

Utopia at the Border

The Fourth Symposium of the Imaginarities of the Future
International Research Network

Funded by the Leverhulme Trust

University of Regensburg, Germany
Tuesday 20th – Thursday 22nd September 2016

Tuesday 20th September

Room 319, Altes Finanzamt Building, Landshuter Straße 4

9.30am: Utopia at the border: an introductory discussion

Welcome to Imaginarities of the Future

Nathaniel Coleman & David M. Bell, Imaginarities of the Future, Newcastle University, UK

Why Utopia at the Border?

Kenneth Hanshew, Imaginarities of the Future Network Partner, University of Regensburg, Germany

Utopia at the Border: Some Provisional Thoughts

David M. Bell, Newcastle University, UK

Open Discussion on hopes, expectations, issues, etc.

11.00am: Coffee break

11.30am: Within, Against and Beyond Europe and its Borders

Under-studies in Race and Crisis; towards an understanding of Europe's racializing assemblages and the reproduction of the 'migrant crisis'

Alexander Benham, University of Sussex, UK

The 'migrant crisis' of Europe is an under-studied event. This is not to deny that it has been spoken about at great volume, or written about at great length. Neither is to claim that academics have failed to engage with the crisis; alongside Slavoj Žižek's long, loud and utterly loathsome polemics, there have also been works of critical sensitivity and insight. However, despite all of this, I would still insist that the crisis is fundamentally under-studied. This April, *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* devoted a feature section to 'Europe's "Migrant Crisis" In Comparative Perspective.' In this section, all five papers managed to discuss the crisis without a single reference to 'race' or 'racialization.' I fear this is indicative of a generalized phenomenon. The racializing assemblages which reproduce Europe and its 'migrant crisis' are too often elided by the European project of critique.

This is the smaller part of what I mean by under-studied: the larger piece remains beneath the surface. Critique originates on stable ground, founded on conquest and racial domination. But beneath this ground something else is always already happening – the 'irreducible intellectuality' of collective and connective study. This is where anti-colonial thought and the black radical tradition has its anorginary source – and where we now return to. This essay will first look to Denise Ferreira Da Silva's conceptualization of race and global space, and examine how migrants are written into affectability as the others of agentive, self-determining Europe: migrants do not move or travel, they are 'smuggled' or 'rescued.' Then we will turn to Gil Anidjar, and suggest that the figure of the migrant is the latest iteration of 'the enemy'; a threatening presence against which Europe finds and founds itself. Da Silva reads Europe through the lines of philosophy and science, Anidjar through the contours of the 'theologico-political,' but they are both caught up in under-study, writing beneath the settled ground of critique. In this paper I hope to 'understudy' for them, and, through the recital of their work, improvise towards something incisive.

Jagged Edge

Ackrylic, London, UK

Illustrated by multiple media, this session will discuss the creation of *Jagged Edge*. *Jagged Edge*, premiering in London this June, is a multimedia stage show built from interviews with real people about their enforcement of, experiences of and resistance to borders: the ex- Air Force vintage shop owner who rents AK47s to and hates immigrants, the Bengali family priced and policed out of their home in East London, the ‘fundamentalist’ placed on house arrest, the young student anarchist watching an area disfigure around him, and the asylum seeking women on intermittent hunger strike, wearing WE WANT FREEDOM T-SHIRTS, in Yarl’s Wood (the UK’s disgraced women-only detention centre). Illustrating our talk with select media from the show, including audio clips, film and set pieces, audiences will be treated to a slice of Jagged Edge’s feel, an introduction to its themes, and a glimpse at the idiosyncratic, human details of those that enforce, and resist, borders in London.

12.30pm: Lunch

1.30pm: Community and Theory

Stateless Spaces: Creating, Maintaining, and Transgressing Borders in Antebellum Communal Settlements

Molly Reed, History, Cornell University, USA

My paper will consider how communal settlements of the antebellum period in the United States developed novel relationships to place. In the 1840s, American social and religious reformers established over fifty communal settlements. These communities erected and transgressed borders, disrupted existing neighborhoods, economies, and institutions, and reorganized spatial relations. Though often treated in popular memory as isolated experiments, communities of this period were deeply entangled; they were connected through shared ideology, skills, challenges, and members. Communities represented paradoxical spatial configurations; they were frequently ephemeral and populated by mobile actors, but simultaneously deeply invested in place-making. In this context, communitarians erected, transgressed, and reimagined geographical and cultural boundaries. Despite open engagement with a changing world, communitarians simultaneously erected community borders and developed mythologies of place which were deeply exclusionary. My paper considers interactions, tensions, and unlikely alliances between Shakers, Fourierists, Owenites, and proponents of Universal Reform. Through this analysis of the transformation of space and place, I seek to combat prevailing narratives that emphasize isolation and homogeneity in communal settlements, and to bring attention to the range of possible futures available to nineteenth-century Americans prior to the Civil War.

