Aydın Adnan Menderes University
Department of English Language
and Literature

THE SHARED STORY OF HUMANITY: MYTHOLOGY AND ARCHETYPES

UNDERGRADUATE CONFERENCE

29-30 April 2026



Aydın Adnan Menderes University
Department of English Language
and Literature

The Welcome Speech: 10.00 - 10.10
The Keynote Speakers' Speech: 10.10 - 11.00
Prof. Gillian Mary Elizabeth Alban

First Coffee Break: 11.00 - 11.10

- **Chaos and Order 11.10 - 12.10**

Chairman Lecturer Günay Güneş

Mustafa Kerem Gazi 11.10-11.25
Rüya Güven 11.25 - 11.40
Elif Kemal 11.40 - 11.55

Discussion Session 11.55 - 12.10

Second Coffee Break 12.10 - 12.20

- **The Women in Mythology 12.20 - 13.20**

Chairman Asst. Prof. Çiğdem Alp Pamuk

Yaren Damla Coşkun 12.20 - 12.35
Burçak Hazal Çakır 12.35 - 12.50
Mine Kavak 12.50 - 13.05

Discussion Session 13.05 - 13.20

Lunch Break 13.20 - 14.20

- **The Binary Oppositions of The Mother Archetype 14.20 - 15.20**

Chairman Dr. Özgür Esen

Ünzile Etoğlu 14.20 - 14.35
Şevval Nur Demirci 14.35 - 14.50
Talia G.G. Doumalar 14.50 - 15.05

Discussion Session 15.05 - 15.20

Third Coffee Break 15.20 - 15.30

- **Literary Classics 15.30 - 16.30**

Chairman Asst. Prof. Hafize G.K Artuç

Arda Vural 15.30 - 15.45
İmran Sena Erön 15.45 - 16.00
Hande Koçer 16.00 - 16.15

Discussion Session 16.15 - 16.30

Fourth Coffee Break 16.30 - 16.40

Wrap Up Speech by Asst. Prof. AYŞE ARZU KORUCU 16.40 - 17.00

Welcome Speech by Asst. Prof. Ayşe Arzu Korucu 10.00-10.10

- **The Keynote Speaker**
  Gillian Mary Elizabeth Alban

Author of The Medusa Gaze in Contemporary Women's Fiction: Petrifying, Maternal and Redemptive and Melusine the Serpent Goddess in A.S. Byatt's Possession and in Mythology

Presented by *Pınar Çetin*

10.10 - 11.00



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The Keynote Speaker
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29-30 April 2026
10.10
Atatürk Kongre Merkezi
İSA BEY Salonu
10.10 - 11.00







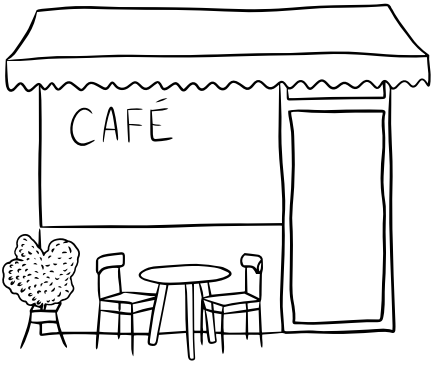




Coffee Break

11.00 - 11.10

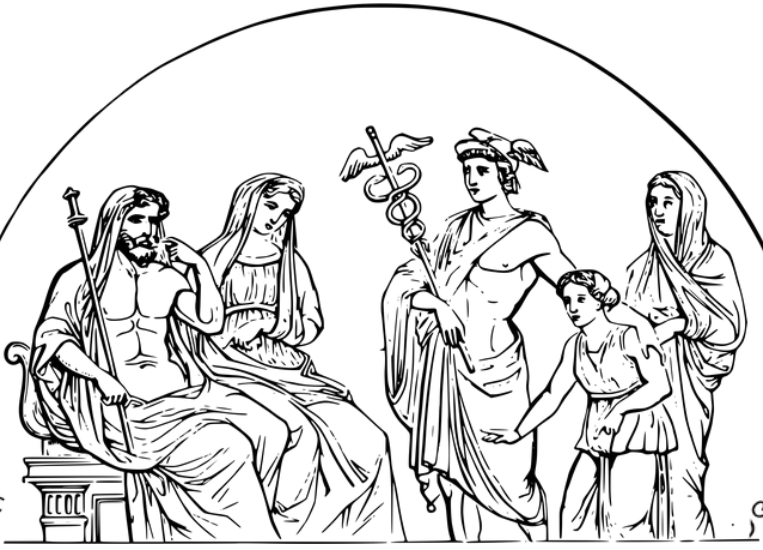




CHAOS AND ORDER

11.10 - 12.10

Chairman Günay Güneş





Mustafa Kerem GAZİ

Osmaniye Korkut Ata University

11.10-11.25

The Panoptic Guardian Archetype: Power, Myth, and Discipline in The Book of Dede Korkut and Machiavelli's The Prince

