



The Biography Society
La Société de Biographie

Newsletter

The Biography Society is a scholarly society of research, international and interdisciplinary, devoted to the development and the valorisation of the theory and the practice of biography.

ISSUE 1
NOVEMBER 2017

www.biographysociety.org

First Conference of the Biography Society: “La Vérité d’une vie/ Biography and Verity,” 19-21 October



Keynote speaker biographer
Tiphaine Samoyault, author
of *Roland Barthes* (Paris:
Seuil, 2015) and moderator.

The First Conference of the Biography Society was held at Aix Marseille University, Maison de la recherche, Schuman Campus, Aix-en-Provence. The international conference gathered 30 academics and biographers from all over the world. The event was a great success and the Biography Society would like to thank all the participants who shared their research on the topic as well as Aix Marseille University for hosting the conference. The articles emanating from the conference will be published in two volumes.

General Assembly and Renewal of the Board

On Saturday 21st October, The Biography Society held its annual General Assembly at Aix Marseille University, Maison de la recherche, Schuman campus, Aix-en-Provence.

The society’s board has been renewed and we would like to congratulate the following:

Pr. Joanny Moulin as President of the society, **Pr. Hans Renders** as Vice-President, **Dr. Nigel Hamilton** as Honorary President, **Maryam Thirriard (PhD candidate)** as Secretary, **Dr. Patrick Di Mascio** as Deputy Secretary, **Dr. Jean-Charles Perquin** as Deputy Secretary, **Pr. Sophie Vallas** as Treasurer, **Pr. Yannick Gouchan** as Deputy Treasurer, **Alexandre Tremblay (PhD candidate)** as Deputy Treasurer.

Since its founding workshop in November 2015, the Biography society has organized and convened several events and activities:

Sept 2016-June 2017: “Séminaire biographie”, monthly seminar at the Maison de la Recherche, Schuman Campus, Aix Marseille Univ. The program is accessible via the society’s website.

19 Oct-08 Nov 2016: Aix Marseille University welcomes visiting Professor Hans Renders, Chair of Biography at Groningen University and Director of the Biography Institute. Renders animates Master classes for ACMA graduate students and LERMA post-graduate students as well as seminar sessions for the Biography Society seminar.

16 November 2016: Conference “Le Pari biographique”, François Dosse, Professor of contemporary history and author of *Le Pari biographique. Ecrire une vie* (La découverte, 2005), Aix Marseille Univ, Aix-en-Provence.

14 December 2016: Conference “Exemplary lives : Why we read biographies and what German Enlightenment had to say about it”, Dr Tobias Heinrich, Lector at New College, Oxford University.

15 December 2016: Seminar session “Inspiré d’une vie: le genre biopic en question,” Taïna Tuhkunen, Professor of American literature at Université d’Angers, co-editor of “Based upon a Life: The Biopic Genre in Question.” (Dec. 2016), *LISA*, e-journal.

The Biography Society would like to thank the LERMA (EA 853) and the Faculty ALLSH, Aix Marseille Univ, for financing these invitations.

1-3 June 2017: Workshop: « (Re)Constructing Lives » at the SAES Congress in Reims

20-21 Oct.2017: First international conference of The Biography Society: "La Vérité d'une vie / Biography & Verity", Aix Marseille Univ, Aix-en-Provence.

Publications:

2017, 2018 "The Year in France" / "The Year in the Netherlands", *Biography, An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* (Hawai'i) 39.4 (Fall 2016) : 606-614, etc.

April 2017 : *Great Biographers / Grands Biographes* (part one), eds. J. Moulin & Hans Renders, *Les Grandes Figures historiques dans la littérature et les arts*, n° 6, April 2017, e-journal.

Events and activities for the upcoming year 2017/2018

- **The Biography Society Doctoral Thesis Award**

The membership fees of the Biography Society are mainly intended to finance the doctoral thesis award the society has projected to set up. This prize is intended to reward outstanding PhDs in the field of biography studies. The award will concern PhDs in English and in French and specific juries will be set up.

The society would like to remind its members that they can now pay their annual membership fee directly on the society's internet site, in the "Society Members/ Join the Society" section (25 euros/15 euros for students).

- **Upcoming events**

The Biography Society Seminar at Maison de la recherche, Aix-en-Provence:

