methods. As my translation of metaphor continues, I establish a discursive path through epistemologies to locate theory into materiality. The productive slippage in transferring theoretical ideas into poetic and theatrical metaphors is eloquently posited here by Walter Benjamin:

Translation, with its rudiments of such a language, is midway between poetry and theory. Its work is less sharply defined than either of these, but it leaves no less of a mark on history. If the task of the translator is viewed in this light, the roads toward a solution seem to be all the more obscure and impenetrable (Benjamin 259).

In rehearsal, I approach my research from this place between poetry and theory. I develop a methodology to introduce abstract hypothesis into a physical practice that interweaves language prompts, free writing, improvisation, media and technology, material objects (serving as memory devices) and dance performance. This direction of flow sets up an old and problematic paradigm of the bifurcated self - the mind and the body or the idea and its vehicle. I am working to find a democratic transfer between the theoretical and material that upends Cartesian hierarchy of mind and body.

Mikhail Bakhtin’s theories of the grotesque body and new bodily canon provide productive metaphors to dismantle Cartesian duality, which reduces dance epistemologies to representations of thought. Bakhtin’s topography of the grotesque body emphasizes the spillage and overflow of the material body to subvert the Cartesian split. In a vertical spectrum (with the mind at the top and the body as separate and underneath), Cartesian bifurcation privileges the intellect over body, problematically assuming at once, a split, enforcing the notion that corporeal experience needs translation, rendering the body illiterate. By adopting Bakhtin’s theory of the grotesque body, I extend his metaphor of the bodily strata to demonstrate the multi-directional and unruly movement among a dancer’s collection of epistemological layers. These layers of knowledge are both abstract and concrete embodied interactions with memory or projections of the future; these layers of knowledge can be seen as a palimpsest of conscious embodied acts of transfer.

A vertical hierarchy of translating movement to language and language to movement is problematic as it forces a one-dimensional flow of information. In fact, embodied performance creates a multidimensional workspace. I have found that dancers’ ways of knowing are constantly pulling knowledge through multi-faceted human experience; embodied knowledge acts like a centrifuge for the incongruent, at times, intuitive mixture of abstract ideas, concrete experiences, songs sung, music memorized, images, verbal directives, consciousness as well as memory. As I explore how dancers embody language, design language, and construct identity through lived experience, I recognize that not all movement must be rooted in language; certainly, though, dancers are always consciously or unconsciously re-routing memes, memories, and metaphors in their experiences.

Palimpsest: a metaphor and a strategy for a transdisciplinary trajectory

A dance practice is implicitly transdisciplinary, continually moving, thinking, deciphering, moving again - among stories, locations, memories, languages, continents, genres, venues, materials, and references. As such, a dancer’s system of signs and actions are multilingual and polyphonic. A dancer’s method for knowing and conveying knowledge should remain unfinished and understood within the context of translation. In Dialogic Imagination, Bakhtin points out, “The dialogic orientation of discourse is a phenomenon that is, of course, a property of any discourse” (Bakhtin 279). I develop my dances by moving freely among discourses to establish a new domain. In order to investigate the question of what is being translated, I resist the assumption that translation is finished when carried from one entity to another. The Latin roots of translation are, across (trans) and carry (latus). I find it productive to investigate translation into dance research by reiterating the potential for multi-tiered movements among rather than between things, since the act of translation transforms the life of one idea to a new life in another. I extend Benjamin’s prospect of reproduction, which is committed not to exactitude but to resonance, “the language of a translation can – in fact, must – let itself go, so that it gives voice to the intentio of the original not as reproduction but as harmony” (Benjamin 260).

