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## **AGRÉGATION EXTERNE D'ANGLAIS**

### **ÉPREUVE HORS PROGRAMME**

#### **Première partie** (*en anglais, durée maximale : 40 minutes*)

Vous procéderez à l'étude et à la mise en relation argumentée des trois documents du dossier proposé (A, B, C non hiérarchisés). Votre présentation ne dépassera pas 20 minutes et sera suivie d'un entretien de 20 minutes maximum.

#### **Deuxième partie** (*en français, durée maximale : 5 minutes*)

À l'issue de l'entretien de première partie, et à l'invitation du jury, vous vous appuierez sur l'un des trois documents du dossier pour proposer un projet d'exploitation pédagogique dans une situation d'enseignement que vous aurez préalablement définie. Cette partie ne donnera lieu à aucun échange avec le jury.

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## DOCUMENT A

**Richard Brautigan, "1692 Cotton Mather Newsreel", in *Revenge of the Lawn* [1972]. Edinburgh: Canongate Books, 2014, pp. 6-9.**

O 1939 Tacoma Washington witch, where are you now that I am growing towards you? Once my body occupied a child's space and doors had a large meaning to them and were almost human. Opening a door meant something in 1939, and the children used to make fun of you because you were crazy and lived by yourself in an attic across the street from where we sat in the gutter like two slum sparrows.

We were four years old.

I think you were about as old as I am now with the children always teasing and calling after you, 'The crazy woman! Run! Run! The witch! The witch! Don't let her look at you in the eye. She looked at me! Run! Help! Run!'

Now I am beginning to look like you with my long hippie hair and my strange clothes. I look about as crazy in 1967 as you did in 1939.

Little children yell, 'Hey, hippie!' at me in the San Francisco mornings like we yelled, 'Hey, crazy woman!' at you plodding through Tacoma twilights.

I guess you got used to it as I've gotten used to it.

As a child, I would always hang my hat on a dare. Dare me to do anything and I'd do it. Ugh! Some of the things that I did following, like a midget Don Quixote, trails and visions of dares.

We were sitting in the gutter doing nothing. Perhaps we were waiting for the witch or anything to happen that would free us from the gutter. We had been sitting there for almost an hour: child's time.

'I dare you to go up to the witch's house and wave at me out of the window,' my friend said, finally to get things going.

I looked up at the witch's house across the street. There was one window in her attic facing down upon us like a still photograph from a horror movie.

'OK,' I said.

'You've got guts,' my friend said. I can't remember his name now. The decades have filed it off my memory, leaving a small empty place where his name should be.

I got up from the gutter and walked across the street and around to the back of the house where the stairs were that led to her attic. They were grey wooden stairs like an old mother cat and went up three flights to her door.

There were some garbage cans at the bottom of the stairs. I wondered what garbage can was the witch's. I lifted up one garbage can lid and looked inside to see if there was any witches' garbage in the can.

There wasn't.

The can was filled with just ordinary garbage. I lifted up the lid to the next garbage can but there wasn't any witches' garbage in that can either. I tried the third can but it was the same as the other two cans: no witches' garbage.

There were three garbage cans and there were three apartments in the house, including the attic where she lived. One of the cans had to be her garbage but there wasn't any difference between her garbage and the other people's garbage. So...

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45 I walked up the stairs to the attic. I walked very carefully as if I were petting an old grey mother cat nursing her kittens.

I finally arrived at the witch's door. I didn't know whether she was inside or not. She could have been home. I felt like knocking but that didn't make any sense. If she were there, she'd just slam the door in my face or ask me what I wanted and I'd run screaming down the stairs, 'Help! Help! She looked at me!'

50 The door was tall, silent and human like a middle-aged woman. I felt as if I were touching her hand when I opened the door delicately like the inside of a watch.

The first room in the house was her kitchen and she wasn't in it, but there were twenty or thirty vases and jars and bottles filled with flowers. They were on the kitchen table and on all the shelves and ledges. Some of the flowers were stale and some of the flowers were fresh.

I went inside the next room and it was the living-room and she wasn't there either, but again there were twenty or thirty vases and jars and bottles filled with flowers.

60 The flowers made my heart beat faster.

Her garbage had lied to me.

I went inside the last room and it was her bedroom and she wasn't there either, but again there were twenty or thirty vases and jars and bottles filled with flowers.

65 There was a window right next to the bed and it was the window that looked down on the street. The bed was made of brass with a patchwork quilt on it. I walked over to the window and stood there staring down at my friend who was sitting in the gutter looking at the window.

70 He couldn't believe that I was standing there in the witch's window and I waved very slowly at him and he waved very slowly at me. Our waving seemed to be very distant, travelling from our arms like two people waving at each other in different cities, perhaps between Tacoma and Salem, and our waving was merely an echo of their waving across thousands of miles.

75 Now the dare had been completed and I turned around in that house which was like a shallow garden and all my fears collapsed upon me like a landslide of flowers and I ran screaming at the top of my lungs outside and down the stairs. I sounded as if I had stepped in a wheelbarrow-sized pile of steaming dragon shit.

80 When I came screaming around the side of the house, my friend jumped up from the gutter and started screaming, too. I guess he thought that the witch was chasing me. We ran screaming through the streets of Tacoma, pursued by our own voices like a 1692 Cotton Mather newsreel.

This was a month or two before the German Army marched into Poland.

