



# MIGS NEWS

A publication by the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS)

## Editorial

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the latest issue of MIGS news! In this issue you will find the latest activities of our team including project updates, new projects, lobbying and advocacy activities, as well as new faces among our team.

MIGS is involved in a number of new projects, and has recently received funding from the European Science Foundation to organise an ESF Exploratory Workshop under the Scientific Coordination of Professor Nira Yuval Davis, aiming to bring together key feminist activists from across the globe to discuss the challenges faces by the women's movement and ways to address them.

In our Current Projects section, you will find updates on projects launched in the previous year with exciting new developments in research, training, capacity building, and exchanges of good practice on a European level. MIGS has also continued its lobbying activities and has circulated press releases on a number of issues affecting women.

This summer, MIGS also introduced its new internship programme and received a high number of applications from potential participants. After careful consideration of all candidates, MIGS has selected two promising new interns who will have the opportunity to travel to Cyprus and learn how MIGS works on a day to day basis as well as have the opportunity to work alongside our team on our projects and other activities.

Finally, we would also like to take this opportunity to announce that our Director, Dr. Myria Vassiliadou, has recently been appointed the new Secretary General of the European Women's Lobby [EWL] as of 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007. The MIGS team congratulates her warmly on this wonderful achievement and, although Myria will no longer continue as Director of MIGS, she will continue to be very much a part of the Institute as a member of the Board. MIGS hopes to announce a new Director of the Institute soon.

Enjoy reading,  
MIGS Team

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## New Projects

### Intercultural Dialogue on Violence against Women



The Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies is coordinating a new project entitled "Intercultural Dialogue on Violence against Women", funded by the *Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures*.

The overall objective of the project is to enhance the active participation of women in intercultural dialogue about violence against women and the diffusion of information about overcoming discrimination and violence against women in the Euro-Mediterranean region. Specifically, the proposed project will bring together 25 women from diverse backgrounds in five countries in the Euro-Med region to discuss and identify areas of common concern, exchange experiences, and highlight best practices in relation to violence against women.

The project will begin with an innovative photographic competition open to young women from Cyprus, Egypt, Greece, Morocco and Spain under the theme "Violence against Women in the Mediterranean". The photo competition seeks images that make a creative and powerful statement on the issue of Violence against Women in the Mediterranean region.

Click on the link below for additional information from our website.

<http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=240>

### ESF Exploratory Workshop on Feminisms and Activism



The *European Science Foundation* and *MIGS* will be conducting an Exploratory Workshop on the subject of "Feminisms and Activism: Transversal Politics in Contemporary Europe and across the Globe".

The workshop will take place on from the 12<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup> of September 2007 in Nicosia, Cyprus and will be convened by Susana Pavlou (CY) and Nira Yuval-Davis (UK).

The main aim of the workshop is to bring together a group of key feminists who live across various countries of Europe (but come from diverse locations across the globe) and who have been involved in European and global feminist initiatives networks, in order to systematically address the tensions and uncertainties faced by the women's movement both on the European level and the global level. Note: This workshop will not be open to the public.

Click on link below for additional information from our website.

<http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=236>



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## Gender Inequality in Family Life in Cyprus

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The Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies is coordinating a new project entitled "Gender Inequality in Family Life in Cyprus" funded under the *Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission* and the *Ministry of Justice and Public Order in Cyprus* for the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for all.

The main aim of the project is to challenge stereotypes, prejudice, and the unequal power distribution with regard to gender within family life in Cyprus through the production of a documentary film.

Training seminars on gender awareness will also be included in the activities with aim to raise awareness among the producers and director on the issue of gender and gender and the media in particular. To do so the trainer will be using the Gender and Media Handbook [[www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=22](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=22)] published by MIGS.



## APROPOS - Multisectoral and Multidisciplinary Professional Specialization Programme and Network for Violence Prevention

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MIGS is partner in the new project "APROPOS - Multisectoral and Multidisciplinary Professional Specialization Programme and Network for Violence Prevention" funded by the DAPHNE II programme of the European Commission and co-financed by Finland's Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. The project is coordinated by Women's and Gender Studies, University of Oulu, Women's studies, University of Oulu.

