

Global Fantastika

July 4 & 5, 2016

Lancaster University, UK

Monday July 4th, 2016 – Day One

8:30 – 9:30 – Registration
9:30 – 10:50 – Session 1
11:00 – 12:20 – Session 2
12:20 – 1:30 – Lunch (not provided)
1:30 – 2:40 – Keynote: Mark Bould
2:50 – 4:10 – Session 3
4:20 – 5:20 – Session 4

Tuesday, July 5th, 2016 – Day Two

9:00 – 9:30 – Registration
9:30 – 10:40 – Keynote: David Punter
10:50 – 12:30 – Session 5
12:30 – 1:30 – Lunch (not provided)
1:30 – 2:50 – Session 6
3:00 – 4:20 – Session 7
4:30 – 5:40 – Keynotes: Sarah Illott and Chloe Buckley

See below for abstracts and bionotes.

Session 1A – Shapeshifters in Fantastika

- Rebecca Gibson, Lancaster University, UK; “In a dream I was a werewolf: the werewolf in contemporary witch pop.”
- Hanan Alazaz, Lancaster University, UK; “Salu’ah: The Gendered Werewolf of Arabia”
- Thomas Brassington, Lancaster University, UK (@TomWBrass); ““Using Massa’s Tools”: Shapeshifting and the Decolonisation of Fantasy.”

Session 1B – Trains, Saucers, and Automobiles: Modes of Transportation

- Chris Hussey; University of Cambridge, UK (@TheHussler101); “Tickets Please! – Trains, stations and travel in the works of China Miéville.”
- John Sharples, UK (@jjsharples); “Shapes in the Sky: The Atomic Bomb, Flying Saucer, and Sputnik I in Post-War American Culture.”
- Lauren Randall, Lancaster University, UK (@lauren1randall); “I live, I die, I live again!': Preservation, Peril and Progress in *Mad Max: Fury Road*.”

Session 2A – Neill Blomkamp’s Cinematography

- Rebecca Duncan, University of Stirling, UK; “Post-apartheid Sensoria: Beyond Imperialist Ecologies in Neill Blomkamp’s *District 9*.”
- Alan Gregory, Lancaster University, UK (@AlGregory1); “Triangulations of TetraVaal: Corporate Configurations of Homosociality in Neill Blomkamp’s *Chappie*.”
- Rachel Fox, Lancaster University, UK (@rachfox26); “‘This body represents hundreds of millions, maybe billions, of dollars’ worth of technology’: Bodies of Value in Neill Blomkamp’s *District 9* (2009) and *Chappie* (2015).”

Session 2B – Crossing Borders in Media

- Andrew Goddard, UK (@AnxiMusic); “Alice in *Hallyu*-land: the reconfiguration of the iconography of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* in K-pop videography during 2015.”
- Hannah Boaden, University of Edinburgh, UK (@hboaden); “Beyond Borders: Walter Mitty, Kumiko, and the Blurring of Fantasy and Reality.”
- Helga H Luthersdottir, University College London, UK; “From Monstrous Makers to Masters of their own Creation: Tracking the Uncanny Blacksmith.”

Keynote – Mark Bould: “Afrofuturism, Archive, Anthropocene.”

Mark Bould, University of the West of England, UK

Session 3A – Indigenous Peoples in Fantastika

- Brian Baker, Lancaster University, UK (@SciFiBrian); “Dreamspace, Dreamtime: Alan Garner’s *Strandloper*.”
- Will Smith, Lancaster University, UK (@likewinterblue); “‘The Fiery Windigo’: Madge Macbeth’s *Wings in the West* (1937).”
- Sławomir Koziół, University of Rzeszów, Poland; “Speculating about speculative fiction: Prospects of pigoons in Margaret Atwood’s *MaddAddam* trilogy in the light of the American ‘century of dishonour’.”

Session 3B – Borderlands and Landscapes in Fantastika

- Jessica Miller, University of Queensland, Australia; “Fantastic Territories: Critical cartography, creative cartography, and their implications for fantastic narratives.”
- Kevin Corstorphine, University of Hull, UK (@kevcorstorphine); “The Old Gringo and the Alien: The Reimagining of Ambrose Bierce.”
- Rob O’Connor, York St John University, UK, and University of York, UK (@RobOConnor26); “Walking the Streets with a Sloth on Your Back: Notions of ‘otherness’ in the urban landscapes of Lauren Beukes’ *Zoo City* and Nnendi Okorafor’s *Lagoon*.”

Session 4A – Folk and Fairy Tales

- Karen Graham, University of Aberdeen, UK (@kar_took); “‘I know all the stories ... but I still want to hear the world tell them the way only it can tell them’: Reimagining Russian folklore in *Deathless* and *Egg and Spoon*.”
- Dragoş Manea, University of Bucharest, Romania (@dc_manea); “The Post-Communist Fairy Tale: *Harap Alb continuă*’s Glocalized Aesthetics.”

Session 4B – Constructions of Fantastika

- Jim Clarke, Coventry University, UK; “‘He beheld me with alien eyes’: A corpus-based study of nationality, race and otherness in high fantasy literature.”
- Pascal Lemaire, Belgium; “Uchronie en francophonie : playing with time in French.”

Keynote – David Punter, “Arachnographia: Fantasy, Gothic, Spider.”

David Punter, University of Bristol, UK

Session 5A – Weird and Lovecraftian Literature

- Christina Scholz, University of Graz, Austria (@weird_prophet); “Ariekene Socio-Psycholinguistics and Postcolonial Awareness in China Miéville's *Embassytown*.”
- E. Dawson Varughese, UK/India; “Time, Truth and *Itihasa*: ‘weird’ New India in Arni's *The Missing Queen* (2013).”
- Kerry Dodd, Lancaster University, UK; “Eerie Egypt: Exhuming Archaeological Horrors in Blackwood and Lovecraft.”
- Valentino Paccosi, Lancaster University, UK; “From Lovecraft to *Hellboy*: Del Toro and the Lovecraftian.”

Session 5B – Eco-Critical Landscapes and Economic Breakdowns

- Pablo Gómez Muñoz, University of Zaragoza, Spain; “The Biopolitics of Climate Change in Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema.”
- Hollie Johnson, The University of Nottingham, UK (@HollieD_Johnson); “Borders under siege: Ecological dystopia and cyborg insurrections in Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*.”
- Sinéad Murphy, King's College London, UK (@S1nead_Murphy); “‘A dream of something beyond sex’: desire and agency in Ahmed Khaled Towfik's *Utopia*.”
- Douglas Leatherland, Durham University, UK; “Commerce and Empire in Col Buchanan's *Heart of the World*.”

Session 6A – Japanese Representations of Fantastika

- Inés Gregori Labarta, Lancaster University, UK (@InesGLabarta); “Crossing bridges: Western and Eastern in *Spirited Away*.”
- Filippo Cervelli, University of Oxford, UK (@musashi023); “Japanese Magical Realism: the Written Word in *Death Note*.”
- Ana Dosen, Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia; “Biogaming Limbo: Ressentiment of the New Era in Sion Sono's *Tag*.”

Session 6B – The Other in the Margins of Fantastika

- Katie Burton, Teesside University, UK (@KatieMayWrite); “‘Why do people go to these places, these places that are not for them?': Negotiating identity and national allegory in Helen Oyeyemi's *White is for Witching*.”
- Nedine Moonsamy, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa and University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa; “Women in the writing of Nnedi Okorafor and Lauren Beukes: animism and African feminism.”

- Kevan Manwaring, University of Leicester, UK (@bardicacademic); “Loving the Alien: the ethics of representation in Fantasy and Science Fiction.”

Session 7A – Young Adult Dystopic Fiction

- Andrew Tate, Lancaster University, UK (@cloudatlaskid); “Keep Watching: Spectacle, Rebellion and Apocalyptic Rites of Passage.”
- Bill Hughes, UK (@BillBloodyHughe); “Genre mutation and the dialectic of dystopia in Holly Black’s *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown*.”
- Alison Tedman, Buckinghamshire New University, UK; “Redefining boundaries from space to ground: *The 100* (2014-).”

Session 7B: Subversive Global Horror

- Kieran Foster, De Montfort University, UK (@kierantfoster); “Dracula Unseen: The Unmade Films of Hammer.”
- Enrique Ajuria Ibarra, Universidad de las Américas Puebla, Mexico (@kike_ajuria); “Alucardas and Alucardos: Vampiric Obsessions and Underground Mexican Horror Cinema.”
- Tugce Bicakci, Lancaster University, UK (@turkishygothic); “Turkish Police in Hell or Barbarism vs. Civilisation: A Gothic Reading of Can Evrenol’s feature film *Baskın* (2016).”

Keynote – Sarah Ilott and Chloe Buckley, “Feminist Rewritings of the Spiritual and Physical Wilderness of the Bush.”

Sarah Ilott, Teesside University, UK (@Dr_Ilott)

Chloe Buckley, Lancaster University, UK (@gothlit_chloe)

Conference Organizers:

Charul (Chuckie) Palmer-Patel, Lancaster University (@docfantasy_)

Rachel Fox, Lancaster University (@rachfox26)

*Day 1: Abstracts and Bionotes***Session 1A – Shapeshifters in Fantastika**

- Rebecca Gibson, Lancaster University, UK; “‘In a dream I was a werewolf’: the werewolf in contemporary witch pop.”
- Hanan Alazaz, Lancaster University, UK; “Salu’ah: The Gendered Werewolf of Arabia”
- Thomas Brassington, Lancaster University, UK (@TomWBrass); “‘Using Massa’s Tools’: Shapeshifting and the Decolonisation of Fantasy.”

Rebecca Gibson, Lancaster University, UK:**‘In a dream I was a werewolf’: the werewolf in contemporary witch pop**

This paper posits that the werewolf archetype of European folklore is redefined as a site of female power and transformation in contemporary global witch pop, allowing female singer-songwriters to reposition themselves as no longer the Little Red Riding Hood of folk tales but as the wolf instead. Witch pop, which I identify as a sub-genre of witch house, has its roots in the magic realism of Massive Attack and Tori Amos, pairing mythology and folklore-driven lyrics with synth and electronic soundscapes to produce a fantastic aesthetic which allows often dark subject matter to be delivered in the guise of glimmering fairy tale mini-narratives. This paper tracks two parallel threads in the reinterpretation of the werewolf in this genre: traditionally a masculine symbol of the animalistic or primitive vying with the civilised intellectual, I argue that the werewolf is reinvented as a means for female empowerment through the work of artists such as CocoRosie, First Aid Kit, and Cat Power. Following in the footsteps of the female werewolf as a contemporary iteration of the monstrous feminine in texts such as *Ginger Snaps* (2000) and *The Last Werewolf* trilogy (2011), these artists reimagine the werewolf archetype as a metaphor for the frustrations and evolutions of the female singer-songwriter in a patriarchal society. Often also used as a metaphor for animalistic sexuality, here too these artists affect a shift in the interpretation of the werewolf; Bianca and Sierra Casady of CocoRosie employ the archetype in their 2007 song *Werewolf* not only as a means of transformation but as a means to symbolically declare defeat over the lingering power of their abusive father. I conclude that the werewolf is no longer the territory of the male character torn between his primitive and civilised instincts but is claimed as the province of powerful creative women with a healthy respect for global folklore; where the vampire and the zombie are continually recycled as convenient symbols in neo-liberal narratives of consumerism, the werewolf retains its stance as a symbol of transformation in a new arena.

Bionote; Rebecca Gibson is a future PhD student at Lancaster University. Her thesis ‘Plastic Gothic: Exposing the Gothicisation of Plastic Surgery and Body Modification in Text and Media’ focuses on Gothic texts which use body modification as a device to explore identity and the disruption of prevalent power structures. Her other interests include feminism, sci-fi and nihilism.

Hanan Alazaz, Lancaster University, UK:**Salu'ah: The Gendered Werewolf of Arabia**

Roaming the deserts of Arabia looking for men to devour, narratives about the nature of the Salu'ah's activities are charged with horror. Her demonic nature shifts her from human to animal. But, her gender questions the very structures that abject her as a monster and a female. This paper reviews a number of folktales that represent the Salu'ah, the she-wolf of Arabia. It analyzes how the narrative functions within the Bedouin social environment. It analyzes the imagery within these narratives to generate an image of the context in which this myth operates.

