

Call for Papers:

4. Wuppertaler Graduiertenforum Narratologie
23. bis 25. Juni 2013, Bergische Universität Wuppertal

Postclassical Narratology – Cultural, Historical and Cognitive Aspects of Narrative Theory

The crisis of narratology at the beginning of this century seems to be almost forgotten, and narratology is more popular than ever these days. One of the major reasons why narrative theory has been infused with new life, thus escaping a premature death roughly thirty years after Tzvetan Todorov broke the ground is the fact that it managed to leave the “barren ground of structuralism” behind and has moved on to “greener pastures” (Nünning). The “greener pastures”, then, bear almost as many labels as there are programmatic proposals associated with them, but can be subsumed under one heading: postclassical narratology. These context-sensitive approaches to narrative share one conviction: that purely formalist, structuralist and decontextualized narrative theory should be surpassed in favour of a fuller investigation that takes not only texts but also their contexts into account.

Narratology in its postclassical phase goes beyond the consideration of textual features alone, and thus considers the production and/or reception aspects of narratives (rhetorical, cognitive, and affective narratology), the development of certain narrative structures in specific historical periods (diachronic narratology), and the analysis of the various negotiations of cultural aspects in narrative texts (e.g. feminist, Marxist, postcolonial, intercultural, or ethnic narratology). Most recently, the debate on ‘natural’ vs. ‘unnatural’ narratology constitutes an interesting new contribution to the postclassical remodelling of narrative theory.

This conference invites contributions from doctoral students from various disciplines who share a common interest in narrative theory and storytelling. We particularly welcome papers which heed the “clarion call” resonating through some of the more recent publications in the field, urging scholars to move beyond programmatic proposals and put their often promising endeavours into practice.

Topics for papers may include, but are not limited to:

- Thematic readings and context-sensitive applications of narratological concepts for interpretative purposes
- Meta-theoretical aspects of contextualist narratology: recent developments, the status quo, and future prospects within the field of narrative theory
- The dynamics of the production/reception process of narratives
- Narratology across the sciences: interdisciplinary research projects
- Discussions of recent developments/directions within various contextualist narratologies

- Historical and diachronic approaches to narrative theory
- Ethical issues and the dialogic negotiation of meanings within the narratological paradigm
- The social and cultural relevance of narratology
- (Applications of) narrative theory in the context of media-specific, transmedial, and transgeneric research

Papers should be 30 minutes (either German or English) and each paper will be accompanied by a 15-minute discussion. Please send abstracts for papers (no longer than 500 words in PDF or Word format), along with a short biographical statement, by 03 March 2013 to:

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