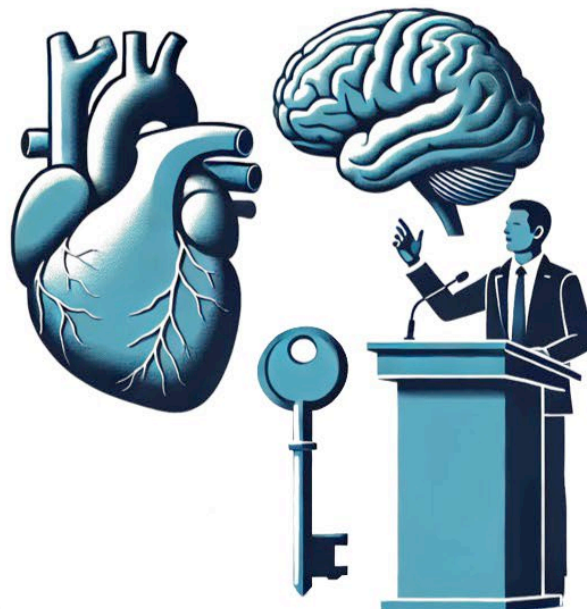




CONFERENCE

THE (COGNITIVE) “KEY TO THE HEARTS OF MEN”



The Perlocutionary Power of **Political Narratives**



May 15-16, 2025

Amphithéâtre de la MILC

35 rue Raulin





Day 1 – Thursday 15 May 2025

Session 1: 14h – 15h30

Carolina Simoncini, Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3.

« Le story telling de la droite italienne : de Silvio Berlusconi à Giorgia Meloni »

Au cours des trente dernières années, plusieurs hommes et femmes politiques italiens ont eu recours à un « storytelling » soigneusement conçu pour transmettre aux électeurs une image précise d'eux-mêmes. Le maître de ce type de communication a été, sans aucun doute, Silvio Berlusconi, dès son entrée en politique en 1994. À l'époque, il était connu comme un riche entrepreneur milanais ayant réussi dans le secteur de l'audiovisuel, mais également dans l'immobilier et le football. Berlusconi annonce alors son intention de « entrer sur le terrain ». La métaphore footballistique (le football étant de loin le sport le plus populaire en Italie) n'est pas choisie par hasard, tout comme le nom de son nouveau parti, « Forza Italia », cri de ralliement que les supporters scandaient pour encourager l'équipe nationale italienne lors des compétitions internationales. Berlusconi cherche à se faire connaître comme un *homo novus*, un homme d'affaires qui a bâti un empire économique et fourni de l'emploi à des centaines d'Italiens, prêt à changer la politique injuste qui empêche des hommes comme lui d'atteindre leurs objectifs.

Si le discours de l'entrepreneur autodidacte trouvait un écho favorable auprès d'un certain public, Berlusconi savait rapidement se transformer en séducteur invétéré lorsque le contexte l'exigeait, ou en macho sexiste pour conquérir d'autres segments de la population. Ses talents pour construire des récits crédibles autour de sa propre figure ont été imités par de nombreux politiciens après lui, comme Umberto Bossi, Matteo Salvini, Matteo Renzi, Beppe Grillo et, enfin, Giorgia Meloni. De manière habile, cette dernière a su se forger une image de pionnière d'une nouvelle forme de féminisme de droite. Elle aime rappeler qu'elle est née parce que sa mère a, à la dernière minute, renoncé à l'avortement ; elle insiste sur les trois termes qui la définissent : « femme, mère, chrétienne », faisant ainsi appel à un symbolisme identitaire propre à la droite, qui semble renaître, dégagé de toute critique de conservatisme. La protection des traditions et de la patrie constitue également un thème que Meloni utilise de manière habile pour justifier sa lutte contre l'immigration. S'inspirant de l'« amour que nous avons pour l'unique maître que nous ayons jamais eu, et ce maître s'appelle le peuple italien »⁽¹⁾, Meloni crée aisément un ennemi menaçant l'intégrité de ce peuple. Sa politique de lutte contre l'immigration clandestine, qui lui a valu de faire les gros titres de la presse étrangère (*Le Monde* lui a récemment consacré plusieurs articles), devient ainsi une bataille entre envahisseurs et envahis, entre ceux qui menacent une « identité » nationale italienne et ceux qui doivent la défendre.

⁽¹⁾ Discours du 9 septembre 2019 à la Chambre des députés.

