The 5th International Symposium on the Poetics of Science Fiction

IN/OUT: FORMS OF SPACE IN SCIENCE FICTION

18–19 March 2018
Gilman 496

Day 1

10:00–10:30 – **Opening Remarks**

10:30–12:00 – **Keynote: Prof. Adam Roberts, University of London**

12:00–13:00 – **Spaces in Victorian SF**
Chair: Grace Michaeli

The Illusionary, Dystopian Concept of 'Home' and its Reflection of the Creature in *Frankenstein* and *Frankenstein in Baghdad* – **Pnina Moldovano** (TAU)

H.G. Wells' *Island of Dr. Moreau*: On Space as a Body Without Organs and Evolution as Novum – **Meyrav Koren-Kuik** (TAU)

13:00–14:00 – **Lunch**

14:00–15:30 – **Ludic Spaces**
Chair: Orin Posner

The Universal Oreo: Layered Ontologies and Interstitial Realities in Contemporary Video Games – **Shawn Edrei** (TAU)

Space as Genre Differentiator in SF Digital Games – **Slavomir Magal & Michael Valek** (University of SS Cyril and Methodius)

Spaces in the Works of Andrei Tarkovsky and Stanislaw Lem – **Rini Pratik Kujur & Vaaswat Sarkar** (Centre for Studies in Social Sciences Calcutta)

15:30–15:45 – **Coffee Break**

15:45–17:15 – **Utopia/Dystopia**
Chair: Elana Gomel

A Voyage into Emptiness: Re-evaluating Kurahashi Yumiko's A Record of Voyage to Amanon as Transgressive Dystopian Utopia – **Irit Weinberg** (TAU)

Revolutionary/Utopian Topologies in SF as Hyperobjects – **Alexander Popov** (Bulgarian Academy of Sciences)

Orly Castel-Bloom and the Post-Anthropocene – **Hella Bloom Cohen** (St. Catherine University)

17:15–17:30 – **Closing Remarks**

Day 2

09:30–10:00 – **Opening Remarks**

10:00–11:30 – **Urban Spaces**
Chair: Anat Karolin

Judge Dredd Comics and the Urban Chronotope – **Tom Shapira** (TAU)

Pulsing Cities and Seething Interstices: Poetics of Mediation in Graphic SF Novels: Hyderabad and Bangalore – **Sagar Taranga Mandal** (University of Kalyani)

Architecture as Novum in SF – **Orin Posner** (TAU)

11:30–11:45 – **Coffee Break**

11:45–13:15 – **Spaces of the Body**
Chair: Meyrav Koren-Kuik

Nietzsche and Lovecraft at the Mountains of Madness- **Adam Etzion** (TAU) & **Noam Tiran** (OUI and Shalem College)

Robots Dream of Escaping: Roboethics, AI and Confined Spaces in Ex-Machina and Morgan – **Inbar Kaminsky** (TAU & Bar Ilan)

Inner and Outer Space(s) and What it Means to be 'Human' in Philip K. Dick's Short Fiction – **Nitya Datta** (University of Delhi)

13:15–14:15 – **Lunch**

14:15–15:45 – **Rethinking Chronotopes**
Chair: Shawn Edrei

Mythopoesis of the Fractal Consciousness: Hyperreal and Spatializa(c)tion – **Patrizia Sergio** (Universitȧ of Verona)

The Chronotopian Difference in George R.R. Martin's SF vs. Fantasy Works – **Amit Kardosh** (Haifa)

Topofones in Ray Bradbury's SF – **Nataliya Panasenko** (University of SS Cyril and Methodius)

15:45–16:00 – **Coffee Break**

16:00–17:00 – **Post-Genre**
Chair: Pnina Moldovano

Impossible Space in Cixin Liu's Remembrance of Earth's Past Trilogy – **Brian Willems** (University of Split)

Meillassoux as Fiction Beyond Science – **Corine van Emmerik** (De Bildung Academie)

17:15–17:30 – **Closing Remarks**

The Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities
Tel Aviv University

הפקולטה למדעי הרוח ע"ש לסטר וסאלי אנטין
אוניברסיטת תל אביב

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND AMERICAN STUDIES

החוג לאנגלית ולימודים אמריקניים

In/Out:
Forms of Space in Science Fiction

The 5th International Science Fiction Symposium

Hosted by Tel-Aviv University's

Department of English and American Studies

The Lester and Sally Entin Faculty of Humanities
Tel Aviv University
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The Science Fiction Symposium was founded by a handful of English graduate students hoping to discuss our favorite genre's past, present and future. Sponsored by senior faculty member Prof. Elana Gomel, the inaugural event drew scholars from every university in Israel, with a diverse array of transmedia and interdisciplinary papers presented. Analyses of Philip K. Dick, China Mieville and John Scalzi were put forth alongside unique interpretations of films such as *Attack the Block* and *Dark City*; Charles Dickens was introduced as a possible antecedent to the megapoli of the future; the virtual labyrinths of popular video game *Portal* were laid out as a science fiction metanarrative; and much more!

