



International Conference

Classical Antiquity & Memory

from the 19th - 21st Century

Bonn, Germany

28-29-30 September 2017

(Deadline: May 15th)

Quand l'homme a voulu imiter la marche, il a créé la roue, qui ne ressemble pas à une jambe

[When man wanted to imitate walking, he invented the wheel, which does not look like a leg]

Reading Antiquity always already presupposes an act of re-remembering and thereby a bringing back to heart (ri-cordare). At the same time, remembering is based on generating difference, i.e. on differences enabling the reappearance of the past as a phantom-like present. When identifying significant historical events and explaining their impact, classical mythology is often engaged in literary and cultural discourses that re-shape and re-interpret narratives that develop our sense of self. Therefore, constructing collective memories and remembering a shared antiquity are often interwoven through mechanisms of encoding, storing, retrieving and forgetting the Greco-Roman past.

Re-/Dis-Membrance

- To what extent does the re-appropriation of classical texts contribute to (de-)constructing memory?
- What is the rhetoric of constructing memory in modern literature and art?
- How are dis-continuities exploited in favour of rejecting the concept of a collective cultural memory?

Re-Presentation

- To what extent does contemporary literature exploit classical antiquity as propaganda?
- Does the ancient world progressively elude our memories in the era of postmodern cultural amnesia, or do the spectres of the classical past still haunt us?
- How do the mechanisms of re-remembering the classical past change within the context of national and transnational, socio-historical and fictional accounts of classical literature?
- What impact does the digital age have on our relationship with our (remembrance of the) past?

Apollinaire: *Les mamelles de Tirésias, Préface*

Remembering Antiquity implies calling into question past cultural and political amnesia and repression: With the return of the ghost of right-wing politics which deny the relevance of intellectuals, the criteria of choosing one text and not the other become all the more important. This Conference will explore and discuss Dis-/Re-Membering as an urge to consume and/or erase the memory of “classical” texts that we may call into question by re-writing them in the context of various literary, artistic, visual or musical representations.

Re-Canonisation

- What are the politics of (re-)establishing a Greco-Roman literary canon?
- How is cultural memory constructed as a form of opposition or as a survival technique that makes use of classical antiquity?
- How does re-/dis-membling the Greco-Roman past operate in our fragmented and/or catalogued present?
- What is the connection between personal literary and collective cultural memory, especially in times of crisis when there is a blatant lack of founding myths.
- How is the classical world (re-)mediated – as a dead corpse or as a living organism - and what aspects make Antiquity relevant for our social, moral, artistic and intellectual world?

Abstracts (in English) of approximately 300 words (30' presentations + 10') are to be sent to the organisers: memory.bonn2017@gmail.com. Submissions are due **May 15, 2017**.

Organised in collaboration with the **Centre for the Classical Tradition (CCT) Bonn** (University of Bonn), and **Jocasta | Classical Reception Greece** (University of Patras).

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