The project aims to construct a regional, national and international network of professionals working and dealing with questions of violence. The main result of the project will be a multi-sectoral and multidisciplinary specialization programme for professional education and in-service training on violence and violence prevention.

To read more about the projects partners, aims and objectives visit our website at: <http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=256>

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### DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

The Gender and the Media Handbook is now also available on the "I Know Politics: International Network of Women in Politics" website at: [www.iknowpolitics.org](http://www.iknowpolitics.org)



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## Current Projects Update

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### **Date Rape among Young Women and the Development of Good Practices for Support and Prevention**

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MIGS is coordinating a transnational project entitled “Date Rape Cases Among Young Women and the Development of Good Practices for Support and Prevention”, funded by the Daphne II Programme of the European Commission.

The project began in September 2007. It aims to measure the prevalence and incidence of date rape among female college students in Cyprus, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, and Malta, and assess the attitudes, behaviours and level of awareness among beneficiaries and target groups.

The first project information leaflet is now available in five languages. View the Project leaflet [[http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?attachment\\_id=194](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?attachment_id=194)]

In addition, the quantitative and qualitative research taking place in the five partner countries is in its final stages and the country reports, which will include the research findings as well as policy recommendations, will be available at the end of September.

For more detailed information regarding this project, please visit our website at: <http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=18>

### **Integration of Female Migrant Domestic Workers: Strategies for Employment and Civic Participation**

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Since September 2006, MIGS has coordinated this transnational project which is funded under the INTI Preparatory Actions 2005, Integration for Third- country Nationals of the European Commission.

Among its activities, the project involves a mapping of existing integration services and policies, best practices and strategies adopted in all partner countries in relation to female migrant domestic workers, particularly in the areas of employment and civic participation.

The project also involves the organization of study visits in all partner countries, three of which have already concluded successfully, in Germany, Greece and in Cyprus.

For more detailed information regarding this project, please visit our website at: <http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=17>



## Young Women: Fit for Politics!

Following the success of the pilot workshop, the two-day national training "Young Women: Fit for Politics!" took place on 24-25th of March, 2007 in Nicosia. The two trainers from MIGS, Susana Pavlou, Program Coordinator, and Karolina Vinakurava, Research Associate, organized and facilitated this empowering event.



The dynamic team consisted of ten young women from diverse backgrounds, all united by one common goal, which is to become active European citizens and future leaders in public and political life. In addition to the new-comers, a couple of old members who participated in the pilot in July 2006 now expressed great interest to continue being a part of this exciting initiative and all were welcomed.

The final international workshop will bring together participants from Austria, Cyprus, and Turkey and will take place on 30 June – 1 July 2007 in Vienna.

Click on the link below for additional information  
<http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=254>

### DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

MIGS has launched an online directory of institutions and organisations in the Mediterranean that do gender related work. Over one-hundred institutions from around the world are featured, including universities/colleges, research institutions, media organisations and NGOs. To view the directory or register your organisation please visit [www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?page\\_id=70](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?page_id=70)

## Role of Women in Economic Life



The Role of Women in Economic Life project aims at enhancing the role and involvement of Mediterranean public governmental and non-governmental institutions to facilitate and expand opportunities for women's economic participation. The 3 year project (January 2006 – January 2009) covering 10 countries in the MEDA region, is funded by the European Commission and managed by the British Council in partnership with MIGS.

The second partners' meeting took place from 5-8 March 2007 in Casablanca, Morocco. The meeting came at a stage where the RWEL programme has been in action for almost a year and



half and can be considered the first technical meeting based on the outcomes of the first meeting that took place in Cairo in June 2006, where a common understanding of the aim and objectives of the EOWEL programme was established.

