BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

16th TRIENNIAL EACLALS CONFERENCE
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms
University of Oviedo, April 3-7, 2017

www.eaclals-oviedo17.com /

@Eaclals2017 // @Eaclals2017

Conference Convenors
Isabel Carrera Suárez
Emilia María Durán Almarza

Local Committee
Esther Álvarez López
Carmen Alfonso García
Luz Mar González Arias
Christina Jurcic
Carla Rodríguez González

Extended Committee
Ana María Cristea
Miasol Eguíbar Holgado
Andrea Fernández García
Sandra García Corte
Alba González Sanz
Zuzel López Baquez
Raluca Mariana Pinzari
Paola Prieto López
Eva Pelayo Sañudo
Andrea Rodríguez Álvarez

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

	Monday April 3

11:00-11:30	**Conference Opening**
Location	*Paraninfo*. Historical Building

	Plenary Session 1
11:30-12:30	IEN ANG ***Claiming Chinatown: Asian Australians, Public Art and the Making of Urban Culture***
Location	*Paraninfo*. Historical Building

12:30-13:30	Q&A WITH JAVIER BAULUZ
Location	*Paraninfo*. Historical Building

13:30	*Wine Reception*
Location	*Cloister*. Historical Building

	Parallel Sessions 1				
16:00-17:30	**Urban and Rural Limits**	**Urban Performances**	**Caribbean Alter/Urban Spaces**	**Urban Visual Narratives 1**	**Writing Indian City Spaces**
	Ballyn, Renes, Ribas	*Anastasijevic, Pinzari, Toth*	*Frątczak, Grau, McDougall*	*Aláez, Fernández Campa, Paravisini*	*Álvarez, Bayer, Gámez*
Location	SYDNEY ROOM (Classics)	LONDON ROOM (History)	KINGSTON ROOM (English)	SINGAPORE ROOM (Geography)	MUMBAI ROOM (Spanish)

	Parallel Sessions 2			
18:00-19:30	**Canadian Urban Fiction**	**Postcolonial European Cities**	**Resisting the Urban 1**	**Perspectives on Displacement**
	Abdel-Rahman, Olinder, Radu	*Iannone, Tournay, Bastida*	*De, Caitlin Stobie, Oliva*	*Pfalzgraf, Royo, Varadharajan*
Location	SYDNEY ROOM (Classics)	LONDON ROOM (History)	KINGSTON ROOM (English)	SINGAPORE ROOM (Geography)

	Live Performance
20:30-21:30	ALECIA MCKENZIE AND DENISE KING ***Jamericazz***
Venue	*Chamber Room*. City of Oviedo Auditorium

Tuesday April 4

Parallel Sessions 3					
9:30-11:00	**Emotional Performances**	**Resisting the Urban 2**	**Emotional Scottish Geographies**	**Cinematic Cityscapes**	**Fractured Indian Cities**
	Brito, Campbell-Hall, Campobasso	*Gautam, Perera, Raimondi*	*Dodgson-Katiyo, Riaño, Rodríguez Álvarez*	*Cristea, Hofer, Vetter*	*Tandon, González Rodríguez, Mohanram*
Location	SYDNEY ROOM (Classics)	LONDON ROOM (History)	KINGSTON ROOM (English)	SINGAPORE ROOM (Geography)	MUMBAI ROOM (Spanish)

Plenary Session 2
11:30-12:30
ANANYA J. KABIR
Improvisation and the "Cramp of Time": Jazz Dance, Capitalism and Modernity
Location
Humanities Library Lecture Hall

Literary Cities 1
12:30-13:30
XIAOLU GUO
An Exile in London
TENDAI HUCHU
Between the Forest and the Desert: Showing Shit with Words and Other Such Things
Location
Humanities Library Lecture Hall

Parallel Sessions 4					
15:30-17:00	**Exploring Polycoloniality**	**Postcolonial and Queer Desires**	**Healing and Well-Being**	**Transcultural Urban Encounters 1**	**Black and Brown Encounters**
	Al-Janabi, Koshy, Leon	*Fernández Carbajal, González Arias, Leetsch*	*Pérez Ruiz, Alexander, Barker*	*Estévez, Herrero, Thompson*	*Cowaloosur, Iglesias*
Location	SYDNEY ROOM (Classics)	LONDON ROOM (History)	KINGSTON ROOM (English)	SINGAPORE ROOM (Geography)	MUMBAI ROOM (Spanish)

Literary Cities 2
17:00-18:00
SIMONE LAZAROO
Bodies of Water in Two Cities
ANITA BADAMI
Topic: TBA
Location
Humanities Library Lecture Hall

Live Performance	
18:30-19:30	JOSEFINA BÁEZ ***Lecturance "As Is E"***
Location	Humanities Library Lecture Hall

Live Performance	
20:30-21:30	INUA ELLAMS ***An Evening with an Immigrant***
Venue	*Chamber Room.* City of Oviedo Auditorium

Wednesday April 5

Parallel Sessions 5

9:30-11:00	(Open) Cities and Historical Erasures	Dysfunctional Urbanities	Writing Peripheral and Mediterranean Cities	Writing Australian Cities	Embodied Encounters in South African Fiction	(Re)escribiendo ciudades 1
	Az-Zuabidy, Koegler, Misra	*Collett, McLeod, Rodríguez-González*	*Nyman, Szoltysek, Sanches*	*Brayshaw, Schwegler, Zach*	*Novosivsc hei, Herbillon, Wilson*	*Alfonso, Falcón, Fernández*
Location	SYDNEY ROOM (Classics)	LONDON ROOM (History)	KINGSTON ROOM (English)	SINGAPORE ROOM (Geography)	MUMBAI ROOM (Spanish)	HARARE ROOM (16D)

Writing the Urban 1. Rountable with Authors

11:30-12:30	**INUA ELLAMS, XIAOLU GUO, GILLIAN SLOVO, ANGIE CRUZ, JOSEFINA BÁEZ, ALECIA MCKENZIE**
Location	Humanities Library Lecture Hall

Plenary Session 3

12:30-13:30	BELÉN MARTÍN LUCAS ***Neoliberal Wars of Terror:*** ***A Decolonial Feminist Critique of the "War on Terror" Metanarrative***
Location	Humanities Library Lecture Hall

Lunch Time Film Screening

14:00-15:30	***She, A Chinese***, by Xiaolu Guo. Q&A with director to follow.
Location	*Lecture Hall*. Administrative Building (Second Floor)

Durational Performance

15:30-19:00	AMANDA COOGAN ***Cowards***
Location	Departmental Building Main Hall

Literary Cities 3

16:00-17:00	VAHNI CAPILDEO ***Cities by the Metre: Poems to Walk Around In*** ANGIE CRUZ ***Dominicana. The Impossible Possible***
Location	Humanities Library Lecture Hall

Parallel Sessions 6					
17:00-18:30	**Gendered Bodies and Migrant Encounters**	**Postcolonial Shakespeares**	**Decolonization, Disgust and Dissent**	**Urban Visual Narratives 2**	**City Walkers**
	Gunne, Houlden, Rushton, Deckard	*García Ramírez, Mengíbar, Wanjala*	*Davies, Igartuburu, Ramírez Méndez*	*Pimentel, Russell*	*Banerjee, Borras, Murray*
Location	SYDNEY ROOM (Classics)	LONDON ROOM (History)	KINGSTON ROOM (English)	SINGAPORE ROOM (Geography)	MUMBAI ROOM (Spanish)

	Thursday April 6

Parallel Sessions 7

	Afropolitans, Pedestrians and African (American) Flâneurs	Writing South African Cities	Transcultural Urban Encounters 2	Bodily Performances	(Re)escribiendo ciudades 2
9:30-11:00	*Adeaga, García Corte, Haith*	*Gyuris, Hand*	*Drawe and Mattheis, Fresno Calleja, Toossi*	*Caballero, Nadaswaran, Osorio*	*Escobar-Wiercinski, López Baquez, Montes*
Location	SYDNEY ROOM (Classics)	LONDON ROOM (History)	KINGSTON ROOM (English)	SINGAPORE ROOM (Geography)	SANTO DOMINGO ROOM (14D)

Literary Cities 4

	GILLIAN SLOVO *Cities in Chaos, Cities in Strifes* KEVIN IRELAND *Urban Spaces*
11:30-12:30	
Location	Humanities Library Lecture Hall

Plenary Session 4. Anna Rutherford Lecture

	ARITHA VAN HERK *The Memory-Life of Cities: Seduction and Forgetting*
12:30-13:30	
Location	Humanities Library Lecture Hall

Parallel Sessions 8

	Writing London	Representing Mean Streets	Emotional and Embodied Encounters	Representing Southern African Urban Spaces	Urban (Post) Colonial Cultures	Canadian Urban Imaginaries
15:30-17:00	*López Ropero, Pérez Fernández, Pérez Zapata*	*Fernández García, Pelayo, Scafe*	*Arundhati and Zia, Beretta, Nnodim*	*López, Cheryl Stobie, Vitackova*	*Diem, Michel, Parker*	*Bock, Schuchter, Varela*
Location	SYDNEY ROOM (Classics)	LONDON ROOM (History)	KINGSTON ROOM (English)	SINGAPORE ROOM (Geography)	SANTO DOMINGO ROOM (14D)	CALGARY ROOM (24D)

17:00	*EACLALS Business Meeting*

Live Performance

20:30-21:30	SILVIA ALBERT *No Country for Black Women*
Venue	Pumarín Theater

Friday April 7

Plenary Session 5	
9:30-10:30	FRANCES NEGRÓN MUNTANER ***King of the Line: The Sovereign Acts of Jean Michel Basquiat***
Location	Humanities Library Lecture Hall

Parallel Sessions 9					
	Capital Fictions	**Urban Violence(s)**	**Performing Black Urban Experiences**	**Challenging the Urban**	**Urban Historical Rhythms**
10:30-12:00	*Kennedy, Borzaga, Ramsey-Kurz*	*Wessels, Zander*	*Cruz Gutiérrez, Prieto López, Holland*	*Callahan, Kusnir, De Loughry*	*Eguíbar Holgado, García Agustín, Pérez García*
Location	SYDNEY ROOM (Classics)	LONDON ROOM (History)	KINGSTON ROOM (English)	SINGAPORE ROOM (Geography)	HARARE ROOM (16D)

Plenary Session 6	
12:30-13:30	HELEN GILBERT ***Performing in the Slipstream: Indigenous Denizens in European Urban Spaces***
Location	Humanities Library Lecture Hall

Writing the Urban 2. Roundtable with Authors	
13:30-14:30	**VAHNI CAPILDEO, ARITHA VAN HERK, KEVIN IRELAND, SIMONE LAZAROO, ANITA BADAMI, TENDAI HUCHU**
Location	Humanities Library Lecture Hall

14:30	*Conference Closing*
Location	*Humanities Library Lecture Hall*

ABSTRACTS

PLENARY LECTURES

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

21

IEN ANG
Western Sydney University, Australia

Claiming Chinatown: Asian Australians, Public Art and the Making of Urban Culture

Chinatowns have traditionally functioned as ethnic enclaves which were despised by the dominant western culture, while functioning for Chinese immigrants as a refuge from the hostile white society they were surrounded by. In today's globalised world the meaning of Chinatowns has been transformed, as they have become more open, hybrid and transnational urban spaces, increasingly interconnected within the broader Asia-Pacific region. For Asian Australians, Chinatown may be a site of conflicting memories of Australia's racist history and of cultural marginalisation and ethnic survival, but it is also – in today's multicultural and cosmopolitan age – an area to be claimed for the expression of new Asian-Australian identities. In Sydney's Chinatown, public art projects by Asian Australian artists such as Jason Wing and Lindy Lee articulate some of the complexities and ambiguities of what it means to be Asian in Australia today.

HELEN GILBERT
Royal Holloway London, United Kingdom

Performing in the Slipstream: Indigenous Denizens in European Urban Spaces

Indigenous societies in many parts of the world have particular stakes in a postcolonial rethinking of urban spaces in Europe, particularly as they pertain to heritage practices and networks. Over the last 500 years, countless indigenous people have inhabited this continent—as captives, entertainers, traders, soldiers, servants, dignitaries, athletes, protestors, artists and more—some coming freely, others forced or coerced, all leaving traces of their presence, however fleeting. The histories and legacies of these denizens are indelibly entangled with our own. Their cultural riches, too often ossified as exotic artifacts, swell the galleries and storage vaults of ethnographic museums in our cities and university towns. Indigenous films, visual art, dance and theatre now appear in a range of European festivals and exhibitions, albeit mostly on the fringe, bolstering our multicultural capital and thereby our claims to an inclusive cultural sphere. In this context, there is a compelling case to heed the ways in which contemporary Indigenous performance makers are attempting to reconfigure metropolitan notions of heritage, not just in creative but also conceptual terms.

My paper discusses indigenous interventions at cultural sites in London and Berlin, focusing specifically on two recent works engaging with their architectural features and museum collections. The first, *Cultural Graffiti in London* (2013), comprised a series of public performances in which Tahltan Nation artist Peter Morin sonically etched British landmarks—including the Houses of Parliament, Buckingham Palace and Big Ben—with the songs and drumbeats of his homelands in Canada. Morin's work has also inspired an (in-progress) interactive map that will guide users through real or virtual tours of "Indigenous London", highlighting hidden histories of cultural and artistic exchange that have contributed to the city's remarkable diversity. The second intervention focused on Berlin's renowned Ethnologisches Museum where Rosanna Raymond, a Pasifikan "tusitala" or teller of tales, activated the massive Oceania galleries in a processional performance responding to the museum's holdings. This work, titled *Soli I Tai—Soli I Uta (Tread on the Sea—Tread on the Land)* (2014), employed the Samoan principle of VA to convey how the objects on view are woven into human histories, past and present.

As well as opening new windows on the (global) cities at issue, these deceptively simple projects raise profound questions about the provenance of particular heritage sites and objects in Europe even as they set up possibilities for new modes of stewardship and cross-cultural transmission in the arts and heritage sector. I aim to link such questions to current debates about representation, materiality, mobility and agency in the dynamic slipstream of indigenous performance practice and its increasingly numerous digital offshoots.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

23

ARITHA VAN HERK
University of Calgary, Canada

The Memory-Life of Cities: Seduction and Forgetting

Foot bridges buckle under the locks affixed to them, declarations of eternal fidelity, bound to inflame deceit. Restaurants and cafés embark on assignations, waiters conspiring with wine bottles to inflame expectations. The glowing windows of corner flats boasting wrought iron balconies promise a chair before a fire, a generous footstool, and a snifter of vanity. The market square wafts coffee and silken pepper, the burn of toasted cheese. And the lines of laundry sunning themselves against ochre walls declare the memory-life of erasure and *nettoyage, lavandería en casa*. We traverse cities looking for their mnemonic retrievals of home, how they promise reassurance and consolation, the vigilance of oneiric recollections. And dreaming a memory, we memorize a dreaming.

We perform the urban as our own theatre of seduction and forgetting, imagining that we traverse streets that will remember us, that will record our passage as significant, that stones will measure our transit, and that we cast a shadow against the tumid and measuring air.

