

Dr Petra JAMES

I. General Information

1.1. Name, First Name : **JAMES, Petra**

1.2. Nationality: Czech

Permanent Resident Status: Belgium

1.6. Professional Address :

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Private Address:

6 avenue Vanderaey, 1180 Brussels, Belgium.

1.8. Languages spoken:

- active

Czech (mother tongue)

English, French, (C2, native level)

German, Spanish (B2 level)

- passive

Slovak, Polish, Russian (reading level)

II. University Degrees and Qualifications

2010 Qualified in Comparative Literature (section 10 of C.N.U.) and Slavic Studies (section 13 of C.N.U.), France.

2009 Ph.D., (grade “très honorable avec les félicitations du jury à l’unanimité”) – University Paris Sorbonne (Paris IV) and Masaryk University of Brno, Czech Republic, thesis supervisors Xavier Galmiche and Jiří Trávníček.

Title of the Doctoral Thesis : « *Composer un monde blessant à coups de ciseaux et de gomme arabique* » : *Collages et montages dans l’œuvre de Bohumil Hrabal (1914-1997) au regard des pratiques romanesques de Claude Simon et de la poésie expérimentale (Brion Gysin et William S. Burroughs) – années 1950 à 1970*

2003-2004 DEA (MA) *Littérature, langue, représentation* (grade: très bien) – University Rennes 2 - Haute Bretagne.

Title of the Master Thesis : *La poétique des « confrontages » de Bohumil Hrabal.*

1996-2002 MA in Czech and English Philology and Literature, Masaryk University of Brno, Czech Republic.

Title of the Master Thesis : *Časové struktury v české poezie 90. let 20. Století* [Structures of Time in Czech Poetry of the 1990s].

III. Scientific Career

3.1. Occupied positions (inversed chronological order) :

- fonction / title

- Since 2011 at l’ULB : “chargée de cours temps plein nomination définitive” (Associate Professor, tenured position)

3.2. Research Stays Abroad

- January 2022 Research stay in Oxford (University College) – research project .
- 2019 Research Fellow at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA, spring semester (February - June 2019), research project “American Foreign Correspondents In Central Europe (1970s and 1980s)”.
- 2006-2009 University Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV), Paris, France.
Ph.D., Double-Degree with Masaryk University of Brno, Czech Republic.
- 2003-2004 University Rennes 2 - Haute Bretagne, Rennes, France.

IV. Teaching activities

As Chair of Czech Studies at ULB, I teach classes on Czech culture and literature, classes on Central European culture and specialized courses on Master level focusing on translations of literary texts. I am also in charge of the course Introduction to Literary Studies destined to all students of the Department of Languages and Literatures (350 students).

Theses and post-doctoral projects :

Astrid Muls (thesis defended in January 2022) « La Dissidence tchèque et ses ‘traductions’ : Václav Havel et Jan Patočka en tant que mythes médiatiques français et belge », main promoter Petra James, co-direction Pieter Lagrou)

Vaida Niksaitė, “Dreaming the Nation, Selling the State”, Lithuanian National Project, main promoter Pieter Lagrou, co-promoter Petra James (defense expected in 2022).

Sybil Raysz, doctoral candidate (projet ARC « The Artist, The Scientist, The Industrialist »), doctoral project “La science-fiction de langues slaves de 1877 à 1972 : la modernité en miroir de la science et de la littérature” (projet commence en automne 2022).

V. Scientific activities:

5.1. List of publications 5.1.1. - Monographs

- 2023 When Rural Meets: *Cultural History of Modernisms in Bohemia 1895-1925*, Prague, Karolinum, Charles University Press (book contract signed), co-authored with Rajendra Chitnis, Oxford University (to be published).
- 2019 *Bohumil Hrabal: Povídky, črty a hovory (výbor povídek)* (Bohumil Hrabal: Short Stories, Sketches and Dialogues), coll. Seminář České knihovny, vol. 21, Prague, Czech Academy of Sciences, Institute of Czech Literature (www.kniznice.cz).
- 2013 Petra James and Martin Kolář, *Mimésis a historická paměť* (Mimésis and Historical Memory), Univerzita J.E.Purkyně, Ústí nad Labem, 129 p.
- 2012 *Bohumil Hrabal: Composer un monde blessant à coups de ciseaux et de gomme arabique*, Paris, Les Éditions Classiques Garnier, Études de littérature des XX^e et XXI^e siècles, 2012, 462 p.