Marcuse’s utopia: right here, not yet, and over

Margath Walker, Department of Geography and Geosciences, University of Louisville, USA

The most striking aspect setting Herbert Marcuse apart from other principal figures identified with the Frankfurt School is his unwavering commitment to the utopian spirit, to the possibility of a better future. While there are many lines of connection between Marcuse and Ernst Bloch’s *Principle of Hope*, most notably in the idea that the process of attaining utopia is a self-generating one rather than a pre-existing ideal state to strive for, Marcuse politicizes the concept by building on Bloch’s formulations. He writes that while the established reality principle has cast utopia as a placeless place beyond reach, the notion and desire for utopia is a necessary component of the human mind. Here, I seek to characterize Marcuse’s vision through a geographic lens and argue that utopia is a realizable place, itself part of his larger project of dialectical thinking. Utopia is commonly understood as both ‘good place’ and ‘no place’ but for Marcuse it

is more. Across the breadth of his work, utopia is *right here, not yet, and over*. In elaborating these three phases, I argue that utopia stretches beyond juridical-territorial conceptualizations reconfiguring temporal borders through an activation of the ‘disallowed’, an articulation of oppositional space rooted in imagination. Spatio-temporal plurality is precisely what imbues utopia with power; at times translating into elusiveness and at others appearing right before us to thwart pessimism and defeatism. Marcuse’s work on utopia is integral to a pre-figurative politics where the concept of becoming is integral. It is synonymous with struggle, change and overcoming material and metaphorical borders.

2.30pm: Coffee break

2.45pm: Queering the Border, Bordering the Queer

“Is a Gay Community Possible?” Tracing the Borders of the Brixton Gay Community

Milo Bettocchi, School of Geography, University of Nottingham, UK

In this paper, I dwell on the borders of a utopian project – what became known in the 1970s as the Brixton Gay Community. Drawing on semi-structured oral history interviews and archival material, I examine how the former squatters of the Brixton Gay Community – a utopian project in south London with an emphasis on living liberation – demarcate(d) the Community along temporal and racialized lines.

One of the men who lived in the Brixton Gay Community worked for years on writing a book about the Community. The book remains unpublished, but in hand-written notes towards its completion a question stands out: “Is a gay community possible?” This, it turns out, was one of the working titles of the book. That question animates this paper – perhaps the Brixton Gay Community never was; perhaps it was over before it began, perhaps it can be remembered but never reached. The question suggests impossibility, disappointment, failure, longing. Perhaps it is also hopeful - the answer to the question could well be ‘yes’, or ‘someday’. I thus trace the ways in which the Brixton Gay Community is placed by its former inhabitants in the past, the present and/or future, as well as the utopian “nowhere”.

Further, I trace the ways in which the very notions of ‘community’, ‘gayness’ and the space itself were and are racialized – in particular how blackness and the predominantly black space of Brixton were defined against and marked the boundaries of the Brixton Gay Community. Thus, this paper takes up recent calls by queer geographers to problematize the concept of queer space as ‘pure’ dissident space, resistant space or progressive space, and who argue that while queer space is often lauded as the disruption of heterosexual space, rarely is that disruption interrogated also as a disruption of racialized, gendered, and classed spaces.

Borders, Identity and the Body

Gerardo Perfros-Barradas, Histoire et Cultures des Mondes Ibériques, Université Paris-Sorbonne, France

This paper provides an analysis of my eight-month ethnographic fieldwork studying the impact of uneven development and embodiment on interactions between Brazilian and Western-European homosexual males in an LGBT beach in Rio de Janeiro. I aim to explore to what extent the spatial *errance* involved in cruising described by Néstor Perlongher (1987) can be translated into social *errance*, providing privileged points of rupture from which new possibilities beyond participants’ original intentions may become discernible.

The question is to what extent the interlocking imaginaries of progress and affective encounters can create new opportunities and new identities. Drawing on the work of Gloria Anzaldúa, I will look for instances of a queer *mestizo* consciousness, in which the intersection of discriminations can lead to redefinitions of

traditional categories, leading to ‘the creation of yet another culture, a new story to explain the world and our participation in it, a new value system with images and symbols that connect us to each other and to the planet.’ (Anzaldúa 1987: 182).

3.45pm: Coffee break

4.00pm: Borderlands and the Politics of (post-) Identity Conceptualizing Borderland Masculinity: a New Mestiza Consciousness for Chicano Men?

Kostia Lennes, Anthropology, University of Leuven, Belgium

This paper draws from Gloria Anzaldúa’s work on the ‘new mestiza’ as a higher Chicano consciousness going beyond Western binary thinking regarding race, language, gender, sexuality and any other aspect of identity. I start the presentation by introducing the term “borderland masculinity” as a concept that illustrates the influence of cross-border identity (in Anzaldúa’s sense) on Chicano masculinity. In order to achieve this, I explore the specific implications of borderland identity, borderland subjectivity and mestizaje for Chicano men as “men”. Then, I discuss two notions derived from the literature focusing on Chicano male identity: “unhomely masculinity” and “Brown masculinity”. Both notions, though they illustrate various masculinity strategies, converge toward what I have called the “borderland masculinity” since they are an expression of a specific “masculine” cross-border identity. In the final part of the presentation, I question the future and the perspectives of “borderland masculinity” as a fluid identity that may be mobilized to counter hegemony through violence, but also to encourage a convergence of struggles (particularly those related to the “new mestiza”), taking into account the intersecting identities of the larger Chicano community in the US-Mexican context.

