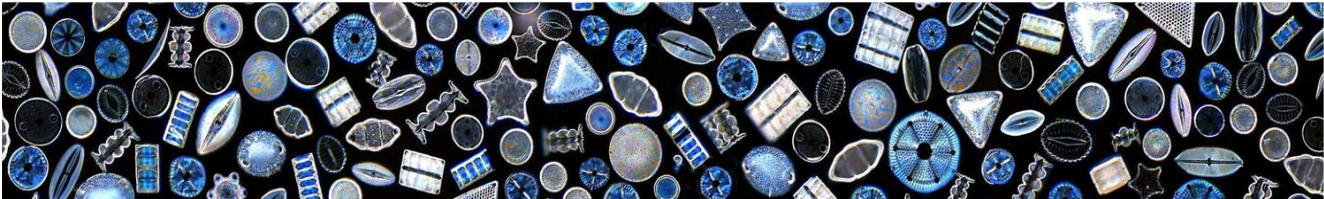


# IRTG Diversity

Mediating Difference in Transcultural Spaces

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# ABOUT THE IRTG DIVERSITY



Diversity is a central issue in current discussions about cultures and societies. Bringing together scholars and PhD students from the Université de Montréal, Universität Trier, and Universität des Saarlandes, our **International Research Training Group (IRTG) Diversity: Mediating Difference in Transcultural Spaces**—funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)—pursues an innovative research program in the contested fields of diversity, multiculturalism, and transnationalism. We do so by examining paradigmatic changes and historical transformations in interpreting multicultural realities in North America (Québec and Canada in particular) and Europe (Germany and France in particular) since the 18th century.

## THE IRTG DIVERSITY IS CHARACTERIZED BY:

- Regular transatlantic exchanges between academics and doctoral candidates.
- Our aim to study diversity in all its individual, societal, political, and communicative complexities.
- Taking into account historical developments in our studies of current problems and phenomena.

# IRTG DIVERSITY: RESEARCH

Diversity is not a new phenomenon, but in recent years the use of the term has exploded in academic as well as public debates about the constitution of modern societies. Yet, the meaning of diversity remains highly contested in both arenas.

## THE IRTG'S CORE RESEARCH QUESTIONS ARE:

- How has cultural difference and diversity been mediated in North America and Europe?
- How and when do migration and the mobilization of markers of difference change social configurations?
- What factors and processes account for the transformative power of diversity?



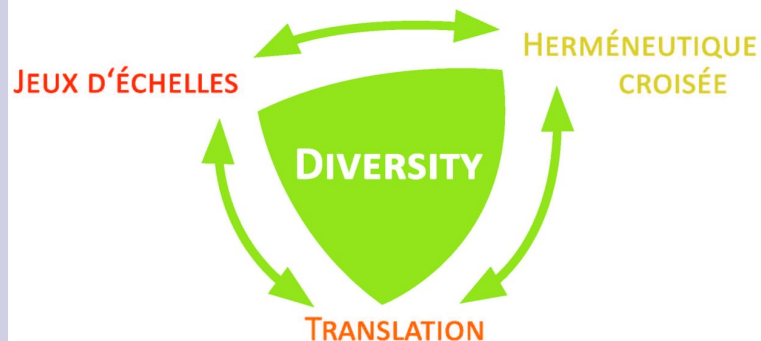
# IRTG DIVERSITY: RESEARCH



The IRTG investigates diversity through the lenses of three dominant modes of social action: the politics, the practices, and the narratives of diversity. We make an analytical distinction between these three modes in order to explore the conflictual, the quotidian, and the communicative character of the mediation (of difference) as a complex social interaction producing distinct, yet often overlapping localities of diversity as well as transcultural spaces.

## ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVES AND APPROACHES

Theoretically and methodically our research program and its related framework of analysis are informed by and based on key ideas and methods from the fields of sociology, ethnic and migration studies, literary criticism, human geography, history, and from the field of cultural and media studies. Our research programme is based on the concepts: Translation, jeux d'échelles, and herméneutique croisée.





# PEOPLE OF THE IRTG



# PEOPLE OF THE IRTG





# DOCTORAL TRAINING



The IRTG Diversity is currently the academic home of 19 doctoral students, 9 at the Université de Montréal, and 10 at Trier and Saarland University. Established scholars, post-docs and administrative staff at all three institutions complete the IRTG's team.