My discourse occurs among disciplines, which is where translating metaphor becomes challenging. I want to know how to build dances that are ways of moving among disciplines. How might I borrow and apply Benjamin’s questions about translatability, Taylor’s Archive and Repertoire, and Bakhtin’s dialogic texts into dance practice? By asking this question, I have found an important design model capable of restoring resonance and clarity to complex and often untranslatable acts. I am developing theoretical and material palimpsests as delivery systems for language, which are also time-based maps of various texts at work in my dances: live movement, video media, projection, text, and memory devices. I am able to productively convert the theoretical problems to physical, performed solutions, which are in essence, time-based palimpsests of various kinds of texts and knowledge.
My research scaffold interweaves theoretical models, physical practice, and live performance. The intersection of these modes has added two significant layers in my approach. I introduce the concept of palimpsest as metaphor for the discursive and dialogic investigation and use two kinds of palimpsests. In the first, I am focusing on the translatability of theoretical frameworks within dance performance and the translatability of embodied experience within the world of ideas. This is a theoretical palimpsest: a crossroads of ideas, a framework for my choreographic research to ‘carry over’ objectives set forth by scholars while allowing me freedom to avoid “monstrous examples of literalness” (Benjamin 260). Within the second palimpsest, I am designing material layers and theatrical devices that construct overlapping and intersected texts; these texts are visual, kinetic, corporeal, aural, and material memory devices within each dance performance. This material palimpsest of movement vocabulary and new media provides a rich visual framework of memes, cultural references, inscribed bodily gesture, and visual symbols to poetically interact and move meaning between ideas and experience. Applying both the theoretical and the theatrical palimpsests, I can explore the ways translation research is useful within an embodied praxis and performance.

Embodiment and corporeality exist within culture and its system of language; language and communication are already a priority in all embodied acts of performance whether that performance is a quotidian task or a stylized production that crafts poetic symbols. So the trouble here is not whether corporeality and choreographic research are connected to translation and semiotics. Dancers utilize and create signs, which produce and convey knowledge. Even choreographers who eschew representation in their embodied research are participating in the discourse of knowledge production. At this moment of uncertainty and anxiety about the legibility of embodied research within a broad spectrum of discourses, I find myself embracing the very problems and potentials within translation theory in my field of dance performance and dance studies. Benjamin quotes the poet Stéphane Mallarmé to evoke these problems, “The imperfection of languages consists in their plurality… the diversity of idioms on earth prevents anyone from uttering the words which otherwise, at a single stroke, would materialize as truth” (259, 263). The promise of diversity of idioms, none of which is perfect, presents the next year of my research with an abundance of languages and discourses to craft into dances. As I tether my research to an embodied practice, I embrace the paradox that dancing subjects are both embodied archives of their culture’s language and the agents of language circulation. I am eager to know how the dances I am choreographing are received and thus translated by audiences in China, Central America, and the United States. What these performed archives and translations look like in a dance changes every time, depending on who is dancing, when they are dancing, and for whom they are dancing.

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The uneven ground

Anglophone scholarship remains the largest and the most dominant site of knowledge production in the world today, and feminist scholarship is not outside of this epistemological politics. Historically Anglo-Francophone feminist theories have dominated feminist knowledge production and distribution, which leads to marginalization of the larger part of feminist thoughts worldwide, and reinforces the isolation of researchers on the national or linguistic periphery (Descarries 2014, 564-569; Mohanty 1991; Shohat 2002, 67-78; Cerwonka 2008, 809-832). Although there are critiques of the hegemony of Western Anglophone feminism, as Maria do Mar Pereira shows in her recent study on the strategic appropriation of western feminism in Spain, such criticism may result in a simplistic conceptualization of power within global academic exchanges, which understand it in terms of loss and constraint, and make invisible the gains and openings, thus failing to fully understand the complexity of these relations at the local level (do Mar Pereira 2014, 627-657). There are many examples of feminist scholars from Western countries (mostly well known Anglophone scholars) helping raise awareness of and protecting the development of Women's Studies programs in places such as Taiwan.

While feminist scholars working in other languages criticize the dominance of Anglophone scholarship and the invisibility of non-Anglophone feminist thoughts, Chinese feminist scholars face different issues. Women's Studies is a new field of inquiry in China; Chinese feminist scholars are in an intellectual environment with an abundance of Anglophone literature on the one hand and often the scarcity of relevant Chinese works on the other. They sometimes have no choice but to turn to western, mostly Anglophone, literature, in both translated and original works (Ge and Jolly 2001, 61-78; Wang 1998, 1-43; Min 2005b, 259-356).