A Reading of Julia Alvarez’s Poems in light of Gloria Anzaldúa’s Theory of the Borderland

Naglaa Saad Mohamed Hassan, School of English, Fayoum University, Egypt

In her 1987 book, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Gloria Anzaldúa negotiates border/hybrid identities through her concept of “mestiza.” Instead of the stereotypical binaries of inside/outside, self/other, colonizer/colonized, Anzaldúa offers a space in which hybrid identity can survive and flourish. Writing out of her own experience as a Mexican American writer living on the Texas-U.S. Southwest-Mexican border, she diagnoses the problem of people of mixed cultural heritage who have to suffer the threats of displacement and codifications by the dominant culture. For Anzaldúa, the borderland is a symbol of “the emotional, psychological and political conundrum of the mestizo [and] is physically present whenever two or more cultures edge each other.” Stretching the scope of her concept even further, Anzaldúa notes that the borderland is the place “where people of different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle and upper classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy”. As such the borderland goes beyond the physical, encompassing psychological, social as well as linguistic elements. It is in light of this theory that this paper investigates the poetry of Julia Alvarez, the Dominican-American poet, novelist, and essayist. Bridging theory and practice, it shows Alvarez’s poetry to be fertile ground for exploring Anzaldúa’s concept of the borderland. Beginning with her collection *Homecoming*, in which she writes that “language is my homeland,” Alvarez, through poems written in crisp diction and vivid imagery, produces portraits of the mestiza, the hybrid subject searching for a borderland in which he/she can overcome the threat of displacement. This includes explorations of cultural encounters, domesticity, and snapshots of social gatherings. The paper is to be divided into two parts. The first investigates Anzaldúa’s concepts of the borderland and mestizo, showing their distinction from other postcolonial concepts

(including Homi Bhabha's "inbetweenness" and Gayatri Spivak's "subaltern"). The second part analyzes a number of representative elements in Alvarez's output in light of Anzaldúa's theory with particular focus on the psychological, cultural and social aspects of the borderland.

"The Duchess of Kingdom Mountain:" Negotiating Post-Ethnicity and Indigeneity in a Québec-U.S. Borderlands Utopia

Evelyn P. Mayer, University of Applied Sciences Landshut, Germany

Howard Frank Mosher's 2007 novel *On Kingdom Mountain* critically reflects on and negotiates multiple borders, particularly geographic, societal, and ethnic/racial borders. Set on and along the Canada-U.S. border between northeastern Vermont and Québec, the novel features the unique in-between space of Kingdom Mountain belonging to the protagonist Jane Hubbell Kinneson. In this post-ethnic utopian, Bhabhian "third space," the so-called "Duchess of Kingdom Mountain," who is both Memphremagog Abenaki and Caucasian, lives according to her own rules based on ancestral and Aboriginal conceptions of belonging and identity. Indigeneity and kinship ties shape Jane's colorblind outlook and actions in 1930s rural Vermont. The partly indigenous protagonist not only resists the commodification of nature and the development of her Native land in the name of dubious progress, but also disrupts societal expectations by welcoming the partly African American Henry, an aviator from the South, to post-ethnic "Kingdom Mountain."

In so doing, the Duchess draws on her family's legacy of inclusiveness and social justice having been actively involved with the Underground Railroad. Linking with the indigenous experience and critique of the imposition of artificial and colonial borders on Native lands, Mosher highlights the arbitrary nature of the international line in a humorous fashion. The Line cuts right through the protagonist's kitchen, so that "she ate with one foot in Canada and one in the United States" (10). Moreover, the international boundary is not recognized, but functions as "a Kinneson family joke" (10). This presentation focusing on Mosher's "Duchess of Kingdom Mountain" thus contextualizes post-ethnicity and indigeneity in the Québec-U.S. borderlands within the larger framework of border studies. Kingdom Mountain is portrayed as a utopian space offering an alternative conceptualization of borders and belonging.

5.30pm: Collective discussion

led by lotF Network Partners

Wednesday 21st September

Room 319, Altes Finanzamt Building, Landshuter Straße 4

10am: Literary Border Crossings

Borders and Boundaries in Darko Suvin's Poetry

Pavla Veselá, Department of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic

In his foreword to a special issue of *Paradoxa* devoted to Darko Suvin, Philip Wegner has argued that Suvin's experience of marginality, dislocation and migration provided him with a global perspective on culture. "It is in its myriad forms of border crossings—and in its openness to diverse perspectives, the connections it draws across various fields, disciplines, and cultures, and the depth of its political commitments—that the real importance of Suvin's works for our dire present situation emerges." Suvin's theoretical writing indeed moves across the boundaries of eras, cultures, disciplines and genres, and his poetry demonstrates an equally wide-reaching approach. Formally diverse, Suvin's poetry moves in a Whitmanesque manner from Orwell to Le Guin, from Japanese folklore to Tito, from Montréal to Leningrad. My presentation will focus on various boundary crossings in several of his poems, but I will also consider enclosures.