À propos de l'autrice : Carolina Simoncini est docteur en droit italien et Maître de conférences en études italiennes à l'Université Lyon 3 Jean Moulin. Ses domaines de recherche sont le droit public italien, l'histoire des institutions italiennes, le droit italien des étrangers, l'histoire politique contemporaine italienne.





Virginie Robleda Sudre, Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3

« Il était une fois ... » : La légitimation de la monarchie espagnole. Quel est le poids des discours médiatiques dans la légitimation de la monarchie espagnole, de Juan Carlos I à la princesse Leonor ?

Si la place de la monarchie espagnole dans le paysage politico-médiatique est aujourd'hui incontestée, cela n'a pas toujours été le cas. Il faut d'abord remonter aux origines de la nomination de Juan Carlos I pour comprendre que, placé sur le trône par le dictateur Francisco Franco, il ne semblait pas évident alors qu'il put rester en place sur le long terme. Présenté comme un des artisans de la transition démocratique, puis comme le « sauveur » du pays après l'échec du coup d'Etat militaire du 23 février 1981, il devient alors la coqueluche des médias et des Espagnols, que l'on qualifie de « juancarlistas » à défaut de monarchistes. C'était sans compter sur son penchant pour les femmes et pour l'argent, qui finissent par être révélés au grand public et le conduisent à abdiquer avant de fuir le pays pour échapper aux poursuites judiciaires. C'est alors que Felipe VI arrive sur le devant de la scène : lui non plus n'était au départ pas très apprécié des Espagnols, qui le trouvaient méprisant, hautain et éloigné des réalités. Sa romance puis son mariage avec une journaliste populaire d'abord, la mise en scène de sa vie de famille ensuite, font les choux gras de la presse. Son arrivée précipitée au pouvoir en 2014 avec une image et un discours en rupture claire avec ceux de son père, lui permettent peu à peu de gagner en légitimité. C'est désormais sur la future reine, la princesse Leonor, que les regards sont tournés. Il s'agit là de poursuivre l'opération séduction en cours depuis presque 50 ans, afin de garantir le soutien populaire à l'institution monarchique, dans un pays fragilisé par la polarisation de l'éventail politique, les bras de fer entre pouvoir central et régionaux, et les scandales de corruption, et qu'elle apparaisse comme une des clefs de voûte du système politique et étatique actuel.

Bibliographie (non-exhaustive) :

Herrero Jiménez Beatriz, Berganza Conde María, Gómez Montero Eva, « La monarquía española a examen : del silencio consensuado de los medios a los enfoques de ataque y defensa en el caso de los escándalos de Juan Carlos I », *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, n°81.

Zugasti Azagra Ricardo, *La forja de la complicidad : monarquía y prensa en la transición española*, Fragua, Madrid, 2007.

Zurutuza Cristina, Barrera Meneses Elisa, « La sucesión al trono de España en « El País » y « El Mundo » : el encuadre de un cambio tranquilo », *Repensar los valores clásicos del periodismo : el desafío de una profesión enredada (XXI Congreso Internacional de la Sociedad Española de Periodística)*, 2015.

À propos de l'autrice : Virginie Robleda Sudre est maîtresse de conférences à l'Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3. Elle a obtenu son doctorat en Études hispaniques à l'Université Montpellier 3 en décembre 2021, avec une thèse sur l'action antifranquiste de Nicolas Sartorius, promoteur et dirigeant des Commissions Ouvrières (<https://www.theses.fr/2021MON30099>). Elle est désormais membre de l'IHRIM (UMR 5317). Ses travaux couvrent un large éventail de sujets liés à l'histoire politique et culturelle de l'Espagne (républicanisme contemporain, diplomatie culturelle, politiques mémorielles).





Nicola Riccardi, Università degli studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia

Guardians of the Nation: The Perlocutionary Power of Nationalist and Populist Narratives in the Discourses of Blas Piñar (1979-1982) and Santiago Abascal (2019-2024)

This paper explores the parliamentary discourses of Blas Piñar, leader of Fuerza Nueva (FN), and Santiago Abascal, leader of Vox, focusing on how their rhetoric shapes nationalist and populist narratives in Spain across two distinct historical periods (1979-1982 and 2019-2024). Drawing on discourse analysis and interdiscursivity (Pêcheux 1975), this study compares how both leaders present themselves as defenders of the Spanish nation-state, using narratives rooted in anti-separatism, opposition to regional autonomy, and a vision of Spanish political unity.