The meeting provided a regional forum for sharing, learning and linking the work of the seven EOWEL projects and for building on strengthening cross-cutting themes, communication and visibility, review and analysis, documentation and dissemination of lessons learned.

The project website is now fully functional with many new features including a Gender Equality Database, announcements on relevant events, training workshops, and conferences, as well as four new thematic areas, including Gender and Media, Micro Enterprise Development, Capacity Development, and Marketing and Trade, where relevant tools, information, reports, materials, manuals, useful links, and related resources will be available. Please visit [www.roleofwomenineconomiclife.net](http://www.roleofwomenineconomiclife.net).

The project has also produced three quarterly newsletters, edited by MIGS, which are available on our website at <http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=15>.

### **ELANI : Open Doors, Equal Initiative**



MIGS has recently been involved as a partner, in an Equal community initiative programme, co-funded by the European Social Fund, entitled ELANI: Open Doors. This project's overall objective aimed to improve the participation of women in economic life by encouraging businesses to adopt family friendly policies and to thereby promote the reconciliation of professional and family life.

As partner, MIGS is the coordinator for Action 4 "Mapping of the Social Gender Map of Cyprus". The findings report was finalized in February 2007 and was presented by the Main Researcher, Chrystalla Ellina at the International Conference on the "Reconciliation of Family and Professional Life" which was held in Nicosia – Cyprus on the 27th and the 28th of April 2007.

MIGS has also been an active participant in other Actions of the project including Action 5 "New models – New culture and labour environments" and Action 7 "New forms of partnership to facilitate the employment of women" both as trainers and trainees.

Click on the link below for additional information from our website.

<http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=13>

### **CIVICUS: Exploring the Gender Gap in Civil Society**

MIGS is participating as a partner in a bi-communal project coordinated by MC-Med in cooperation with Intercollege entitled 4th International Symposium: The State of Civil Society: Where should we go from here?, funded by UNDP – Action for Cooperation and Trust.

Within the framework of this MIGS conducted a study with a sample of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the south to directly assess the extent to which women participate in CSOs, quantifying if and where there is a gender gap, and identifying the barriers and constraints potentially excluding women from participation. The



study was completed in January 2007 and the main findings were presented by our main researcher, Stalo Lesta, at the Gender Gap workshop that took place during the 4<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on the 4<sup>th</sup> May 2007.

Click on the link below for additional information from our website.

<http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=96>

## **Daphne II: Secondary Educational Schools and Education in Values**



MIGS is a partner to a project coordinated by the University of Zaragoza and funded by the European Commission – Daphne Programme entitled “Secondary Education Schools and Education in values: Proposals for gender violence prevention”.

The main aim of the project is to contribute to gender violence prevention in secondary schools, given that it is one of the stages in which many young people begin their first relationships and begin to shape certain values in relation to the models of attraction.

Within the framework of this project, MIGS has completed a state of the art report on the current situation of violence against women in Cyprus. The project is currently undergoing its second phase whereby all three partner countries [Cyprus, Malta and Spain] conduct qualitative research in five secondary schools in Cyprus with the aim of assessing the Models of Attraction of Cypriot teenagers and also for discovering the perceptions concerning gender relations and gender roles which currently exist among the younger generation of Cyprus. All the reports will be available upon completion of the project.

Click on the link below for additional information from our website.

<http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=19>

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## **MIGS Events & Activities**

### **Book Presentation by Maria Kyriakidou**



MIGS organized a book presentation by Dr Maria Kyriakidou entitled “Politicizing the Soul: Gendered Perspectives to Local Democracy”.

The book reminds us of the need for a reconnection between feminism and politics not only on a theoretical level but also on an empirical level. The book adopts a feminist angle through which it examines the cases of elected women council members in the city of Thessalonica during the city elections of 2002.



Guest of honour was Mrs Anna Marangou, Archeologist, Art Historian and former candidate for Nicosia Mayor. The presentation took place at Intercollege on Monday, 5th of February at 6:30pm.