5.2.2. Active Participation in International Congresses and Conferences

- 2022 ASEEES, Roundtable on the Women of the Czechoslovak Dissidence, Chicago, USA, November 2022.
- 2022 EAM Network Congress, Lisbon, Portugal, 1-3 September 2022.
- 2022 “Robot as Scientific Gesamtkunstwerk”, conference *Revisiting The Avant-Garde Total Work of Art*, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, 23-24 May 2022.
- 2022 « Entre textes et contextes ; entre l’Est et l’Ouest », conference *Crépuscule des paradigmes*, Université Paris-Sorbonne, Paris, France, 23-25 May 2022.
- 2022 “Verhaeren in Bohemia”, *Re-thinking the Avant-Garde*, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland, 28-29 April 2022.
- 2022 “Czech Reception of Belgian Symbolist Literature”, *Slavistendagen*, University of Groningen, The Netherlands, 4-6 April 2022.
- 2022 “Emile Verhaeren in Böhmen” (en allemand), University of Münster, Germany, Avril

2022. “ ‘Je cherche le peintre aux doigts blancs’ : l’absence créatrice dans la phénoménologie de l’art de Jan Patočka et dans la poésie de Petr Hruška», conference *Processus créateur, voies négatives*, Université de Toulouse II Jean Jaurès, France, 9-11 March 2022.
- 2021 “The Czech Avant-Garde and Titanism”, conference *The Prehistory of the Avant-Garde*, Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, 8-9 December 2021.
- 2020 Panel “Crossing the Lines: Czech Samizdat, Exile, and Official literature 1948-1989”, ASEEEES, Washington, November 2020 (online).
- 2020 “The Other Europe: Changes and Challenges Since 1989”, Macmillan Center, Yale University, USA, September 2020 (online).
- 2020 Workshop “Libuše in America: Perception of America by Czech and Slovak women in the interwar period”, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA, February 2020.
- 2019 Panel discussant, ASEEEES, San Francisco, USA, November 2020.
- 2019 Panel “Eastern and Southern European Dissent, and its International Networks”, ASEEEES, San Francisco, USA, November 2020.
- 2019 PIASA Congress, Gdansk, Poland, June 2020.
- 2018 Panel "Performing History and Trauma in Literature: Artistic Responses to the Dictatorial Challenges of the 20th Century in Central Europe", ASEEEES, Boston, 6-9 December 2018.
- 2018 Panel “1968 et les chemins de traverse: de l’underground à la dissidence” at the conference “1968: Vents d’Est, vents d’Ouest”, Marc Bloch Centre and French Institute, Berlin, Germany, 15-16 May 2018.
- 2018 Preparation of two panels on dissident movements in Eastern Europe and movements of international solidarity, Chair of the panel, BASEES, Cambridge University, England, 13-15 April 2018.
- 2018 “Milada Součková“, conference *Re-Tracing Gender: Women in Central and Eastern European Avant-Garde*, Institute of Polish Culture, Warsaw University, Poland, 16-18 January 2018.
- 2017 Workshop “Bohumil Hrabal: Interdisciplinary Approaches”, ULB, Brussels, 5-6 December 2017.
- 2017 Participation in the panel “Bohumil Hrabal: Transgressive Topography and schizophrenic historiography” at ASEEEES Convention (Congress topic: Transgressions), Chicago, USA, 9-12 November 2017.
- 2017 “Mémoire allemande dans les romans contemporains d’Europe central”, “Imaginations/Interrelations/ Inter-Representations in Czech and German-Speaking Literature and Culture”, international conference co-organised with Helga Mitterbauer, ULB, Brussels, Belgium, 5-7 October 2017.
- 2017 “Bohumil Hrabal: The Eater of History”, workshop in Czech Studies, The University of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA, April 2017.
- 2017 “Critique littéraire Jan Patočka”, conference “Jan Patočka: Heresy and Heritage”, ULB/ KuLeuven, 2-6 May 2017.
- 2017 “Smetišťe dějin Bohumila Hrabala“, Conference „Schizophrenic Historiography of Bohumil Hrabal », Nymburk, Czech Republic, 30 March-1 April 2017
- 2016 “Coming to Terms with the Legacy of the Communist Dictatorship: Contemporary Central European Literatures as Places of Memory, Amnesia and Mourning”, congress organised by the Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia, October 2016
- 2016 “Quatrains of Jan Skácel”, conference *Kleine Formen in der Lyrik*, Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany, Septembre 2016.

