



Photo : Romane Lallier-Soultan

ABSTRACTS

**Friday
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2026**

Abandonment

Organized by the M2 TILE students

FREE ADMISSION

Keynote speaker:

Aurore Caignet - senior lecturer in British contemporary civilisation - Rennes 2

Keynote speaker

Aurore CAIGNET

**Abandonment, Memory and Community
in Shirley Baker's 1960s Street Photography**

Aurore Caignet is a senior lecturer in contemporary British civilisation at the University of Rennes 2. Her research focuses on industrial heritage and its representation, industrial landscapes, and the regeneration and image of post-industrial cities. Her most recent work has highlighted social documentary photography in northern England through the work of Shirley Baker, Ian Beesley and Chris Killip.

Panel 1 : Abandonment as a Cultural and Sociological Practice

Damir MOSKOV
M2 ALC-TILE

Linguistic distancing in modern Russia

This study presents "mute language" (strategies of linguistic distancing) in contemporary Russia as a symbolic and dialectical form of sociopolitical abandonment. We examine how citizens withdraw from the state-mandated reality by rejecting governmental "necrolanguage" in favor of coded speech, Aesopian metaphors, and strategic silence. Focusing on examples of linguistic "refusal" surrounding the word war, and forms of word-play extracted from social media, we demonstrate how the practices both result from state abandonment and active alteration of the relationship between citizens and power. This "internal exile" through language marks a transition from public participation to a private, fragmented dissent. The research contributes to the seminar by demonstrating that abandonment can be an act of agency: a way for an individual to "abandon" a state that has already abandoned the truth..

Gabrielle Tignac
M2 Translation, UBO

The notion of abandonment within the relationships between people and garbage

I would like to do a presentation about the notion of abandonment within the relationships between people and garbage. I have already worked on this subject in my ethnology master's thesis, "Relationships with marine garbage in Brest and in Tromsø: cultural practices and views within exhibition spaces". Within it, I talked about the definitions of the word "déchet" and about various expressions that revolve around that word in French and in Norwegian. I noticed that the notion of abandonment is at the core of this word. For example, you have "déchet", which is an abandoned object, and you also have "déchet abandonné", which is an abandoned object that is left unattended outside the treatment system and so an object that is abandoned twice.

In the presentation, I would also like to talk about the cultural practices around garbage. We, as human societies, have built entire systems dedicated to their abandonment : bins, incinerators... Also, outside these systems, there are people who keep garbage for scientific (museums) or artistic purposes (piñse, ghostnets) as a way to build awareness around pollution or for aesthetic reasons. It can also be a way to resist abandonment as they change back the status of garbage (abandoned) to object (kept). I will show these practices with some examples that I have encountered during my research on site.

Romane LALLIER-SOULTAN
M2 TILE UBO

Questioning responsibility for the abandonment of the Celtic cultures at the end of the 19th century: *Green Fire: A Romance (1896)* by William Sharp

William Sharp wrote and published his romance *Green Fire* during the Celtic Revival, a cultural movement which, originally, sought to shed light on the cultural wealth of Ireland. This movement quickly spread to Wales, Scotland and Brittany in reaction to the modernisation and industrialisation implemented by members of the English and French upper classes during the 19th century. Some authors of the Celtic revival, such

as Hersart de la Villemarqué, whose work Sharp uses in *Green Fire*, thought that the Breton people had relinquished their resistance against the invaders (1867). *Green Fire* is representative of the literary productions published during the Celtic Revival because, among other things, many heroes and fictional characters from the different medieval Celtic traditions are mentioned, and the protagonist, Alan, regrets the “ancient times” and is depicted as “the voice of the Celtic sorrow”. This paper aims at determining if Sharp, in his romance and in his epistolary communications, questions the responsibility of the inhabitants of the “Celtic” regions in the loss of their cultures.

Panel 2 : Abandonment and the Construction of Identity

Paula ALMEIDA MENDES

Phd in Portuguese Literature and Culture, University of Porto

Perspectives on abandonment in the works of Sarah Beirão

The works of Sarah Beirão (1880–1974) give significant attention to women. Some of these books highlight situations of female abandonment related to orphanhood or divorce. Against this backdrop, this communication proposal seeks to draw attention to the dimension of abandonment present in the works of Sarah Beirão. Starting from the analysis of her books *Sozinha* (1940) and *Um Divórcio* (1950), we will try to emphasize issues relating to the female condition in early 20th-century Portugal, in order to understand the historical and cultural evolution of the patterns imposed on women in contemporary society.