Blas Piñar's discourse during Spain's early democratic transition reflects a nationalist response to the decentralization of power and the consolidation of democratic institutions under the Constitution of 1978. Piñar's rhetoric emphasizes the preservation of Spanish territorial unity, rejection of regional autonomy, and a nationalist vision in response to perceived threats from peripheral nationalist movements, particularly in Catalonia and the Basque Country. His rejection of the political system is framed through apocalyptic metaphors of Spain's "suicide" and a critique of what he considers the erosion of Spain's moral, spiritual, and economic heritage.

In contrast, Santiago Abascal's discourse, while similarly rooted in nationalism and opposition to separatism, reflects the modern context of a digital and globalized era. Abascal frames his political opposition through a populist dichotomy, pitting "patriots" against "globalists," while presenting himself as a heroic figure who has personally fought for Spanish unity. His rhetoric emphasizes the defense of the 1978 Constitution against perceived threats from separatists, leftist movements, and European institutions. Abascal's narrative is embedded in broader populist themes such as resistance to political correctness, globalism, and supranational control, while simultaneously advocating for national sovereignty and self-reliance, particularly in the context of energy policy.

By analyzing the continuities and divergences between these two leaders' discourses, this paper highlights how nationalist and populist narratives are adapted to changing political contexts, while also tracing the legacy of far-right discourse in Spanish parliamentary politics. Through this comparison, we aim to demonstrate how both Piñar and Abascal deploy political narratives that frame the nation's crisis, drawing on a rhetoric of betrayal and victimhood to construct themselves as the legitimate defenders of Spain.

This study contributes to the understanding of political discourse in Spain, particularly in relation to how master narratives (Sergeant 2020) and anecdotal narratives (De Fina 2017) are utilized in shaping political ideologies and influencing public perception. It also provides insights into the broader interplay between nationalist rhetoric and populist strategies in contemporary democratic systems.

Keywords: political narratives, nationalist discourse, Blas Piñar, Santiago Abascal, Spain, populism, parliamentary discourse, far-right politics.





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About the author:

Nicola Riccardi holds a PhD in Digital Humanities with a specific focus on Spanish political history and the online communication of the Spanish far-right. He completed his PhD at the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, after conducting research at the University of Barcelona and the IDHN research center (University of Cergy-Pontoise). His interests range from political communication to public history, with a particular focus on the use of lexicometric methodologies in discourse analysis. He is currently a postdoctoral researcher on the project titled "CATO-POPULISMOS – Nationalisms and Populisms during the Pontificate of Pius XII: Cultural Circulation, Religious Perception, and Devotional Practices in Europe and Latin America (1939-58)." He is interested in public history and the various forms and strategies for disseminating historical and scientific knowledge. He is the author of the podcast "La strada per la Moncloa" (<https://lastradaperlamoncl.wixsite.com/spain>) and leads a workshop on cultural podcasting in the master's program "DHialogue" (<https://www.dhialogue.it>). He is a member of Sissco, the Asociación de Historiadores del Presente, and the Asociación de Historiadores de la Comunicación. He writes for various journals on political communication and political science, such as EuroBull and YouTrend.





Session 2: 16h – 17h

Eglantine Zatout, Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3

“The Voices of the Children”: Integrating Descendants of LGBTQ+ Families into the Marriage Equality Narrative

In the US, the debate over same-sex marriage centered mostly on the institution itself; i.e, the rights married spouses have rather than the legally recognized bond between parents and children granted by marriage. A non-profit dedicated to LGBTQ+ families, Family Equality (1979-), tried to integrate the people who had been raised or were being raised in those families to the narrative. It did so by submitting amicus curiae briefs, they labelled “Voices of the Children”, to the US Supreme Court when it was hearing cases related to marriage equality: *Hollingsworth v. Perry* (2013), *United States v. Windsor* (2013) and *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015).

This presentation will analyze the narrative presented in those documents. It is first a response to the right-wing narrative on gay people which holds that they are a threat to children. In order to challenge this narrative, the “voices heard” in the brief emphasize how “normal” their families are. I will analyze the definition of a “normal” family they present and the criteria used to “prove” their “normality”. Secondly, this “normality” is used to show that the families formed by same-sex couples “deserve” to be legally recognized through access to marriage. In order to do so, they reclaim the narrative of “family values” by showing how they conform to those values. In other words, they do not purport to question or challenge the dominant definition of the family but wish to expand it so as to be included.