ANANYA JAHANARA KABIR
King's College London, UNITED KINGDOM

Improvisation and the "Cramp of Time": Jazz Dance, Capitalism and Modernity

The title of this talk draws from an observation by Mura Dehn, the Russian documenter of African American social dance in Harlem, New York during the 1930s and 1940s: "Jazz liberates us from the cramp of our tempo". Mura Dehn, trained in Ballet and Modern dance in Russia, fell in love with what later came to be called "jazz dance" when she first saw Josephine Baker dance in Paris, and subsequently moved to New York in order to study and learn the different social dances that were exploding in uptown dancehalls such as the famous Savoy Ballroom. These dances, which included most famously the Lindy Hop, also folded into themselves memories of earlier dances, like the Cakewalk, that had first developed on the Plantation through complex processes of creolization and mimicry as slaves watched and imitated the partner dances of their masters. Now, in the urban setting of New York, the process was reversed as White observers such as Dehn watched Black dancers execute the dazzling kinetic virtuosity that characterised Jazz dances. Most of all, they were captivated and intrigued by the improvised and yet complex nature of these dances, which also involved trust and partnership between the dancing couple. This talk will analyse Mura Dehn's dense observations of the Savoy Ballroom, as preserved in her archives in the New York Public Library, and also the film she made of the Savoy dancers, "The Spirit Moves". Using this material to present the phenomenon of "White folks (where whiteness functions as a signifier for embourgeoisment) watching Black dance", I will demonstrate how jazz dance's quality of improvisation and "swing" were seen as antidotes for modernity's malaise, "the cramp of time".

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

25

BELÉN MARTÍN-LUCAS
University of Vigo, Spain

Neoliberal Wars of Terror:
A Decolonial Feminist Critique of the "War on Terror" Metanarrative

Undoubtedly, 9/11 has become a totemic moment in the imaginary of cultural globalization that is often used to mark the beginning of a new era, the foundational mythical element of a new metanarrative that has functioned as primary ideological basis for the so called "war on terror". This metanarrative has emanated most prominently from the urban hubs of global capital—performing the role of victimized targets of terrorist attacks—and rapidly permeated across national and regional boundaries. I will examine a selection of narrative texts in English written by women and set in diverse urban contexts, from the slums of Manila to North American suburbia, through the touristic resorts in "the third world". My aim is to problematize the appropriation of feminist discourse in the neocolonial rhetoric sustaining armed interventions in the name of freedom, and more particularly of women's freedom. I will argue that decolonial and transnational feminist perspectives are required to fully expose the patriarchal character of contemporary neocolonial wars. While not forgetting the much-debated cooptation of the gendered female victim in the justification for pre-emptive violence by hegemonic Western powers, nor the Orientalist bias in the depiction of Muslim women in Western media towards that goal, I will foreground especially the intricate system of economic, racial and sexual privilege of neoliberal globalization that these narratives criticize. I will examine in particular selected examples that consider the material lives of those directly affected by violent globalization and the wars *of* terror that enforce it.

FRANCES NEGRÓN-MUNTANER
Columbia University, USA

King of the Line: The Sovereign Acts of Jean Michel Basquiat

The talk will consider the logic and limits of artist Jean-Michel Basquiat's "sovereign" visual vocabulary, including his signature crown symbol, as a way of thinking about race and power in the modern world. Although past critical attention has largely focused on Basquiat's interest in crowns as related to fame and trade, Negrón-Muntaner will argue that Basquiat was equally, if not more invested, in a larger critical project: to lay bare the relationship between capitalism, modernity, and European sovereignty for black subjects across the Americas, Africa, and the Western-dominated art world. He was similarly consumed by the challenge of upending Eurocentric knowledge systems that have sought to delegitimize multiple Afro-diasporic, Latinx, and indigenous epistemologies, and leveraging the might of black (art) kings toward a different way of knowing, relating, and being.

PARALLEL SESSION ABSTRACTS

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

29

SHADIA ABDEL-RAHMAN TÉLLEZ
University of Oviedo, Spain
shadia-24@hotmail.com

Embodying the Construction, Destruction and Reconstruction of the City: Literary Representations of Urban Architecture, Agoraphobia and Skateboarding

In *If I Fall, If I Die* (2015), the Canadian writer Michael Christie creates a three-dimensional picture of urban space, understood as a fluid territory that can be constructed, destructed and reconstructed by the body. In this sense, Christie introduces three characters of a broken family with three different perspectives on the city. On the one hand, the absent father represents modern architecture as a tool for planning both space and urban encounters in metropolitan cities. On the other, the overprotective mother's agoraphobic condition symbolises the influence of the chaotic urban space on the subject's embodiment, illustrating the processes through which the body can reject or "unmake" public space and build a safe zone indoors, in her hometown in Thunder Bay, Canada. The third dimension presented by Christie is embodied by the main character, an eleven-year-old boy who, for the first time in his life, decides to explore the outside world, where he befriends a Native boy and learns how to interact with urban architecture by means of skateboarding, an urban sport that displays simultaneously the deconstruction of normative urban architectural planning and the performative process of spatial re-signification. Differently from other literary or cinematographic representations, *If I Fall, If I Die* provides a unique portrayal of the phenomenological origins of agoraphobia, the disease of modern cities or, as Christie puts it, the "urban malaise" *par excellence*. Likewise, this novel may be one of the first comprehensive depictions in contemporary fiction of the philosophical principles behind skateboarding, understood as an urban performative sport of bodily architecture. This paper will analyse, from a phenomenological perspective, the contraposition between agoraphobia and skateboarding in order to account for the different expressions of bodily (mal)adaptation to the city and the alternative modes of production of urban architecture and private space, proving that the frontier between the inside and the outside is not definite nor material, but inscribed in the corporeality of Christie's characters.

TOMI ADEAGA
University of Vienna, Austria
tomiadeaga@gmx.net

Challenges of Cosmopolitanism in Teju Cole's *Open City* (2007) and *Every Day is for the Thief* (2011)

This paper examines some of the challenges of cosmopolitanism in Teju Cole's *Every Day is for the Thief* (2007) and his second novel, *Open City* (2011). The protagonists of both texts project the image of the flâneur (an obsessive wanderer who alienates himself from the world while he stands astride its heart) and are inquisitive investigators of the cities in which they find themselves. They are constantly challenged by the fast-moving lives in the cities through which they wander. Having left his country of origin, Nigeria, many years earlier and now living in New York, the protagonist in *Every Day is for the Thief*, whose name is not mentioned in the book, returns to Lagos, Nigeria, on a visit. He wanders through the streets of Lagos, but is no longer able to identify with the everyday life there. He is completely alienated from his aunt's family, friends and society. Going

through the streets of Manhattan, New York, across the Atlantic to Brussels and back, Julius, who is a psychiatrist in *Open City* is equally reflective and detached from his colleagues at work and his friends. He is unable to build any lasting relationship with any of them. Instead, he wanders through their lives and is not even touched when he is accused by his friend's sister of committing rape while they were growing up in Lagos. What drives these two characters to flânerie? How central is the quest for identity in the two texts? These are two of the questions that will be explored in this paper.

MÁXIMO ALÁEZ CORRAL
University of Oviedo, Spain
malacor.01@gmail.com

Text/Image/Performance: Narrating the Performed Urban Identity in Gillian Wearing's *Signs…* Photographic Series

Gillian Wearing (Birmingham, 1963) is a British contemporary artist, well-known for her daring photographic and videographic works capturing anonymous people unrelated to her, either with or without costumes and masks, as they build up their identities before the lens. In *Signs that say what you want them to say and not Signs that say what someone else wants you to say* (1992-1993), one of her earliest and most famous pieces, Wearing took around 600 photographs of people she randomly picked up on the streets of London, after asking them to write whatever they chose in a blank placard and to hold the writing in front of the camera. This large artistic project established a narrative of diversity in relation to urban identity, and questioned how far people would go in revealing their private selves (through personal writing), while at the same time allowing their images to be captured in the context of urban public space.

Drawing on Jordi Borja's concepts of the "city of desire" or the "conquered city", Erving Goffman's concepts of frontstage and backstage, and Judith Butler's concept of performativity, in this paper I intend to dissect Wearing's work in relation to: the interaction between public performance and private self; the notion of urban space as a liminal territory that individuals can "write themselves" into; the clash/integration between text and image in the construction of performed urban identities; and the way the city affects/conditions a postcolonial reading of gender, social or racial diversity. It is my contention that Wearing's work brings to the fore the "blurred" quality of contemporary urban spaces, and that this indeterminacy allows for the representation (both visual and textual) of diverse identities on equal terms, thus challenging hegemonic and heteronormative frameworks based on rigid or discriminatory readings of the urban individual.

HAZAM KAMEL ABD AL-JANABI
University of Leicester, UNITED KINGDOM and University of Thi-Qar, Iraq
haj10@leicester.ac.uk

Borders of Conquest in Ahmed Sa'dawi's *Frankenstein in Baghdad* (2013)

This paper explores how contemporary fiction articulates and interprets postcolonial critiques of Western modernity, producing increasingly nuanced understandings of colonial and imperialist discourse as well as of the effects of military alliances among powerful nations, resulting in the Iraq war and the War on Terror before it. The paper concentrates particularly on the idea of urbanization in some archeological sites. In

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

31

addition, this discussion of Ahmed Sa'dawi's Arabic Booker-winning novel *Frankenstein in Baghdad* (2014) examines the novel's engagement with modern systems of knowledge-production and contemporary discourses of imperialism. A key institution here is the mass media and the role it plays in shaping public consciousness, particularly in relation to the interests of geopolitical forces such as the United States. The inquiry also probes the possibilities of transformation the novel suggests in relation to the Iraqi predicament—political in-fighting, economic instability, sectarian clashes, and social turmoil. The novel's suggestion for revaluating indigenous knowledges and practices as untapped resources for Iraq's complex identity is a critical move to cultural articulations as alternative to the Western hegemonic paradigm. Considering Sa'dawi's novel within the theoretic context identified in this paper is so intellectually productive that it bears relevance to actual experiences in postcolonial states like Iraq. This consideration can also yield insights into postcolonial knowledges as celebrating dialogue in and beyond difference.

VERA ALEXANDER
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen, Netherlands
v.alexander@rug.nl

The Country in the City: Gardens as Stages of Resistance

Raymond Williams' dichotomy between the country and the city is just one among many binary oppositions challenged by the living space of the garden: others include culture vs. nature, built vs. grown, enclosure vs. exclosure, private vs. public, rooted vs. expansive, reality vs. myth. After all, gardens introduce country elements to cityscapes, and garden cities have constituted an ideal *topos* in utopian writings since early modernity.

In postcolonial writings, garden heterotopias have featured as productive sites of resistance from which notions of human centrality have been interrogated: David Dabydeen stages a Caribbean engineer's battle for control over nature in an English garden; Jamaica Kincaid speculates about the role of the gardener as coloniser and retraces the steps of colonial plant hunters; Olive Senior digs up colonial skeletons in the tropics; Leslie Marmon Silko unmasks the politics of representations of North American indigenous cultures; Carol Shields eerects scenes of metafictional garden mazes to rethink growth and power; J.M. Coetzee's guerilla gardener Michael K demolishes all props dividing human and nonhuman lives in war-torn South Africa, Romesh Gunesekera dramatizes gardens in apocalyptic theatres of a dystopian wilderness, and Drusilla Modjeska and Kate Llewellyn rehearse female creativity through practices of gardening and garden writing.

Drawing on works on gardens and gardening which proliferate across boundaries between fiction and referential writing, this paper argues for an appraisal of gardens as critical and metafictional arenas that invite us to rethink practices defining urban growth and expansion, human control, belonging and modernity.

Mª DEL CARMEN ALFONSO GARCÍA
University of Oviedo, Spain
caralf@uniovi.es

Tras los pasos de una metáfora: Madrid, colmena literaria

Esta comunicación explora la metáfora sociopolítica de la colmena y su trascendencia

literaria en el ámbito español. A través del análisis de determinados títulos narrativos, el objetivo es tratar de establecer una genealogía textual que ponga de manifiesto las redes de sentido a través de las cuales se articula la representación literaria de Madrid en tanto que colmena moderna y postmoderna.

PATRICIA ALVAREZ SÁNCHEZ
Independent Scholar
patriciaalvarezsanchez@gmail.com

Urban Landscapes in India: From Political Uncertainty in Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* to Globalization in Adiga's *The White Tiger*

Traditionally, the city has been ignored in postcolonial studies because it has been interpreted as a symbol of imperialism. Some postcolonial novels such as Achebe's *No Longer at Ease* (1960) reflect how cities have attracted the rural population seeking for employment and modernity, and explore the negative legacy of colonialism in their own country. Others may serve as an example of the fascination and later disappointment with the imperial metropolis such as Coetzee's *Youth* (2002). On the other hand, the case of Indian literature is quite extraordinary since it depicts cities as places where economic disparity is interwoven with different castes, classes and traditions. This paper aims to explore the urban imaginary and its connection with the history of India in two novels, Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*'s (1981) and Adiga's *The White Tiger* (2008).

The life of the protagonist in *Midnight's Children* is linked to the history of India. The novel examines the postcolonial history of India focusing on the city of Bombay as a hybrid space where incredible transformations take place: the birth of a new heterogeneous postcolonial population, the modernization of the city and the proliferation of new art forms. Bill Ashcroft mentions in "Urbanism, mobility and Bombay" that Bombay is the perfect postcolonial city because it is the destination of a population explosion that "outstrips services and generates a sudden rise of shanty towns" (498). *The White Tiger* tells the story of a village boy of extraordinary talents who manages to become a very successful businessman. His transformation occurs in the context of the flowering city of New Delhi, which I will interpret as representative of globalization. The protagonist becomes an ambitious choreographer of the urban inventory in New Delhi, a city with extraordinary energetic creativity and opportunities. Both Bombay and New Delhi are discursive environments and will help us analyze how life has changed in India since its independence.

SILVIA ANASTASIJEVIC
Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany
silviaanastas@gmail.com

Transcultural Humour and the City: Cross-cultural Encounters in Urban Spaces

In the attempt to define humour and understand it better, many theoretical approaches look through the lens of the nation state. In some ways, taking on this perspective can be helpful, as it highlights the fact that there may be important regional differences and contexts which allow a joke or comedic performance to be understood in the first place. On the other hand, we live in a world which seems to constantly move closer together thanks to exponentially improving technologies of mobility and communication. The Internet, for instance, facilitates the exchange of knowledge, comedic and cultural

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

33

material, which, in turn, creates possibilities for identification beyond the unifying idea of a certain nation state or culture. In this way, more people can become part of a global "inside joke." Moreover, with the majority of the world's population residing in urban spaces, cities are the physical places where much of the transcultural exchange takes place, resulting in new kinds of communities and ways of belonging being negotiated. This is also true for transcultural humour and the forms of collective identification it provides. With this in mind, it is the interplay between the city, humour and transculturality which will be at the centre of this paper. Here, the focus will not only be on the nature of the transcultural encounters but also on the question of what role the urban space plays in the creation of a transcultural humorous community, how the city is represented and how this influences the form and function of the humour portrayed. The primary material will be drawn from a variety of media from contemporary Anglophone popular culture, including stand-up comedy and new digital media. Humour and postcolonial theory will be the theoretical foundation.

ARUNDHATHI
Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India
arundhathirs@gmail.com

SARAH ZIA
Independent Scholar
zarahzia612@gmail.com

City of Love or Love in the City?

