

**Postgraduate Student Conference 2014, Literature & Culture Colloquium
Tuesday, 6 May 2014, “Kostis Palamas” Building**

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“Apparitional Monitoring and Female Ghostliness in Charlotte Brontë’s *Villette*”

This presentation examines Charlotte Brontë’s novel *Villette*, along the axes of disciplinary surveillance and (social) spectrality. First of all, it analyses the social system of surveillance and female sexual repression, and places the figure of the spectre at the centre of this discourse of female regulation. By way of close textual analysis, the presentation demonstrates how the spectre can function as an ever-present, elusive monitoring figure, whose apparitional gaze haunts the novel’s (anti)heroine and perpetuates her sexual repression. Secondly, this presentation brings together the elements that constitute the heroine’s elusive, spectral identity and argues that Brontë employs the spectral metaphors to denote the heroine’s dispossession and social precariousness. The third and last part of the presentation focuses on the heroine’s appropriation of her socially-imposed spectrality and her subversion of the system of disciplinary monitoring. It suggests that through the gradual emergence of her sexuality and her opposition against the ideology of female ghostliness and the novel’s policing figures, Brontë’s heroine manages to de-spectralise herself and claim the active role of agent instead of her previous passive role as social outcast.