

## CMLL STUDENTS SET TO STUDY ABROAD IN EUROPE

French, German, and Spanish students are excited to be studying abroad in Europe this summer. We are hosting three programs in Tours, France, in Berlin, Germany, and in Alcalá, Spain. Follow us on Instagram at @msstate\_cml to keep up with our students' adventures this summer!

## IN MEMORIAM: DR. ANA MARÍA HERNÁNDEZ DE LÓPEZ

*By Julia Kraker*



*Dr. Ana María Hernández de López*

I did not have the pleasure of knowing Dr. López or having her as a professor, but after talking to former colleagues, her long career as professor of Hispanic American literature at MSU left a lasting impact not only within the department but with her friends as well. Dr. Ana María Hernández de López (Dra. López) passed away in November of 2021 at the age of 91. She is survived by her husband, Dr. Mariano López, her sons Cándido (Robin) and Teddy, and her grandson Ryan. She is remembered by former student, María Arun Kumar as a “world-renowned scholar on Latin American literature, editing books on Carlos Fuentes and Gabriel García Márquez. In addition, she organized symposia, including the symposium on Carlos Fuentes in 1987.” Kumar continued to state that “as a teacher, she was very knowledgeable and always encouraged her students to deepen their own knowledge of literature, and on a personal level she greatly valued family and friends, and she had a wonderful sense of humor.”

In remembering Dr. López, Dr. Rosa Vozzo, Spanish instructor and former colleague of Dr. López, says she has many wonderful memories working with Dr. López, but she states that “some of my fondest memories are my visits to Dr. López’s office after her trips and not only hearing about her adventures but seeing what new books she brought back and getting on the list to borrow them.” She continued describing her by recounting that “her tenacity was well known by all, ‘cuando la doctora se propone algo lo consigue’ was a phrase that her friends and colleagues repeated more than once.” Dr. Vozzo shared one of the many stories from her visits. She said that Dr. López once rode on the back of a motorcycle to reach a small village in Nicaragua after discovering that someone had a copy of an issue of Ruben Dario’s *Mundial Magazine* she was missing from her collection. Dr. Vozzo said that she came home with the copy.

Dr. López authored numerous poems and articles as well as edited books on poet, Ruben Dario and novelist, Gabriel García Márquez. Perhaps some of her most well-known work was when she edited *Interpretaciones a la obra de Carlos Fuentes*. Dr. López’s efforts to organize the second international symposium at MSU involved inviting Carlos Fuentes to speak. Due to unexpected health issues, he was unable to attend; however, he personally wrote a letter to Dr. López and commented on her commitment and devotion to literature: “Juana de Arco de este esfuerzo, la profesora Ana María Hernández de López, merece todo nuestro agradecimiento por su tenacidad, su inteligencia y su devoción a la literatura: que su guerra, como la da la santa, dure cien años y cien años de solidaridad quisiera ofrecerle yo.”

Her career also included serving as the director for study abroad in Puebla, Mexico and San José, Costa Rica and numerous teaching awards. Many of her former students followed her footsteps to become teachers and professors. Dr. López was Professor Emerita of Foreign Languages before she retired in 2005, but her teaching legacy, and her passion for literature will continue to influence others for many years to come.

## INTERVIEW WITH FAHD BENSAID

By Carly Bahler

As we approach the two-year mark of COVID upending life as we know it in ways both big and small, the French section in CMLL has been fortunate to be able to consistently count on its dependable lecturers for their vital contributions to undergraduate French. We are also proud to say that both lecturers who have (re-)joined the team over the past two years are graduates of our program. After Maud Barthès returned to CMLL in Fall 2020, the French section welcomed back in Fall 2021 Fahd Bensaid, who has been teaching our French III sections this academic year. I recently sat down with Fahd to find out more about his experiences in and out of the classroom.

*Fahd, you finished your MA in French here in CMLL in May 2021, but your interests don't stop at French, and your studies haven't stopped either. Can you tell us a little bit about your trajectory and your current academic pursuits?*

I came to Mississippi State University in January 2017 in order to pursue a Master's in Aerospace Engineering. Right after I completed that degree, I started a Master's degree in French that I finished in May 2021. I am currently finishing my third and final Master's in Industrial Engineering, hopefully by December 2022.

*You've obviously been very busy in an academic setting, but I know that you and your wife (also a CMLL graduate) have a vlog (i.e. a video blog), The Americans. Tell us more about how this!*

My wife, Bobbie Jo (née Smith), or *Bobbie* for short, graduated from State double majoring in Spanish and German in 2017, and she graduated with her Masters in Spanish in 2020. She currently works in Food Science, Nutrition, and Health Promotion as a Project Coordinator for Youth Mental Health Gatekeeper Trainings. She travels around the state and provides Mental Health First Aid and Suicide Prevention trainings to adults and young people. Her work is more important than ever, given the effect of the pandemic on mental health.