Dr. Maria Kyriakidou is an Assistant Professor of History and Politics at the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences, American College of Thessaloniki, Greece. She is also adjunct instructor of Greek history at the Hellenic Open University as well as adjunct instructor of Gender and Politics at the Department of Political Science, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece.

Click on the link below for additional information from our website.

<http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=204>

## Seminar on the Implementation of 2 National Action Plans



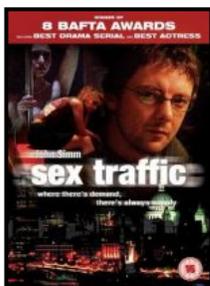
Mr. Lazaros Savvides, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Interior and Josie Christodoulou of MIGS

On the 5th March 2007, within the framework of International Women's Day, the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies organised a seminar entitled "The Implementation of the National Action Plan on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Exploitation of Young Persons and the National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion" funded by the National Machinery for Women's Rights.

The aim of the seminar was to provide a forum for the discussion and analysis of the two National Action Plans, the presentation of the current position and views of the various governmental departments and non-governmental organizations concerned, and subsequently raising awareness among policy makers and civil society actors.

The seminar was conducted in the form of constructive dialogue between individuals and organizations that play an important role in the empowerment of civil society and in promoting dialogue between the state and NGOs, with the aim to combat and eliminate gender discrimination. For a full seminar report please visit our website at: <http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=231>

## Film Screening: Sex Traffic



MIGS organized a screening of the award winning film Sex Traffic on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May at the Intercollege UNESCO Amphitheatre.

Sex Traffic, winner of eight BAFTA Awards, focuses on the global business trafficking young women into forced prostitution in European and American cities. Elena and Vara, two sisters from Europe's poorest country Moldova, leave their village together with Vara's fiancé Alex to start a new and better life in London. Some



days later, they realize the bitter reality: they were sold to traffickers who force the young women to work as prostitutes in several states in the Balkans.



### Film Festival: "Fear and passion: aspects of human sexuality in cinema"

The Friends of the Cinema Society, in collaboration with the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) and other organisations, organized the screenings of a film season entitled "Fear and passion: aspects of human sexuality in cinema" on the 8th -31st of May 2007. All screenings were held at the Cine Studio, Intercollege.

Miranda Christou, Board Member of MIGS gave an introductory talk to the screening of Brokeback Mountain on the 20th and 29th May 2007. To view the introductory talk please visit: [http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?attachment\\_id=269](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?attachment_id=269)

"While the topic of human sexuality is one that concerns us all, both at the personal and social level, it is not often that it becomes the object of public debate. This is precisely what led us to think that a film season on the subject could prove both interesting and useful. After all, the screening of a film is at once a personal and collective activity.

- The Friends of Cinema Society



Click on the link below for the full programme and additional information from our website: <http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=241>

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## MIGS Representation



### Action against Trafficking in Human Beings: Prevention, Protection and Prosecution

On behalf of MIGS, Rania Tollefson attended the sixth information and awareness raising seminar in the framework of the Campaign is organised in Nicosia on 15-16 February 2007 by the Equality Division of the Directorate General of Human Rights of the Council of Europe in co-operation with the Ministry of the Interior of Cyprus.

The seminar aimed to bring together Council of Europe keynote speakers and national officials with expertise in human rights, criminal and prosecution matters, as well as representatives of relevant national NGOs, from Council of Europe member states such as Bulgaria, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Moldova, Romania and the Ukraine.



According to the Council of Europe, “the conference constituted a valuable opportunity for participants to exchange and share their experiences of national legislative measures and policies to combating trafficking in the light of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings”.

