

CfP: 3rd Conference on Contemporary Greek Film Cultures

'Strategies of the Documentary'

Vienna, 16-18 May 2018

Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, University of Vienna



After the meetings in London (2013) and Seattle (2015), the 3rd Conference on Contemporary Greek Film Cultures addresses the diverse aesthetic, historical, medial, and theoretical connections between moving images and all possible aspects of the 'documentary.' In light of the many facets of this key term, the conference does not confine itself to practices or traditions of documentary cinema in Greece. It rather explores the multiple cinematic acts and modes of registering, representing, evidencing, authenticating, certifying, and instructing; it discusses the indexical nature of photography and the digital image, the factual as well as fictional functions of audio-visual recording, the archival status of documentary film in Greece, its ideologies, deceptions, and omissions, the filmic depiction of documentation processes, the documents presented on-screen or lost in the Mediterranean Sea. This thematic focus responds to three interrelated circumstances:

▷ Greek cinema exhibits a long tradition and wide variety of documentary practices which, up to now, have hardly been analyzed on a larger scale (see, however, Stefani 2007 and Stathi / Skopeteas 2009). Therefore, the conference intends to delineate past as well as present documentary strategies, trace their historical dominants and archaeological margins, and bring Greek and international concepts and timelines of the documentary into closer contact.

▷ Recent years have seen a significant expansion of the 'documentary' mode: for instance, one can observe a growing ambiguity regarding the relation between world and image; the latter no longer claims unconditional *vérité* or *directness* but introduces distance, irony, and submits to the ontological uncertainties of docufictions and mockumentaries. Beyond that, the documentary may verge on animation and the virtual, while in other cases approaching the body or synaesthetic experience. The conference offers a forum to explore such tendencies and techniques in Greek film culture.

▷ From *ANT* to *New Materialism*, several recent theories question and reconfigure authoritative dualities such as active/passive, subject/object, concrete/abstract, or thing/image. In so doing, they challenge the relation between world and gaze on which many documentary concepts rely; they dismiss the idea of a 'perception' of reality and conceive of things as autonomously contributing to a larger sphere of awareness, action and politics. The conference seeks to shine a light on new theories and strategies of the documentary that might react to, or reflect on, such 'post-humanist' approaches.

Possible areas of inquiry include, but are not limited to:

- Variations and developments of the Greek documentary image
- Fact and fiction (definitions, oppositions, hybrids)
- Tokens of the 'real' (hand-held camera; black-and-white material; grain ...)
- Documentary modes in feature films
- 'Realism' and its documentary qualities
- Ideology, politics, propaganda
- Documentary and the Greek 'crisis'
- Representing history (newsreels, found footage, the archive, historical documentary after postmodernism ...)
- Documenting the Other (aspects of gender, race, religion, colonialism ...)
- Documentary and current theory
- Relations between documentary, reportage, essay film
- Documentary cinema and the digital, new formats, new media ...
- Making and showing documentaries (organizational and economic aspects of production, distribution, reception, festivals ...)
- Politics of canonization and archiving (from technical conservation to the production of a Greek national identity)
- Authorship and orphan films
- Industrial film
- Documentary and intermediality (documentary films on stage, orchestral accompaniment, DVD editions)

The conference is organized by Lilia Diamantopoulou and Maria Oikonomou, Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, University of Vienna

The closing date for sending your proposal is **May 30, 2017**. Please send your abstract for a 30 min. paper (max. 300 words) along with technical requirements and a short CV to: contemporarygreekfilm2018@gmail.com

There will be a registration fee of € 60 (students attend for free), inclusive of a small lunch at the two main conference days, tea/coffee and a conference pack.

Scientific Committee: Lilia Diamantopoulou (Modern Greek Studies, University of Vienna) / Konstantinos Kalantzis (Anthropology, University College London) / Melanie Letschnig (Film and Media Studies, University of Vienna) / Angela Melitopoulos (Media Artist, Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Copenhagen) / Maria Oikonomou (Literary and Media Studies, University of Vienna) / Eva Stefani (Documentary film maker and visual artist, University of Athens).