Andriamahaleo MIORAS RANDRIAMANIVO

M2 Etudes Culturelles, UBS Lorient

Lost and grieving: abandonment among the myriads of emotions in the trilogy *Me Before You*

Abandonment among the myriads of emotions in the trilogy *Me Before You* with a political dimension through an exploration of contemporary global issues, the novel series *Me Before You* unpacks the process of grief after death, including the feeling of abandonment, while addressing them as complex topics shaping the plot twists. Joblessness and economic recession, social class inequality, immigration and international mobility, gender equality and women empowerment, mental health and Human Rights, are questioned through the character development. The illustration of mourning in this trilogy reveals how abandonment can arise from unforeseen misfortunes linked to these issues. In this sense, abandonment mirrors inevitability, a core element of tragedy found in this novel series. The isolation of the main character as she copes with abandonment represents the unbearable burden of grief imposed as a lifelong aftermath of loss. Thus, this presentation aims to demonstrate the tragic inevitability of abandonment after the death of loved ones.

This discussion will focus on the fatality of separation, where the abandoned is passive and unable to change the situation. After that, the rhetorical techniques of expressing emotions used by the author Jojo Moyes will be analysed to show how she conveys the trauma-bound experience of abandonment. Then, the destructive force of abandonment, sparking the feeling of being haunted, will be examined alongside its generative outcome. On the whole, this trilogy reveals a process of transformation that redefines the identity of the main character as she overcomes grief and eventually surrenders to her passion after being abandoned.

Nicole BRANDSTETTER

PhD in Romance Studies (French Literature),
Munich University of Applied Sciences

Resilience and abandonment – survival strategies between adaptability and ignorance as reaction to the climate crisis and digitalisation in John Lanchester's *The Wall* and T.C. Boyle's *Blue Skies*

In Lanchester's novel *The Wall* (2019), the first-person narrator defends the Wall against the "Others" in a future setting. The world has undergone a deep transformation due to Brexit, climate change and migration. The people are abandoned (by nature, by society) on their island and react to that state by another form of abandonment: The strategies of exclusion of others by the Wall and of inclusion of their own people by chipping them set clear lines of difference vs. belonging. When abandoned from their home-island, the protagonist and his beloved start a failed attempt of renewal with a group of people in a floating community on the sea until they finally find a new state of living on an abandoned platform – but their renewal is just an illusion as it closes a circle: The last words of the novel is also the beginning of the novel.

In Boyle's novel *Blue Skies* (2023), people struggle with the consequences of the climate crisis and feel abandoned by nature. The protagonists relentlessly try to adapt their way of life to the apocalyptic catastrophe that challenges their lives. Devastating fires and incessant rain, fatal diseases and the extinction of species threaten humanity. In this hopeless situation, the protagonists try to develop resilience by adapting their way of life against their abandonment, but they fail miserably. In both novels, mankind is abandoned by disruptive phenomena. Their resilience is nourished by adaptability and ignorance but cannot fully overcome the abandonment they are confronted with

Enora POUPON

M2 TILE UBO

Anagnorisis and abandonment in the comic *Vies Volées* by Matz and Mayalen Goust

What if you were told tomorrow that your name and parents were not real? We're not talking about legally adopted children, but stolen ones whose parents were probably murdered during Argentina's last dictatorship and are now considered 'Desaparecidos', disappeared. The fear of abandonment is described as the fear of being left out by your loved ones. But how could you express the feeling of being lied to your entire life? The stolen babies in Argentina between 1976 and 1981 were not abandoned by their biological families, but when they learn the truth in their twenties, thirties or forties, they may feel abandoned by those who have claimed to be their family for decades. This communication aims to analyse the moment of realisation of the truth in the comic *Vies volées, Buenos Aires, Place de Mai* by Matz and Mayalen Goust. Our work aims to show how anagnorisis, a term frequently used in Greek tragedy to describe the moment of recognition, represents this feeling of abandonment and the protagonist's reaction to creating new boundaries as their identity is split in two. We would also like to demonstrate that this pivotal moment in the narrative enables the protagonist to evolve, discover their identity, and rebuild themselves.