Historically, political discourse and mythic narrative have both served as powerful frameworks for shaping social order, revealing how canonical texts continue to inform collective values and patterns of conduct across cultures and periods. Rather than functioning merely as historical treatises on statecraft, such texts can also be interpreted as models for the production and circulation of power in the Foucauldian sense. For Michel Foucault, power is not simply a repressive, top-down force that limits action; it is also a productive force that generates knowledge, social norms, and subjectivities. Drawing on this framework, this study offers a Foucauldian reading of Niccolò Machiavelli's The Prince to examine how political order is constructed through the management of visibility, appearance, and discipline. To situate this discussion within the broader field of mythology and archetypal criticism, the paper extends its analysis to The Book of Dede Korkut, investigating how Dede Korkut may be read as a guardian-sage figure whose symbolic authority regulates communal identity and behavior. The analysis focuses on the strategic concealment of power, the cultivation of outward appearances, and the calibrated use of reward and punishment. Through these techniques, the Machiavellian ruler fosters a political environment in which subjects internalize surveillance and regulate their own conduct. In a comparable yet culturally distinct way, Dede Korkut embodies an archetypal form of moral oversight, guiding individuals toward self-regulation under the authority of collective memory, wisdom, and tradition. In this sense, The Prince may be reread as articulating a logic of rule that resonates with Foucault's concepts of panopticism and docile bodies, while The Book of Dede Korkut demonstrates how mythic authority can perform a related regulatory function within epic narrative. Ultimately, this reading argues that Machiavelli's political pragmatism extends beyond the restriction of behavior, demonstrating instead how power actively produces political realities, disciplined subjects, and social identities. It further suggests that mythological archetypes, rather than operating identically to political systems, can function as enduring symbolic mechanisms through which societies transmit authority, preserve collective memory, and reinforce normative order.



Rüya GÜVEN

Erciyes University

11.25 - 11.40

Cosmic Order and Chaos: A Jungian Analysis of Turkic Mythological Figures

Throughout mythological traditions, cosmological order and chaos are often expressed through symbolic figures that embody fundamental archetypal patterns. In Turkic mythology, this symbolic structure can be observed in mythological figures such as Ülgen, Erlik, Umay and Ay Ata. Based on the archetypal theory developed by Carl Gustav Jung, this study interprets the figures in question as symbolic manifestations of universal archetypal structures in the collective unconscious. In this context, Ülgen, who is associated with the sky, creation and divine order, can be considered in the context of the persona archetype, which represents the visible and regulatory dimension of cosmic authority. In contrast, Erlik, the ruler of the underworld, embodies the shadow archetype, symbolizing the hidden, chaotic, and destructive forces that co-exist with order. This study also examines symbolic gender dynamics through the figures of Umay and Ay Ata. Although Umay is often interpreted as a protective goddess, her authoritative and active role can be evaluated within the framework of the animus concept. Conversely, the lunar symbolism associated with the Ay Ata evokes qualities associated with the anima, such as intuition, cyclicality, and connection with the unconscious. As these figures illustrate, Turkic mythology, rather than rigid binary oppositions, reflects a complex archetypal balance that structures the cosmological imagination and production of symbolic meaning.



Elif KEMAL

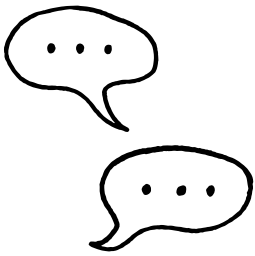
Istanbul Kültür University

11.40 - 11.55

Whose Chaos Gets to Survive?

