

ROCHELLE TOBIAS

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Employment

Professor, Department of German and Romance Languages and Literatures, Johns Hopkins University, 2007-present.

Director, German Subdivision, 2007-2011, 2013-2018, 2019-present
Director, Max Kade Center for Modern German Thought, 2013-present

Associate Professor, Department of German, Johns Hopkins University, 2003-2007.

Assistant Professor, Department of German, Johns Hopkins University, 1996-2003.

Academic Director, Berlin Consortium for German Studies, Free University Berlin, 2001-02.

Education

Ph.D. University of California, Berkeley, June 1996
Department of Comparative Literature

Free University, Berlin, Germany, October 1994-March 1996
DAAD Research Fellow

M.A. University of California, Berkeley, 1990
Department of Comparative Literature

B.A. Bryn Mawr College, 1985
Graduated cum laude with Honors in English

Honors, Grants, and Awards

Co-PI with Naveeda Khan and Deborah Poole, Alexander Grass Humanities Institute,
Grant for Lecture Series, Critical Climate Thinking, 2016-2017

Environment, Energy, Sustainability, and Health Institute, Johns Hopkins University,
Seed Grant, December 2015

Kenneth Weisinger Memorial Lecture, University of California, Berkeley, April 2011

Institutional Grant for the Creation of the Max Kade Center for Modern German Thought
at Johns Hopkins, 2012

Fellow, Center for Advanced Studies, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, June 2009

American Association of University Women, 2000-2001

Dean's Summer Research Fellowship, 1998

DAAD Fellowship, 1994-96

Mellon Dissertation Fellowship, 1993-94
Foreign Language Area Studies Summer Grant, 1991
Bertelsmann Foundation Scholarship, 1988

Books

Pseudo-Memoirs: Life and Its Imitation in Modern Literature. Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2021.

The Discourse of Nature in the Poetry of Paul Celan: The Unnatural World. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006. Reviewed in *The German Quarterly*, *German Studies Review*, *Colloquia Germanica*, and *Bryn Mawr Alumnae Bulletin*.

Edited Volumes

Hölderlin's Philosophy of Nature, ed. Rochelle Tobias (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020).

Phenomenology to the Letter: Husserl and Literature, ed. Philippe P. Haensler, Kristina Mendicino and Rochelle Tobias (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020).

Editor with Julia Ng, "Benjamin, Scholem and the Marburg School." *MLN*, 127:3 (May 2012).

Editor, "Religion and the State: German-Jewish Perspectives." *MLN*, 121:3 (April 2007).

Editor with Rainer Nägele, "What is Formalism?" *MLN*, 113:3 (April 1998).

In Progress

Rilke, Phenomenology, and the Space of Consciousness. This project examines the relationship between interiority and exteriority in Rilke's poetry and Husserlian phenomenology.

Robert Walser, Literary Miracles, and Virgin Births.

Articles

"Introduction: Hölderlin and the Natural Philosophical Tradition," *Hölderlin's Philosophy of Nature*, ed. Rochelle Tobias (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 1-20.

"The Untamed Earth: The Labour of Rivers in Hölderlin's 'Der Ister,'" *Hölderlin's Philosophy of Nature*, ed. Rochelle Tobias (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), 75-93.

"Introduction," *Phenomenology to the Letter: Husserl and Literature*, ed. Philippe Haensler, Kristina Mendicino, and Rochelle Tobias (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020), 1-20.

“Gregor Samsa and the Problem of Intersubjectivity in Husserl,” *Phenomenology to the Letter: Husserl and Literature*, ed. Philippe Haensler, Kristina Mendicino, and Rochelle Tobias (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020), 309-29.

“Rivers,” *The Anthropocene Unseen: A Lexicon*, ed. Cymene Howe and Anand Pandian (Santa Barbara, CA: Punctum Books, 2019).