To read more about this conference please visit the Council of Europe homepage at: [www.coe.int/t/dg2/trafficking/campaign/Docs/SeminarsConf/CyprusArt28feb\\_en.asp#TopOfPage](http://www.coe.int/t/dg2/trafficking/campaign/Docs/SeminarsConf/CyprusArt28feb_en.asp#TopOfPage)

### **Roundtable Discussion on the Role of Women in Civil Society**

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On the invitation of the Counselor for Public Affairs of the United States Embassy in Cyprus, Susana Pavlou, Programme Coordinator at MIGS attended a round table discussion on the Role of Women in Civil Society with Professor Kathleen McCarthy, Centre for Philanthropy and Civil Society, The Graduate Centre of the City University of New York.

The round table discussion took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> May at the Hilton Park Hotel in Nicosia and was attended by representatives of Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot women’s organizations as well as the Secretary General of the Cyprus National Machinery for Women’s Rights, Ms. Maro Varnavidou, and the Cyprus Law Commissioner, Ms. Leda Koursoumba.

Following a presentation of the development of women’s philanthropy in the United States in the last century, a lively discussion followed on women’s activism and the women’s movement in Cyprus and barriers towards women’s greater participation.

### **4th International Symposium – Panel on Gender Gap**

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Susana Pavlou, Programme Coordinator, represented MIGS at the “4th International Symposium: *The State of Civil Society: Where should we go from here?*” as Chair of the Panel on the ‘Gender Gap’.

Speakers at the panel included Maria Hadjipavlou, Fatma Azgin, and Itir Bagdadi who spoke on various aspects of gender equality and women’s activism.



### **UNDP International Civil Society Fair: Open Voices- Active Citizens**

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On behalf of MIGS, Rania Tollefson actively participated in the event “International Civil Society Fair: Open Voices- Active Citizens” organized by UNDP-ACT.

The aim of this event was to raise the levels of active participation in civil society through the strengthening and formation of local and international partnerships and networks, around the themes of corporate social responsibility, networking, fund raising and volunteering. The event took place on 3-5 May 2007 in the Ledra Palace area and included a variety of activities and functions ranging from seminars, workshops, entertainment programme with live bands and an



exhibition; including the set-up of stands representing more than 70 local and international Civil Society Organizations.

### **EUROMED Gender Connection Network**

On behalf of MIGS, Georgina Christou participated in a workshop organised by the Italian non-profit association CE.S.I.E Onlus – Center of Studies and European Initiatives based in Palermo – Sicily and funded by the Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures.



The aim of this workshop was to set the basis for the creation of a network combining various organisations across Europe and the Mediterranean which deal with gender, youth and cultural issues. The workshop was conducted in Palermo during the 22nd-28th of April 2007 and included countries such as Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Greece, Cyprus, Portugal, Turkey, Estonia and Italy. The aim of the network was defined during the workshop will be to

increase gender equality in the Euro-Med region and coordinate and help the participating organisations in identifying common areas of concern in order to develop various projects on these issues.

For more information please visit our website at:  
<http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=265>

### **Bicommunal Journalists Roundtable on Trafficking in Persons**



In honour of International Women's Day 2007, the American Embassy Nicosia's Bicommunal Support Program organized a round-table for Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot journalists from both sides of the "Green Line".

Also present were representatives from civil society organisations, including the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies represented by Josie Christodoulou.

Note: Picture courtesy of US Embassy

For more information on this event please visit:  
[www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=222](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=222)

### **Capacity Building Workshops**

Rania Tollefson attended two Island-Wide Workshops on Advocacy in the European Union at the Goethe Center in Nicosia on the 18th of April 2007. The two consecutive workshops were facilitated by Mr. Florent Sebban, Policy Advisor at Eurostep on increasing Civil Society Organisations' in local, regional and EU Development Policy. The workshops covered issues on "Understanding what "Development" and



“Development Policy” means in the EU and “Best Practices on How to Effectively Lobby and Influence Development Policy within the EU”.

Susana Pavlou attended the workshop “The Establishment of a Local Development Policy in Alignment with EU Policies”, organized by The Cyprus Family Planning Association, CARDET, and The Management Centre of the Mediterranean, which was held at The Cyprus Anti-Cancer Society Hall on the 30th of May, 2007, between 15.30 and 19.15. The workshop was organized within the framework of the general programme: “Building Capacity among Cyprus NGOs towards increased participation in EU Development Policy and Action” funded by the Presidency Fund.

