

RESEARCH DAY 2009



12 JUNE 2009

Museum of Byzantine Culture

2 Leoforos Stratou, Thessaloniki

ΜΟΥΣΕΙΟ
ΒΥΖΑΝΤΙΝΟΥ
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MUSEUM
OF BYZANTINE
CULTURE



SCHOOL OF ENGLISH

ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI

FRIDAY 12 JUNE 2009	
9:00 – 9:15	OPENING ADDRESS <i>Professor Yiorgos Kalogeras</i>
SESSION 1 9:15 – 10:45	VIOLENCE, BODIES AND REPRESENTATION Chair: Anna Papavassileiou <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Virginia Dakari “The Cancer Body (Politic) of American Violence: John Guare’s <i>A Few Stout Individuals</i>” 2. Sotiris Babajimopoulos “The Representation of Violence in <i>Unforgiven</i> ” 3. Eirini Kapsidou “Photography after Postmodernism: Some Reflections” 4. Maria Ristani “Systolic and Diastolic Rhythms: Bodies in Beckett’s Late Dramas”
SESSION 2 10:45 – 12:15	CULTURAL DIFFERENCE IN THEORY AND LITERATURE Chair: Maria Ristani <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Theodora Patrona “Italian-American Persephone in Sicilian setting: Susan Caperna Lloyd’s <i>No Pictures in My Grave</i> (1992)” 2. Öz Öktem “‘[F]uries of hell’ in ‘the paradise of women’” 3. Fani Kopaka “Nietzsche and Jewish Historicism: an Extension of the View that Nietzsche is the Father of New Historicism” 4. Vera Tavardkinadze “Symbolism of the Water in the Grail cycle (Jungian and Bachelarian Points of View)”
12:15 – 12:45	Refreshment Break

<p>SESSION 3 12:45 – 13:30</p>	<p><i>CHILDREN’S AND YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE</i> Chair: Despoina Konstantinidou</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Vasiliki Tialliou</i> “Postmodern Childhood and Kinderculture” 2. <i>Vasiliki Trantopoulou</i> “From Antiquity to Infinity, From Europe to America: Young Adult Fantasy”
<p>SESSION 4 13:30 – 14:30</p>	<p><i>TECHNOLOGY, SCIENCE AND NARRATIVE</i> Chair: Vasiliki Trantopoulou</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Katia Tachmatzidou</i> “Merging Colours, Merging Identities and the Emerging Female Educator in the Brontë Novels” 2. <i>Filomachi Spathopoulou</i> “Scientific influences in the works of Jane Austen” 3. <i>Giorgos Dimitriadis</i> “Simulated Space vs. Worldmaking in Digital Fantasy”
<p>SESSION 5 14:30 – 15:30</p>	<p><i>TRANSLATION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY</i> Chair: Filomachi Spathopoulou</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Anna Papavasileiou</i> “The (Im)possibility of Poetry Translation: The Case of Rendering C.P. Cavafy’s Poetry into English” 2. <i>Katerina Gouleti</i> “Rendering Culture-Specific Utterances in TV Subtitling” 3. <i>Theodora Valkanou</i> “The Poetics of Irishness”
<p>16:00</p>	<p>Taverna Lunch</p>

ABSTRACTS

Sotiris Babajimopoulos

The Representation of Violence in *Unforgiven*

After twenty years of decline of the Western, a genre that had flourished for decades, Clint Eastwood filmed *Unforgiven* (1992) and offered a revisionist vision which questioned the traditional structures of violence, order, power and redemption. The director-actor's intention was to deconstruct his own emblematic image of a dominating macho man and reflect on the origins of violence. At the same time, he reflected on the genre's dualisms (civilization versus nature, law versus outlaws and order versus anarchy) and the inevitability of indulging in violence when searching for redemption. This presentation will analyze the mechanisms of violence in *Unforgiven* and will argue that the movie signifies the end of an era of classical violence and the passage to a new one, an era of self-consciousness and excess.