Some Chinese feminists welcome the influence of Western feminism; other scholars, however, express concern that China's Women's Studies are being limited, marginalized, and/or colonized by well-developed, well-financed international movements dominated by Western feminism. Either supporting or rejecting, both arguments rely on the dichotomy of Chinese/Western, or local/global. I am in agreement with Marie-Paule Ha, that rather than falling into an either/or debate on which theoretical framework (Western or Chinese) is better suited to study gender and sexuality in Chinese, we need to articulate a research framework that acknowledges our heterogeneities (Ha 2009, 423-449). In this essay, I would like to take up the metaphor of a plant, and argue that instead of becoming “local branches” of a global feminist tree, or a different species standing parallel to Western feminism, feminist inquiry in and about China necessarily involves a process of grafting, in which foreign tissues (theory, concepts) are inserted onto the trees of Chinese feminism, and new fruits are harvested through this effort.

I argue for a “grafting” strategy because firstly as a very young field, Chinese feminist inquiry needs to import foreign feminist theories for discipline building. Secondly, the hybrid construction of gender ideas in China necessarily evokes a synthesis of theories and concepts, Chinese and foreign. Lastly, this enterprise is made possible by a new generation of mestiza Chinese feminist scholars inside and outside of China.

The hybrid subject: Chinese conceptualization of gender

Many China scholars claim that the traditional (pre-twentieth-century) Chinese conceptualization of gender is different from the Western, modern gender system. On this ground, some scholars are against using the concepts of sex and gender developed in the West in explaining Chinese gender configurations (Louie and Edwards 1994, 135-148; Li 1999, 261-277). I argue that even though traditional Chinese conceptualizations of gender originated from a different epistemological framework from those in the West, ideas of gender in twentieth-century China are heavily influenced by various Western discourses on the body, gender, and sexuality. The transnational flow of people and ideas since the 1978 beginning of China’s “open door” policy has enabled many Chinese people to have the experience of traveling or living outside of China, and exposed many more to foreign ideas and ways of life, including ideas about gender.

Studies on gender perception in China also show that what we can observe is heterogeneity and hybridity: there are multiple overlapping and competing gender discourses, Chinese and foreign, traditional and contemporary, global and local, circulating in China today (for examples, see Barlow et al. 2005, 245-294; Cao and Lu 2014, 840-848; Zhang 2014, 13-38). My research on Chinese women’s oral life stories also shows that today’s experience of gender, as revealed in the women’s narratives, cannot be explained simply by resorting to a “Chinese” (often meaning traditional, Confucian-based) conceptual framework for gender, but needs to be understood in a framework that accounts for the ways multiple gender discourses work together, including Western influences. These discourses interact with each other to constitute various configurations of gender that are often hybrid products.

If the research subject is becoming increasingly hybrid, so is the study of them. I argue that, just like in today’s transnational context, there is no historical, enclosed, pure “Chinese” conception and experience of gender; the importing of foreign

1 Different terms have been used to describe and critique “Western” “white” feminisms; each points to different aspect of the power relations, but also has its pitfalls. In conjunction with the concerns on translation, transplanting, and grafting of this paper, I use the term “Anglophone feminist discourse” which dominated feminist knowledge production today, to highlight the linguistic aspect of the domination.

2 The hybrid construction is nonetheless a selective process, shaped by China’s specific historical and political context, and its shifting relationship with the “West”, which I will further explore in the next step of this project.
feminist thoughts in Chinese feminist scholarship is not just unavoidable but also necessary.

The importing of foreign feminist thought has been carried out at different levels, from translation to transplanting. For example, Min Dongchao demonstrates the negotiations and multiple meanings that are implied in the process of transferring terms such as feminism and gender into the China, and how the translation and usages of these terms have been adjusted according to Chinese context (Min 2004, 3-19; Min 2005b, 259-356; Min 2007, 174-193; Min 2005a, 209-214). However, as Spakowski points out, while it is valuable that Min’s study highlights how the “local” exercises its agency in the transplanting process and leaves traces on the “global”, the study did not look at “an entire field of ‘local’ theory production that might be affected but still not totally absorbed by the ‘global'” (Spakowski 2011, 31-54). I argue that in addition to looking at the “inserting in” of the scion, we also need to attend to what can be “grown out of” through grafting: namely, the production of a new hybrid fruit that can be harvested. Successful grafting requires the gardener to have extensive knowledge about both the host plant (the rootstock) and the scion (the foreign plant), and skill to ensure the joints form. The new generation of Chinese feminist scholars are in a unique position to take up this grafting mission.

