

## EDITORIAL: ON CRISES

by

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This year's issue entitled *Crises: Living in a Changing World* focuses on the current socio-political and financial crisis as well as on the emotions and insights this crisis triggers. In each one of the essays contained in the 2012 issue, an array of reactions is detected ranging from uncertainty and anger to determination, self-exploration and hope. What makes each one of these self-reflective essays interesting, though, is that they stem from and reflect back on real-life concerns and issues, as is the case of gender discrimination and inequality, unemployment, and immigration.

In an attempt to come to terms with the difficulties and dilemmas Greek society faces nowadays, our contributors – all of them undergraduate and postgraduate students of the School of English – link their own personal experiences and feelings with those expressed in a variety of English-speaking texts, such as music lyrics, poems, films, and newspaper articles. In this way, their views move beyond the borders of their local community as they shed light on issues or events of a global appeal. In particular, Evgenia Kleidona in her piece “To Fight or Not to Fight” focuses on the ambivalence that characterizes the way certain attitudes develop from generation to generation especially when it comes to gender discrimination by commenting on the acts of exclusion or inclusion that are still discernible in our societies nowadays. This issue is explored further by Aikaterini Delikonstantinidou in “*Breakfast on Pluto: Changing World – Changing Identities*” where gender dilemmas are seen in tandem with the development of nationalist discourses often leading to racial prejudice and moral degradation. In Anastasia Mani's piece with the title “The Unbearable Lightness of Crisis: from Kazan's *America, America* to Eternity” emphasis is placed on the struggles of the newcomer, the immigrant, to come to terms with nostalgia for what is left behind and the challenges of the new and the unknown. In Dimitra Gkotosopoulou's piece “Economic Crisis: Hoping for Hope in Hopelessness” the struggle of survival in a world of political disillusionment goes hand in hand with the need for soul-searching so that indifference and fear give way to determination and personal sense of responsibility. Dimitra Efstathiou provides her own exploration of the political scene in her piece “And Now What?” by focusing on social imbalance as a consequence of financial crisis, while in Elli Karampela's speculative piece “Finding a Way to Smile Again,” external anxiety fires the characters' need for inner exploration. This sets into motion a process of self-appreciation that gradually, through the story, leads to an acknowledgement of each person's inner power and strength that not only needs to be treasured but also communicated to the generations to come. In Fjoralba Miraka's “Mona Lisa: Alone, Absolutely Alone in the Universe,” the feelings of transience and instability that contemporary crises generate should not dwarf the individual but fortify it instead with an openness of mind and dynamism so as to understand its position in time and space. Mona Lisa, the main character in the story, exemplifies the contemporary individual whose self-awareness becomes the tool of coming to terms with an external and inner crisis.

Through their essays, the contributors embark on a process of self-exploration and awareness in an effort to interpret and respond to the economic challenges, the

political antagonisms, and the ideological failures of our globalized world. The essays' comparative perspective traces the universal impact of radical transformations that characterize societies in transition. By linking their personal experiences to a number of literary, artistic, and media texts, the writers engage with questions of identity formation and attempt to come to terms with the reality of social conflicts, cultural prejudices, and individual limitations.