Virginia Dakari

The Cancer Body (Politic) of American Violence: John Guare's *A Few Stout Individuals*

Perhaps the most violent of all metaphors regarding cancer is that of warfare rhetoric. As Söntag has observed in *Illness as Metaphor*, the diseased body operates as a battlefield where an irrational civil war is taking place: the enemy, hosted by the body itself, expands and metastasizes to destroy cells, tissues, organs, and eventually, the entire organism. Using this discussion on cancer metaphors as a point of departure, this presentation explores the body in pain and the cancerous self as a metaphor for a diseased socio-historical body the way it is portrayed through Ulysses Grant's character in John Guare's play *A Few Stout Individuals* (2002). On stage, General Grant, echoing the much contested military figure of the American Civil War era, is dying of cancer, struggling against his failing memory and his decaying body in order to complete his memoirs. Using (and abusing) General Grant's memory, Guare sets on a debate regarding America's past, historical memory and national violence, occasioned by 9/11 as the most obscene crime of post-millennial terrorism.

Giorgos Dimitriadis
Simulated Space vs. Worldmaking in Digital Fantasy

The revolution of digital technology has brought forth the convergence of fantasy cinema and interactive new media, like gaming, which make extensive use of digitization to create entire worlds on demand. In terms of audience perception, the question should be posed whether these worlds constitute *worldmaking* or *simulation*, i.e., whether they are ontologically autonomous spaces, or simply fake and subordinate illusions of reality. As forms of escapism, both possible versions of digital fantasy constitute a hyperreal condition; nevertheless, worldmaking should be understood as *hyperreality*, i.e., as a space with the same ontological weight, cognitively speaking, as the real world, whereas simulation should be understood as *hyperrealism*, i.e., as a deceiving imitation of the actual world. By juxtaposing the American and the European schools of cognitive film theory, digital fantasy in new media will be measured against worldmaking and simulation, in an attempt to determine the way they enable spectators to use the moving image in order to transgress or expand their perception of reality.

Katerina Gouleti
Rendering Culture-Specific Utterances in TV Subtitling

The treatment of culture-specific utterances is said to be one of the most challenging tasks for any translator. In the case of subtitling, there are special idiosyncratic features that render the particular task even more demanding. This presentation attempts to outline the defining factors, both on intratextual and extratextual levels, influencing the professionals' choices. The subtitler has to take a wide range of parameters into consideration ranging from the polymedial nature of subtitling to the functionality of each utterance within the audiovisual product. Each parameter works as a confining or aiding framework for the subtitling act and ultimately determines the range of choices and possible alternatives for the adoptable strategies. Examples of culture-specific references will be drawn from two different sets of subtitles written for a very popular TV series (Beverly Hills 90210) broadcast by two Greek TV channels with a twenty-year time gap. The question of whether and if and to what extent and towards what direction the treatment of culture-specific utterances has changed in the course of time will be dealt with in this paper.

Eirini Kapsidou

Photography after Postmodernism: Some Reflections

Postmodern photography focused on the re-appropriation and re-representation of images, thus signaling the death of the 'original' and the beginning of reproduction. Contemporary post-postmodern photographers' efforts are turned towards experimentalism and the presentation of 'new' forms of expression. Photography today displays a tendency towards cruelty, through a minute description of reality, therefore adopting a form of 'neo-realism' as a means of representation. This presentation discusses the specific tendency with reference to the work of major contemporary photographers, also taking into consideration the influence of digitalization. The basic question to be posed is whether digital processes widely implemented in today's photography allow for realistic representation or any degree of originality.

Fani Kopaka

Nietzsche and Jewish Historicism: an Extension of the View that Nietzsche is the Father of New Historicism

Nietzsche has always been regarded as the father of New Historicism, which was a development of, or response to, the Christian view of history. However, Nietzsche's theories can also be seen to correspond to the development of Jewish Historicism, and, in particular, to Jewish scholarship and culture in nineteenth-century Germany. Although it is well known from his works that Nietzsche was influenced by Jewish culture and religion, the actual impact of his theories on nineteenth-century Jewish Historicism has yet to be examined systematically. In this presentation, it will be argued that there are very strong parallels between the two. In fact, it seems likely that Nietzsche had a direct influence on Jewish scholarship.

Öz Öktem

“‘[F]uries of hell’ in ‘the paradise of women’”

My research is on the representations of the Muslim woman in the Renaissance English drama. However, in order to get an accurate picture of the Islamic feminine of the era, I feel it necessary to contrast her with the image of the Christian woman of the same period. Considering the decisive Protestant attitude in inventing the ideal womanhood, the elements of the contemporary

discourse on women form important parameters for the representations of the Muslim women specific to the early-modern age. The good-woman conduct characterized by chastity, silence, and obedience creates a meaningful contrast with the image of the Muslim woman portrayed as evil by the lustful, aggressive and transgressive female figure in drama. In my study, I argue that the construction of the Islamic female in these works is highly influenced by religious anxieties against Muslims coupled with the contemporary masculine anxieties against independent women. To support this argument, in this presentation, I present a quick survey of the social and economic conditions of the early-modern Englishwomen and try to discover in which particular ways they might have provoked anxieties among the English society's male members.

