

ACADEMIC CONFERENCES

Greek Myths on the Map

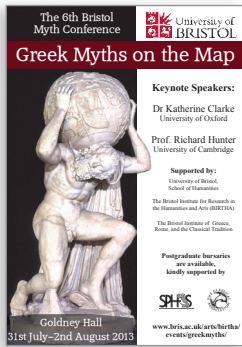
Greek Myths on the Map was the sixth iteration of Bristol's long-running series of international myth conferences. The theme explored the intricate connections between Greek myth and ancient geographical thought, and produced a wealth of material examining how myths shaped the ancient Greeks' understanding of the world, and the impact of changing perceptions about the geography of the world on traditions of mythic storytelling.

The idyllic surrounds of Clifton's Goldney Hall hosted a collegial gathering of some fifty delegates from across Australia, North America, the Middle East, Europe, and the UK. Over three days, eighteen papers ranged conceptually across the

breadth of the Greek mythic tradition, and geographically across the basin of the Mediteranean and beyond. The organizers worked hard to put together a programme which included specialists on ancient geographical texts alongside those working on myth, and to include both emerging and established scholars. The two keynotes forged a particular sense of occasion. Dr Katherine Clarke (Oxford) spoke captivantly of the interplay of myth and landscape; Prof. Richard Hunter (Cambridge) struck a more introspective tone with his topic 'deserts in the soul'.

In keeping with the tradition of Bristol myth conferences, a volume of collected essays on the theme is planned.

The organizers wish to thank those who provided financial and material support: Bristol's Institute of Greece, Rome and the Classical Tradition, the School of Humanities, The Classical Association and The Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies. The conference could not have taken place as it did without the backing of BIRTHA, and the administrative guidance and assistance of Sam Barlow and Kat Burger.



Female Fury and the Masculine Spirit of Vengeance: Revenge and Gender from Classical to Early Modern Literature



varied ways that gender impacts the performance and interpretation of revenge

This two-day international conference, held at University of Bristol on 5 and 6 September 2012, brought together established scholars and PhD students to explore the complex and

in texts from the classical period to the Renaissance.

Professor Edith Hall gave a public lecture on 'A Day in the Life of an Erinyes', exploring the cultural, psychological, and linguistic origins of the Furies' gender, and Professor Alison Findlay in her lecture 'Re-marking Revenge: Gender and Performance in Renaissance Drama' addressed how classical texts are reimagined and reinterpreted in Renaissance literature. Other papers presented at the conference investigated how women influence retribution indirectly

(such as through cursing or goading), asking whether these acts constitute an important means of female agency. Papers also explored how revenge, while often thought of as a quintessentially masculine activity, can be portrayed as intensifying passionate feelings traditionally thought of as feminine. The discussion generated by the conference (and some of the papers given) will provide the foundation for a collection of essays on the subject being considered by Cambridge University Press. The conference was organized by Lesel Dawson (English).

POSTGRADUATE CONFERENCE SCHEME

On Friday 22 and Saturday 23 February 2013, the University of Bristol Centre for Medieval Studies hosted its 19th annual Postgraduate Conference.

The conference was kindly sponsored by BIRTHA, with additional help from the School of Modern Languages and the departments of History and English. The theme of the conference was Mind and Body, and drew graduate students and early career scholars from universities across the UK working on medieval topics in a range of disciplines. The sessions comprised of two

or three papers each and covered topics such as 'corporeally imaging the sacred', 'forgiving the sinner', 'searching for spiritual perfection', 'depicting the (fragmented) body', 'mind and body in intellectual life', 'mind and body in Islamic cultures', and 'questions of medicine and healing'.

We were delighted to welcome Dr. Matthew Treherne of the University of Leeds as our keynote speaker. Dr. Treherne gave an address on 'Perspectives on Mind and Body, Thought and Action in the Middle Ages', which was of great interest to

delegates. The conference was a stimulating and enjoyable experience for delegates and organizers alike, and a lot of common ground was discovered.

Principal Organizer:
Tamzin Simmons
PhD candidate, Italian
CMS conference 2013
Organizing Team:
Jade Bailey, Emma Croker, Paul Seage, Nadine Weber, Andraea Zambakides.



