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ΠΡΟΣΚΛΗΣΗ

Την Τετάρτη, **11** Μαρτίου **2015**, ώρα **12.00 το μεσημέρι**
στο Σπουδαστήριο Κλασικής Φιλολογίας (745),
θα γίνει στο πλαίσιο των «Επιστημονικών Συναντήσεων»
του Τομέα Κλασικής Φιλολογίας η ομιλία
του Dr Elton Barker
(Reader in Classical Studies / Open University, UK)

με θέμα:

"Mapping the ancient world:
countercartography, networks and bottomless maps"

Σας προσκαλούμε να παραστείτε.

Ο διευθυντής του Τομέα Κλασικής Φιλολογίας

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Mapping the ancient world:
countercartography, networks and bottomless maps

Abstract

The past decade has seen a growing spatialization of literary studies, closely connected with the development of new geographical technologies, such as GIS, and their application to the humanities (Dear et al. 2011: GeoHumanities: Art, History, Text at the Edge of Place, New York). For example, Antiquity Á la Carte allows users to investigate the historical, cultural and geographical data produced by the Ancient World Mapping Center. Yet there is a problem with GIS applications, when applied to research into ancient geography. On the one hand, they present a pre-determined vision of the world, based on Cartesian principles and contemporary modes of thinking, into which users "plug in" data from antiquity. On the other, GIS, as a point-based geometrical package, is particularly poorly equipped to deal with the predominant primary source that preserve ancient conceptualisations of space—texts. In my contribution I will outline the ongoing efforts of two projects to use mapping visualisations as the means of interrogating and challenging our understanding of ancient world space (cf. Harley, J. B. 1989: 'Deconstructing the map', Cartographica 26, 1-20): the Hestia project, which investigates the ways in which geographic space is organised and represented in Herodotus's *Histories*; and Pelagios, which uses and develops the principles of Linked Open Data to facilitate the construction of (potentially) bottomless maps.

Textual space is constructed by and through the stories told about it, where ideas such as hodology (Purves, A. 2010: Space and Time in Ancient Greek Narrative. Cambridge) and topokinesis (Turnbull, D. 2007: Maps, narratives and trails: performativity, hodology and distributed knowledges in complex adaptive systems—an approach to emergent mapping. Geographical Research 45, 140-49) provide an interpretative framework for reimagining Herodotean space. Developing the idea of 'proxies', we explored how individuals, social groups or even non-human agents contributed to the complexity of spatial representation in the *Histories*. In particular, we analysed these spatial entities in terms of their textual relatedness—whether and how places and/or proxies are linked by the author. The resulting 'X-ray' maps (cf. Moretti, F. 1998: Atlas of the European Novel, 1800–1900. London) seemed to offer to us alternative pathways through Herodotean space that can bring to the fore the underlying ways in which spatial understanding is constructed in terms of action and influence rather than cartographic location.

Texts, however, are only one source and means of accessing important data salient to rethinking ancient world space. In a rapidly expanding digital environment, it is now possible to gain access to primary data of all different kinds, rather than rely solely on their interpretation in print publications. But how is one able to find them and bring them to bear on one's own research? The Pelagios project uses global gazetteer services (e.g. http://pleiades.stoa.org/) to achieve a connectivity through common references, with the result that online documents of varying nature—not only literary texts but also inscriptions, archaeological finds, museum objects, photographs, etc.— can be read in and against each other. As well as helping us to see the ancient world as being every bit as interconnected, interactive and interesting as the present (Elliott, T. and Gillies, S. (2009): Digital Geography and Classics. Digital Humanities Quarterly 3.1), this community driven initiative has the potential to transform research, while also posing the challenge of developing the tools and methods that need to be developed for that research to take place.