“Walking Is Not Writing: Performance and Poetics in Walser’s *Der Spaziergang*,” *Spazieren muß ich unbedingt. Robert Walser und die Kultur des Gehens*, ed. Annie Pfeifer and Reto Sorg (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 2018), 39-49.

“From Mythology to Myth: The Courage of Poetry,” *MLN* 132:5 (2017), 1164-1179.

“The Untamed Earth: The Labor of Rivers in Hölderlin’s ‘Der Ister,’” *Literatur für Leser* (2016), 61-73.

“Rilke, Husserl, and the Sensuality of Thought,” *Konturen* 8 (2015), 40-61.

“Rilke, Malte und die gnadenlose Liebe,” *Die Aporien des Verzeihens*, ed. Marc Crépon and Verena Rauen (Vienna: Verlag Turia & Kant, 2015), 177-202.

“Egology and Ecology: Husserl on the Natural World,” *Yearbook of Comparative Literature*, 58: 218-222.

“Rilke’s Landscape of the Heart: On *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*,” *Modernism/modernity* 20:4 (November 2013), 667-684.

“Paul Celan,” *DeGruyter Encyclopedia of the Bible and its Reception*, ed. Hans-Josef Klauck, Bernard McGinn et.al. (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2013).

“Introduction to the Special Issue,” *MLN* 127:3 (April 2012), 427-32.

“Irreconcilable: Ethics and Aesthetics for Hermann Cohen and Walter Benjamin,” *MLN* 127:3 (April 2012), 665-80.

“Budowanie Gwiazdy Dawida,” tr. Piotr Jakubowski, *Kartki Celana: Interpretacje*, ed. Joanna Roszak (Cracow: Austeria, 2012).

“Dvojna fikcija v Walserjevem romanu Jakob von Gunten,” tr. Mojca Kranjc, in Robert Walser, *Jakob von Gunten* (Ljubljana: Beletrina, 2011).

“À la limite de l’esthétique: La réconciliation pour Hermann Cohen et Walter Benjamin,” *Les cahiers philosophiques de Strasbourg* 27:1 (Fall 2010), 175-193.

“Writers and *Schlemihls*: On Heine’s *Jehuda ben Halevy*,” *Babel: Festschrift für Werner Hamacher*, ed. Aris Fioretos and Urs Engeler (Basel: Urs Engeler, 2008), 354-62.

“Aster, Disaster: The Nature of Names,” in *Pistola: A Literary Journal of Poetry Online*, March 2008, http://www.pistolamag.org/poetry/Entries/2008/3/7_Rochelle_Tobias.html.

“Romantic Irony and the Modern Lyric: Szondi on Hofmannsthal,” *Telos* 140 (Fall 2007), 131-46.

“The Letter and the Law: A Brief Introduction,” *MLN* 121:3 (May 2007), 467-71.

“The Double Fiction in Robert Walser’s *Jakob von Gunten*,” in *German Quarterly* 79:3 (Summer 2006), 293-307.

“March 27, 1329: Pope John XXII condemns portions of Meister Eckhart’s work as heretical,” in *The New History of German Literature*, ed. David Wellbery et al (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 140-44.

“The Homecoming of a Word: Mystical Language Philosophy in Celan’s ‘Mit allen Gedanken,’” in *Placeless Topographies: Jewish Perspectives on Literature of Exile*, ed. Bernhard Greiner (Tübingen: Niemeyer Verlag, 2003), 175-85.

“A Doctor’s Odyssey: Sickness and Health in Kafka’s ‘Ein Landarzt,’” in *The Germanic Review* 75:2 (Spring 2000), 120-131. Reprinted in *Short Story Criticism*, Vol. 60, ed. Justin Karr.

“The Ground Gives Way: Intimations of the Sacred in Celan’s ‘Gespräch im Gebirg,’” in *MLN* 114:3 (April 1999), 567-589.

“Das Gesicht der Dinge,” in *Gedichte von Rainer Maria Rilke*, ed. Wolfram Groddeck (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1999), 104-121.