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BIRTHA NEWS

THE BRISTOL INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH IN THE HUMANITIES AND ARTS

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bristol.ac.uk/birtha

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Professor Carolyn Muessig
BIRTHA Director

This year BIRTHA supported dozen of colleagues on the Conference, Research Grant, Small Grant and Annual Research Grant schemes.

BIRTHA's backing goes a long way to reinforce research initiatives at every level, reaffirming the Faculty's commitment to assist colleagues' research whether on a departmental, school, faculty, inter-faculty or inter-university level. In addition to the support given to academics, BIRTHA also has assisted postgraduates in enabling them to run and organize conferences in their areas of expertise. BIRTHA has also supported research students needing funding to cover publication costs such as copyright charges for images.

The annual BIRTHA debate affords an opportunity for staff, students and the public to discuss questions of academic relevance. On 8 May 2013 participants

revisited the question from last year 'What is a university?'. In addition to encouraging a continuation of this analysis within the University itself, some members from the 2012 debate developed a lateral discussion group wherein we considered the lack of interaction between town and gown. As a result, on 26 February 2013, BIRTHA organized a discussion between the Peoples Republic of Stokes Croft (PRSC) and the University of Bristol asking the question 'Whose street is it anyway?'. The event was held at *Rise*, the independent music store on the Triangle. The speakers were a mix of University of Bristol academics and members of the PRSC. It is worthy of note that from among the 60 people who attended there was a handful of University folk as well as a majority from the public who had hitherto never participated

“The annual BIRTHA debate affords an opportunity for staff, students and the public to discuss questions of academic relevance.”

in a University fuction. We were glad to find out that the streets are owned by us all, but the public did indicate a skeptical view of the University in general and what its function and place are in Bristol. The public wants more opportunity to speak to the University. A follow-on was 'Dante and Dan Brown' held on 14 May 2013. The panel included both the Directors of the Institute for Advanced Studies and BIRTHA.

Last year's annual BIRTHA Lecture featured A. N. Wilson who spoke on 'Dante in Love'.

The talk attracted over 125 people from the general public as well as academics from the University. This year's BIRTHA Lecture will be part of the second InsideArts Week (10-16 November 2013, bristol.ac.uk/arts/festival/programme/). The BIRTHA Lecturer will be Professor Paul Gough, the Royal West of England Academy Professor of Fine Arts and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at the University of the West of England. The lecture is entitled: "Running out of memory": Inscribing the city in the cause of commemoration', and will reflect on the underlying issues behind public commemoration, drawing on examples from the mass mourning for Diana, Princess of Wales, and the recreational grief that many feel has become part of the British zeitgeist, to other less reverential forms of remembering – urban graffiti, rogue artworks, guerrilla gardening. The talk will take place on Monday, 11 November 2013, 6.30, Great Hall, Wills Memorial Building. The event is free but booking is necessary (bristol.ac.uk/arts/festival/programme/2013/3.html).

As ever, thanks are owed to the Dean, Professor Mike Basker and our outgoing Faculty Manager, Paula Coonerty for their constant support of BIRTHA. Thanks are also owed to the the time and dedication provided by the BIRTHA Committee, the BIRTHA intern Katharina Burger and especially Sam Barlow, BIRTHA Co-ordinator, without whom BIRTHA would not be able to flourish. Best of luck to everyone for a fruitful and productive year.

Professor Carolyn Muessig
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IN THIS ISSUE...



If you would like any assistance or guidance on how BIRTHA can help you please do get in touch or call into the office in the Graduate Centre, 7 Woodland Road. My office hours are Tuesday – Friday, 9.30 – 3 pm.

Samantha Barlow
BIRTHA Co-ordinator

INTERN REPORT



The BIRTHA internship has been a very useful and enjoyable experience. Helping with the organization of events, such as conferences, has allowed me to gain some insight into the many different research areas at the Faculty of Arts. Being involved with the processing of applications for funding has helped me to develop an awareness of the relevant assessment criteria. Overall, the internship has contributed to my ability to facilitate interdisciplinary research in the future as it has exposed me to different views on related research problems and the University's research support services that can help bring researchers together for debates.

