



Presenting the Past: Exploring the Relationship between Text and Event in Early Modern Europe

First Annual Conference

**Text and Event in Early Modern Europe
Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate**

Porto, 16 -17 November 2012

Programme



**Presenting the Past: Exploring the Relationship between
Text and Event in Early Modern Europe
(First Annual TEEME Conference)**

Dates: Friday and Saturday, November 16 and 17 2012
Place: Porto, Portugal
Venue: Auditório Nobre
Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto (FLUP)
Via Panoramica
4150-564 Porto

PROGRAMME

Friday, November 16

09:30 Registration and Morning Coffee

10:00 **Opening Remarks**

Rui Carvalho Homem (Universidade do Porto)

10:15 **Dean's Welcome Address**

Fátima Marinho (Universidade do Porto)

10:30 **Keynote Lecture**

Bernhard Klein (University of Kent): "Sea-birds at the Cape of Storms, 1497"

**Session 1: Natural Knowledge and Natural Law in Early
Modern England**

Chair: Rui Carvalho Homem (Universidade do Porto)

11:00 Sarath Jakka: "An Equal Measure: Natural Law, Population Control and the Colonial Impulse in Thomas More's Utopia"

11:40 Maria Avxentevskaya: "Practicing Knowledge: The Metaphorical Epistemology of John Smith"

12:20 Lunch

**Session 2: Politics, Emotions and Selfhood in Early Modern
Narratives**

Chair: Claudia Jarzebowski (Freie Universität Berlin)

14:00 Stefania Gargioni: "The Crafting of the Narrative: Henry of Navarre's figure as constructed in Jean de Serres' historical accounts translated into English"

14:40 Laila H. El-Sayed: "Love Talk in Ahmed bin Qasim Al-Hajary's Travelogue"

15:20 Kristina Nikolovska: "New Spaces for Expression: Marginalia and Colophons Written by Balkan Orthodox Slavs under Ottoman Rule (1400-1600)"

16:00 Coffee Break

Session 3: Changes in Religion

Chair: Alixe Bovey (University of Kent)

16:30 Mikhail Beider: "Reading History: Forced Baptisms of the Cossack Uprising in mid-17th Century Ruthenia"

17:10 Linnéa Rowlatt: "A Dragon in the River: Conceptual Metaphor and Nature in Early Modern Alsace"

17:50 Conclusion

Saturday, November 17

09:00 Morning Coffee

Session 4: Material (Con)Texts

Chair: Martin Procházka (Univerzita Karlova v Praze)

09:30 Martina Pranić: "Texts Producing Events? The Case of Marin Držić's Conspiratorial Letters to Cosimo I de' Medici"

10:10 Kate De Rycker: "Paper Planes: The Social Life of Texts"

10:50 Coffee Break

11:15 TEEME Second Cohort Introductions

1. Johan Sebastian Garcia Zaldua
2. Annemie Daniel Gerda Leemans
3. Natália Perez
4. Maryam Ala Amjadi
5. Valentina Caldari
6. María Cristina Pascual Noguero
7. Daniel Lange
8. Vidya Kesavan

12:25 General Discussion

Chair: Sabine Schülting (Freie Universität Berlin)

12:45 Concluding Remarks

Sabine Schülting (Freie Universität Berlin)

13:00 Conclusion

ABSTRACTS

Maria Avxentevskaya: "Practicing Knowledge: The Metaphorical Epistemology of John Smith"

In *Selected Discourses*, the Cambridge Platonist John Smith (1618-1652) describes how knowledge can be experienced as inward beauty and loveliness, if only digested into life and spiritual practice. My paper aims at drawing a legitimate philosophical perspective for this vision. Using Bertrand Russell's terminological instrument of knowledge-by-acquaintance, I intend to reconstruct the intellectual intentions of the Neoplatonic theologian, and examine how his metaphorical discourse is paving the way towards the idea of true knowledge. Smith's epistemological use of metaphors shows how abstract thinking builds upon the events in inner spiritual experience, thus contributing to the foundational ideology of early modern science.

Mikhail Beider: "Reading History: Forced Baptisms of the Cossack Uprising in mid-17th Century Ruthenia"

Jewish chronicles from mid-17th century Ruthenia tell of brutal massacres practiced by the Cossacks towards the region's Jewish communities during their uprising against the Polish crown. The Cossacks, however, spared the lives of those who accepted their offer to baptize into the Orthodox faith. Yet, in an act known to east-European Jews as "holiness of the name" (*kiddush ha-shem*), the overwhelming majority chose death over betraying the faith of their forefathers. This paper will discuss methods of the events' memorialization in the chronicles, and address the problem of event interpretation by the different parties involved.