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## Lobbying & Advocacy

### Cyprus in Violation of CEDAW Convention on the Issue of Children of Displaced Women

In a statement issued by MIGS, the Institute welcomed the efforts of the Committee for Refugees of the Cyprus Parliament and the Minister of Interior Neoclis Silikiotis to take measures to reduce the discrimination suffered by the children of displaced women, maintaining however that the recommended measures fall short of eliminating this discrimination.

Click on the link below for the full statement:  
<http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=197>

#### DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

As part of its objectives and advocacy work, MIGS often works with media professionals and attempts to disseminate information through all types of media. You can view all the media articles which mention MIGS and its work on our website at [“MIGS in the Media”](#) or [www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?page\\_id=157](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?page_id=157)



## £20, 000 for the Third Child; Long Term Solution or Short Sighted Fix?



The Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies issued a statement maintaining that the governmental proposal to give Cypriots £20,000 (around 35,000 Euro) for a third child represents a short-sighted, highly problematic solution which fails to provide a long-term, comprehensive, and sustainable vision of how to best address the serious implications of the demographic issue.

MIGS's statement on this issue attracted a lot of media attention. To view an extensive newspaper article detailing all the issues mentioned in the MIGS

statement visit: [http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?attachment\\_id=268](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?attachment_id=268) [Only available in Greek].

Click on the link below for the full press release:

<http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/wp/?p=243>

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## Women Writers: Fiction, Voice and Identity

MIGS recognises the impact of women writers in Literature in terms of understanding the multilayered levels of discrimination against women. Women writers have been traditionally excluded from the literary canon. Their voices, now heard, are a testament to change. Every 6 months our newsletter introduces women writers from diverse backgrounds that have dealt in revolutionary ways with a variety of themes relating to gender.

**"The silence depressed me. It wasn't the silence of silence. It was my own silence."**

Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*

**"Write what should not be forgotten."**

Isabel Allende

*Words*

*Sylvia Plath*

*Axes,  
After whose stroke the wood rings,  
And the echoes!  
Echoes travelling  
Off from the centre like horses.*

*The sap  
Wells like tears, like the  
Water striving  
To re-establish its mirror  
Over the rock.*

*That drops and turns,  
A white skull,  
Eaten by weedy greens,  
Years later I  
Encounter them on the road-*

*Words dry and riderless,  
The indefatigable hoof-taps.  
While  
From the bottom of the pool, fixed stars  
Govern a life.*



### Publications to Delight In

- o Fadumo Korn, *Born in the Big Rains* (2006)
- o Kate Chopin, *The Awakening* (1899)
- o Maxine Hong Kingston, *The Woman Warrior* (1976)
- o Ali Smith, *The Accidental* (2004)

### WHY WE LOVE 'EM!

#### Useful information on these writer's works:

In her memoir *Born in the Big Rains*, international activist **Fadumo Korn** illustrates her devastating transformation, recovery and empowerment after undergoing violent genital mutilation at the age of seven in Somalia, her native land. The novel has been characterised by reviews as "brutally honest, politically sensitive, and [a] bold addition to literature on global women's health."

**Kate Chopin's** bold subject matter on its own renders her a forerunner of 20<sup>th</sup> century feminist writers. Her work contains universal themes related to all women at all times. Her second novel *The Awakening* which describes a dissatisfied wife who explores her sexuality, was harshly criticised on the grounds of immoral standards when it was published in 1899. Her short stories reflect on similar themes. Two recommendations are: *The Story of an Hour*, and *The Storm*.

**Maxine Hong Kingston** is a Chinese American writer whose writing, a blend of fiction and non-fiction, often reflects her cultural heritage and carries themes which invert historical misogynistic practices such as foot-binding. *The Woman Warrior* is exceptional in the transgression of gender roles it portrays, as its protagonist is simultaneously both a tender mother and a feared warrior.

