

Editor's note

The name *Tropos* derives from the Ancient Greek and is intended to evoke a cluster of meanings. It denotes a particular figure of speech, or a whole mode of rhetoric, but also refers to the spiritual significance concealed behind the literal meaning of religious scripture. The word also indicates a turn or change of direction, and stands for an instantiation of something unrepeatable as opposed to something universal. In this spirit we hope to publish articles that stimulate critical turns of thought and deal with specific phenomena that have the ability to reveal more complex meanings.

This inaugural issue presents a selection of papers from an interdisciplinary conference entitled 'Unity/Disunity' held at University College London on 27-28 June 2013. The conference, organised by a group of students from the School of European Language, Culture, and Societies (SELCS), the School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies (SSEES), and the Centre for Multidisciplinary and Intercultural Inquiry (CMII), featured postgraduate speakers from across the UK as well as keynote addresses from Prof Charles Lock of Copenhagen University and Dr Tim Beasley-Murray of UCL. The research presented at the conference drew on a range of disciplines, and examined a wide variety of subjects, from the role of metaphor in the Hebrew Bible and what neurology can teach us about the unity of consciousness to the challenges of Indian nationalism and the problem of cinematic temporality. We were delighted to partake in the lively and stimulating response provoked by the conference theme and are pleased to be able to share a small portion of it with you here.

'Unity/Disunity' was the second annual interdisciplinary conference organised by graduate researchers at UCL, following on from the inaugural conference 'Fragile Realities' (6th July 2012, proceedings published by *Opticon1826*, Special Issue 13, Autumn 2012). The conference series, which will continue in 2014 with 'Distance and Proximities' on 26-27 June, is organised by the Graduate Society for Comparative Cultural Inquiry, which is also the driving force behind this journal. The society, and *Tropos*, is open to all researchers who are interested in challenging norms and disciplinary divisions, who are willing to critically reflect on culture, literature, art, film, history, philosophy, politics, or any other related field. Our ambition is to cover the subjects encompassed by the rubric Arts and Humanities, taking our cue from the boundary-crossing work being done in UCL's SELCS and CMII.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all our speakers for making the conference such a lively forum of intellectual exchange. We are also very grateful to Prof Lock and Dr Beasley-Murray for their thought-provoking keynote speeches. A special thank you must also go to Prof Tim Matthews for opening the conference, and Prof Stephen Hart and Dr Dilwyn Knox for their encouragement.

We are indebted to the UCL European Institute, the A&H Faculty Institute for Graduate Studies (FIGS), and the Graduate School for their generous financial support of the conference and the present publication. We are also grateful to Ms Karin Charles, Ms Felicity Stafford, and Ms Alexa Stewart for providing administrative support, and to SSEES for giving us use of the Masaryk Room. Martin Moyle at the UCL Library was instrumental in setting up the journal, and we are also grateful to Tim Causer and Erica McLaren for helping us take our first editorial steps. Finally, we are indebted to Essi Viitanen for her excellent design work on this journal.

We hope you will enjoy this inaugural issue of Tropos.

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