Every city has a unique language of love and romance. In India, popular culture signified the snowcapped peaks of Kashmir in the sixties and Switzerland in the nineties as the ultimate destinations of romance. While this is not to say that urban centres in India were never privileged in terms of the amatory experience, the narrative of romance has been drastically transformed in Indian urban centres post the nineties. Even in this shift, there is marked difference as to which places are associated with love and romance. Before the nineties, public gardens, parks and historical monuments (marked by low or no costs for entry) were the favoured sites, especially for those seeking refuge from the prying eyes of parents and society. Economic liberalization and privatization in the nineties actively promoted a culture of consumption which in turn has led to the mushrooming of cafes, lounges and restaurants that are slowly replacing the erstwhile public culture of romance. This has also impacted the kind of romantic activities which are considered acceptable in the public domain. Apart from being sites for potential romance to blossom, these are also sites of active consumption but they limit the kind of romantic activity one can indulge in with public acceptance. What we intend to study is how the change in the economic dynamics of the city has impacted the emotional space in the city. Building upon Alan Badiou's ideas about love and John Urry's theories about places and mobility, we seek to explore how the spatial dimension of expression of love and affection has evolved with the changes in the city. This paper also examines how the performance of romantic acts in the city is now a function of economic privileges, complicated by the intersection of caste and class.

THAMIR RASHID SHAYYAL AZ-ZUBAIDY
University of Leicester, UNITED KINGDOM and and Wasit University, Iraq
trsaz1@leicester.ac.uk

The City as an Excluding Space

Drama is an important site where the Aboriginal playwright's narrative of Australia, white settlement and its pernicious effects is being related and performed. Due to the processes of displacement and dispossession, the Aborigines were driven away from their places, which became white urban cities. In this sense, those urban sites become the liminal spaces where the Aborigines, the First People of Australia, are prohibited, punished, arrested and racialised and also their relation with white Australians is negotiated. In this paper, I will investigate the portrayal of the urban space in three Aboriginal plays, namely, Jimmy Chi and Kuckles' *Bran Nue Dae* (1991), Wesley Enoch and Deborah Mailman's *The 7 Stages of Grieving* (1996) and David Milroy's *Waltzing the Wilarra* (2011). Drawing on the above, I will show how these playwrights, through the medium of theatre, draw out the complexity of their people and portray the city as a site of exclusion. While stating this, I will highlight how they tend to depict the non-urban sites as spaces where not only alternative representations of dwelling are constructed but also inclusive aspects of Aboriginal culture and tradition are articulated.

SOHINI BANERJEE
University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA
sohinibanerj@english.umass.edu

Writing the Postcolonial City:
Walking as Urban Practice in Teju Cole's *Every Day is for the Thief*

Writing the postcolonial city in a transnational world is a complicated project. Any translation of postcolonial urban spatiality to narrative textuality must confront the question of spatial form at the same time that it engages with the imprints of inequality embedded in the material infrastructure of postcolonial urbanity. Writing the postcolonial city must explore not just how much the postcolonial city is a product of coloniality and the narratives of industrial capitalism, neo-liberalism and globalization, but also how these formations influence and control the possibilities for mobility, agency, magnifying, in turn, the stark imbalances that co-exist in postcolonial urban experience. How fiction represents the complexities of the resultant postcolonial urban experience —its rhythms and resonances— is through the use of the trope of walking, which as a practice and process, captures the discursive contours and realities and imaginaries in postcolonial cityscapes. In this paper, I focus on Teju Cole's novel *Every Day is for the Thief,* mapping the routes its central protagonist takes through Lagos both within the narrative framework and beyond. Cole's protagonist walks, drifts through the city, chronicling and commenting on it, and in the process, lends shape to urban textures through his own experience. By presenting the city through the often uneasy movement through the urban terrain, Cole critiques the uneven structural development of postcolonial cities, while commenting on the way that the legacies of coloniality–modernity, development, globalization– continue to inflect the experience of postcolonial urbanity. Through walking, Lagos is presented as a city of contradictions, in which corruption, bribery and the paucity of resources have created an altogether distinct pace of city living—a pace, I also argue, that becomes a question of form in the text. Moreover, in re-envisioning the

idea of flânerie through the postcolonial city, Cole explores the possibilities of flânerie as a postcolonial practice that can illuminate postcolonial urban processes.

CLARE BARKER, QULSOM FAZIL, AND JOANNA SKELT
University of Leeds, United Kingdom
C.F.Barker@leeds.ac.uk

Global Alum Rock: Negotiating "Brand Pakistan" within a Birmingham British Pakistani Muslim Community

This paper summarises the findings of a collaborative research project focusing on the health and wellbeing of a British Pakistani Muslim community in the Alum Rock area of East Birmingham. This community has faced very particular inflections of the increasing Islamophobia and heightened surveillance of Muslims experienced across the UK and globally since 9/11. Following post-7/7 terror-related arrests in the area, this part of the city was often perceived in the local and national media to be a Muslim ghetto, and the 2014 "Trojan Horse" episode regarding the so-called "Islamisation" of East Birmingham schools attracted further sensationalised media coverage. Our research, funded by the AHRC, sought counternarratives from within the community to reductive negative representations of British Muslims generally and Alum Rock specifically, and considered the ways in which such representations can act as social determinants of health and wellbeing.

The paper brings together findings from literary and media analysis, qualitative research, and community arts practice. The first part gives an overview of the ways in which British Muslim fictions negotiate what Kamila Shamsie terms "Brand Pakistan" – the demand within the literary marketplace for stories about religious fundamentalism and terrorism. Referring to texts by Naseem Aslam, Sunjeev Sahota, and Avaes Mohammad, it considers the extent to which literary texts about radicalisation reinforce the dominance of a narrow idea of British Muslim identity and feed into media stereotypes of the "bad Muslim" and the "threat within", or whether their attempts to imaginatively access the minds, worlds, and motivations of vulnerable Muslim youth have the potential to counter damaging news media representations.The second half of the paper draws on interview data from the Alum Rock community and creative writing produced as part of the research, including poetry by students at Park View School (one of the "Trojan Horse" schools). It explores the impact of "Brand Pakistan" representations on the community, focusing especially on their perceptions of Alum Rock in relation to global geopolitics and Muslim spaces. Bypassing any idea of "Birmingham", the area emerges as at once a loved and vibrant hyperlocal space, a portal to a Pakistani homeland in Azad Kashmir, and the gateway to an imagined worldwide Islamic community encompassing oppressed Muslims in Gaza, Iraq, and Syria. The paper reflects on the entanglements between literary and media representations and the lived experience of this community, and considers the forms of resistance to oppressive narratives found in British Pakistani Muslim self-representations, both in literary fiction and in community arts projects.

PATRICIA BASTIDA RODRÍGUEZ
University of the Balearic Islands, Spain
pbastida@uib.es

Embodying the Invisible:
African Women and European Cities in Chika Unigwe's Fiction

Contemporary migrant flows have transformed urban life in sometimes unpredictable and thought-provoking ways. With them, new voices have emerged inscribing new experiences and subjectivities, but also new forms of interaction have appeared that imply exclusion and evidence the attempt by dominant discourses to invisibilise specific groups of people. An awareness of this can be observed in the literary production of Nigerian diasporic writer Chika Unigwe (1974-), who explores in her fiction the experiences of young African women in European urban contexts and the knowledge they generate about the places they inhabit. Unigwe's portrayal of lonely African females and their casual, embodied encounters in European cities pervades both her long and short fiction, and particularly that of the African prostitute who travels illegally to Europe and is granted a space in areas such as Antwerp's Red Light District but is not allowed to move freely in other urban contexts.

In her novel *On Black Sisters' Street* (2009), Sisi, one of the prostitutes, performs urban encounters in the most literal sense, as she pretends to be the privileged, upper-class African tourist expected by city-dwellers, whereas some of Unigwe's short stories depict the painful passage from an unhappy and deprived African environment to a European city where they will be equally unhappy, if not more, and rendered invisible in addition. In this paper I intend to examine these urban encounters as portrayed in some of Unigwe's novels and short stories as well as the author's perceptions of European urban life, particularly that in Antwerp as a frequent setting for her fiction. Taking as my starting point Liz Bondi's perception of identities as embodied and Marc Augé's concept of non-places, my aim is to shed some light on the literary representation of the experiences of many female Africans in contemporary European cities and on Unigwe's denunciation of their position in the West.

JOGAMAYA BAYER
Independent Scholar
jogamaya.bayer@googlemail.com

Writing the City:
Mahasweta Devi's "Mother of 1084" and Neel Mukherjee's "The Lives of Others"

According to the 2010 special report of the *Foreign Policy* magazine, we have reached a global crucial point as half the world's population is now urban. Nevertheless, cities offer not only current global problems but also future possibilities. The 2014 Revision Highlights of the World Urbanization Prospects published by the United Nations' Department of Economic and Social Affairs underline that "Governments must implement policies to ensure that the benefits of urban growth are shared equitably and sustainably." This vision characterises the works of those thinkers who, in urbanisation, saw a means to substitute segregation with egalitarian pluralism (Lefebvre) and who not only viewed cities as places of conflicts but also as cores where new claims, by both the powerful and the disadvantaged, could be formulated (Sassen). Mahasweta Devi's "Mother of 1084" (1974) and Neel Mukherjee's "The Lives of Others" (2014), both set in Kolkata—a city that has been ranked 100th on the Global Cities Outlook 2016 ranking by A.T. Kearney,

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

37

12 points higher as of last year—deal with these questions of sharing benefits of urbanisation equitably. These novels, set in the 1960s and 1970s, portray one of the most harrowing chapters in the history of this city, when a left radical Maoist movement mostly comprising youth from schools and universities was crushed by the state. This paper focuses on the relentless critique by the authors regarding the fragmentation and debasement of the Bengali middle class that led to the young generation losing faith in the existing value system. Both novels question this value system that caused the alienation of the complacent middle class from the social and political situation of the country and, as suggested by this paper, help us envision the possibilities of how an old city can be transformed into a new urban space that is more inclusive.

CARLOTTA BERETTA
University of Bologna, Italy
carlotta.beretta2@unibo.it

Calcutta's Sensuous Geography in Three Novels by Amit Chaudhuri: *A Strange and Sublime Address, Freedom Song, A New World*

Amit Chaudhuri's writing is mostly concerned with mundane domestic and family life. Nevertheless, the city of Calcutta features prominently in his novels. In fact, the novelist creates a compelling urban aesthetics, and provides an insight into the transformations and challenges which postcolonial cities face. The aim of this essay is to explore Calcutta's geography in *A Strange and Sublime Address* (1991), *Freedom Song* (1998), and *A New World* (2000). I will look in detail at the representation of Calcutta's cityscape, as achieved through language and narrative devices. Amit Chaudhuri produces and cultivates the everyday through "a tangible texture of locality" (Majumdar 2007), which puts at the centre the sensory experience of his characters. In this way, the characters' history and identity closely intertwine with a sense of place. To translate sensory perceptions into literary form, the novelist makes some compelling aesthetic choices. In particular, Chaudhuri uses language as "poiesis-aisthesis", emphasising its presentational and not representational qualities (Pultz Moslund 2015), and creates multi-sensorial cityscapes. In addition, Chaudhuri's Calcutta is an arena of stories. As the characters' multiple trajectories intersect those of other people, new stories emerge, in a way that strikingly recalls what Michel de Certeau theorised in *L'invention du quotidien* (1990). Both voyeurs and flâneurs play a significant role in Chaudhuri's Calcutta, so that the city is at the same time object of contemplation and a lived experience. Finally, as the city underwent significant changes in the period comprised by the novels, I will address how its fictional representation adapts accordingly. Moving from the city of his childhood to contemporary Calcutta, Amit Chaudhuri keeps careful trace of the evolution of the postcolonial urban space to date.

GERALDINE BOCK MCMURRAY
University of Oviedo, Spain
geralb@gmail.com

Women's Embodying the City in Alice Munro's Short Stories

This paper explores women embodying the city in relation to short stories by the Canadian author Alice Munro and how women's identity is represented in the urban environment. Focusing on two short stories "Powers" from the collection *Runaway* (2005)

and "Family Furnishings" from *Selected Stories 1995-2014* (2015), I will discuss the protagonists' experiences and strategies of embodiment and disembodiment of the urban. Deborah Parsons argues in *Women Walking the Metropolis: Women, the City and Modernity* (2000) that the street provides stimulation and is resourceful for women's corporeal identities; however, Munro shows how aging can produce a scission between the subject and the production of urban space and may lead to displacement and estrangement. I suggest that Alice Munro, in a similar way to Jean Rhys, reflects on the realities of women's position in the economic and consumer world of the city. The city in the story "Family Furnishings" grants the illusion of place and offers the protagonist her own identity. The paper will conclude with a reflection on how the concept of the urban has been essential in Munro's writing as representing a temporary retreat for her protagonists to reinvent their subjectivities.

MARIE FRANCHESCA M. BORRAS
Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines
franchesca.borras@yahoo.com

**City Poets: The Emergence of the Flâneuse in *Wanderlust:*
A History of Walking by Rebecca Solnit and in *Dear City* by Conchitina Cruz**

> Permit us to refresh your memory: what comes from heaven is always a blessing, the enemy is not the rain. Rain is the subject of prayer, the kind gesture of saints. Dear City, explain your irreverence: in you, rain is a visitor with nowhere to go.
> (Conchitina Cruz, *Dear City)*

In "Dear City," Cruz transports readers to a dialogue with the city and its "irreverence." The poet highlights the inaccessibility of the city that even "rain" could not find a shelter. The speaker implies the dweller's struggle to assert his/her presence in the city. The poet encapsulates the image, particularly of Metro Manila, the capital city of the Philippines — flooded and helpless— and the damage that identifies it. The flâneuse effectuates a measure-taking between the sky and earth, in Heidegger's terms, and carries out a colloquy with the city through an intimate, unfeigned tone. Moreover, by way of an introduction of the flâneuse, and as a contestation against the initial proposition of Charles Baudelaire that the flâneuse does not exist in urban space, this research recourses to Rebecca Solnit's *Wanderlust: A History of Walking* (2001) in order to make explicit the implied presence of women in the streets of the city. With a rather sanguine tone, Solnit contends her presence — her *being,* her *body,* and her identity — in urban space as she interrogates the general behaviour of women in the streets. Moreover, Solnit also reiterates the significance of walking in the city when she posits that "walking alone also has enormous spiritual, cultural, and political resonance" (245). By simply traversing through walking, one collects parts and parcels of the city that appear almost a remembrance of the individual's identity and nonidentity as she recognizes herself with the space where she is situated and, from a certain distance, inquires on her position as both a subject and component of the city. This study attempts to make manifest, then, the presence of the flâneuse in the city, specifically in Manila, *walking* and surveying the streets of the metro, through the poem(s) of Conchitina Cruz, a contemporary Filipino poet, and *Wanderlust: A History of Walking by* Rebecca Solnit.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

39

MEG BRAYSHAW
Western Sydney University, Australia
megmbrayshaw@gmail.com

The End of the City in M. Barnard Eldershaw's
Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow

In the final third of Marjorie Barnard and Flora Eldershaw's ground-breaking novel of urban destruction, *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* (1947; 1983), two characters climb to the top of the tallest tower in Sydney and look out over the ruined city. For a night and a day, the city has burned, smashed to pieces by its citizens in response to a threatened invasion from an international coalition, which means to intervene in the civil war brewing between the city's Left and Right political factions. Begun in 1940 and completed in 1944, Barnard Eldershaw end World War II in this way, with Sydney self-destructing and its people fleeing into the desert, where they largely perish. At the top of the tower, the man who has engineered this situation looks down on what was the most populous city in Australia without remorse: "The people don't own a stone of it" (289). His female companion, however, is deeply affected by the death of the place in which she grew up. "The past had fallen in," she thinks, "the future did not exist" (407). For her, with the end of the city comes the end of time itself. Taking this moment of aerial survey as its flashpoint, this paper explores the poetics of urban destruction as employed by Barnard Eldershaw in their killing of Sydney. I seek to position the book within a global canon of urban apocalypse fiction, without sacrificing the specifics of its local context. What does it mean for two women writers to wilfully destroy the colonial, capitalist city? This paper posits some answers to this question, focusing particularly on the novel's presentation of urban subjectivities, scales and temporalities under threat, and its writers' use of text as a weapon of mass destruction.