Panel 3 :

Forms of Abandonment in Workplace Environments

Lou LEMOINE

M2 Études Culturelles, Rennes 2

Writing, a Form of Self-Abandonment? Loss, Sacrifice, and the Quest for Oneself: The Case of Benjamin Trotter in Jonathan Coe's *Middle England*

In Jonathan Coe's *Middle England* (2018), the main character, Benjamin Trotter, is a writer who has spent thirty years of his life writing a book he does not manage to finish. This project, which he calls "the most important thing of his life" (The Closed Circle 103), progressively turns into an obsession he cannot detach from. This is extended to the point that the creator and his creation seem to become one. In this way, the issue of identity is prominent in regard to the link between writing and abandonment in the novel. Indeed, writing makes Benjamin lose his identity, but it is also cathartic because it takes him on a journey to rediscover who he really is. In my presentation, I will therefore present abandonment as the devotion of oneself to the act of creation, and more specifically to writing. Through a literary analysis of Coe's text, I will examine how Benjamin and his writing project are described, both by himself and by those who know him. I will also explore the reasons why Benjamin chooses to give up who he is as a person in order to devote his life to his creation, as well as the duality between the costs and benefits that result from such a commitment. Although I will focus on the treatment of abandonment in *Middle England*, I will need to refer to two previous books, which are prequels to the novel under study: *The Trotter's Club* (2001) and *The Closed Circle* (2004).

Milan MARY

M2 ALC-TILE

Abandonment of self and values in Kazuo Ishiguro's novel *The Remains of the Day* (1989)

For this seminar, I would like to present the different aspects of abandonment in the novel (1989) as well as in the film *The Remains of the Day* (1993) directed by James Ivory. The story revolves around the butler Stevens working in Darlington Hall. I will first focus on the abandonment of values in a pivotal period for the British Empire. The engagement towards preservation or modernisation shifts within the story and its adaptation. Oppositions seem to form between nobles and the working class, between old and new generations, with Stevens in the middle of this turmoil. The place of women in domestic work could also be given some reflection. A panel of historic examples and use in the novel and film will be presented. In a second part, Stevens' dedication to his vocation will be studied and analysed as a form of self-abandonment. The character's individuality and his true beliefs are hidden behind traits of personality such as dignity. It manifests on many different levels : in his relations, in his thoughts, in his role as a butler and as a narrator. Examples from both the novel and the film will be presented.

Flore BOURUMEAU

M2 TILE UBO

**Bringing New Technologies into the Hollywood Film Industry:
Representations of the Obsolescence and Abandonment of Actors
in *Babylon* (2022) and *The Substance* (2024)**

Since the creation of the Hollywood film industry, the acting profession has evolved with the development of new technologies and the economic pragmatism that drives the industry. These pressures make actors prone to obsolescence defined by *The Oxford English Dictionary* as “the process or fact of becoming obsolete or outdated” a condition that often leads to abandonment. Over time, this obsolescence of actors has been repeatedly represented on screen in many different movies across various genres, evoking the nostalgia of a bygone era but also showing how beloved stars are commodified and abandoned. Through a close comparative analysis of *Babylon* (2022) and *The Substance* (2024), my research examines how the relationship between technology and actors' futures in the industry is depicted, while also considering the roles of both industry's leaders and the public.

Fanny PENIN

Photograph, Author

Could abandonment be the common thread in my path as a photographer?

I have never really tried to find a common thread in my work as a photographer. I just do it. It organises itself naturally, always from a sensation. Interpretation and the words come afterwards. Because from the start, my images are words. The very origin of the term photography (to write with light), characterises my approach.

My current photographic work entitled: *Les Roches Blanches*, Summer 2025, is immersed in an abandoned holiday camp which has been a squat now for many years. It is a body of work that offers a different approach to 'abandonment' through portraiture : it is about building trust, letting myself be surprised by what another has to offer me. Here, abandonment enables a balance through which I can merge with the other.

This seminar aims to develop an understanding and an acknowledgment of abandonment from various perspectives: literary, political, cultural, social and linguistic. Through three different panels, we seek to explore abandonment as both a destructive and generative force: one that creates distance, rupture, and loss; but also leads to liberation, renewal, and redefinition.



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