

[Will to Truth: Sarah Kofman and the Relief of Philosophy](#)

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Type:

Conference

Date:

September 26, 2019 to September 27, 2019

Location:

United Kingdom

Subject Fields:

French History / Studies, Philosophy, Cultural History / Studies, Intellectual History

International Conference

Will to Truth: Sarah Kofman and the Relief of Philosophy

26-27 September 2019

Room 243, Second Floor, Senate House, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HU

Sarah Kofman played a key if under-studied role in the development of continental philosophy, psychoanalytic thought, and autobiographical writing in the late 20th century. She dedicated her life to philosophy, publishing two dozen books, often on or starting from Nietzsche or Freud, but also ranging widely across aesthetics, psychoanalysis, gender studies, and more. She was an exacting presence in the deconstructive group of Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Nancy, and Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe. Much of her oeuvre has been translated into English and other languages, and she has been the subject of at least three monographs and four collective editions. 25 years after her sudden death, this conference aims to read Kofman's work in all its vitality.

Our focus on the *relief of philosophy* is to be understood in several ways. For Kofman, the philosophical tradition has often served as a protection against the intolerable, as consolation, catharsis, or even *relief*. Her work attempts to bracket off this tradition, *relieving* it of its privileges and responsibilities. Yet she also cautions against the repetition of this protective gesture in the turn towards psychologizing or biographical discourses. In spite of her fierce attacks on the conceits of the metaphysical tradition, her work retains a unique space for the will to truth, her particular practice of philosophy standing apart from such discourses, whether in high or low *relief*.

Conference Programme

Thursday 26 September 2019

10.30 Arrival and Opening Discussion

11.00 PHILOSOPHY 1 — Chair: Charlotte Thevenet

Tracy Strong: 'The Place of Nietzsche in Sarah's Kofman's Work'

John McKeane: 'Ecce femina: Kofman and Nietzschean Relief'

Joseph Johnson: 'The Consolation of the Bat: Recovering Sarah Kofman from the 'Margins of Medieval Studies''

13.00 Lunch

14.00 AESTHETICS — Chair: John McKeane

Duncan Large: 'Of Metals and Men: Kofman, Conversion and *The Merchant of Venice*'

Caroline Sheaffer-Jones: 'The Play of the Frames in Sarah Kofman's "The Imposture of Beauty: The Uncanniness of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray*"

Jordi Massó Castilla: 'A Philosophical Duel'

16.00 Coffee

16.30 TRUTH AND PLAY — Chair: Duncan Large

Elizabeth Rottenberg: 'What is at Play in Play? Sarah Kofman's Playful Reading of Freud'

Nicolas Cotton: 'Sarah Kofman: on the Status of Perversion in Philosophy (Socrates, Nietzsche, Freud and Derrida)'

Jacob Bates-Firth: 'Two Late-career References to Galileo'

18.30 Reception

19.30 Conference dinner

Friday 27 September 2019

09.30 Coffee and Opening Discussion

10.00 DERRIDA — Chair: Elizabeth Rottenberg

Ginette Michaud: 'Reading Derrida Reading Kofman'

Charlotte Thevenet: "'Sarah Kofman': Derrida's Missing Woman"

Paul Earlie: 'Kofman's Rhetoric'

12.00 Lunch

13.00 PHILOSOPHY 2 — Chair: Tbc

Cosmin Toma: (Title tbc)

Tina Chanter: 'Kofman on Kant's Fetishism'

Cillian O'Fathaigh: 'Debt 'Relief': Kantian Debt in Sarah Kofman's Work'

15.00 Coffee

15.15 PERVERSION AND TRANSGRESSION – Chair: Jacob Bates-Firth

Mathieu Frackowiak: (Title tbc)

Peter de Graeve: 'Sarah Kofman - On (Not) Being Elsewhere'

Giustino de Michele: 'Sarah Kofman: the Relief of the Fetish?'

17.15 End

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URL:

<https://modernlanguages.sas.ac.uk/events/event/19813>