CONCEPCIÓN BRITO VERA
University of La Laguna, Spain
cobrito@ull.edu.es

Globalization as a Structure of Feeling: Aesthetics, the Political and the Self
in Two Novels by Mohsin Hamid and Tash Aw

This paper is born as a reflection on the effects of globalization on the lived experience of the artist as an individual self. The novels studied are Mohsin Hamid's *How to Get Filthy Rich in Rising Asia* (2013) and Tash Aw's *Five Star Billionaire* (2013). Written by two male Asian authors, these works also share their use of satire and the conventions of the self-help book to challenge general assumptions about the neoliberalist discourse of globalization. Self-help books, with their emphasis on success and their belief in the individual´s capacity to control his/her own situation irrespective of race or class, are a vehicle for the transmission of neoliberal values which the artist questions by means of satire. The contradiction derived from contraposing the ideal of an-easy-to-get success against the many lives that are actually left behind incites a certain type of feeling traceable through the anxiety and disorientation expressed by the characters. In my reading of the two novels, these emotions are understood as emerging structures of feeling pointing at the individual´s effort to map globalization. According to Raymond Williams (1977), structures of feeling are emerging social formations, not yet articulated, which combine feeling (meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt) with structure (since they have internal relations and hierarchies). Because they are social

formations in *solution*, intimately related to the present and outside the realm of the fixed and articulated, they find in art a vehicle for their expression. Given that they are the point at which the political, the lived and aesthetics converge, my final aim is then to explore their potential as markers of social processes as expressed in Hamid and Aw's novels.

GLORIA CABALLERO ROCA
University of Oviedo, Spain
alicedont@gmail.com

Performing and Embodying the Urban in Old Havana

Among the most critical acts in the establishment of early cities was the tracing of boundaries, which created an outer and an inner world. The wall to be constructed was thought of as inviolate, a membrane not to be transgressed as it was an instrument of definition and distinction between the foreigner and the citizen. The gates to the city, the portals which allow for the flow from the outside in and the inside out, per force did not have this sacred function. The profound psychological resonance of belonging to a community embraced in walls, gave meaning to the lives lived within a microcosm of what was also felt to open up toward a world above and down to a world below, both larger than itself. The city has become to a large extent the vicissitude of the pragmatic and the practical in the interest of the exercise of power, be it religious, governmental or economic, generally in that order historically.The hearths of the families within the defining and confining walls of the first cities with the unifying ziggurat or temple have transmogrified to the microwave for convenience and an urban sprawl that can subvert the concept and existence of city centre where everyplace can become anyplace of uniform service. The emotional and psychological consequences of the fast moving, fast changing urban environment on the city dweller are no doubt profound and multitudinous. In contrast to this, my life in Havana speaks to a world of connectedness and identity. The meaninglessness of the new urban world order is in marked contrast to my experience in Old Havana which has its roots in the deep past of a continent.

DAVID CALLAHAN
University of Aveiro, Portugal
callahan@ua.pt

The Earthly City and the City of No Place: Canada's *Mass Effect*

At first sight, Bioware's critically and commercially successful role playing video game series, *Mass Effect,* takes its place as one more Canadian text supporting multicultural respect, even though its action is set in distant future space for the most part. Like many space operas in which different species (called "races") are encountered and cooperated with or opposed, there is constant parlaying of group values and practices in the generally crowded locations where the races are placed together. However, the games' would-be sensitive treatment of difference can be seen, in a less sympathetic reading, to be using some of the conventions of the space opera to elide certain aspects of Canadian cultural politics which have proven resistant to self-congratulatory discourses concerning the conviviality of the non-coercive city. In the *Mass Effect* universe, the centre of decision-making is not a location identified with any specific group but a giant space city, whose constructors are conveniently supposedly extinct. Questions of ownership, priority

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

41

and hierarchy are accordingly displaced and diluted in a city shorn of its identitarian links with location. Moreover, human beings are not colonists anywhere in space, removing one problematic but central aspect of Canadian multiculturalism. This paper would attempt to read the necessarily fictional cities of the non-Earth future portrayed in the games in terms of discursive itineraries generated by Canadian cities of the present, in order to see whether the games' projections might be classified as utopian or evasive.

DEVON CAMPBELL-HALL
Southampton Solent University, United Kingdom
devon.campbell-hall@solent.ac.uk

Emotional Performances of Urban Squalor in Vikas Swarup's *Q and A* (2005) and Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire* (2008)

Cities are traditionally places where new narratives are created, where the status quo can be not just interrogated but changed. Yet with current technological advances being available to consumers from across international social divisions, arguably, the process of recording performed versions of urban existence is becoming more than ever an exercise in voyeurism. Guy Debord writes of how within commodity fetishism, "the perceptible world is replaced by a set of images that are superior to that world yet at the same time impose themselves as eminently perceptible" (1967, 38).

This paper explores the notion of how we consume images and if such consumerism is simply an example of what Graham Huggan terms "the postcolonial exotic" (2001), or if the spectacle of despair has an educative element that can prompt social change for the better. The elegance with which both Swarup and Boyle have contended with a harshly divided Indian society may seem to gloss over some of the harsher elements of life in the slums of Mumbai, but this paper argues that rather than oversimplifying the urban squalor in which the story is set, these texts offer a politically astute analysis and an element of emotional education for the audience.

However, consuming representations of urban squalor does not necessitate the viewer taking any social responsibility for the conditions that create it. The spectacle, argues Debord, "is not a collection of images; rather it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images" (1967, 1). The power of such images – whether of real life or simply fictional representations thereof – will be argued as a significant element of postmodern technological culture in which important moments are only as real as their recordings.

MARIA GIOVANNA CAMPOBASSO
University of Udine, Italy
campobasso.mariagiovanna@spes.uniud.it

The Window as Frame: Urban Emotional Performance in Marjorie Barnard's "The Persimmon Tree"

The narrative device of the window as a permeable membrane between the observer and the urban setting has now reached a state of prototipicality in Western literature. The image of the window *per se* conjures the complexity of the opening onto two spaces, the enclosed and the open, without putting them necessarily in communication. This article seeks to offer a contribution to the ongoing discussion on the metafictional potential of the urban window in literature for emotional performance by focusing on "The

Persimmon Tree" by Australian writer Marjorie Barnard. As in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*, a mature woman observes from the isolation of her room the pedestrians passing by, her neighbours, especially a woman she finds herself inexplicably fascinated by. The personal and spatial specularities between the two establish no bond between them, as their shared loneliness is "a barrier, not a link." The urban notion of "neighbour" differs from that in the suburbia or in the country: those women live close to others, so close that it is possible for one to peek in the private life of the other, but, as often argued, urbanized spaces lack community bonds. The urbanised space is here not that of openness, of the encounter, of the peculiar, as it was in Romanticism, but a rather empty, "discreet", space of isolation. My analysis aims to provide textual evidence of the reading of "The Persimmon Tree" as an emotional performance of the urban through windows, which are used as narrative device for filtering the gaze. Special focus is set on the position of the story within the constellation of literary works where urban windows serve the purpose of projecting introspection, such as Alberto Moravia's novel *The Looking Man* or short stories like E.T.A. Hoffman's "The Cousin's Corner Window" or James Joyce's "Eveline."

ANNE COLLETT
University of Wollongong, Australia
acollett@uow.edu.au

The Pestilential City: Claude McKay in Paris

In October 1923, having spent a year travelling through Moscow, Petrograd, Hamburg and Berlin, Jamaican-born expatriate cosmopolitan Claude McKay arrived in Paris, sorely depleted of funds and seriously ill. Diagnosed with syphilis, he was admitted to hospital where he underwent treatment for six weeks. According to his biographer, Wayne Cooper, "his sickness embarrassed, dismayed, and depressed him"; but during this period he wrote a set of 10 poems that he later grouped under the title, "The Clinic". This paper will focus on "The Desolate City", a poem McKay described as "a composite evocation of the clinic, my environment, condition and mood." The poem represents bodily and psychological manifestation of disease and associated spiritual malaise as a city under siege – a city whose foundations have been breached (Its sewers bursting ooze from up below/ And spread their loathsome substance through its lanes/Flooding all areas with their evil flow) but one whose walls meant to protect from harm, serve only to magnify suffering (All is neglected and decayed within,/ Clean waters beat against its high-walled shore / In furious force, but cannot enter in.)
      I am interested in the complex relationship thereby established between inside and outside for which the skin or the city structure intended to keep invading barbarians at bay and maintain a civilized life, is betrayed, turned against itself. Although the obvious correlatives are the work of McKay's male contemporaries, *The Waste Land* (1922) by T.S. Eliot, who drew upon the earlier poem by James Thomson, *City of Dreadful Night* (1874), Bertolt Brecht's *Ten Poems from a Reader for Those Who Live in Cities* (1926-27) and the earlier work of Thomas Mann's, *Death in Venice* (1912), McKay is black. What difference do colour and ethnicity make to McKay's understanding of the skin (of civilisation) that is found to be wanting: vulnerable, treacherous, shameful? How might we understand this poem by a black West Indian to be the same, but ultimately, different, to other late nineteenth/early twentieth-century representations of the modern city and its association with sexual promiscuity or perversion, disease, decay and the absence or desecration of "the natural world."

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

43

VEDITA COWALOOSUR
Stellenbosch University, South Africa
veditacowaloosur@gmail.com

Black and Brown Encounters in Cosmopolitan Spaces

From Franz Fanon, via Edward Said, to Stuart Hall and Paul Gilroy, we have learnt how, in instances of encounters between people of different national ethnic and racial provenances, the colonial mindset has held up skin colour as a conspicuous marker of culture (or thereby lack of), as well as a parameter for measuring vice and virtue. "Black" and "white" are of course not the only colours on this scale. "Brown" features prominently too. But where on this scale is it to be placed? How are these hierarchies maintained and perpetuated across the boundaries of class and privilege in the capitalist world-system of an increasingly fluid world? In this paper, I aim to analyze how commercial Hindi cinema (or Bollywood) has treated the relations between brown and black diasporas in cosmopolitan spaces, especially cities across the United States and Europe. I will focus especially on three films, which politicize and portray complex relationships between urban migrant communities of different skin colour, namely *Namaste London* (2007), *Singh is Kinng* (2008) and *Kambakkht Ishq* (2009).

ANA-MARIA CRISTEA
University of Oviedo, Spain
anamariac87@gmail.com

(De)constructing the *gwo nèg* outside of Haiti:
Diasporic Masculinity in Jephte Bastien's *Sortie 67* (2010)

The present paper explores the construction of masculinity in *Sortie 67* (2010), the debut film of Haitian-Canadian film director Jephte Bastien. My research builds on the limited scholarly work on filmic representation of Haitian masculinity in Québécois cinema, most of which addresses the parodic subversion of the hypersexualisation of black men in Jacques Benoit´s 1989 *How to Make Love to a Negro without Getting Tired* (originally *Comment faire l'amour avec un nègre sans se fatiguer*), based on the novel of Haitian author Dany Laferrière. Released twenty years after Benoit´s film, *Sortie 67* (in English *Gangsterland*) is the first movie which can be considered entirely Haitian and it also corresponds to the first explicit incursion into a "gangster" community in Québec. I argue that, by questioning the belonging of black (heterosexual) masculinity to the nation, the film contributes to a certain tradition of contesting Québec/Canada, in general, and Montréal, in particular, as multicultural spaces (Bissoondath, 1994; Schwarzwald, 2003). By seemingly creating a stereotypical narrative, Bastien manages to trouble the figure of the racialized gangster and uses this context to denounce the discriminatory system which marginalises black men. Through the figure of Ronald/Jecko, the biracial protagonist, the director introduces an alternative to the construction of the powerful man, who tries to distance himself from the authority. Thus, the film hints at a transnational exportation and reconceptualization of the *gwo nèg* or "big man", as it is referred to traditionally in Haiti and its diaspora (Braziel, 2008) and underlines its potential to critique and negotiate the politics of the diasporic countries of adoption.

CRISTINA CRUZ GUTIÉRREZ
University of the Balearic Islands, Spain
cristinacruz1988@gmail.com

Embodying and Performing Black Urban Femininity:
The Politics of Michelle Obama's Hair

Hair is an essential element in Black women's socialization. Too frequently, featuring natural hair undermines Black women's possibilities of occupying high-paying professions (Banks 2000) This situation has its roots in the slavery period, when hair texture influenced labor division inasmuch as Black women with "bad" kinky hair were sent to the fields, while those with "good" hair remained in the house and could accompany their mistresses to urban centers [Byrd and Tharps, 2014]. Today, prospective professional success is one of the reasons leading Black women in urban areas to relax and weave their hair. The result has been the naturalization of weaves and relaxers, while natural hair stands of a symbol of revolution, a reason for being marginalized or not taken seriously. Black hair becomes Otherized and political whenever not conforming to standards of femininity. In this context, Butler's theory of performative femininity (1990) can be linked to urban spaces, for relaxing one's hair is read as a way of performing the urban and assimilating into mainstream urban social patterns of style, behaviour, and appearance.

This paper explores to what extent Michelle Obama's hairstyling decisions become literally political in a context in which she is collectively imagined as an embodiment of aspirational Black urban femininity. Thus, the focus will be on the representation of Michelle Obama's hair, and of her embodying Black womanhood. I shall analyze Michelle Obama's being granted political influence and power, and her burden of representing and performing Black urban femininity. The analysis will be based on fashion magazine articles discussing her hairstyles. Such articles underline the idea that the Obamas would not be politically trusted if Michelle featured natural hairstyles, and include vicious attacks on the Obama daughters when they wore their hair naturally twisted. Hence, relaxed hair will be read as a performative strategy fulfilling social expectations and contributing to achieve political goals such as becoming the US First Lady.

DOMINIC DAVIES
University of Oxford, United Kingdom
dominic.davies@ell.ox.ac.uk

Urban Comix: Collaboration, Production and Resistance in the Global South

This paper will explore comics movements comprised of cross-national circuitries of collaboration and practical forms of cultural production illustrated through a series of case studies situated in what urban theorist Saskia Sassen has called "the global city" and that I have recently started to classify collectively, in my current research, as "urban comix". These comics, or graphic narratives, not only depict and (quite literally) *reframe* the divisive infrastructures produced by the cross-national dynamics of neoliberal capital, but are also created and consumed by networks of authors and readers residing *in* those unequal and unevenly developed urban environments. These networks of cultural production and exchange draw on and re-appropriate the "comix" tradition of underground social satire and political dissent, first emerging in the U.S. in the 1960s and '70s, to explore different modes of resistance to the restrictive governmental and

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

45

neoliberal infrastructures of the twenty-first-century city in the Global South. As though to highlight the sociopolitical effectiveness of these productions, the case studies discussed in this paper—from comics collectives resident in Cape Town to Cairo and Delhi to Beirut, but comprised of artists of varying nationalities—have all been subject to some kind of legal prosecution at the hands of their respective governments. Egyptian, Lebanese and South African state-infrastructures and institutions are threatened not only by the political dissent that such cultural productions mobilise, but also by the social circuitries of producing and consuming communities that comics culture facilitates as well as the physical occupation of urban spaces that they encourage. The resistant practice of urban comix production is thus not only resistant to cross-national capital flows, but also productive, in that it develops alternative and increasingly democratic ways of inhabiting unevenly developed global cities through its artistic, social and narratological practice.

