



Panel Abstracts Booklet

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Organization



Funding



Partners



[PANEL 22] **CLASSICAL MOTIVES IN CONTEMPORARY SHORT NARRATIVE AND
IMPORTANCE OF SUMARIES IN CLASSICAL RECEPTION**

[Wednesday]

Slot 3: 3:40 - 4:30pm

Yoshinori Sano, International Christian University, Tokyo [ysano@icu.ac.jp]

Three summaries of the ruse of the wooden horse in the Odyssey and beyond

There are three notable depictions of the ruse of the wooden horse in the *Odyssey*: at 4. 266-289 narrated by Menelaus, at 8. 499-520 by Demodocus, and at 11. 505-537 by Odysseus. Presumably an ampler description(s) existed in the oral tradition about the fall of Troy (or *Ur-Ilioupersis*, if one uses a Neo-Analytical terminology), and these three versions in the *Odyssey* are 'summaries' of the richer oral version(s). Comparing these three 'summaries', one account (in *Od.* 4) describes both outside (Helen calling the names of the Greeks) and inside (Odysseus trying to save his comrades) of the horse, one (in *Od.* 8) describes only the outside (the Trojans' fatal decision of bringing the horse inside the wall), another (in *Od.* 11) describes only the inside (what Odysseus and Neoptolemus were doing.). Therefore, these three summaries are composed from three different perspectives.

In this paper, firstly, I would like to examine how dexterously each of these three perspectives are chosen in the respective contexts of the three summary accounts in the *Odyssey*. Secondly, I would like to bring in some other later descriptions of the episode of the Wooden Horse including modern materials to illustrate how each of the three 'summaries' with different perspectives have been received or neglected.

David Bouvier, Univ. Lausanne [david.bouvier@unil.ch]

How much are Demodocos' songs in the Odyssey summaries?

If an oral song or poem is the direct result of the Muse's inspiration and if inspiration is linked to a particular moment and context, how may a new song capture or recapture an old one? May one singer include in his performance parts or fragments of a previous one? The tradition requires that singers perpetuate songs and themes by reenacting them. What about the summary of a song in another?

We find in the *Iliad* many mentions of musical performances, but the content of these performances is never told. Such is not the case in the *Odyssey* that seems to establish a clear contrast between singers like Phemios and Demodocos and the «poet» himself of the *Odyssey*. The question will be asked here of the status and the form of Demodocos' songs, especially of the song of Ares and Aphrodite.

The three Demodocos' songs are neither introduced neither concluded with any of the usual formulas generally used to introduce or close other direct speeches (Τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη / Τὸν δ' ἡμείβετ' ἔπειτα καὶ μετέειπεν // Ὡς φάτο / ὥς εἰπὼν). Unlike the many characters' direct speeches, Demodocos' songs are introduced by ὥς (in VIII 76; 268; 500) and are «closed» or, to put it better, suspended, by the demonstrative neuter plural : ταῦτα : ταῦτ' ἄρ' αἰδοῦς ἄειδε περικλυτός (VIII 83, 367 and 521). This is an exceptional formulation. Paying attention to this word, ταῦτα, we will see how much it is

a good way to refer to a summary. It will be the occasion to study if the song of Ares and Aphrodite is in the *Odyssey* summed up or partially quoted by the narrator of the poem.

Text to be read : *Odyssey* VIII 266-369.

Slot 4: 4:40 - 5:30pm

Maria de Fátima Silva, University of Coimbra [fanp13@gmail.com]

Perfection - an intolerable privilege of the gods. Eça de Queiroz, Perfection

Taking as his model Book V of the *Odyssey*, the Portuguese writer Eça de Queiroz replaces, in a short narrative, Ulysses in Calipso's island.

The structure and style of his narrative preserve, in the main lines, those of the homeric poem, even if some new marks give the new version another effect. Eça underlines, as his central focus, the conflict between mortals and imortals, put together in the same utopian place. departing from the same essencial traces, in life of men and gods - sex, meals, diary activities -, the narrative put in conflict all that constitute opposite marks: eternity, passivity, divine perfection, with suffering, danger, instability, that represent human condition.

To conclude that, for Ulysses, the years during which he shared the excellency of Calypso were for him a prison and a suffered exile, putting him aside from instability, surprise, in which life depends.

Jan Haywood, Open University, UK [jan.haywood@open.ac.uk]

Alice Oswald's Memorial, a new Iliad

One of the most significant literary responses to Homer's *Iliad* in the twenty-first century is Alice Oswald's *Memorial* (2011). Since its publication, the poem has received considerable scholarly attention related to various issues, including its interaction with oral poetics, the poet's use of certain similes and its evocation of more recent conflicts. In this paper, I would like to explore further the ways in which *Memorial* repeats significant strands of the Iliadic narrative (for example, Hector's death at the hands of Achilles), whilst simultaneously providing a new kind of narrative that re-casts the Trojan War. Ultimately, I will argue that the poem, which can be read as a kind of condensed version, or summary, of the *Iliad*, differs from its Homeric precedent in several fundamental aspects, not least in Oswald's primary focus on commemoration and in the poem's extensive coverage of the multiple grisly deaths that occur on the battlefield at Troy.