2016 “From ‘Lieux de mémoire’ to ‘lieux d’amnésie’: The Representation of the Expulsion of Germans in Czech Literature”, conference Places of Amnesia, Cambridge University, 5-6 April 2016.

2016 “Mystification dans l’histoire de la littérature tchèque“, workshop Cultures de divertissement en Europe centrale, University Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV), Paris, France, 1st April 2016.

5.2.3. Invited Scholar

2022 Member of the Scientific Committee of the conference *Crépuscule des Paradigmes*, Université Paris-Sorbonne, France.

2022 “Czechoslovak and German Dissidence”, with Myriam Geysler, ENS Lyon, France, 6 mai 2022.

2022 R.U.R. et l’imaginaire de l’intelligence artificielle, séminaire de Laurence Brogniez, ULB, 22 April 2022.

2021 "Vladimír Vančura and Bohumil Hrabal: artistic creation as an avant-garde project", Palacký University in Olomouc, Czech Republic, invited by Erik Gilk, Olomouc, 15 April 2021 (online).

2021 October – Chair of a Panel at an Interdisciplinary Workshop, Université Paris-Sorbonne, 15 October 2021.

2021 "The Myth of Faust and titanism in the works of Jan Patočka", Czech Society for Aesthetics (*Česká společnost pro estetiku*), Prague, April 2021 (online).

2019 "American Networks of the Czechoslovak Dissent in the 1970s and 1980s" University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, April 2019.

2018 “Vitalism of Henri Bergson and the works of Karel Čapek“, University Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV), invited to the seminar on modernism organised by Xavier Galmiche and Luba Jurgenson, 16 March 2018.

2018 Workshop “Bohumil Hrabal, reader of Roland Barthes”, Erfurt University, Germany, invited by Holt Meyer, 31st January-1st February 2018.

2017 “Memory of Expulsion of Germans from Czechoslovakia in Contemporary Czech Fiction”, Gent University, invited by Berber Bevernage, 1st June 2017.

2015 Cultural Memory in Contemporary Czech Fiction, 20-22 October 2015 (12 hour course), Department of Czech Literature, Masaryk University of Brno, Czech Republic.

2015 Lecture on the topic of Central-European Postmodernism, invited by Alexandre Prstojevic, Inalco, Paris, November 2015.

5.3. Scholarships, Grants, Research and Pedagogical Projects

2022-2024 **Fondation Wiener-Anspach**: *When Rural Meets Urban: Towards Cultural History of Modernisms in Bohemia 1895-1925* (collaboration with Oxford University)

2022-2024 **FER** (Fonds encouragement à la recherche) funding related to the project *When Rural Meets Urban*

2022-2023 **FEE** (Fonds encouragement à l’enseignement) – classé A, projet porté en collaboration avec la Directrice de TI, LTC, ULB, création des cours digital sur UV pour l’apprentissage des langues slaves (russe, tchèque, polonais)

2022-2027 **ARC project** “The Artist, The Scientist and The Industrialist”, main promoter Petra James - with Dennis Ioffe and Laurence Brogniez, submitted in January 2022 (accepted)

2011 Post-doctoral scholarship Ferdinand Braudel/ Clemens Heller, Fondation de la Maison des Sciences de l’Homme, Paris, France. Project on Cultural Memory in contemporary Central European fiction