Through a psychoanalytical reading of the narratives, this paper analyzes how the myth shifts the social hierarchies to empower the feminine. It reviews the role of her transformation into the maternal and how it contributes to the figure of the werewolf as a female and as a monster. These narratives invert gender structures of heteronormative discourse when the monstrous feminine in the she-wolf destroys the location of its abjection which functions within the patriarchal discourse. The exaggeration of her abjection highlights her as an emasculator. She is a mother that devours. The female she-wolf, the Salu'ah, emerges as more powerful than men of the desert where the Bedouin man is perceived to be the hero. She represents his most horrific fears.

Bionote: PhD candidate at Lancaster University and Lecturer of Fiction and Comparative Literature at Princess Nurah University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia-
Currently researching the representation of the rejection of motherhood in postwar American novel.

Thomas Brassington, Lancaster University, UK: @TomWBrass**"Using Massa's Tools": Shapeshifting and the Decolonisation of Fantasy**

Fantasy traditionally invokes European mythology as its basis for world-building. This European basis pairs the Fantastic with the language and ideologies of the (ex)coloniser, implying that fantasy is pre-disposed to functioning as an extension of the colonial narrative. Writers such as Nalo Hopkinson have expressed such anxieties, arguing that 'to be a person of colour writing science fiction is to be under suspicion of having internalized one's colonization' (Hopkinson, *So Long Been Dreaming*, 7). These anxieties are further magnified when we consider the 'great fantasy colonization of the 1980s' Brian Attebery highlights (Attebery, *Stories about Stories*, 138). In contemporary Western culture, fantasy is firmly configured as a genre of the coloniser, and a tool that expresses colonial discourses.

However, there are an increasing number of fantastical texts that resist aligning themselves with colonial discourses, intimating a wider decolonisation of fantasy. This is particularly marked in texts where elements of the colonial discourse are used counter-discursively. The component that I will be examining is the pairing of the 'native' with the 'animal' in colonial discourses that David Punter identifies as a process of de-territorialising the colonised space (Punter, *Postcolonial Imaginings*, 145-146). This paper will focus on shapeshifting, focusing on the characters of Onyesonwu in Nnedi Okorafor's *Who Fears Death* (DAW Books, 2010) and Zamia in Saladin Ahmed's *Throne of the Crescent Moon* (Gollancz, 2012).

Through Zamia and Onyesonwu, I intend to demonstrate that shapeshifting acts as a counter-discursive tool, since these characters are instilled with power through this ability, rather than stripped of it. From this, I hope to effectively demonstrate the subversive use of 'massa's tools' (both in fantasy more generally and the 'native/animal' pairing I am focusing on), and how this is indicative of an emergent decolonisation of fantasy.

Bionote: Thomas Brassington is completing his MA in English Literary Studies at Lancaster University. He has presented papers this year on Gothic drag queens, and Orientalism in video games. His main research interests are drag queens, postcolonialism, and corporeality. He hopes to do a PhD one day.

Session 1B – Trains, Saucers, and Automobiles: Modes of Transportation

- Chris Hussey; University of Cambridge, UK (@TheHussler101); "Tickets Please! – Trains, stations and travel in the works of China Miéville."
- John Sharples, UK (@jjsharples); "Shapes in the Sky: The Atomic Bomb, Flying Saucer, and Sputnik I in Post-War American Culture."
- Lauren Randall, Lancaster University, UK (@lauren1randall); "'I live, I die, I live again!': Preservation, Peril and Progress in *Mad Max: Fury Road*."

Chris Hussey; University of Cambridge, UK; @TheHussler101

Tickets Please! – Trains, stations and travel in the works of China Miéville.

In Miéville's multitude of works, modes of travel feature prevalently, and some of which are adapted to suit the places and settings he crafts. However, the trusted source of locomotion in the form of the train features prevalently in a number of his novels, from *Iron Council* (2004) and the eponymous "perpetual train" to *Railsea's* (2012) mysterious tracked world. These trains often represent the beginning of journeys, and the departure from the conventional, where Miéville often subverts the traditional linearity of train journey for 'other' purposes.

Trains, within these works, represent the engine through which the narrative is often driven, as a focal point for societal comment and critique as well as outright rebellion. The

use of trains and their related functionaries is furthermore a platform to represent opportunity, such as through the Iron Council's desire to lay new tracks and to go renegade, or how *Un Lun Dun* (2007) implies that 'Manifest Station' should reflect the many meanings of the word 'manifest'; as somewhere from where they will journey and return to. In a similar way, the centrality of Perdido Street Station to the plot within the novel of the same name (2000), and within New Crobuzon, is indicative of the importance of these interchanges for both traveller and activist alike.

This paper reflects on the importance of trains within a number of Miéville's novels, to consider and analyse their use as metaphors, plot devices, and modes of transport. Their prominence and prevalence within Miéville's corpus suggest they may act as a carriage for ideas, and I will look to unpick why they may represent more than just a vehicle within these works. All aboard!

Bionote: I'm embarking on my PhD journey at the University of Cambridge, exploring real and literary place in children's literature, questing to continue collecting letters after my name. I balance part-time study with working for the charity Early Education, indulging both my love of children's literature and education at every opportunity.

John Sharples, UK: @jjsharples

Shapes in the Sky: The Atomic Bomb, Flying Saucer, and Sputnik I in Post-War American Culture

The flying saucer within post-war American popular culture became intertwined with narratives of home, technology, and authority. As an object embodying a specific cultural moment, the flying saucer became a point where discussion of aesthetics, power and modernity conjoined, projected into American minds via print media, fiction, comics, advertisements, songs and material culture - an alternative icon to blue suede shoes or Marilyn Monroe. As a 'monster,' this symbol of modernity possessed a certain plasticity of identity, evoking feelings of fear, fascination, even playfulness. As an historical object, assessed in relation to technological and social change, the flying saucer became thoroughly domesticated within American society. This paper situates Kenneth Arnold's initial sighting of a 'flying saucer' in June 1947 within a cultural and science-fictional space from the launch of the atomic bomb in August 1945 to the launch of Sputnik I in October 1957, considering how accounts of these technologies questioned official, institutional and scientific explanations, inviting readers to participate in the debate, subverting accepted power hierarchies. These responses can be framed in sensory terms - as an interplay between two orientations of looking - up and down - and listening. Looking up, 'watching the skies!' in science-fiction parlance, suggests an observational attentiveness and a capacity for day-dreaming. Looking down suggests a down-to-earth-ness, or a myopic existence, with one's head in the sand. In auditory terms, the atomic bomb was seen before it was heard due to the relative speeds of light and sound; the flying saucer was said to swoosh silently across the sky overhead; whilst Sputnik was heard only through its beeping

via operators hunched over their radio sets. This paper develops previously published work from the *Cultural and Social History* journal.

Bionote: Dr John Sharples completed his PhD at Lancaster University. He is currently working on a book for Manchester University Press on the cultural history of chess-players. His academic interests include chess, flying saucers, monsters, etc. See <https://lancaster.academia.edu/JohnSharples> for current information.

Lauren Randall, Lancaster University, UK: @lauren1randall

'I live, I die, I live again!': Preservation, Peril and Progress in *Mad Max: Fury Road*

Credited as an artist who 'rewrote the post-apocalyptic action genre' [Tallerico, 2015] with his *Mad Max* 'trilogy', George Miller revived his creation to produce a monstrous success in cinemas and award shows alike with *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015). Despite entertaining a new look (regarding both visual techniques and casting), *Mad Max: Fury Road* still grapples with the ideas and preoccupations of its predecessors: an eroding (and chroming) civilisation, survival at any cost, and redemption. This paper thus seeks to examine how these elements have evolved and manifested in this new iteration and why 'Mad' Max Rockatansky and his quest for survival – and, ultimately, salvation – is still seen as relevant thirty years after his previous onscreen ride.

It posits that the trajectory of the motor-battles travelling across the eponymous terrain, through the heterogeneous landscape of Miller's world (now harder to simply label 'Australia'), presents a search amidst chaos for a harmonious relationship between the old and new, between preservation and progression. It argues that the vehicular onslaught and simultaneous escape/pursuit narrative through natural, occupied and changing environments projects and emphasises the idea of a 'return' to and awareness of the past and previous as aiding movement forwards into a brighter, enlightened existence.

As such, the paper will also consider the cultural and social narratives outside of the film that *Mad Max: Fury Road* engages with, specifically how the stasis induced by the villain Immortan Joe's rule over the Citadel is positioned parallel to discussions of patriarchal capitalism. It will probe the idea of motherhood, breeding and property that fuel the plot's action as well as the hierarchies the film displays, thus exploring the complexities and connotations of Imperator Furiosa and her role as a saviour in a male-driven world.

Bionote: Lauren Randall is a PhD student at Lancaster University. Her doctoral thesis is centred upon the concept of 'Sunshine Gothic' (primarily Beach Gothic and Tourism Gothic) in contemporary American narratives, fiction and non-fiction. She has previously given papers on 'nightmares and hopelessness on American beaches' and 'uncanniness and Californian vampires'.

Session 2A – Neill Blomkamp’s Cinematography

- Rebecca Duncan, University of Stirling, UK; “Post-apartheid Sensoria: Beyond Imperialist Ecologies in Neill Blomkamp’s *District 9*.”
- Alan Gregory, Lancaster University, UK (@AlGregory1); “Triangulations of TetraVaal: Corporate Configurations of Homosociality in Neill Blomkamp’s *Chappie*.”
- Rachel Fox, Lancaster University, UK (@rachfox26); “‘This body represents hundreds of millions, maybe billions, of dollars’ worth of technology’: Bodies of Value in Neill Blomkamp’s *District 9* (2009) and *Chappie* (2015).”

Rebecca Duncan, University of Stirling, UK:**Post-apartheid Sensoria: Beyond Imperialist Ecologies in Neill Blomkamp’s *District 9***

This paper situates Neill Blomkamp’s *District 9* (2009) within the socio-economic context of contemporary South Africa, a country in which racialised inequalities cultivated under imperial and apartheid rule have been compounded following democracy by a governmental enthusiasm for neoliberal policy-making. In a postapartheid geography already segregated economically along racial lines, neoliberalism’s minimisation of state support, its prioritisation of the private and the multinational over the public and the local, has broadly worked to perpetuate old, now-nameless oppressions. As it uncannily reanimates historic inequalities in contemporary South Africa, neoliberal capital equally overlays these with new, unevenly distributed permutations of precarity, exemplified, in the post-democratic moment, by crime as alternative accumulation, by waves of xenophobic violence, and by upsurges of militarised law enforcement designed to control a population increasingly intolerant of its circumstances.

District 9 grapples with this context of compounded oppressions, and, like the work of a growing number of contemporary South African authors and artists, does so with recourse to a localised vocabulary of horror. I argue that Blomkamp’s manipulation of the embattled body constitutes, in the first instance, an attempt to articulate a particular postapartheid *sensorium*: a lived experience of degradation, produced through the concatenation of historic and contemporary violences.

Secondly, I suggest Blomkamp’s use of horror seeks to perform a postcolonial, ecocritical function. Here, I draw on Jason W. Moore’s conception of colonialism as an ‘ecological regime’ (Moore, 2015), in which imperial hierarchies of race and culture inflect definitions of ‘Nature’ as that which falls beyond humanity, and might thus be appropriated for the ends of profit. This reading focuses the real economic continuity between apartheid and neoliberal ages, and it situates the human/non-human dualism at the crux of contemporary

and historical degradations. In his overtly hybrid invocations of horror as ‘corporeal transgression’ (Reyes, 2015), I suggest Blomkamp attempts to disrupt binary figurations of human and extra-human worlds, seeking to assert both the violent fall-out of a Nature-Society split, and a renegotiation of this relation in less oppositional terms. To conclude, I turn to Nigerian author Nnedi Okorafor’s *Lagoon* (2014) – a critical response to *District 9* – and comment on the limitations to Blomkamp’s work this text identifies, and the alternatives it presents.