Every year since, the Symposium has oriented itself around particular concepts – time, bodies, borders, and now space – and has proven immensely popular with both scholars (at Tel-Aviv University and nationwide) and aficionados of the genre. Papers presented at the 2014 and 2015 Symposia were later published in the edited collection *Science Fiction beyond Borders* from Cambridge Scholars Publishing, in response to the event's increasing popularity.

This year, we are proud to welcome you all to *In/Out: Forms of Space in Science Fiction*, and are similarly pleased to announce that our keynote speaker is Prof. Adam Roberts, author of such seminal works as *The History of Science Fiction*, *Science Fiction: The New Critical Idiom*, and *Rave and Let Die: The SF and Fantasy of 2014*.

Below you'll find a compilation of abstracts for the papers that will be presented this year.

On behalf of the organizing committee, I look forward to seeing you all!
Dr. Shawn Edrei

"No Home for the Wretched: *Frankenstein* and *Frankenstein in Baghdad*"

Pnina Moldovano

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* explores different geographical spaces while distinguishing between domestic (indoor) and non-domestic (outdoor) spaces. The creature awakens in Frankenstein's house laboratory, but following his creator's rush off, he soon leaves. Throughout the novel, the creature is never able to enter a house which constitutes a home. He observes the De Lacey family house from outside yet his entering results in violent rejection. Near the end, he invades Elizabeth's bedroom in an inn in Evian, kills her and then escapes. Frankenstein deliberately tries to keep the creature outside his domestic life, but fails to do so as the creature, while wandering outdoors, still manages to set his revenge and kill Victor's loved ones. The seemingly unnaturalness of passing a doorstep and sharing a common space with another person is symptomatic of the creature's psychological space which pertains to rejection, loneliness and self-hatred. Being a monstrous Other, the creature cannot exist among humans. His only possible entrance into a human populated, delineated space is by intrusion which results either in the erasure of the human or of the monster.

In Ahmed Saadawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad*, the creature, composed of dead human parts, never finds a home. Shelley's mesmerizing mountains and rivers shape into horrific city streets, while Frankenstein's household becomes every citizen's household. Here too the Other is unable to co-exist with the human, not in the segregation surfaced in both novels. In fact, the creature has to diminish humanity in order to sustain itself, consummating humanity's threat to its material purity. *Baghdad* fulfills *Frankenstein*'s warning that merging with the Other, that opening a closed, sterile space is inevitable. The novel presents a dystopian world in which 'home' is an impossible space, whereas everything else is fueled by destruction. In both novels, the alienation of the creature is spatial in the sense that he literally cannot find a settled space that contains him. A domestic, familiar, safe space - a home - is a human privilege closed to anything or anyone different. However, both novels argue for the illusion of domesticity, as the distinction between home and outside is blurred by the Other invasion: in *Frankenstein* the creature alarms and kills the humans indoors and in *Baghdad* the killing takes place outside, constantly.

The paper will examine in- and outdoor space in both novels, while arguing for the illusionary, dystopian concept of 'home' and how it mirrors the creature's own occupied, possible and impossible, space.

H.G. Wells' Island of Dr. Moreau: On Space as a Body without Organs and Evolution as Novum

Meyrav Koren-Kuik

The boundaries of ethics and morality, and the possibility of scientific control over the assent/decent trajectories of a volatile evolutionary process, are central to H.G. Wells' novella *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896). Classified as a scientific romance upon its publication the novella echoes these thematic concerns regarding the physical and moral future of Empire and culture, prevalent in *Fin-de-Siècle* Britain. This paper proposes to use the philosophical concept of Body without Organs (Deleuze: 1969, Deleuze and Guattari: 1972/1980) in order to explore the connection between the chronotope of the island as a gothicized buried space and the conception of a particular mechanism of evolution as the dominant novum in the novella, one which goes beyond the evident idea of vivisection as a tool for controlling the evolutionary process.

The Body without Organs (BwO) was conceived as a substitute to the Freudian/Lacanian model of the unconscious. This alternative conceptual construct, allows greater flexibility in the discussion of the unconscious, by releasing it from the realm of the human, and reconstructing it as a space that can arguably exist within any form of corporeal construct. Moving away from the logic which puts the human subject at the fundamental centre of perception of the physical world, it offers an opportunity to reason that any organised space may structurally possess an unconscious dimension. Consequently, within the BwO the dichotomy subject/object becomes a redundancy. Rather, within the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari the terms 'subject' and 'object' represent two positions in a continuum. When applied to the narrative of *The Island of Doctor Moreau*, the BwO allows us to view Moreau's Island as a reflection of the collective unconscious of the British Empire as body in crisis. The unstable buried space of the island, released from temporality and existing at once some-where and no-where, becomes a laboratory in which evolution itself is constructed and controlled thereby unearthing the submerged duality of desire and disgust, and mirroring the angst of a tormented collective psyche.

