

FROM THE SCHOOL OF MODERN LANGUAGES FOR THE WORLD

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BBC featurette on the Atelier Populaire and their connection to a castle in Co. Durham

In mid-January, Dr Gillian Jein was invited by the BBC to contribute to Inside Out-North East and Cumbria for a feature on the Atelier Populaire, a radical agit-prop poster collective active in Paris in May '68, and their connection to Brancepeth castle in Co. Durham. The programme aired on 11th February at the same time as a BBC news feature which documented the discovery of some original posters.



At Brancepeth castle, Dr Jein met with brothers James and Oliver Dobson, whose father, Dennis Dobson, was a London-based publisher active in the sixties and seventies. Dobson published a number of important counter-cultural artists and authors, notably Ralph Steadman's darkly illustrated version of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and Spike Milligan's first works in print. In London in the summer of 1968, the publisher met with students from the Atelier Populaire and agreed to publish their posters in book format. It is likely that the original posters were given to Dobson by the students during this meeting as these were part of the publication package opened by Oliver in January 2019 for the first time in fifty years. Dr Jein's contribution to the programme involved explaining how the Atelier Populaire came into being and elaborating on the posters' significance in giving a visual language to the '68 revolution. Situating contemporary street and protest art in relation to the group's methodologies, the salient anti-establishment features of Atelier Populaire include the occupation of institutional buildings, the reappropriation of public space, the use of anonymity and collective production processes, and the cheapness and mobility of material production. These practices stemmed from a conceptual refusal of bourgeois notions of art, the collective insisted that their posters ought not to be historicised in aesthetic terms, nor valued as art objects in their own right. Against the prevailing transcendentalist idea that art and the social exist in radically separate spheres, the Atelier Populaire's methods aimed at once to dismantle the elite walls of the gallery by placing art in the street, and to question purely aesthetic definitions by exploiting the communicative and motivational potential of art to transmit and unite the voice and struggle of the diverse groups in revolt over that summer, namely workers, students and immigrants.

Dr Jein is working with the Dobson family to research further the correspondence between Denis Dobson and the student radicals as well the publication processes and discovered posters. These materials promise to shed new light on the motivations and organisation of the Atelier Populaire, and to further new understandings of the translation of May '68 from street to book

RENEWAL Exhibition

RENEWAL is a creative literature and photographic essay aiming to restore a mutilated dictionary with the intention to compile an inventory of lost ideas, as a strategy of conservation and prevention against words which are currently threatened or in danger of extinction, such as "renewal". The exhibition restores the 65 missing pages in the dictionary *DICCIONARIO DEL ESPAÑOL ACTUAL* by Manuel Seco et al. Several funding bodies have helped to write this story, which is included in the activities developed by the research project Cultural Narratives of Crisis and Renewal (CRIC – H2020 Marie Curie RISE) coordinated from Newcastle University.



The exhibition opened on 15th October 2018 and we were honoured with the presence of artists Juan Millás and Eduardo Nave from the photo collective NOPHOTO. For 3 weeks, visitors had a chance to engage with the legacy of the 2008 economic crisis in Spain 10 years on. We stimulated engagement from the audience on the concepts of cultural and social renewal. We did this by raising awareness of alternative social imaginaries through visual culture (photography). Words such as “remuneration”, “recovery”, “representation” and “renewal” are heavily charged and we have facilitated critical thinking, at a time when macro statistics and micro lived experiences (GDP vs pocket money) present a widening gap. The exhibition focused on lived experiences in the context of Spain, where official figures



confirm economic renewal but many citizens are still experiencing significant hardships since the 2008 economic crisis.

The RENEWAL exhibition has attracted attention and two art galleries in Spain have expressed their interest to host it: The Museo Barjola (Gijón) and the Centre Cultural La Nau (Valencia). We have helped to shape the debate around notions of renewal in society by focusing on less represented individuals and communities. In terms of impact, first we printed 200 booklets with English translations as an indicator of the number of people interacting with the exhibition physically present. At the end of the 3 weeks (15th Oct – 2nd Nov

2018), only a few were left. Second, we disseminated the information through official listservs and social media, producing a video in our CRIC Facebook page that has been reproduced 208 times, reaching hundreds of people.

Eyes on Murakami

Dr Gitte Marianne Hansen and Dr Michael Tsang organised an international event series on Japanese author Murakami Haruki at Newcastle University (March 2018).

2018 marks the fortieth year since internationally acclaimed Japanese author Murakami Haruki first decided to write a novel while watching a game of baseball (or so the story goes). Coinciding with this anniversary Dr Gitte Marianne Hansen was awarded an AHRC Fellowship for her research project 'Gendering Murakami Haruki: Characters, Transmedial Productions and Contemporary Japan'. As part of the project she and her



Research Associate Dr Michael Tsang organised the event series 'Eyes on Murakami' in March 2018, <https://research.ncl.ac.uk/murakami/>. The four days of the event were packed with diverse activities, including a translation workshop and public translation symposium, an art exhibition with works produced by Japan and Newcastle based artists, a film screening at the Tyneside Cinema and the academic conference '40 years with Murakami Haruki'.

The Real Translation Project – 2009-2019

The Real Translation Project reaches its 10th year offering opportunities to SML students!

This extracurricular project provides opportunities for language students to practice their linguistic skills and engage with community and charity organisations via the translation of real documents. Over the last 10 years, almost 500 students have participated in a wide range of projects locally and internationally. The projects this year include:

1. *Audio-guides for Newcastle's Castle*. Final year students from the French, German and Portuguese sections translated the Castle's audio-guide under the leadership of Dr Pauline Henry-Tierney, Jan-Okke Baumbach and Dr Conceição Pereira.

The students visited the Castle in October to familiarise themselves with the building and Erasmus exchange students recorded the audio-guides. Work is now beginning for the Mandarin version under the supervision of Linlin Fang.

[right: SML students involved in the Real Translation Project in front of the Castle]



2. *Audio-Visual Translation: Project Refresh* (Cultura de la renovación, CRIC). Students from the Spanish section, led by Angela Uribe de Kellett worked on the translation into English of a video on a school renovation project in Córdoba, Argentina, involving schoolchildren and their teachers. The 15 students also produced the subtitles for the video. The students took part in two workshops - one on social mapping by Argentinian researcher Pilar Heredia and another on subtitling given by Dr Pauline Henry-Tierney.

(Angela Uribe de Kellett, Director Real Translation Project)

Contact us

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