About the author:

I am a doctor in American studies and an associate professor at Lyon 3. My PhD was entitled: “Redefining the American Family Through the Activism of LGBTQ+ and interracial families (1913-2021)”. My research is focused on LGBTQ+ families, their activism and their relationship to dominant norms. I also study LGBTQ+ identities and their social and legal recognition.

Ruvindra Sathsarani, University of Tübingen

"Cry 'Havoc!' and let slip the dogs of war." - Disintegrated Political Structures and the Rise of Populism in Recent German Politics. An Analysis of current German political events through Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* and *Timon of Athens*

On November 7th 2024, headlines reported the collapse of the German coalition government when Chancellor Scholz dismissed his finance minister, igniting widespread discussions about the country's upcoming elections and its precarious political situation. This event highlights not only the failure of a political partnership but also the deepening sense of instability within the country. The breakdown of the so-called “traffic-light” coalition, driven by mutual distrust, raises significant questions about the role of confidence and trust in political contracts. It challenges the notion of political alliances being based on shared values and stability, suggesting that once the foundational trust between leaders erodes, political systems are susceptible to collapse. This study proposes exploring these themes through a close reading





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of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* and *Timon of Athens*, two plays set in ancient Rome and Athens, respectively. Shakespeare's choice to adapt and stage these plays was connected to the political dynamics of early modern England, particularly the shift from Elizabeth I's rule to James I, the Gunpowder Plot, and the growing tension between monarchs and Parliament. These events mirrored anxieties about power, trust and the relationship between rulers and ruled. This paper seeks to read *Coriolanus* and *Timon of Athens* alongside Hobbes's *Leviathan*, focusing on the collapse of social bonds during political failures. In both plays, Shakespeare addresses how the breakdown of trust between leaders and the public can lead to social unrest and the rise of populist movements. In *Timon of Athens*, Timon's tragic fall from a generous and benevolent leader to a misanthropic recluse exemplifies how a leader's misplaced generosity and unmonitored wealth can create an imbalance in socioeconomic structures, leading to societal collapse. Timon's descent into ruin is not only a personal tragedy but also a reflection of how political and social systems that rely on resource exploitation can quickly unravel when these resources are depleted. His generosity is repaid with betrayal, as his friends and allies abandon him once his wealth and influence no longer serve their interests. This mirrors how political alliances are often driven by the expectation of material and ideological reciprocity, and how their disintegration can trigger social and political conflict. *Coriolanus* offers a powerful exploration of the consequences of a breach of trust between political authorities and the populace. Coriolanus, a proud and imperious leader, becomes a symbol of how political elites exploit and manipulate the discontented masses for their own benefit. The plebian uprising in the play parallels how modern political movements, such as Wagenknecht's BSW and the far-right AFD in Germany, have capitalized on public dissatisfaction. Both texts and contemporary events highlight the dangers of leaders who fail to understand the needs of the people, and the ways in which populist movements can exploit such failings to gain power. Through the plays, this study aims to explore the intersection of trust, leadership, and social unrest, showing how Shakespeare's works continue to offer critical thoughts into political dynamics standing the test of time.

Keywords: Current German Politics, Shakespeare studies, breach of trust, populism in politics.

About the author: Ruvindra Sathsarani is the research and teaching assistant to the Chair of English Literature and Gender Studies at the University of Tübingen, Germany. She teaches and does research on Shakespeare Studies, Post-colonial literature, and Women's Writing with a special focus on female workers' rights.

Day 2 – Friday 16 May 2025.

Session 3: 9h30 – 10h30

Alma-Pierre Bonnet, Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3

Narratives in Political Discourse: Towards a Critical Approach

This paper discusses the significance of narratives in political discourse and proposes a methodical approach to their study. Drawing on the fields of narratology, critical discourse analysis and political studies, it is argued that, under the disguise of the narrative format,





political actors are able to convey key political messages that might go unnoticed, in order to reinforce their ethos and/ or justify their worldviews, which calls for a critical – and systematic – approach. After exploring the way in which narratives represent important gateways into the overall representation of key issues by political actors and how this narrativisation of political discourse might provide fertile ground for the dissemination of hidden political messages and ideologies, the paper goes on to present a three-part methodology to facilitate the deciphering of such messages within narratives. The ambition of the paper is to introduce what we hope to be a ubiquitous approach to the critical study of narratives in political discourse, whatever the type of narratives recognized in the literature (“political narratives”; “crisis narratives”; “strategic narratives”, etc.).

Keywords: political narratives, CDA, discourse analysis, narratology, political discourse.

