

1 Bande dessinée – 10 perspectives : analyse pluridisciplinaire de la série
1 Comic – 10 Perspektiven: Eine multidisziplinäre Analyse der Reihe
Miss Pas Touche (Hubert et Kerascoët, 2006–2009)

03/04/2025 – 04/04/2025

– Salle des Actes – Université Sorbonne Université –
 17, rue de la Sorbonne, 75005 Paris

Jeudi, 3 avril 2025
Donnerstag, 3. April 2025

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|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 08h30–09h00 | Accueil des participant.e.s / Empfang der Teilnehmenden | | |
| 09h00–09h30 | Introduction / Einleitung Hannah Johnson / Séverine Adam / Thomas Sähn | | DE/FR |
| 09h30–10h15 | Dr. Romain Becker | Toucher à <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> : comment éditer une bande dessinée pour le public germanophone ? | FR |
| 10h15–11h00 | Julie Dagenbach | La genèse de l'écriture dans <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> : une étude intersémiotique comparatiste. | FR |
| 11h00–11h30 | Pause-café / Kaffeepause | | |
| 11h30–12h15 | Pr. Dr. Karen Struve | Lectures postcoloniales de <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> | FR |
| 12h15–13h00 | Pr. Ass. Dr. Lukas Wilde | <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> : Transmediale und medienspezifische Figurenanalyse | DE |
| 13h00–14h00 | Pause déjeuner / Mittagessen | | |
| 14h00–14h45 | Dr. Isabelle Licari-Guillaume | Usage du stéréotype national dans <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> et <i>Miss Don't Touch Me</i> . | FR |
| 14h45–15h30 | Pr. Dr. Anke Grutschus / Dr. Beate Kern | « Pas besoin de saliver, Stan » : pragmatique des formes nominales d'adresse dans <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> . | FR |
| 15h30–16h15 | Dr. Séverine Adam | L'oralité mise en scène dans <i>Miss Pas Touche / Fräulein-Rühr-Mich-Nicht-An</i> . | FR |
| 20h00 | Dîner commun / Gemeinsames Abendessen | | |

Vendredi, 4 avril 2025

Freitag, 4. April 2025

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|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 09h00–09h30 | Accueil des participant.e.s / Empfang der Teilnehmenden | | |
| 09h30–10h15 | Dr. Thomas Sähn | Une analyse structurale de <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> . Entre <i>Storytelling</i> et effet de défamiliarisation | FR |
| 10h15–11h00 | Dr. Jochen Thermann | Folgenschwere Blicke. Eine narratologische Analyse der Bände 1 und 2 von <i>Miss Pass Touche</i> von Hubert/Kerascoët | DE |
| 11h00–12h00 | Discussion finale / Abschlussdiskussion | | DE/FR |
| 12h00–13h00 | Pause déjeuner / Mittagessen | | |

Toutes les interventions seront traduites simultanément en allemand ou en français.
 Alle Vorträge werden simultan ins Deutsche oder Französische übersetzt.

