



# “Woven with Tram Lines”

Zurich in Anglophone  
Literatures



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Quote from page 115 of: Self, Will. “Leberknödel.” *Liver: A Fictional Organ with a Surface Anatomy of Four Lobes*. 2008. London: Penguin, 2009. 67–184.



**James Fenimore Cooper**  
**William Wordsworth**  
**Wilkie Collins**  
**Ian Fleming**  
**James Joyce**  
**F. Scott Fitzgerald**

**Philip K. Dick**  
**Thomas Pynchon**  
**Patricia Highsmith**  
**Raymond Carver**  
**Tom Stoppard**



# Overview

- 1) Zurich in Anglophone Literatures: Why bother?
- 2) Methodological tools & problems
- 3) Some findings
- 4) Conclusion: Anglophone cultures and their projected spaces



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# Franco Moretti: Distant Reading

“The majority of books disappear forever – and ‘majority’ actually misses the point: if we set today’s canon of nineteenth-century British novels at two hundred titles (which is a very high figure), they would still be only about *0.5 per cent* of all published novels.

[... T]he aim is not so much a change in the canon [...] as **a change in how we look at *all* of literary history: canonical and noncanonical: together.** [...]

But of course, there is a problem here. Knowing two hundred novels is already difficult. *Twenty thousand?* How can we do it, what does ‘knowledge’ mean, in this new scenario? One thing for sure: **it cannot mean the very close reading of very few texts [...]. A larger literary history requires other skills:** sampling; statistics; works with series, titles, concordances [...].” (66–67; emphasis added.)



Franco Moretti

<http://f.i.uol.com.br/folha/ilustrada/images/14262591.jpeg> (03.04.2017)



# Zurich (1780–2017): Increasingly Important?





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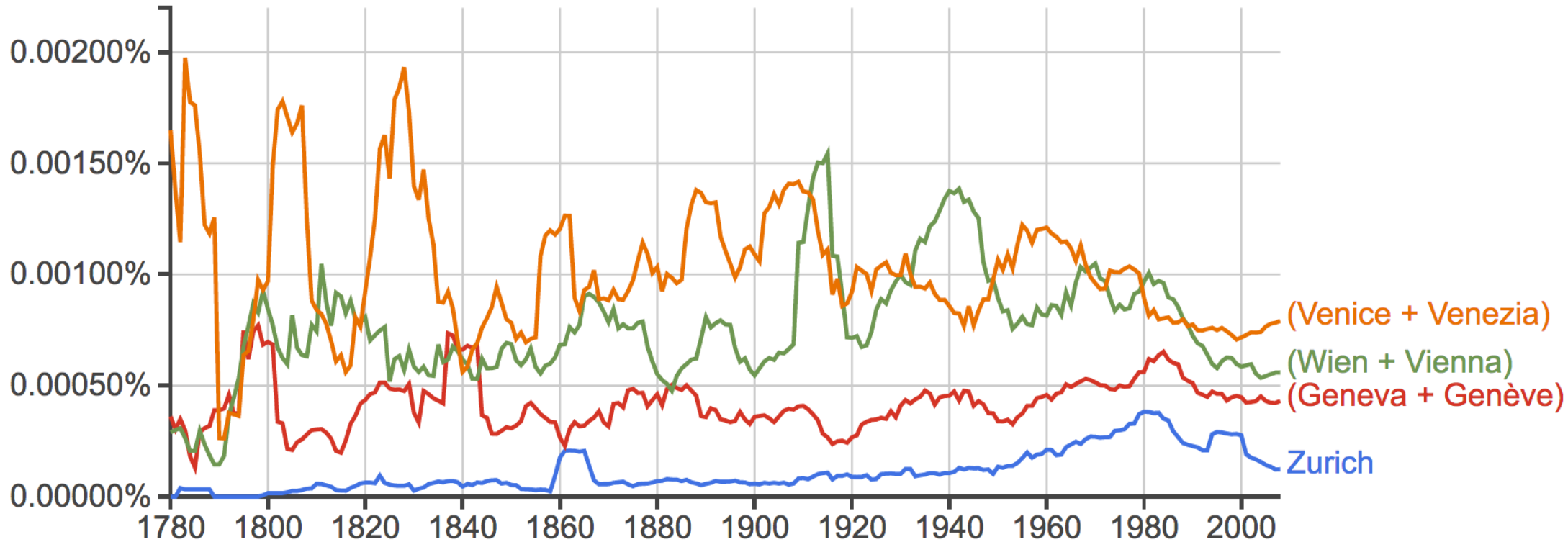