“Death’s Poetic Property” (A reading of Louis René des Forêts’ *Poèmes de Samuel Wood*) in *Qui Parle* 5:1 (Fall/Winter 1991), 9-26.

Book Reviews

Review of Samuel Frederick, *Narratives Unsettled: Digression in Robert Walser, Thomas Bernhard, and Adalbert Stifter*, *German Quarterly*, 86:4 (October 2013), 500-502.

Review of Katja Garloff, *Words from Abroad: Trauma and Displacement in Postwar German Jewish Writers*, *Monatshefte* 99:4 (Winter 2007).

Review of John Zilcosky, *Kafka’s Travels: Exoticism, Colonialism and the Traffic of Writing for Seminar: A Journal of Germanic Studies*, 41:2 (May 2005), 178-80.

Review of Noah Isenberg’s *Between Redemption and Doom: Strains in German-Jewish Modernism*, H-Net: Humanities and Social Sciences Online, H-German@h-net.msu.edu, October 2001.

Review of Lydia Koelle’s *Paul Celans Pneumatisches Judentum* for *Shofar: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Jewish Studies*, 18:3 (Spring 2000), 173-176.

Translations

Wolfgang Ernst, "69 August Street," Introduction to the catalogue for the exhibit *Hausgeschichten* (Berlin: Kunstwerke Berlin, 1995).

Interviews

Joachim Maier and Rochelle Tobias, "Eine Urenkelin von Simon Oppenheimer erinnert Familiengeschichte," *Schriesheimer Jahrbuch* 6 (2002), 104-132.

Recent Lectures and Conferences

"Bliss, Forgetfulness, and the Prehistoric World in Kafka and Benjamin," University of Pennsylvania, December 2020.

"Celebrating Celan at 100," Video Tribute, Deutsches Haus, New York University, November 2020.

"Five Theses on Literature and Phenomenology," University of Oregon, Eugene, October 2020.

"*Statt einer Philosophie: Käte Hamburger on Rilke and Husserl*," German Studies Association, Portland, Oregon, October 2019.

"The Allegedly Factual: Bernhard and Husserl on Fiction," American Comparative Literature Association, Washington, DC, March 2019.

"Like-Minded But Not Like-Bodied: Kafka's Challenge to Husserl's Notion of Intersubjectivity," The Inhuman Gaze and Perceiving Otherwise, Paris, France, June 2018.

"*Ungleichzeitig: The Problem of Self-Relation in Rilke and Husserl*," Rilke and Philosophy: An Interdisciplinary Symposium, Södertörns University Stockholm, May 2018.

"Time Out of Joint: The Problem of Self-Relation in Rilke and Husserl," Phenomenology and Literature: New Readings in Husserl, Brown University, May 2018.

"Loose Threads: Text Formation in Robert Walser," Conference, Modes of Formation and the Thinking of Possibility, Johns Hopkins University, April 2018.

"Four Walls and Beyond: Kafka's Metamorphosis," German Studies Association, Atlanta, October 2017.

"Walking Is Not Writing: Performance and Poetics in Robert Walser's 'Der Spaziergang,'" Robert Walser-Zentrum, Bern, Switzerland, May 2017.

“The Neediness of the Gods: Hölderlin’s Caesura,” *harmonisch entgegengesetzt: Hölderlin’s Philosophy of Nature*, Johns Hopkins, March 2017.

“The Untamed Earth: Hölderlin’s ‘The Ister,’” Climates Past and Present Conference organized by Sara Miglietti for GRLL and the Charles Singleton Center for the Study of Premodern Europe, JHU, February 2017.

Conference Organization

Convener, “Literature and the Possibility of Transcendental Critique: The Legacy of Käte Hamburger,” German Studies Association, Portland, Oregon, September 2019.

Co-Organizer, “Literature and Phenomenology: New Readings of Husserl,” International Conference, Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island, May 2018.

Co-Organizer, “Modes of Formation and the Thinking of Possibility,” International Conference, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, April 2018.

