

July 27, 9:00~10:30: Session (I-1) Room 1-102

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“Globalization and global citizenship in the works of Aristides George Paradissis”

Key words

Greek-Australian literature, migration, globalization, global citizenship, identity

Abstract

Over time many human groups or individuals have experienced migration, from the first human beings who left Africa in search of food and better living conditions until this century, in which we are witness to multitudes moving around the Earth in search of a better life, usually escaping from famine, wars, poverty or natural disasters. Although the concept of “globalization” was mainly defined and used in the mid-late 20th century, it can be argued that globalization, understood as the exchange of world views, products, knowledge and people, has its origins well before this period.

Australia is considered to be a “nation of immigrants” as most of its population settled in the last three centuries. One of these migrants was Dr Aristides George Paradissis (1923-2005), an academic born in China of Greek parents and, in my opinion, an example of global citizen. Dr Paradissis was also a writer who published poetry, short stories and a novel. Given the fact that most of his characters interact with peoples from other cultures and multilingualism is a constant, this presentation focuses on Paradissis’ narrative writings, namely *Dragonsleep* (1995), *The Balzac Stories: From Paris to Parramatta and Other Tales* (1996) and *The Shanghai Chronicles: The Day After Pearl Harbor and Other Stories* (1998). The novel, *Dragonsleep*, is a combination of mystery and science fiction, it is set in Chefoo (China) in 1931, and its main characters are of American, Chinese or Greek origin. The two collections of short stories, *The Balzac Stories* and *The Shanghai Chronicles*, comprise twenty stories with different main characters of various nationalities: Australian, Chinese, French and Greek, among others. Most of these characters are either travelling or first- or second-generation migrants and the stories are set in different Australian, Chinese or European locations in the late 19th century or during the 20th century.

This paper has a dual aim: to explore the concepts of globalization and global citizenship and relate them to the notion of identity, and to analyse some of the characters portrayed in Paradissis’ texts under this prism. Traditionally, migrants’ identities have been classified as first- or second-generation migrants, emphasizing the “lack of roots” in the new country, that is, whether they or their parents were the first to

live in that land. This classification is not useful to approach many of the characters in Dr Paradissis' works as some of them are second-generation migrants who then migrate to another country and, thus, become first-generation migrants there. This first- or second-generation category is based on a fixed premise (place of birth) and, thus, does not reflect the influence that the different countries have on a person's identity. The notion of global citizenship, on the other hand, embraces and acknowledges these changes as it transcends political borders. Consequently, this presentation will also consider the notions of home and belonging.

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Catalina Ribas Segura is Associate Professor of Languages Department, University College Alberta Giménez (CESAG). She received her doctorate in English Literature and Language (specialization in Australian Studies) from the University of Barcelona (Spain). Some of her recent publications include "Language and Bilingualism in Antigone Kefala's *Alexia* (1995) and *The Island* (2002)" *Coolabah* (January 2014) and "Lives Broken by the Tiananmen Square Massacre: Consequences in Chinese Australian Literature" (in *Lives in Migration: Rupture and Continuity*, CEA-UB 2011). Her current research interests are in the fields of contemporary Australian literature and include multiculturalism, diaspora, identities construction and detective fiction.