Bionote: Rebecca Duncan completed her DAAD-funded PhD in South African Gothic at Giessen University (Germany) in June 2015, and is currently Teaching Fellow in Gothic literature at the University of Stirling. She has published articles and book chapters in the fields of Gothic, postcolonial and South African literary studies, and her monograph, entitled *South African Gothic*, is forthcoming with University of Wales Press.

Alan Gregory, Lancaster University, UK; @AlGregory1

Triangulations of TetraVaal: Corporate Configurations of Homosociality in Neill Blomkamp’s *Chappie*

In *Contemporary Masculinities in Fiction, Film and Television* (2014), Brian Baker contends that during the twenty-first century, the ‘crisis of masculinities that became prominent at the end of the 1990s ... has become the new hegemon’ (1). The new dominant that Baker identifies incorporates references to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s concept of the homosocial outlined in *Between Men* (1985), a notion that highlights cultural anxieties concerning rituals of male bonding. For Baker, homosociality represents a cultural practice which indicates that male imperatives of display ... produce backwards projections of hegemony (244). These backwards projections are integral to the perpetuation of a contemporary dominant gender script predicated on notions of masculinities in crisis.

A contemporary, global science fiction film which displays homosociality as symptomatic of a new masculine hegemony is Neill Blomkamp’s *Chappie* (2015). Blomkamp’s presentation of the professional rivalry between Deon Wilson (Dev Patel) and Vincent Moore (Hugh Jackman), employees of weapons manufacturer TetraVaal, represents a corporate configuration of Sedgwick’s concept. The intense relationship between the engineers, as they develop their opposing models of militarised technology, embodies the competitiveness that Sedgwick ascribes to male homosocial desire. Blomkamp’s corporate revision of homosociality is triangulated by TetraVaal CEO, Michelle Bradley, (Sigourney Weaver). Despite her professional authority, Bradley is reduced to a conduit who facilitates the homosocial bond between Wilson and Moore through her allocation of funding to Wilson’s Scouts and, latterly, to Moore’s alternative heavy weapons platform, the MOOSE. The competing technologies also inform a broader, ideological opposition which galvanises Wilson and Moore’s antagonism. Moore champions his machine, controlled neurologically by a human pilot, in response to reservations concerning Wilson’s development of Artificial Intelligence which threatens to emasculate Moore and render humanity obsolete.

Bionote: Alan Gregory completed his doctoral thesis at Lancaster University in 2013. His publications include 'Fabricating Narrative Prosthesis: Fashioning (Disabled) Gothic Bodies in Tim Burton's *Batman Returns*' (2014), and 'Staging the Extraordinary Body: Masquerading Disability in Patrick McGrath's *Martha Peake*' (Routledge, 2015). He is currently editing a special issue of *Studies in Gothic Fiction* on Disabled Gothic Bodies, and completing the monograph *Disabled Male Bodies in Contemporary Gothic Fiction* for Palgrave Macmillan's Literary Disability Studies series.

Rachel Fox, Lancaster University, UK; @rachfox26

"This body represents hundreds of millions, maybe billions, of dollars' worth of technology": Bodies of Value in Neill Blomkamp's *District 9* (2009) and *Chappie* (2015)

In Neill Blomkamp's South African films, *District 9* (2009) and *Chappie* (2015), the "human" is metamorphosed into the "animal" and the "technological" respectively. In this paper, I consider the different modes of value – corporate and phenomenological – attached to these transformed bodies, and examine how Blomkamp's films' critically dismantle the corporate systems that provide civil services (in the form of refugee relocation and police force).

Donna Haraway describes a cyborg as "a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism" (291). I make a case that Blomkamp's metamorphosed protagonists are cyborgs: the human-alien hybrid with a biometric signature that operates alien technology in *District 9*; and AI technologies and digitised human consciousness in *Chappie*. These cybernetic elements are valued by the privatised corporations MNU and Tetra Vaal as prospective commercial gain: How can this cybernetic/ biometric system be weaponised? How much will it pay? Additionally, in the case of *District 9*, non-human bodies, despite demonstrating human thinking skills, are *de-valued*, and are bio-political subjects: registered, documented, relocated... disposable. The treatment of the "prawns" in *District 9* is disturbingly similar to some of the recent rhetoric surrounding the Syrian refugee crisis, with British Prime Minister, David Cameron, calling the refugees a "swarm."

The films' narratives work to deconstruct the corporate valuing system (that registers utility above humanity). Haraway has argued that "biotechnologies are the crucial tools recrafting our bodies. These tools embody and enforce new social relations" (302). The biotechnological and metamorphosed protagonists in Blomkamp's films introduce new processes through which to conceive the marginalised "Other." I will consider how consciousness, sensations, and emotions are embodied within these biotechnological beings wherein the "body is the fabric into which all objects are woven" and "the general instrument of... 'comprehension'" (Merleau-Ponty 235). In summary, this paper critically examines the different value systems at work in Blomkamp's films, and suggests that Blomkamp's disassembling of corporate structures has resonances within current geopolitics.

Bio-note: Rachel is a research student at Lancaster University. Her research is predominantly focused on inter-media relations, post-colonialism, neo-imperialism, and feminism. She is co-organiser of *Global Fantastika*, and her article, “‘The other garden’: Palimpsestic and abject faerie spaces and species,” in the *Locating Fantastika* special issue of *The Luminary* is currently forthcoming.

Session 2B – Crossing Borders in Media

- Andrew Goddard, UK (@AnxiMusic); “Alice in *Hallyu*-land: the reconfiguration of the iconography of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* in K-pop videography during 2015.”
- Hannah Boaden, University of Edinburgh, UK (@hboaden); “Beyond Borders: Walter Mitty, Kumiko, and the Blurring of Fantasy and Reality.”
- Helga H Luthersdottir, University College London, UK; “From Monstrous Makers to Masters of their own Creation: Tracking the Uncanny Blacksmith.”

Andrew Goddard, UK; @AnxiMusic

Alice in Hallyu-land: the reconfiguration of the iconography of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland in K-pop videography during 2015.

K-pop, South Korean pop music, is audiovisual in nature, rather than just a musical movement. K-pop music videos serve a multitude of functions within the K-pop subculture, and much like music videos of other cultures, they incorporate icons and visual references. One such series of references which appears to be prevalent in K-pop music videos is the fantastical iconography of Alice in Wonderland, derived from *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* (Carroll, published in 1865).

In this paper, I will be focusing on K-pop music videos released in 2015 only, as K-pop’s industries are constantly transforming, not merely in terms of musical styles. Therefore, investigating a fractional timeframe within K-pop is fruitful, so as to accurately pinpoint trends rather than assuming vague generalisations over longer periods of time. Additionally, I am limiting this investigation to videos released by female artists only, as they predominantly use this iconography, and as K-pop is highly gendered, it is appropriate to focus on female artists exclusively.

The two videos I will be examining use the iconography of Alice in staggeringly different ways. Dalshabet’s “JOKER” (April, 2015) encodes Alice imagery in the costumes and sets of the video to fuel a sexually-charged aesthetic, with occasional allusions to Alice’s narratives. This iconography is also fused with imagery of Heath Ledger’s portrayal of The Joker from 2008’s *The Dark Knight*, to form a striking cultural hybrid. Contrastingly, IU’s “Twenty-three” (October, 2015) lyrics and video heavily reference the narrative qualities of Alice’s cultural capital. IU relates her liminal age-range as a young woman to the imagery of Alice, and incorporates a psychedelic visual rendering of Alice’s adventures into her video. These are greatly contrasting reconfigurations of this imagery, but they both exemplify Korea’s attempts to exert greater cultural influence globally, known as *Hallyu*, to audiences outside of Korea.

Bio-note: Andrew Goddard is currently working full time as the Departmental Assistant for Lancaster University's Institute for Contemporary Arts, after graduating from Lancaster with a BA (Hons) in Mathematics & Music. He hopes to continue within academia in the future, focusing on East-Asian audio-visual cultures, particularly K-Pop and other Japanese video games.

Hannah Boaden, University of Edinburgh, UK: @hboaden

Beyond Borders: Walter Mitty, Kumiko, and the Blurring of Fantasy and Reality

The introduction of global digital communication through internet forums has enabled a highly accessible method for sharing and expanding knowledge. Literature and other media have become subject to critical discussion and theorising on ancillary information that would support its plausibility to exist within reality. The ability to form these new levels of depth for imagined spaces and beings means that the distinction between fantasy and reality is blurring.

This blending is an essential theme in *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* (SLWM, Stiller, 2013) and *Kumiko: The Treasure Hunter*, (KTH, Zellner, 2014) where each film presents confusion for its protagonist as well as the viewer. Walter and Kumiko both exhibit mundane existences, but it is only when their lives are threatened by change that they actively determine the outcome through a journey across the world that places them in improbable scenarios.

In this paper, I will discuss the dissolution of boundaries. The merging of fantasy and reality correlates to the breakdown of the borders between nations (global travel) and borders in communication (technological developments). In contrast, it is noteworthy that both films emphasise the prevalence of language barriers. Despite our spatial freedom and ability to converse, comprehension itself remains a formidable obstacle.

I intend to illustrate how SLWM and KTH individually approach the merging of fantasy and reality, drawing attention to their style, cultural exchange and references to existing media. The dialogue and *mise en scène* demonstrate an unmistakable emphasis on misapprehension and communication. By examining these films in this manner, it shows how American films with different audience appeal can be used to address continuing cultural boundaries whilst other borders are breaking down.

Bionote: Hannah graduated in 2015 from Lancaster University with a first-class degree in (BA) Fine Art and is due to commence an MPhil in Art at the University of Edinburgh. Her study interests include: transitional structures, visual culture, temporal perceptions of spaces, and understanding human experience through the arts.

Helga H Luthersdottir, University College London, UK:

From Monstrous Makers to Masters of their own Creation: Tracking the Uncanny Blacksmith

Fantasy has always held close ties to mythologies and legends, using them freely as source and inspiration. The methods vary, from adaptations of basic storylines to creations of entire worlds to amalgamation of locations, characters, and plot. Thus fantasy has reanimated countless figures of ancient times, be they gods, serpents, wolves, or warriors.

One such character is the monstrous maker, the uncanny blacksmith widely known from various mythologies and legends. Although celebrated for his usefulness fulfilling the needs of gods and kings, he remains a perpetual outsider due to his physical impairments or social shortcomings. His connections to manual labour and compulsive productivity lower his class status, while his genius and artistry elevates it, creating a social paradox in otherwise exemplary societies. Revered yet feared for his abilities and inventions, the maker is first and foremost a provider, with the greatest of his creations belonging to others leaving the maker himself all but forgotten.

All of these characteristic and contradictions are embraced by contemporary fantasy where, yet again, the fascination with the monstrous maker crosses both borders and art forms. The smith's abilities are coveted as before, the creations more magical than ever, the uncanniness even greater. But one thing has changed. In line with contemporary fascination with the individual these smiths are not only masters but keepers of their inventions.

Focusing on the shift in emphasis from community to individual, I will explore the developments of the monstrous maker from antiquity to contemporary times, paying special attention to the global appeal and adaptation of this uncanny figure in *Iron Man* (Dir. Jon Favreau, 2008), *Sacred Blacksmith*, Isao Miura (story), Yamada Koutarou (pencils/inks), and *The Blacksmith*, Richard Sparkman and Malik Evans (story), Alberto Muriel (pencils/inks), to name but a few texts.

Bionote: Helga holds a PhD in Comparative Literature from University of Colorado, Boulder. She currently convenes the Icelandic BA Programme at the Department of Scandinavian Studies, UCL. Her research interests include visual representations of Norse Mythology and the Nordic and Arctic Region in popular culture, Nordic Noir, and Nordic (post)colonialisms.

Keynote – “Afrofuturism, Archive, Anthropocene.”

Mark Bould, University of the West of England, UK

Abstract tba

Session 3A – Indigenous Peoples in Fantastika

- Brian Baker, Lancaster University, UK (@SciFiBrian); “Dreamspace, Dreamtime: Alan Garner’s *Strandloper*.”