*Fahd and Bobbie Jo in San Diego, California*

Bobbie travels extensively across Mississippi for work, but Bobbie and I love to travel for leisure, too! We wanted to have a cute way to remember our trips, so we decided to start making videos to document them. We then decided that we would love to turn it into a vlog even if it's just for ourselves! Our name is *The Americans*, which is not only a blend of the words *Moroccan* and *American*, but it also incorporates the Spanish word for 'love', *amor*. This word encapsulates our love for travel, and not to mention one another. We started making vlogs about 2 years ago, and we would love to share a video every month, but with work and school, it's not always possible. It's definitely rewarding when we can look back and see fun things we've done! Once I picked up a few people from Pakistan who were coming to MSU, and they told me they knew who I was because they had seen one of our vlogs on YouTube talking about the university! I think it helps us to reach more people since we have videos in both English and Arabic.

*What an exciting way to capture all these moments as you build your life together and blend your cultures. Speaking of which, Morocco is a multilingual and multicultural country. What can you tell us about your multilingualism and multiculturalism, and what it means to you more globally?*



*Fahd and Bobbie Jo in Chefchaouen, Morocco*

I think that my being from Morocco and the fact that my wife and I speak multiple languages between us adds a lot to our relationship by keeping it always interactive, interesting, and energetic! In my French III classes, I enjoy introducing students to Moroccan culture by sharing my experiences. Some students are not even aware that French is spoken in Morocco, and so it's certainly a different cultural exposure than they might have anticipated getting in a French class. I can easily incorporate my experiences into any grammar or vocabulary lesson just by talking about my daily activities or general tendencies in Morocco, for example. I can get students to participate and compare their experiences with mine (or other Moroccans). It makes for a dynamic classroom where we're always laughing and sharing stories.

Still, one of the things I love most about being multilingual goes beyond speaking. It's the fact that it opens the mind to different cultures and different perspectives. French in Morocco is used as an administrative language; however, learning the French language made me understand the French culture more, and also made learning English as a third language and understanding the American culture easier. This is because I am already open to understanding that the outside world is not so fundamentally different; it just sees things from another angle. For instance, Bobbie and I also love food, and we love going to the international French café chain, Paul.

There's a Paul in Rabat (the capital of Morocco). It's impressive not only for the quality of food, but also because you can order in French in any Paul of the world, and that adds to the experience of eating. Bobbie and I love it. French also allows us to travel to so many beautiful countries such as France, Morocco, Belgium, Senegal, Mauritius, Canada, and more.

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Finally, it's not just French III students who have gotten glimpses into Moroccan culture. This past Fall, Fahd was also a major presence at French Club events, where attendees across levels could sample some delicious Moroccan tea, made with fresh mint, and served hot from Fahd's authentic Moroccan tea kettle. Beyond enjoying the tea, students also marveled at Fahd's mastery of the traditional Moroccan high pour, where he never spilled a drop. CMLL not only welcomes Fahd Bensaid back for this academic year but looks forward to his contributions in the semesters to come.

## **LANGUAGE LINKS: 很高兴认识你 HĚN GĀOXÌNG RÈNSHÍ Nǐ (NICE TO MEET YOU!)**

*By Rosy Nigro*

The Chinese language stands out as the most spoken in the world with over an estimated billion people in China and various other parts of the world speaking it. Chinese is now considered one of the most important languages because of the growing interest in Chinese culture in the West and worldwide. Chinese has an increased presence in the business world; learning it would be the best way to open the doors to many business opportunities. Recent studies have shown that Chinese has also become a popular choice for a second language among college students.

As Dr. Fumiko Joo explains, CMLL's Chinese program is currently housed in the Asian Studies concentration. CMLL has offered Chinese language courses for many years. The full-fledged Chinese program started when Asian Studies was officially set up as one of the CMLL's concentrations during the Spring 2020 semester. Today, MSU students can learn Mandarin,



the most widely spoken dialect in China, over three years of study. Currently, Dr. Liang-yin Lin teaches all levels of the language from Chinese I through Chinese VI. In small classroom settings, students can develop skills in speaking, listening, reading, writing, and build a strong foundation for communicating in various social contexts. In addition to Chinese language courses, the program offers Chinese literature and culture courses. Currently, Dr. Joo teaches survey courses for Chinese literature and culture as well as specialized Chinese literature courses in the upper-level division.

Dr. Joo emphasizes the enthusiasm of the students in learning about not only the Chinese language, but also the Chinese culture outside the classroom. CMLL, in fact, offers opportunities for students to be fully immersed in experiences and events like the Chinese Table, which is a faculty-led group that provides activities related to the Chinese culture as an extracurricular program. The celebration of the mid-Autumn Festival in the fall and lunar New Year in the spring are good examples. Additionally, and even more exciting, the Chinese Club was officially admitted as a student organization in 2021, which will be the main platform for engaging more students into the Chinese program in the future.

In terms of future plans, Dr. Joo plans to start a summer study abroad program in China. She hopes to launch the program once the COVID-19 pandemic is settled, and travels to and in China become easier.