2011 Post-doctoral scholarship DAAD. Project on Cultural Memory in contemporary Central European fiction

6.1.3. Organisation of International Congresses and Conferences

- 2022 International conference “Le Rêve Tchèque », dedicated to Czech literature after 1989, 1-5 December 2022, co-organized with Xavier Galmiche, Université Paris-Sorbonne, France (Paris et Bruxelles).
- 2020 Panel organiser for ASEEES Convention, Washington, USA, November 2020.
- 2018 Panel organiser for ASEEES Convention, Boston, USA, 6-9 December 2018.
- 2018 Preparation of two panels and panel chair at BASEES convention, Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge University, England, April 2018.
- 2017-2018 Organisation of a series of **6 workshops** (from October 2017 to June 2018) and seminars in Czech Studies of the research lab Philixte of ULB, Brussels (Budget: 3600 euros).
- 2017 Organisation of the workshop Bohumil Hrabal: Interdisciplinary Approaches, ULB, Brussels, 5-6 December 2017.
- 2017 Imaginations/ Interrelations/ Inter-Representations in Czech and German-Speaking Literature and Culture, International conference, co-organised with Helga Mitterbauer, ULB, 5-7 October 2017.
- 2017 International congress Jan Patočka: Heresy and Heritage, ULB/ KULeuven (co-organised with Nicolas de Warren, Francesco Tava et Daniel Leufer), 2-6 May 2017. In collaboration with the Czech Embassy in Brussels, the European Parliament, Czech Center of Brussels, Prague House of Brussels.
- 2017 Schizophrenic Historiography of Bohumil Hrabal, Nymburk, Czech Republic, 30 March-1 April 2017 (in collaboration with Charles University of Prague : Petr Bílek, Jakub Česka, Marek Durčanský and Erfurt University, Germany: Holt Meyer)
- 2015 Workshop on European postmodernism, February 2015 (with Dorota Walczak and INALCO, Paris)
- 2013 Lead organiser of the conference Comment raconter ? - La mise en récit de l’Histoire : Les arts, la narration et la mémoire culturelle, with Kenneth Bertrams, Pieter Lagrou, Bénédicte Ledent, Dorota Walczak, Université Libre de Bruxelles, 6-7 December 2013. (Scientific committee: Sabrina Parent, Isabelle Meuret)
- 2012 Co-organisation of the conference Barbaric and Civilised. Polish and World Writers in an Intercultural Dialogue on Poetry, with Dorota Walczak, Katia Vandendorre et Cécile Bocianowski, Université Libre de Bruxelles, 31 novembre-1 décembre 2012
- 2011 Co-Organisation of international congress Les littératures de l’Europe centrale et orientale sur les ruines du communisme, with Hélène Mélat, Aurélie Rouget-Garma et Clara Royer, Université Paris Sorbonne - Paris IV, 24-26 mars 2011.

VIII. Description of my major research topics.

I have a lasting scholarly interest in the relation between art and politics and I am researching various aspects of cultural and political opposition. This interest translates with the focus on modernism and avant-garde and underground as far as cultural opposition is concerned and with the focus on dissident movements in politics. I am also interested in moments and personalities where both aspects meet, such as the aesthetic thinking of the Czech philosopher Jan Patočka. Most lately, I have published extensively on the comparative history of the avant-garde and the complex relation between aesthetics and political practice. My current research project in collaboration with the University of Oxford and funded by Fondation Wiener Anspach (2022-2024) “When Rural Meets Urban: Towards a Cultural History of Central European Modernisms” will allow me to explore the sociocultural aspects of modernisms in Bohemia in the beginning of the 20th century. As a member of the editorial board of the ambitious project *Cultural History of Central-European Avant-Gardes* I am currently contributing to the re-evaluation of the contribution of Central European Artists to the general history of the Avant-Gardes. My current interest in the cultural and political dissent could be traced back to this original research topic. I have been publishing on literary representations of Cultural Memory in contemporary Central European fiction. I draw on methodology coming from Cultural Memory Studies and Trauma Studies and collaborate with experts in the field on several research projects. In my research focused more exclusively on the study of aesthetics I explore the origins and specificities of Central European modernisms and the avant-garde, a topic naturally stemming from the scholarly expertise acquired in my previous research.