

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS  
ARISTOTLE UNIVERSITY OF THESSALONIKI  
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS  
LUDWIG-MAXIMILIANS UNIVERSITY OF MUNICH

13th Trends in Classics Conference

## **Intended Ambiguity**

**Thessaloniki**  
**23 – 26 May, 2019**

[https://www.lit.auth.gr/13th\\_trends](https://www.lit.auth.gr/13th_trends)

Auditorium 'Stefanos Dragoumis'  
Museum of Byzantine Culture  
2, Stratou Avenue, Thessaloniki 546 21  
<https://www.mbp.gr>

Organizing Committee  
**Therese Fuhrer**  
(Ludwig-Maximilians University of Munich)

**Martin Vöhler**  
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Ambiguity in the sense of two or more possible meanings is considered to be a distinctive feature of modern art and literature. It characterizes the “open artwork” (Eco) and is generated by “disruptive tactics” (Weltershoff) and strategies to engender uncertainty. While ambiguity is seen as a “paradigm of modernity” (Bode), there is scepticism regarding its use in the pre-modern era. Older studies were dominated by the conviction that there was a lack of ambiguity in pre-modernity because, according to the rules of the “old rhetoric”, ambiguity was seen as an avoidable error (*vitium*) and a violation of the dictate of clarity (*perspicuitas*).

The aim of the conference is to re-examine the putative “absence of ambiguity” in the pre-modern era. Is it not possible to find in antiquity clear examples of deliberately employed (intended) ambiguity? Are the oracles and riddles, the *Palinode* of Stesichoros and Socrates (*Phaedrus*), the *dissoi logoi* of rhetoric, the ambiguities of the tragedies all exceptions or do they not indicate a distinct interest in the artistic use of ambiguity? The presentations of the conference, which will include scholars from various philologies, will combine a recourse to theoretical concepts of intended ambiguity (in rhetoric, philosophy and aesthetics) with exemplary analyses from the field of pre-modern art and literature.

**Program**

**Thursday 23 May, 2019**

**15.15 – 15.45**

**Registration**

**15.45 – 16.00**

**Welcome Speeches**

Walter Stechel

German Consul General in Thessaloniki

Therese Fuhrer

Organizing Committee

Franco Montanari, Antonios Rengakos

General Editors of *Trends in Classics*

**16.00 – 17.00**

**Opening Speech**

**Chair: Irmgard Männlein-Robert**

J. Knappe (Tübingen), Seven Perspectives of Ambiguity

**17.00 – 17.30**

**Coffee Break**

**Modern and Pre-Modern Ambiguity**

**17.30 – 19.00**

**Chair: John Hamilton**

M. Vöhler (Thessaloniki), Introductory Remarks to Modern and Ancient Concepts of Ambiguity

M. Lüthy (Weimar), The Modern Perspective: Ambiguity, Artistic Self Reflection and the Autonomy of Art

M. Chrysanthopoulos (Thessaloniki), Multipliers of Ambiguity: The Use of Quotations in Cavafy's Poems Concerning Emperor Julian

**19.00 – 20.00**

**Chair: Michael Lüthy**

F. Mehlretter (Munich), Ambivalent Allegories: Giambattista Marino's *Adone* (1623) between Censorship and Hermeneutic Freedom

S. Reichlin (Munich), The Ambiguity of the Unambiguous. Figures of Death in Late Medieval Literature

20.00 – 22.00

Reception

**Friday 24 May, 2019**

**Greek Concepts of Ambiguity**

9.30 – 10.30

**Chair: Evina Sistakou**

J. Strauss Clay (Virginia), Traversing No-Man's Land: *Outis* in the *Odyssey*

J. Hamilton (Harvard), The Ambiguity of Wisdom: *Mētis* in the *Odyssey*

10.30 – 11.30

**Chair: Panagiotis Thanassas**

C. Balla (Crete), Intended Ambiguity in Plato's Representation of Socrates in the *Phaedo*

P. Golitsis (Thessaloniki), Aristotle on Ambiguity and Ambiguity in Aristotle

11.30 – 12.00

Coffee Break

12.00 – 13.30

**Chair: Antje Wessels**

E. Sistakou (Thessaloniki), Postmodernism in Alexandria? Modes of Ambiguity in Hellenistic Poetry

I. Männlein-Robert (Tübingen), Between Conversion and Madness: Sophisticated Ambiguity in Lucian's *Nigrinus*

A. Lamari (Thessaloniki), Symptotic Sexuality: The Ambiguity of Seafood in Middle Comedy

13.30 – 15.30

Lunch Break

**Roman Concepts of Ambiguity**

15.30 – 17.00

**Chair: Richard F. Thomas**

T. Fuhrer (Munich), Unsettling Effects and Disconcertment – Strategies of Enacting Interpretations in Roman Historiography

S. Harrison (Oxford), Prophecy, Poetry and Politics in Vergil's *Eclogue 4*

J. Soldo (Swansea), '*Vitae aut vocis ambigua*': Seneca the Younger and Ambiguity

17.00 – 18.30

## Guided Tour of the Byzantine Museum

**Saturday 25 May, 2019**

**9.30 – 11.00**

**Chair: Therese Fuhrer**

- L. Cordes (Berlin), ... *ut Catonem, non me loqui existimem* – Ambiguity and Gradual Convergence in First Person Discourse  
B. van der Velden (Leiden), The Latin Commentary Tradition on ‘Inclusive’ Intended Ambiguity  
M. Formisano (Gent), *Legens*. Ambiguity, Syllepsis and Allegory in Claudian’s *de raptu Proserpinae*

**11.00 – 11.30**

**Coffee Break**

**11.30 – 13.00**

**Chair: Theodore D. Papanghelis**

- R. Kirstein (Tübingen), Ambiguity as Provocation for Literary Studies. The Case of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*  
S. Alekou (Nicosia), The Ambiguity of *simulatio* in Ovidian *ecphrasis*  
J. Fabre-Serris (Lille), Double Entendre, Unconscious Desire and Auctorial Intentionality in Some Ovidian Speeches (*Met.* 3.279-292; 7.810-823; 10.364-366, 440-441)

**13.00 – 15.00**

**Lunch Break**

**15.00 – 16.30**

**Chair: Stephen Harrison**

- R. F. Thomas (Harvard), Catullan Ambiguity  
A. Wessels (Leiden), ‘*Liber esto*’ – Wordplay and Ambiguity in Petronius’ *Satyricon*  
S. Frangoulidis (Thessaloniki), Friend or Foe? Ambiguity in Apuleius’ Tale of Aristomenes (*Met.* 1.2-20)

**16.30 – 17.00**

**Coffee Break**

**17.00 – 18.30**

**Guided Tour of the Archeological Museum**

**20.00**

**Conference Dinner**

**Sunday 26 May, 2019**

**9.00 – 13.00**

**Guided Tour: Thessaloniki through the ages**

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