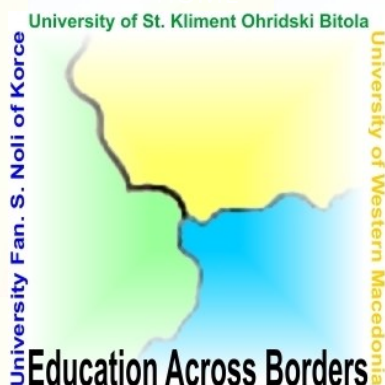


UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN MACEDONIA  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION



*1<sup>st</sup> International Conference*

**EDUCATION ACROSS BORDERS**

*Florina 5-7 October 2012*

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# CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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**PREFECTURAL  
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**MUNICIPALITY OF  
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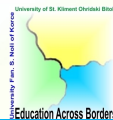
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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTORY NOTE



I am pleased and honored to present the e-book edition of the 1st International Conference entitled: "**Education Across Borders**", held in Florina on October 5- 7, 2012, as part of the educational/scientific cooperation of the three neighbouring Faculties of Education:

- a. Florina Faculty of Education of the University of Western Macedonia (Greece)
- b. Korca Faculty of Education of Fan S. Noli University (Albania)
- c. Bitola Faculty of Education of St. Kliment Ohridski University (FYROM)

The conference was planned in 2011, after an exchange of visits by delegations of academic staff of the three institutions, with the purpose to establish harmonious neighboring relations and scientific cooperation, as well as to strengthen the bonds with neighboring universities aiming at the cross border scientific and cultural development.

During the conference, the syllabi of the Faculties of Education of the three Universities were presented, some scientific ideas and views were exchanged and suggestions were made about prospective collaboration at undergraduate and postgraduate level.

In the opening-day plenary, some selected papers related to cross-border educational cooperation were presented, while in the second day of the conference presentations and lectures as well as round tables were held, which covered the following thematic strands:

1. History and Culture
2. Information and Communications Technology
3. Language and Literature
4. Mathematics and Science
5. Pedagogy and Psychology

In total, 149 abstracts were submitted to the conference, having been prepared by 247 authors (155 authors from Greece, 43 from Albania and the 49 from FYROM). The total number of presented papers was 119, with 72 papers from Greece, 18 papers from Albania and 29 papers from FYROM.

Drawing attention to the successful outcomes of the conference that were achieved, we highlight the valuable opportunities provided with, for making future exchanges and collaborations between academics of the three Faculties of Education. In this context, the Korca Faculty of Education of Fan. S. Noli University will host the 2nd Conference, which will be held on October 2014.

It is my hope that this institution will be established and the targets, which were set, will be achieved.

*Prof. Charalampos. Lemonidis*  
*Dean of the Faculty Of Education*



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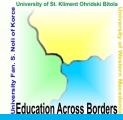
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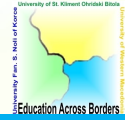
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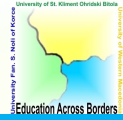
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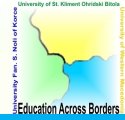
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# SEEKING FOR TRACES OF GREEK CULTURE IN THE FICTIONAL WORLD OF HARRY POTTER

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## Abstract

The world-wide *Harry Potter* phenomenon concerns in a critical level many Literature's approved researchers and scientists. The relative studies that were worked out are innumerable and they cover a wide range of the literary analysis' discipline fields. In our study we will try to find out and show off the infiltration of the Greek culture and heritage in the origin of the names, in the presentation of the characters and the magic attributes that characterize them that are included organically in the plot of the ultimate fictions *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. All of them demarcate a field of research, which examines if Rowling as a writer proceeded consciously in the embodiment of these elements or they were included in the context of a wider humanitarian culture that penetrates unconsciously in the contemporary literary texts.

**Keywords:** *Harry Potter, Greek culture, Rowling*

## 1. Introduction

The exceptionally profitable and critical success of the Harry Potter series is without precedent in world-wide Children's Literature. Even if other best – selling writers have made a lot of money quickly, none of them has managed to prove himself so acceptable both to critics and to a vast international child and adult readership. 109.739 words, 3.363 pages, 199 characters, 7 books, 1 story. The Harry Potter series has sold more than 450 million copies worldwide, has been translated in 67 languages and has gained many awards. Until today somebody could compare these achievements only with Enid Blyton's, whose timeless storytelling has helped shape and foster imagination in millions of children worldwide. Her series of books based on recurring characters and designed for different age groups have enjoyed huge success in many parts of the world, and have sold over 600 million copies. Her work involves children's adventure stories, and fantasy, sometimes involving magic and has been translated into nearly 90 languages

([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enid\\_Blyton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enid_Blyton)).