**Ali Smith** could certainly be described as a feminist writer who challenges literary forms and content in innovative ways. *The Accidental*, winner of the 2005 Whitbread Novel of the Year, shows the protagonist of the novel as both a mystery woman and a flesh and blood ordinary girl who interrupts and alters in various ways, the life of a family. She lives through the ages and breaks the boundaries between present and past, male and female roles: *Hello. I am Alhambra, named for the place of my conception. Believe me. Everything is meant. From my mother: grace under pressure, the uses of mystery; how to get what I want. From my father: how to disappear, how not to exist.*

For additional contribution on this page e-mail Eleni Skarpari at:  
[eleni@medinstgenderstudies.org](mailto:eleni@medinstgenderstudies.org)

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## Faces @ MIGS



### Rania Tollefson, Project Coordinator

Rania Tollefson graduated with a BA in Communications from the University of Indianapolis in the USA with a minor in Graphic Design. As a student, she became increasingly interested in the creative Arts and took classes on gender. She developed a keen interest in further developing her knowledge on and contributing to these areas. A tireless and dedicated team member, Rania plays a key role in MIGS lobbying and advocacy activities, is actively involved in dissemination and is responsible for the Institute's website and newsletter. She has recently assumed the



role of project coordinator for the project "Intercultural Dialogue on Violence against Women".

E-mail: [rania@medinstgenderstudies.org](mailto:rania@medinstgenderstudies.org)

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### **Eleni Skarpari, Project Administrator**

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Eleni Skarpari holds a BA in English Literature from Lancaster University and an MA in English Literature from Warwick University in the UK, with an area of concentration in feminist literary theory and the tensions as well as the interrelations within modernist women's writing between art and quantum physics.

For the past four years she has also been a lecturer of English at the Intercollege, focusing mainly on teaching creative as well as academic writing, and western literature. She has so far published two short stories and several poems in *Cypriot Identities*, edited by Karin B. Costello, and in *"Cadences: A Journal of Literature and the Arts in Cyprus"*, edited by Dr. Spurgeon Thompson. Additionally, for the past two years she has been the editor for the English magazine, 'View', published in Cyprus, dealing with diverse issues but concentrating on the Cypriot lifestyle.

Eleni has been with MIGS since September 2006 and plays a key role as Project Administrator in the implementation of the transnational project "Integration of Female Migrant Domestic Workers". With boundless enthusiasm and passion, Eleni has also represented MIGS in a number of training workshops and other events. Her research interests include female voices and identity within the experience of urban space and French feminist theory. A talented musician, Eleni spends her free time singing and lyric writing.

Email: [eleni@medinstgenderstudies.org](mailto:eleni@medinstgenderstudies.org)

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### **Christiana Kouta Nikolaou, Project Coordinator**

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Christiana Kouta Nikolaou is a Lecturer in the School of Health Sciences at the Cyprus Technological University. She teaches Health Promotion, Community Nursing, Transcultural Nursing and History of Nursing. Her main research interests include health promotion/education, community health, youth, sexuality, culture and gender. She has been an active member of the Family Planning Association for more than a decade and a member of the Board of Directors for 7 years. Christiana has been the President of the Cyprus

Family Planning Association for the past two years and is an amazing and tireless volunteer in Civil Society work! She is also a member of the Cyprus Bioethics Committee and the Management Committee of the COST action: "Health and Social Care for Migrants and Ethnic Minorities in Europe". A passionate scholar and caring colleague, Christiana had brought valuable insight and expertise to MIGS programmes. She is project coordinator and main researcher for the Daphne II project "Date Rape Cases among young Women".

Email: [nnikolaou@cytanet.com.cy](mailto:nnikolaou@cytanet.com.cy)



## POST YOUR EVENTS!

MIGS invites you to contribute to our newsletter by posting events such as conferences and training courses, as well as new publications on gender-related issues, articles etc

Please contact:

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