Tiamat and Leviathan: The Politics of Collective Memory from Antiquity to Postmodernity

Myths are not passive relics of the ancient world but dynamic instruments of collective memory, continually reinterpreted to reflect shifting ideological needs. This thesis examines two primordial chaos figures: Tiamat, the female sea goddess of the Babylonian Enuma Elish, and Leviathan, the male sea monster of the Hebrew Bible. The central argument is that gender does not describe these figures but determines their fate: female chaos is annihilated, male chaos is repurposed. This asymmetry reflects a patriarchal cosmological logic reproduced across antiquity, early modernity, and postmodernity, shaping how societies remember, fear, and legitimize authority. In the Enuma Elish, Tiamat begins as a creator goddess before being reframed as a monstrous enemy, killed by Marduk, her body is split to form sky and earth. She annihilated and instrumentalized simultaneously. Leviathan, by contrast, appears in Job 41 as a creature of awe-inspiring power that Yahweh marvels at rather than destroys. Importantly, 1 Enoch 60:7-9 describes Leviathan as originally female, suggesting its subsequent masculinization was an ideological act: when chaos is feminine, it must be destroyed; when it is male, it can be controlled and repurposed. This repurposing reaches its fullest expression in Thomas Hobbes's Leviathan (1651), where the chaos monster becomes a metaphor for sovereign power. The female chaos figure has no place in early modern political imagination except as something that must remain dead for order to exist. Male chaos survives as authority; female chaos survives only as a warning. In the postmodern world, this asymmetry is both reproduced and contested. Popular culture keeps Leviathan sublime and Tiamat monstrous, while feminist theology reclaims her destruction as the founding myth of patriarchal cosmology. Asking whose chaos survives is never a mythological question. It is always a question of identity and power, and the answer has always been gendered.



Discussion Session

11.55 - 12.10



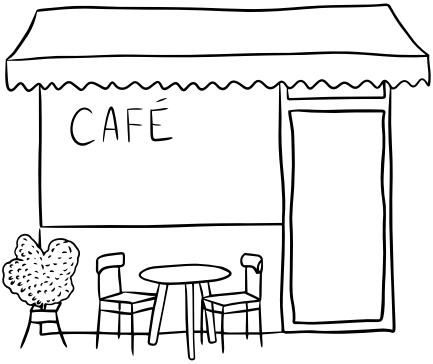




Coffee Break

12.10 - 12.20





THE WOMEN IN MYTHOLOGY

12.20 - 13.20

Chairman Asst. Prof. Çiğdem Alp Pamuk





Yaren Damla COŞKUN

Manisa Celal Bayar University

12.20 - 12.35

Galatea's Evolution from Stone to Flesh: An Examination of Ovid's and Madeline Miller's Galatea

Mythological stories often articulate societal norms and gender roles, serving as both mirrors and creators of cultural realities. These norms and gender roles are a reflection of the patriarchal order. Feminist rewritings reclaim female agency, voice, and subjectivity, often through strategies that question, subvert, or directly challenge canonical myth tropes. Revisionist women writers rewrite these ancient myths to give them a new voice. Madeline Miller is one such writer. This article compares Ovid's and Miller's narratives of Pygmalion and Galatea, examining how a revisionist approach fills these gaps. In Ovid's Metamorphoses, Galatea is silent and objectified. She lacks an identity, and the statue remains voiceless and nameless.

Galatea is a product of the fantasy of the perfect woman born from the artistic spirit of her creator and husband, Pygmalion. Madeline Miller's Galatea, on the other hand, is a work of resistance, rewriting the ideal female character from past myths. Miller gives Galatea a voice, and Galatea's voice is heard for the first time. Miller's Galatea makes the character more than just a statue and gives it a consciousness.The woman's voice, the narrative, enables us to invert patriarchal fantasies and narratives. Miller demonstrates that motherhood becomes a point of criticism of patriarchal authority. Galatea is transformed into a real woman with a mind of her own, but Pygmalion sees her only as an object to be controlled and manipulated. Miller has liberated the 'perfect' role model idealized by Ovid and has removed her grom being a victim of the system.