# Zurich (1780–2017): Increasingly Important?

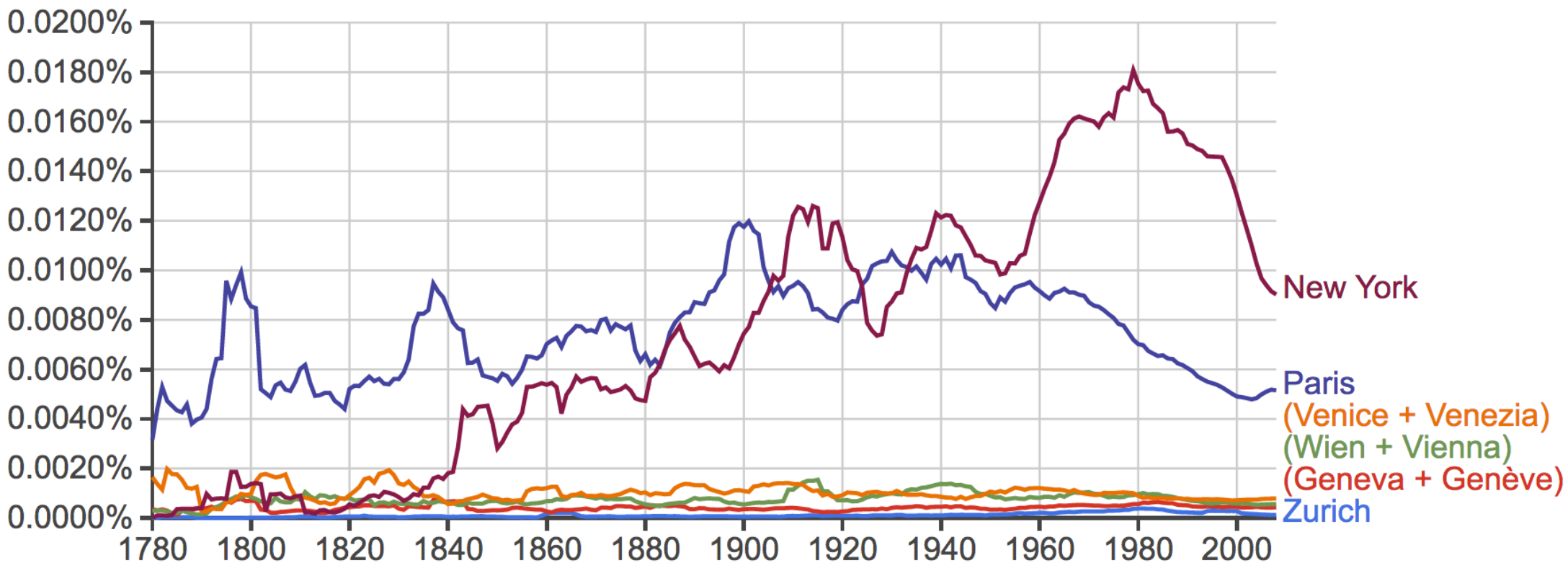




# Zurich (1780–2017): Increasingly Important?

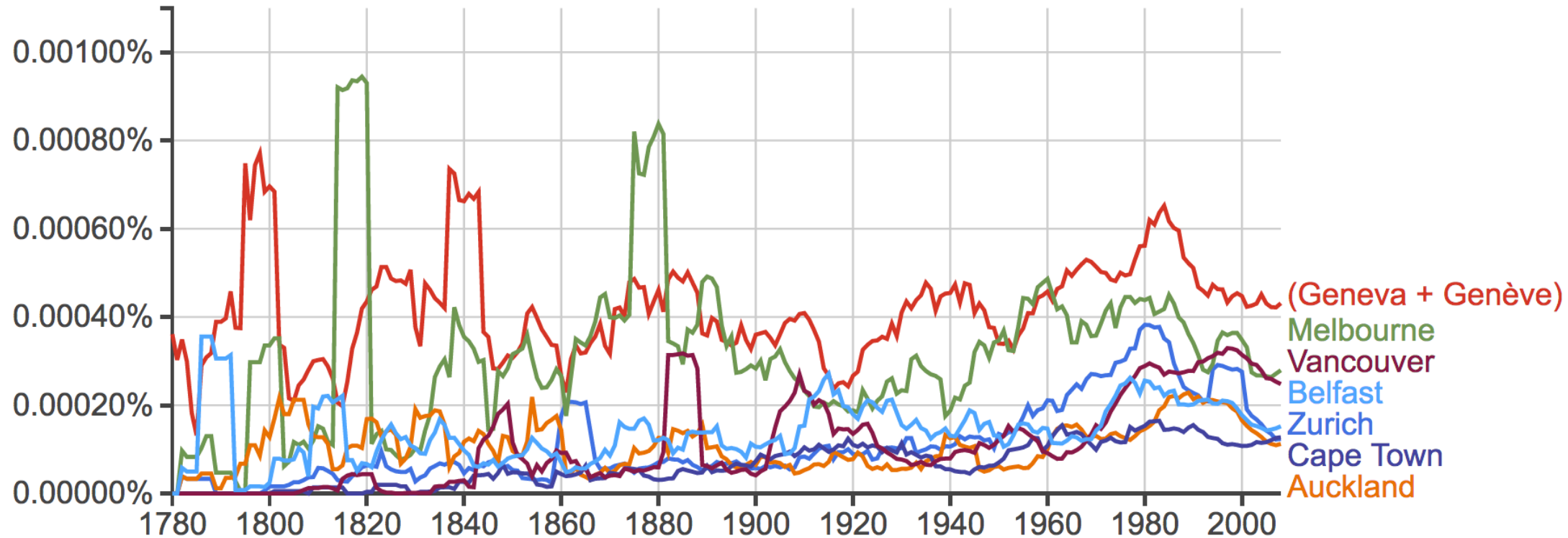


# Zurich (1780–2017): Increasingly Important?





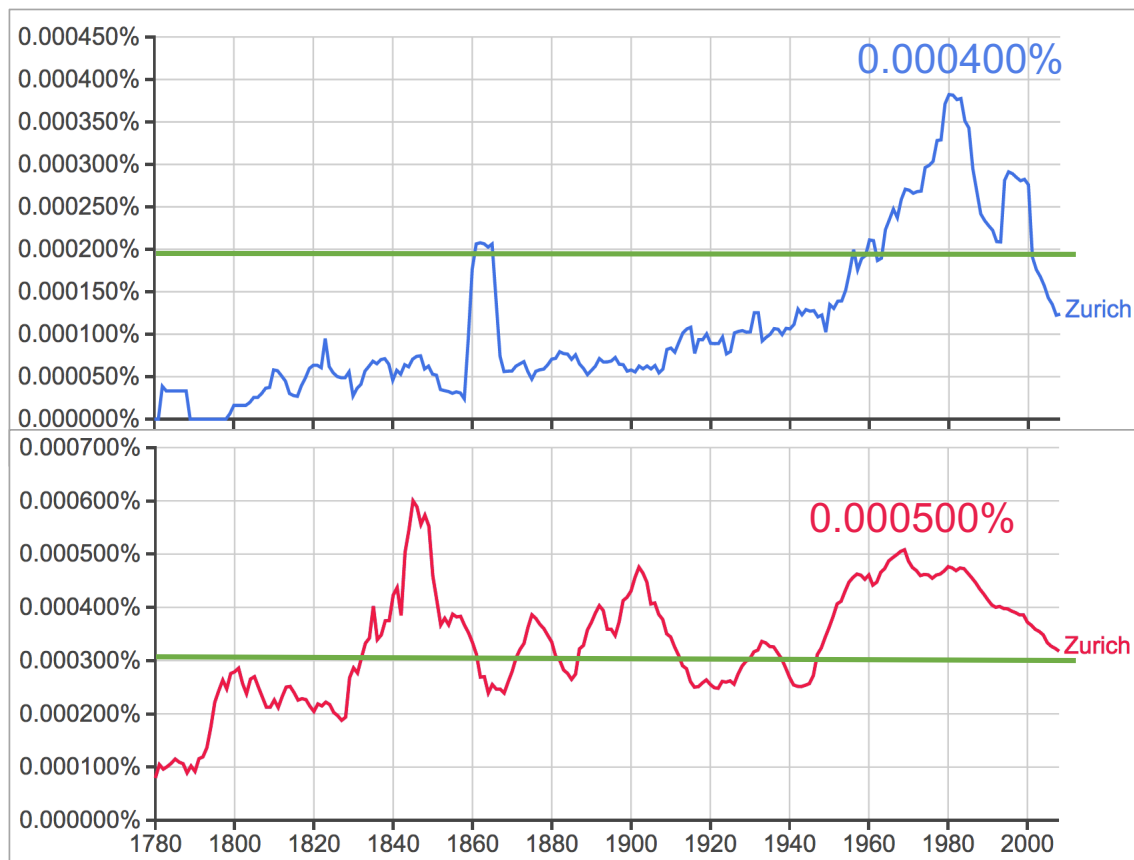
# Zurich (1780–2017): Increasingly Important?



# Zurich (1780–2017): Increasingly Important?

*usually:* in  
“English” at least  
twice as frequent  
as “English  
Fiction”

**BUT:** peak in  
1980 clearly  
different



“English  
Fiction”  
corpus

“English”  
corpus

# Barbara Piatti: Projected Spaces vs. Settings

Any space in a literary work (i.e. setting or projected) can be:  
(a) imported; (b) transformed; or (c) invented/feigned.

## *Three types of projected spaces:*

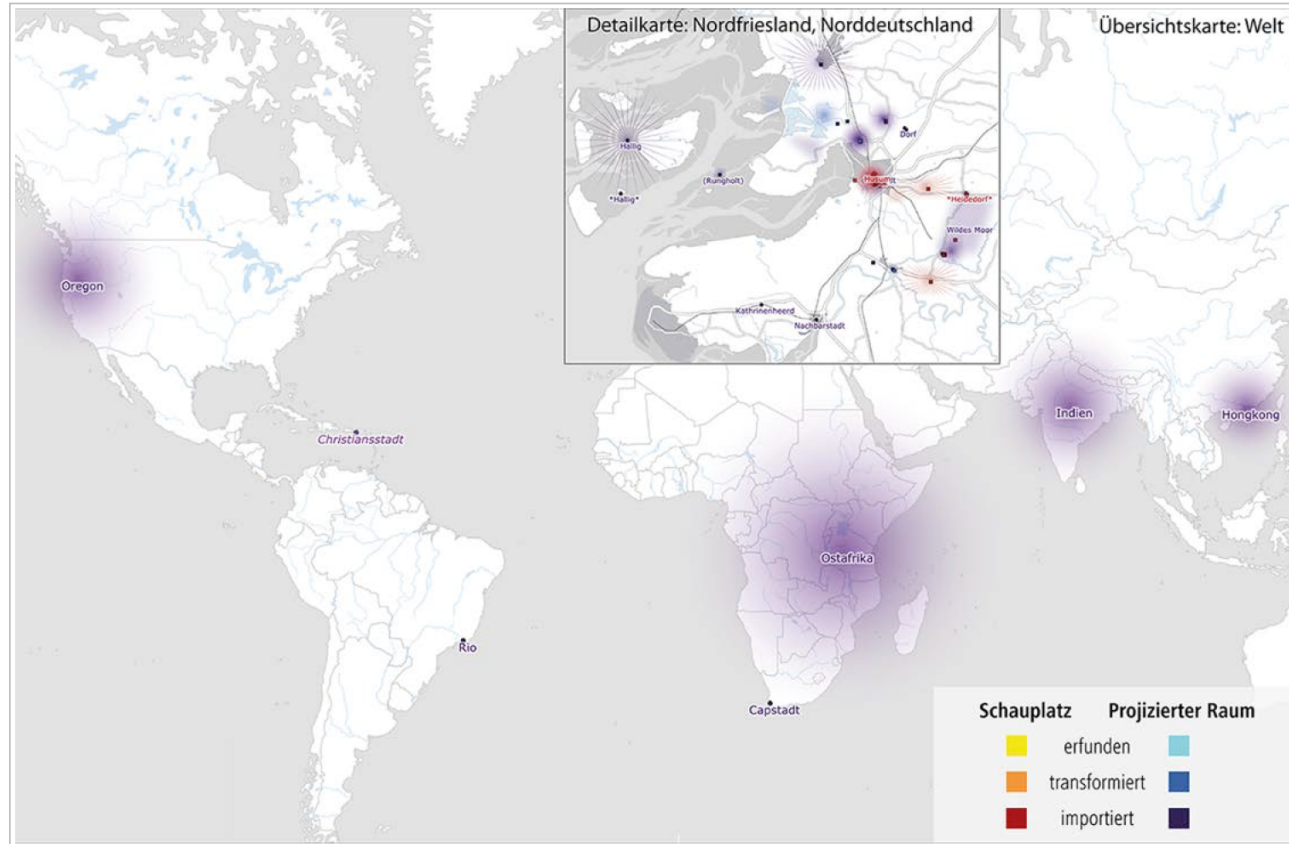
- 1) places a character is remembering
- 2) places a character is dreaming of
- 3) places a character is longing for