Katharina Burger
Civil Engineering (PhD)

A SELECTION OF FORTHCOMING
EVENTS SUPPORTED BY BIRTHA

Autum 2013
19 - 20 October
BIRTHA Conference: ‘The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology Launch Conference’
24 October
7.30-9.30pm, Victoria Rooms. **Latif Bolat in concert**
11 November
6:30pm, Great Hall, Wills Memorial Building
BIRTHA Annual Lecture: **Professor Paul Gough, UWE**
‘Running out of memory’: Inscribing the city in the cause of commemoration’ (part of InsideArts)

Workshops with Professor Ian Hacking, taking place in the Verdon-Smith Room, Royal Fort House, 3-5pm:
28 October “Intro –‘Language, Truth and Reason’ 30 years later”
29 October “Probabilistic Reasoning”
30 October “Taxonomic Reasoning”

Medical Humanities Research Seminars
Institute for Advanced Studies, Royal Fort House
31 October
Professor Ronald Schleifer (University of Oklahoma)
26 November
Dr Antonio Casado da Rocha (University of the Basque Country, San Sebastian)
10 December
Dr Angela Woods (Centre for Medical Humanities, University of Durham)
11 February
Dr Neil Vickers (King's Centre for Medical Humanities, University of London)
18 March
Professor Clare Hanson (University of Southampton)
20 May
Professor Sander Gilman (Emory)

Research Programme Scheme Award 2013-14:
The 1970s in Comparative Perspective
7 November
10am - 5pm, Workshop 1 ‘Shaping the 1970s’
13 November
6.30pm, Public Lecture by Baroness Shirley Williams
6 March 2014
10am - 5pm, Workshop 2 ‘Remembering the 1970s’
17 June
Workshop 3 ‘Legacies of the 1970s’

Research Programme Scheme Award 2012-14
Making Bristol Count: Historicising Numeracy
18 December
Workshop ‘Painting by Numbers: Cultural Histories of Numeracy’
May
‘The mathematization of the mind? Science and social science in the long nineteenth century’

Spring 2014
11– 13 April
BIRTHA Conference: **Medieval Romance in Britain**
7 May
BIRTHA Debate, 3 pm
Is there a best method toward mindfulness?

For more details and for a comprehensive listing of all faculty events please check the Faculty of Arts website:
bristol.ac.uk/arts/research/events

RESEARCH PROGRAMMES
SCHEME AWARD 2013-14

Under this scheme BIRTHA makes an annual award of up to £5K

The 1970s in Comparative Perspective

Team Leaders: Ruth Glynn, Mark Allinson.
Team Members: Rajendra Chitnis, Hugh Pemberton, Debbie Pinfold, Gino Raymond, Claire Shaw, Caragh Wells.

The 1970s are making a comeback in popular culture and academic research. In Western Europe and the Americas, the resurgence of interest in the decade has resulted in close interrogation of the relationship between the contemporary world and the period that sought to negotiate the radical social, political and cultural potential of 1968. For countries untouched by the 1968 movement, the 1970s present a conundrum; marked less by distinct political and social change, they were nonetheless subject to revolutionary cultural movements reflecting the post-1968 spirit. This research programme explores the extent to which the 1970s are key to the evolution and formation of contemporary society, politics and culture. It consists of three one-day workshops, bookended by two distinguished lectures and complemented by a film series designed to support student engagement with the research programme.

The launch event, held in conjunction with InsideArts, is a public lecture on ‘Remembering the 1970s’ by Liberal Democrat politician, Baroness Shirley Williams of Crosby. This is followed by

the first workshop, ‘Shaping the 1970s’ (November 2013), which explores the extent to which it is possible to construct a transnational history of the 1970s and asks whether the decade marks the beginning of a significant political and social shift in Europe and beyond. The second workshop, ‘Remembering the 1970s’ (March 2014), explores representations of the decade

1970s are key to the evolution
and formation of contemporary
society, politics and culture

through the prism of memory studies and seeks to ascertain whether the events of the decade or the interests of the present have been most influential in shaping the distinct memorial cultures of the decade in different contexts. The final workshop, on ‘Legacies of the 1970s’ (May 2014), interrogates the ideological construction of the 1970s in subsequent periods and focuses particularly on agendas underlying a construction of the decade as something beyond which we have moved and/or to which we have no wish to return. The series closes with a public lecture by popular historian Dominic Sandbrook. You can view the schedule of events for this project on the BIRTHA website: bristol.ac.uk/birtha.