[Thursday]

Slot 5: 9:00 - 9:50am

Susana Marques Pereira, University of Coimbra [smp@fl.uc.pt]

Revisiting the Classics in the Portuguese Program of Basic Education: Maria Alberta Menéres, Odysseus

To retell the fascinating adventures of Odysseus to a young audience was the challenge that Maria Alberta Menéres set out in her adaptation of the Homeric *Odyssey*.

This rewrite was included by the Portuguese Program of Basic Education, as one of the comprehensive reading works suggested to the students of the 6th level. The repeated overcoming of dangers and obstacles by a hero or the use of the marvelous are *per se* seductive ingredients for the recipients. This age group, however, presupposes a very specific dissemination of a famous myth. It is a purpose of the present study to focus precisely on particularities that a narrative devised for a young audience implied.

Amy Pistone (via skype), University of Notre Dame, USA [apistone@nd.edu]
Greek Mythology for Children and Classical Reception for Young Readers

Children's literature that recounts Greek mythology sits at the intersection of contemporary short narrative and summaries, since stories from Greek myth were often shortened and adapted to make them more suitable for a young audience. However, this process of adaptation is rarely a simple bowdlerization and instead often involves substantial rewriting to avoid plot points that were not deemed appropriate for children while simultaneously crafting a story line that would appeal to young readers.

There do not seem to be many English language texts that predate Hawthorne's *A Wonder Book for Girls & Boys* (with fantastical illustrations by Walter Crane), first published in 1851. My paper will be focusing on this work as a noteworthy intervention in children's literature as well as in classical reception. The content and the structure of Hawthorne's stories speak to a new style in children's literature that goes beyond the already extant "fairy tale" genre and is in many ways indebted to the conventions of classical literary genres while simultaneously breaking new ground. I will address the use of a framing device and narrator (Cousin Eustace Bright) and sly metaliterary winks that recall Plato and Apuleius at times, as well as clever linguistic wordplay that would only be accessible to a relatively learned reader. I will also address the ways that Hawthorne reworks classical mythology to both avoid some of the most sexually explicit content while simultaneously shifting the plot to give characters motivations that are more relatable to young readers.

Finally, I will explore the question of whether Hawthorne's work and the similar works that come after him should be read as a sign that emerging modern concepts of childhood are inflected by or should be informed by the intrinsic value of traditional, canonical works (such as Shakespeare and stories from Greek and Roman antiquity). Or, are "the Classics" primarily of value as works that can be adapted, summarized, and reworked to entertain and delight a modern audience composed equally of men, women, and children, all of whom deserve equal value as readers?

Slot 6: 10:00 - 10:50am

Naoko Yamagata, Open University, UK [n.yamagata@open.ac.uk]
Homeric Summaries in Plato

Although Plato's frequent use of Homeric quotations and references has been well documented since the publication in 1949 of Labarbe's *L'Homère de Platon*, his use of summaries of Homeric episodes and passages in his writing has not been specifically examined and will be worth closer attention. This paper focuses on three main examples in which Plato employs Homeric summaries in different ways. The first is the summary of Achilles'

resolve to avenge his friend Patroclus' death in *Apology* 28c, which modifies some details of the original passage in *Iliad* 18 to suit the situation of Socrates at the trial. The second is a collection of short summaries of Homeric highlights that Socrates produces at *Ion* 535B to illustrate the power of poetic inspiration. The third is the unique example at *Republic* 393d-394a where Socrates 'translates' the episode of Chryses' attempt to ransom her daughter from Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1 into a prose summary, in order to illustrate the narrative without *mimesis*, i.e. the singer's enactment of the character. While the first two examples recall the emotional effects of the original passages summarised, the third has exactly the opposite effect, removing all poetry out of the passage, prefiguring the expulsion of Homer and other poets from the ideal city in Book 10. This paper examines Plato's varying strategies in using Homeric summaries which mirror his shifting agenda, different from dialogue to dialogue.

Aldo Brancacci, Università di Roma 'Tor Vergata [aldobrancacci@yahoo.it]
Berkeley, Il Teeteto, e la dottrina platonica delle idee

La *Siris* di Berkeley è percorsa da una messe ingente di riferimenti alla tradizione della filosofia antica, in particolare a Plotino, alla tradizione neoplatonica, e a Platone. Molteplici sono gli aspetti del pensiero platonico cui Berkeley si mostra interessato, ma un interesse centrale è riservato alla teoria delle idee, che appare ricostruita sulla base di una ricognizione di numerosissimi passi di dialoghi platonici. Nell'ambito di tale ricognizione spicca una attenta esegesi del *Teeteto*. Delle dottrine ontologiche e gnoseologiche esposte in questo e in altri dialoghi tardi Berkeley si avvale sia per ricostruire una storia propriamente filosofica di tutta una serie di questioni teoriche, che egli solleva nel suo trattato, sia per accreditare suoi propri pensamenti, sia, infine, per ritrovare in Platone la matrice originaria di nozioni e concetti passati alla filosofia moderna.