Barbara Piatti

[http://barbara-piatti.ch/wp-content/uploads/Piatti\\_Autorenfoto\\_farbig.jpg](http://barbara-piatti.ch/wp-content/uploads/Piatti_Autorenfoto_farbig.jpg)  
(09.10.2017)

# Projected Spaces: Theodor Storm, Regionalist?





# Zurich in Anglophone Literatures: Why Bother?

- 1) Zurich is a projected space for Anglophone cultures.
  - a) part of a larger, yet-to-be-written literary-historical geography;
  - b) questions: Which spaces are absent? Why? Hierarchy of spaces?
  
- 2) The idea and the methodologies of distant reading can:
  - a) also be applied to other places;
  - b) be adapted for other projects (e.g. with Ngrams: other keywords).





# Keyword: Fictional Revolutions (20th Century)

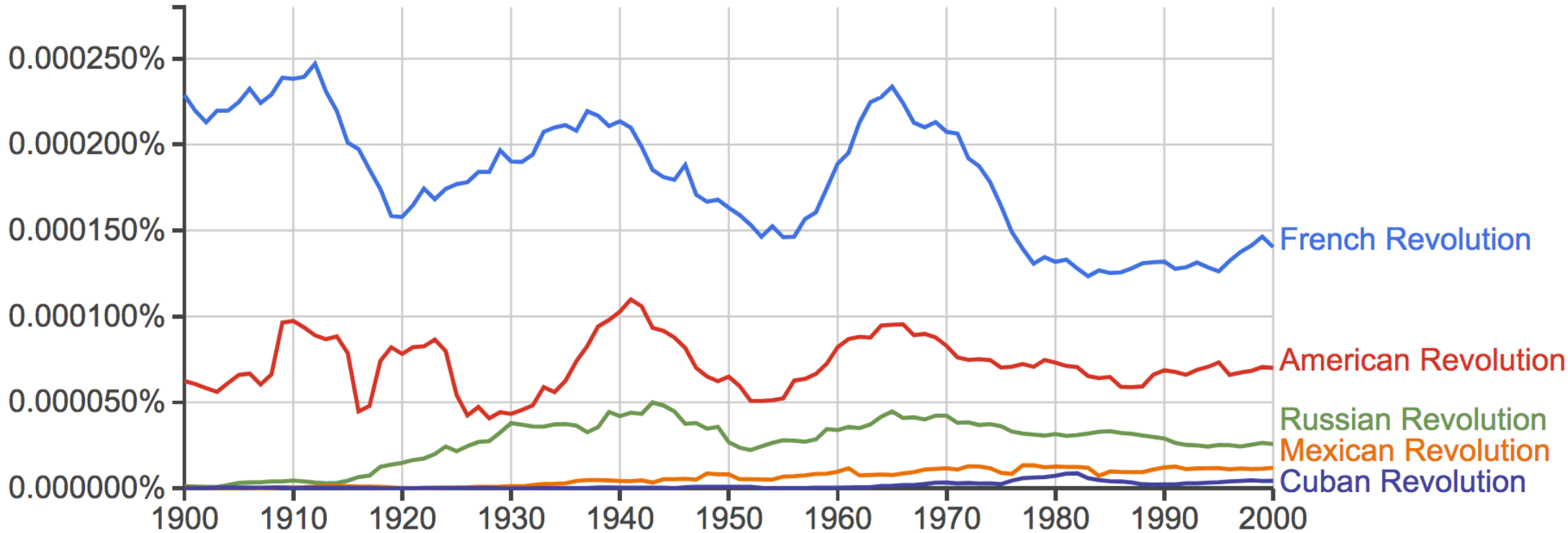
five revolutions:

American, French, Russian, Mexican, Cuban

→ Which of these appears most frequently in the  
“English Fiction” corpus (1900–2000)?



# Keyword: Fictional Revolutions (20th Century)

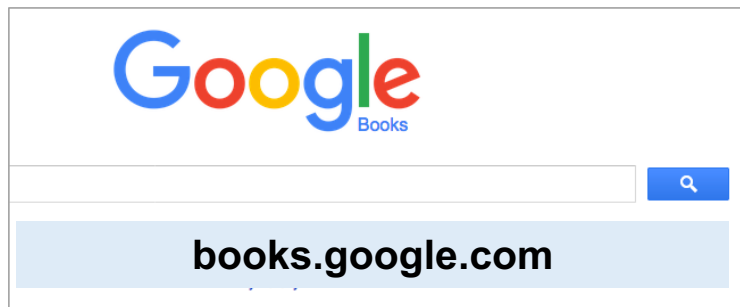




# Overview

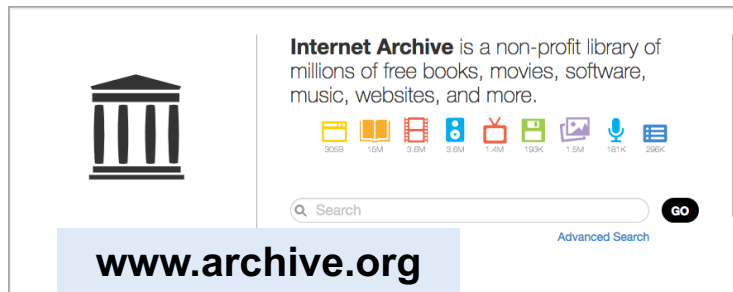
- 1) Zurich in Anglophone Literatures: Why bother?
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# How to Find Obscure Texts



Google Books

books.google.com



Internet Archive is a non-profit library of millions of free books, movies, software, music, websites, and more.

www.archive.org



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Fachgebiete

Recherche / Fachgebiete / Englische Philologie / Englische Philologie

Fachinformation | Bibliotheken | Datenbanken | E-Journals / E-Books | Weblinks

Fachbeschreibung

Die Englische Philologie ist ein Sammelschwerpunkt der Zentralbibliothek Zürich und ist mit allen Teilgebieten sowohl der Sprach- als auch der Literaturwissenschaft vertreten.

Fachbestand

Die für Studium und Forschung relevante Literatur der englischen Literatur- und Sprachwissenschaft wird in Auswahl gesammelt. Besonderes Augenmerk liegt auf dem wachsenden Angebot auf dem Gebiet der neuen englischen Literaturen, die in den Ländern des British Commonwealth entstehen. Aus der englischsprachigen Belletristik werden literarische Werke ausgewählt, die in Originalsprache und teilweise auch in Übersetzung erworben werden. Die anglo-kanadische und US-amerikanische

Seiten Inhaltsverzeichnis

- ↓ Fachbeschreibung
- ↓ Fachbestand
- ↓ Lesesaal-Bestand
- ↓ Fachzeitschriften
- ↓ Neuerwerbungen
- ↓ Recherchehilfe
- ↓ Anschaffungsvorschläge
- ↓ Ansprechpartnerin



# Google Books Advanced Book Search

The screenshot shows the Google Books Advanced Book Search page. The search term 'Zurich' is entered in the search box, and the results are set to '10 results'. The interface includes various filters for search criteria, content, language, title, author, publisher, subject, and publication date. Annotations with blue boxes and arrows point to specific elements: 'Search Term(s)' points to the search box, 'Language' points to the language dropdown menu, and '“fiction,” “drama,” or “poetry”' points to the subject filter dropdown menu.