Anna Papavassileiou

The (Im)possibility of Poetry Translation: The Case of Rendering C.P. Cavafy's Poetry into English

The purpose of this presentation is to discuss the (im)possibility of poetry translation and the presence, or lack thereof, of any criteria for its evaluation. In the first part, the difficulties of translating poetry into English in general as well as the issue of assessing poetry translations will be discussed. An overview of historical approaches to the translation of poetry as well as a discussion of historical theories will be briefly mentioned. The second part will show that in the case of the translation of Modern Greek poetry into English and specifically the poetry/case of the Greek poet C.P. Cavafy (1863-1933) there was a lack of any specific translational tools and/or strategies on the part of the poet's English translators. Moreover, none of Cavafy's English translators have ever explained how they have overcome the particular problems they have encountered in rendering his poetry into English. I will predominately focus on the case of Cavafy because firstly he is variously and repeatedly translated into English and, secondly, he is the most widely translated poet of Modern Greece. I will also trace some aspects of the Cavafian language whose rendition into English has proven to be difficult. Specific examples will be offered from the poem *The Retinue of Dionysos*, showing at the same time the power of the visual image on poetry. Finally, I will conclude by outlining my personal translational tools. A discussion of the inadequacies of the existing articles on the assessment of the translations of Cavafy's poetry will also be included and specific examples will be offered.

Theodora Patrona

**Italian-American Persephone in Sicilian Setting: Susan Caperna Lloyd's
No Pictures in My Grave (1992)**

In her 1992 spiritual memoir, Susan Caperna Lloyd outlines her search for the Goddess and the Demeter Persephone cults in the Sicilian ruins while recording her participation in the traditional Good Friday processions in the Sicilian town of Trapani. Her personal agony for self-definition appears to be finally resolved at the end of her third stay in Sicily; when she manages to overcome the limitations imposed by the Sicilian milieu, she becomes an initiate of the *misteri* turning from a spectator into a participant, the Goddess she had long been looking for. In accordance with postmodern artistic conventions, Caperna Lloyd, in the role of the depressed Persephone, foregrounds the ethnic woman's longing for spirituality, strength and nurturance. In its postmodern version, the author's approach to the myth ends like a fairy tale, happily ever after. Caperna Lloyd's ethnic Persephone, content in the niche that she thinks *she* has found for herself, is trapped in the shady inertia of theorizing, drugged by the pomegranate seeds of her ethnic-identity quest and female matriarchy.

Maria Ristani

Systolic and Diastolic Rhythms: Bodies in Beckett's Late Dramas

In my continuing exploration of Beckett's inherent musicality, rhythm still constitutes a crucial parameter of research. At this stage, what forms an area of particular interest are the rhythmic patterns woven by Beckett's bodies of intense listening, as these feature particularly in his late dramas. Influenced by the disruptive canvases of Francis Bacon, this presentation addresses the interplay of systolic and diastolic rhythms within which bodies in Beckett are caught, wavering from being reinforced in pregnant postures of bodily conservation, to being evacuated, spilled forth in threateningly excremental wanderings. The analysis attempted revolves around what Steven Connor has termed 'the inflationary body image,' tracing the latter in the frenzied movements of the Beckettian bodies that alternate with stillness, in the very voices that fill them in and spread them out, in their stuttering language and its convulsive intervals.

Filomachi Spathopoulou
Scientific Influences in the Works of Jane Austen

Owing to the development of industrialization and commercialization, England had already become a ‘consumer society’ by the end of the 19th century. This same society was highly competitive and individualistic, as was the view of society promulgated by Malthus and the theory of evolution set out by Darwin. In my presentation, I will approach Austen from a Darwinian and a Malthusian perspective and will attempt to illustrate their influence on her work through the use of examples from her novels. My primary focus will be on marriage and the importance of a good income.