Totalitarian Capitalism? Janusz A. Zajdel's *Limes Inferior* in the light of bio politics

Rafał Szczerbakiewicz, Institute of Contemporary Literature, Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland

Sociological fantasy in Poland called communist rule into question in an obvious way. What was its meaning, though, in the 1980s, a moment when all over the world countries of the so-called real socialism decentralized and liberalized their crisis-ridden economies? It is in this context that Janusz A. Zajdel's novel *Limes Inferior* came into being (after the 'spring' of Solidarity's social movement). The novel presents a dystopian, futuristic, totalitarian world in which post-soviet states become disconcertingly similar to the order of neoliberal countries. From today's perspective it appears to be an exceptionally accurate precognition. The question is, was it intended as a prophecy of Poland's future?

Zajdel, a writer with a conservative worldview, sleeps and dreams a dystopian dream, which turns into a negative desire – because in the prophesised future there is no trace of communal solidarity left. The lack of a project of social emancipation presents an impasse that stems from the crisis of left-wing thought in post-communist Poland and at the same time presents a trace of Polish counterrevolution. It depicts a world in which the noble/rustic consciousness has not been exposed to the practice of capitalism and subconsciously yearns for its consumptionist fetish.

Psychogeographical utopia: beyond borders in the fiction of Iain Sinclair.

Jon Anderson and Kieron Smith, School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University, UK

In his psychogeographical fiction *Landor's Tower*, Iain Sinclair crosses borders – between England and Wales, past and future, fiction and reality. Through his characters drifting in and through the utopia between borders, relations of identity, nationhood, history, and place are questioned and realigned. This paper explores the utopia at and beyond the borders of Sinclair's novel *Landor's Tower* and demonstrates how these fantastical realities distort conventional understandings, as well as offer new insights into, the role of fiction in reflecting and re-forming our relations with the world. This paper develops arguments made in the monograph *Page and Place: Ongoing Compositions of Plot* (Anderson, 2014), and provides the basis for the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) funded project entitled: *A New Literary Geography: Establishing a Digital Literary Atlas of Wales and its Borderlands*.

11.30am: Coffee Break

12.00: Movement and Migration

Critical dystopia, borders and the society of control in transnational science fiction cinema

Mariano Paz, Ralahine Centre for Utopian Studies and School of Modern Languages & Applied Linguistics, University of Limerick, Republic of Ireland

The objective of this paper is to consider how several types of borders (territorial, economic, and psychological) are conveyed in transnational science fiction cinema. In particular, I will discuss how two recent films, *Code 46* (Michael Winterbottom, 2003) and *Sleepdealer* (Alex Rivera, 2008), use the trope of the border so as to explore and critique contemporary class divisions and social exclusion. Both works imagine globalized near-future societies in which biopolitical techniques that allow for the control and manipulation of people have dramatically increased. Such techniques or, in the terminology used by Michel Foucault, *dispositifs*, correspond to two forms of social control. The first type has been defined by Foucault with the term *disciplinary society*; the second one was introduced by Gilles Deleuze as *society of control*. Both are systems in which power is exerted on individuals through the application of technologies that regulate their everyday lives. These two types of social control are explored in the selected films. *Sleepdealer* presents a futuristic US-Mexico borderland in which walls prevent people from physically moving across it, but digital technologies provide a way in which virtual migration is possible. This, however, helps those in power to further exploit the Mexican labour force. *Code 46* offers a political *novum* that explores the tension between the included and excluded in a globalized society - one in which population movement is regulated by biometric technologies that allow for the manipulation not only of individual consciousness but also unconscious drives and desires. I will show how, through their dystopian scenarios, the two films are expressing anxieties about the tensions generated by a contemporary world order that, while intensifying the amount of commercial, professional and financial circulations across the globe, also leaves out entire categories of people who do not take part, or are not allowed to take part, in transnational exchanges.

1.00pm: Lunch

2.00pm: Complicity, Negotiation, Resistance

Border stories: negotiating life on the Austrian-Italian border
Johanna Mitterhofer, Institute for Minority Rights, European Academy EURAC, Bozen/Bolzano, Italy

The establishment of the Italian-Austrian border between today's South and East Tyrol in 1920 came as a shock to the people living in the villages surrounding the border. Perceived as an imposition "from above", the border altered the local landscape, economy and politics in ways not always transparent to those whose life world was changed. But the border did not simply transform what surrounded it; the border was also transformed by its surroundings. The river flowing across the border without changing shape or the German language spoken on either side were visual and auditory evidence that the border, although present, did not have the dividing power the political elites assigned to it. Stories told about the border's genesis placed it squarely in village politics, relocating agency from external forces to local actors, who could be blamed and shamed. Multifaceted economic activities, from smuggling to shopping trips across the border, allowed borderlanders to use the inequalities of different taxation and pricing regimes demarcated by the border to their own advantage. Negative memories of the border, although painful, were strategically transmitted to younger generations 'lest they remember'. Perhaps most importantly, daily life

continued despite of, on, across and with the border, gradually normalizing it to the point that for some people, “the border just was, and that’s it”. This does not mean that borders are unproblematic features of a landscape. Borders divide and cause pain, they often create or reinforce inequality; sometimes they kill (Albahari, 2015). By retelling some of the stories and memories of elderly people living on either side of the Austrian-Italian border, I seek to highlight, however, that borderlanders are not passive victims of border regimes imposed on them. Instead, their narratives give insight into how they actively explain, manage, cope with, and challenge the undesired and difficult consequences of borders on their lives.