Slot 7: 11:10 - 12:00am

Ana Isabel Martins, University of Coimbra [anitaamicitia@hotmail.com]
Les philosophes présocratiques dans les Histórias Falsas (2010): une déviation de l'œil de l'histoire de la philosophie

Gonçalo M. Tavares affirme : "les grecques ont assuré toutes les relations possibles, donc, nous avons seulement aujourd'hui un point de vue". Concernant cet œuvre, l'auteur reconnaît : "D'un côté, je voudrais d'abord exercer une légère déviation de l'œil par rapport à l'axe central de l'histoire de la philosophie ; de l'autre côté, j'étais curieux de remarquer comment la fiction littéraire peut être trouvée dans un fragment de vérité au point où tout se mélange et devient uniforme".

L'épigraphe de Jorge Luís Borges, avec laquelle l'auteur ouvre ce recueil de contes, guide le lecteur à travers de cette idée de l'inséparabilité dans l'âme humaine de la dimension vertueuse et vicieuse. *Histórias Falsas* présentent neuf petites histoires, indépendantes et autonomes mais en dialogue stricte et en articulation autour de plusieurs références classiques. Les philosophes présocratiques deviennent des personnages – Héraclite d'Éphèse, Thalès de Milet, Empédocle, Diogène, Zeno, Anaxagore – et plusieurs d'autres figures célèbres de l'Histoire de l'Antiquité jouent un rôle dans ce scénario littéraire de Gonçalo M. Tavares – Platon, Procruste, Pindare, Alexandre. Les aphorismes du Portique

d'Athènes favorisent les intertextualités philosophique et littéraires, en promouvant la réécriture de ces racines et de ces origines de la culture occidentale. Sous l'idéal de la brièveté, apanage du genre du conte, l'auteur engage les thèmes classiques, mobilise stratégies narratives et rhétoriques spécifiques et présente une écriture acérée et acrimonieuse.

Ce travail essaie de répondre aux questions suivantes : i) Comment la réappropriation des thèmes est-elle adaptée à l'espace contemporains résultante de la diachronie ? Quel sont les traits intensifiés et quels sont les traits dilués tout au long de ce processus de réception dans l'hypercontemporanéité ? Comment se révèle le mérite individuel de l'auteur lorsqu'il s'approprie d'une tradition ? Comment les « déviations de l'œil » par rapport à l'axe central de l'histoire se situent-elles entre la vérité et la vraisemblance ?

Slot 9: 2:30 - 3:20pm

Maria Fernanda Brasete, Univ. Aveiro, Portugal [mbrasete@ua.pt]

The Twelve Labours of Heracles in a Mozambican short-story: Os Sapatos Novos de Josefate Ngwetana, of João Paulo Borges Coelho

“Os Sapatos Novos de Josefate Ngwetana” is one of the short stories of the second volume of the series Índicos Índicios, entitled *Meridião* (2005), written by the Mozambican writer and historian João Paulo Borges Coelho. The narrative focuses on the character of Herculano, son of Josefate, who decides to go away in search of a better life than his father's. The journey that the young Herculano undertakes takes place on the southern coast of Mozambique, but the various stages of his wandering can be read as a Mozambican re-creation of the mythological labours of Heracles. As the Greek hero, this character will also have to pass and surpass “twelve points” to reach his goal, in this case, to find his identity and his memory. At the end of the short-story, the author presents a “Note” on the return journey of Herculano, in which he discusses the relationship between history and reality, mentioning some of the Greek authors who reported “this wondering of Herculano” to, in a parody to Lucian of Samosata, to affirm that the one presented in this tale “is the only true description.”

Graciela Zecchin de Fasano, Univ. Nacional de La Plata [gzecchin@isis.unlp.edu.ar]

Inversion and perversion of Greek Mythology in Marco Denevi's short narrative

The publishing of *Falsifications* by Marco Denevi in 1966, three years after the appearance of *Rayuela* (1963) by Cortázar clearly places Denevi in the context of the great Argentinian writers of the 20th century, along with Borges, Bioy Casares and Abelardo Arias, among others. Greek myths, especially those related to *Odyssey* and the Minotaur, were appropriated by Argentinian writers in an unusual way at that time and with a marked predilection for cycles. Perhaps a little overshadowed by those masterful presences, Denevi proposed in his book *Falsifications* a series of micronarratives whose title shows a notoriously and controversial reception: a “desacralized” perspective, but which is supported *ab initio* as a derived falsehood.

Among stories that pervert consecrated Spanish and universal literature texts, Denevi places mythical versions particularly focused on love, war, women, enabling, on the one hand, the treatment of Perseus, Oedipus, Orpheus, Odysseus, Polyphemus and Heracles,

and on the other hand, characters such as Sirens, Helene and Penelope. We try to show that they are not presented aleatory, but they are included to discuss ancient versions told by mythographers as Apollodorus or other writers as Pausanias or Hyginus.