Burçak Hazal ÇAKIR

Hacettepe University

12.35 - 12.50

The Women of Troy by Pat Barker and the Trojan War from Women's Perspective

The Trojan War was one of the most important components of the Greek Mythology, yet it only emphasizes martial heroism; how the war started, what strategies were used and how the Greeks became victorious. However, there is always another overlooked dimension to this conflict; the human remnants of the war, especially women. In her book, Pat Barker rewrites the war through the experiences of women. She traces their transition from being individuals to objects of war. For example, Briseis was once a queen, but forced to become a slave, Andromache, who was Hector's wife, was forced to watch her child's death after the fall of Troy, the prophetess Cassandra was raped because people did not believe in her oracles. The writer handles the subject from a feminist point of view and displays struggles of women of the war from silencing to commodification. She also explores the theme of women's enduring trauma after the war. This paper will engage the problem of how traditional epics glorify the Trojan War as a display of heroism through men and strategic victory while Barker deconstructs the usual and accepted narrative by focusing on the voices of the women who survived the war.



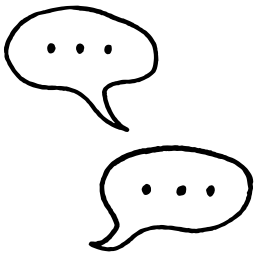
Mine KAVAK

Batman University

12.50 - 13.05

Giving Voice to the Silenced: Penelope and the Twelve Maids in Margaret Atwood's The Penelopiad

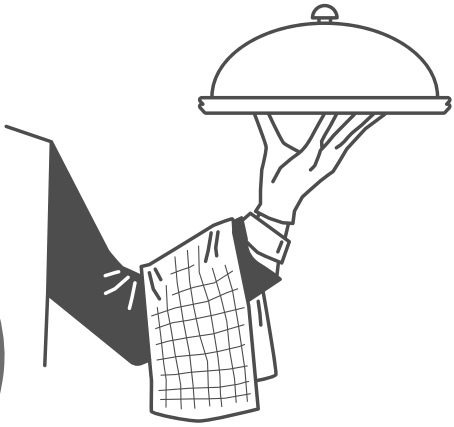
Rewriting classical myths has an important place in contemporary English literature. Many modern writers return to Greek myths and retell them from new perspectives in order to question traditional narratives and give new meanings to well-known mythological stories. Social and cultural changes, especially the rise of feminist movement in the twentieth century, have strongly affected the way these myths are rewritten. Margaret Atwood's The Penelopiad can be shown as an example of such rewriting. In Homer's Odyssey, Penelope is depicted as a loyal and patient wife, and the twelve maids are given very little significance. However, in her postmodern novel, Atwood retells this mythological story from Penelope's point of view and gives voice to the twelve maids, who are indeed silent in the original story. She also portrays Odysseus as a flawed and questionable character, besides being a mythological hero. Through this retelling, Atwood challenges the patriarchal perspective of the original myth and examines the issues of gender, power and justice. In this respect, this presentation aims to study how The Penelopiad rewrites the Homeric myth and how Atwood uses this rewriting to question patriarchal authority and give voice to marginalised female characters.



Discussion Session

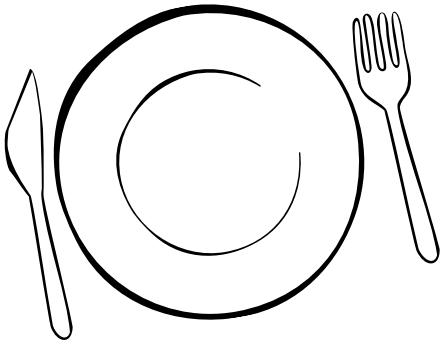
13.05-13.20





Lunch Break

13.20 - 14.20



THE BINARY OPPOSITIONS OF THE MOTHER ARCHETYPE

14.20 - 15.20

Chairman Dr. Özgür Esen





Ünzile ETOĞLU

Pamukkale University

14.20 - 14.35

The “Mother Earth” Archetype: A Comparative Analysis of Gaia in Greek Mythology and Yavanna in Tolkien’s Legendarium

This paper explores the "Mother Earth" archetype through a comparative analysis of two powerful female figures: Gaia from Ancient Greek mythology and Yavanna from J.R.R.Tolkien’s The Silmarillion. Both characters represent the life-giving and protective power of nature, sharing significant similarities that connect ancient myths to modern fantasy literature. The study first focuses on their roles as creators within their respective mythologies. Gaia is the primordial mother who gives birth to the world itself, while Yavanna, known as the "Giver of Fruits," is the divine architect of all growing things and the creator of the Two Trees of Valinor. Secondly, the paper examines their protective instincts toward the natural world. Gaia’s rebellion against the Olympian gods to protect her children finds a modern parallel in Yavanna’s plea to create the Ents (Shepherds of the Trees) to guard her forests from destruction. Finally, the discussion highlights how these two figures demonstrate that the "Mother Earth" archetype remains a vital part of the"shared story of humanity." By comparing Gaia’s ancient origins with Tolkien’s modern legendarium, this research shows that the symbolic representation of nature as a maternal and protective force has endured throughout history.