Residual Effects: On the Role, Status, and Agency of the Human Body in Bordering Processes

Sandra Noeth, DOCH-Stockholm University of the Arts, Sweden; University of Hamburg, Germany

Borders are many things: built, architectural, manifest, embodied, symbolic and felt - always there, always yet to come. The lecture takes its starting point in the human body in order to focus on the *experience* of the border, its performativity and physicality. In *becoming-border*, the body not only is an object or witness of the bordering situation, as existing research in border studies suggests. However, drawing on artistic and theoretical research developed in the field of contemporary dance and choreography, the body rather appears as an integral part and an active agent in the process. Thus, I would like to argue that the human body introduces an ethical dimension in the discussion on borders: shifting the focus from the event and the materiality of the border to its residual, structural effects, the human body brings up questions of responsibility, of our own individual and collective involvement and participation in producing and maintaining borders.

3.00pm: Artistic Engagements

Portable Cities—The Fantasy of ‘Home-making’ beyond Borders

Vivian Kuang Sheng, History of Art, University of York, UK

This paper considers a series of artworks, titled Portable Cities, by the Chinese sculptor Yin Xiuzhen. As a successful international artist, Yin travels frequently and unevenly around the world while making artworks for various institutions and events. In each location, Yin manipulates second-hand clothes collected from local residents, and erects little fabric models of cities, such as Berlin, Beijing, Groningen, and San Francisco, within unfolded suitcases. Each of Yin’s works can be considered a portable ‘home’, which commemorates her experience of inhabiting these either familiar or completely new and foreign places. Through her banal gestures of placing, sewing, arranging and packing, humble domestic objects, old clothes and suitcases in particular, are creatively re-appropriated to engage with and reflect on rapid urbanization and dynamic international travel and exchange. This paper draws on Iris Marion Young’s conception of ‘preservation’—a devalued yet significant aspect of ‘home-making’. As Young argues, preservation, which is typically associated with female domesticity, does not fix the subject in place, but instead it constructs a fluid subject-in- process through reciprocal communications with different living environments. This paper relates Yin’s artistic engagement with domesticity in a transnational context to Young’s arguments about preservation, collapsing the conventional divisions between interior and exterior, private and public and local and global in relation to the notion of home. This paper examines: how might Yin’s Portable Cities demonstrate a fluid situation of ‘being at home’ again and again across geographical and sociocultural borders through repetitive, cyclical domestic works of preservation? And in what ways might Yin’s border-crossing practice articulate a romanticized, utopian mode of transnational mobility and transregional connectedness, which is problematically detached from the situation of increased border

controls, and political and social exclusion experienced by multitudes of migrants and refugees in relatively disadvantaged positions within the hierarchically organized and asymmetrically developed world?

Crossing contested borders: *Quid pro quo* (2011) - a performance act embodying the conceptual and material of significance of women's experience of the divide

Panayiota A. Demetriou, School of Arts, University of Bristol, UK

Contested borders not only represent the physical, institutional and legal boundaries of geographical frameworks, but also speak for the disputed processes of a constant negotiation between territory, power and socio-political identity. The Cyprus *Green Line*, *Barbed-wire*, *'Peace-Force'*, *Buffer Zone* are some of the collection of names that personify the geographical frontier, or the twisted iron thorned object that runs horizontally from East to West of the Island, separating the northern from the southern part since 1974. This quintessential symbol of war, exile and migration is not only a 'technology' of social control that memorializes the violent history that led to its forceful establishment; it is not only made out of barbed-wire, sand bags and military troops but it is also a physical manifestation of cultural construction that represents the Cypriot's political and socio-cultural anxiety. This article addresses an artistic practice that emerged from conflict and struggles of forced migration, focusing on Cypriot performance artist, Christina Georgiou's, performance intervention *Quid pro quo* (2011). Georgiou carried her refugee mother across the border, as she carried her children in 1974 (from the North to the South), an intervention symbolic of returning 'home'. Through the discussion of the piece, the paper asks how performance is used to engage with such crises, through reenacting female refugees' experiences of encountering technologies of war.

4.00pm: Break

4.30pm: Indigenous Futurisms

Future Reservations/ Reservations of the Future: Conceptualizing the Border in Stephen Graham Jones's Speculative Fiction

Kristina Baudemann, Department of English and American Studies, Europa-Universität Flensburg, Germany

"border—1. no man's land between America and the INDIAN TERRITORIES—*n.*, *Geog.* **2.** where you exile TOMATOES—*n.* **Syn.** **1.** redline, fringe, strip, brink, track, supercollider, new medicine line, hardline, end of the end of the trail. **2.** RMZ. **3.** the looking glass." (Stephen Graham Jones, Appendix of Terms to *The Bird is Gone: A Monograph Manifesto* [2003], 163-64)