Co-Convener, “Phenomenology to the Letter: Husserl and Literature,” Seminar at the German Studies Association, Atlanta, Georgia, October 2017.

Organizer, “*harmonisch entgegengesetzt: Hölderlin’s Philosophy of Nature*,” Johns Hopkins, March 30-April 1, 2017.

Co-Organizer, Lecture Series, “Critical Climate Thinking,” Johns Hopkins, 2016-2017.

Co-Organizer, Workshop “Climate Change and its Challenges to the Scholarly Habitus,” Muséum national d’histoire naturelle, Paris, December 2015.

Organizer, Three-Day Seminar, “Hölderlin’s Rivers,” American Comparative Literature Association, Seattle, March 2015.

Co-organizer with Elisabeth Strowick, “The Aesthetics of Bildung. Literature, Knowledge and the Pleasure of Representation.” Johns Hopkins University, November 2012.

Panel Chair, “Metaphors of the Gaze,” Augenmensch: Goethe and the Field of Vision, Conference at Columbia University, November 1999.

Moderator, Between Messianism and Secularization, Criticism and Theology, Literature and the Sacred Conference, Johns Hopkins University, March 1999.

Session Leader, “Voices in/and/of Writing,” at the Passions, Persons, Powers Conference, UC Berkeley, May 1992.

Member, Steering Committee, The Berkeley Symposium: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Visual Representation, March 1991.

Teaching

Undergraduate Courses:

Small Forms: The German Novella in the Mid-19th Century
Fighting Sleep: Insomnia and Literary Modernism
Urban Dwellings
In Transit: German-Jewish Literature of Exile
Topics in German Literature: Wandering
Chess Games
German-Jewish Thought Since the Enlightenment
Literary Modernism in Berlin
Fin-de-siècle Vienna
Robert Walser
Literature and Photography
Detective Fiction in its Nascence
What is a University?
Ghost Stories, Haunted Houses, and Other Occult Phenomena
Decadence
Panorama of German Thought
German Political Thought
Art in Literature
Heidegger's *Being and Time* and *Rectify*
Healing and Health in and Beyond Theology
Fictional Autobiographies and Autobiographical Fiction
Seeing the World by Foot from Chamisso to Werner Herzog
Heidegger's *Being and Time* and the Examined Life

Graduate Seminars:

Negative Theologies: Meister Eckhart and Georges Bataille
Narratives of Time: Theories of Tragedy and *Geschichtsphilosophie*
Modern German Verse: Individual Poems, Poetic Cycles
The History of a Concept: Redemption and Utopia in German-Jewish Thought
Paul Celan
Guilt in Heidegger and Kafka
Ontological Aesthetics
The Life of Stones: Geology in the Works of Goethe, Novalis and Celan
Pseudo-Autobiographies
Narrative Theory: A Critical Reevaluation
Nietzsche-Mann-Adorno
Understanding Irony
Aestheticism
Literature of Terror, Terror of Literature
The *Bildungsroman* and Its Critique
Anti-Mimesis: Modern Poetry and Aesthetic Theory
From *Kultus* to *Kultur*: Poetry, Tragedy, and the Ritual of Art
Drifters, Footprints, Telling Time
Heidegger and the Poets
Spiritual Poverty: Meister Eckhart, Musil and Benjamin
Life Worlds: Literature and Phenomenology
The Melancholic Imagination
Literature and Law: The Case of "Michael Kohlhaas"
Adorno's Aesthetic Theory
Poetic Thought: Goethe, Hölderlin, Rilke

Philosophy and/of the Novel
Thinking of the Environment
Music, Poetry, Voice: The Pursuit of Transcendence in Modern Literature
On the Difficulty of Saying I

Independent Studies:

Ekphrasis: Mörike and Rilke
Alienation in Brecht's Poetic Work
Robert Walser's Mikrogramme
Nietzsche
Musil's and Roth's Novels
Holocaust Testimonies
Richard Wagner and Thomas Mann
Kafka and Holocaust Literature