**Find results**

- with **all of the words**
- with the **exact phrase**
- with **at least one** of the words
- without** the words

**Search:**  All books  Limited preview and full view  Full view only  Google eBooks only

**Content:**  All content  Books  Magazines

**Language** Return pages written in English

**Title** Return books with the title

**Author** Return books written by

**Publisher** Return books published by

**Subject** Return books on subject Fiction

**Publication Date**  Return content published anytime  Return content published between

**ISBN** Return books with the ISBN

**ISSN** Return serials with the ISSN

**Search Term(s)**

**Language**

**“fiction,” “drama,” or “poetry”**

# Google Books Advanced Book Search

*Four  
Types of  
Results*

## Poems by William Wordsworth:: Including Lyrical Ballads, and the ...



<https://books.google.ch/books?id=7oUUAAAAYAAJ>

William Wordsworth, Dorothy Wordsworth - 1815 - Read - More editions

## The Collected Poems of William Wordsworth

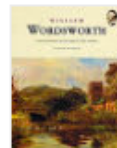


<https://books.google.ch/books?isbn=1853264016>

William Wordsworth - 1994 - Preview - More editions

Poems written in youth - Poems referring to the period of childhood - Poems of the imagination - Sonnets - Memorials of tours - Ecclesiastical sonnets - Epitaphs - Inscriptions.

## William Wordsworth: A Biography with Selected Poems



[https://books.google.ch/books?id=L\\_4LAQAAMAAJ](https://books.google.ch/books?id=L_4LAQAAMAAJ)

Rosanna Negrotti - 1999 - Snippet view - More editions

No special knowledge or appreciation is needed to enjoy Wordsworth: he wrote for everyone. Much of his best work is included in this beautiful book.

## Selected Poems [of] William Wordsworth



<https://books.google.ch/books?isbn=0874715946>

William Wordsworth, Walford Davies - 1975 - No preview

*Read*

*Preview*

*Snippet View*

*No Preview*



# Different Types of False Positives

- 1) Tag in Google Books wrong (e.g. non-fiction appears in fiction)
- 2) “Zurich” refers to something else (e.g. first name of a protagonist)
- 3) Text appears in “English Fiction,” but is written in a different language
- 4) Translated works – or should they be included? Why (not)?
- 5) ...

→ *A lot of manual sifting and double-checking involved.*

# Zurich in Anglophone Literatures: The Corpus

Novels	547
Poems	174
Short Stories	87
Plays	34
Novellas	5
Screenplays	3
Comics	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>852</b>

## *Some questions and problems:*

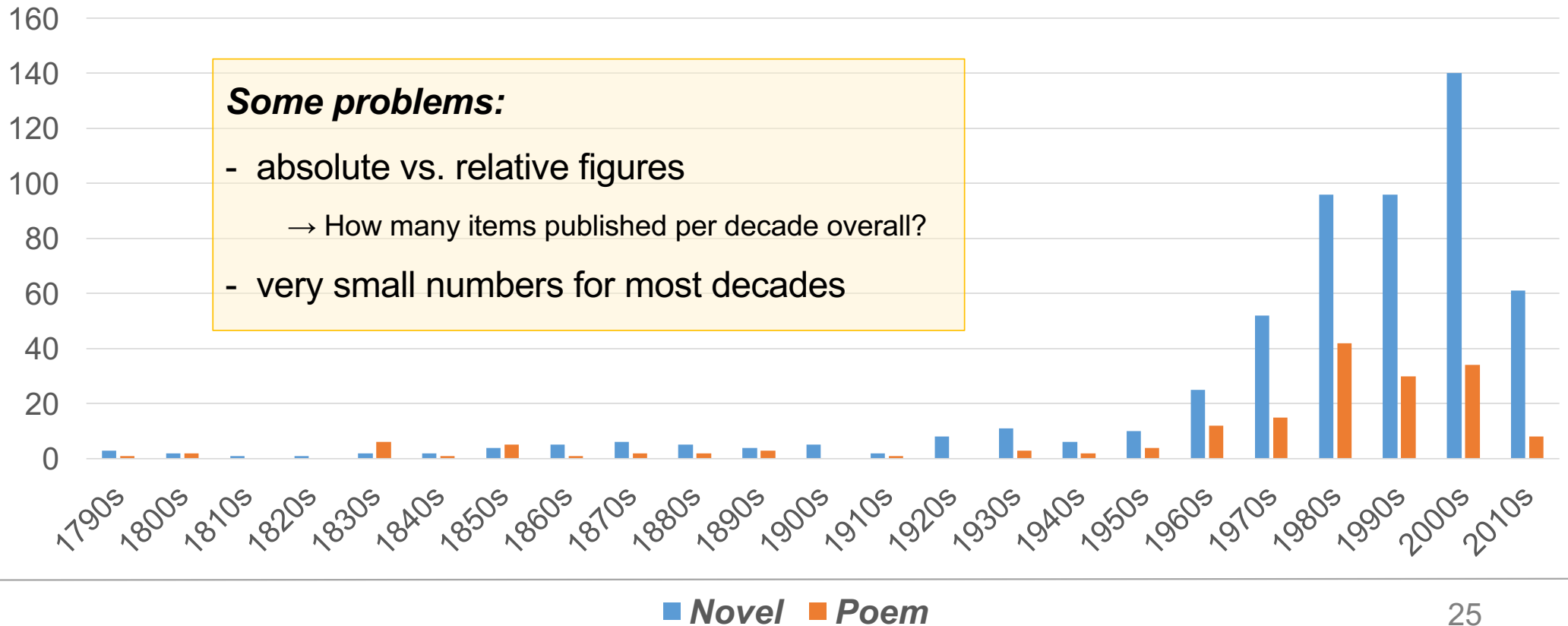
- What's (not) in the Google Books corpus?
- poor tagging → false positives & false negatives
- Does each of the texts carry equal weight?
  - widely-read vs. obscure texts?
  - cross-genre comparisons (e.g. novel ↔ poem)?
  - Zurich is central vs. Zurich only marginal presence?