- Will Smith, Lancaster University, UK (@likewinterblue); “‘The Fiery Windigo’: Madge Macbeth’s *Wings in the West* (1937)”
- Sławomir Koziół, University of Rzeszów, Poland; “Speculating about speculative fiction: Prospects of pigeons in Margaret Atwood’s *MaddAddam* trilogy in the light of the American ‘century of dishonour’”

Brian Baker, Lancaster University, UK; @SciFiBrian

Dreamspace, Dreamtime: Alan Garner’s *Strandloper*

This paper will consider Alan Garner’s 1996 novel *Strandloper*, in which William Buckley, a Cheshire labourer is being taught to read by the son of his local lord and magistrate. Subject to dreams and visions, Buckley is transported to Australia on fabricated charges of trespass, when his real ‘crime’ was to participate in ancient (pagan) fertility rituals and trying to read and write. Buckley escapes from the penal colony and is rescued by an Aboriginal tribe, after which he enters the Dreamtime and assumes an Aboriginal subjectivity. *Strandloper* narrates the arrival of further English settlers onto tribal lands, and Buckley’s renegotiation of his English and Aboriginal subjectivities. The paper will consider Garner’s layering of English and Aboriginal ritual and storytelling, projections of English and Australian space through structures of myth and political power, and themes of transnational and local mobility.

Bionote: Dr Brian Baker is a Senior Lecturer in English at Lancaster University. He has published, among other things, books on masculinity (*Masculinities in Fiction and Film: Representing Men in Popular Genres 1945-2000* and *Contemporary Masculinities in Fiction, Film and Television*), Iain Sinclair and science fiction, and is writing, among other things, an article on Garner’s *Red Shift* and its tv adaptation for a forthcoming collection on film and tv representations of the North of England.

Will Smith, Lancaster University, UK; @likewinterblue

‘The Fiery Windigo’: Madge Macbeth’s *Wings in the West* (1937)

Madge Macbeth is one of many popular Canadian women writers who, as Carole Gerson notes, were widely read between 1920 and 1950 but ‘were not treated seriously by the academics who shaped the canon in the 1950s and 1960s.’ Consequently Macbeth has only received tentative attention in the last decade. Her body of work is broad, constituting a number of published novels in different genres, non-fiction works and a similarly extensive career writing in magazines and newspapers. This paper focuses on one little-studied work of Macbeth’s, *Wings in the West* (1937), a science-fiction adventure story co-authored with Eedson Louis Millard Burns. The working title for *Wings in the West* was ‘The Fiery Windigo,’ and the novel portrays a Northern Ontario landscape rife with reports of unusual events and missing persons seemingly connected to the figure of the Windigo. On

publication, J. R. MacGillivray reviewed the text alongside a number of Northern adventure novels, and was characteristic of the canonising process by suggesting: 'I would hardly recommend any of them on merely literary grounds'. Nevertheless, surveys of Canadian science fiction have included the novel as a key text from the early twentieth-century. This paper will examine how Madge Macbeth's use of the figure of the Windigo functions. Focusing on the relationships between English-Canadian, Cree, Metis and Russian peoples and the use of landscape alongside multiple ideas of the Windigo, this paper re-examines the politics of Canadian literary fantastika.

Bionote: Will Smith is an Associate Lecturer in the Department of English and Creative Writing at Lancaster University. His current research explores the representation of Toronto in fiction in the first half of the twentieth century with a particular focus on Francis Pollock, Isabelle Hughes, Bradda Field and Fred Jacob. Other recent work has focused on the role of book awards in shaping a relationship with place in Toronto and in North-West England.

Sławomir Koziół, University of Rzeszów, Poland:

Speculating about speculative fiction: Prospects of pigeons in Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy in the light of the American "century of dishonour"

The paper will investigate parallels between pigeons – genetically modified pigs with human-level intelligence that appear in Margaret Atwood's *MaddAddam* trilogy – and North-American Indians in the 19th century. Drawing on a number of philosophical perspectives, starting from Cartesian humanism and ending with Hobbesian contractarianism, the paper will at first analyse the way in which the status of pigeons – as perceived from human perspective – changes in the course of the trilogy, until they enter into a tactical alliance with humans, in order to fight other humans.

It is this final development in the relationship between pigeons and humans, when the pigeons apparently find themselves in the position of humans' equals, that will be used for drawing parallels between the situation of pigeons in the trilogy and that of North-American Indians in their relationship with the white settlers and the American government in the 19th century. Using historical accounts of this relationship, especially the use of Indian scouts by the American Army, the paper will indicate various attitudes of white settlers towards Native Americans and the fact that many treaties between Indians and the American government were broken by the white people as soon as the cooperation ceased to be profitable for them, so that the period was dubbed "the century of dishonour." The paper will argue that the main disadvantage of Native Americans – the source of their weakness and white settlers' condescension – was their technological backwardness, which allowed white settlers and the American government to break the agreements with impunity – a situation most succinctly described by words of Hilaire Belloc: "Whatever happens, we have got / The Maxim Gun,- and they have not."

If the technological backwardness of Native Americans was a result of a different path of cultural development, the paper will argue that pigoons are anatomically incapable of technical creativity because they lack fingers – a fact clearly indicated in the trilogy itself. Thus, although the trilogy ends with the alliance between pigoons and humans, the paper will argue that this situation would not last long in the time of a complete collapse of human civilization.

Bionote: Sławomir Koziół holds a PhD degree from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków, Poland, and presently is a lecturer at the University of Rzeszów, Poland. He has written a monograph on representations of social space in the twentieth-century British novel, as well as a number of scholarly articles dealing with pop culture, new media art and representations of art in fiction. His recent academic interests include also science-fiction and post-humanism.

Session 3B – Borderlands and Landscapes in Fantastika

- Jessica Miller, University of Queensland, Australia; “Fantastic Territories: Critical cartography, creative cartography, and their implications for fantastic narratives.”
- Kevin Corstorphine, University of Hull, UK (@kevcorstorphine); “The Old Gringo and the Alien: The Reimagining of Ambrose Bierce.”
- Rob O'Connor, York St John University, UK, and University of York, UK (@RobOConnor26); “Walking the Streets with a Sloth on Your Back: Notions of ‘otherness’ in the urban landscapes of Lauren Beukes’ *Zoo City* and Nnendi Okorafor’s *Lagoon*.”

Jessica Miller, University of Queensland, Australia:

Fantastic Territories: Critical cartography, creative cartography, and their implications for fantastic narratives.

The fantasy map is ‘...often taken to be a hallmark of fantasy and one of the genre’s most distinctive characteristics’ (Ekman, 11). If the fantasy map is, indeed, one of the conventions of the genre, what impact do the conventions of the map itself have on the ways fantastic narratives are written and presented?

This is a question particularly pertinent to the production and reception of narratives which fall into the portal-quest category of fantasy. Portal-quest fantasies are, for a number of reasons, more likely to be accompanied by a map. The fantasy map, too, has often been used as a way into broader criticisms of portal-quest fantasy – criticisms which paint the portal-quest as a formulaic and ideologically conservative mode of fantasy. I contend that unconventional fantasy maps, used both outside and inside portal-quest narratives, which are informed by the tenets of critical and creative cartography can offer a way to resist the patterns of formula and conservatism these narratives tend to conform to.

In this paper, I will analyse how the fantasy map plays into, and extends, the conventions of fantasy narrative with a focus on the portal-quest mode; I will also argue for the fantasy map's potential to subvert the conventions and rhetoric of portal-quest fantasy by introducing critical and creative cartography as both practices and critical lenses which open up new ways of writing and reading portal-quest narratives.

The presentation will touch on maps, and the relation between map and narrative, in *The Hobbit* by J.R.R Tolkien and in *The Glass Sentence* by S.E. Grove.

Bionote: Jessica Miller is a children's writer and a PhD candidate at the University of Queensland, Australia.

Kevin Corstorphine, University of Hull, UK; @keycorstorphine

The Old Gringo and the Alien: The Reimagining of Ambrose Bierce

In 1913, at the age of seventy-one, Ambrose Bierce crossed the border from the United States to Mexico (a country in the grip of revolution), planning to travel onwards to South America. He was never to return. In his final correspondence, Bierce anticipates his disappearance, writing that 'Naturally - it is possible - even probable, that I shall not return. These be "strange countries," in which things happen; that is why I am going.' Bierce was no stranger to the theme of strange countries, having conjured up fantastical places in stories like 'An Inhabitant of Carcosa' (1886), in which a spirit attempts to find his way back to a long-civilisation. Strangely, he seems to have anticipated his own future disappearance too. The very short story, 'The Difficulty of Crossing a Field' (1888) describes a plantation owner who attempts to walk a short distance and simply vanishes. These stories, although fantastic in nature, comment on the transience of individuals and civilisations, and of the ways in which land is contested over time.

This theme is nowhere more evident than in borderlands, and here particularly in the politically fraught US-Mexican border. Carlos Fuentes, in his 1985 novel *The Old Gringo*, creates an imagined version of Bierce's adventures south of the border, and in doing so explores the ways in which the cultures of Mexico and the United States encounter each other and intermingle. Perhaps in part because of its device of using an American author through which to explore Mexico, *The Old Gringo* was to become the first novel by a Mexican author to be a best-seller in the United States. Fuentes was not the first author to be drawn to the story: Robert Bloch, author of *Psycho*, wrote his own version in the form of 'I Like Blondes' (1956), where Bierce's ultimate fate was to be taken over by an alien called Ril, who collects human bodies to wear while visiting Earth. This paper will examine these fantastical reimaginings of Bierce's life alongside his own fiction, and explore what they have to say about the imaginative possibilities offered by cross-cultural exchanges at the border.

Bionote: Dr Kevin Corstorphine is Lecturer in English at the University of Hull. His research interests are in Gothic, horror, and weird fiction, with an emphasis on representations of space and place, including haunted houses and landscapes.

**Rob O'Connor, York St John University, UK, and University of York, UK;
@RobOConnor26**

Walking the Streets with a Sloth on Your Back: Notions of 'otherness' in the urban landscapes of Lauren Beukes' *Zoo City* and Nnendi Okorafor's *Lagoon*.

Lauren Beukes' *Zoo City* (2010) and Nnendi Okorafor's *Lagoon* (2014), set in Johannesburg and Lagos respectively, are both examples of a shift in the portrayal of science-fiction urban spaces away from westernised capitalist cities, such as New York, Los Angeles and London, to a more global representation of urban cultures. The connection of the technological supercity to science fiction is an established one, and AfroFuturism's embracement of technoculture and genre motifs in order to explore the themes and concerns of African diasporas therefore naturally embodies itself within representations of African urban centres. The architectural landscape itself is familiar, yet unfamiliar, as the physical geography is imbued with anthropomorphic qualities. Portrayal of the diversity within the populations of these dystopian African cities also encourages exploration of otherness, subaltern communities and alienation, making them ideal for critically analysing these traditionally postcolonial concerns through the critical lens of science fiction narratives.

Both Beukes and Okorafor adopt the urban landscape as their base for exploring ideas of African identity in its multiple forms. As well as exploring the diversity of Johannesburg and Lagos' physical geographies and populations, the use of the alien first-contact narrative in *Lagoon* does represent a critically-engaging shift away from the more recognisable, 'Westernised', first-contact locations, whilst simultaneously exploring the concept of the 'other' through the context of science fiction. In *Zoo City*, this exploration of otherness is also engaged through the motif of the 'animalled' citizens, with non-human species creating not only commentary regarding identity but also justice and punishment. This paper will demonstrate how both Beukes and Okonafor embrace African urban landscapes and the portrayal of their inhabitants as a methodology for exploring the notion of African identity, mythology, alienation and otherness.

Bionote: A PhD student and visiting lecturer at York St John University, Rob O'Connor's research focuses upon the work of China Miéville as well as genre theory, contemporary literature and creative writing. He also teaches literature and creative writing for the Centre for Lifelong Learning at the University of York.

Session 4A – Folk and Fairy Tales

- Karen Graham, University of Aberdeen, UK (@kar_took); "I know all the stories ... but I still want to hear the world tell them the way only it can tell them': Reimagining Russian folklore in *Deathless* and *Egg and Spoon*."
- Dragoş Manea, University of Bucharest, Romania (@dc_manea); "The Post-Communist Fairy Tale: *Harap Alb continuă*'s Glocalised Aesthetics."