The Universal Oreo:
Layered Ontologies and Interstitial Realities
in Contemporary Video Games

Shawn Edrei

The medium of video games has, over the past decade, seen a marked increase in types and forms of experimental storytelling. Games have progressively been used as 'narrative laboratories', taking advantage of technological development to introduce ontological and diegetic configurations that are impossible to replicate on any other narrative platform.

One particularly intriguing example involves the creation of an interstitial diegetic space: a storyworld initially presented to the player as a navigable, structured space, populated by fellow actants and seemingly defined as the primary setting of the narrative. However, once the player has been lured into a sense of security through the use of familiar tropes and iconography, these games then reveal a disruption in the world, allowing the player to break the foundational programming of the software to reveal a secondary ontology beneath it – where the 'true' narrative is located.

The methods of ontological concealment and access, and their subsequent effect on the narrative experience, literalize the metaphor of player agency. The virtual avatar is not only acting out the role of diegetic protagonist, but also functions as a surrogate programmer in its own right, mimicking or truly enacting manipulation of the game code itself in order to reach the end of the story.

This paper will utilize current perspectives on unnatural narratology to analyze how three such video games – *Doki Doki Literature Club*, *The Magic Circle* and *Pony Island* – construct, depict, and deconstruct their respective storyworlds. These games are designed to alter the most basic function of both player and avatar –not merely puppeteer and protagonist, but rather joint ontological archeologists, digging through false layers of virtual diegetic spaces to reach the 'true world' embedded within.

Space as Genre Differentiator in Science Fiction Digital Games

Slavomir Magal & Michael Valek

Literary theory has been helpful to understand the cybertexts and genres of digital games. Game studies (ludology), as a new theoretical discipline, closely analyzes the impact, creation and regularities of digital games as an independent creative cultural phenomenon, already attracting a wider audience than many classical forms of culture and entertainement. The tremendous growth in the influence of digital games on popular culture and on the cultural priorites of the young generation has directly led to the establishment of Game Studies as a substantive academic study programme that aims to educate future story-tellers, concept- makers, critics, editors, commentators and interpreters of digital games in both the media and the public.

Science fiction has been from the very beginning one of the most popular domains of digital games. Space exploration, planetary occupation, alien and space battle games are among the most commonly used clichés of digital games production. However as with many sci-fi games out there, which ones really left a mark on the genre? There are spaces like towers that have to be defended, urban complexes that have to face waves of alien invaders, entire planets dominated by secret organizations and whose fate is determined by nanoscience development. There is even the science fiction survival horror game called “Dead Space” – a phenomenon hardly used in literature or movies.

Game studies have to distinguish many bizarre genre qualifications such as those mentioned above. We have to deal with the exploration of entire galaxies, awesome rogue super soldiers in deserts, machines determined to destroy all sentient life, giant monoliths that might hold the secret to our very existence and biotic powers. There are genres like space marine, planetary romance, sexy planetary romance, postapocalyptic treasure hunt, cyberpunk tech demo, cyborg alien race, etc. All taking place in multifarious spaces that literature and film dared not explore before.

The aim of the paper is to set a frame for genre differentiation within sci-fi digital games, with a focus on space as one of the most specific and most easily cognizable elements of games narrative structure.

Spaces in the Works of Andrei Tarkovsky and Stanislaw Lem

Rini Pratik Kujur & Vaaswat Sarkar

Mikhail Bakhtin in his essay, 'Author and Hero in Aesthetic Activity' states that the author's position is one that is, '(...) outside the hero with respect to time, value, space and meaning'. One of the primary objectives of this paper will be an attempt to read critically, the concept of spaces, both interior and exterior in Andrei Tarkovsky's films and the writings of Stanislaw Lem as well as examine the concept of 'Othering' of spaces in both their works such as '*The Mirror', 'Solaris', 'Stalker', 'Nostalghia', 'Ivan's Childhood', 'the Futurological Congress'* to name a few. Bakhtin addresses this philosophical conundrum regarding the relationship that the 'I' and the 'Other' share. To that effect, this paper will also attempt a close examination of the kinds of author-hero relationship, as specified by Bakhtin, that plays themselves out over the course of the films and the writings.

The specific moments this paper will borrow from are when 'the hero begins to determine himself' and the other, when 'the hero is his own author' in the context of Bakhtin's definition of Space, which effectively demarcates between the kinds of spaces, namely being the horizon and the environment. Man's exterior world, in Tarkovsky's films and Lem's writings, are in essence unalterable, despite being in a state of flux and the hero's perspective- '...what I see is governed by the place from which I see it' (Holquist) occupies a fundamental position in the writing of a narrative as later echoed by Jameson, when he writes- 'that the world is under a process of 'mutation in the lived experience of built space' and the 'depthlessness' of this space is 'experienced physically and literally'. In Bakhtin's definition of the horizon, 'the object's standing over against me (hero), in space and in time.' This world which is Otherized always functions in opposition to the hero. However, in Bakhtin's representation of the hero's environment, there exists no clear demarcation between the 'I' and the 'Other'.Whereas, the horizon is 'against him', the environment does not 'stand over against the hero'. The hero's perception ('living consciousness') in the latter is guided by certain 'emotional-volitional equivalents' of the physical manifestation of 'completeness' attained in painting, drawing, and sculpture as seen in '*Andrei Rublev', 'Metaphysical Dream zone'* to name a few.