Enid's books still continue to sell more than 8 million copies worldwide and she is still voted as a children's favourite

(<http://www.blurbit.com/q554389.html>).

Rowling's Harry Potter stories as a whole have a distinctly backward – looking quality that provide readers with a classical myth wrapped in a beautifully imagined children's story. Rowling takes us back to the simplicities of the stories we were reading when we were young, when children's book were generally less realistic and more concerned with pleasing fantasies. We wonder if this is one of the elements that lent in the books the enormous success along with the unique plot, the multidimensional characters and their particular world. A world so different and the same time so realistic, as the writer achieved to represent through description, but also through writing on subjects like the eternal battle of good – villain, love, friendship, death, orphan hood, social hierarchies and so many others. Rowling deeply invests in teaching their protagonists and through them their readers how to confront with all these and particularly how to eradicate, and ameliorate racism through its depiction (Horne 2010: 76).

Contemporary social issues do not exist in Potter books. Harry's fellow – pupils live in a world where drugs, alcohol, divorce, or sexual activity of any kind is simply not a problem. Difficulties instead arise from more remote, less instantly recognizable sources (Tucker 1999:221). The constant sniping at various social and personality stereotypes set up by the author for reader's instant scorn also has an old-fashioned ring to it. We have to emphasize that significant critics like Lerer defend the Harry Potter books against the accusations of clichéd tones, common tropes, and borrowed plots by arguing that transforming these “commonalities” into “new gold” is precisely what gives them power (Russell 2009: 238). Rowling mocks the type of blinkered suburban existence once, where Harry's detestable relatives live a joyless existence. Harry himself hates his environment, a dark cupboard, deprived of any affection and so will his readers, too. We have a type of a classic formula with an exceptional hero and obvious villains. A popular melodrama in traditional gothic-style scene, that of the boarding Hogwarts School with its coat of arms and Latin tag where pupils attend because they have magical talents or backgrounds and not for the sake of their wealth (Tucker 1999:222).

Some literary scholars, such as Amanda Cockrell, Katherine Grimes, Maria Nikolajeva, and Benoit Virole, argue over whether the Harry

Potter series should be classified as fairy tale or myth. This distinction is important because the conventions attributed to each genre illuminate a text's literary goals and nature and directly correlate to its support of fate or free will (Pond 2010: 182). A theme, originated directly from ancient Greek Mythology, which persists to cause tensions and discussions. Although it appears at first reading that the Harry Potter series was distinguished for its identifiable hero, a boy in whom all readers can find themselves, Rowling actually offers her audience a story of an exceptional hero. She uses traces at once fundamental to the formation of identity and central to the ongoing struggle for power between Harry and Voldemort. Again and again, Harry proves himself able to make use of the past and demonstrates an ability to accept traces as connections with it, yet also as indications that the past has passed. Central to Harry's heroism is his ability to live in time and even to manipulate and take advantage of its passage, surrounding himself with his personal history and forging his identity through the traces of his family (Zimmerman 2009:194). While Harry's world remains unexpectedly at fate's mercy, Harry strives to excel his personal limitations through a Nietzschean moral. His actions and choices propel him above his peers, beyond a staid and determined fate and encourage us to achieve success available to the strong – willed by reaching for our potentials (Pond 2010: 202).