ASIS DE
Mahishadal Raj College, India
ademrc@gmail.com

The Jail, the Jungle and the Jarawas: Urbanity and Rhythmic Transformation of Island Life in Pankaj Sekhsaria's *The Last Wave* (2014)

Like colonization, dynamics of urbanity presuppose a system of control on the landscape, its resources, and life in any place on Earth. The relation between urban settlements and their surroundings is often so complex that the cognitive infrastructural expansion of the urban centre may well defy any simplistic model of linear development. A case in point is the situation of the Indian islands of Andaman and Nicobar, where urbanisation has already triggered a rhythmic transformation of environment, life and culture. These islands are believed to be the home of some Negrito tribes including the Jarawas for over more than 50,000 years, though urbanity set its foot during the British colonial period in the nineteenth century. Established primarily as a penal colony in 1858 in South-west Andaman, the present capital city of Port Blair was named after Lieutenant Archibald Blair, an officer of the British East India Company. The establishment of Chatham Saw Mill (1883), the oldest and largest in Asia for extraction of timber, and of the Cellular Jail (1906) has primarily contributed to the societal organization and resultant urbanization in these islands. This paper aims mainly at an environmentally and culturally informed approach to the visible effects of urbanity; as on the lives of the settlers, so on the life of the indigenous hunter-gatherer, forest dwelling Jarawas, as depicted in Pankaj Sekhsaria's *The Last Wave* (2014), the first Indian Anglophone island novel. Both the bio-physical and socio-cultural aspects of the island landscape and ecology, as affected and transformed by unbridled urbanization are the focus of this paper: "everything was being replaced by monsters of the modern age" (Sekhsaria. *The Last Wave* 2014, 33). I will also show how Sekhsaria rejects the objectivist urbanity in his novel and the narrative becomes subjectively urban in its advocacy for the Jarawa's rights of the jungle.

TREASA DE LOUGHRY
University College Dublin, Ireland
treasa.deloughry@gmail.com

Representing the City: Capitalism-in-Crisis and Fixed Capital

Narratives have abounded in the past decade about the city as a site of fixed capital, as a repository for current and future wealth, and a supposed safeguard against financial turmoil. But what does it mean to consider cities as sites of wealth creation? Narratives about core cities, like London and New York, unproblematically produce the urban as a place for the concretization of contemporary capital for future gain. This paper examines the urban as a site of fluid and fixed capital, and how contemporary novels and theories mediate and problematize this commodification of socio-ecological relations, focusing on concepts of urbanization, globalization and capitalism-in-crisis by cultural geographers and Marxists like David Harvey, Jason W. Moore, Richard Sennett, and Allan Sekula. In particular, this paper focuses on literary narratives that challenge the city's production as a private space, examining representations of the urban as a site of capitalism-in-crisis. This includes Rana Dasgupta's *Tokyo Cancelled* and its spectacular account of New York City's Madison Avenue as a malleable and nearly organic entity that threatens the socio-ecological and economic bases for rentier capitalism, and Dasgupta's *Solo* and its realist account of the securitization of New York City after 9/11 by security contractors who import mass manufactured disciplinary technologies from China. Examining these intertwined critical narratives, of the city as a set of increasingly reproducible spaces and technologies designed to protect and facilitate the reproduction of wealth, this paper concludes by focusing on how experimental narratives and radical protest movements challenge conceptions of the city as a frontier for global investment and commodification.

CHRISTOF DIEM
University of Innsbruck, Austria
Christof.Diem@uibk.ac.at

Performing Ex-Centricity in the City Palace:
Urbanity and Migration in Michael Ondaatje's *In the Skin of a Lion*

Michael Ondaatje has repeatedly challenged notions of traditional historiography in his novels. Self-consciously deconstructing the very fabric of history-writing—its textuality and narrativisation, its retrospective interpellation of causality, its reliance on selection and interpretation—Ondaatje seeks to "de-doxify" (Barthes 1977) cultural representations and allows for those to speak (and to be seen) who tend to find little, if any, place in conventional history books. In Ondaatje's texts, the unsayable, the voices of multiplicity and difference, the voices and bodies of those ascribed to ex-centricity, always lurk at the edges of what is being said. Heeding John Berger's dictum that "Never again will a single story be told as though it were the only one," Ondaatje's historiographic metafiction uses real historical events and real urban spaces and craftily weaves them into its own unravelling narrative threads, its own performative architexture. For, as Patricia Waugh contends, "the apparent *impersonality* of *histoire* is always finally *personal*, finally *discours*" (1993). In this paper I wish to show how diasporic alterity is voiced and performed—and ultimately transcended—in Ondaatje's 1987 novel *In the Skin of a Lion*. Largely set in Depression-era Toronto, the novel frequently makes use of urban

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

47

landscapes as sites of identity construction and (re)negotiation. In positioning the character of Patrick Lewis, a Canada-born sojourner, in relation to recently-arrived immigrant workers, Ondaatje questions received notions of citizenship, nationality, and belonging. "Unmooring" (Sassen 1996) and deterritorialising prototypically hegemonic urban sites such as the Bloor Street Viaduct and the Toronto Water Treatment Plant by means of illegal on-site performances, the city's migrant community, who has welcomed Patrick in their midst, reclaims and redefines a space for the "transmigration" (Sassen 1996) of emergent cultural forms. Ultimately, as in many of Ondaatje's novels, it is through the edges of the imagined nation state that Patrick, a member of its alleged centre, finds common grounding.

PAULINE DODGSON-KATIYO
Independent Scholar
pauline.dodgson@btinternet.com

"All the loose ends of Scotland": Possessed by the City and the Past in Tendai Huchu's *The Maestro, The Magistrate and The Mathematician*

Tendai Huchu's novel, *The Maestro, The Magistrate and the Mathematician*, like the model on which it is loosely based, Dostoyevsky's *Demons*, tells three inter-connected stories. The main characters are three Zimbabwean men living in Edinburgh who not only, in the words of the Scottish poet Hugh MacDiarmid, gather into themselves "all the loose ends of Scotland" but also the loose ends of their pasts in Zimbabwe. Each man walks, runs through, journeys through or dreams the city while remembering the past so that the city is transformed into a text which possesses the characters and the reader.

This simple transformation, though, may be deceptive. In an interview, Huchu has said that he "envisioned *The Maestro, The Magistrate & The Mathematician* as a book of illusions, which, while it presents itself as one thing, constantly undermines that position." He adds that he intended to take readers on a "wild goose chase", dragging them in the wrong direction to show how the "political and ideological world is inescapable."

This essay argues that the city and the past are both performed in the text through fragmentation. Fragments – descriptions, stories, memories, emotions —either connect, creating more than is at first visible, or they fail to connect, through leaving gaps and absences which confuse and confound the reader. Either way, the reader has to attempt to map and interpret the novel in much the same way as the novel attempts to map Zimbabwean histories on to the contemporary Scottish city.

CLAUDIA DRAWE
University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany
lena.mattheis@uni-due.de

LENA MATTHEIS
University of Duisburg-Essen, Germany
claudia.drawe@uni-due.de

Bindura Sun over Holyroodhouse

The increasing interconnection of global urban spaces, theorised among many others by Saskia Sassen, Arjun Appadurai and Edward Soja, and the ensuing transcultural and translocational transmogrifications that Frank-Schulze Engler and Silke Stroh discuss, are shaping the contemporary literary landscape: Global novels with diverse settings and writers experience a growing readership, as well as additional attention in literary scholarship. When Wolfgang Welsch constructs commonalities side by side with

transcultural approaches, he asks about these texts: "Why do we fall under their spell?" We believe that a reading that relies on a fusion of both global and urban concepts may be the appropriate tool to answer this question, since many of these enchanting novels share at least one of the following two characteristics: 1. A major city has an essential narrative function (as a "character" or highly relevant setting). 2. Two or more entirely different cityscapes, cultures and social spheres are layered and contrasted.

We will analyse two novels that exemplify both of these characteristics: *Portrait with Keys* by South African author Ivan Vladislavić and *The Maestro, The Magistrate & The Mathematician* by Zimbabwean writer Tendai Huchu. One central tool for this analysis will be a literal mapping of urban performance, movement and trajectories. While the rather metaphorical mapping lexicon is used extensively in urban, postcolonial, gender and queer studies, the actual maps and paths drawn by a text can provide further insight into how transculturally perceived urban spaces and places are layered over memories and immediate walking experiences. The urban palimpsest will enrich this synchronic mapping with a diachronic amplification. To also integrate personal perspectives into the history of the cityscape, we will consider the "impossible ubiquity" of the emigrant and immigrant that Abdelmalek Sayad describes: just as structures in urban space can mirror absences, the emigrant/immigrant is neither entirely present nor absent.

MIASOL EGUÍBAR HOLGADO
University of Oviedo, Spain
eguibarmiasol@uniovi.es

Reading Space and Body Racialisation in the Post-Africville Renaissance

The presence of African people in the Canadian region of Nova Scotia can be traced back to the eighteenth century, with the arrival of slaves and later of Loyalists from the United States after the American Revolution; several communities have developed in the area since then, with the subsequent influx of slave refugees through the Underground Railroad, Maroons from Jamaica, and, more recently, immigrants from different parts of the world. In spite of this longstanding tradition, African Nova Scotians have suffered and struggled against oppressive politics of segregation in the past and discriminatory practices and marginalisation in the present. One of the most brutal acts of obliteration was the razing of the black community of Africville in the capital of the region, the city of Halifax, in the 1960s. Several artists and critics have portrayed life in this urban neighbourhood before its destruction and have analysed its consequences. George Elliott Clarke, one of Nova Scotia's most acclaimed writers and intellectual figures, has devoted most of his fictional and non-fictional production to the recovery and assertion of black Canadian identity, and has developed the idea of "Africadia," a term by which he renames the black communities pertaining to the African diaspora in Nova Scotia. According to Clarke, the loss of Africville has played a central role as the catalyst for an emergent and markedly nationalist Africadian literature. In this paper I will pay attention to processes of racialisation of space that took place during the razing of Africville, and I will connect these processes of erasure with the central position the black body adopts in Clarke's and others' fictional and non-fictional texts that seek to debunk the invisibility of the African Nova Scotian subject.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

49

SARA ESCOBAR-WIERCINSKI
Wayne State University
du2503@wayne.edu

Women in Urban Spaces of Subjectivities and Violence

The physical and intellectual violence against women has been studied directly and indirectly in Latin American dictator novels, often set in abject surroundings and forms of oppression. The female characters are often victimized and locked up in urban spaces where they are either prostitutes or female objects of desire for lustful dictators. The abuse is demonstrated in many studies on classic dictator novels by authors such as García Márquez, Vargas Llosa, and Roa Bastos. However, little has been written about the treatment given to women in current dictator novels. This paper analyzes the contemporary representation of women in Zúñiga Araúz's literary work: *El Chacal del General* (2007), and aims to define the spaces of subjugation in the misogynist "machismo" culture of dictators. It argues that in spite of the abuse committed against women, that very situation of control and violence makes the protagonists rise above oppression to recover their voice, subjectivity, and empowerment. The paper shows how abuse occurs regardless of the places they inhabit in society (elite locations, underprivileged homes or in brothels), their age or their social status. The ostensible acceptance of the manipulation stems from low self-esteem, the poverty in which they live and the loss of their voice. Factors such as these reduce them to a state of apparent complicity with their oppression. The theories of Michel Foucault, among others, are used as a means to develop an epistemology of two forms of subjugation, manifested *in* and *towards* bodies.

JOSÉ MANUEL ESTÉVEZ-SAÁ
University of A Coruña, Spain
jose.manuel.estevez.saa@udc.es

Transcultural Exchanges and Contact Zones in Tabish Khair's *How to Fight Islamist Terror from the Missionary Position* (2012) and *just another jihadi jane* (2016)

The most influential theoreticians of multiculturalism and interculturalism have deployed an honest and rigorous attempt at conceptually re-examining their proposals, shown by the recent publication of "Interculturalism versus multiculturalism –The Cantle-Modood debate" (2015), and of *Multiculturalism and Interculturalism: Debating the Dividing Lines* (2016). As we intend to demonstrate, both Ted Cantle and Tariq Modood have soundly acknowledged the need of revising and updating interculturalism and multiculturalism so as to answer to the changing circumstances of contemporary societies. It is my intention to briefly review recent assessments of interculturalism and multiculturalism; to try to establish a dialogue between the interculturalism-multiculturalism debate and the precepts of transculturalism (Dagnino 2012, McLeod 2011); and to exemplify the appropriateness and usefulness of the transcultural approach in the exegesis of Tabish Khair's *How to Fight Islamist Terror from the Missionary Position* (2012) and *just another jihadi jane* (2016). These novels deploy the allegedly Danish and British multicultural societies in which their protagonists live, at the same time that their plots expose shortcomings in quotidian intercultural exchanges inside the two communities.
Tabish Khair exemplifies in Aarhus and Yorkshire the possibilities as well as the limits of interculturalism at the level of contact zones (Pratt 1991), limits that are exemplified, as

we demonstrate, in relation to religious, cultural and gender issues. My analysis of these novels vindicates the interest of adopting a transcultural critical lens that incorporates the assumption of error, prejudice, ignorance, and lack of communication, and that is also structurally evidenced by the metaliterary reflections on the difficulties of representation. Transculturalism, thus enables us to assess the possibilities as well as the shortcomings of multicultural spaces and intercultural exchanges, and offers an updated vocabulary to interpret the efforts that writers such as Khair are making in the representation of commonality and difference, conviviality and incommunicability, understanding and ignorance (McLeod 2011) as inherent and inevitable in social spaces "where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other" (Pratt 1991).

My research vindicates the interest of critical terms such as transnational writer, transnational literature, transculturality and transculturalism, since they offer a critical vocabulary particularly appropriate for the study of the transnational and transcultural social movements that are being reflected in twenty-first-century literature in English.

Aída Elizabeth Falcón Montes
University of Oviedo, Spain
aidafalconmontes@yahoo.es

Cartografía de La Habana a Jovellanos en la obra de Georgina Herrera

La poeta afrocubana Georgina Herrera (Jovellanos, 1936) intenta reescribir la historia de la nación cubana con un lenguaje distinto y un enfoque feminista no solo vinculado a su ancestralidad y a su genealogía femenina sino también a los principales espacios en los que vive y habita. De ahí que las referencias en su obra a Jovellanos, su pueblo natal, la casa en la que creció y la ciudad de La Habana sean motivo de examen. La carga emocional presente en cada uno de estos textos permite profundizar en los mecanismos de significación excluyentes y las estrategias de superación que Herrera ha desarrollado como parte del proceso de formación de su identidad individual.

Marta Fernández Campa
University of Reading, United Kingdom
m.fernandezcampa@reading.ac.uk

Representations of Space in Contemporary Caribbean Visual Art and Literature

Often as a response to stereotypical and superficial representations of the Caribbean, artists from the region as well as those based in the diaspora have focused on their own relationship to place and have thus confronted the different modes of tropicalization and picturesque representation of the islands that, as Krista Thompson notes in *An Eye for the Tropics* (2008), have historically dominated photographic and visual depictions of the region. Similarly, the work of Caribbean literary authors demonstrates a longstanding engagement with alternative representations of the city, the seaside and the countryside. The theoretical framework provided by writers and scholars such as Derek Walcott (fragmentation/ "the sea is history"), Antonio Benítez-Rojo (counter-point and polyphony), Édouard Glissant ("poetics of relation") and Paul Gilroy (Black Atlantic), among others, are also testament to the rich tradition of spatial critical conceptualizations in Caribbean studies. In this paper, I will focus on the work of artists Christopher Cozier and Ebony Patterson and the poetry of M. NourbeSe Philip in order to discuss the differing, yet

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

51

connecting ways in which they all reflect on experiences of space and place through a range of selected works.