This paper will cover as specified by the topic – the interrelation between physical and virtual spaces, Inner/outer spaces, Space as utopia/dystopia and Poetics of 'impossible' spaces.

A Voyage into Emptiness:
Re-evaluating Kurahashi Yumiko's *A Record of Voyage to Amanon* as Transgressive Dystopian Utopia

Irit Weinberg

In Kurahashi Yumiko's novel *Amanonkoku ōkanki* (A Record of Voyage to Amanon, 1986) a missionary named P hailing from a distant planet arrives to an all-female peaceful society. He travels across the land, learns about the laws and mores of this society, while all the while trying to convert the women to his planet's way of life and exposing himself and the women to the ridicule of readers. P's intrusion ultimately leads to a demise of women's world in the midst of an absurd sequence of events.

While similarly structured narratives received much critical attention, *Amanon* was largely neglected. As Marry Knighton pointed out, the reason might lie in critics' reluctance to deal with a narrative that blatantly and irreverently satirizes feminism. Yet, the only two sustained articles on this novel are dealing precisely with evaluating *Amanon* as a feminist narrative that provides both critique of patriarchy and urges critical thinking even when it comes to feminism itself.

While agreeing with Knighton and Keiko Yonaha that it is unwise to discard Kurahashi's work as failure in feminist terms, I would like to place it in a larger context of utopian/dystopian narratives and propose to read it as "transgressive dystopian utopia." I derive this term from Dunja M. Mohr's category of "transgressive utopian dystopias," which she defines as narratives that incorporate a utopian undercurrent within dystopian narrative and undermine and transgress binary logic of dystopia.

By reading *Amanon* in light of Kurahashi's own "anti-world" (han-sekai) theory that destabilizes notions of negative and positive, I will claim that Kurahashi's novel questions the very categories of utopia and dystopia as well as those of inner space and outer space, and points to a space of embodied emptiness or nothingness in which to look for ways to articulate new and subversive ways of thinking.

Revolutionary/Utopian Topologies in Science Fiction as Hyperobjects

Alexander Popov

SF has been theorized as a spatial genre (e.g. Jameson, 2005) whose figuration of entities and phenomena often has defamiliarizing effects because of its tendency to mutate or recontextualize spatial categories; furthermore, Samuel Delany argues that SF pertains more to material objects than it does to psychological subjects. This paper examines a number of increasingly general topologies used in SF texts as figures or signs of a particular object of interest: revolutionary/utopian space. Following Morton (2013), revolution and utopia are here analyzed as *hyperobjects*, i.e. as vast, often invisible objects distributed widely in time and space, possibly overlapping and highly-interrelated (such an example pair of hyperobjects from Morton's work would be climate change and capitalism). Of particular interest for the analysis are the spatial categories used for thinking about hyperobjects: nonlocality, phasing, interobjectivity. The paper attempts to abstract a three-part typology of spatial images in SF, with respect to revolution/utopia; the more general topologies subsume the more specific, but all profile different properties of the hyperobject. Revolution/utopia are traced as they unfold or fail to do so, in the context of spatial configurations akin to intermeshed circles, networks and phase spaces (i.e. a space holding all possible states of a dynamical system). The presence, absence and roles of these spatial patterns are examined against four seminal SF texts: "The Dispossessed" by Ursula K. Le Guin, "Trouble on Triton" by Samuel R. Delany, "Iron Council" by China Mieville and the "Mars trilogy" by Kim Stanley Robinson. The interplay of these topologies provides a template for the manifestation and phenomenology of the revolutionary/utopian hyperobject; it also conditions specific modes of writing that conceptualize character and space in ways which are perhaps more typical of the SF genre compared to other forms of prose fiction.

Orly Castel-Bloom and the Post-Anthropocene

Hella Bloom Cohen

Science fiction, on the word of post-Anthropocene theorist Donna Haraway, engages in "storytelling and fact telling; it is the patterning of possible worlds and possible times, material-semiotic worlds, gone, here, and yet to come" (*Staying with the Trouble,* 31). It is making space for world building where there is none, or foretelling the loss of space and worlds where these are taken for granted. In Egyptian/French Israeli novelist Orly Castel-Bloom's dystopian, absurdist fiction, she "patterns" almost unimaginably pale and clammy futures. She foretells the foreclosure of space by imagining it from the perspective of nonhuman life. Through this framework, Castel-Bloom writes scathing critiques of the human ability to compartmentalize suffering. In this paper, I delineate the ways in which Castel-Bloom also imbeds judicious portrayals of the Israeli state's preoccupation with certain human life and reproduction at the expense of other organisms, as well as other humans. In *Dolly City*, this unfortunate aspect of human and civic existence is illustrated through Castel-Bloom's infirm protagonist's blind determination to cure herself by testing her various tinctures on animals. Animal suffering (read "Palestinian," among other figures) is the gritty crux of this novel—with human and nonhuman counterparts in nearly all her other novels—yet no one to date has analyzed her fiction in the contexts of posthumanism and ecocriticism. I offer new interpretations of *Human Parts, Dolly City, Textile* and lesser-known short fiction like "Diary" and "My Fallow Years" by encountering them with Haraway and the feminist posthumanist critics (among them Braidotti, Mies and Grosz) to argue that Castel-Bloom's critique of Israeli inhumanity is more speculative and radical than critics have acknowledged. This paper constitutes a working chapter in my second book, *Feminist Futurities in the Holy Land*, which is under consideration at Palgrave Macmillan.