Programme détaillé
Ausführliches Programm

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| 09h00–09h30 | Introduction / Einleitung Johnson, H. / Adam, S. / Sähn, T. | DE/FR |
| 09h30–10h15 | Dr. Romain Becker : Toucher à <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> : comment éditer une bande dessinée pour le public germanophone ? | FR |
| | <p>While they may look the same at first glance to an outside observer and were created by the same writer and artists, <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> and <i>Fräulein Rühr-Mich-Nicht-An</i> are not the same comic series, if only because they were created in – and for – different cultural and editorial environments. By drawing on reception theory, material studies and on notions inherent to editorial studies, this introductory article analyzes the series and its German adaptation as distinct objects created so as to appeal to different audiences with different horizons of expectation regarding comics. What were the intentions behind the books being released and advertised in the way (and in the form) that they were for French- and German-speaking audiences? To what extent does Hubert's and Kerascoët's work reflect the different ways comics are per- and received in different cultures? The article insists on the production and reception context one will have to bear in mind when reading the following chapters focusing on the work's content.</p> <p>The multiple volumes of the series are symptomatic of their environment: only one of these series is called a <i>bande dessinée</i>, after all, and the other will be seen as a <i>Comic</i> (or, if the German publisher succeeded in its "editorial writing", as a <i>Graphic Novel</i>). The various names for the medium are representative of its cultural legitimacy and the reception it has historically known in a given context. While the French trio's series will be seen as a regular part of the "Ninth art form" in France, the German public may be surprised by the narrative and graphic characteristics of the work, particularly ill-suited to the usually very young audience. Visually and materially speaking, the pieces are also typical of the local comics market: for instance, <i>Fräulein Rühr-Mich-Nicht-An</i> was initially published in a paperback format so as to lower the production (and sales) costs, and theoretically allow it to be sold in more varied outlets. On the contrary, a later hardcover edition of the complete series allowed German publisher Reprodukt to insist on the quality of this imported product and attempt to capture the hearts of an as of yet unfamiliar public. Far from being an ethereal piece of art or a mere import, <i>Fräulein-Rühr-Mich-Nicht-An</i> is thus a cultural product adapted to its time and its space, a piece that evolves depending on its publisher's needs and wants.</p> | |
| 10h15–11h00 | Julie Dagenbach : La genèse de <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> , un polar qui détourne les stéréotypes de genre | FR |
| | <p>The aim of this contribution is to shed light on the genesis of <i>Miss Pas Touche</i>, to show how the series was born from a mutual desire of the authors to create a crime fiction that deflected gender stereotypes in comics, using a non-sexualised female character and queer protagonists. Using a study of the <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> scripts and an interview conducted with the Kerascoët duo in November 2024, I will show that certain elements of the detective story, such as the false leads, were used by the authors to play with any gender stereotypes that may be found in crime fictions. However, while the deconstruction of gendered roles is at the heart of the series, we can ask ourselves whether this deconstruction is complete and whether the series is not ultimately replaying gender stereotypes as its heroine evolves over the course of the four volumes.</p> | |
| 11h00–11h30 | Pause-café / Kaffeepause | |
| 11h30–12h15 | Pr. Dr. Karen Struve : Postkoloniale Lektüren von <i>Miss Pas Touche</i> | FR |

If you follow *Miss Pas Touche* in the eponymous Comic/BD series by Hubert & Kerascoët into the shady world of the high-class brothel, she not only leads you into a milieu thriller, but also into the middle of an intermediate space shaped by colonial discourses, in which eroticism and exoticism violently overlap. In addition to the exotic decor of the *Pompadour*, there are emblematic figures that re- and deconstruct European colonial discourses.

In a first step, my article presents an overview of postcolonial Comic/BD research, which is primarily focused on intercultural comic research and postcolonial cultural and literary theory (Said, Spivak, Bhabha, Fanon, Glissant). In a second step, the proposed postcolonial readings of the *Miss Pas Touche* series then refer on the one hand to the constructions of selected characters: above all the dazzling Miss Jo, who occupies a simultaneously marginalized and

privileged position in the constellation of characters of the brothel ladies, who makes racism and homophobia visible, who plays with gender stereotypes, who enters into a homosexual relationship with one of her customers (who in turn mirrors Miss Jo almost antithetically in terms of self-confidence, skin and hair color and social background) and whose name also refers to the postcolonial icon Josephine Baker in terms of cultural history. Further, there is the protagonist Blanche (in a postcolonial perspective alluding to her skin color), who invokes the British colonial system through her untouchability, and imagological, colonial-dominant stereotypes. And finally, the regular customer Edouard from the English royal family will be analyzed, whose deadly sadism is latently linked to the British Empire. On the other hand, the postcolonial readings focus on the formal-aesthetic procedures of the Comic/BD series, which re- and deconstruct power relations and colonial-male gaze regimes, particularly through coloration, classic panel structures and focal settings. In a third step, several aspects of intersectional readings are developed (in the overlapping of the difference categories of gender, skin color, class, age, physical disability, etc). The article concludes with a reference back to postcolonial Comic/BD research, which receives important impulses from the intersectional overlays in *Miss Pas Touche* and the deconstruction of the female-male gaze.