SMALL GRANT SCHEME

Animals and Empire Workshop

The workshop, held on 12 and 13 June 2013, was a great success, bringing together postgraduate students and established scholars from a range of disciplines including Historical Studies, English and Geography.

Approximately fifteen staff and students from the University, and fifteen staff and students from elsewhere (including US and Australian participants) presented a range of papers and contributed to some stimulating discussions surrounding the fields of Animal Studies, Animal History, Environmental History and the important ways in which such insights ought to fruitfully inform the teaching of imperial history, particularly at Bristol, where the histories of imperialism

forms a strong strand in terms of research as well as teaching. Funding acquired from the University Research Strategy fund paid for a public lecture on 12 June at Bristol Zoo Gardens, thereby increasing the public impact of the conference, and deepening existent ties between the Department of Historical Studies and the Zoo. We now plan to formulate a range of outputs from the event, having received approaches from a variety of leading scholars (William Beinart and Nigel Rothfels), publishers, and from the online display space, the Animal History Museum, thereby maximising the academic and public impact of the workshop.

Simon Potter and Andrew Flack (Historical Studies)

Update 2012-14

The BIRTHA numeracy workshop series was launched with an introductory gathering and a reception in December 2012. Our first workshop – ‘The numeracy agenda’ – was held in April 2013.

The workshop combined papers from colleagues from across the Faculty of Arts with contributions from guest speakers to develop an inter-disciplinary approach to understanding the history and meanings of numeracy. Alexander Bird spoke on the history of numeracy within the medical profession, while Max Jones addressed the implications of cognitive research on spatial-numerical associations for the history of numeracy. Fiona Jordan charted the relationship between numeral classifiers and social stratification, developing a valuable anthropological perspective on numeracy. Alice Jenkins from the University of Glasgow traced the development of science and literature studies, raising significant methodological questions for the study of literature and numeracy, while Benjamin Wardhaugh from the University of Oxford demonstrated the value that the history of the book – more precisely the Georgian mathematics textbook – can have in reconstructing cultures of numeracy in the past. James Thompson rounded proceedings off by looking at the rich evidence of numerical reasoning and debate apparent in the political culture of late nineteenth century Britain.

In 2013-14, the numeracy project will develop its historicising agenda with a guest lecture and two workshops. In October 2013, the Faculty will be hosting a series of lectures by Professor Ian Hacking, the second of which – on probabilistic reasoning – is supported by the numeracy project. The first full workshop in December 2013 reconstructs the cultural history of numeracy, drawing upon a range of disciplines, and a mix of speakers from the Faculty and from outside Bristol.

The final workshop in May 2013 will focus in upon the mathematization of the mind in the long nineteenth century, revisiting the relationship between quantification and discipline formation at a crucial juncture in the history of the subjects studied in our Faculty.

James Thompson (Historical Studies)

SMALL GRANT SCHEME

Perspectives on Brazilian Culture

Perspectives on Brazilian Culture, held at the University of Bristol on 23 May 2013, brought together the leading novelist Adriana Lisboa, and colleagues from Manchester, Oxford, Portsmouth and Bristol to exchange and develop ideas relating to the study of Brazilian culture.

The symposium explored a variety of approaches to the study of Brazilian culture, from film studies to literature, and from indigenous culture to engagement with Hollywood film. Dr Claire Williams (Oxford) examined the function of public transport in Brazilian road movies. Roberta Gregoli (Oxford) discussed Brazilian understandings of the relationship of gender to the physical body in ‘body swap’ films. Prof. Lúcia Sã (Manchester) offered a paper exploring Amazonian approaches to the relationship between humans and the natural world as

a contrast to the philosophical outlooks of Europeans. Felipe Correa (Oxford) investigated the ways in which Lima Barreto’s work engages with and draws on the *Commedia dell’arte*. Dr Rhian Atkin (Bristol) delivered a paper on Adriana

The symposium enhanced
the research environment
in Portuguese and Brazilian
Cultural Studies

Lisboa’s novel, *Symphony in White*, and gained new insights on the novel through discussing it with the author. Adriana Lisboa gave an interview to Dr Margaret Clarke (Portsmouth) and talked about her writing and Brazil’s position on the global stage. Later, she read from some of her

novels and talked about her future work at a public event held at Stanfords bookshop. The interview has been made available as an open-access resource through the website: **latinamericanbristol.org.uk/radio-continente/#adriana-lisboa-perspectives**.