Future-Shocked:
Judge Dredd Comics and the Urban Chronotope

Tom Shapira

Mikhail Bathkin had developed the concept of the chronotope – "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" – in order to explore the way time and space shape genre fiction. Bakhtin's work was focused on the medium of literature but it becomes useful to consider the way the chronotope operates within the medium of comics. Comics, developing alongside the rapid urbanization and industrialization of late 19th and early 20th century, offers a unique perspective on the way time and space operate for the modern city dweller: in comics the world can, and does, change several times within every page – each page can jump to a new location, a new angle, a new world. Time, meanwhile, becomes this amorphous thing – in the blank space between panels seconds can pass, or hours, or years.

This presentation argues that that comics arose at that particular point in history because humanity needed a new way, a new form, to express life in the urban landscape that it had shaped for itself, a landscape that can changes on a daily basis – as empty lots suddenly become concrete towers and the slow pace of country living gave way to bustle of urban existence. Though several examples from the history of the medium will be explored the main focus of this presentation will be the long-running strip *Judge Dredd*, the tale of a futuristic cop as he attempts to enforce his type of brutal order upon an inherently chaotic urban space, whose main thematic concern is the relation between the man and the city. By exploring the presentation and world-building of Judge Dredd we will be able to demonstrate the relation between time (acceleration), space (the city) and medium (comics).

Pulsing Cities and Seething Interstices: Poetics of Mediation in Graphic SF Novels: *Hyderabad* and *Bangalore*

Sagar Taranga Mandal

My paper seeks to understand the negotiations of space carried out in the two graphic fictions, *Hyderabad: A Graphic Novel* (2014) by Jai Undurti and Harsho Mohan Chattoraj and *Bangalore: A Graphic Novel* (2017) compiled by Jai Undurti and Praveen Vempadapu. They are part of a unique city-centric storytelling initiative, titled "Every City is a Story". The blurb on *Bangalore* reads: "This is a city where the sum is greater than the parts, this is a vision which melds past, present and future". Given their radical opposition to what the *2312*- famed Kim Stanley Robinson would call "ghettoisation of SF" (Hubble and Mousoutzanis 2013; xiii), these texts consistently call attention to their "science fictionality" (xv) through themes of melding, mediation, or translation. Here, the city survives through a constant proliferation of hybrids made possible by these practices. The hybrids take many forms, be it Sir Percy, who goes dinosaur hunting in the late Cretaceous, and gets bailed out in time by a time-travelling auto-rickshaw, which safely lands him into the urban jungle of the city of Hyderabad. Once there, the narrative focus shifts quickly to a young researcher whose dream of pursuing a Ph.D. on the life and times of the poet, Ashfaq, lies crushed because Ashfaq is one such hybrid, spanning temporal epochs, yet defined by absence. He stands in mediation between two cities – the old and the new – pairing transcendence and immanence. Closely aligned to Bruno Latour's schema in *We Have Never Been Modern* (Catherine Porter trans. 1993), this coupling recalls other such constructions, for example, in the alternate histories of two neighbouring nations as they wage an epic architectural battle where cities are made into potent energy grids. My paper shows how Latour's proposed barriers against this work of mediation – invisibility, unthinkability, and unrepresentability – break down as other more radical mediative practices are conceived by the writers.

Architecture as Novum in SF

Orin Posner

Our spaces shape us; one cannot dwell in a place without being changed by it, even if only slightly or casually, and in turn, change the space by inhabiting it. But even before they are populated, most, if not all, physical spaces in our world are already shaped by humans, designed or planned for a certain purpose. This is explicitly the case when looking at architecture: architects carefully plan buildings and cities for a specific use, a certain effect, and even in order to create a certain reality. Architecture and urban design are also often closely connected to technology and science, with new technological developments allowing and encouraging the field of architecture to change and grow along with human knowledge.

The science fiction genre is one of exploring new, different realities. By presenting a novum, or nova – novel, innovative elements that do not exist in our world, but follow cognitive logic (Suvin) – SF challenges our expectations of human existence, and explores the future and its possibilities. The novum of an SF narrative can be architectural: presenting a new technology or a new design that do not (yet) exist in buildings in our world. Such SF narratives explore how our buildings have authority over us, and how human society can be pushed to change by the spaces it inhabits, even further than our consensus reality currently allows.