ALBERTO FERNÁNDEZ CARBAJAL
University of Leicester, United Kingdom
afc9@leicester.ac.uk

Wandering the Urban Desert: Matrilinearity, Sufism, and L'errance in the Postcolonial Autofiction of Abdellah Taïa

Abdellah Taïa (b. 1973) is the first Moroccan and Arab writer and filmmaker to assume his homosexuality fully in the public eye. His autofictional novels deal with his non-normative sexuality in Morocco and with his diasporic experiences in Europe —chiefly Switzerland and France— and Egypt. This paper will first focus on *An Arab Melancholia* (2008, trans. 2012) by examining Moroccan homophobia, which brings about a crisis of identity in the young Abdellah, and his disenchantment with normative Islam, which leads him to the feminine religious spaces of urban Morocco and to embrace a more tolerant Sufi version of the faith in postcolonial Cairo. I shall also explore *Salvation Army* (2006, trans. 2009; dir. Taïa, 2014), via the work of Sara Ahmed, from a queer phenomenological perspective. I will argue that Taïa's literary celebration of a queer diasporic sexuality pushes against geographical and personal borders, acting as a temporary antidote to Morocco's sociopolitical strictures. In Taïa's mapping of space "on the move," the lack of a definite spatiality allows him to express his queer diasporic desires. Finally, I will show how the connection, in *An Arab Melancholia*, between Taïa's melancholia and the concept of *l'errance* ("wandering"), negotiated in dialogue with Jean Starobinski, is inspired by the pre-Islamic Arab nomadic poetry of Al-Mu'allaqat and of the classical poet Al-Farabi. The constant wandering through the symbolic urban deserts of Europe and North Africa in search for the beloved, which for Taïa's autofictional incarnations remains inexorably open-ended, will help me envisage Taïa's queer sensibility as a transhistorical assemblage of homoerotic desires challenging the prescriptive condemnation of homosexuality in postcolonial Islam, prizing human movement against both physical and ideological stasis.

ANDREA FERNÁNDEZ GARCÍA
University of Oviedo, Spain
andreafg87@hotmail.com

Violence, Pain and Anger in Yxta Maya Murray's *Locas* (1997): An Emotional Reading of Female Gangbanging

Gangbanging has traditionally been a prominent theme in Chicana/o literary production. Luis Rodríguez and Alejandro Morales are among the authors who choose to address such a complex issue in their works, shedding light on the factors and circumstances leading to the rise and activity of male urban gangs. Both point towards a sense of anger against unequal social structures as the main force driving the creation, expansion and associated violence of Chicano street gangs. In other words, they show how their main characters' alienation from dominant society, lack of opportunities and sentiment of extreme rejection and unbelonging coalesce into a state of rage and displeasure that pushes them into the sordid world of gangbanging. But what about female gang literature? In this paper I investigate the emotional dynamics that drive gang joining and

activities in Ytxa Maya Murray's *Locas* (1997). Set in the Los Angeles barrio of Echo Park, *Locas* is told from the perspectives of Lucía and Cecilia, two Chicana girls who decide to change their lives after spending a long time living under the oppression of male-dominated urban warfare. Following the works of affect theorists such as Sara Ahmed (2004) and Randall Collins (1990), I will argue that Lucía's rage against the subservient position given to her in the context of macho, sexist and chauvinistic urban warfare compels her own gang into being and fuels her subsequent violent actions. On the other hand, I will also contend that Cecilia's suffering under the oppression of male gangsters leads her to abandon gangbanging for an extreme commitment to religion. Finally, I will interrogate the characters' perceived sense of agency and happiness after making their life-changing decisions. We will see that Lucía's pattern of abuse against other women and Cecilia's fervent religious devotion leave them in a state of guilt and little personal realization, which, as I will argue, evidences the limitations imposed by the overarching male chauvinism that dominates the barrio.

RAQUEL FERNÁNDEZ MENÉNDEZ
University of Oviedo, Spain
findelinfinito@gmail.com

La resistencia a la ciudad con el cuerpo en la poesía de Ángela Figuera Aymerich

La obra de Ángela Figuera Aymerich (1902-1984) ha sido estudiada desde su faceta social en la posguerra española. Sin embargo, pocos análisis vinculan su compromiso en la lucha contra el Régimen de Franco con la problemática relación existente en sus poemas entre el cuerpo femenino y el espacio urbano. El examen de esta cuestión a la luz de la teoría feminista y de los discursos identitarios nacional y de género revelará un enfoque novedoso de la resistencia a la dictadura desarrollada por la autora.

MARTA FRĄTCZAK
Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań, Poland
mfratczak@wa.amu.edu.pl

Deconstructing the Myths of Urban life in *Orealla* (1984) by Roy Heath

In *Tristes tropiques* Claude Lévi-Strauss writes that cities are for Westerners the hallmarks of civilization. After all, it was on the ability to gather people into a single, defined space which imposed order and authority, that the West constructed its sense of superiority towards the new world. The idea of building cities, which in the past were physically and nowadays are symbolically surrounded by walls keeping out *the other*, is so deeply rooted into our minds that rarely, if ever, do we seek alternative to our urban life-styles. However, there are places and people that, by their very nature, reject urbanization and all that it stands for: progress, regulated time and organized authority.

   The paper is a critical reading of Roy Heath's rather forgotten novel *Orealla* (1984), where the author captures essential disparities between urban and rural spaces that stand for two philosophies of life in Guyana. In the novel an Amerindian man, Carl, somewhat against his will, is caught in the swirl of modern economy, which forces him to earn his living. Therefore he comes to Georgetown but he does not fully grasp the idea of city life. The capital seems to him oppressive, full of pointless rituals and essentially unsuited for the Guyanese lifestyle and climate. Instead of running away, however, he continues to carve a niche for himself in this foreign place, although his presence is

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

53

difficult to accept for many a proper Georgetown dweller. On the way, he infects his master, Ben, with a vision of alternative life beyond city limitations, thus making Ben, and indirectly the reader, question the very basis of our Westernized, urbanized life-styles.

PALOMA FRESNO CALLEJA
University of the Balearic Islands, Spain
paloma.fresno@uib.es

Dairy F(r)ictions:
Performing Interethnic Encounters in the New Zealand Corner Shop

My paper focuses on the New Zealand dairy (corner shop, convenience store) –an icon of Kiwi culture, ubiquitous in New Zealand's sub/urban landscapes– as a site for the performance and negotiation of interethnic encounters and conflicts. I shall discuss the relevance of this sub/urban location in relation to the emerging literary and artistic cartographies of New Zealand's multicultural cities articulated by artists of Asia and Pacific ethnicities. My analysis departs from the short film *Tom's Dairy* (2012) by Samoan writer Oscar Kightley, a coming of age story that reflects nostalgically on the lives of Pacific Island migrants in the 1980s, with the dairy shop becoming the central location around which the protagonists negotiate quotidian conflicts deriving from their underprivileged and marginal status. I shall then move on to consider Jacob Rajan's monodrama *Krishnan's Dairy* (1997), the story of an Indian couple recently arrived in New Zealand and their efforts to succeed by running their own business in the context of New Zealand's demographic transformation in the 1990s as a result of changes in its official migration policy. Finally, I analyse the comic appropriation of the stereotype of the Indian dairy shop owner in the successful animated TV series *bro'Town* (2004-2009), created by Elizabeth Mitchell and the comedy group The Naked Samoans. I propose a reading of these works as part of a performative continuum, with each genre –short drama, monodrama, animated sitcom– allowing for different strategies to articulate issues of representation, dislocation, competition for political and symbolic recognition and the struggle for conviviality in the multi-ethnic city. The dairy shops portrayed in these works serve as a catalyst for such discussions, allowing us to witness New Zealand's demographic and cultural transformation from the last decades of the twentieth century and to explore the lives of characters which have traditionally been constructed as marginal to urban national narratives.

CRISTINA M. GÁMEZ-FERNÁNDEZ
University of Córdoba, Spain
cristina.gamez@uco.es

The Urban Slum and Human Power in Annawadi:
Katherine Boo's *Behind the Beautiful Forevers*

This paper seeks to analyze the depiction of the Bombayite slum Annawadi in Katherine Boo's 2012 *Behind the Beautiful Forevers: Life, Death, and Hope in a Mumbai Undercity*. Although it easily reads as a novel —and indeed one has to keep this idea actively in mind while reading— this book is a fine piece of literary journalism. Boo is not a novelist, but an American journalist who documented her narrative out of journalistic research for three years, in a very similar vein to ethnographic research methodology. The book reportages the life of garbage pickers and their families for a year and a half. Its title

shows a disclosure of beauty hidden in unexpected *loci* or at least this is what it suggests before one reads it. In addition, the preposition *behind* in the title tries to demonstrate to the Western reader that this Bombay slum can be read on a deeper level. However, half way between journalism and literary fiction, this phenomenon features a narrative mode recently fostered by global literary markets —after the Oscar-winning *Slumdog Millionaire,* movie version of Vikas Swarup's *Q & A*— which secures true stories for Western readers' curiosity amalgamated with literary style. This journalistic literary depiction will be explored particularly through notions looked into by sociologist and historian Mike Davis (*Planet of Slums*, 2006) and Mrinalini Chakravorti (*In Stereotype*, 2014). Both provide complementing perspectives from urban theory and power and from literary investigation in stereotypes which, far from simple repetition, generates fresh responses to the issues affecting globalization among other contemporary world challenges.

EDUARDO GARCÍA AGUSTÍN
Complutense University of Madrid, Spain
eduard07@ucm.es

Globalized Urban Labyrinths and Mutilated Bodies in David Cronenberg's *Consumed*

Marc Augé defines a non-place (*Non*-Places, 1995) as a "space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical, or concerned with identity" (1995: 77-8). Examples of such non-places are hotels and airports, which occupy a place in the urban space but have more identity features in common with other airports or hotels than with their urban or national setting. It is precisely in this labyrinthic mapping of the global non-places that David Cronenberg lets Naomi and Nathan, the main characters in his first novel, *Consumed* (2014), wander. However, these twenty-first-century, techno-addicted photojournalists do feel more at home in such identity-less spaces than in the cities they visit, turning non-places into globally connected places. Their sexual intercourse in the Hilton at Amsterdam Schiphol Airport becomes an act of physical separation, as Nathan travels to Toronto and Naomi to Tokyo, but their personal and professional stories intertwine: their bodies are infected by Roiphe's disease, a rare STD, and their investigation subjects are related to the death, dismembering and eating of Célestine Arosteguy by her husband, Aristide, a twenty-first-century version of Simone de Beauvoir and Sartre. In *Consumed*, David Cronenberg questions key Canadian identity features such as Frye's "Where is here?" and disseminates body parts over the globalized labyrinth of urban spaces. These, just as the bodies of the novel's female characters, are also dismembered and deconstructed in the form of a globalized, interconnected world where different electronic devices, such as ipads, iphones or digital cameras, do indeed connect such separated cities as Toronto and Tokyo, redefining the time-space dimensions: images travel 6407 miles in a fraction of a nanosecond, while the same event may be viewed in a present-to-past, or a present-to-future, journey of the thirteen-hour's Time Zone Difference on their Macbooks.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

55

Sandra García Corte
University of Oviedo, Spain
garciacsandra@uniovi.es

Pedestrianism: Performing the Urban in a Contemporary Afropolitan Narrative

The Afropolitan subjectivity is a type of spatial subjectivity which emerges in the global metropolis, thus giving the afro-diasporic imaginary an urban sense which articulates multiple ways of being. Lately, the urban is analysed as a space which must be thought of from the subject's perspective as lived experience (Lindón 2007: 7–16). Perceptions of the city are influenced by imaginaries which affect the relationship of urbanites with the city and its parts. Imaginaries can refer to the city as a whole, to the urban as a way of life or to different fragments of the city, i.e., to those micropolis in which the daily character and routines of its inhabitants can be observed (11). The street is one of the key parts of the urban in the negotiation of spatial subjectivities.

The analysis of urban representation in works of fiction becomes fundamental to improve our comprehension of the transnational metropolis as a key space for the development and transformation of the afro-diasporic subjectivity. In particular, characters can give us very valuable information about the ways of living and performing the urban. A key figure in this sense is the postcolonial and post-diasporic "pedestrian" that Isabel Carrera Suárez proposes in "The Stranger Flâneuse and the Aesthetics of Pedestrianism" [2015]. Pedestrianism is different from *flânerie* in that it implies "physical and emotional engagement with the city, a space shared and inhabited" (857). Contemporary writers of African descent in the United States have contributed to recreate this figure, probably because "[their] observing and traversing of cities is conducted from the perspective of alterity" (855). Therefore, the aim of this talk is to explore the portrayal of this transcendental figure in recent Afropolitan narratives.

Paula García Ramírez
University of Jaén, Spain
pagarcia@ujaen.es

Wole Soyinka's Plays:
Between Shakespearean Tradition and Yoruba Opera

Wole Soyinka (1932-) is one of the most famous and acclaimed African writers, particularly after becoming the first African to be awarded the Nobel Prize in 1986. I will focus my attention on his plays, particularly *A Dance of the Forest*, 1963, to pinpoint how Soyinka portrays two realities of relevance: on the one hand, he describes the African tradition through Yoruba Opera; on the other, he has inherited the dramatic tradition of Shakespeare as part of his upbringing in the colonial British Empire.

The effect that Shakespeare and other British writers have on Soyinka has sometimes earned him criticism (Jeyifo, Biodun. 2014) for being a westernized writer who does not write for his people. From my point of view this criticism is unfair and superficial; Shakespeare is an icon of global scope that has extended his presence in many cultural contexts, so incorporating Shakespearean elements in Soyinka's theatre shows the cosmopolitan vision of the writer.. Thus, it would be a mistake to think that Soyinka limits himself to mimicking the theatrical British; on the contrary, Soyinka integrates them in the African cultural context by means of Yoruba Opera and other African elements in order to reach a powerful synthesis of cultural syncretism.

In *A Dance of the Forest* (1960), Wole Soyinka performs the myths and rituals from the Yoruba people: dance forms, drums, songs, poetry, and mime to produce on stage the codes of the traditional cultures. Thus, the magical frame of the forest connects the writer with Shakespearean modes of describing a midsummer night's dream although, in the case of Wole Soyinka, it will develop into a tragic nightmare (Jonathan Peters qtd by Diala 2014). Sharing the language, culture, traditions, and history make the Yoruba people a continuum across the coast line of Western Africa (Nigeria, Benin, and Togo) and the spaces situated in the African diaspora: Caribbean Islands, Cuba, Peru, Brazil, and the United States. Theatre is a communal example used to perform and connect the rituals and traditions of Africans and African Diasporas.