Karen Graham, University of Aberdeen, UK; @kar took**“I know all the stories ... but I still want to hear the world tell them the way only it can tell them”: Reimagining Russian folklore in *Deathless* and *Egg and Spoon***

“Walk the same tale over and over, until you wear a groove in the world, until even if you vanished, the tale would keep turning, keep playing, like a phonograph, and you'd have to get up again, even with a bullet through your eye, to play your part and say your lines.”¹

Fairy tales often announce themselves with familiar phrases like “once upon a time”, or with well-known motifs. Cows are sold for magic beans, and witches’ houses are made of gingerbread. This is particularly the case when those fairy tales are reimagined into a fantasy setting, something that is becoming more and more common in contemporary fantasy writing. Popular culture remains hungry for adaptation, particularly in the related genres of fairy tale and fantasy. As this trend continues, the ways in which retellings are constructed becomes more complex and writers begin to look outside of the familiar canon of European folktales such as those collated by the Grimm brothers, Charles Perrault or Giambattista Basile.

Jack Zipes famously suggests that fairy tales are a radical mirror for society: a discussion that evokes a powerful image from those fairy tales themselves. My previous research has explored how adaptation itself functions as a mirror in the process of repetition and reflection, which is an inherent part of retelling. This paper will explore the particular challenges faced by contemporary fantasy writers Catherynne M. Valente and Gregory Maguire in refashioning these less than familiar tales. It will question whether the less familiar motif of Baba Yaga and her chicken-leg house can be as successful as those motifs mentioned previously. Building on this concept of adaptation as mirror this paper will consider how effective this understanding of the function of the re-told tale is when the narratives in question originate outwith the European cannon.

Bionote: Karen Graham is a Doctoral Researcher at the School of Religious Studies at the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. She recently submitted her thesis, ‘Telling Tales: Re-making myth in the adult fiction of Gregory Maguire’, for examination. Her research interests include the adaptation of myth and fairy tale, intertextuality, the literary vampire, supernatural hybridity, and the fantastic.

Dragoş Manea, University of Bucharest, Romania; (@dc manea)**The Post-Communist Fairy Tale: *Harap Alb continuă*’s Glocalized Aesthetics**

¹ Catherynne M Valente, *Deathless* (New York: Tor, 2011) p. 180

This paper analyzes the most popular publication on the recent Romanian comic book market, *Harap Alb continuă* (*Harap Alb Continues*, 2012–) as a case study for the post-communist refashioning of national heroes, in the wake of Ceausescu's ultranationalist dictatorship. *Harap Alb Continues* is the ongoing work of a collective of young independent comic book creators from Bucharest who successfully capitalized on the blurriness that exists between the comic book superhero and the traditional fairytale hero in order to produce an adaptation that blends figures from Romanian folklore and the American superhero tradition. The Romanian fairy tale that is adapted in the comic is Ion Creangă's 1877 *Povestea lui Harap-Alb* (*The Story of Harap Alb* – the protagonist's name can be translated as White Moor or White Arab, and in 19th century Romania it was suggestive of his condition as a white slave). The comic is a fascinating example of a completely glocalised product, considering that it is a Romanian fairytale adapted in a manner that relies on the aesthetics of superhero comics, full of muscular heroes and hourglass-shaped heroines. It became an instant hit and the best-selling serialized comic in a country where graphic narratives are still viewed with scepticism.

In conversation with Henry Jenkins, Marie-Laure Ryan, and Astrid Erll, my paper attempts to analyze the strategies used by *Harap Alb continuă* in the process of creating not only a Romanian superhero tradition, but also a new array of heroic national figures that incorporate the features of Anglo-American superhero masculinity. I argue that the series' success stems primarily from the fact that it goes beyond a simple adaptation of the fairytale, and instead reworks important figures from Romanian cultural memory, such as pre-Christian deities and other famous characters from Romanian folklore, in order to create a paradoxical nationalist rhetoric, which employs the tropes of Anglo-American superhero and fantasy comics.

Bionote: Dragoș Manea is an assistant lecturer at the University of Bucharest, where he teaches seminars in British and American literature, translation, and academic writing. His main research interests include the adaptation of history, historical fantasy, cultural memory, and the relationship between ethics and fiction.

Session 4B – Constructions of Fantastika

- Jim Clarke, Coventry University, UK; “‘He beheld me with alien eyes’: A corpus-based study of nationality, race and otherness in high fantasy literature.”
- Pascal Lemaire, Belgium; “Uchronie en francophonie : playing with time in French.”

Jim Clarke, Coventry University, UK:

“He beheld me with alien eyes”: A corpus-based study of nationality, race and otherness in high fantasy literature.

High fantasy literature is notable for its world-building, wherein authors construct imaginary geographical, social and cultural *topoi*, wherein the invention of geographical

and geopolitical maps are often created as visual aids to assist the reader in comprehending the background world-building against which the narrative unfolds.

This world-building process often entails radical re-imaginings of sentient species, peoples, races and nations, as well as a fantastical accommodation of magic. Yet in building worlds, authors must also create geopolitical constructs which may then function to generate drama derived from conflict.

Using a base corpus of ten of the most well-known high fantasy texts of the past century, diachronically distributed, this paper will use methods derived from corpus linguistics to examine how fantasy literature has historically utilised notions of nationhood, race, alienness, and borders.

Bionote: Dr Jim Clarke is Senior Lecturer in English and Journalism at Coventry University. He is the principal investigator on the Parallel Translation Corpus of *A Clockwork Orange*, and the author of a forthcoming monograph on Science Fiction and Catholicism.

Pascal Lemaire, Belgium:

Uchronie en francophonie : playing with time in French

Recent years have seen numerous Alternate Histories published in English by such households names as E. Flint, R. Conroy or H. Turtledove, to mention but a few, but the phenomenon hasn't been confined solely to the English speaking world.

Uchronie has also become increasingly popular in France, with various authors such as S. Beauverger, U. Bellagamba or the late R.C. Wagner publishing both short stories and full length novels recognized by the public as clearly S-F in nature. Others popular authors such as G. Musso or E.-E. Schmitt have also published uchronies, sold as such but devoid of any formal reference to S-F.

All those fictions are accompanied in their publication by various publications of a more scientific or pedagogic nature trying to define the borders of the genre and to lead the readers towards less famous texts. K. Gobled and B. Campeis' *Guide de l'Uchronie* or E.B. Henriet *L'Histoire revisitée* being the most notable of those, the authors also giving many conferences on the topic during literary festivals and writings articles or giving interviews for the general press with the goal of further publicize the genre.

But alternate history still has to conquer its place among academics, although some like Q. Deluermoz and P. Singaravelou are attempting to legitimize its use.

Beyond giving a short panorama of the situation of A-H in France and Belgium, the present paper will attempt to show how this French practice of Uchronie differs from the English way and will try to provide explanations for those differences as well as open potential new avenues of investigation such as looking at the African and North American french language production.

Bionote: With formal training in both Ancient History and ICT, and a job in the later domain, I now study how the ancient world meets modern literature, especially in the SF and Fantasy genres. From there grew a secondary interest in how literature plays with History and especially in uchronia.

Day 2: Abstracts and Bionotes

Keynote – “Arachnographia: Fantasy, Gothic, Spider.”

David Punter, University of Bristol, UK

Abstract tba

Session 5A – Weird and Lovecraftian Literature

- Christina Scholz, University of Graz, Austria (@weird_prophet); “Ariekene Socio-Psycholinguistics and Postcolonial Awareness in China Miéville's *Embassytown*.”
- E. Dawson Varughese, UK/India; “Time, Truth and *Itihasa*: ‘weird’ New India in Arni's *The Missing Queen* (2013).”
- Kerry Dodd, Lancaster University, UK; “Eerie Egypt: Exhuming Archaeological Horrors in Blackwood and Lovecraft.”
- Valentino Paccosi, Lancaster University, UK; “From Lovecraft to *Hellboy*: Del Toro and the Lovecraftian.”

Christina Scholz, University of Graz, Austria: @weird_prophet

Ariekene Socio-Psycholinguistics and Postcolonial Awareness in China Miéville's Embassytown

Weird Fiction is part of what Gary Wolfe terms ‘the post-genre fantastic’ (Luckhurst 2012:1), transcending genre boundaries as well as cultural and national spaces. *It speaks to a global experience of certain spatial logics, a transformation of borders and flows* (ibid), which makes it a suitable mode of writing to communicate problems and world-views in multicultural and postcolonial spaces, as writers like Nnedi Okorafor, Nalo Hopkinson, and China Miéville have demonstrated. For H.P. Lovecraft, who defined the genre, *the weird is not the discovery of an aberration, which would place us in the context of law, norm and the monster. Rather, the weird is the discovery of an unhuman limit to thought, that is nevertheless foundational for thought* (Thacker 2010:23). China Miéville's novel *Embassytown* (2011) is an experiment in linguistics and postcolonial language politics. Humans have colonised the planet Arieka in order to harvest its biotechnology. Its

(deliberately underdescribed) native inhabitants have double mouths, and their language is purely mimetic. They can only describe what they have seen or experienced, and they cannot lie. Since they don't perceive humans as whole, sentient beings, the colonial leaders hold the monopoly on communicating with them through 'Ambassadors', pairs of human clones with synchronised brainwaves. With rumours of Ariekei dissent (which is complicated enough to achieve), the colonial power must find new, more effective ways to control them. The Ariekei, on the other hand, need a creative, performative language if they hope to achieve independence. Using the linguistic turn in Western philosophy as a framework, starting from describing Ariekei Language along the lines of Saussure's classic model of the linguistic sign and ending with an explanation of the leap from simile to metaphor, Miéville explains how this can be achieved and what it means for postcolonial politics, leading us all the way from issues of otherness via a transformation of consciousness to possible worlds of intercultural communication and equality.

Bionote: Christina Scholz is currently writing her PhD thesis on M. John Harrison's Empty Space trilogy and teaching English Literature and Culture and Intermediality at the University of Graz, Austria. Her fields of interest include the further theorisation of Weird Fiction, Hauntology and the Gothic imagination, the interrelation of genre fiction and other forms of art, and depictions of war, violence and trauma in the arts. She has a Master's degree in Comparative Literature.

E. Dawson Varughese, UK/India

Time, Truth and *Itihasa*: 'weird' New India in Arni's *The Missing Queen* (2013)

India has experienced a surge in genre fiction post millennium. A particularly successful body of genre fiction – in terms of sales and reception – has been 'mythology-inspired' fiction. This paper introduces the term 'Bharati Fantasy', a genre term which defines this specific fiction production in both Indian and non-Indian terms. The paper moves to an analysis of Arni's speculative novel *The Missing Queen* (2013) raising questions about time, truth-telling and representations of truth. In doing so, the paper explains the idea of *itihasa* a Sanskrit term that translates as 'thus it happened', calling into question *if* the Indian epics which inspire this body of 'mythology-inspired' fiction' can be considered as 'real' events. Focussing on key moments in the novel, time, truth and *itihasa* are explored for their connection with Bharati Fantasy, foregrounding how the slippage between time and *ithasa* render the novel's genre as speculative. In conclusion, the paper considers the role of (global) reception in relation to such Bharati Fantasy. Anchored in Indian cultures, for many non-Indian readers Arni's novel is 'weird' whilst for many Indian readers her novel is a type of historical fiction and for some Hindus, it represents 'truth'.

Bionote: E. Dawson Varughese is a global cultural studies scholar and her specialism is India. She works on Indian genre fiction and the Indian graphic novel (see *Reading New India*). Her most recent book is: *Genre Fiction of New India: post-millennial receptions of 'weird' narratives* to be published by Routledge in 2016. See her work at: www.beyondthepostcolonial.com

Kerry Dodd, Lancaster University, UK:**Eerie Egypt: Exhuming Archaeological Horrors in Blackwood and Lovecraft**

Central to archaeological narratives lies the desire to unearth forgotten secrets or shed light on hidden civilisations. The horror entombed within therefore acts as a retaliation against these epistemological quests, instead destabilising the certainty of assumed knowledge and often sending the protagonists mad with incomprehensible realisations. Equally identifiable in Weird fiction, the cross-over between these two modes seeks to locate the inhuman and indefinable threat as a reaction against attempts of colonial systematisation.