As so-called 'domestic dependent nations,' Indigenous nations in the USA are held in a state of postcolonial limbo: reservations are geographically removed and enclosed spaces, but politically still answer to federal governments. A large part of 20th and 21st century Indigenous literatures are thus dealing with the possibilities and pitfalls of political sovereignty and the question of whether full decolonization will require absolute political independence. Not surprisingly, since the 1970s, many writers have ventured into the realms of SF (speculative and science fiction) to explore different shapes of Indigenous futures, how these can be implemented, and what role reservation borders might have within these utopian figurations. Blackfeet writer Stephen Graham Jones' novel *The Bird is Gone: A Monograph Manifesto* (2003), for instance, imagines a future when all U.S. American reservations will have been removed to North and South Dakota to form one giant utopian project – restoring "all indigenous flora and fauna to the Great Plains" (164). The border (as defined above) between the so-called Territories and the rest of the U.S. is supposed to keep

anything Western out and exiling the Natives who are expected to strive and flourish, now that their societies can finally be rebuilt without microwaves and anthropologists. In my talk, I will argue that Jones' SF story, aptly subtitled *A Monograph Manifesto* enters into dialog with the utopian itself, asking whether decolonized Indigenous futures can even be mapped out in Western forms of writing. Most importantly, I will demonstrate that before discussing the pros and cons of Indigenous political sovereignties, the first border we must set out to cross (out) is language itself.

Visions of the Fifth World: Towards a Pan-Tribal Utopia in Leslie Marmon Silko's *Almanac of the Dead*

Ewelina Bańka, Institute of English Studies, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland

My presentation will focus on the portrayal of the Fifth World – a pan-tribal utopia – in Leslie Marmon Silko's apocalyptic novel *Almanac of the Dead*. Drawing on the ancient mythologies throughout the Western Hemisphere, Silko creates a complex narrative about the decline of Western civilization in the Americas, accompanied by the eventual retaking of the lands by Indigenous people marching across the continents. The writer creates a utopian vision of a pan-tribal revolution, launched against the powers of “vampire capitalism,” that aims at restoring tribal values, strengthening people's bond with the land, and affirming the cultural continuity of Indigenous peoples. Constantly crossed by the Indigenous revolutionaries, the US-Mexico border becomes Silko's key symbol to represent the Euro-American domination which is to be abolished and replaced by a global, pan-tribal coalition. The process of reclaiming the land by the Indigenous armies is understood by Silko not as merely reclaiming the Americas by Native people but as reclaiming the land/world for the traditional, rooted cultures struggling with the capitalist, industrial civilization. Portrayed in the novel as part of a global movement for political and environmental justice, the march of the armies may therefore be seen as a symbolic strengthening of bonds within the tribal community understood by Silko as humanity. Therefore, calling for global political and cultural changes, the prophecy of Silko's novel becomes universal. These changes, seen from a traditional Indigenous perspective, represent the next step in humanity's process of transcending borders, of “marching” towards a new level of consciousness, towards a world in perfect balance – Silko's imagined Fifth World.

Weaving pasts, weaving futures: mining and ecotourism in Southern Mexico

María José Rodríguez Ávila, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium

In Sierra Juárez Oaxaca, in Southern Mexico, indigenous communities have had a history of spatial struggles to maintain access and control of their land. Beatlán, a rural village where I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in 2015, possesses a communal land title and has a local governance system that provides it with relative autonomy from the national government. Under this system, actors have opened different communally-based industries, including an ecotourism organization and a mineral processing plant (which closed in 2005). In this region, anthropologists such as Salvador Aquino Centeno (2006, 2009) and Andrew Mathews (2003, 2011) have explored how memory plays a role in political fights around the control of natural resources, more particularly, on how actors make sense of their current engagements by mobilizing and (re)interpreting their pasts. However, their works don't address the conundrum that despite the consciousness of colonization and memories of recent exploitation, actors show an ambivalent desire to access the market and take part of the very system that excludes them. I intend to tackle this contradiction through ethnographic data by exploring the legend of the origins of Beatlán, a (hi)story that has been mobilized in the context of ecotourism to attract more tourists, and that addresses the arrival of the Zapotecs and the conquest by the Spanish in la Sierra. In this context, history refuses to be relegated to the past. Through the metaphor of “weaving pasts and futures”, I aim to understand the interplay between pluralized pasts, present engagements, and future aspirations (c.f. Zeitlyn 2015). The metaphor allows the necessary movement to ask the following question: How do these remembrances inform the aspirations

different actors pursue? I argue that the aspirations, and the paths taken to arrive to them, are re-evaluated through these remembrances.

6.00pm: Collective discussion
led by lotF Network Partners

Thursday 22nd September

Gästehaus, Great Hall, Hinter der Grieb 8

10am: Unnaming and Renaming: A Workshop on Reconstituting Spaces of Meaning

James Block, Political Science, DePaul University, USA

Adnan Selimovic, Linköping University, Sweden

This symposium has probed a number of border terrains, from global and regional borders, to borders concerning identity categories, to the ways borders are constituted for communities involving language, literature, and bodies among others. We would like to build upon these earlier discussions, at the same time shifting the focus to a theme that in different ways impacts these discussions: the crisis of subjects as shapers of meaning as we dwell in our particularity. Our goal is to explore together the project some would call utopian, the ways that the subject, ourselves, can be recovered from mechanisms of control and exclusion. Interrogating the borders in each of our heads and hearts is in our view a priority for utopian pedagogy, of which this workshop, our courses and perhaps other courses in the future, can be examples as we explore these issues together and share pedagogical resources. In this way, in our journeys beyond borders, utopia becomes part of our lives here and now, and hereafter.