Descriptions of children utterly absorbed in a Potter book are very heartening at a time when the joys of reading are so often challenged by other juvenile habits and activities and the fact that the writer attracts an adult audience as well is equally impressive. Where children lead, literary critics do not always want to follow. Rowling possesses that mixture of literary populism linked to an extraordinary ability to get through to children. Rowling belongs to the writers who spread the idea that it is books themselves that can be truly exciting rather than an amorphous concept like “reading” (Tucker 1999:233). Potter stories attracted more adults in taking an interest in what their children read even to the extent of enjoying some of the same books for themselves. We are not sure that these stories, with their old-fashioned plots, settings, and characterization, are necessarily the ideal to reintroduce parents and other adults to what is best in contemporary children's literature. But,

on the other hand, it would be sad if the quality of these books was to be compared with Enid Blyton's stories (Tucker 1999:234). Rowling belongs already to the classics and by that, we do not move on reckless and sacrilegious comparisons with Homer, Virgil, Ovid or Aesop whose influence throughout antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance was abiding as the aim of classical education was to prepare the young for a life in public service, moral development and edification, such as that emphasized by those writers. But it is very interesting to observe how Rowling's success marks a new beginning for Children's Literature.

The author has used in her books mythological elements deriving from multiple mythologies, such as the Greek, Roman, Nordic and Celtic among others. The ancient Greek mythology plays a significant role into the wider formation and education of human beings, owing to the importance of the range and depth that the last has brought on universal human values. Therein, the myths contribute to the formation of the human character and bring forward the position of man against the gods (behind their "lies" resides the universal and global element of human existence) and against the universe. In this article, we explore the existence and use of Greek names and characters, whether they exist into mythology or as poets and authors of ancient Greece, in the last two books of the series, *Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince* and *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*. More specifically, we will ascertain a. the etymological origin of important heroes and heroines' names into the books and we will investigate b. the role and the textual function of specific persons, as well as c. the possible correlations of etymological origin and textual function, wherever and however they are traced. In aid, we will cite as reference the books' pages in which these persons are referred.

## 2. Analysis

### 1. *Xenophilus Lovegood*<sup>1</sup>

- a. His name derives from the Greek words "xenos" (its meaning is "foreign") and "philia" ("friendship" being its meaning).

<sup>1</sup> References of the 7th book, chapters: 8th 115-133, 20th 315-328.

He is namely someone who loves and cares about the foreign, the unknown, whether human or creature or situation. The English word "Lovegood" is a compound one, deriving from the simple words "love" and "good". The second component of his first name "Xenophilus" has a direct relevance with the first component of his last name "Lovegood", which denotes someone who loves fairness and more generally the love towards fairness. In ancient Greece, the adjective "xenophilos" is encountered and in subsequent years also as the first name "Xenophilos" or "Xeinophilos" in the works of the poet Simonides, while in Modern Greek we see the adjective "philoxenos" (meaning welcoming). Therein, between the English Lovegood and the Greek Xenophilus a direct etymological and semantic relevance is presented.

- b. Xenophilus<sup>2</sup>, publisher of the magazine *The Quibbler*, acts as a catalyst through the plot of the series, mainly through the revelation of the history of the Deathly Hallows to Harry, Ron and Hermione. When the Death Eaters abducted his daughter Luna, he was forced to write in favour of The Ministry of Magic into his magazine, essentially serving the interests of Voldemort.
- c. Xenophilus is occupied with the pursuit of imaginary magical items and creatures. He is also the designer and collector of items that do not function properly or may not be exactly what he thinks they are. He is accustomed to dealing with creatures of objects that he is not familiar with and that he does not even know with certainty their existence but nonetheless continues to believe in.

### 2. *Sirius Black*<sup>3</sup>

- a. The name<sup>4</sup> Sirius derives from the

<sup>2</sup> The Harry Potter Lexicon. "Xenophilus Lovegood". Last page update 27 July, 2007. <http://www.hp-lexicon.org/wizards/xenophilus.html>

<sup>3</sup> References of the 6th book, chapters: 1st 7-24, 2nd 25-41, 4th 59-80, 24th 480-499.

References of the 7th book, chapters: 25th 406-418, 26th 419-438, 33th 529-553, 34th 554-564, 36th 580-600.

<sup>4</sup> Colbert, David (2004). *The Magical Worlds of Harry Potter. A Treasury of Myths, Legends, and Fascinating*

constellation called “dog star” (the main star of the constellation Canis Major). In ancient Greek “kinastron” or “Sirius dog”. The name Sirius was assigned to it, as it is the brightest star in the sky. The Greek word “Sirius” means “scorching”, “searing” and as a constellation it was particularly popular to the ancient Greek tragic and lyric poets, while there are often references to it from Hesiod to his work “Works and Days”.