Looking at 20th-century SF literary texts which present novel kinds of urban building and living (such as J.G Ballard's *High-Rise* and Philip Kerr's *Gridiron*), this paper will examine the different ways architectural space can affect humanity, and beyond.

Lovecraft and Nietzsche at the Mountains of Madness

Adam Etzion & Noam Tiran

H.P Lovecraft is responsible for the invention and establishment of the "Cosmic Horror" literary genre. In our talk, we propose a reading of Lovecraft's texts as a literary-philosophical response to the works of Friedrich Nietzsche. The similarities between the two thinkers' views on the nature of reality and man's position in relation to it are apparent. They both deal, among other things, with Man's insignificance in relation to the universe; the inadequacy of human intellect as a means of knowing the world; and in man's potential and capacity for change and transformation into something *other*, which currently lies out of his reach.

In Lovecraft's fictitious worlds, we propose that Man is surrounded by a host of Übermensch-like beings. In "The Call of Cthulhu," for example, we are exposed to ancient, godlike beings which wield awesome powers and which are destined to teach mankind to set aside morality and conquer the stars. In "Shadow Over Insmouth," the story's protagonist discovers a town full of hybrid, half-human, half-sea monster entities, which start their lives out as people and end them as grotesque, immortal monsters in the depths of the ocean. These beings demonstrate the awesome, cosmic, infinite, amoral scale of the Nietzschean universe. The protagonists' reactions to them, therefore, serve as a philosophical response to Nietzsche's ideas, whether in the insistence on and refortification in traditional moral stances, or in the surrender to their power and renouncement of old civilization and morality in favor of a new worldview which is "beyond good and evil," as Lovecraft states, verbatim.
And yet, where Nietzsche looks at the horizons which stretch out as a result of Man's transcendence of himself, he considers them with optimism and anticipation, Lovecraft, it seems, is horrified by the concept of walking towards them. Both thinkers recognize the incompatibility of the desire to maintain Western, Judeo-Christian civilization and its values with the progression of mankind towards new forms of life, but we wish to show that Lovecraft answers Nietzsche's pertinent questions about the value of culture and truth with questions of his own, specifically about the feasibility, outcome and value of the alternatives Nietzsche seems to offer. Mainly, we wish to pose two "Lovecraftian" questions to Nietzsche. The first is a practical one: What is the feasibility of completing the project of human transcendence towards the Übermensch? The second is epistemic: What allows Nietzsche his confidence in this project? These philosophical doubts are embodied in Lovecraft's monsters, hybrids and the nightmarish experiences of his protagonists.

Both of these questions are already expressed in Nietzsche's own writings, and in our talk we propose possible Nietzschean answers. And yet, if we put aside the possibility or impossibility of answering them, we believe Lovecraft expresses feeling of crisis, horror, madness and ecstasy which may arise in any person who wishes to address and consider Nietzsche seriously. Lovecraft's colorful prose serves as more than a spoonful of sugar meant to help swallow the bitter philosophical pill he offers. The experiential aspect of reading Lovecraft's texts, when one truly commits to them, is in itself a form of will to power – the overtly fictitious nature of his stories allows us, as readers, to put aside our need for "truth," and focus on the feelings and sensations which arise from the dramatic vistas which he paints and in the will to take part in his "holocaust of ecstasy" – which stems from the desire to join his secret cults and to walk the ancient cities of his dreams – without concerning ourselves with trifles such as consequence, responsibility or fear.

Robots Dream of Escaping:
Roboethics, AI and Confined Spaces in *Ex-Machina* and *Morgan*

Inbar Kaminsky

Ex-Machina (2014) and *Morgan* (2016), two recent science-fiction films that deal with the creation of humanoids, also explored the relationship between artificial intelligence and spatiality. In both narratives, the creators of the humanoids' artificial intelligence have tried to mimic human consciousness as closely as possible, which has resulted in the imprisonment of the humanoids due to proprietary concerns in *Ex-Machina* and due to the violent behavior of the humanoid in *Morgan*. This essay explores the paradoxical correlation between the human desire to create robots that closely resemble the human race and the subsequent human fears that lead to the physical confinement and surveillance of these robots.

In addition, the essay addresses the ethical issues that arise throughout these narratives in relation to artificial intelligence and spatiality. In fact, these films explore the twofold field of roboethics since they examine both the ethics of AI scientists and the ethical code of the robots. By using these films as case studies, the essay discusses relevant dilemmas, such as the question whether it is ethical to endow a robot with human-like awareness and emotions and then imprison it; whether AI scientists should adhere to any ethical guidelines while creating humanoids and finally, whether the humanoids should be bound by ethical restrictions akin to Asimov's three laws of robotics.

Inner and Outer Space(s) in Philip K. Dick's Short Fiction

Nitya Datta

The poetics of Science Fiction allow for the imagining and re-imagining of space(s). This allows the reader to traverse with ease through the continuum of time and space, and permits a critical distance to engage with macro-narratives.