# Zurich in Anglophone Literatures: The Corpus

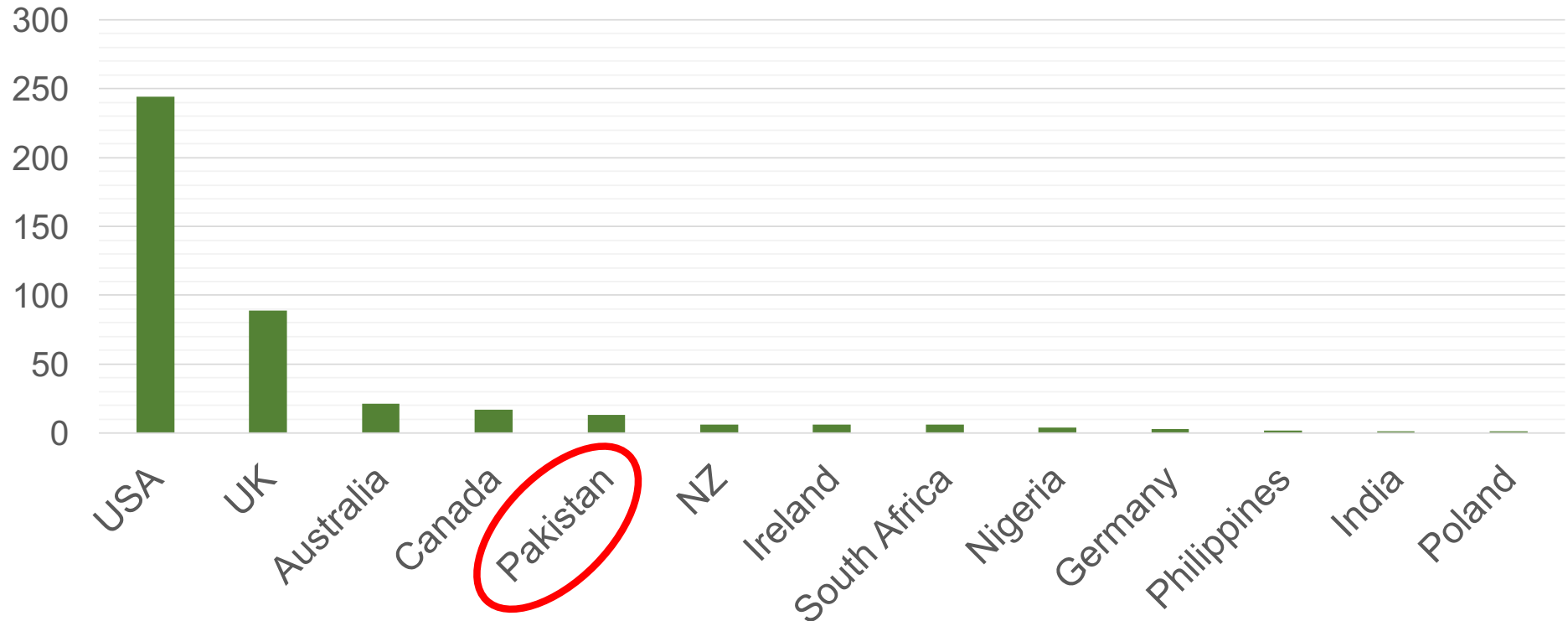
Number of items per decade





# Geography: Transnational? National? Or ... ?

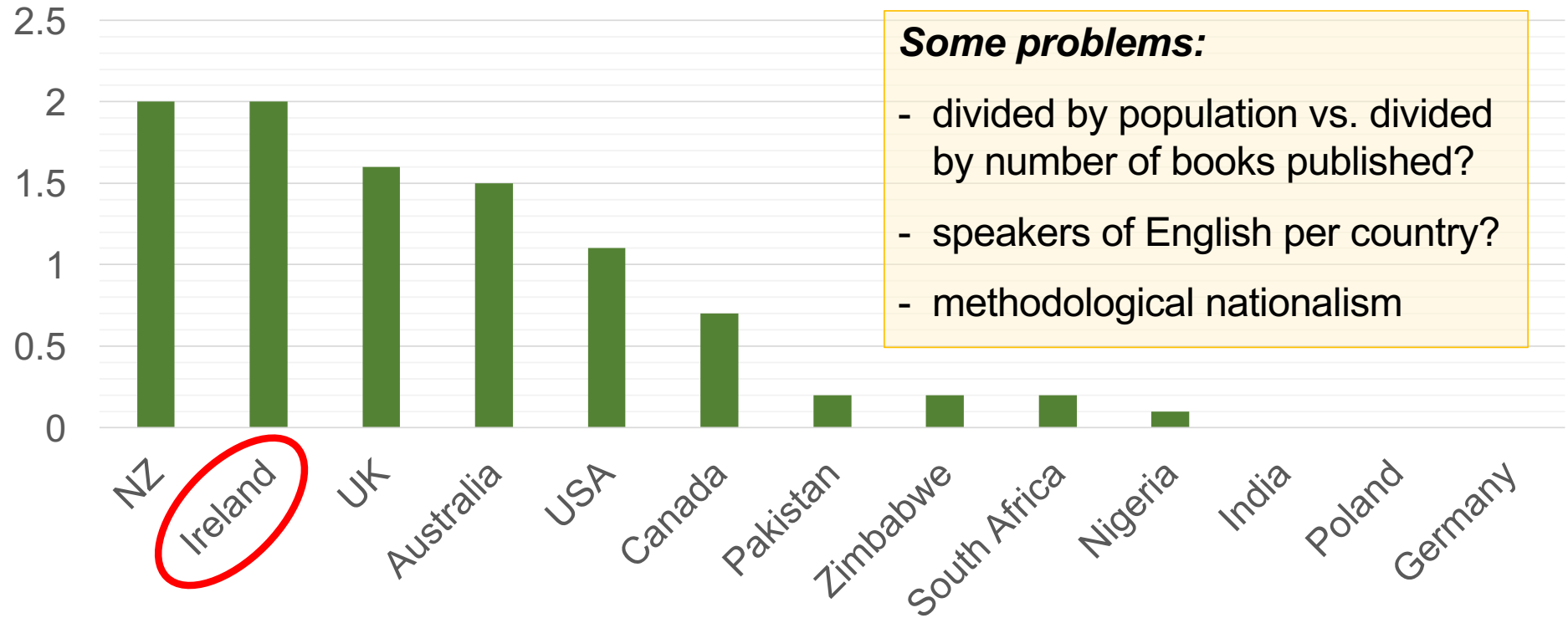
1950 to 1999



Items per country

# Geography: Transnational? National? Or ... ?

1950 to 1999



Items per country, divided by population in 1975 (in millions)



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# “By the Margin of Fair Zurich’s Waters”

from: Dance, Charles. *The  
Beulah Spa: A Burletta, in  
Two Acts*. London: Miller,  
1833. 35. [Act 2, scene 2.]

## SONG.—CAROLINE.

By the margin of fair Zurich’s waters  
Dwelt a youth, whose fond heart, night and day,  
For the fairest of fair Zurich’s daughters  
In a dream of love melted away :  
If alone, no one bolder than he ;  
But with her none more timid could be,—  
“ O list to me, fair one, I pray :”  
When she did so, he only could say,  
    Ai, a, &c., alack ! well-a-day,  
    Ai, a, &c. was all he could say.

By the margin of fair Zurich’s waters,  
At close of a sweet summer day,  
To the fairest of fair Zurich’s daughters  
The youth found at last tongue to say,  
“ I’m in love, as thou surely must see,—  
Could I love any other but thee?  
Oh ! say, then, wilt thou be my bride ?”  
Can you tell how the fair one replied ?  
    Ai, a, &c., I leave you to guess,  
    Ai, a, &c., of course she said, Yes.



# “By the Margin ...”: Broadsheets



**ZURICH'S  
FAIR WATERS.**  
J. Catnach, Printer, 2, & 3, Monmouth-court,  
7. Dial.

**BY** the margin of Zurich's fair wa-  
ters; ayieo!  
Dwelt a youth whose fond heart  
night and day,  
For the fairest of fair Zurich's daugh-  
ters; ayieo!  
In a dream of love melted away,  
When alone, no one bolder than he,  
But with her none more timid could be,  
Will you list to me, dearest, I pray;  
ayieo!  
When she did, this was all he could  
Ayieo, ayieo! alack well-a-day,  
Ayieo, ayieo! was all he could say.  
By the margin of Zurich's fair waters,  
ayieo!  
At the close of a fine summer's day,  
To the fairest of fair Zurich's daugh-  
ters, ayieo!  
This fond youth found at last tongue to say:  
I'm in love, as you plainly may see,  
Could I love any other but thee?  
O say then wilt thou be my bride? ayieo!  
Can you tell how this fair one replied?  
Ayieo, ayieo! I leave you to guess,  
Ayieo, ayieo! of course she said 'Ye



**THE  
YOUNG  
May Moon.**

Printed by J. Catnach, 2, & 3, Mon-  
mouth-court, 7 Dial.

**T**HE young May moon is beaming, love,  
The glow worms' lamp is gleaming  
How sweet to see (love,  
Thro' Norma's grove,  
While the drowsy world is dreaming, love!  
Then awake! the heavens look bright, my  
dear;  
'Tis never too late for delight, my dear;  
And the 'bes of all ways  
To lengthen our days,  
Is to steal a few hours from night, my dear  
Now all the world is sleeping, love,  
But the Sage his star-watch keeping, love  
And I, whose star,  
More glorious far,  
Is the eye from that casement peeping, see  
Then awake, till rise of the sun, my dear  
The Sage's glass we'll shun, my dear;  
Or in watching the light  
OF ladies of the line,  
He might happen to take those he loves, my

**Pretty Girls of London.**

**L**ET poets sing about the fair,  
And praise them with their grace and air,  
The country but its dainties rare,  
No many leavens have I done,  
But for my cheeks and form divine,  
For sparkling eyes and teeth so fine,  
No other audience can I choose,  
The pretty girls of London.

The doody takes such mighty care,  
To spruce his person, cut his hair,  
Waxes whiskers too a killing pair,  
And thinks he's out by the door,  
I'll be up Bond street he struts so gay,  
Somehow he'll get on the way,  
He swaggers in his fine array,  
To charm the girls of London.

The shopman staves up all his cash  
About the streets to cut a dash  
In every heart to make a man,  
In every pride to catch a man,  
I'll be sure that his clothes are out  
On a Sunday grandly strut about  
But on Monday his rags are up the spout  
The' teasing the girls of London.

The chimney-sweeper cries 'I wow,  
I am this village calling now,  
I mean to be a ship or two,  
And see where there is fun done  
I'll be off, that's what I say,  
And sport my little nose all right  
I'll be sure that I'll be right  
And gammon the girls of London.

The jolly tar just come ashore,  
Has senters in his pore galore,  
Sits out in gaudy you may be sure  
Of a port when there is fun done,  
As death as 'Chloe he calls about  
An eye and tooth makes a rout  
But never he gets cleared out,  
By the pretty girls of London.

Apprentice boys who men would be  
All wish to charm the fair d'ye see,  
As with their master's cash make free,  
So in the  
Each place of fashion they are set,  
And their champagne are quite the set  
The sport they learn and out they get  
With the pretty girls of London.

Old gentlemen of sorry fare,  
By got your names plugg'd on some  
Hoguard a bit to rest pass in more  
And an eye in a young man,  
Cry 'talk of me—'oh, pooh, all stuff,  
I'm up to the ear and bald and blue  
The more I see, that's some enough  
For the pretty girls of London.