This paper argues that ‘the archaeological Weird’ embodies a fantastical mode where this fusion speaks to both colonial and epistemological anxieties. Focusing primarily on Algernon Blackwood’s ‘A Descent into Egypt’ and H. P. Lovecraft’s ghost-written ‘Under the Pyramids’, I argue that these two tales, whilst not chiefly Weird, are articulated through the hallmark register of mankind’s redundancy, cosmic horror and subjective annihilation. By focusing on why Egypt is a re-occurring location for these narratives, this paper states the Weird’s deconstruction of empirical certainty is mirrored in the disruption of colonial boundaries.

Concentrating on theoretical work on museums, archaeology and Imperial Romance, I draw together the connections between global topographies and the inhuman. Focusing on the parallel descents into the past (physically and figuratively), fixation with the mystical ancient past and articulation of the archaeological horror, I argue these two tales illuminate spaces that defy cartographical and epistemological scrutiny. These inhuman topographies are a locus which channel the Weird’s capacity to undermine boundaries, borders and ontological certainty: questioning whether these established delineations can endure the inconceivable. Concluding by highlighting the repeated return and haunting of Ancient Egypt, this paper will address the mythical propensities bestowed upon this concept and why it remains an alluring prospect to excavation and horror narratives, in order to answer how the archaeological horror serves and adapts as a colonial retribution.

Bionote: Kerry Dodd is a current first-year PhD student at Lancaster University. His thesis, titled ‘The Archaeological Weird: Exhuming the Inhuman’, focuses on the underpinning connection between archaeology and Weird fiction, encompassing a range of contemporary examples and media. Kerry’s interests also include Science Fiction, the Gothic and too many long Fantasy novels.

Valentino Paccosi, Lancaster University, UK:**From Lovecraft to *Hellboy*: Del Toro and the Lovecraftian**

The cinema of Mexican director and writer Guillermo Del Toro has been influenced by many authors in the “Fantastika” genre, and among those H. P. Lovecraft is the one whose elements appear more frequently in the director's works.

In this paper I will focus on Del Toro's *Hellboy* (2004), as this film not only shows how the director has been able to use “Lovecraftian” themes and mix them with elements that are part of his cinematic style and cultural background, but it is also an interesting example of how Lovecraft's works has been filtered and elaborated through different media. The film is based on the comic book series of the same name, created by American artist and writer Mike Mignola, and its plot is based on three *Hellboy* storyline. The comic borrows many themes from Lovecraft and mix them with elements from detective stories, superhero comics, the Book of Revelation and B-movies.

In this paper I intend to investigate how Del Toro's *Hellboy* adds to the pulp elements of the comic book themes that are part of his cultural background, such as the importance of friendship, family and fatherly love, Cristian symbolism and the concept of free will. Moreover, I will analyse how the director was able to take key elements of Lovecraft's world view, such as the pursuit of knowledge and the discovery of extra-dimensional beings, and use them to illustrate his perspective on life, which is quite different from Lovecraft's nihilistic visions. I will also illustrate how in *Hellboy II: The Golden Army* (2008) the director, influenced by his previous film *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006), developed further his artistic vision replacing most of the Lovecraftian themes with fantastic elements taken from Dunsany's *The King of Elfland's Daughter* (1924).

Bionote: Valentino Paccosi is a PhD student in English at Lancaster University. He got his BA and MA in European Languages and Literatures in Florence, Italy. He then studied Film Production at the Arts University Bournemouth. He is currently studying the influence of H. P. Lovecraft across different media.

Session 5B – Eco-Critical Landscapes and Economic Breakdowns

- Pablo Gómez Muñoz, University of Zaragoza, Spain; “The Biopolitics of Climate Change in Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema.”
- Hollie Johnson, The University of Nottingham, UK (@HollieD_Johnson); “Borders under siege: Ecological dystopia and cyborg insurrections in Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*.”
- Sinéad Murphy, King's College London, UK (@S1nead_Murphy); “‘A dream of something beyond sex’: desire and agency in Ahmed Khaled Towfik's *Utopia*.”
- Douglas Leatherland, Durham University, UK; “Commerce and Empire in Col Buchanan's *Heart of the World*”

Pablo Gómez Muñoz, University of Zaragoza, Spain:

The Biopolitics of Climate Change in Contemporary Science Fiction Cinema

Several twenty-first century science fiction films suggest that one of the most significant transformations that climate change brings about is the need for large groups of human beings to relocate geographically and/or to redesign the territories where they live. This paper argues that, apart from presenting environmental and geographical changes, these films also point to their biopolitical implications. As Sherryl Vint notes, biopolitics establish which "lives [are] deemed 'worth living'" and which ones are "deemed expendable" (2011: 163). This paper analyzes the biopolitical logics of the environmental scenarios that appear in sf films such as *The Day After Tomorrow* (Roland Emmerich, 2004), *Wall-E* (Andrew Stanton, 2008), *2012* (Roland Emmerich, 2009), *Snowpiercer* (Bong Joon-ho, 2013), *Elysium* (Neill Blomkamp, 2013), and *Interstellar* (Christopher Nolan, 2014). These films depict landscapes of waste, pollution, resource depletion, desertification, and extreme temperatures in which it is no longer possible to live. In these all-too-real scenarios, humans need to migrate, build homes far from home, reorganize social structures, survive lethal weather conditions, or even attempt to live in outer space. These circumstances invite to ask questions such as: who has access to the limited resources available? how are these resources distributed? what are the logics that drive these processes of social reorganization?, how do the societies that these films depict redesign both physical and symbolic borders? In order to analyze the biopolitical implications of the aforementioned global environmental transformations, this paper draws on previous work on sf and the environment (Weik von Mossner 2012, 2014; Höhler 2014), biopolitics and sf (Vint 2011, 2015; Baker 2015), and climate change and biopolitics (Cupples 2011, Dalby 2013, Grove 2014). Through this framework, the paper considers how contemporary sf films present wealth, profession, race, and nationality as major references in the organization of the new social scenarios that climate change produces.

Bionote: Pablo Gómez is a PhD Research Fellow in Film at the Department of English and German at the University of Zaragoza (Spain). In his dissertation, he uses cosmopolitanism as a theoretical framework to study how twenty-first century science fiction films represent borders, economic globalization, transnational mobility, migration, and climate change.

Hollie Johnson, The University of Nottingham, UK; @HollieD Johnson

Borders under siege: Ecological dystopia and cyborg insurrections in Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*

Responding to the need to 'think globally' in response to present environmental concerns, Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* (2009) is a novel that confronts the geopolitics of global capitalism in an attempt to reveal the interwoven social, cultural, economic, and ecological networks at play. Set in a speculative, ecodystopian future, the novel depicts a post-crisis society recovering from the strain of fossil-fuel exhaustion and agricultural plagues. Bacigalupi re-orientates the often western-centred narrative of environmental exploitation by placing Bangkok, Thailand, at the centre of his story, presenting it as one of the few nation-states to have yet resisted Western exploitation and preserved its independence.

Taking Bacigalupi's critique of neo-liberal economics as my starting point, I will present the ways in which Bacigalupi weaves together narratives about global economy, national security, and human identity in order to present a global vision of ecological interconnection that confronts modern capitalism's inherent contradictions. In particular, I will focus on the role played by borders and walls, both their defence and permeability, within this critique. *The Windup Girl* is a novel full of barriers and divides. Indeed, as a nation-state, Thailand's identity is presented as being dependent on its separation from the outside world. However, I will argue that Bacigalupi questions the viability of these borders within the context of a global economy and ecology, exploring how characters in the novel use ideas about otherness to police both national and biological borders. Breaking down these boundaries, Bacigalupi challenges the concepts of the 'natural' and the 'human', revealing their instability as well their culpability in the damaging attitudes taken towards the environment. Developing the image of the polluted or diseased body across both the city and its citizens, Bacigalupi challenges these ethical and ontological divides through a dystopian vision of ecological connectedness.

Bionote: I am a Midlands3Cities, AHRC-funded student, based in the School of English at the University of Nottingham. Drawing from an interdisciplinary background, my research focuses on the development of ecodystopian fiction, exploring the dialogic relationships between humanity and non-human nature as presented within contexts of extinction, climate change, and environmental exploitation.

Sinéad Murphy, King's College London, UK; @S1nead Murphy

'A dream of something beyond sex': desire and agency in Ahmed Khaled Towfik's *Utopia*

Published in Arabic in 2009 and in English translation in 2011, Ahmed Khaled Towfik's *Utopia* has been widely lauded as anticipating or 'predicting' the Arab Spring. Towfik's imagined environment, in which the dispossessed Others function solely as a consumer market to support the lavish overprivilege of Utopia, bears uncanny resemblance to structures of socioeconomic inequality in contemporary Egypt, and the impending uprising on which the novel concludes begs to be read as an allegory for events which unfolded in 2011.

Mark Bould argues that *Utopia* is pushed towards these readings, however, by *both* 'generic and cultural forces'.² The schematisation of the science fictional world of the text, and its deployment of a well-wrought trope of a divided society, invite straightforward allegorical interpretations of Towfik's extensive critique of social reality in Egypt – a critique which extends far beyond the moment of uprising itself. My paper will analyse processes of (re)production and consumption at work in Towfik's text as a means of unpacking these

² Bould, Mark, 'From Anti-Colonial Struggle to Neoliberal Immiseration: Mohammed Dib's *Who Remembers the Sea*, Sony Labou Tansi's *Life And A Half* And Ahmed Khaled Towfik's *Utopia*', *Paradoxa*, 25 (2014), 17–45

‘generic and cultural forces.’ Particularly, I propose that the text’s portrayal of the effects of neoliberal capitalism on women is central both to its representation of contemporary Egypt and the critique of normative reality elaborated through its science fictional mode. The creation of a utopia has resulted in the silencing, exploitation, and abuse of women from both sides of *Utopia’s* fractured populace – it is just such issues which in turn undermine and destabilise the creation of an ideal society. I suggest that analysing the role of women in *Utopia* can move the text away from allegorical readings which often collapse differences of genre, to focus instead on its use of science fiction to elaborate a social and cultural critique.

Bionote: Sinéad Murphy is a second-year PhD candidate in the Department of Comparative Literature in King’s College, London. Her research is an AHRC LAHP-funded project on contemporary Arab speculative fiction in English. She completed her BA and MA degrees in University College Dublin, Ireland.

Douglas Leatherland, Durham University, UK;

Commerce and Empire in Col Buchanan’s Heart of the World

Set across an expanse known only as the Heart of the World, Col Buchanan’s ongoing series invites us to think about the consequences of sociopolitical forces ranging from commercialization and world trade to political propaganda and religious extremism. Buchanan’s work also touches on issues which have typically been marginalized, particularly in the genre of ‘high’ fantasy. This paper will argue that the Heart of the World depicts the primary, twenty-first century world with an uncanny resemblance.

Commercially, the Heart of the World thrives – or rather depends – on trade with the Alhazii Caliphate, whose chokehold on supplies of ‘black powder’ ultimately determines the course of military politics, creating a situation not beyond our present understanding. Besides the trade in black powder, Buchanan frequently alludes to the lucrative markets of prostitution and drugs. Meanwhile, even the common language spoken in Buchanan’s world is aptly named Trade, reinforcing the mutual dependency of language and commerce.

Drawing inspiration from his own experiences of the troubles in Northern Ireland, Buchanan takes imperialism and religious fanaticism to a frightening level. Much of his fictional world is under the enforced rule of the Holy Empire of Mann. The Mannian cult advocates the purifying of the conscience by purging it of guilt. Stood against the Mannians and their vision for a new world order are the ‘democras’, or ‘people without rulers’. The dichotomy of ideals is clear, and caught in the midst of this struggle between freedom and tyranny is the aged assassin, Ash – one of fantasy’s few black protagonists. Ash, the ‘farlander’, comes from the land of Honshu, from which he has fled into exile. Above all, he seeks peace in a world not entirely his own.

Bionote: Douglas Leatherland is an English PhD student at Durham University. The focus of his current research is anthropomorphism in the twentieth-century animal narrative. His

other interests include fantasy literature and its representations of race and nationality, and fantasy cartography.