Friday 17 November 2017 9.00-11.00 room 2.41	Joanny MOULIN : <i>Teoría de la Biografía</i> de Teresa del Olmo Ibáñez
Thursday 21 December 2017 9.00-12.00 – room 2.44	Wilhelm HEMECKER : <i>Biography in Theory: Key Texts with Commentaries</i> & le Ludwig Boltzman Institut für Geschichte und Theorie der Biographie (Vienne)
Friday 19 January 2018 14.00-17.00 – room 2.44	Thea PICQUET : « Biographie et Histoire. <i>La Vita di Antonio Giacomini</i> de Jacopo Nardi »
Friday 23 February 2018 14.00-17.00 – room 2.44	Yannick GOUCHAN : « <i>La jeune fille et la mort. La vie graphique d'Elizabeth Siddal, muse de la PRB</i> », (Marco Tagliapietra, Elizabeth, 001 Edizioni, 2009).
Friday 23 mars 2018 14.00-17.00 – room 2.44	Anna María CABALLÉ : la Unidad d'Estudios Biográficos (Universidad de Barcelona)
Friday 20 avril 2018 14.00-17.00 – room 2.44	Tommaso DI CARPEGNA (Università degli Studi di Urbino « Carlo Bo ») & Collette COLLOMP, <i>L'uomo che si credeva re di Francia</i> (Laterza, 2005)
Friday 25 May 2018 14.00-17.00 – room 2.44	Guy LE THIEC : « De la vie aux lettres, Lucrece Borgia »
Friday 22 June 2018 14.00-17.00 – room 2.44	Patrick DI MASCIO, « <i>Si je devrais écrire une biographie (de Tocqueville, de Freud)...</i> ».

Biography Society events at other venues:

7-9 June 2018: Workshop at the 2018 SAES Congress at Université Paris Nanterre, theme: « Révolution(s) ».

29 August –2 Sept. 2018: "TRANSNATIONAL BIOGRAPHY IN EUROPE", Seminar at the ESSE Congress (European Society for the Study of English) in Brno.

Abstract: "In the nineteenth century especially, biography has played an important literary and cultural part in the building of the national identities of the European nation-states, with deplorable historical consequences. Today, on the contrary, there is a discernible interest in biographies of figures of international significance — artists, scientists, politicians, etc. Such transnational biographies are lives of historical personages belonging to linguistic and cultural areas different from the biographers' and the readers'. This seminar, backed by the Biography Society network, would focus more particularly on transnational biographies in Europe, in so far as they perceptibly contribute to building a sense of cultural belonging to the European Community." —Conveners : Marleen RENSEN, M.J.M.Rensen@uva.nl Assistant Professor, Department of European Studies, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands & Joanny MOULIN, joanny.moulin@univ-amu.fr Professor, Senior member of Institut Universitaire de France, English Department, Aix-Marseille University, France.

19-21 September 2018: "DIFFERENT LIVES. Global Perspectives on Biography in Public Cultures and Societies", Joint Conference of the BIOGRAPHY SOCIETY and the BIOGRAPHY INSTITUTE, to be held at Groningen University.

The call for papers: On 19-21 September, 2018, the Biography Institute of the University of Groningen will host a conference designed to take a look beyond our own borders and delve deeper into the question of how the art of biography is practiced in other parts of the world. Biographers from different continents will gather to examine the ways in which their foreign colleagues practice their craft and discuss the cultural perspectives that guide biographers in their approach to the infinite complexity of the other. *Different Lives: Global Perspectives on Biography in Public Cultures and Societies* will bring together biographers from France, Great Britain, Vietnam, South Africa, China, the United States, the Netherlands, and other nations, whose work reflect the global diversity of biographical practice. For the participants, it will provide an opportunity to learn about international research in the field.

In addition to Richard Holmes' adage 'biography as a handshake across time', we would like to know how biography can contribute to a better understanding of differences between societies and cultures. How can biographers from different parts of the world learn from each other, without becoming all the same? For this purpose, we call on our speakers to inform us about the history and the state of the art concerning biography in their own countries. By doing so, speakers can show how in their cultural background biography functions as a public genre, featuring specific societal issues and opinion-making. Presumably, this could lead to a different thinking about the role of biography in society.

To contribute to the discussion about the national perspectives in biography, the following subjects thus can be explored:

- Religion
- Current topics in biography
- Societal pioneers ('untimely individuals')
- Censorship
- Biographical criticism
- Access to archives
- Foreign biography in each country
- The publishing world
- Transnational similarities
- Biography in public space

The conference is jointly organized by the [Biography Institute](#) and the [Biography Society](#). Owing to these organizations' expansive networks, a broad group of prominent researchers and biographers will be present. Richard Holmes will give the keynote lecture and Nigel Hamilton will host a masterclass on Biography.

Abstracts are due on December 20: 12:00, 2017 and must be submitted via bioconferencegroningen@rug.nl

- **Upcoming publications**

2017: *Great Biographers / Grands Biographes* (part 2), eds. J. Moulin & Hans Renders, *Les Grandes Figures historiques dans la littérature et les arts*, n° 6 bis, e-journal.

2018: *Études Biographiques : la biographie au carrefour des humanités*, eds. Joanny Moulin, Yannick Gouchan & Phuong Ngoc Nguyen, Éditions Honoré Champion.

2018: *Political Biographies in Film & Print*, eds. Joanny Moulin & Delphine Letort, in *Biography, An Interdisciplinary Quarterly (Hawaii)*.

2018: *Practising Biography Studies : Boundaries of the Genre*, in *European Journal of Life Writing*, eds. Joanny Moulin and Maryam Thirriard.

An ISSN for the Biography Society's Research Blog:

The *Bibliothèque Nationale de France* (BNF) has assigned an ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) to the Biography Society's research blog, acknowledging the scientific value of the site contributions. Visit the site at www.biographysociety.org, ISSN 2491 – 5378.