About the author: Alma-Pierre Bonnet is a Senior Lecturer in British studies at Jean Moulin Lyon 3 University, France. His research interests centre around political communication and political strategy. His current research focuses on the use of storytelling and narratives in political discourse, in particular through the use of critical narrative analysis. He recently published a collective book on the culture wars in the UK with Routledge (co-editor: Raphaële Kilty).

Catherine MacMillan, *Yeditepe University, Istanbul*

Saving the (Dystopian) EU From Itself? Turkey, Ontological (In)security and Narrative in Justice and Development Party Discourse on the EU

This paper explores the discourse of Turkey’s governing Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi* – AKP) towards the European Union from the combined perspective of Ontological (In)security and the Narrative Policy Framework. Ontological security, an approach which originally derives from psychology and sociology (Kinvall, 2019, 285), generally refers to the possession of a stable, complete and continuous sense of self over time (Rumelili, 2018, 281) (Mitzen, 2006, 342) which can, however, be challenged by various anxieties and fears. In the context of International Relations, political actors may try to (re)establish a sense of ontological security through narrative, which can allow a conception of a stable self to be projected across time and space (Steele and Homolar, 2019, 216). According to the Narrative Policy Framework, narratives are composed of a setting, plot, characters and morals, and such narratives may also correspond to *genres* (Subotic, 2019) (Spencer and Oppermann, 2020).

As Çapan and Zarakol (2019) have argued, Turkish ontological insecurity is deeply entrenched and is related to its ambivalent relationship with the West, notably through its liminal position between East and West, and its perceived temporal lag in the context of ‘catching up’ with the West. On this basis, it is argued that, particularly since 2016, AKP discourse towards the European Union has attempted to overcome this sense of ontological insecurity toward the West through a dystopian narrative of the EU, a narrative genre that is also evident in, for instance, the French right-wing populist *Rassemblement National*’s discourse on the EU (MacMillan, 2022).

The AKP thus depicts the European Union as an oppressive, exclusionary quasi-dystopian regime, unable to break away from its totalitarian past (MacMillan, 2020). Dystopian narratives





of the EU originating from radical right populist actors within the EU may serve not only to express feelings of ontological insecurity, but even, through depicting the EU as the source of such insecurity, to heighten them, potentially framing continued membership of an unreformed EU as a threat to (individual and national) ontological security (MacMillan, 2022). However, in the case of Turkey, a long-standing candidate for EU accession, such framing arguably aims to foster a sense of ontological security. Thus, the accession of Turkey, portrayed as the heir of a tradition of tolerance dating back to the Ottoman Empire, is depicted as a potential remedy for the EU's supposed inability to escape from Europe's fascist, exclusionary past. Such discourse, through its emphasis on a Turkish tradition of tolerance, not only portrays Turkey in a superior position *vis a vis* the EU – as a potential dystopian hero – but also, through emphasising a Turkish tradition of tolerance, serves to strengthen Turkish ontological security through providing a narrative of a “stable self to be projected across time and space” (Steele and Homolar, 2019, 216).

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Catherine MacMillan is an Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Yeditepe University (Istanbul). She obtained her PhD (in European Studies) from Marmara University in 2008. Her research interests are interdisciplinary, including European Studies (with a focus on discourse analysis focusing on Turkey's relations with the EU, Brexit and populism) and literature (with a special interest in politics and literature). She published a





monograph in 2014, *Discourse, Identity and the Question of Turkish Accession to the EU: Through the Looking Glass*, and edited another book, *Contemporary Perspectives on Turkey's EU Accession Process*, in 2018. She is also the author of various book chapters and articles.

Session 4: 11h-12h

Anna Semenova, Sorbonne Université. Paris, France

Les récits stratégiques dans le discours de M. Zakharova, la porte-parole du ministère des Affaires étrangères de la Russie