So in every rank in every stage,  
The London ladies are the rage,  
Their beauty charms both youth and age  
They really are by some done,  
Their bits, their lovely faces dear,  
Whenever or when they may appear,  
And may good fortune ever cheer  
The pretty girls of London.

**By the Margin of Fair  
Zurich's Waters.**

**B**y the margin of Zurich's fair waters, ayieo,  
Dwelt a youth whose fond heart night and day  
For the fairest of fair Zurich's daughters, ayieo  
In a dream of love melted away,  
When alone, no one bolder than he,  
But with her none more timid could be,  
Will you list to me, dearest, I pray; ayieo  
When she did, this was all he could say,  
Ayieo, ayieo! was all he could say.

**By the margin of fair Zurich's waters—  
Ayieo!**  
At the close of a fine summer's day,  
To the fairest of fair Zurich's daughters—  
Ayieo!  
This fond youth found at last tongue to say:  
I'm in love, as you plainly may see,  
Could I love any other but thee?  
O say then wilt thou be my bride? ayieo  
Can you tell how this fair one replied?  
Ayieo, ayieo! I leave you to guess,  
Ayieo, ayieo! of course she said, 'ye

**J. Pitts, Printer & Toy Warehouse,  
6, Great St. Andrew Street Se-  
ven Dials**

**BY THE MARGIN  
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For the fairest of fair Zurich's daughters—  
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**J. Pitts, Printer & Toy Warehouse,  
6, Great St. Andrew Street Se-  
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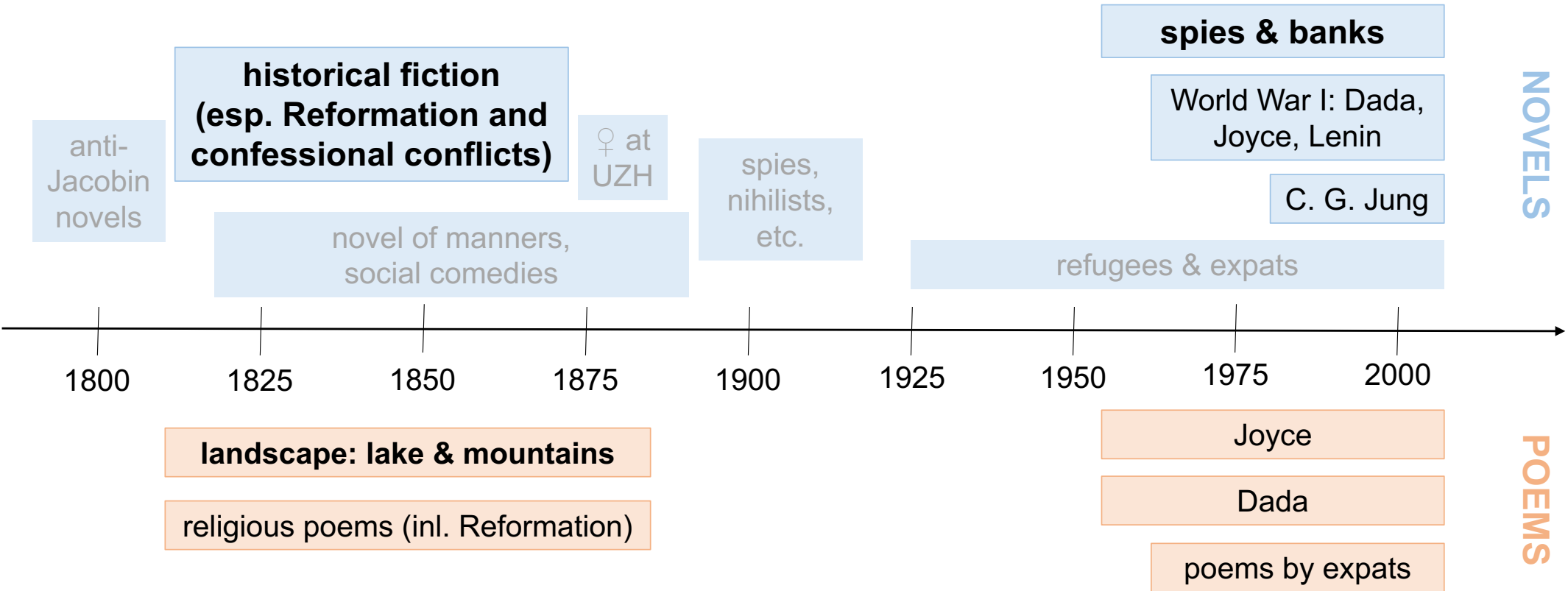
## “... Fair Zurich’s Waters”: Other References

- reference in letter by American author Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1837)
- text reprinted in anthologies (e.g. *The Quaver*, 1844)
- included in another play: Albert Smith & John Oxenford, *Fair Star* (1844)
- reference in diary by actor Ira Aldrich (1854)
- *Punch Magazine* (October 8, 1859): satirical rewriting
- *Europe Viewed through American Spectacles*, by Charles C. Fulton (1874)
- *In Sunny Switzerland: A Story of Six Weeks*, by Rowland Gray (1884)

→ *Set to music – over ten different versions available online!*



# General: Key Themes and Genres



Some key themes also evident in plays (e.g. confessional conflict, World War I, C. G. Jung)



## Dada Zurich: Cast of Characters



Hans  
Richter



Hugo  
Ball



Emmy  
Hennings



Hans  
Arp



Sophie  
Taeuber



Richard  
Huelsenbeck



Tristan  
Tzara



Francis  
Picabia



Marcel  
Janco

**Also there:**  
Hans Heusser  
Christian Schaad  
Walter Serner  
Viking Eggeling  
Arthur Segal  
Otto van Rees  
Adya van Rees

“Dada, born in 1916 [in Zurich] and over by the early 1920s, was an international artistic phenomenon, which sought to overturn traditional bourgeois notions of art. It was often defiantly anti-art.”  
(Hopkins xiv)

Hopkins, David. *Dada and Surrealism: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: OUP, 2004.

# Dada Zurich: Key Characteristics

- cabaret & live performance  
(dance, song, masks → “African” art)
- chance as an aesthetic principle
- *objets trouvés* & everyday materials
- opposition to war & bourgeois culture
- multimedia (later, esp. Berlin: collage)

**Wood & Screws**



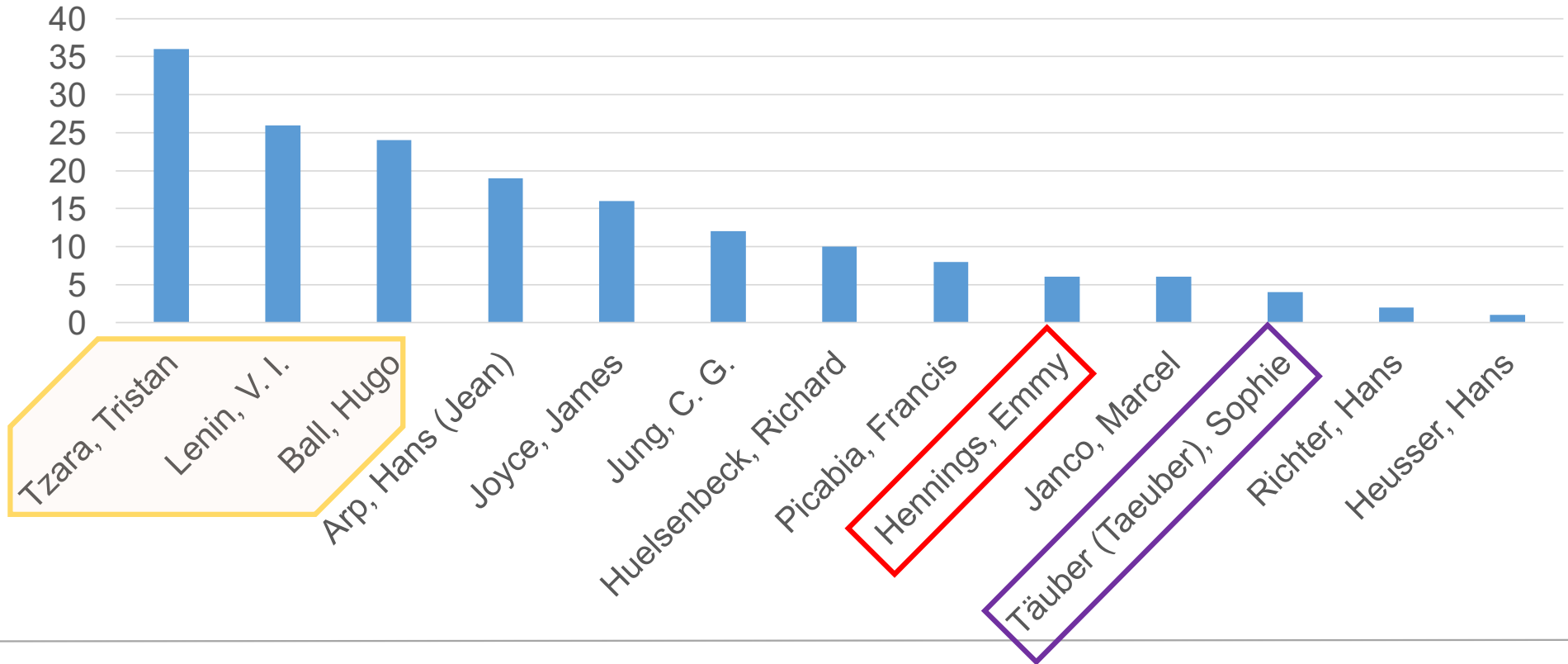
Hans Arp,  
*Relief Dada* (1916)