## **KING CAKE / ROSCA DE REYES RECIPE**

*By Martha Roskelley*

The name of this delicious bread comes from the Three Wise Man from the Bible, who came bearing gifts for Jesus on the Twelfth Night. The tradition of king cake is largely rooted in France and Spain. Settlers brought an early version with them to Louisiana in the 1870s and years later, it's become synonymous with the Mardi Gras. Rosca de Reyes is the Mexican version, brought by the Spaniards during Viceroyalty of New Spain. A small doll representing baby Jesus is randomly inserted under the bread and whoever gets the slice with the doll must then hold a party on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Feast of Candelaria. This version of the bread is less sweet and colorful, but delicious with a cup of coffee or hot chocolate.

2 packages (1.4 oz/7 g each) dry yeast	2/3 cup sugar	<b>For decorating bread:</b>
1/2 cup lukewarm water	1/2 tsp. salt	1/2 cup sugar
4 cups all-purpose flour	1 teaspoon grated orange peel	1/2 cup butter
3 whole eggs	2 tablespoons orange-flower water	1/2 egg
3 egg yolks	3/4 cup butter, softened	7/8 cup flour

Sprinkle the yeast over the lukewarm water, add 2 tablespoons of the flour and let stand for 20 minutes in a warm place.

Place the remaining flour in a large bowl, make a well in the center, and place the rest of the ingredients along with the dissolved yeast. Mix the ingredients together with your fingers, then knead on a floured board until the dough is smooth. When small bubbles start to form, shape into a ball and place in a lightly greased bowl. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled in volume.

Meanwhile, to prepare the decoration, cream the sugar with the butter and add the rest of the ingredients to form a stiff dough. Set aside.

Knead the bread dough one more time and shape into a large ring loaf. Transfer to a greased baking sheet and let rise in a warm place for 45 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 475 F. Decorate the ring with flat strips of the sugar- butter mix, pressing them into the dough. Glaze the ring with an egg wash and bake for 10 minutes. Lower the temperature to 400 F and bake another 10 minutes. Insert two small plastic dolls or two kidney beans under the bread.

## **WRITING THE FEMININE: DR. FERNANDA NEGRETE**

In November we hosted an online lecture by Dr. Fernanda Negrete as part of the CMLL Distinguished Lecture Series. Dr. Fernanda Negrete's talk was entitled "Writing the Feminine: From Symptom and Sublimation to the Aesthetic Act". In this talk, she discussed a concept of writing that grounds some key elements in psychoanalytic work, as well as in artistic creation, as conceived by a number of modernist and contemporary authors and artists. Among them, Louise Bourgeois, Sophie Calle, Lygia Clark, Roni Horn, Clarice Lispector, and Stéphane Mallarmé stand out. Their works of literature and art prompt the question of how writing – understood as a process or practice that opens a non-representational space for the libidinal body and that calls for reading beyond interpretation – engages with what psychoanalysis calls the feminine. She considered the stakes of this term in three distinct modes of writing that offer sites of emergence for the feminine, although with different implications: the symptom, sublimation, and the aesthetic act.

Dr. Negrete is the Director of the Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and & Culture and Associate Professor at Dept. of Romance Languages & Literatures at University of Buffalo, SUNY. She has published *The Aesthetic Clinic: Feminine Sublimation in Contemporary Writing, Psychoanalysis, and Art* (SUNY 2020) among many other works on psychoanalysis, feminism, cinema, and modern literatures in French, Portuguese, Spanish and English.

## **2023 CMLL LANGUAGE EXPO UPDATE**

We will be hosting the CMLL Language Expo in February 2023. Due to concerns at the beginning of the year, we decided to postpone the 2022 Language Expo, but we look forward to hosting our Mississippi high school teachers and students next year! Please check our website for more details.

## **GERMAN CLUB MOVIE NIGHT**

The German Club at MSU will be showing the film *Ich fühl mich Disco* on March 31<sup>st</sup> at 6:00 in McCool 109. This coming-of-age film looks at relationships from the perspective of a son who does not like sports or girls, and a dad who wishes he did.

## **INTERNATIONAL FIESTA RETURNS TO MSU**

After a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic, the annual International Fiesta will be hosted once again at MSU on the Drill Field on April 2<sup>nd</sup> from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. This event is full of cultural exchange and entertainment. Departments and student groups across campus will host booths to showcase their cultures and sell delicious food.

## **THE BLUES OF ACHILLES: JOE GOODKIN**

CMLL and Shackouls Honors College are cosponsoring a free concert by Chicago musician, Joe Goodkin, who will be performing *The Blues of Achilles*, inspired by Homer's *Iliad*. This free event will take place on April 12, 2022 from 5:30-7:00 in Griffis Hall in the Forum Room. Joe Goodkin has written and performed his music in more than 43 states and abroad.



## DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICAL AND MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES

The Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Literatures at MSU, consisting of faculty members in Chinese, French, German, Greek, Italian, Japanese, Latin, Russian, and Spanish, offers Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts Degrees in Foreign Languages with concentrations in Classics, French, German, and Spanish.

East meets West, Classical languages converge with modern languages giving our students the experience that will allow them to embrace diversity, while maintaining a solid sense of their own historical identity.



*Lee Hall*

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