Dans le contexte géopolitique actuel, marqué par une multiplication des désaccords entre la Russie et les pays occidentaux, il nous semble important d'étudier le discours du ministère des Affaires étrangères (MAE) russes afin de décortiquer leurs approches argumentatives face à la gestion des situations conflictuelles. Notre communication a pour but de démontrer un procédé rhétorique centré sur l'utilisation de la répétition employé par la porte-parole du ministère des Affaires étrangères russes, Maria Zakharova, lors de ses interventions politico-médiatiques entre 2019 et février 2022. En politique, la répétition n'est pas un phénomène nouveau : les slogans connaissent un usage massif. Mais ici, nous ne parlons pas de la répétition en tant que figure de style, comme l'anaphore, mais de la répétition persuasive qui s'inscrit dans une stratégie d'influence. Dans ce cas-là, la répétition est vue comme un acte d'énonciation performatif. Ce phénomène de répétition est aussi appelé récits stratégiques (strategic narratives) ou répétition à intention argumentative [Plantin 2016]. À travers ces récits, le pays construit son image recherchée, ainsi que l'image souhaitée de son passé et avenir. Les récits stratégiques servent aussi à justifier les actions diplomatiques du pays et à promouvoir les intérêts et les valeurs nationales [Oates&Steiner 2018, Miskimmon 2017, 2022]. Nous verrons dans notre communication qu'initialement les récits stratégiques servent à constater une position du MAE sur un thème donné, mais à force de la répéter, elle devient un fondement, un thème récurrent, et se rapproche du topos¹. Ensuite, puisqu'au fur et à mesure de la répétition ces thèmes deviennent bien connus par le public, la porte-parole a plus de facilité à jongler avec ceux-ci en n'évoquant les sujets que brièvement, ce qui permet de se concentrer davantage sur l'attribution des appréciations négatives à ces thèmes, ainsi que sur le jugement de ses adversaires. Finalement, quand le récit est acquis par le public et bien intégré dans le discours, il peut être utilisé pour la manipulation et la propagande. Nous allons démontrer, par exemple, comment le récit sur la russophobie s'inscrit dans le cadre de la grande théorie du Kremlin dans laquelle les pays de l'Ouest sont unis contre la Russie ou encore un autre cas de répétition issu de la citation de Theresa May : *highly likely* qui est apparu seulement en 2018. Aujourd'hui, nous avons de plus en plus besoin de savoir décoder les messages politiques complexes qui sont véhiculés par les médias. Nous tâchons à présenter la figure de Maria Zakharova du point de vue de ces fonctions professionnelles mais aussi en tant qu'orateur. En outre, nous cherchons à analyser le cadre communicationnel des conférences de presse : leurs conditions, déroulement, contenu. Enfin, c'est grâce à l'étude de la répétition persuasive présente dans le discours de M. Zakharova, que nous allons essayer de comprendre comment les récits stratégiques ont émergé et ont été mobilisés pour forger et renforcer l'identité nationale, tout en accentuant l'opposition entre la Russie et l'Occident.

1 Topos est un synonyme de lieu commun, schéma d'argument ou encore la formule de l'argumentation [Plantin 2016 : 574].





Mots clés : discours politico-médiatique ; répétition ; récits stratégiques ; identité nationale

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ATER en linguistique anglaise à l'Université Sorbonne-Nouvelle, Doctorante en linguistique
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Natasha Lock, *King's College London*

The Perlocutionary Power of "the Enemy!": Understanding the construction of enmity narratives under the Chinese Communist Party

Beijing's public list of domestic enemies is extensive, diverse and puzzling. In 2014, Premier Li Keqiang warned that "corruption is a natural enemy of the people's government,".(1) In 2008, Zhang Qingli, the Communist Party chief of Tibet, called the struggle against the Dalai Lama a "life and death battle between us and the enemy"(2) Amid the governmental spirituality crackdown in the summer of 1999, state-media organ Xinhua portrayed the Falun Gong group





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as “deviant”, “dangerous”, “evil”, and therefore an enemy that needed to be contained.(3) Why would an authoritarian regime publicly divulge that enemies exist within their state? Are domestic enemies inscribed in Beijing’s political terrain? How has the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) managed to perpetuate the narrative of enmity?

This research examines the construction of domestic enemy narratives in Chinese political discourse and explores how demarcations of purported enemies within have served and continue to serve as a core component of state and society dichotomies. By disentangling the similarities and differences between the framing of enemies under three regime flashpoints (4), this research showcases the central role that enemy narratives occupy in the CCP’s toolbox. In each of these episodes under Jiang, Hu and Xi, “enemies” perform as important stock stories that exercise constructive influence when the appropriate cues are present, and the environment necessitates it. Beyond a stock story, I additionally argue that hyping the notion of “enemies” works as a valve mechanism to offload societal emotion and target it towards an external subject. From its establishment in 1949 to the present, the CCP’s leadership in the People’s Republic of China (PRC) has congruously garnered an inventive, rhythmic, and nationwide panoply of enemy narratives to serve as a core component of its domestic policy and surrounding narratives. By peeling back some of the layers of CCP narratives, we can find evidence of how maintaining the trope of enmity and framing this as a security matter play a major role in state strategy. This study aims to answer the following research question: how are narratives of enmity used and reproduced by the Chinese Communist Party?