Katia Tachmatzidou
Merging Colours, Merging Identities and the Emerging Female Educator in the Brontë Novels

Newton’s experiments proved that sunlight is a heterogeneous mixture, which initially appears white, and which can be analysed into its component colours/rays by means of a prism. This way, optics can provide us with a metaphor/model for the heterogeneity of the elements of literary texts such as narrative voice or perspective. Constant shifts, as well as the merging of voices and perspectives, can lead to the heterogeneity and multiplicity of the literary text. This framework leaves ample space for the foregrounding of the heterogeneous female voice, as well as multiple female identities, which are constructed by sets of multiple aspects either contrasting or subordinating each other. Such a multiform subjectivity characterizes the female educator, a recurrent figure in the Brontë novels. The foregrounding of the female educator in these novels results in the empowerment of the female subject and the challenge of traditional norms regarding the nature of female education.

Vera Tavardkinadze
Symbolism of the Water in the Grail cycle (Jungian and Bachelarian Points of View)

My dissertation concerns the symbolism in the French and German romances of the Grail cycle. I will examine the symbolism of human personages, as well as natural elements and the events of everyday life (as a spear, a sword and so on). I will consider as well traditions and customs and the religious or moralistic side

of life. So, these symbols are widespread in different cultures, Christian as well as non-Christian. Because of this, I think these symbols belong to the unconscious of the human psyche and, moreover, to the collective unconscious. I will examine the symbolic through different points of view and use different critical methods. In this presentation, I will use Jungian and Bachelarian methods to examine the symbolism of water in the human unconscious and literary works.

Vicky Tialliou
Postmodern Childhood and Kinderculture

Although today, due to postmodern diversity, there is no one concept of childhood but many, fragmented and overlapping ones, the 'birth' of the notion of childhood emerged during the Renaissance while the zenith of traditional childhood lasted from about 1850 to 1950. Yet, the postmodern child bears only a few characteristics of traditional childhood: postmodernism's refusal of oppositions results in a contradictory definition of what it means to be a child; today children are innocent and potential criminals, naturally pure and extremely knowledgeable. Because of children's loss of innocence and early maturation, the boundaries between childhood and adulthood tend to fade, which is only natural in the era of postmodernity. Equally complex are the texts children encounter while their education takes place at a number of social sites, which produce kinderculture, the culture of children; as children are exposed to a variety of reading matter, their literature has ceased to be traditional, too. Kinderculture is accused of favoring repetition but this is a clearly postmodern trait, since intertextuality, bricolage, pastiche or parody, all entail the notion of repetition. When children are blamed for boredom, loss of memory and concentration or impoverished imagination, they are actually accused of their postmodern way of living. However, postmodernism is an adult creation: today childhood is fragmented because it is postmodern and children constitute the recipients of postmodernism while being the offspring of its creators. Searching for the causes of childhood's fragmentation in postmodernity may justify and improve children's postmodern condition.

Vasiliki Trantopoulou

From Antiquity to Infinity, From Europe to America: Young Adult Fantasy

Through a study of European and American fantasy literature for young adult audiences, the genre in general, its functions and dominant themes are explored. The world of fantasy, the locus of the adolescent's salvation and integration, oscillates between the perpetually influx reality and the decentered individual of a deterritorialized, dystopian timelessness. Adolescents on the fringes of adulthood pivot these oneiric worlds to gain insight into identity and form a unified, coherent self. The initiation process and the ensuing integration pose threats to the dominant order as the adolescent relishes in transgressing the law, defying capitulation to conventional practices and societal constructs. In an effort to define unconscious fears and desires, the young adult, through fantasy literature, enters the world of the anti-conventional, goes beyond conceptual cages, assumes multiple identities and embarks on a quest whose goal is the total exploration of universal reality. Young adult readers of fantasy experience a cosmic fusion where the physical world and the spiritual interpenetrate, where space is transformed with the superposition of countless overlapping worlds and universes, where mind and matter lose their barriers and form an integral scheme of action of a much broader perspective. Young adult fantasy is reinscribing both the world and literary criticism by postulating that forces the self has no definitive mastery over and which have a whim of their own recondition societal transformation and identity formation.

Theodora Valkanou

The Poetics of Irishness

This presentation examines the representation of Irish cultural identity in the texts of Anglo-Irish literature. It attempts to offer an outline of what Irishness consists of through a brief overview of the most influential theories on cultural identity, paying special attention to the aspect of nationhood. By shedding light on the reasons why national identity issues are so accentuated in Ireland, the presentation will also discuss whether the Irish conception of cultural identity changed in the course of the past century.

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

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Poster Painting: *Composition X* by Wassily Kandinsky 1939; Oil on canvas,
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