12h15–13h00 – Pr. Ass. Dr. Lukas Wilde : *Miss Pas Touche*: Transmediale und medien-spezifische Figurenanalyse

DE

The interdisciplinary field of transmedia character studies has emerged at the intersection of character concepts and analytical approaches from literature, theater, film, comic book, and game studies. It tries, on the one hand, to capture the transmedial circulation of fictional protagonists in franchises, and on the other hand, to trace and compare media-specific differences of character representations in and beyond narrative texts. In comic book analysis, transmedia character studies can draw on a series of recent works about “paper actors” and on cartooning as a visual as well as a special narrative mode of exaggeration. Transmedia character studies assumes that access to narrative texts is mostly established through their protagonists. Access to these characters, however, is themselves reliant on media-specific affordances. Since the depicted figure as an entity of a possible world must remain just as inaccessible as “imagination” on the side of production or reception, the double mediation from media affordances to characters to narrative worlds can only be reconstructed by assuming “intersubjective communicative constructs”: Characters can thus be triangulated between the (often) mutually corrective poles of a textual analysis and a discourse analysis. In this way, private, subjective imaginations can be questioned with regard to their intersubjective qualities: on the basis of published (production/reception) statements about these characters and texts, and on the basis of textual evidence and media-specific conventions of representation.

The following analysis therefore lends itself to *Miss Pas Touche*: In a first part, it outlines three relevant dimensions which Blanche assumes in the text: she functions simultaneously as a structural actant in generic plots (a murder mystery, a ‘prince charming’ plot), as a thematic carrier of meanings (negotiations of gender and class), and as a represented fictional being. In a second part, the mimetic level (of the fictional individual) is examined in more detail, because it acts as a hinge for the structural and thematic levels. Blanche, as an intersubjective construct, can again be analyzed in three different respects: First, the multimodal representations remain extremely vague about her inner life, motivations, and intentions; second, the cartoonization instead presents to us the affects and emotions of Blanche in exaggerated vividness, often along strongly conventionalized comic conventions; third, however, the cartoon in turn remains surprisingly vague – in contrast to film, for example – about her actual appearances: What exactly she looks like within the depicted world. Hubert and Kerascoët’s narrative techniques are based on this double vagueness of both the first and third aspect (Blanche’s thoughts and attitudes, as well as her physicality) while at the same time accentuating the affective level: In the first half of the story, we must be surprised by how “badly” (naively) Blanche conducts her investigation and thus ultimately remains only a minor character in the social drama; in the second half, her intolerance of Antoine’s homosexuality, and thus once again the resolution of the plot, must and should surprise, shock, and break with a easy identification.

13h00–14h00

Pause déjeuner / Mittagessen

14h00–14h45 – Dr. Isabelle Licari-Guillaume : Usage du stéréotype national dans *Miss Pas Touche* et *Miss Don’t Touch Me*.

FR

This article examines *Miss Pas Touche* - as well as its US version published by NBM, *Miss Don’t Touch Me* - using translation studies, reception, comics history, material studies, and a transnational framework in order to establish how the books both exploit and subvert cultural stereotypes relative to countries and national identity.

My decision to rely on mixed methodology is typical not just of the continued indiscipline that is often said to characterise comics studies (Hatfield 2010, Jenkins 2011), but also of the nature of Anglophone Studies within French academia. It is grounded in the belief that topics of inquiry should drive the choice of disciplinary frameworks, rather than the other way around.

I begin by assessing the use of national stereotype within the book itself. I show how identities and cultures appear, on the surface, to be essentialised and commodified (as Blanche herself indeed is when she takes up her position as the “English governess”), but eventually turn out to be paradoxical, playful, and transient.

In the second part, I analyse how the book as material object speaks of its context of production, adaptation, and reception by the public. Materiality is grounded in culture-specific expectations and functions as a doorway into the national traditions of the comics industry.

The third part focuses more specifically on the American translation of the book, using it as a case study of the complexities hidden behind the traditional dialectics of domestication and foreignization; as shown in my interview with translator Joe Johnson, the American text alternates between these two poles in a very ad hoc way, exploiting specific cultural subtexts in a variety of manners.

Finally, the last part of the study looks into the reception of the book in the United States, to show how cultural stereotypes fed expectations about Hubert and Kerascoët's work, in the end, to highly *undisciplined* readings of *Miss Pas Touche*, where the text is used to project aspirations and disrupt established, orderly interpretational practices.

14h45–15h30 – Pr. Dr. Anke Grutschus / Dr. Beate Kern : « Pas besoin de saliver, Stan » : pragmatique des formes nominales d'adresse dans *Miss Pas Touche*.