## KARAWANE

jolifanto bambla ô falli bambla  
*grossiga m'pfa habla horem*  
**égiga goramen**  
higo bloiko russula huju  
hollaka hollala  
*anlogo bung*  
**blago bung**  
blago bung  
**bosso fataka**  
ü üü ü  
schampa wulla wussa ólobo  
*hej tatta gôrem*  
eschige zunbada  
**wulubu ssubudu uluw ssubudu**  
**tumba ba- umf**  
*kusagauma*  
**ba - umf**

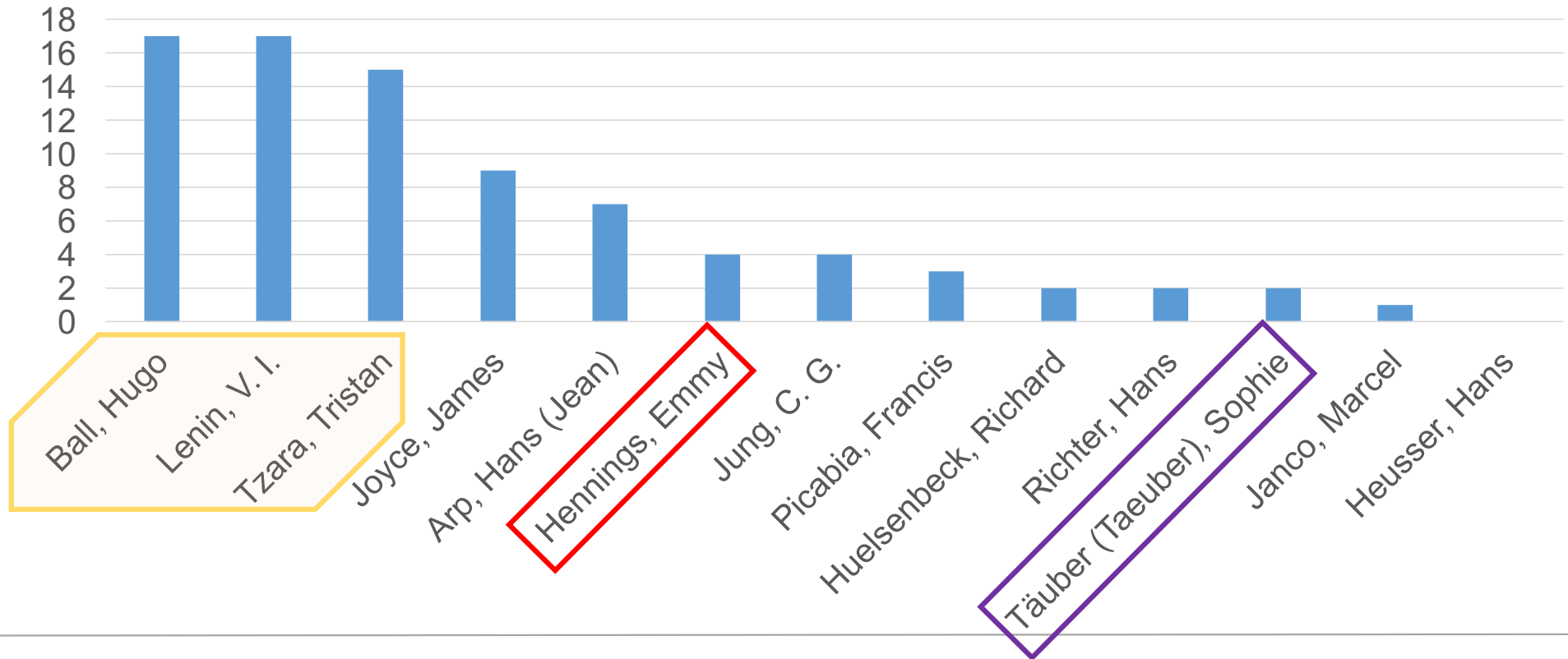
# Dada Zurich: 54 Anglophone Items

Occurrences in all types of texts (at least once)



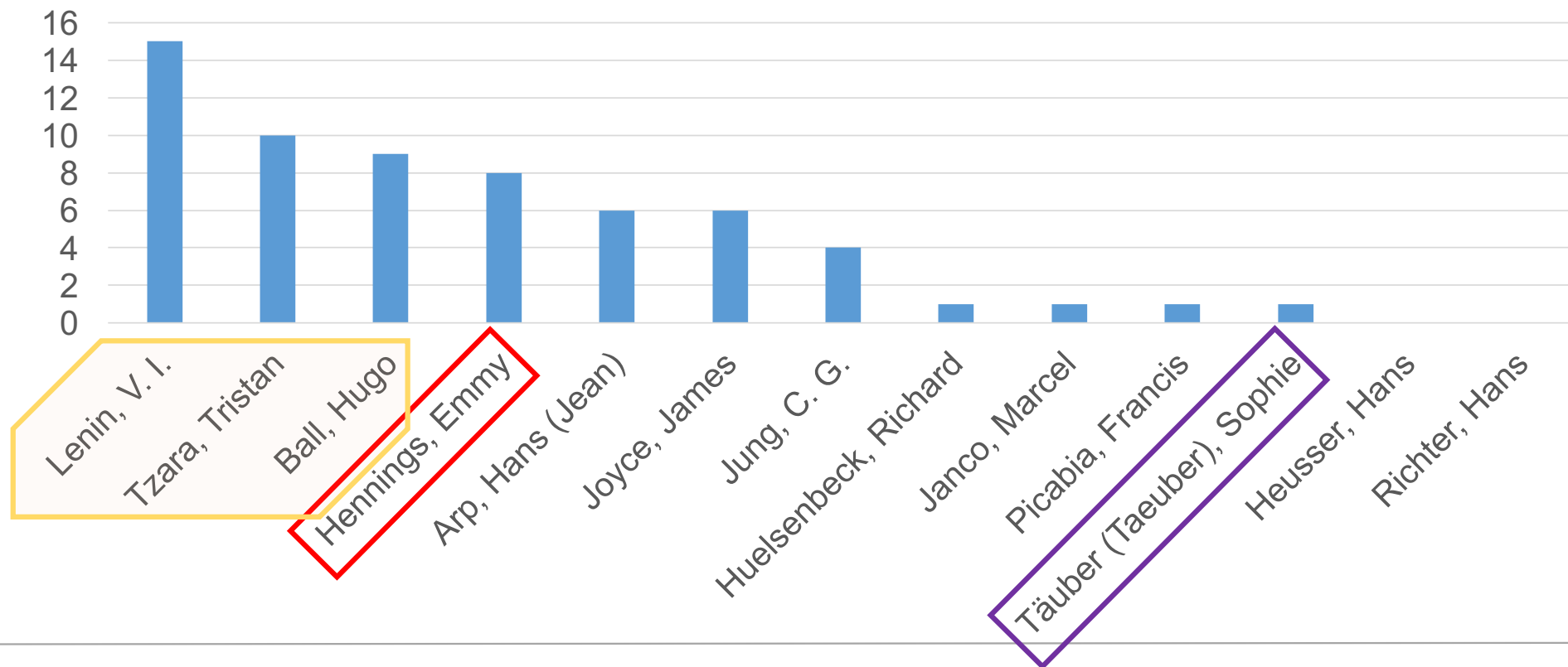
# Dada Zurich: 54 Anglophone Items

Occurrences in all types of texts (at least twice)



# Dada Zurich: 54 Anglophone Items

Occurrences in all types of texts (at least three times)





# from: Anthony Sobin, “Zurich: February 5, 1916”

Seventy kilometers away World War I rages on. It is Zurich, February 5, 1916, and at No. 1 Spiegelgasse, a quiet residential street, it is opening night at the Cabaret Voltaire.