The mestiza researcher

Rey Chow argues in her book The Age of the World Target that the “post-atomic bomb world order” (Chow 2006) and the global dominance of Western, especially Anglo-American, knowledge lead to a one-way hierarchical privilege between those who specialize in the West and those who specialize in non-Western cultures. Using language as a metaphor, she points out that the latter are pressured to be multilingual—to acquire global breadth and be cosmopolitan in their knowledge in order to pass as credible academic professionals—whereas specialists of the West tend to be monolingual, in the sense that they often speak only from within their own specialty or language. She points out that it is ironic that the monolingual, self-referential West is therefore “provincial” even as it is asserting its global dominance, whereas the multi-lingual “rest” is actually the cosmopolitan.

This is precisely the case for Chinese feminist scholars, both inside and outside of China. Working in a young and largely marginalized area of inquiry, Chinese feminist scholars have to be literally and culturally multilingual, working with both Chinese and foreign (mostly Anglophone) literature to carry out their research. Many feminist scholars based in China completed their graduate studies abroad and returned to work in China, and publish in both Chinese and English. There are also increasing numbers of Chinese feminist scholars originally from China who have studied abroad, now work as academics outside of China, and publish their research about gender issues in China in English or other languages.3

Some Chinese feminist scholars worry that, as a result of the translation and transplanting of foreign feminist thoughts, feminist research in China is often informed by Western theoretical frameworks, thus the academic exchanges Chinese feminist scholars engage in are mediated by Western disciplinary discourses that “structure the very way we articulate our research problems and define what count as legitimate topics of inquiry and meaningful explanations” (Ha 2009, 423-449, and see also Xu 2009, 196-215; Li 1999, 261-277).

I argue that despite being situated in the uneven landscape shaped by global knowledge production and China’s historical context, Chinese feminist scholars could take their multi-lingual and cosmopolitan knowledge background as an opportunity for intellectual agency. In her discussion of the “mestiza” identity, Gloria Anzaldua argues that mestiza identity brings together what she describes as “self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference” (Anzaldua 2008, 870-878). She describes the mestiza as moving toward “a more whole perspective, one that includes rather than excludes.” She also envisions moving beyond ambivalence to a form of synthesis, and that synthesis will be a “third element” above and beyond the separate parts of her identity. Anzaldua speculates that the future belongs to the kind of consciousness that breaks down unitary aspects of paradigms and various dualities, and perhaps even dualistic thinking altogether.

While carefully navigating between the landmines of colonial and imperialism legacy, Western cultural hegemony, and Anglophone dominance, Chinese feminists nonetheless have the potential to develop a new mestiza consciousness. From this advanced position, they can bring together different frames of reference, synthesize, go above and beyond, create, and produce what I call xenophone scholarship.

Xenophone scholarship

In Not Like a Native Speaker: On Languaging as a Postcolonial Experience, Ray Chow discusses how having an accent is the symptom of an incomplete assimilation and a botched attempt at eliminating another tongue’s competing co-presence (Chow 2014). In geopolitical terms, having an accent is to leave on display—rather than successfully cover up—the embarrassing evidence of one’s alien origins and migratory status. She argues that a creative domain of languaging is emerging in insisting on speaking with an accent, by drawing its sustenance from mimicry and adaptation. She names it the “xenophone enounce.” While Chow’s focus is on language, I would like to extend this idea to knowledge production, and to think about how, when the hybrid-trained multilingual scholars write (both in English and their native tongue), they are writing with an accent, and how the “xenophone scholarship” they produce opens up the opportunity for constructing new feminist knowledge.

The accent in Chinese feminist scholarship goes both ways. On the one hand, Chinese scholars write in English with an accent—drawing intellectual resources from their Chinese cultural and educational background, with Chinese

3 Currently there is no free standing Women’s Studies Masters or PhD program in China—Chinese students who wish to be trained in Women’s Studies have to go abroad.
epistemological influences and patterns of inquiry. On the other hand, those who write in Chinese are also writing with a foreign accent—with the presence of loanwords and the influence of foreign feminist thoughts. What these two accented forms of writing have in common is their hybrid reworkings of Euro-American thought, with China as the source of a xenophone scholarship that could transform existing feminist knowledge.