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## Document B

**Jan Machielsen, "Scotland has apologised for witchcraft executions – as a historian, I worry this was a mistake", *The Conversation*, March 16th, 2022. Retrieved from [theconversation.com](https://theconversation.com).**

On International Women's Day this year, Scotland's first minister Nicola Sturgeon apologised at Holyrood to "all those who were accused, convicted, vilified or executed under the Witchcraft Act of 1563".

5 Her apology follows a social media campaign for an apology, legal pardon and national monument for more than 2,000 people executed between 1563 and the act's repeal in 1736. This has been led by two new organisations set up in the wake of the #MeToo movement: *Remembering the Accused Witches of Scotland* (RAWS) and *Witches of Scotland*.

10 Witchcraft monuments dot the European countryside. They have been erected at many sites of intense witch-hunting such as Cologne and Bamberg in Germany, and in the French and Spanish Basque Country.

Pardons are more of a novelty. In 2008, the Swiss canton of Glarus pardoned Anna Göldi, whose execution for witchcraft in 1782 was Europe's last. In January, Catalonia became the first territory to pass a blanket pardon of all its  
15 witches, with plans to rename streets in their memory.

Scotland was the epicentre of witch-hunting in the British Isles. Wales and Ireland saw a negligible number of executions, whereas Scotland executed at least 15 times as many witches as England relative to its population.

20 In 1597, King James VI of Scotland (and later I of England) became the only European monarch to publish a treatise defending the reality of witchcraft. A supposed sect of North Berwick witches had allegedly sought to sink the king's ship upon his return home from marrying Anne of Denmark.

25 These 1590 trials witnessed exceptional levels of torture and James interrogated some suspects himself, becoming convinced of the satanic conspiracy when a suspect "declared unto him the verye woordes" which he had exchanged with his new queen on their wedding night.

30 The king, a proponent of divine right monarchy and a leading claimant to the English throne, was delighted to hear that he was indeed "the Lord's annointed" and "the greatest enemy the Devil hath in the worlde" and arranged for a pamphlet to be published in London to let his future subjects know.

35 Scottish historians and institutions have long confronted this bloody history. The 2003 Survey of Scottish Witchcraft, a database which documents all known accused, remains a vital resource. The University of Glasgow has made many texts available online, while the National Galleries organised a deeply impressive exhibition of witchcraft engravings.

Most recently, the National Trust for Scotland published a report on the connections of its properties to the witch-hunts. A BBC Scotland podcast series has also helped raise public awareness.

## Prejudice, misogyny and grievance

40 Given the great strides that have already been made, is a pardon the next  
step? Pardons have traditionally been reserved for miscarriages of justice where  
the victims or their immediate descendants were still alive.

What makes the 1692–93 trials in Salem, Massachusetts, unique within the  
wider history of witch-hunts is the swiftness with which public opinion changed.  
45 Within a matter of years, the first survivors had their names cleared and received  
financial compensation, providing a foundation on which later posthumous  
pardons were built.

As Sturgeon noted in her speech, Scotland has already offered a general  
apology and automatic pardon to gay men convicted prior to 2001 under  
50 discriminatory laws. The case for a pardon, therefore, can appear  
straightforward. Witchcraft did not exist. Pardoning long-dead witches will not  
help them, but if we decide that it will help us as a society we should officially  
acknowledge the injustice.

The case for witch museums, memorials, even street names is similarly  
55 strong. They can foster reflection about the negative impact of our own biases  
and prejudices on others – especially the vulnerable “other” – in the present.

From a historian’s perspective, the case for an official apology is much  
more challenging, however. At a time when powerful politicians claim to be the  
victims of witch-hunts, historians are wary of the ways in which the past can be  
60 reclaimed to legitimise present grievances. Comparisons to the Holocaust or  
other modern acts of genocide are also deeply problematic.

We are also acutely conscious of the danger of official narratives. Nicola  
Sturgeon’s assertion that Scotland’s witches were killed “in many cases, just  
because they were women”, unconsciously evokes and rejects the memorable  
65 claim by Christina Lerner, Scotland’s most famous witchcraft historian, that  
witches were accused not because they were women, “but because they were  
witches”. Indeed, one in six were men.

The deep misogyny of the witch-hunts is not in doubt, but the workings of  
the patriarchy were (and are) complex. It was also by no means the hunt’s only  
70 driver: the worsening climate, growing economic inequality and tensions within  
communities all played important roles.

We may also ask what the first minister was apologising for. If historians  
have learned anything in the past 50 years, it is that stronger states with greater  
central oversight such as England, France and Spain saw much lower levels of  
75 witch-hunting than weaker ones, like Scotland.

James VI may have approved of witch-hunting, but Edinburgh normally  
performed a more passive, enabling role, allowing local communities and elites to  
root out the witches in their midst.

Witchcraft accusations blamed a community’s ills – unexplained deaths,  
80 harvest failures, ill feeling – on a single, often vulnerable, individual, absolving  
the consciences of all those around her. Her confession and death showed that  
her neighbours had been right to mistreat her “because” she was an evil witch.

We should ask whether representing the witch-hunt as a “state-sanctioned  
atrocitv” risks doing something similar. Early modern communities prosecuted  
85 witches collectively. It is facile to claim that only the state, or even only elites,  
were responsible; there is a potential witch-hunter in all of us. If the purpose of  
an official apology is to pin blame for the witch-hunt primarily on the Scottish  
state, then that would be precisely the wrong lesson learned.

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## Document C

**Daniel Gardner, *The Three Witches from Macbeth* (Elizabeth Lamb, Viscountess Melbourne; Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire; Anne Seymour Damer), 1775. Gouache and chalk, 940 mm x 790 mm, National Portrait Gallery, London.**