The symposium enhanced the research environment in Portuguese and Brazilian Cultural Studies, and also allowed students the invaluable opportunity to meet an author they had studied. The event attracted an audience from across the university and beyond, with colleagues making the trip from as far afield as Exeter and Leeds.

The symposium was funded by the BIRTHA Small Grants Fund and the Faculty Research Director’s Fund, while Adriana Lisboa’s visit was funded by the Bristol-Brazil Fund.

Luce Irigaray @ Bristol



From 9-15 June 2013, the University of Bristol hosted Luce Irigaray, one of the world’s most influential continental philosophers.

Trained as a linguist, philosopher and psychoanalyst in France, Professor Irigaray’s decisive contribution to philosophy is her insistence that the defining question of our age is the question of ‘sexual difference.’ Her work on this question has fundamentally transformed the nature of inquiry into rhetoric, ethics, and the legacies of Western philosophy. Her publications include over 25 monographs and translations into 16 languages, and continue to make a significant impact in the humanities, social sciences, arts, theology, and law. She is the only living philosopher to have a ‘philosophical circle’ dedicated to meeting and discussing her work (**irigaray.org**).

While at Bristol, Professor Irigaray hosted her annual international seminar for doctoral students whose research focuses on aspects of her philosophy. Now in its 10th year in the UK (and its 3rd year at Bristol), the seminar is a rare opportunity to engage in an intensive week-long dialogue with a small group of fellow researchers and with Professor Irigaray. This year, the seminar brought together visiting researchers from Hungary, the US, Italy, Germany, and the

UK. The seminar culminated in a very well-attended symposium on Friday the 14 June at the Institute for Advanced Studies, with presentations by the visiting researchers and a lecture by Professor Irigaray entitled: ‘Towards an Ethics of Desire and Love.’ Professor Irigaray also signed copies of her latest book, *In the Beginning, She Was* (2013, Continuum), a text that eloquently argues for a re-engagement with the pre-Socratic tradition in Western philosophy.

In the weeks preceding Professor Irigaray’s recent visit to Bristol, a group of Bristol students and staff met to read and discuss her work. Over 2013-2014, we plan to maintain the momentum generated by her visit by organizing a series of cross-Faculty reading group sessions on feminist philosophy, including the work Julia Kristeva, as well as on contemporary debates in feminist theory on affect and ‘new materialism.’ We also plan to organize several events aimed at bringing Bristol researchers into closer conversation with other readers of Irigaray’s philosophy in the UK, such as members of the MaMSIE (Mapping Maternal Subjectivities, Identities and Ethics) network based at Birkbeck.

Our aim is to submit a proposal to the AHRC Research Network scheme to support further activities across faculties and institutions that address important questions raised by Irigaray’s work, namely,

how to envision and enact more ethical relations between genders, generations and cultures.

As recipient of a Leverhulme Trust Visiting Professorship, Professor Irigaray plans to return to the University of Bristol in May-June 2014 for an extended visit. She will again host her international seminar at the Institute for Advanced Studies in June 2014 as well as participate in other activities related to her ongoing collaborations with researchers at Bristol. PhD or early career researchers interested in learning more about the Luce Irigaray International Seminar will find further details at this website: **workingwithluceirigaray.com**.

BIRTHA’s support for Luce Irigaray’s visits to Bristol have been vital to generating new research collaborations and networks, and have helped bring together readers of Irigaray’s work from across the University. Many thanks go to Carolyn Muessig for her generous support for Professor Irigaray’s visits, as well as to Sam Barlow for publicising events related to her visit to BIRTHA email list members. This is just a brief summary of activities planned for continuing conversations around Luce Irigaray’s work, and we invite BIRTHA members interested in collaborating on future inter-disciplinary events related to her work (or to the work of feminist/Continental philosophers) to contact Dr Maria Fannin in the School of Geographical Sciences at m.fannin@bristol.ac.uk.