Becoming a subject is in our view hard work, separating out the ways we and our students are encouraged to become false subjects (Bling Ring), to disappear into television or social media narratives, into abstraction, into cynicism or irony. Utopian pedagogy can provide a space to allow our subjectivities to emerge. Is this pop psychology? Or Freire-light? Or wishful thinking? Or can each of us, in each our own way, find a path through the flashing yellow lights to a connection with what enables us to be meaning creators, affirming and utopian subjects, facilitators of the future? Stay tuned...

11.30am: Break

11.45am: Walls, Enclosures, Commons

The Self in Glass Cage, the Other on Stage

Ufuk Ersoy, Clemson School of Architecture, USA

Today, while the majority of architectural discourse revolves around the image quality of buildings and seeks to treat them as efficient 3-D smart objects, architectural identities of cities are simply examined with reference to external appearances of buildings. In this view, building façade performs as nothing other than a surface of self-display and promotion. Nearly four decades ago, the sociologist Richard Sennett already noticed this urban problem and tracked it down to the disintegration of the city in the nineteenth century. For Sennett, social and political changes that industrial capitalism instigated gave rise to an inner-directed, narcissist society and converted urban life into “the tyrannies of intimacy.” In the nineteenth-century Paris and London, the façade lost its dialectic expressive capacity. External walls of buildings in the city which used to serve as sceneries of events both inside and outside, became the barriers where urban life ended and private life started.

Is an interactive wall still possible? This is an important question that has occupied the agenda of contemporary architects. Nevertheless, most of the answers given by pragmatic architects of the twenty-first century remain within the frame of visual and instrumental thinking and recall the spectacular nineteenth-century Crystal Palace which epitomized a paradigm for the twentieth-century myth of

permeable transparent wall. To understand what an interactive wall is or used to be, this paper calls attention back to the nineteenth century and delves into the remote yet tense dispute between two important bourgeois figures of London, the well-known architecture critic John Ruskin and the gardener Joseph Paxton who built the Crystal Palace. While, for Paxton, transparent glass was an excellent instrument to measure and control the interior, for Ruskin who refused to step in the Crystal Palace, it denied the theatricality of architecture.

'Wastes of Corn that Stretched without a Bound': Waste and Enclosure in Wordsworth's *Salisbury Plain Poems* from the 1790s'

Ruby Tuke, School of English, Queen Mary, University of London, UK

In summarizing the effects of transforming commoners into wage labourers, opponents of the Land Enclosure Acts in England often railed against the fact that, once paid, wages would be spent in public houses and then 'pissed against the wall'. This expression became popular within anti-enclosure discourse throughout the 1790s. Rather than creating individual freedom, the new dependency on wages caused widespread depravity amongst the rural poor. It is significant that the fruitless expenditure of the wage can only be detected through a reference to a physical barrier. This view was diametrically opposed to that being formulated by the British Government at the time. They perceived common land as 'waste' as it was not yielding anything of value, and was against an emerging concept of 'national interest'.

This paper proposes that, in his *Salisbury Plain Poems* from the 1790s William Wordsworth presents the plain as an economic and moral wasteland. It provides different examples of the unusual ways in which the plain is amended and changed over the course of the decade. It argues that whatever remains is in intentional discordance with eighteenth-century rural literary modes. Instead, the plain is a dystopic land in which the characters journey or wander, and is inhabited by a diaspora of rural people including vagrants, travellers, gypsies and discharged soldiers. This paper argues that Wordsworth uses the expanse and movement taking place on the plain to paradoxically highlight the inhibiting effects of land enclosure on the different individuals.

This paper suggests, finally, that the plain demonstrates Wordsworth's early criticism of the harsh political effects of enclosure. At the same time it reveals the psychological impact of what happens when someone is prohibited access to familiar resources in their external environment. In doing so, it accommodates both Ecological and Materialist strands of current Romantic research.

Artist in Residence

We are commissioning a number of artistic and performance works drawing on the work of the Imaginarities of the Future network for our final symposium/exhibition at Chelsea College of Arts, London, in August 2017. To this end, we have invited the artist Miranda Iossifidis to attend this symposium to produce a work in response to and in dialogue with the discussions it produces. Miranda is a Lecturer in Contextual and Theoretical studies at London College of Communication, University of the Arts London. She has a PhD from the Sociology department at Goldsmiths College, looking at political myths of past uprisings and the relationship between commemoration and contemporary political action in Athens.

Withdrawn Papers

Unfortunately three participants had to withdraw having been accepted. We have reprinted their abstracts here for reference.