- b. Sirius Black<sup>5</sup> was Harry’s godfather. He died in the fifth book of the series, but reappears in the seventh book into the memories of professor Snape and also as a ghost, when Harry used the Resurrection Stone, giving him courage before he met Voldemort.
- c. Sirius was an Animagus (an animal mage), therefore he had the ability, when he wanted, to transform into an animal. The form that Sirius took was that of a black dog, in direct association with the “dog star”.

### 3. Narcissa Malfoy<sup>6</sup>

- a. Her name<sup>7</sup> derives from the Greek myth of Narcissus<sup>8</sup>. Narcissus was a young man of rare beauty. According to the predominant tradition, Narcissus, seeing his reflection into the water, was so enchanted, that he continuously stooped in order to mirror himself into the water until he died and in the place of his death the homonymous flower sprang up. According to another version, many nymphs had fallen in love with Narcissus, without reciprocation, provoking Nemesis into punishing him, by making him mirror himself onto the water of a spring and leading him to death as a direct result of his unsatisfied love for his

own reflection. Narcissus is considered to be the demon of sleep or death and consequently of Hades. The homonymous flower was believed to instigate sleep. It was grown on graves or was used in the weaving of wreaths for the dead. Today the flower<sup>9</sup> symbolizes egoism.

- b. Narcissa is Draco’s mother<sup>10</sup>. She had never been a Death Eater, although she embraced the Dark Lord’s views. Narcissa “changed” when Voldemort made her son a Death Eater and forced him to endanger himself and kill Dumbledore. Her turnabout proves to be very useful for the development of the plot, as, when Voldemort, believing that he has killed Harry, sends her to check if he is still breathing, she lies saying that he is dead.
- c. Narcissa is described as a very beautiful woman, blonde, with blue eyes. She comes from a wealthy and aristocratic family and she is distinguished for her snobbery. The association between the etymology of the word with the heroine’s textual role is direct and not only limited to her beauty.

### 4. Alecto Carrow<sup>11</sup>

- a. In Greek Mythology, Alecto<sup>12</sup> was one of the Erinyes, or Furies, the mythical infernal goddesses who castigated those that had committed crimes against the physical or moral order. Their number is indeterminate. Euripides in his work “Iphigenia en Tauris” cites three: Alecto (anthromorphism or personification of fury and implacable anger), Megaera (anthromorphism or personification of hatred and envy) and Tisiphone

Fact). Berkley Books, p. 41

<sup>5</sup> Harry Potter Wiki. “Sirius Black”. Retrieved December 11, 2011 from the World Wide Web:

[http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Sirius\\_Black](http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Sirius_Black)

<sup>6</sup> References on the 6<sup>th</sup> book, chapters: 2<sup>nd</sup> 25-41, 6<sup>th</sup> 103-123.

References on the 7<sup>th</sup> book, chapters: 1<sup>st</sup> 9-18, 23<sup>rd</sup> 362-385, 34<sup>th</sup> 554-654, 36<sup>th</sup> 580-600.

<sup>7</sup> Colbert, David (2004). The Magical Worlds of Harry Potter. A Treasury of Myths, Legends, and Fascinating Facts. Berkley Books, p. 148.

<sup>8</sup> Roussos E. (eds). (2008) Universal Mythology, Athens Publishing 2008, p. 460.

<sup>9</sup> Interfloras Gamos Blog. Last page update February 05, 2010.

[http://gamosflowerswedding.blogspot.com/2010/02/blog-post\\_05.html](http://gamosflowerswedding.blogspot.com/2010/02/blog-post_05.html)

<sup>10</sup> The Harry Potter Lexicon. “Narcissa (Black) Malfoy”. Last page update 10 January, 2008.

<http://www.hp-lexicon.org/wizards/narcissa.html>

<sup>11</sup> References on the 6<sup>th</sup> book, chapters: 27<sup>th</sup> 539-556, 28<sup>th</sup> 557-569.

References on the 8<sup>th</sup> book, chapters: 12<sup>th</sup> 184-202, 29<sup>th</sup> 460-473, 30<sup>th</sup> 474-488, 31<sup>th</sup> 489-512.

<sup>12</sup> Hellenica. “Errinyes”. Retrieved December 19, 2011 from the World Wide Web:

<http://www.hellenica.de/Griechenland/Mythos/GR/Erinyes.html>