In the next step of my research, I will investigate the grafting feminism process and explore strategies for developing xenophone scholarship by reflecting on my own journey of conducting feminist research on China, and examining other Chinese feminist scholar's works.

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Radio, Silence: The Status of the Voice in Beckett’s Drama and Prose

by Andrew Kincaid

Having wandered in Europe during much of the 1930s, Samuel Beckett (1906-1989) spent the War years in France, first in Paris, where he was a member of the Resistance, and then in the small town of Roussillon, where he was forced to hide out. Upon his return to the capital after the war, he experienced a burst of writing between 1947 and 1949. This period, “the frenzy in the room,” as he called it, produced not only Waiting for Godot, but also his masterpiece: the series of novels, Molloy, Malone Dies, and The Unnameable, which explore with increasing intensity the limits of language, subjectivity and fiction without the frame of plot, personality or landscape. By the mid-1950s, his reputation as a writer and dramatist was ascending. The Trilogy won the acclaim of notable Parisian critics. Waiting for Godot, though written in 1948, was gaining notoriety, too, for a writer whose themes of frailty, loss and memory captured many of the currents of the post-War European psyche. But despite his growing fame, Beckett had actually not written much, as suggested by the title Texts for Nothing (1951), since the early 1950s. It was then that he made a somewhat unusual move. He chose to turn away from fiction and the theatre and toward writing for radio, toward thinking about what radio could do for writing.

Between 1956 and 1962, Beckett wrote six plays for broadcast over the airwaves. In terms of literary studies and Beckett studies, I explore the question of why Beckett took up radio. What about that medium appealed to him? What possibilities and limitations did this particular technology provide or foreclose? From his first published story, “Assumption,” with the opening line, “He could have shouted and could not” through to his last written sentence, “what is the word,” Beckett’s work probes the mystery of the voice. Who has a voice? Is a voice located within or without? To whom do we listen? How are voice and authenticity linked? What is the status of a disembodied voice? How can voices be produced, coerced and silenced? What, if anything, lies beneath a voice? To study Beckett and radio, then, is to examine the status of the voice as a mediated signifier for a range of affects from authenticity and intimacy to trivialization and distance. To study radio is to study the distance between the collective and the personal, the national (NPR) and the private (listening alone).

Tuning into radio is just one example of Beckett’s concern with translating his language and imagery from one medium into another. If fiction originally offered him the space to delve into interiority, into the voices and silences that reverberate in a narrator’s head, then theatre offered him the opportunity to stage embodied voices and physical images. After radio, he would turn to silent film, posing questions about the camera’s mode of perception and intrusion. Beckett’s Film, with the epigraph “to be is to be perceived,” starred a camera pursuing Buster Keaton around a New York block. After delving into film, Beckett turned to television and video. Television allowed him to explore camera movement and visual abstraction, to experiment with speed, especially slowness, in a fast and future-oriented medium concerned with seriality. After television he would return to prose in ever more minimalist meditations.

Each time Beckett experiments with a genre, he pushes the medium to its limits, to the point at which the format is almost unable to support the content asked of it. In Waiting for Godot, for example, he confronts the history of the naturalist stage, a setting with props, scenery, context and characters that provides the structure for a story with rising and falling action, tension and resolution. Godot famously stripped the Western stage of props, objects to sustain identity, and replaced them with almost nothing. The play’s only stage direction, “A country road, a tree,” became emblematic of this technique. The minimalist image of two men waiting, lost and confused, referred to no specific history, yet reached across nations and languages as an image of unfathomable loss. In creating a play about nothing (“two acts in which nothing happens twice”) with relatively little plot and banal dialogue, Beckett asks of theatre and of the audience: what do you expect from drama? What is the minimum that the art form must present in order to still be theatre? In other words, and simply, what is the essence of theatre?

“A voice comes to one in the dark. Imagine.” This opening line from Company (1980), a late prose piece, suggests the appeal of radio for Beckett at a time when he was in need of inspiration. In radio, everything is in the listening. And Beckett’s pieces required an acute ear. A move from the theatre to the wireless provided the possibilities of experimenting with soundscape and with a landscape of the human voice. A radio play setting did not need to be confined to a kitchen or a living room; memory could become setting, sound could become psychology, and voice could be the visual. Radio, even more than Godot, could reject realistic representation. Beckett’s strange mixture of deep interiority, rhythmic prose, exhortations to speak balanced by refusals and silence, could test radio and be tested by it.