Kate De Rycker: "Paper Planes: The Social Life of Texts"

Like a skeleton from an archaeological dig, the text is often seen as a lifeless and incomplete clue telling us of the life that it once documented: the event is dynamic, the text static. This paper will argue instead that texts were much more "eventful" and part of the everyday landscape than we think. Increasingly, in the early modern period, the immediacy and ephemerality of print was being harnessed to speak to a public rather than elite audience, and allowing them to speak back. In this sense print could be said to have entered in a new phase, a "Print 2.0".

Stefania Gargioni: "The Crafting of the Narrative: Henry of Navarre's figure as constructed in Jean de Serres' historical accounts translated into English"

My proposal focuses on the methodological approach to the narratives about Henry of Navarre in late sixteenth century England. Following Natalie Zemon Davis' perspective, I would like to investigate the crafting of the narrative in Jean de Serres' historical accounts. I will argue that the way in which Jean de Serres, as a historical agent, creates a narrative – the tone, rhetorical devices and format – matters as much, if not more, as the narrative's references to historical "reality". Firstly, I intend to summarize the main features of Jean de Serres' accounts and the contexts in which they were written and received. Secondly, I will analyse the way in which the narrative about Henry is constructed, comparing it to fictional writings: characterizing, emplotting, crafting the "reality effect". Finally, I will discuss how the function of this narrative, like that of any other ideological discourse, is not merely representational, but informed by a political purpose.

Laila H. El-Sayed: "Love Talk in Ahmed bin Qasim Al-Hajary's Travelogue"

In this paper, I study the "language of emotions" in Ahmed bin Qasim Al-Hajary's travelogue, authored in 1637, *Kitāb Nāṣir al-dīn 'alā 'l-qawm al-kāfirīn*. In his travelogue, Al-Hajary talks about emotions (emotion talk) and with emotions (emotional discourse). Close analysis is given to an excerpt of the text to display how Al-Hajary talks about *Love*. I use both semantic- and discourse-based approaches to highlight the cultural scripts which reflect, construct and govern the talk about and expression of Love in Al-Hajary's emotional community. I relate the analysis of his emotion talk to the social constructionist theory of emotions and the history of emotions.

Sarath Jakka: "An Equal Measure: Natural Law, Population Control and the Colonial Impulse in Thomas More's Utopia"

This paper aims to place the reasons used to justify colonisation in Thomas More's *Utopia* within the context of early modern intellectual developments. I look at the ways in which natural law was used to justify colonial endeavour and understand More's text as a part of this history. While natural law is used to legitimate the Utopian state's colonial policy, the more substantive aspects of its acquisitive scheme deal with the state's adherence to a policy of population control seen as central for preserving its sustainable food economy. I conclude by relating early modern theories of population control to the demographic anxieties encountered in *Utopia*.

Kristina Nikolovska: "New Spaces for Expression: Marginalia and Colophons Written by Balkan Orthodox Slavs under Ottoman Rule (1400-1600)"

This essay deals with the intricate relationship between *fact* and *narration* in the textual fragments that occupy the margins of religious South Slavic manuscripts. These marginalia and colophons were inserted during the first two centuries of Ottoman expansion in Europe, but their influence persists to the present day, as they have been the primary source for nationalist historiographers commenting on the history of the Slavs in the early modern period. These textual artifacts were even more compelling as they were seen to be first-hand evidence of the subjects' life under the "Turkish Yoke". I argue that by adopting such an explicit nationalist perspective, Balkan historians and literary critics have failed to note some important developments present in the rhetorical strategies of these texts.

Martina Pranić: "Texts Producing Events? The Case of Marin Držić's Conspiratorial Letters to Cosimo I de' Medici"

By looking at historical evidence, as well as subsequent historiographical and biographical interpretations, this paper aims to examine a controversial episode in the biography of Marin Držić, Ragusan playwright, poet, and priest, who in 1566 authored a string of conspiratorial letters addressed to Cosimo I de' Medici, seeking patronage in an attempt to overturn the current Ragusan government. After centuries buried in archives, these letters – as texts that were clearly committed to initiating events – played a decisive role in determining the popular opinion of Držić, who remained branded with a subversive mark of folly and became as intriguing as one of his own comic characters.