**Tristan Tzara**, young Romanian poet, screams from his works as **Huelsenbeck**, drunk, blindfolds **Hugo Ball** [...].

**The singer** at the cabaret has a new name! Everyone yells **to her**, “Dada! Dada! Dada!” In her honor, **Hans Arp**, with a sledge hammer, noisily destroys antique Greek statuary [...].

.....

Directly across the street, in house No. 6 Spiegelgasse, **Lenin** tries to read.

“**Hugo Ball and his girlfriend**, the singer **Emmy Hennings**” (Sanders 145; emphasis added)

Edward Sanders. “Dada Comes to Zürich.” 1900–1939. Vol. 1 of *America: A History in Verse*. Santa Rosa: Black Sparrow Press, 2000. 145–146.

“**Ball and his companion Emmy Hennings**” (Kraus 175; emphasis added)

Chris Kraus. *I Love Dick*. 1998. Semiotext(e) Native Agents Series. Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2006.

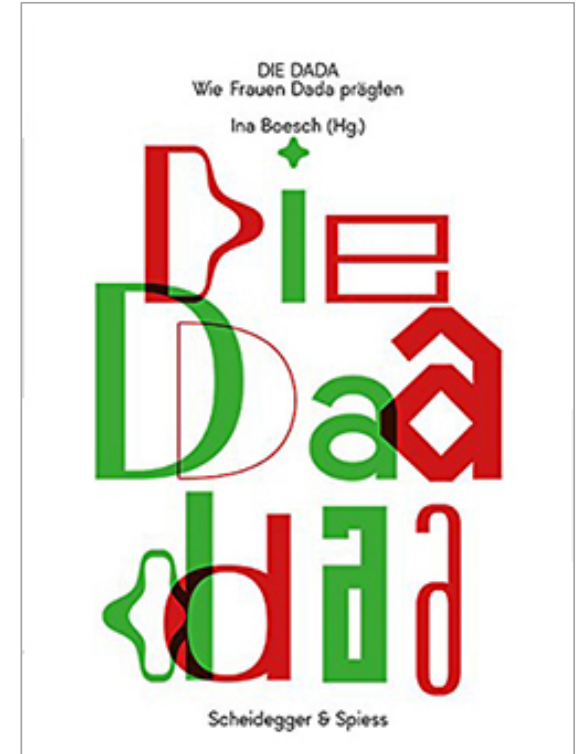
Meredith Tax’s feminist novel *Union Square*: one chapter referring to Dada Zurich – but only Tzara (and **one invented woman**) mentioned.

Meredith Tax. *Union Square*. 1988. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001.

# Women of Dada Zurich: Absent or Secondary?

- 1) Men wrote autobiographical accounts.
- 2) Women tended to work in 'non-language' and/or ephemeral media (e.g. painting, dance).
- 3) Anglophone texts about Zurich Dada: 81.5% by men.
- 4) Research on the role of women in (Zurich) Dada only really took off in the 1990s.

→ Time lag in fiction, poetry, etc.?





# Significant Absences (I): Swiss Literature

“TZARA: Oh, I assure you Gwendolyn has been in the Public Library [i.e. the ZB]. But I have had to admire her from afar, all the way from Economic to Foreign Literature.

CARR: I had no idea Gwendolyn knew any foreign languages and I am not sure that I approve. It’s the sort of thing that can only broaden a girl’s mind.

**TZARA : Well, in this library Foreign Literature includes English.**

**CARR : What a novel arrangement. Is any reason given?”**





# Significant Absences (I): Swiss Literature

## **References found (so far) in x out of circa 850 items:**

- Salomon Gessner: 2
- Robert Walser: 1
- Max Frisch: 1
- Gottfried Keller: 0
- Johanna Spyri: 0

“Poor Zurich. Nothing happens in Zurich.

Einstein happened in Zurich.

Yes, I’d forgotten.

And Max Frisch.

Who is Max Frisch?

Switzerland’s greatest novelist. Also, he writes plays.

I don’t know his work.”

***Einstein, Brecht, even Paul Celan: 2 or more***

## **To compare:**

Tzara: 36 • Joyce: 35 – of which Joyce’s grave: at least 5 • C. G. Jung: 33



# Significant Absences (II): Putsch & Revolution

**The French & Russian Revolutions *are* mentioned...**

**Jonathan Sperber on the 1848 revolutions in Europe**

“One final event in 1847 made the advent of a new revolution seem increasingly likely, the Swiss Civil War [i.e. Sonderbundskrieg].

Although it sounds extremely peculiar today, order and stability in the Swiss cantons had never been completely restored following the 1830 revolution.” (Sperber 115)

“When the history of the Revolution – or indeed of anything else – is written, Switzerland is unlikely to loom large in the story.”  
(Stoppard 72)

Sperber, Jonathan. *The European Revolutions, 1848–1851*. 1994. 2nd ed. New Approaches to European History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Stoppard, Tom. *Travesties*. 1974. London: Faber and Faber, 1975.



# Overview

- 1) Zurich in Anglophone Literatures: Why bother?
- 2) Methodological tools & problems
- 3) Some findings
- 4) Conclusion: Anglophone cultures and their projected spaces



# Some Conclusion for Zurich Literature (I)

- 1) So far, no clear evidence that the *Anglosphere* is a useful analytical category
  - at least not in this type of literary historical study...
  
- 2) 1960–2010: quantitative leap for Zurich as projected space of Anglophone literatures
  - peak: 1980 – decline since end of Cold War (briefly halted by Nazi gold controversy?)
  
- 3) qualitative: two periods with a ‘clear’ shape, interrupted by ‘fuzzy’ period
  - c. 1810–1870: historical fiction, religion (esp. confessional conflict), landscape
  - c. 1950–2010: banks & spies, legacy of two world wars (Nazi gold, Dada, Lenin...)

## Some Conclusion for Zurich Literature (II)

« **Dans la première moitié du siècle**, le nouveau paysage helvétique est composé de cliniques, de banques privées et de boutiques de luxe. C'est la face rassurante du pays. Son revers est le malaise de toute civilisation occidentale. Cette contradiction est perçue par les écrivains de la modernité qui déclarent leur rejet d'une société matérialiste et spirituellement stérile.

**Après la Seconde Guerre mondiale** la Suisse ne joue plus ce rôle ambigu mais significatif. **Derrière les clichés qui persistent**, elle devient chez les écrivains de langue anglaise **pratiquement invisible**, littéralement et littérairement neutre. » (Vincent 121–122; emphasis added)

**Not  
really  
true for  
Zurich –  
more  
research  
needed!**



## The Lecture I Didn't Give

### THE POEM I DIDN'T WRITE

Here is the poem I was going to write  
earlier, but didn't  
because I heard you stirring.  
I was thinking again  
about that first morning in Zurich.  
How we woke up before sunrise.  
Disoriented for a minute. But going  
out onto the balcony that looked down  
over the river, and the old part of the city.  
And simply standing there, speechless.  
Nude. Watching the sky lighten.  
So thrilled and happy. As if  
we'd been put there  
just at that moment.

A wide-angle photograph of the Zurich waterfront at sunset. The sky is filled with dramatic, dark clouds, with a bright glow on the left side where the sun is setting. The water of the Limmat river is dark blue with gentle ripples. In the foreground, several boats are docked at a wooden pier, many covered with blue or white tarps. The background shows the city of Zurich with various buildings, including a prominent church with a tall spire on the left and a large, ornate building on the right. The overall atmosphere is serene and picturesque.

**Thank you for  
your attention!**



## Appendix: Final Exam – Sample Question

Which of the following statements best reflects a key point made by Martin Mühlheim during his lecture on Zurich in Anglophone Literatures?

- a) Zurich texts should be studied because many were written by very famous authors.
- b) Studying Zurich texts is a powerful way of fighting Anglospheric hegemony.
- c) The study of Zurich texts is merely one piece of a larger literary-geographical puzzle.
- d) Only by studying Zurich texts can we fight sexist views about Dada.
- e) The only meaningful way of studying Zurich texts is to use a quantitative approach.