Our 3 year doctoral programme allows our graduate students to work within their respective academic disciplines, and it facilitates regular and numerous interdisciplinary exchanges. Students come together for winter and summer schools, attend research colloquia focusing on research methods and have dissertation workshops.

In addition, there is a transatlantic lecture series and an international conference, and we also regularly invite internationally renowned researchers as guest professors.



# CURRENT PHD PROJECTS

**Aliz Alföldi:** *L'espace transculturel du théâtre québécois: Une approche géocentrée de la diversité québécoise entre 1975 et 1996*

**Maria Teresa Cappiali:** *Activism and Political Participation Among People of Migrant Background: Discourses and Practices of Inclusiveness in Four Italian Cities*

**Lucio Castracani:** *Les "mains invisibles": les travailleurs migrants temporaires dans le secteur agro-alimentaire au Québec*

**Carola David:** *Héritage culturel et écriture de la mémoire collective dans la littérature haïtienne contemporaine*

**Rebecca Ferrari:** *Mapping the City: The Migratory Experience(s) of Maghrebien Women in Paris*

**Stephanie Gravel:** *L'impartialité des enseignants du programme Éthique et culture religieuse (Québec, 2008) et la diversité au Québec.*

**Leon Grimard:** *Tactiques de survie et/ou de subsistance en réponse à l'exclusion socioéconomique: les Gitans dans la cité, la périphérie et les communautés rurales du Languedoc-Roussillon.*

**Sarah Larsen-Vefring:** *Inszenierung von Diversität: Performanz kultureller Vielfalt und Differenz im Theater Robert Lepages*

**Christoph Laugs:** *Clothing and Identities: The Role of Material Culture for Bonding Mechanisms and Senses of Belonging among Métis in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century.*

**Bertrand Lavoie:** *Liberté de religion et laïcité. La régulation publique de la religion et l'agentivité juridique des personnes portant un signe religieux musulman en France et au Québec.*

**Alice Lefilleul:** *L'animisme dans les Littératures Innu et du Golfe de Guinée : à la recherche d'une nouvelle perspective critique*



## From an Interview on Rahab Njeri's PhD project:

I am working on *Black Canada*. More specifically, I am interested in how Blackness was constructed and represented in Canada from 1960 to 1990. Before my PhD, I had focused on American rather than Canadian Studies, but since I've started my project, I've become more and more enthusiastic about studying Canada, and about the period from 1960 onwards. [...] With my project, I would like to help in overcoming the absence of Black History in Canada. I am working on three case studies, which allows me to look at different narratives of Blackness in Canada, and at the diversity of *Black Canada*.

# CURRENT PHD PROJECTS

## From an Interview on Sophie Schram's PhD project:

I am currently working on the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the EU. I think that Quebec is particularly interesting; as a Canadian province, it nevertheless positions itself in this international context. I compare the situation of Quebec to the position of France in the EU. Here, the concept of *Histoire Croisée* comes into play, which is an essential idea in the IRTG's approach to diversity: my external, non-static point of view on the topic – in this case my European perspective on Quebec – allows for a comprehensive approach. The combination of an outsider perspective and intensive contacts with Canadian colleagues and supervisors during my field trips enables me to gain additional insights which one might overlook if being part of the discourse.



**Rahab Njeri:** *Black Canada: Construction and Representation of Blackness in Canada 1960-1990*

**Dave Poitras:** *The Lived Experienced Meanings of Everyday Nationhood in Montreal & Brussels*

**Sarah Pröwrock:** *Diverstität im Spannungsfeld nationaler Identitätskonstruktionen: Eine vergleichende Untersuchung politischer und medialer Diskurse in Deutschland, Frankreich und Québec*

**Sophie Schram:** *Border Discourse and National Positions. Investigating France and Québec in the Canada-EU Trade Agreement*

**Svetlana Seibel:** *"Personal Totems": The Poetics of the Popular in Contemporary Indigenous Storytelling in North America*

**Rosaria Maria Tagliente:** *La religion au quotidien. Ethnographie de la religion vécue à Taranto (Italie).*

**Kaisa Vuoristo:** *The Success of Sexularism: How the "Veil Affairs" Transformed French Republican Ideology and Public Discourse (2004-2014)*

**Xymena Wieczorek:** *What happens after Migration? (Im)Mobilities among Polish Transmigrants*



You can find out more about the  
IRTG Diversity on our website at  
**[www.irtg-diversity.com](http://www.irtg-diversity.com)**

**New doctoral positions will be  
advertised in November 2015**

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# IRTG Diversity

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