(1) "Premier Li vows ‘zero-tolerance’ to corruption," *Xinhua* (2014).

http://english.www.gov.cn/news/news_release/2014/08/23/content_281474983030309.htm

(2) Quoted in: Barbara Demick, *Eat the Buddha: Life and death in a Tibetan town* (Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2021). p.188.

(3) see Chiung Hwang Cheng’s admirable article that analyses 309 Xinhua news items concerning Falun Gong during the period spanning from 1 April 1 to 31 December, 1999 in Chiung Hwang Chen, "Framing Falun Gong: Xinhua

News Agency's Coverage of the New Religious Movement in China," *Asian Journal of Communication* 15, no. 1 (2005), <https://doi.org/10.1080/0129298042000329775>.

(4) Jiang Zemin’s crackdown on Falun Gong in 1999; Hu Jintao’s suppression of Tibetan “Dalai Lama forces” in 2008; and the first year of Xi Jinping’s Anti-Corruption Campaign in 2012/13

About the author:

Natasha Lock is a third year PhD candidate at the Lau China Institute of King’s College London. Her work examines the manipulation of narratives (victimhood, enmity, humiliation) and emotions (anger, fear, envy) by authoritarian regimes. Natasha has presented her work on the construction of enemies at conferences in the UK, the Netherlands, Hungary, Denmark, Finland and China. Her most recent publication cross-analyses the visual imaginaries of enemies in political editorial cartoons published by the *Taipei Times* and *Global Times*. Natasha holds a BA degree in History, International Relations and Mandarin Chinese from the University of Exeter and completed her Master’s degree as a Yenching Scholar at Peking University where she was named Graduate of the Year. She spent 5+ years living, working and studying in China.

Keynote Speaker

Philip Seargeant, the Open University





Place making as political narrative - how the linguistic landscape is used to narrate competing political narratives

All cities are sites for the narration of the stories of their inhabitants - and often these are specifically political stories. We see this most explicitly when political demonstrations are held on the streets of a city, and people carry temporary placards emblazoned with slogans which index or articulate concise narratives about a political issue. But the narrative that's being expressed isn't encoded solely in the words written on the placard - it's embodied in the actions of the crowd, in the route they're marching along, and the landscape they're passing through. Urban space is a chaotic mosaic of semiotic resources, many of which are the product of acts of "place-making" through which dominant cultural narratives are espoused. The talk will look at the role that place-making of this sort plays in contemporary political discourse, and how narrative is expressed and contested via the semiotic landscape. It will explore these issues with reference to a specific example from British politics.

About the author: Philip Seargeant is a writer, researcher & educational filmmaker specialising in the study of language & communication. His current work focuses on the relationships between language, politics & social media, while earlier work looked at the emergence and status of English as a global language. He is currently Senior Lecturer of Applied Linguistics at the Open University.

Recent publications:

Seargeant, P. (2023) *The Future of Language: How Technology, Politics and Utopianism are Transforming the Way we Communicate*, London: Bloomsbury.

Seargeant, P. (2023) *Political activism and the linguistic landscape: Or, how to use Public Space as a Medium for Protest*, Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Seargeant, P. (2023) *Crisis Leadership: Boris Johnson and Political Persuasion during the Covid Pandemic*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Seargeant, P. (2020) *The Art of Political Storytelling: Why Stories Win Votes In Post-Truth Politics*, London: Bloomsbury

Seargeant, P. (2019) *The Emoji Revolution: How Technology is Shaping the Future of Communication*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Session 5: 15h30-17h

Sayf Mohamed, Cergy Paris University

Framing France: The Role of Metaphors in Shaping Master Narratives in Emmanuel Macron's Political Discourse

Metaphors play a pivotal role in shaping political narratives, offering frameworks through which complex realities are simplified, values are conveyed, and collective identities are constructed. This study explores the function of metaphors in nurturing "master narratives" overarching cultural and political stories that shape societal understanding and political discourse. With special emphasis on the French context, this article examines how metaphorical language has been employed in political tweets to articulate and propagate dominant narratives such as Ecological transition, Reform, and Modernisation in French political discourse. By analysing a corpus of tweets posted by the French president Emmanuel





Macron over a period of 4 years, the study investigates how these metaphors resonate with or challenge public perceptions. The results reveal the centrality of conceptual metaphors in constructing a master narrative that has been translated into policies and the continuity between historical master narratives and their modern reinterpretations, which mirrors the dynamic interplay between language and political communication in France.