FR

It is only in recent years that linguistic analyses of specific features of the language used in comics have begun to emerge. Among the aspects that have been studied, linguistic variation (e.g. the use of dialects, slang or the staging of orality) plays an important role (see, for example, Pustka (ed.) 2022). However, the analysis of other aspects would be quite enriching and would contribute greatly to our understanding of the specificities of the genre. Among these somewhat neglected aspects (with a few exceptions, cf. Pietrini's (2014; 2016) analysis of deictics and discourse markers), one can include a pragmatic approach to the communicative interaction that takes place in comic book dialogues.

A pragmatic study might raise questions such as: How do the characters manage to structure their utterances and interactions with their interlocutors? What linguistic and non-verbal devices (visually represented in the polysemiotic genre of comics) are used to represent the unfolding of a linguistic exchange and make it accessible to the reader?

Our paper aims to illustrate how pragmatolinguistics and discourse and interaction analysis contribute to understanding the *Miss Pas Touche* comic strip series. To do this, we have chosen the example of nominal forms of address such as the appellative *Madame* in (1) or the proper noun *Romain* in (2):

(1) *Madame*, je peux vous parler une seconde ? (*Miss Pas Touche*, vol. 2, p. 7)

(2) *Romain* ! Quelle bonne surprise ! (*Miss Pas Touche*, vol. 2, p. 32)

Address terms are used to represent the addressee on the one hand, and as vocatives on the other, thus forming a 'functional category' (cf. Kerbrat-Orecchioni 2008, 392ff.). So far, their use in comics has been little studied. The few existing works (see especially Bobińska 2021) tend to consider semantic and formal aspects, neglecting the interactional dimension that is specific to comics as a genuinely multimodal genre. The *Miss Pas Touche* comic strip series seems to be particularly suitable for exploring the potential of a pragmatolinguistic analysis, since it features a wide variety of characters, from the most humble to the most elegant and wealthy circles of Parisian society, as well as a large number of interpersonal relationships (e.g. between mother and daughter, between friends/competing sex workers, between sex worker and clients/procurer). Dialogues between two people alternate with exchanges involving several people.

In our contribution, we will first take stock of the nominal forms of address used in *Miss Pas Touche*. In a second step, we will look at their interactive functions (cf. e.g. Kerbrat-Orecchioni 2008a, Kerbrat-Orecchioni (ed.) 2014), such as identifying the addressee, defining and regulating interpersonal relations, verbalising interactional routines, structuring discourse, gaining the floor, mitigation, intensification and politeness. We expect that certain functions will be more common in comics than in other genres such as novels. Furthermore, we intend to determine whether there are any functions that are specific to comics. Finally, it seems important to take into account the multimodal nature of the comic in order to determine which graphic elements (e.g. facial expressions, gestures, gaze direction, posture, character movements) are used to emphasize and convey the dialogic and interactive nature of address.

15h30–16h15 – Dr. Séverine Adam : L'oralité représentée dans *Miss Pas Touche* / *Fräulein-Rühr-Mich-Nicht-An*.

FR

Orality is an integral part of comics, which generally feature a number of characters who communicate with each other in the form of dialogue reproduced in speech bubbles.

But this is a fictional orality – a represented, even stylised orality, which borrows a number of salient features from spontaneous speech in order to create an effect of real orality. On closer inspection, we find that certain features of spontaneous speech appear very frequently in the spoken word portrayed in the comic strip, while others are either absent altogether or present much less frequently. What's more, we find that certain features are under- or over-represented, depending on the work and, within a given work, depending on the characters, thereby contributing to the linguistic characterisation of the characters in question.

We propose to study these phenomena in the *Miss Pas Touche* series by Hubert and Kerascoët. With the help of previous studies on the subject, we will identify the characteristic features of spontaneous speech and compare them with the speech of the characters in the series, who come from different social backgrounds and use different registers, in order to show firstly how the orality represented in the series is similar – or not – to spontaneous speech and secondly to attempt to draw up a linguistic portrait of the characters.

As the series has been translated into German, and published under the title *Fräulein Rühr-Mich-Nicht-An*, it will also be interesting to look at how the translator went about rendering the manifestations of orality in the target language. It will be seen that, while the translation generally has an oralising effect in both the dialogue and the narrative narrated by the protagonist, Blanche, the distribution of orality markers differs somewhat from one language to another.