Beckett’s first radio plays were commissioned by the BBC’s third program, a venue for non-commercial and experimental broadcasts; therefore, we must set his pieces in the context of public service and national culture. Beckett, I argue, had an awareness of radio’s ability to mediate between the subjective and objective, between the human voice as marker of uniqueness and identity and technologically reproduced and altered speech.

It is not enough, however, to view Beckett’s media politics through the lens of the ontological question of what is radio. Ontology, what we know, can never be separated from epistemology, how we know. My project on Beckett and translation (in the literal sense of “passing or carrying over” from one medium to another) aims,
Beckett’s radio plays are haunted by space (a later piece depicts interrogation in a torture chamber), while All That Fall, his most naturalistic and autobiographical work, conjures up the Dublin mountains of his youth (O’Brien). The turn to radio now makes sense. A medium of air and technology, of presence and absence, of proximity and vastness, speaks to the post-war phenomenological push to seek a poetics of space that is neither wholly objective nor subjective. To our questions of what is radio and how do we know radio, we can add: where is radio?

This year’s research focus at CIE is translation. Let me conclude with a few thoughts on why I think Beckett is a particularly apt writer for the pursuit of this theme that combines media and reception with the drive to communicate and its inherent inadequacy.

Failure echoes across the study of translation from Babel to Benjamin. In Genesis, Nimrod builds “a tower with its top in the heavens” and he sets about “making a name” for himself. God punished him by scattering mankind across the earth and taking away the ability to “understand one another’s speech.” Benjamin’s “The Task of the Translator” also mourns the failure of translation to ever find adequate agreement between the primary and the copy. “There can be no likeness to the original,” he writes, for the “nucleus,” “the center” of any text always remains elusive. Something in the primary document inevitably fails to be communicated. A translator can never do what the original text did. None of which is to say that nothing positive comes out of translation, for in touching obliquely the original, the foreign, we reinvigorate our own language, our own culture, with otherness and difference. Moreover, to translate is to pay attention to the history of other translations and to the politics that have accrued around the original text, like fruit around a seed. To translate is to be a historian, but lest we find ourselves searching for some pure Language, we must always pay attention to the medium, whether that medium is a translator, a voice, or a technology.

Beckett’s work, of course, famously inhabits this space of failure. The last line of The Unnameable, “I can’t go on, I must go on,” emerges out of the problems of translation: the exhausting, impossible search for the right word, combined with the ethics of trying to express and to hear other voices, no matter how fragmented, dispersed, weak, or impoverished they have become. Many of Beckett’s signature moves—homelessness, repudiation of origins, residual life, ventriloquism, and the abandonment of textual surfaces and omniscient narrators—share a concern with translation. What gathers around the translator also collects around Beckett, namely the relationship between origin and truth, location and identity, medium and possibility. My project is to explore these connections.

Therefore, to put the writer in conversation with theorists of radio who explicitly seek to critique the technology, its history, and its social relations. How, in other words, does critical theory take up radio? Here I add to the argument laid out by John Mowitt in Radio: Essays in Bad Reception by combining literature and radio drama with his philosophical approach. My research returns me to Brecht, Adorno, Benjamin, Sartre, Fanon and Raymond Williams, amongst others, all of whom deployed radio in order to analyze the processes and results of modernization, from reification (Adorno) to collective resistance (Raymond Williams, for example, on regional radio stations). Brecht and Benjamin are famous for seeing the democratic potential of radio enfolded into the technology itself due, in part, to its portability and affordability, and to the free availability of the medium’s medium: air. Adorno, on the other hand, feared that radio would create not only lonely and isolated listening, but that it would also further the denigration of the senses, of the ear itself as it listens to hollowed-out sound.

My own developing interest in radio emerges out of my broader and longer-held interests in the production of space and the literary representations of landscape, especially cities. My current book project investigates Beckett’s representation of place and space, and I am drawn to his attention to radio as a medium that is at the same time both deeply personal and collective (we are all immersed in radio waves), both near and far, both physical and abstract (Guralnick, Kahn and Whitehead, Dolar, Cavarero).