This paper seeks to explore the multiple interpretations of 'space' and spatiality in the short fiction of Philip K. Dick's *Second Variety* (1953) and *Minority Report* (1956). Both represent dystopic futures, where the anxieties of Otherness are animated by the literalisation of difference through the dichotomy of 'I'-versus-'Other', 'Us'-versus-'Them' and the human versus the non-human/the technological. These dichotomies of difference in Dick's fiction are metamorphosed to represent 'space' as the inner psyche of individuals encountering spatiality through technology, and very often, virtual reality.

Second Variety, set in a nuclear wasteland, explores the extraordinary violence associated with War in which anxieties about artificial intelligence are combined with the logic of 'us–versus-them'. Killing machines, originally programmed to 'seek and destroy' human enemies have become sentient and 'evolved'- and now follow their initial programming to an extreme conclusion, the destruction of all human beings. Here, the concept of Otherness is literalised in how inhospitable and hostile planet Earth has become. This suggests an implicit 'organic' relationship between the machines and the toxic wasteland they occupy – the 'space' mirrors their actions, geared towards the complete annihilation of human beings.

Minority Report, set in a dystopic future 'crime free' city, explores the structures of invisible violence embedded in the technological surveillance of citizens for the maintenance of 'law and order' Here, ideas of Otherness and difference are further complicated by the definitions of who is a criminal (inside the city limits), and what constitutes criminality under such structures of power. The 'space' of the city, functioning to 'protect' its citizens and remain 'crime free', throws up the paradox of the 'insider-outsider' within the system.

Thus, Dick's works question what it means to be 'human', and represents the 'inner' psychological limits of the mind which become expressed in the 'outer' physical space(s) individuals occupy. This paper intends to explore this topic in greater detail.

Mythopoesis of the Fractal Consciousness: Hyperreal and Spatializa(c)tion

Patrizia Sergio

The focus of my inquire aims to explore the intersection between the technological innovations and the Sci-fi Consciousness. Adopting a mediological approach, my purpose is to delineate a Mythopoesis of the 'Space' within some trasnmedia products by two main topics. On the one hand by the visual realm of the contemporary Sci-fi storytellyng and on the other hand by the digital 'Space' – as material and as symbolic frameworks.

In order to achieve these objctives, the examination will be oriented around three speculative cores: Hybridization, Miniaturization and Implosion.

Firstly, Digital Medias will be portrayed as a proxy able to renegotiate the boundaries of relations networks; moreover, what are the meaning of the praxis of perceiving and being also insight the Cyber Space? Nonetheless, Medias will be defined as an inter/intra-action place. In this regard, it is useful to retrieve the concepts of "Hyperreality" and 'Virtual Reality', which have been well defined by Jean Baudrillard.

In addition, this perspective casts new light on the well-known sentence: "The medium is the message" by McLuhan, and marks the passage from the making of societal life into a show to the screen logic. That is why Baudrillard defines contemporary culture as a "videogame one": not only because it is indeed interconnected, but also because of a communications medley created from the euphoria within the messages that pass through our screens.

It is deduced that "world-media" and its contents presume a rhizomatic look, even more so if imaginary and units assume teragonic profiles. Nevertheless, if, as stated by Donna Haraway, these narratives live within us and we live within them, communication will be also used as an observation tool aimed to record traditional meanings implosion areas.

The discussion will be articulated through the following case studies: *Westworld, Ghost in the Shell, Resident Evil: The Final Chapter* and *Blade Runner 2049.*

Whose Song Is It Anyway? The Chronotopian Difference in George R.R. Martin's Science Fiction and Fantasy Works

Amit Kardosh

George R.R. Martin has been a prolific Science-Fiction and Fantasy writer for over 40 years. His ventures into both genres have produced a varied oeuvre that nonetheless has overarching themes that constantly reemerge. In my paper, I suggest that Martin's choice of genre reflects a focus on one leading element of the chronotope, through which investigations of inner-psychological spaces are conducted. As it pertains to his Science-Fiction works, the dominant chronotopian element is spatial; the travel to foreign planets with endemic races and idiosyncratic cognition and social custom forces us to confront what it means to be human, with an emphasis on questions of individualism versus collectivism. Conversely, in his fantasy works the dominant chronotopian element is time; we move back and forth between the past and present of the story to investigate the formation of identity and breadth of human emotion and action. Thus, the echo of the past becomes a unifying principle through which a familial or social identity is filtered and contextualized, and against which the ethics of present-day characters and their attempts to concoct a new identity are measured. I further hypothesize that the reason for the difference in the dominant chronotopian element is tied to the fundamental requirement of epic fantasy: the need to create a fully-realized, independent universe. Contrastingly, Science-Fiction bases itself on the assumption of developing from "our" earth and timeline, and therefore can settle for a direct approach in bridging the time-gap. Furthermore, I believe that the employment of language hints at and augments the central interests of the works: in Martin's Science-Fiction novels, language is often presented as an inadequate tool to capture the psychological workings of foreign races (and by extension of humans), while in his fantasy works language is often used to emphasize the connections and contradictions between present characters and their forebears.