20h00

Diner commun / Gemeinsames Abendessen

Vendredi, 4 avril 2025

Freitag, 4. April 2025

09h00–09h30

Accueil des participant.e.s / Empfang der Teilnehmenden

09h30–10h15 – Dr. Thomas Sähn : Une analyse structurale de *Miss Pas Touche*. Entre *Storytelling* et effet de défamiliarisation

FR

The role of characters in a narrative is always twofold: as *actors*, they are the inhabitants of the fictional world represented; as *actants*, they fulfill the narrative functions necessary to turn what is represented into a story. In visual narratives such as comics, characters thus constitute the pivotal element between the various graphic and narrative codes that allow the stories to be told. In recent studies, we have demonstrated that, in the most popular comics, there are commonly shared codes that govern the construction of *actors* (denotative level), based not only on the abstract identities attributed to them (figurative level) but also on the specific narrative roles they assume in the story (narrative level) (cf. Sähn 2022, 2023, 2025). Through an in-depth semiotic analysis of the codes that structure the characters in the *Miss Pas Touche* series by Kerascoët & Hubert (2021/2006–2009), we aim to illustrate how a narrative can play with established codes to create defamiliarization effects while ensuring the story's readability.

To achieve this, we will first lay the foundations of a semio-structuralist approach which aims less to enrich the "potential meaning" of a work (Jauss 1967) than to highlight the codes that allow us to perceive fictional worlds and their evolutions in what initially appears as mere stains and lines (Groupe μ 2015, 1992; Hamon 1977/1972; Lotman 1973/1970; Greimas 1966). Second, we will examine the most widely shared codes, distinguishing between those that dominated Franco-Belgian comics between 1990 and 2010 and those that transcend geographical and temporal boundaries (cf. Sähn 2022). Finally, the third part will be dedicated to an in-depth analysis of character structures in *Miss Pas Touche*. In this analysis, we will adopt a two-pronged contrastive approach. On the one hand, we will account for the evolution of character structures at the intratextual level by comparing that of the *Livre Premier* (2021/2006–2007) with that of the *Livre Second* (2021/2008–2009). On the other hand, we will show how specific these structures are at the intertextual level, by comparing them with the codes that structure the characters in the most popular narratives from the production context of the *Miss Pas Touche* series. Through this study, we aim to shed light on the ambivalent status of this comic, which oscillates between a work of art and a work of entertainment.

10h15–11h00 – Dr. Jochen Thermann : Folgeschwere Blicke .Eine narratologische Analyse der Bände 1 und 2 von *Miss Pass Touche* von Hubert/Kerascoët

DE

The gaze plays a central role in *graphic novels* from a media-theoretical perspective. It is the reader's gaze that traverses the page, follows the sequences of panels, and observes the linear progression of images. At the same time, the reader's gaze can take in the entire page, the spaces between panels, and individual images.

In *Miss Pas Touche*, this media-theoretical duality of the reader's gaze is consciously employed. Beyond that, the gaze assumes a key role in the narration itself, structuring the plot at critical points. For instance, the two initial murders are framed through the wide-eyed gazes of Blanche and Agathe, who peer at the crime scene through a hole in their wall. For Agathe, this forbidden gaze upon Suzy's murder proves fatal, triggering the intrigue that drives Blanche's detective work at the Pompadour brothel. Within the brothel, the plot is further shaped by consequential gazes: hidden peepholes and two-way mirrors offer views into the rooms. These gazes are pivotal for controlling the politically significant guests through the frozen gazes of photography. Thus, the gaze forms the central narratological axis of the plot, focusing on what must not be seen—secret, hidden zones of society that propel the crime narrative forward.

Additionally, focalization through the protagonist becomes a criminological driving force. The reader's knowledge aligns with that of the investigative protagonist. Yet, the manipulation of gazes and perspectives, including subjective camera angles and varying external focalizations through medium and long shots of the protagonist, grants the reader a narrative advantage and thus heightens suspense.

This article explores the narratology of the gaze as a guiding motif that underpins the detective structure of *Miss Pas Touche*.

11h00–12h00

Discussion finale / Abschlussdiskussion
Séverine Adam. / Thomas Sähn

12h00–13h00

Pause déjeuner / Mittagessen

DE/FR

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