

## UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD – CALL FOR PAPERS

### ETYMOLOGICAL THINKING IN THE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES

We are pleased to announce a two-day conference on “Etymological Thinking”, to be held at the University of Oxford on 6-7 November 2015.

Etymology becomes a distinctive feature of intellectual and literary culture in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, remaining one throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Interest in etymology characterises the development of linguistics, philology, and literature. Its powerful but also problematic status prompts writers and intellectuals of different backgrounds to explore etymology in relation to such essential notions as temporality, history, and memory, as well as to recast questions of kinship and diversity between languages. Indeed, etymology may well be said to represent a crucial gnoseological paradigm of modernity. Mérimée, Proust, Gadda, Celan, and Joyce are only the most prominent examples of this new “etymological thinking”. At the same time, etymologies have (also) played a significant role in shaping collective identities, ideologies, and psychologies. Although etymology is a widely established field in linguistics, it is still an understudied area of literary and cultural research.

We invite papers on topics within any of the above-mentioned fields. Literary historians, experts on cultural studies, philologists, classicists, linguists, and translators are especially welcome. Given the various ideas on the nature and value of etymology, this conference intends to provide an innovative platform for dialogue across scholarly approaches and beyond national boundaries within Modern Languages.

Suggested topics include, but are not limited to: the political use of etymology; the relevance of etymologies to the construction of sense in fictional or autobiographical narratives and in poetry; etymology and language planning; writers’ and intellectuals’ involvement in lexicographic and etymological work; etymological dictionaries; folk etymology; learned/popular lexicon; etymology and theories of language and language change; the history of particular languages.

Each speaker will be allowed 30 minutes.

Please send an abstract of 250 words by 31 May 2015 to the following email address:

[etymological.thinking@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk](mailto:etymological.thinking@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk)

Do please specify your name, affiliation, and equipment needed.

Confirmed keynote speakers:

Doctor Philip Durkin (OED)

Doctor Federico Faloppa (University of Reading)

The Organizers

Doctor Teresa Franco

Professor Nicola Gardini

Doctor Cecilia Piantanida