During World War II, many European cities were, of course, destroyed (a scene represented indirectly in Waiting for Godot and Endgame). Many were rebuilt according to the principles of rational, modern town planning and modernist, bureaucratic architecture. Cities were rebuilt for cars, and high-rise public housing was constructed for weary populations and arriving postcolonial immigrants (Lefebvre, Copers, Wakeman). The result was a cold, hard, segregated city in which everyday life was increasingly administered. Many of Beckett’s plays, including Waiting for Godot, but also Knapp’s Last Tape, and especially Happy Days, which has Winnie buried up to her neck in sand, translate the modern, confining experience of space into a dramatic event. Beckett’s first two radio plays, however – All That Fall and Embers, both interestingly written in English, not French – deploy sounds and silence, pauses and internally heard music to evoke childhood, parental relationships, and personalized landscapes. All That Fall follows a woman en route to the train station. We meet her neighbors and listen to her thoughts, while we hear her breath, her panting, her footsteps, dogs barking, donkeys braying and rain falling. Embers intricately works the ebb and flow of the tide into a character’s internal reflections and memories. We never hear him speak (a character on radio who doesn’t speak is Beckett’s joke); we just hear the rhythmic voices in his head and the sound of sand and shingle as he walks the shore. Space, here, becomes soft, flowing, imaginative, melancholy, and transgressive of boundaries between inside and outside. The radio plays are an antidote to the city’s Cartesian geometry.
The Center for International Education at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee selected five Global Studies Fellows for the 2014/15 academic year. The Global Studies Fellows program, established in 2010, aids faculty in advancing their research on interdisciplinary topics relating to globalization, its cultural, political, social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Global Studies Fellows meet monthly to share their progress and devise research strategies. They also share their work at a series of colloquia, and participate in CIE's annual conference.

Joel Berkowitz

Yiddish theatre and drama flourished in eastern Europe, the Americas, and other places around the globe, particularly from the late 19th century to the middle of the 20th, when Europe's Yiddish speakers, and their language and culture, were decimated by the Holocaust. Nevertheless, a number of important dramatists examined the implications of Hitler's rise to power, and the devastation it ultimately wrought. This phenomenon is the subject of Joel Berkowitz's current book project, tentatively titled "In the Days of Job: Yiddish Drama and the Holocaust," which examines how Yiddish playwrights confronted Nazism and the Holocaust, from the rise of the Nazi party to power in 1933, through the attempted annihilation of European Jewry during World War II, and on to the years immediately following the war. His study focuses on a handful of dramatists who each wrote several plays on the subject, and most of them worked in other genres too. Some of these plays were performed widely in Yiddish, and in a few cases in other languages as well; others were published without ever being performed. Whether staged or only printed, though, this body of work adds an important but largely overlooked chapter to the story of how the Holocaust was depicted in drama and theatre, and how Yiddish culture grappled with these cataclysmic events and their aftermath.

Research Questions:

• How are voice and authenticity linked in Beckett’s work?
• What was the state of radio theory at the time that Beckett wrote his six radio plays?
• What were the goals and objectives of the BBC in commissioning Beckett to write for them?
• Why did Beckett take up radio? What was he attempting to translate?
• How are his radio plays different from his theater plays?

Works Cited


Elizabeth Drame will work on a book project exploring the historical impact of colonialism on the development of educational systems in francophone West Africa, the implications of the structures of these systems when considering implementation of regional and international inclusive education mandates, the perspectives of families and children with disabilities on the continent of Africa, and intersections between other identities, images and spaces and dis/ability. This book project aims to present varying perspectives and experiences of key stakeholders in West African communities on dis/ability. The goal of the project is to increase awareness of the ways in which societies in different African countries can either encourage or minimize the active engagement of citizens with disabilities in all aspects of daily life. This work is an extension of research conducted by Drame in Senegal, West Africa as a Senior Research Scholar through the U.S. Fulbright African Regional Research Fellowship Program.