G. L. GAUTAM
Lajpat Rai College Sahibabad Ghaziabad, India
glgautam99@yahoo.com

Eco-Urbanity in the *Inheritance of Loss* by Kiran Desai

In *Culture and Materialism,* Raymond Williams posits the organic unity between man and nature and accepts a separation between them mainly as the product of industry and rural labour. He thus sees no point in counterposing "The great abstractions of man and nature" (83). By mixing our labour with the earth, we have created societies. Furthermore capitalism and imperialism, Williams argues, have "seen both man and the physical products raw material" (84). Basing their arguments on Edward W. Said's *Culture and Imperialism* and Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth,* Elizabeth DeLaughrey and George B. Handley locate land as the vital site to understand the relationship between literature and the environment. They argue: "Historizisation has been a primary tool of post colonial studies and, as Said and Fanon imply, it is central to our understanding of land and by extension, the earth" (14). The relationship between literature and the environment has become   the subject of ecocriticism. Cheryll Glot Felty constructs ecocriticism by emphasing that land is an essential category for understanding ecocriticism: "As a critical stance, it has one foot in literature and the other on Land; as theoretical discourse, it negotiates between the human and nonhuman" (Cherryl and Fromm 1996, xix).
Against this background, the paper addresses the following points: a) The examples of ecourbanity in the *Inheritance of Loss* are those that exude the warmth of co-existence between man and nature. The cook is the typical example, as is the local market; b) A cursory reading fails to underscore the deeper postcolonial ecology of land relationship, obtaining between the subaltern natives like Gyan and the judge, a man of colonial mindset, who owns land at Kalimpong; c) For the adventure-loving Western readership, Desai employs her full creative prowess by affording picturesque vistas of the Himalayan region akin to Wordsworth's landscape; d) Raymond Williams identifies two forces responsible for the exploitation of man and nature: capitalism and imperialism. One of the activists of GNLF, that Gyan joins, resists these forces: he registers protest against the exploiters: "forests sold by the foreigners to fill the pockets of foreigners" (159). "Gyan remembered the stirring stories of when citizens had risen up in their millions and demanded that the British leave" (158).

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

57

MARÍA LUZ GONZÁLEZ-RODRÍGUEZ
University of La Laguna, Spain
malugon@ull.edu.es

In Search of "A Fine Balance" in the Global City:
An Ecocritical Reading of Rohinton Mistry's Novel

Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance* (1995) presents the ugliest side of globalization during Indira Gandhi's Great Emergency period in the India of the late 1970s. The novel takes place in a "City by the sea," clearly identified as Mumbai in 1975. The four main characters travel from their villages to the city in search of a better life. Originally, Mumbai appears as the embodiment of dreams, the place where they can fight against loneliness, poverty and caste. As the novel unfolds, however, Mistry depicts urban development as a greedy trading competition leading to the transformation of the rural landscape into a disorienting and broken cityscape in the name of a process of beautification, which also results in a highly asymmetrical flow of capital among the different social classes. As in other developing countries, the marginalized and the dispossessed are those who suffer most the chaos and tyranny of The Emergency. Instead of advancement and melioration, the outcome is one of destruction, sterilization and identity crisis. My aim in this paper is to revise Mistry's novel *A Fine Balance* from an ecocritical perspective, focusing on the theoretical framework of material ecocriticism. According to Alaimo and Hekman (2010), matter is an agentic, vibrant and unpredictable whole in which the human is just a small part. In this general ecophobic environment, Mistry's characters seem to be doomed to total destruction. I will apply the concept of "porosity," as the "trans-corporeal" (Alaimo 2010) connections that take place in any manifestation of matter, to explain that without a "fine balance" between the local and the global, the rural and the urban, the resulting ecological and economic imbalance present in the novel emerges in profound class, gender and caste disparities.

MARÍA GRAU PEREJOAN
University of Barcelona, Spain
maria.grau@ub.edu

The "Local" vs the "Universal" in the West Indian Literary Field

Generally, postcolonial authors writing from peripheral nations are deemed as "local" or "regional," whereas only those who write from Western urban spaces have traditionally been defined as "universal". Focusing on the West Indian literary field, this paper will discuss the distinction which has been widely drawn between the notions of "local" or "regional" as opposed to "universal", particularly as they refer to writers. In fact, the current glorification of the "migrant" or the so-called "global citizen" has inadvertently sidelined non-diasporic postcolonial writers. Preferred writings are those which straddle worlds and are written from and/or set in metropolitan urban centres, which seem to be considered the only possible global spaces. These issues will be explored in connection to Jamaican writers Marlon James and Kei Miller, and Trinidadian writer Jennifer Rahim. Unlike their predecessors, these three writers were born in already independent West Indian nations and educated in the region. Their writings problematize the notions of "local" and "universal" and prove that writers can combine "local" and "universal" engagements. In their writings Caribbean culture is not, as in mainstreamed writings, diluted into a culture devoid of specificities. Their writings oppose a growing campaign against the folk culture on the part of commercially oriented publishing houses and prove

that Caribbean tropes can be treated in innovative ways. Finally, the issue of location as connected to public support and promotion will be foregrounded: even though the West Indies are no longer that place which artists historically had to leave to pursue their careers, this paper will seek to answer what explains that out of the three writers in question only Rahim writes from the Caribbean.

KATA GYURIS
Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary
gyuriskata@gmail.com

Becoming Hillbrow:
Urban Landscapes and Performance in Contemporary South African Fiction

Inner city locations in South Africa, such as Hillbrow, an infamous neighbourhood in Johannesburg, are often hosts to a large variety of characters and practices. They have developed from relative wealth into post-apartheid slums where abject poverty and violence reign. It is no wonder, then, that so much of South Africa's fiction has been inspired by these iconic cityscapes, the best known of which are perhaps Phaswane Mpe's *Welcome to Our Hillbrow* (2001), Kgebetli Moele's *Room 207* (2006) and Lauren Beukes's *Zoo City* (2011). Doreen Massey talks of places as being alive and possessing their own multitude of stories. As such, they are compelled to continuously (re)perform their identity and to negotiate it with and along their inhabitants. The paper essentially engages with this idea of the dynamic nature of place, and will look at how it allows us to read Hillbrow, the quintessential reminder of South Africa's past and present, as a commutable, multi-faceted place that necessitates very specific identity politics from its inhabitants. Although the three novels follow different generic conventions they share a strong focus on how place determines the lives and fates of people. Instead of this rather single-handed approach, the paper will propose that there exists a two-sided, almost parasitic relationship between Hillbrow and the protagonists, much like Zinzi's relationship with her embodied guilt in *Zoo City*, resulting in a never-ending urban performance.

CHELSEA HAITH
University of Cape Town, South Africa
haith.chelsea@gmail.com

History, Memory and Walking through Time in Teju Cole's *Open City*

In his PEN/Hemingway Award winning debut, *Open City*, Teju Cole effectively "'writes the city" as a space of isolation and introspection, articulating New York City at the "walking pace" (3) of a Nigerian psychiatrist. This outsider narrator, Julius, reframes what is arguably the most photographed and filmed city in the world as different and strange, even exotic in the diversity of its inhabitants. Julius is both at home in New York and identifies as an outsider. His experience highlights the effect of transnational migration on the way that New York is interpreted through his subjective experience. Features of introspection characterise the narrator's movement around the city: he is at times lost in a metaphorical forest, lost in a crowd and lost in the anonymity of the big city. Cole's narrative maps New York, in which each neighbourhood has "a different psychic weight: the bright lights and shuttered shops, the housing projects and luxury hotels, the fire escapes and city parks" (7), in ways that offer an alternative, postcolonial perspective on

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

59

this cosmopolitan space. The narrator is concerned with reading the city's streets for their present and past between which he occasionally slips when "time became elastic and voices cut out of the past into the present" (74). Instances in which he traces the trails of the First Nations people who lived there before the colonial invasion, and an image of a lynched man hanging from a tree that resolves into dark canvas sheeting blowing from a scaffold allow the reader glimpses into a history tainted by colonial and inhumane enterprise. This paper will consider the following questions: What postcolonial concerns are evoked by the narrator's movement both in time and around the city? How does the narrator's black migrant experience of New York shape the framing of this famous city?

FELICITY HAND
Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain
Felicity.Hand@uab.cat

Writing Indian Durban: from Grey Street to Dr. Yusuf Dadoo Street

In Aziz Hassim's debut novel, *The Lotus People*, the anti-apartheid struggle in Durban is focalized around the Grey Street area, the Casbah, a predominantly Indian part of town but where black Africans also plied their trade. The South African Indian community is seen to undergo a steady evolution from the days of zealously preserving their Indianness to joining forces with the other South Africans in a common fight for justice. Hassim's portrayal of the area, which contains avenues of resistance and subversion, reinforces the notion of the Casbah as a chronotope for understanding the history and evolution of the South African Indian community. The novel subtly implies that the gangster world of the Casbah is a toned down version of the crimes of the apartheid regime. The laws that sought to control and intimidate the Indians made their everyday lives far more unbearable than any of the ruthless business deals carried out by the local dakus. In recent years, Grey Street, like many other places in Durban and other South African cities, has been renamed and the current Dr. Yusuf Dadoo Street, while still preserving its intrinsically Indian flavour, is now home to a variety of ethnicities. Some more affluent South African Indians have moved away but the so-called Indian quarter, still known simply as Grey Street, remains a focal point of the community. This paper discusses how Hassim has immortalized the far too often overlooked history of a highly picturesque part of Durban.

MARIE HERBILLON
University of Liège, Belgium
marie.herbillon@ulg.ac.be

Dancing Against Oblivion: Performance as an Antidote to Spatial and Historical Erasure in J. M. Coetzee's *The Schooldays of Jesus*

In *The Schooldays of Jesus* (2016), J.M. Coetzee arguably pursues the reflection on exile and history initiated with *The Childhood of Jesus* (2013), his previous novel, which can be regarded as an allegory of migration: after leaving Novilla, the town in which they had been ascribed a new identity and requested to start a new life, a young boy and his surrogate parents move on to the equally strange Estrella, where they attempt to make another new start. In these texts, Coetzee's meditation is closely interrelated with the postcolonial spaces in which his plots unfold. Like their inhabitants, who have been washed of memory, these urban environments do not seem inscribed with clear historical

layers. However, they are not entirely bereft of historical substance: although the history of the area's settlement is largely unknown to the settlers themselves, Estrella, for example, is "a city criss-crossed with the paths of immigrants" (66), whose own historical narratives can only be expected to alter the dreary, featureless neighbourhoods of their new place. Moreover, Estrella –unlike the supposedly less backward Novilla– has an Academy that teaches children the art of dance in an attempt to reawaken buried "memories of a prior existence" (244) and to gesture towards the intangible. In this paper, I will examine the ways in which Coetzee associates the idea of performance in the postcolonial space with the need to confront history and, in particular, the repressed (but inextinguishable) memories resulting from the crimes committed by the settlers' colonial ancestors. As the author seems to suggest, these crimes constitute a trauma that is likely to persist until the settler populations' guilt has been properly faced, and more inclusive paradigms have been developed. More broadly, I will focus on Coetzee's critique of Cartesianism and on the wide-ranging consequences of the typically Western dissociation between mind and body.

DOLORES HERRERO GRANADO
University of Zaragoza, Spain
dherrero@unizar.es

The Multicultural European City as Postcolonial Text in Tabish Khair's *How to Fight Islamist Terror from the Missionary Position*

The controversy over Salman Rushdie's polemical novel *The Satanic Verses* and, over and above everything, the traumatic aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, have prompted many Western readers to show interest in fiction that delves into the threat of Islamic extremism and the cultural and political reality of immigrant life in Western societies. In keeping with some of the main concerns of Monica Ali's *Brick Lane* (2003) and Mohsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007), Tabish Khair's novel enters the minds of people Westerners are eager to know more about, and brings to the fore the Western – and non-Western– compulsive need to rely on stereotypes that are often invalidated by real-life people and situations. Khair's novel portrays, among other things, Indian and Pakistani characters who make the most of Western social and ideological freedoms, but are nonetheless slightly alienated and isolated by an allegedly multicultural Denmark of liberal sensibility that is still inadvertently prey to old-time prejudices. Although Aarhus is depicted as a cosmopolitan city where cultural differences are, on the whole, respected, the spatial duality public vs. private discloses the barrier that still detaches the rich and cultivated, most of whom fail to uphold any particular set of beliefs, from the poor and uncultivated, who cling to religion as a quintessential part of their identity, and as their main means to make sense of their existence in a world to which they find it difficult to belong. This presentation will try to deplore the binary thinking that pits the cultural spaces of a Western liberal state against the minority enclaves of Islamic population living within it. In tune with Homi Bhabha's theories, I will claim that these categories remain blind to the complex dynamics of negotiation through which displaced populations make sense of their lives across contesting cultural values and traditions. As is well known, for Bhabha such experiences should not be seen to form a distinct and self-contained cultural space but to signal a process of "cultural translation" between traditions [Bhabha, "Beyond Fundamentalism and Liberalism", 1989], to the effect that, in the end, very little is what it seems to be, identities are always hybridised, and conventional types of mapping are put to the test, since they fail to account for the rupturing of boundaries resulting from the flows of both legal and illicit border traffic.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

61

ROBERTA HOFER
University of Innsbruck, Austria
roberta.hofer@uibk.ac.at

Puppet Cities: Urban Marionette Stages in Contemporary Cinema

Films like *Synecdoche, New York* (2008), *Stranger than Fiction* (2006), *Being John Malkovich* (1999), or *The Truman Show* (1998) present us with real-life (puppet) stages, their protagonists performing the roles of Übermarionettes (Edward Gordon Craig, 1907) in urban environments.

Already these characters embody ontological anomalies rooted in a dual nature: On the one hand, the manipulated are flesh-and-blood humans, based in the real world, independent and free-willed. On the other hand, they are marionettes, inhabitants of fantastical worlds, caught on strings and controlled by their masters. By paradoxically merging these contrary concepts, the films not only create human puppets, but also open up new narratological spaces, and in doing so build theatrical worlds that combine features of fictional realms and urban realities.

Navigating this artificial scenery, the human marionettes inhabit artificial territories of both oppression and emancipatory self-empowerment. As they explore the artificiality of their environments, they enter liminal performance spaces in the narratological construction of the filmic text itself. We encounter theatrical elements like curtains or auditoriums, and metaleptic (Genette, *Métalepse*) links between the extra—and intradiegesis through gateway-like stage doors and proscenium arches. Even entire miniature worlds and replica cityscapes occur, providing the ultimate voyeuristic panopticons: "It's fake," exclaims for instance one of the characters in *The Truman Show*. "[T]he sky and the sea, everything… It's a set! It's a show! Everybody's watching you!"

This paper deconstructs the theatrical meta-architecture and spatial anomalies of these puppet stages in contemporary cinema. Interpreting them as backdrops for the human marionette trope, they strengthen our sense that we witness performances about dependencies and identities that take place in an artificial urban reality. As narratological thresholds are breached in these borderlands, we can no longer apply the concept of separate diegetic spaces and must offer new readings of the filmic mise-en-scène.

SAMANTHA REIVE HOLLAND
Independent Scholar
samanthareiveholland@gmail.com

"It's about Details. The Full Picture": Diana Evans' *The Wonder*

In his afterword to the edited collection *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* (2009), Bernard Hesse argues that Paul Gilroy's configuration of black European identity "forgoes the critique of that racial duality, namely that black Europe is both, neither, and more. The complexities of thinking through figurations of black Europe arise from its being irreducible to the fixed terms of either Europe or non-Europe" (Barnor Hesse 2009). Using Hesse's schematic of the irreducibility of black European belonging as my starting point, my paper will interrogate Diana Evans's 2009 novel *The Wonder*, arguing that the cultural spaces of representation that Evans envisions move beyond a paradigmatically diasporic outlook and instead embrace cosmopolitan modes of being. Whether migrant or British-born, her characters are involved in a process of transcultural creation that blends aesthetic influences from Europe, Africa and the Caribbean and in doing so allows them to occupy a shifting, liminal space of belonging.