Şevval Nur DEMİRCİ

Pamukkale University

14.35 - 14.50

Mythic Female Archetypes in Victorian Literature

This study argues that the Victorian constructions of the fallen woman and the Madonna archetype are not merely products of nineteenth-century morality. But they are modern versionsof enduring mythic patterns. Rather than functioning solely as social categories, these figures operate as archetypal structures through which femininity is symbolically organized. The fallen woman embodies the narrative of transgression, exile, and moral contamination, while the Madonna archetype represents sanctified motherhood, moral authority, and social preservation. Together, they form a polarized yet interdependent system that regulates female identity by dividing it into condemned autonomy and idealized self-sacrifice.

Read through a mythological framework, this binary reveals a deep archetypal continuity. The fallen woman recalls Lilith, whose refusal of submission and assertion of autonomy result in demonization and exclusion from sacred order. In contrast, the Madonna archetype parallels Demeter, whose maternal power ensures fertility, continuity, and communal stability. These mythic figures establish an ancient symbolic opposition between the autonomous female body cast outside order and the nurturing maternal figure aligned with preservation.

This archetypal structure resurfaces in Victorian literature, including Oliver Twist, where Nancy and Rose Mayliereproduce these mythic positions within a modern social framework. Ultimately, the study shows that Victorian gender ideology does not invent new models of femininity but rearticulates long-standing mythological oppositions, revealing a shared narrative pattern that lasts across history.



Talia Gkioulmpin

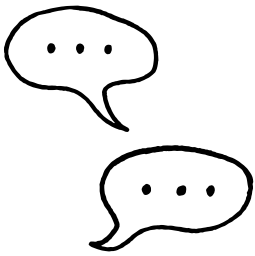
Gialou DOUMALAR

Ege University

14.50 - 15.05

A Never-changing Song and an Ever-changing Body: The Sirens' Change Through History

This presentation aims to delve into the change mythical beings endure with the passing time, specifically focusing on the sirens. Sirens are famous beings that have appeared first in Homer's' Odyssey. From Ancient Greece to the 21st century, the siren has been adapted in various works and changed shapes. While their core, their luring songs, never changed their appearance have changed a lot in history. Their change through history is not limited to their body but their role and space too. While always connected to sea one way or another, not every siren description talks about them being underwater or completely connected to it. This presentation will explain how the sirens' bodies have changed, from bird-like creatures to beautiful mermaids; share the reasons why this happened; and lastly will examine them through feminist criticism. It will begin with the original appearance, then talk about the turn to different roles of sirens in Classical period literature, after it talk about the mermaid like body described for them, and for the last part talk about 21st century sirens. Examples from Ancient Greek texts shall be given, but also texts and art from medieval times. For the last part of the presentation examples shall be given from different media, including literature but not limited to movies, series and musicals. At the end of the presentation there will be time left for any questions, and after the QnA it shall be finished. After the presentation the audience is expected to have learnt about the history of sirens and how they have changed, and be able to analyze them through a feminist critical view



Discussion Session

15.05-15.20



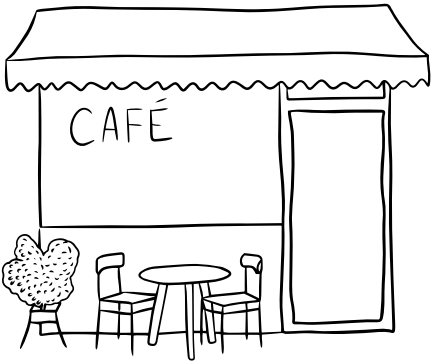




Coffee Break

15.20 - 15.30





LITERARY CLASSICS

15.30 - 16.30

Chairman Asst. Prof. Hafize Gül Koparanoğlu Artuç





Arda VURAL

Osmaniye Korkut Ata University

15.30 - 15.45

The Persona Archetype: Parallels Between Greek Mythology and Twelfth Night

There are many parallels between the Viola/Cesario character in Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night" and Achilles in mythology. Viola's disguise as Cesario to find her brother Sebastian (the need for social acceptance and independent action) and Achilles' hiding in women's clothing on the island of Skyros to escape war demonstrate the persona archetype that allows both characters to escape their problematic situations.