Keywords: metaphors, master narrative, energy transition, France.

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About the author:

Sayf Mohamed is a Lecturer in English Language at the University of Cergy Paris, with a PhD in English Linguistics (University of Lille). He is a former SUSI scholar and his research interests lie in discourse analysis, cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphors, and news representation.

Christopher Jon Delogu, Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3

"They're eating the dogs": The Provocative Storytelling of Trump and Vance versus the Reality-Based Community

The norm-breaking behavior of President Donald Trump, who routinely disregards true facts, invents “alternative facts,” and indulges in hate speech, is well-documented and has so far come at no cost to him, on the contrary. Therefore, this paper will focus instead on the storytelling of the current American vice president, J(ames) D(avid) Vance, and his “disruption” of the “reality-based community” with statements that have attracted much





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attention in recent years. These include the “childless cat ladies” comment (2021), the repetition (on X) of rumors about pet-eating Haitian immigrants (2024) and claims at the Munich Security Conference (2025) that the biggest threat to Europe is not Russia or China but “from within” and that European Union “commissars” are suppressing free speech. The interest of the Vance case is three-fold: first, his rise to prominence and power was the direct result of successful storytelling (a bestselling narrative of freeing himself from poverty and dysfunctional family ties, *Hillbilly Elegy*, 2016); second, his response to objections from the media has been to defend his remarks with a “zero-shame strategy” based on a “the end justifies the means” argument delivered in a stentorian voice. In other words, to better address an allegedly real problem (chaotic immigration, muzzled speech, failing or fake democracy), Vance claims the right to use creative storytelling techniques including hyperbole, metaphors, sarcasm, and even falsehoods. The third point of interest is that the longer-term consequences—for him and the rest of us—of undoing the customary dividing line or “firewall” between fact and fiction, respectful speech and hate speech are as yet unknown. To conclude, this paper will use the attention theory sketched by the journalists Chris Hayes and Ezra Klein to ask whether J.D. Vance will be able to successfully replicate the “total attentional atmosphere” of Trump and Elon Musk who seem to turn all attention—the good, the bad, and the ugly—into more power; or whether instead Vance will join Kari Lake, Mark Robinson, Steve Bannon and other political losers and convicts who have attempted to “flood the zone with shit.” In sum, this paper examines a bellwether case in the ongoing struggle between “making shit up” for political gain versus political narratives that respect facts and the need for rules and human decency.

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BBC coverage of the “childless cat ladies” comment

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NPR coverage of “childless cat ladies” comment

<https://www.npr.org/2024/07/29/nx-s1-5055616/jd-vance-childless-cat-lady-history>

BBC coverage of the false pet-eating claims

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgj447j5711o>

NPR coverage of the false pet-eating claims

<https://www.npr.org/2024/09/10/nx-s1-5107320/jd-vance-springfield-ohio-haitians-pets>

BBC coverage of Vance’s Munich Security Conference speech

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ceve3wl21x1o>

About the author:

Delogu is an American citizen, born in 1963, educated in the U.S.; tenured full professor at the Université Jean Moulin-Lyon 3 since 2003; previously held positions in Toulouse (1994-2003) and Aix-en-Provence (1992-1994); visiting professor of English at Boston University (2004-5); professor of French at Dartmouth College (2008-9), and the University of Southern Maine (2012-13). He teaches translation, many genres and periods of literature, US history, and topics in the history of ideas (democracy, fascism, social classes, life writing, film, journalism). He has translated fifteen books and many scholarly articles from French to English for Columbia University Press, the University of Chicago Press, Other Press, Polity, and Brill among others. C. Jon Delogu is the author of:

Fascism, Vulnerability, and the Escape from Freedom: Readings to Repair Democracy (punctum books, 2022)





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Tocqueville and Democracy in the Internet Age (Open Humanities Press, 2014)

Ralph Waldo Emerson : Une Introduction (Les Perséides, 2006)





The (cognitive) key to the hearts of men?
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PANELS, DRAFTS, AND SLIDES

Each panel includes 2 to 3 speakers and will be moderated by a Chair. Each presentation should last about 15 to 20 minutes. After the presentations, 20 minutes will be available for comments and questions from the audience.