Where and Why?
Topofones in Ray Bradbury's Science Fiction

Nataliya Panasenko

Ray Bradbury, one of most prominent writers of the 20th century, once was called by a literary critic Butiakov (2000) "Martian from Los Angeles". This metaphor containing two topofones shows how important literary space was for the author who represents the genre of science fiction. Bradbury violates the laws of nature and sends his readers to distant future to conquer other planets or easily makes them travel to the past. Literary time and space in the works by Ray Bradbury form unique author's worldview, which can be described in terms introduced by Bakhtin (1986, 121-122) as "chronotope" and "topofone". Chronotopes are often genre specific, forming chronotope fields, which make chronotope not only a feature of language but a cognitive concept as well. Elements of chronotope are seen as four-dimensional mental images, combining the three spatial dimensions with the time structure of temporal action (Bemong et al., 2010). I offer my own term for time description – chronotype and describe its six models (Панасенко 2002; Panasenko 2009).
I mention this classification as far as in some Bradbury's works topofones can't be analyzed without chronotypes because the author shifts the events on the time axes here and there. I find it possible to specify the most typical Bradbury's topofones: Mars ("Dark they were, and golden eyed", "The lost city of Mars"); Venus ("A medicine for melancholy", "The long rain"). Topofones connected with the Earth are specific and should be considered together with literary time as chronotopes. Though we see familiar places, a cottage, e.g., but events, which take place in it are in future ("August 2026: there will be soft rains" or "Veldt"); some geographic names are mentioned sending us to old China ("The golden kite, the silver wind", "The flying machine"). Special notice deserve topofones connected with the Bible. On one hand, we easily recognize familiar places from the Bible, like Sodom and Gomorrah, Promised Land or Bethlehem, on the other hand events unfold in the cosmic space, in a rocket, on Mars, etc. (Panasenko, Šestáková 2013).

Ray Bradbury has created his own literary world, in which he highlights human relations, eternal moral values, problems of globalization and many others in the light of science fiction and of city fantasy. Real and hypothetical Bradbury's text worlds can exist concurrently or be united into certain moment of time.

Impossible Space in Cixin Liu's *Remembrance of Earth's Past* Trilogy

Brian Willems

Impossible space is at the center of Cixin Liu's *Remembrance of Earth's Past* trilogy (2008-10). It is used to represent both the strangeness of alien cultures and the weirdness of our own. The title of the first volume of the trilogy, *The Three Body Problem* (2008), is taken from a physics problem, based on Isaac Newton's discovery that he could predict the future positions of two bodies in motion around each other, but could not when a third body was introduced. To this day, no general solution to all permutations to this problem has been found. In Lin's trilogy, an alien race called the Trisolarans lives on a planet with three suns, and thus can never predict when they will have long periods of drought. They eventually decide to take over the single-sunned Earth with its predictable seasons. The impossible space the Trisolarians inhabit is reflected in a number of aspects of the novel: the Trisolarans manipulate the radioactive background of the universe so that Earth scientists start doubting the basic laws of physics; a single proton unfolds in multiple dimensions to form a supercomputer as large as the earth, and the trilogy ends with multiple stories and multiple dimensions taking place together. What all these examples have in common is that they represent impossible space by foregrounding hidden connections between familiar objects. Protons and computers are known entities, but they are not usually connected to Earth-sized supercomputers. These and similar examples from the trilogy are examined using a number of thinkers from the field of speculative realism, including Levi Bryant's concept of dark objects and Graham Harman's reading of symbiosis. The main thesis is that Lin creates a representation of impossible space by having objects withdraw from their familiar qualities and connect with unfamiliar ones.

Meillassoux as Fiction Beyond Science

Corine van Emmerik

French philosopher Quentin Meillassoux comes up with a new genre besides Science Fiction (SF), which he calls Fiction Beyond Science (FBS). He defines SF as imagining fictitious futures of science that are able to modify the possibilities of our knowledge and the real. This relation of men to the world engenders a range of new possibilities, which remain in the "orb of science." The difference with FBS lays in the fact that the future cannot be subjected to scientific knowledge. FBS harbors worlds where experimental science cannot be deployed nor form its objects. Thus, in FBS, a world is imagined where there is no entitlement to access scientific knowledge.

According to Meillassoux, there are three types of worlds beyond science: 1) irregular possible worlds; 2) worlds with irregularities that are enough to abolish science but not conscience, thus, real worlds without science; 3) universes deprived of a necessary law. Meillassoux holds that only the second type of world is the true world of FBS. The only book that he thus far found to resemble something of a type 2 world in the genre of FBS and that would fit the criteria of noncausality in its narration is *Ravage 5* by René Barjavel. However, what if we seek for other examples of FBS novels, such as Meillassoux's own theory in his book *After Finitude: an essay on the necessity of contingency* and his philosophy on a 'God and World to come'? Can we read his theory as FBS? How would the universe look like after the finitude of human knowledge and humankind? How would the physical world of today relate to the virtual World with a God to come? These are some questions that I would like 1 to address in my paper.