Maria Gillespie’s choreographic research, *Translating Metaphor Through Embodiment*, is a two-year project and cross-cultural dialogue examining how metaphor circulates through dancing subjects in performance. Collaborative investigations and performances will illuminate the literal and poetic ways bodies are transcultural living archives, and authors of language. With research partners in Beijing and Mexico City, Gillespie will create and present choreographies that investigate the cultural specificity of embodiment, memory, and the translation/apprehension of language through a dancers’ system of signs. *Translating Metaphor* utilizes time-based explorations to investigate how the dancing body creates and communicates meaning; how performance re-presents our identities and our histories; and how it moves archived knowledge into circulation. Through the intersection of digital media and video manipulation in performance, and drawing from the works of Diana Taylor, Guillermo Gómez-Peña, George Lakoff, and Mark Johnson, this project embraces the paradox that dancing subjects are both repositories for a culture’s language and the agents of translation.

Xin Huang’s research focuses upon transplanting feminism in contemporary China. Using the case of the study of gender construction in contemporary China, her project examines the translation, adoption, and extension process of various foreign feminist theories about gender in contemporary China, by situating the development of Chinese feminist studies within the dynamic interplay between China and the rest of the world, including China’s semi-colonial history, the Cold War and China’s socialist past, as well as current transnational context of knowledge exchange and production. It traces how feminist theories and concepts are called upon and applied to help conceptualize themes and issues, and in the process, being revised and transformed, by examining Chinese scholars’ writings on gender construction in contemporary China both in English and Chinese.

Samuel Beckett’s life and work emerge out of and are committed to exploring the problems of translation. Beckett translated the majority of his mature work himself, a process that often led him to rewrite the primary text; it was the original that displeased him, not the translation. Beckett’s theatre and writing revolutionized the way abstract concepts such as time, doubt, memory and being could be translated onto the stage. A single stage direction, “A country road, a tree,” with two men waiting by it, has become a symbol of attempting to translate unfathomable loss. Beckett also moved through his career from one medium to another, pushing each to its limit (a radio without voice, a novel with no story, a play with no action), exploring the translatability of each medium, and translating contemporary political questions about surveillance, entrapment, torture, and ecology (lack of resources) into art. Moments of free wandering, or the memory of such mobility, provide hints to Beckett’s translation of geography. Andrew Kincaid’s project examines, via Beckett’s oeuvre, each of these elements of translation, particularly focusing on how Beckett grapples with translation and art in the ruined geographical landscape of post-WWII Europe.
Historically, Translation Studies was largely normative (telling translators how to translate). But as the discipline has grown and expanded, Translation Studies has borrowed from an array of disciplines that support and inform it: Comparative Literature, Computer Science, History, Linguistics, Philology, Philosophy, Media Studies, and Semiotics, among others. While traditionally addressing the movement and history of ideas, languages, and cultures, translation is also a recurring concept in Science and Technology Studies where it evokes the relational agency of humans and nonhumans within actor-networks. Drawing on this breadth of traditions and approaches, this year’s conference will address the regulations and contestations of what is translatable, untranslatable, and by/for whom—in sum, the politics of translation in the widest sense of the term. It will explore translation in its most expansive, trans-disciplinary sense: translation as exchange, migration, and mobility, including media circulation and cross-cultural communication.

The conference will feature presentations by 20 distinguished scholars from the US and abroad, and will take place Friday and Saturday, April 24-25. The conference is free and open to the public. More information will be available soon. Please check the CIE homepage regularly: international.uwm.edu

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Conference Speakers
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Joel Berkowitz, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee
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Russell Scott Valentino, Indiana University Bloomington
Yiman Wang, University of California, Santa Cruz
Stephenie Young, Salem State University

The Center for International Education at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee fosters innovative approaches to understanding the challenges of living and working in our increasingly interconnected world. Interdisciplinary academic programs, education abroad, and overseas research and internships provide students with transformative learning experiences. Scholarly conferences and colloquia, publications, fellowships, course development and travel funding, and interinstitutional partnerships support faculty members’ research. International student recruitment, admissions, and immigration advising strengthen the quality and diversity of UWM’s faculty and student body and expand cross-cultural learning. Programs for educators, business, media, and the public engage community members in dialogue on contemporary world affairs. This comprehensive approach to international education aims to move UWM closer to the ideal of having an interculturally-competent citizenry that is able to thrive in today’s world.