Session 6A – Japanese Representations of Fantastika

- Inés Gregori Labarta, Lancaster University, UK (@InesGLabarta); “Crossing bridges: Western and Eastern in *Spirited Away*.”
- Filippo Cervelli, University of Oxford, UK (@musashi023); “Japanese Magical Realism: the Written Word in *Death Note*”
- Ana Dosen, Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia; “Biogaming Limbo: Ressentiment of the New Era in Sion Sono's *Tag*”

Inés Gregori Labarta, Lancaster University, UK; @InesGLabarta

Crossing bridges: Western and Eastern in *Spirited Away*.

Spirited Away (2001) is the most successful Studio Ghibli film to this date and the first Japanese animation film to be awarded an Oscar. In this paper I will argue how a hybridisation of Eastern culture and Western philosophy produced this successful and original work within the Fantasy genre. Miyazaki, its director, conceived *Spirited Away* (2001) as a carnivalesque celebration of Japanese culture, from its ancient gods to its consumerism (2002). The audience must be familiar with Japanese rituals and traditions to fully understand the meaning of the film – such as the kamikakushi and the kotodoma, which don't have a correspondence in Western culture. I will refer to the shōjo archetype: the reason why Chihiro is, like many other Ghibli heroines, an extraordinarily mature and self-sufficient teenage girl when compared to the more vulnerable heroines of Disney and Pixar. I will also explore ways the Urashima Taro myth has shaped this film, being, as Napier (2005) points out, an essential part of the Japanese psyche. Finally, I will show how Western philosophy can be applied to the film to interpret its many layers. As Yoshioka (2008) argues, European thinking is an influence on Miyazaki's art. I will refer to Hippocrates and his famous 'let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food', to understand the reasons why aliments are the most recurrent symbol in this story. I will conclude by introducing the Platonic concept of the three parts of the soul to offer an answer to the motivations of the three main characters in *Spirited Away* (2001).

Bionote: Inés Gregori Labarta is a Creative Writing PhD student at Lancaster University. She did her undergraduate in English Literature and Japanese. She has published a collection of YA novels and two novellas. Her ultimate goal is to walk to Japan and write a book about it.

Filippo Cervelli, University of Oxford, UK; @musashi023

Japanese Magical Realism: the Written Word in *Death Note*

By incorporating fantastic elements in narratives that still retain social-political relevance, the trope of magical realism is usually associated, with notable exceptions, with novelists of Central and South America. Following such categorisation, this paper proposes a reflection on the new directions the trope has taken, and argues that the popular Japanese manga series *Death Note* (2004-2006) is a prime example of an evolution of magical realism in a medium (comics) and in a culture (Japan) not usually associated with the trope's novelistic tradition.

The paper is a literary, sociological and psychological analysis of the act of writing in *Death Note*, a theme hardly ever touched upon in available studies. Various sources were used to highlight the relationship between Western thought and an Asian production. In the first part Roland Barthes' literary theory has been applied on two levels: the first one deals with how a work is to be studied vis-à-vis the socio-historical context in which it is produced; the second one focuses on language, seeing the text as a constellation of signs that function only in the work's textual dimension. The second part of the analysis uses Western and Japanese studies on trauma (such as Herman, LaCapra and Yoshizawa) to investigate how writing may be both a means to articulate a trauma (e.g. dissatisfaction with how justice is administered) and a form of healing.

The analysis on *Death Note* shows that with fantastic elements triggering the story, the narrative revolves around the written word, an element fundamentally present in real everyday life. Through highlighting the (magical) writing's materialistic and therapeutic properties, it emerges that the manga is deeply inscribed in the socio-historical environment that produced it and constitutes a commentary/critique to it, thus offering valuable insights into the manifestations of fantastika and magical realism in a non-Western culture.

Bionote: Originally from Florence, Italy, I am now reading for a doctoral degree in Modern Japanese Literature at the University of Oxford. My current dissertation investigates the presence of an ideological vacuum, and the reactions to it, as are portrayed in contemporary Japanese novels and popular culture produced between 1995 and 2015.

Ana Dosen, Singidunum University, Belgrade, Serbia:

Biogaming Limbo: Ressentiment of the New Era in Sion Sono's *Tag*

Borrowed from the French language, the *ressentiment* has been introduced as a philosophical term in the 19th century, in the work of Søren Kierkegaard. In the context of slave-master relation, Nietzschean concept of *ressentiment* marks a reactive force of the passive ones to the oppressive agency of the "outside". This paper explores the repetitive feeling of hurt, the persistent reactivation of the wound typical for *ressentiment*, in Japanese film *Tag* (2015) directed by Sion Sono. The main character in the film, Mitsuko goes through the ordeal of running for her life in several parallel universes – in the first segment

of the film she becomes the sole survivor when two school-buses are struck by invisible, lethal force, only to subsequently find herself in another school massacre. After those incidents, she transforms into a set of various female characters in an equally mortal danger. Following Deleuze's suggestion that "the man of *ressentiment* experiences every being and object as an offence in exact proportion to its effect on him", I argue that "virtual" Mitsuko embodies the absolute *ressentiment* as the genetic material of the real Mitsuko has been used in video-game industry. Her "triumph of the weak as weak" is explored through the perspective that provides the insight into the bond between the fetishised object of fiction and the user as its master. Paralleling the dichotomies of character-gamer and slave-master, this paper demonstrates Nietzsche's notion that the crucial factor for the *ressentiment* is found in the slave's need of a hostile world. In *Tag*, where fictional and real world eventually fuse, this Nietzschean paradigm is achieved through the intrinsically passive role of the game character repeatedly put in threatening circumstances by the players.

Bionote: Ana Dosen is University Lecturer at Faculty of Media and Communications in Belgrade, Serbia where she teaches media theory, Japanese culture and art and gives lectures on *Anime: Media representations of South East Asia* and *Asian cinematography*.

Session 6B – The Other in the Margins of Fantastika

- Katie Burton, Teesside University, UK (@KatieMayWrite); "‘Why do people go to these places, these places that are not for them?’: Negotiating identity and national allegory in Helen Oyeyemi’s *White is for Witching*."
- Nedine Moonsamy, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa and University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa; "Women in the writing of Nnedi Okorafor and Lauren Beukes: animism and African feminism."
- Kevan Manwaring, University of Leicester, UK (@bardicacademic); "Loving the Alien: the ethics of representation in Fantasy and Science Fiction"

Katie Burton, Teesside University, UK; @KatieMayWrite

‘Why do people go to these places, these places that are not for them?’: Negotiating identity and national allegory in Helen Oyeyemi’s *White is for Witching*

‘They shouldn’t be allowed in though, those others, so eventually I make them leave’: in *White is for Witching*, Helen Oyeyemi uses 29 Barton Road (the guesthouse) to carry the voice of the ‘goodlady’ through four generations of women, presenting a nation that is still tainted by ideologies of its colonial history. As an image of imperial Britain, the guesthouse portrays the anxieties of a past generation whose fear of the ‘other’ creates a destructive space, both for the self and the ‘other’. This paper will argue that characters Miranda, Ore and 29 Barton Road in particular, convey the anxieties of a post-colonial England striving to identify its ‘Englishness’ within a multicultural space by representing various aspects of this struggle through the navigation of their own identities. I read borders and spaces

within the novel as representations of the characters' own internal negotiations of identity. With a focus on acts of consumption within the novel, this paper argues that Miranda's eating disorders manifest as a vehicle to fracture these borders that exist in both the literal and abstract sense. This paper will pay close attention to Lily Silver's death and the importance of Haiti as a 'dark space', an aspect of the novel that has previously been overlooked. Based on Simon Gikandi's claim that Haiti is "'the savage slot" that enhances the utopian possibilities of the domestic epos' (1996), I read Lily Silver's death as a demonstration of the desire to keep England 'uncontaminated' as such. Overall, this paper will argue that England is presented as a postcolonial space that allows for an exploration into the changing state of a national identity.

Bionote: Katie Burton is a third year English Studies student at Teesside University. Her research interests include feminism in contemporary literature and culture, queer theory, neo-Victorianism and representations of identity in postcolonial fiction. In the future, Katie aspires to complete a Master's degree in English Studies and continue to pursue a career in academia.

Nedine Moonsamy, University of Pretoria, Pretoria, South Africa and University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa;

Women in the writing of Nnedi Okorafor and Lauren Beukes: animism and African feminism.

Feminist interventions in science fiction have grown the genre into an exciting space where marginality and technology serve to challenge the representational and ideological politics of gender and my paper will question how this translates in African science fiction where the intersectional politics of postcolonialism, race and ethnicity produces a different set of challenges for feminist thought. Looking at the work of Nnedi Okorafor and Lauren Beukes, I will explore how their female protagonists are not merely examples of "the increasing infiltration of transnational consumerism" (Coetzee 'Afro Superheroes', 241) but instead engage with the everyday practices and understanding of 'the animist unconscious' of their respective contexts.

In a recent publication on African Superheroes, Carli Coetzee draws inspiration from Harry Garuba's notion of the animist unconscious (Garuba 'Public Culture') to suggest that re-enchantment is a means by which many African nations and literatures articulate the present. Similarly, I will explore how the female bodies and identities in the work of Okorafor and Beukes diverge from what are otherwise popular interpretations of the cyborg (usually inspired by Donna Haraway) and places us in the ambit of animism instead. Overall, I explore this strategy in order to explore its value in the light of contemporary African feminism.

Bionote: Nedine Moonsamy is a Senior Lecturer in the English Literature department at the University of Pretoria and an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. She is currently writing a monograph entitled *A Country Out*

of Time: an examination of nostalgia and nationalism in contemporary South African Fiction and launching a research project on Science Fiction in Africa.

Kevan Manwaring, University of Leicester, UK: @bardicacademic

Loving the Alien: the ethics of representation in Fantasy and Science Fiction

Throughout the history of Fantasy and Science Fiction literature the 'other' has predominantly been represented in ways to exoticize, alienate, titillate and repulse; at worse, this othering has been used to justify aggression and colonization, sexual exploitation, gender and racial inequality, xenophobia and genocide. From Morlochs to Martians, Easterlings to slave-girls of Gor, Klingon to Dothraki in this paper I will explore some of these (mis)representations, but also examples of when authors 'get it right'. Examples of the articulated other, when the 'alien' (be it fairy, extra-terrestrial, multi-dimensional being, etc) is allowed to speak, are rarer, but will be illustrated and discussed in the context of Spivak's 'sub-altern position'. How do we, as writers, rise to the challenge of representation? How can we negotiate the potential mine-field of trigger-responses and accusations (racism; sexism; xenophobia, etc)? Using Ytasha L. Womack's Afrofuturism and Ramón Saldívar's post-race aesthetics to create vectors of ethicality, I argue that SF/F writers are uniquely equipped to take the imaginative and empathic leaps required in the undertaking of such gambits, acclimatized as they are to the outer limits of sentience and the stratosphere of the hypothetical.

Bionote: Kevan Manwaring is a Creative Writing PhD student at the University of Leicester and author of *Desiring Dragons*, *The Windsmith Elegy*, and others. He teaches creative writing for the Open University. He is a Fellow of Hawthornden, the Eccles Centre and the Higher Education Academy. He blogs and tweets as the Bardic Academic.

Session 7A – Young Adult Dystopic Fiction

- Andrew Tate, Lancaster University, UK (@cloudatlaskid); "Keep Watching: Spectacle, Rebellion and Apocalyptic Rites of Passage."
- Bill Hughes, UK (@BillBloodyHughe); "Genre mutation and the dialectic of dystopia in Holly Black's *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown*."
- Alison Tedman, Buckinghamshire New University, UK; "Redefining boundaries from space to ground: *The 100* (2014-)."