Within, Against and Beyond Europe's Borders

European Horizon

Olivier Kramsch, Nijmegen Centre for Border Research, Netherlands

What are the conditions of possibility for a European horizon today? More than half a millennium since the dawning of the first horizon in the wake of the discovery of the 'New World', which tipped the Mediterranean's fulcrum towards the vast mid-Atlantic passage and its teeming interstices, Europe crawls into the 21st century on all fours, constrained and curtailed on all sides. Whether through the supposed inevitability of austerity economics, the 'ever now' of neoliberal micromanagement, the *replis sur soi* of national borders or the heaving shut of all outward-oriented frontiers, Europe appears locked in a stasis from which there appear to be no 'other spaces'. In critical dialogue with historian Reinhart Kosselek's thesis on the overcoming of 18th-19th utopian horizons through the brute realm of 'experience' by war and ecological catastrophe, this paper argues for a less conservative, more open-ended conception of 'horizon' for European spatial politics, grounded in a reworked conceptualization of 'the border'. No longer grasped as a mere demarcation line separating states (or an 'Us' from a putative 'Them'), nor a 'borderland' – and certainly not a '-scape' – this border is rather a 'vision' that carries within it the hidden seeds of 'other worlds', capable of transforming Europe-as-subject beyond recognition. The paper closes by identifying potential arenas for the expression of such a newly wrought European horizon in the practices of refugee-support groups working on either side of the Dutch/German border where the author lives, in addition to the work of activist groups operating at Europe's external frontiers in the South Tyrolean Alps.

A Decolonial Reading of Europe's 'Summer of Refugee': Borders, Migration & Futures in the Ruins of Empire

Proshant Chakraborty, Anthropology, University of Leuven, Belgium

This presentation seeks to analyze, from a decolonial perspective, the on-going 'refugee crisis' that confronts Europe and its borders, especially its manifestation in the summer of 2015. I attempt to bring together two strands of thought: scholarly and activist writings on refugees and migration, and decolonial perspectives and thinking. A decolonial reading is necessitated not only due to the fact that former colonial subjects account for the refugees today; rather, colonialism and coloniality have significantly shaped the idea of Europe itself, the borders of which now need defending. The 'refugee crisis' underscores one aspect of this; the other being European policies on borders, immigration, labor, and so forth. A decolonial reading of the 'crisis,' therefore, seeks to interrogate the very idea of 'crisis' itself, and shows how the coloniality of power

and colonial difference still persist, and strongly undergird the modern/colonial world system—which is now fractured by the ‘waves,’ ‘masses,’ or the ‘multitude’ of refugees. This thinking further takes seriously the idea of empire as a global practice of power, which has its roots in colonial history, but also shapes the contemporary world. At the same time, a combined reading of decolonial thinking and ‘border struggles’ also engenders the possibility of imagining ‘pluriversal’ futures, where the hegemony of Eurocentric ideas of civilization and cosmopolitanism can be challenged and undermined by new forms of sociality and being outside of conventional left liberal politics.

Closed Borders, Open Spaces? Negotiating private/public boundaries in utopian practices from Plato to Piet Blom

Stefan Koller, Department of Philosophy, University of Colorado, USA

At her presentation to the 2014 Imaginarities of the Future workshop on Utopias Bodies and Media, Christina Contandriopoulos pointed out how much utopian architecture from Ledoux’s Royal Saltworks onward would insist on visually presenting a border or boundary around the key territory housing or hosting such architecture. Much like Plato’s Kallipolis (Beautiful Town), intended to exemplify the virtues of its author’s philosophical utopian framework, relied on a fortified divide demarcating the city’s enlightened futuristic interior from its would-be barbarian and backwards neighbours, so utopian architecture, it seems, relies on demarcating geographically the extent of its utopian practice and form of life.

Whether or not defensive boundaries are inherent to the spatial manifestation of utopian thinking, this talk will focus on a much less observed aspect to utopian architecture: the de-territorialization of its interior, once properly marked off from external threat. That is, from Plato’s Kallipolis to Habitat ’67 and Blom’s Kasbah, such settlements crucially function by a reduction of interior borders. Individual dwelling units, though assigned to recognizably social units such as the family or (in case of barracks) the military army unit (as in the barracks of Plato’s guardian-soldiers), are defined by an open space operating as, expressive of, and facilitating ‘things had in common’.

Looking at the link of publically accessible and flowing space to ideals of common ownership and the eradication of the private, opens up new prospects of analyzing the ethical and other prospects of utopian cities and citizenship. To what extent does common ground and open space facilitate the ‘having in common’, not just of crucial property defining the individual’s private life, but of collective ideals and values? How, for instance, do such ideals function in the absence of a spatial configuration, expressed in walls and their absence, to support and protect them? In particular, how do closed utopian societies or communities fare, in comparison, to those radically de-possessed and anti-possessive communities that characterized various Christian heresies and communal movements in pre-Franciscan Italy, movements that married free and shared ownership to an ever itinerant form of life without fixed abode – or, put less flattering, to collective ownership ‘on the run’?

To the extent that even 20th century architectural manifestations of utopian impulse, such as van Eyck and Blom, depend on closing off their habitats from a hostile interior, is Popper’s critique (gaining influence among architects via Rowe) of utopianism, equaling a necessarily closed social system, still on target?

This talk will explore those connections and controversies, operating on a manageably small set of architectural examples, above all Piet Blom’s Kasbah housing complex in Hengelo, NL.