Furthermore, the character of Achilles draws a parallel with Malvolio in Shakespeare's Twelfth Night. Achilles doesn't want to fight in the Trojan War but reluctantly accepts due to both prophecy and the need to gain social standing. Malvolio, on the other hand, acts like a noble to gain social acceptance and benefit from Olivia's status, but he isn't one. This summarizes the subject of my presentation.



İmran Sena ERÖN

Hacettepe University 15.45 - 16.00

The Hermetic Threshold: The Hermes Archetypes in Shelley's Translation of *Hymn to Mercury* and Marlowe's *Faustus*

Besides being the protector of travelers, thieves, and traders; the figure of Hermes or Mercury stands as the essential archetype of the threshold and transformations. As the psychopomp and the divine messenger, Hermes represents the transition between distinct worlds such as the divine and the mortal, ancient and modern. This study explores the hermetic nature of literary translation and allusion, arguing that the act of bringing Greek myth into the English canon is fundamentally an act of hermēneuein: a process of interpretation that involves both mediation and trickery.

By performing a philological analysis of Homeric Hymn to Mercury and its translations by Percy Bysshe Shelley, this study examines how the translator adopts the attributes of the trickster god. This study also argues that English literature's engagement with classical mythology is not a passive inheritance but an active and hermetic reconstruction. By bridging the gap between original Greek fragments and their literary reinterpretations, this study demonstrates how the archetype of the messenger continues to shape our understanding of collective memory and the fluidity of the shared human story.



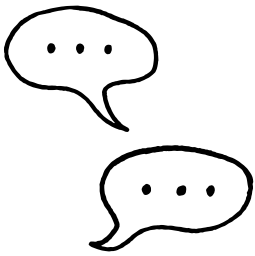
Hatice Hande KOÇER

Erciyes University

16.00 - 16.15

From Light to Darkness: Failed Katabasis and the Birth of the Modern Antihero

Since its publication, Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness has been widely discussed and repeatedly reinterpreted. Especially, it has become a significant novella to understand the philosophy of its era. This novella is still attractingscholarly attention due to its exploration of the darker dimensions of human history and consciousness. In this work, Conrad invites the reader on a journey into both the geographical and psychological darkness of humanity. At the center of this journey lies a structure deeply rooted in mythology: katabasis, the descent into darkness that forms a crucial stage of the heroic archetype. In classical mythology and epic literature, katabasis functions as a transformative moment in the heroic journey. Drawing on Carl Jung's concept of archetypes, the hero takes a journey into the unknown, faces hidden truths, and at the end the hero is no longer the person it was at the beginning, instead, the hero returns with a morally and intellectually completed self. Heart of Darknessinitially appears to reproduce this classical mythological pattern at first sight. However, as the narrative unfolds, the expected completion of the hero archetype and of the katabasis does not occur. This presentation argues that Conrad deliberately constructs a failed katabasis that exposes the collapse of the traditional hero archetype. Through the figure of Mr. Kurtz, often perceived as a heroic or exceptional individual, the narrative reveals a character who cannot complete the evolutionary arc of the classical hero. Rather than fulfilling the mythic structure that leads to redemption or integration, Kurtz's journey exposes psychological and moral collapse, which shows the fragility of the heroic ideal. In this sense, Heart of Darkness both appropriates and subverts the classical katabasis narrative, foreshadowing the emergence of the fractured modern antihero.



Discussion Session

16.15-16.30



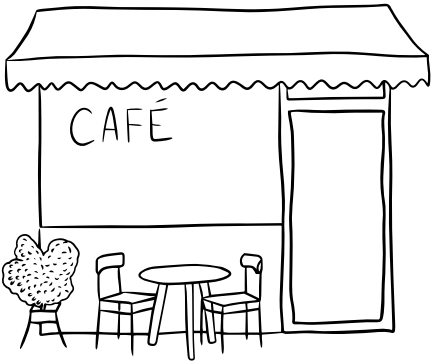




Coffee Break

16.30 - 16.40





Wrap Up Speech by Asst. Prof. AYŞE ARZU KORUCU 16.40 - 17.00

THE SHARED STORY OF HUMANITY

MYTHOLOGY AND ARCHETYPES

—UNDERGRADUATE CONFERENCE—

29-30 April 2026

Thank you for joining