Andrew Tate, Lancaster University, UK; @cloudatlaskid

Keep Watching: Spectacle, Rebellion and Apocalyptic Rites of Passage

This paper will focus on the representation of violent rites of passage in the first instalment of Suzanne Collins' *The Hunger Games* (2008-10) trilogy in comparison with the opening

volumes of Veronica Roth's *Divergent* (2011-14) and James Dashner's *The Maze Runner* (2009-11). Each of these narrative sequences invoke tropes of observation and spectacle – young people are required to perform ingenious and frequently violent acts in order to survive while an adult world, with a variety of ostensible and tacit motivations, watches. Collins, Roth and Dashner's novels are set in surveillance societies; a crucial part of their dystopian status is communicated by a reliance on a technology of observation that is designed to contain dissent. All three texts also revise aspects of the traditional *bildungsroman*; many motifs of the self-development novel, including romantic awakening and disappointment, loss, exile, grief and return, punctuate recent dystopia. In each of the novels discussed, the central protagonist deliberately crosses a line that simultaneously intensifies the visibility of their singular, heroic status and makes them more vulnerable. The adult world is frequently represented as corrupt or compromised but the characters are still seeking to take on the responsibilities of maturity – often with the disclaimer that their era will not succumb to the manifold moral failings of previous generations. The paper will consider the ethical implications of narratives ostensibly written for a teenage readership that pivot on plots in which young people are subject to horrific violence, exploitation and manipulation. It will also address alternative political readings of these dystopian-apocalyptic stories: are they subversive or reassuring, quietly conformist fables disguised as rebellious social critiques?

Bionote: Andrew Tate is Reader in Literature, Religion and Aesthetics in the Department of English & Creative Writing at Lancaster University. He has published widely in the field of contemporary fiction and his books include *Douglas Coupland* (2007), *The New Atheist Novel* (co-authored with Arthur Bradley) (2010), *Literature and the Bible: a Reader* (2013) (co-edited with Jo Carruthers and Mark Knight) and, forthcoming with Bloomsbury in 2016, *Apocalyptic Fiction*.

Bill Hughes, UK; @BillBloodyHughe

Genre mutation and the dialectic of dystopia in Holly Black's *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown*

Genres mutate; perhaps because they exhaust their potential or because of dramatic social change. But, in the era of global commodification, shifts in generic expectations for popular fiction seem to be motivated purely by market forces, reducing the autonomy and even the integrity of the author. Certain genres of Young Adult fiction have displayed this conspicuously in recent times—the boom of vampire paranormal romance following *Twilight* (2005) slumped, to be replaced by the success of a certain style of dystopia with *The Hunger Games* (2008) and its imitators.

These YA dystopias have come under attack from some quarters; unlike classic, socially critical dystopias of the past, these are alleged to be works of agitprop for capitalist individualism. This is a rather crude reading of *The Hunger Games* itself, but this paper is concerned with another generic transformation that has taken place in response to that work.

For the vampire romance has not been killed off; it has risen again in new clothing. YA novels such as Julie Kagawa's *Blood of Eden* series and Holly Black's *The Coldest Girl in Coldtown* (2013) have emerged as a new subgenre where the dystopia encounters paranormal romance. Here, vampire romance meets the apocalyptic landscapes of dystopia, so a new genre is born. Genres bring with them perspectives on the world, and the collision of genres allows for an interesting dialectical play between worldviews.

Black's novel shows concerns with contemporary technology, particularly surveillance, and the commodification of everything. There is a militaristic society and containment camps, and reality TV as means of diversion (as in *Hunger Games*). The background of the post-9/11 'War on Terror' colours the perception of the hitherto assimilated outsider of vampire romance and the paranoid militarism expresses that. *Coldtown* also has a strange glamour—the lure of a lawless alternative culture and haven for transgressive romance. The novel is more complex and subversive than simplistic readings of the new dystopias allow.

Bionote: Bill Hughes has a PhD from the University of Sheffield on communicative rationality and the Enlightenment dialogue. His research is on the eighteenth-century novel and on paranormal romance. He is co-founder with Dr George of the *Open Graves, Open Minds: Vampires and the Undead in Modern Culture* Project at the University of Hertfordshire.

Alison Tedman, Buckinghamshire New University, UK:

Redefining boundaries from space to ground: *The 100* (2014-)

This paper analyses shifting boundaries and othered identities, including those of landscape, in the TV series *The 100* (The CW 2014-). The series can be situated generically in relation to post-apocalyptic cinema, children's adventure narratives, young adult dystopian cinema and TV fantasy series such as *Lost* that are defined by narrative complexity. In *The 100*, a hundred teenagers are shipped down from decaying space station, the Ark, to test the earth's atmosphere. Society in the Ark has evolved over generations into a global diaspora, which is relocated in microcosm through its youth to a tribal American landscape. This world is initially considered to be uninhabited, but is progressively revealed as a landscape of 'Grounder' villages and areas of dangerous wilderness, sites for conflict. Characters form alliances and heroically traverse territories and ethnicities, the latter through masquerade or initiation. The post-technological landscape is reconfigured in Season 2 by the discovery of 'civilised' society inside Mount Weather. This society's infrastructure is supported by division of living space that includes fraught, prohibited areas. Those in control affect others' environmental and bodily boundaries through chemical and other means. By the start of Season 3, new tropes are introduced, modifying the viewer's relation to the fantasy. In Seasons 1 and 2 the digital effects by Zoic Studios, including the space station and mutated creatures, construct immediacy through hyperrealistic naturalistic detail. Season 3 includes a hologram

character and the 'City of Light', a vision of utopian civilisation, of ambiguous status. Here, the text opens up virtual or hallucinatory spaces, moving into the fantastic and evoking the simulations or games found in several young adult films. This paper analyses *The 100* through dystopian, science fiction and eco-critical theories. Comparisons are made with futuristic teen series *The Tribe* (New Zealand, 1999-2003), with young adult dystopian film franchises, and with dystopian and post-apocalyptic cinema.

Bionote : Dr. Alison Tedman is a Senior Lecturer at Buckinghamshire New University. She has written and taught numerous modules in Film Studies, Media Studies and Critical Theory at the University since developing the first Film modules there in the 1990s. Her PhD from the University of Kent theorised fairy-tale film spectatorship. Her paper, 'Simulation Frames: Young Adult Dystopian Cinema' was published in *The Luminary* 6, 2015.

Session 7B: Subversive Global Horror

- Kieran Foster, De Montfort University, UK (@kierantfoster); "Dracula Unseen: The Unmade Films of Hammer."
- Enrique Ajuria Ibarra, Universidad de las Américas Puebla, Mexico (@kike_ajuria); "Alucardas and Alucardos: Vampiric Obsessions and Underground Mexican Horror Cinema."
- Tugce Bicakci, Lancaster University, UK (@turkishygothic); "Turkish Police in Hell or Barbarism vs. Civilisation: A Gothic Reading of Can Evrenol's feature film *Baskin* (2016)."

Kieran Foster, De Montfort University, UK; @kierantfoster

Dracula Unseen: The Unmade Films of Hammer

Few production companies have been as synonymous with one genre as Hammer Films and its horror output. But for every 'Hammer Horror' successfully produced, a number of potential projects failed to make it into production. This paper will utilise two scripts available exclusively at De Montfort University's Hammer Scripts Archive to critically examine two unmade Hammer films. *The Unquenchable Thirst of Dracula* (Hinds, 1977) was written by former Hammer producer Tony Hinds, and was set to be the next instalment in Hammer's immensely successful *Dracula* series, with the story taking place in India in the early 1930s. Around the same time, Hammer were also looking to take the *Dracula* series in a new direction with *Vlad Dracul* (Hayles, undated), an origin story of how Vlad Dracul becomes the vampire Dracula, which was based on Hayle's own BBC radio drama *Lord Dracula* (1974).

The paper will initially outline the contents of the Hammer Archive at De Montfort University, before then providing an industrial context of Hammer at the time the two aforementioned projects were active. The paper will provide a textual analysis of both scripts, noting key plot developments, characters and their relationships, and how the character of Dracula is utilised in each script (is he still recognisable as the 'typical' Dracula

of the source novel? Or does recounting his origin, or displacing the character geographically, alter the character's literary status?).

The aim of the paper is to provide a new context for both Hammer and the character of Dracula, as well as demonstrate the value of unmade scripts (an area of study arguably undernourished within academia) as a key research tool in the examination and documentation of the production processes of the film industry.

Bionote: Having previously studied at Lancaster University, Kieran is now based at De Montfort University as a Midlands 3cities/AHRC funded PhD student, currently undertaking his first year of study. Kieran's thesis utilises the archival materials available at De Montfort University's Hammer Script Archive in order to examine the unmade projects of Hammer Films.

Enrique Ajuria Ibarra, Universidad de las Américas Puebla, Mexico; @kike ajuria

Alucardas and Alucardos: Vampiric Obsessions and Underground Mexican Horror Cinema

Directed by Ulises Guzmán, *Alucardos* (2010) is a Mexican mockumentary film that pays homage to underground Mexican director Juan López Moctezuma. Told partly with interviews and by two obsessive fans, *Alucardos* explores the horror creations of López Moctezuma: *La mansion de la locura* [*The Mansion of Madness*] (1973) – an adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The System of Doctor Tarr and Professor Fether" (1845) – *Mary, Mary, Bloody Mary* (1975), and his most recognised film *Alucarda* (1977). The fans Manuel and Eduardo project on the latter film's vampire protagonist their adult identities and the recollection of their childhood traumas. Their obsession leads them to kidnap López Moctezuma, aided by the spirits that haunt the senile director from the time of his filmmaking years. *Alucardos* presents a perverse and fantastic plot, where the vampire is the key figure to address issues of sexuality, transgression, memory, spectrality, life and death.

Alucardos revives the passion for cult, underground Mexican horror cinema, and it should also be considered a vampire film. Since it is presented in the form of a documentary, the film constantly cites the vampiric (Gelder 2012): Manuel's and Eduardo's obsessions excite connections between past and present, trauma and identity, which are articulated by the haunting shadows of an obscure cinematic vampire. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the intertextual and citational aspects of Guzmán's film to determine the process of mythification of López Moctezuma's productions as underground, cult, and obsessive features in Mexican cinema. As such, these films also serve as a starting point to explore transnational movie trends in Mexico and the categorization of horror as a minor, yet popular, phenomenon in the country's film history.

Bionote: Enrique Ajuria Ibarra is Assistant Professor at Universidad de las Américas Puebla, Mexico. He has previously published several articles and book chapters on Mexican

horror cinema. He is currently preparing a book on the relationship between travel, Gothic, and the horror film and co-editing a collection of essays on Latin American Gothic.

Tugce Bicakci, Lancaster University, UK: @turkishgothic

Turkish Police in Hell or Barbarism vs. Civilisation: A Gothic Reading of Can Evrenol's feature film *Baskın* (2016)

Turkish Horror cinema started 2016 with the goriest film ever made in Turkey as Can Evrenol, a young director famous for his short films, released his first feature *Baskın* for Turkish horror enthusiasts. As one of the rare Turkish horror films without Islamic themes, *Baskın* tells the story of five police officers who find themselves in an old and deserted Ottoman police station after answering an emergency call during their night patrol. Once they begin to explore this labyrinth-like building, the officers are captured and wake up in the middle of a ritual with chanting and sexual activity, all under the control of a character named the Father. Having been screened in the Midnight Madness program in 2015 Toronto Film Festival, the film received positive reviews abroad and was appraised by Turkish horror critics while it was highly criticised by Turkish viewers due to its violence, bloody scenes, sexual references and strong language. Nevertheless, *Baskın* offers a powerful subtext in which the old barbarism vs. civilisation discussion that has been central to the Gothic mode since its birth, is reopened in a contemporary Turkish context. Moreover, the concept of repressed sexuality, another common theme in Gothic narratives, is reinforced in the film as a critique of Turkish masculine culture. In this paper, I will argue that the film engages with the idea of civilisation through the characters of the police officers who symbolise order in society, and of barbarism through the character of the Father and his cult who, in a way, represent the most primitive urges of the human race. Drawing on Maria Boletsi's idea of the barbarian as 'incomprehensible, unfamiliar, uncanny, improper' in the eyes of the civilised, I will generate a discussion which conceptualises traditional masculinity depicted in the film as the barbarian of Turkish society.

Bionote: Tugce Bicakci is a PhD candidate in the Department of English and Creative Writing at Lancaster University. Her research aims to theorise the term Turkish Gothic focusing on national identity and social anxiety in Turkish narratives from 1923 onwards and on Turkish identity as barbaric and evil in Western narratives.

Keynote – "Feminist Rewritings of the Spiritual and Physical Wilderness of the Bush."

Sarah Illott, Teesside University, UK (@Dr_Illott)

Chloe Buckley, Lancaster University, UK (@gothlit_chloe)

Abstract tba