I will explore how Evans configures a transcultural space that introduces an alternative framework for constructions of black British belonging. In the protagonist Lucas' search to understand and locate his absent father, Jamaican dancer Antoney, he discovers that Antoney led a multi-racial dance troupe in 1960s London. As he traces the troupe's movements through multiple European spaces and temporalities, he discovers that Antoney idolised an early twentieth-century Russian dancer, Vaslav Nijinsky. It is slowly revealed (although never explicitly), that Nijinsky's history of sexual confusion and mental illness predestines Antoney's own fate. In linking the two men, seemingly separated by time, culture, race and sexuality, and in Lucas's uncovering of the importance of European spaces to his own family history, the novel presents a liminal, performative space that leaps imaginatively across multiple physical and conceptual boundaries. Consequently, I argue that the novel offers an alternative genealogy of black European spaces.

CATALINA IANNONE
University of Texas, United States of America
catalina.iannone@gmail.com

Branding Lisbon:
Inter-culturality and Visualities in Mouraria's *Mercado de Fusão*

In this project, I look to the Mercado de Fusão, part of Lisbon's Mouraria neighborhood, as a case study of how inter-culturality is addressed in contemporary Portuguese urban space. This development, located in an area of the city historically associated with marginalized communities, represents an ongoing struggle to inscribe a concept of the nation through the production of space. This market serves as a framework to bring together questions regarding the mobilization of multiculturalism as a brand in Mouraria's urban redevelopment while taking into consideration the legacy of race relations in Portugal's neoliberal present. In order to illustrate this, I analyse the visual and material landscape of the market, focusing specifically on commercial photographer Gonçalo Gaioso's photo installation, "All Around Us," that features portraits of shopkeepers from the surrounding neighborhood. Deborah Poole's and Coco Fusco's theories of visual imagery, and Beatriz Jaguaribe's work on branding cities inform my framework for analysis of these photos. I consider this exhibit an example of how categorization and staged authenticity work in tandem to promote tourism, and establish a hierarchy for commerce. The interracial encounters that the photos showcase, as I will explore, draw from the assimilationist discourse of *lusofonia*, and reveal vestiges of colonialism related to economic subjugation and racial hierarchies. This practice evidences the utility of photography as a tool to make sense of changes in the world that surrounds us and establish a given rhetoric to understand such changes in relation to space (Campkin, Mogilevich and Ross "How Images Shape Our Cities"). By putting such categories on display in the Mercado de Fusão, order is imposed upon what it means to be Portuguese in the aftermath of empire and in the face of globalization.

ELENA IGARTUBURU GARCÍA
University of Massachusetts, USA of America
elena.igartuburu@gmail.com

**Life Beyond the Human:
Dirt and Disgust in Urban Gendered Rhythms and Waggling White Meat**

What happens when one embraces the monstrous, the inappropriate and the disgusting? What when we inhabit the dark and dirty corners of the city? What when one enjoys disgust? Erika Lopez's graphic "Trilogy of Tomatoes" and the lesbian *reggaeton* songs and videos by Chocolate Remix tear apart dominant categories of race, gender and sexuality. The highly ironic and insolent tone and content of these works transgress the limits of propriety and intently inhabit the turbid, wet and slippery terrain of the inappropriate, the unexpected and the disgusting. Lopez's raw irreverent language and cheeky stories manage to objectify and animalize her main character Tomato "Mad Dog" Rodriguez who dwells in the streets of New York City and San Francisco and adventures on a road trip between the two cities. Chocolate Remix presents us with a butch lesbian who performs the stereotype of the *reggaeton* macho savoring every word of the highly sexist language of this genre.

The relation of both *reggaeton* and road trip narratives with the urban and mobility explores the relation between the array of identities that Tomato and Chocolate embody and their ability to inhabit the spaces that surround them. Tomato and Chocolate's disidentification with their surroundings and the human signals for something monstrous that already lurks in the corner of our globalized world and which has nothing to do with the public enemies of the Western world. These half object half subject characters break through the thin layer of the real, mobilize our assessment of the ordinary and make visible the layers of signification imposed on familiar images.

E. GUILLERMO IGLESIAS DÍAZ
International University of La Rioja
egid262@gmail.com

**Urbanscape: Representations of Space / spaces of Representation
in Jim Jarmusch's *Night on Earth***

Throughout history, urban centres have played a fundamental role in the development of our societies as we know them today and, so it seems, the tendency will continue in the near future: specialists point out that we are experiencing the fastest and largest urbanization period in history. Thus, the challenges contemporary societies must face take place mostly in large cities, which means the city cannot be reduced to a simple scenario / framework where the progress of the national community takes place, as if it were just a decorative setting: it is urban space that favours and instigates processes of social transformation at all levels: economic, political, cultural, ideological changes that sooner or later will affect and extend to other areas of the nation and beyond.

I propose to offer a preliminary overview of the way in which urbanscape has been traditionally portrayed in film and to contrast it with Jim Jarmusch's *Night on Earth* in order to illustrate with filmic examples some of the theories of two of the most influential philosophers of space and its representation: on the one hand, Henri Lefebvre's insistence on the relevance of fiction narratives as a key to the everyday life of the city and his distinction between spatial practice, representations of space, and spaces of representation. On the other hand, I will pay attention to Michel Foucault's heterotopias,

his concept of "network space" and his famous statement about how we are currently living in the era of space, as opposed to the nineteenth century when the main worry was time and history. I will use selected scenes from Jarsmuch's film to discuss these theoretical proposals.

CAROLINE KOEGLER
University of Münster, Germany
caroline.koegler@wwu.de

Precarious Urbanity: "The Jungle" (Calais) and the Politics of Performing the Urban

Engaging what might be called a postcolonial inflection of a critical urban studies approach, and focusing on issues of privilege and precarity in performing the urban, this paper inquiries into mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion that are at work in the very gesture of attributing the status of urbanity. Who profits, and who suffers, when the status of urbanity is allocated, or denied? How do claims to urbanity unsettle colonial discourses? The Calais refugee camp, "the Jungle", currently awaiting its final destruction, is a harrowing reminder of the urgency of these questions. Working through social media publications, press releases, newspaper articles, and academic studies (e.g. Agier 2010, 2016; Lewis 2016), I examine how control and resistance operate through the notion of urbanity. French police have repeatedly and strategically destroyed the infrastructure of "the Jungle", such as its communal spaces (churches, cafés, children's centres) and improved housing. As such markers of urbanity were destroyed, so the inhabitans' perceived entitlement to hygiene rights, and also freedom of movement ("the Jungle" has been fenced off and movement is limited). Media representations, ignoring these infrastructures and prioritizing images of destitution and violence, have exacerbated the situation. They have made the camp's inhabitants more vulnerable in a number of ways, enabling their treatment as "less than human" or "abject". In other words, I see the notion of "urbanity" connected to what is considered "grievable" (Butler 2009) in society: "If only a grievable life can be valued and valued through time, then only a grievable life will be eligible for social and economic support, housing, health care, employment, rights of political expression, forms of social recognition, and conditions for political agency" (Butler 2015: 198). Performing different versions of urbanity, the inhabitans of "the Jungle" have laid an uncanny claim to the "sphere of appearance" (Butler 2015), and thus to the public recognition that would render them human. Taking up these issues, this paper thus is a call for a critical engagement with the politics of performing the urban.

MINU SUSAN KOSHY
National Institute of Technology, Calicut, India
minususankoshy@gmail.com

Urban Rhythms of Polycoloniality:
Rhythmanalyzing Kochi in Malayalam Cinema

Polycoloniality as a socio-political phenomenon has left deep imprints in the psyche of the colonized people as well as in the "decolonized" spaces they inhabit(ed). The simultaneous presence of multiple foreign powers competing for supremacy has been a characteristic feature of imperialism in South Asia and especially in India, where the Portuguese, the French, the Dutch and the British fought for sovereignty. It is significant that imperialism in India was an end product of the race for spices and as such there was

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

65

a significantly high concentration of foreign powers in the centers of spice trade. Kochi, in the South of India, was a bustling port where trade in spices flourished during the pre-colonial and colonial periods. Its significance as a major trading port contributed to its appeal as a potential settlement for the imperialists. As such, the very first European settlements in India were established by the Portuguese in Kochi. The city also witnessed the establishment of Dutch and British settlements over the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As the erstwhile *Perumbadappu Swaroopam* (as Kochi was called earlier) turned into the kingdom of Cochin and gradually traversed the path of rapid urbanization after independence, the fabric of the city underwent significant transformations, even as traces of Portuguese, Dutch and British imperialism coexisted. The settlements of the imperialists gradually grew deserted; yet their influence dictated and still dictates aspects of life in the city of Kochi. The architecture, culture, language and food patterns reveal the impact multiple foreign rules have had on the city, foregrounding the multiple rhythms that characterize it. Here, rhythmanalysis or the use of rhythms as a "mode of analysis" (Lefebvre xii) becomes significant. In *Elements of Rhythmanalysis*: (1992) Henri Lefebvre asserts: "Everywhere where there is interaction between a place, a time and an expenditure of energy, there is rhythm" (15). The intersection of the spatial and temporal axes – in as much as Kochi as a conspicuous urban space in Kerala is partly defined by its temporal location as a post-polycolonial locale – and the expenditure of energy on the part of the city-dwellers as they go about their daily activities within the urban space, produces multiple urban rhythms which coexist, sometimes harmoniously and sometimes in discordance. The Malayalam movies, set in the last decade of the 21st century in Kochi, capture these rhythms as a conspicuous part of the "urbanity" of Kochi characterized by the remnants of its polycolonial past. The paper attempts to interrogate the urban rhythms of polycoloniality, exploring how the polycolonial urban space is performed through a "rhythmanalysis" of the city of Kochi as represented in select Malayalam movies of the last decade.

JAROSLAV KUŠNÍR
University of Prešov, Slovakia
jaroslav.kusnir@unipo.sk

The City as Post/Colonial and Alter/Native Space in Omar Musa: *Here Come the Dogs*, 2014

In his debut novel *Here Come the Dogs*, a Malayan-Australian author, Omar Musa, depicts a fragmented story of three young characters living in an Australian city who find in the urban environment and its subcultural world a space for the realization of their freedom, personal and cultural identities. Although the main characters' cultural background is not Australian, they are not depicted as traditional immigrant characters constructing their diasporic identities, but as modern transnational subjects seeing the urban as both the alternative cultural space and as a space defining the marginality of their cultural identity. In this paper, I will analyze Musa's depiction of a city as an alternative cultural space in which the imagery of the alternative culture (graffiti, rap music and poetry, sport) represent both a marginal/alternative position of the colonized subjects as well as space symbolically expressing both freedom and a formation of transnational identity of characters living in a modern urban multicultural environment. This transnational identity will be analysed in the context of Bill Ashcroft's concept of transnation and as an identity expressing a specificity of the cultural and ethnic identities of the contemporary young generation.

JENNIFER LEETSCH
Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg, Germany
jennifer.leetsch@uni-wuerzburg.de

Dream Cities: Affective Spatiality in Zadie Smith's North London Writings

In her public lecture "Speaking in Tongues," held at the New York Public Library in 2008, Zadie Smiths envisions a dream city – a place "of many voices, where the unified singular self is an illusion" (*Changing my Mind*, 138). Here, "everything is doubled, everything is various" (138). This side-by-side and the interdependency of voices, identities, knowledges, and affiliations, is what is most remarkable about Smith's London fiction. My paper will explore the affective and emotional geographies Zadie Smith's London novels perform to make visible how such literary dream cities have the potential to productively and creatively reimagine a globalised world. Smith's texts produce stories of community and connection that splay out over North West London, both delineating what it means to live in a global and postcolonial metropolis such as London and simultaneously re-writing the former heart of the empire according to hybrid and ambiguous identity structures. I will focus on Smith's *NW* (2012) as well as her latest novel *Swing Time* (2016) to examine a plethora of interdependent emotional and spatial relationships. While *NW* showcases alternative sexualities, romances and fluid gender constructions which spring from the peculiar intimacy of London's neighbourhoods, *Swing Time* features female friendship and erotic entanglements that originate in London and from there spread their trajectories across the globe. The city in the two novels is enacted as a space that has at its heart multiple and intersecting narratives of desire, love and friendship and thus rebuilds from the ground up a "nation divided by accents and postcodes" (*Changing my Mind*, 251). To make visible fault lines of belonging and the emotional spaces opened up by the two texts, I will look at the novels' spatial structures and affective architectures, drawing from Zadie Smith's own discussions on race, space and identity, to Bhabha's ideas of textualising the nation, as well as affect theorists like Sara Ahmed who recognise the importance of emotion and embodiment in our cultural imaginations. Through storytelling, literary texts such as Smith's *NW* and *Swing Time* emphasise the city as a shared global place of encounter by performing the urban intimately, emotionally and affectively.

CAROL ELIZABETH LEON
University of Malaya, Malaysia
caroleon@um.edu.my

Narrating Malaysia: Rehman Rashid's *Peninsula: A Story of Malaysia*

Literary narratives have always explored the stories of spaces as reflections of the dwellers residing in them. The narrative identities of towns, cities and rural areas image the myriad issues facing their inhabitants; as these spaces evolve, so too do the people.
One such narrative is *Peninsula: A Story of Malaysia* (2016). Written by famed Malaysian journalist-writer Rehman Rashid, *Peninsula* probes into the tumultuous, tricky relationship between Malaysia and her multicultural community. Described as "long awaited," *Peninsula* comes twenty-three years after Rehman's best-seller *A Malaysian Journey* (1993). Indeed Rehman states that the long time lapse between the books was necessary in discovering a context for his story. However, the reader soon finds that this context is an elusive one, fragmentary and difficult to anchor. The spaces of Malaysia, Rehman seems to say, cannot be fully conceived, to the extent that his book has no descriptions of

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

67

physical landscapes, something a reader would naturally expect to find in a book of this kind. There is an intermingling of public and personal stories in *Peninsula*. The writer takes pains to highlight his mixed ancestry, finding delight in naming his relatives. "Only Malaysia could have done this" he claims. Yet this multicultural element, a distinguishing feature of Malaysian society, is a prickly issue and the book asserts that Malaysia in the late twentieth century is fraught with political, racial and religious divisions. The text portrays a country that is unique in the way its ethnic races meld yet the barriers between races stand erect. This paper looks at the way the space of Malaysia is conceived in *Peninsula*. The fragmentary, essay-like structure of the book reflects the intention of the writer to portray both urban and rural life in Malaysia at this point in time: a conundrum of contradictions and uncertainties.

ZUZEL LÓPEZ BAQUEZ
University of Oviedo, Spain
lopezzuzel@uniovi.es

Isel Rivero o el avistamiento de una errante *de paso*

La errancia ha signado la trayectoria vital de Isel Rivero (La Habana, 1941). El título de su segundo y más conocido poemario, *La marcha de los hurones* (1960), prefiguraba en fecha tempranísima con respecto al triunfo de la Revolución cubana (1959), el que sería el destino de la propia poeta y el de tantísimos artistas que decidieron marchar al exilio. Razones profesionales la llevaron después a vivir en primera persona realidades tan distintas como la de Viena y Ruanda, por poner solo dos ejemplos. Incluso una lectura superficial de su penúltimo poemario, *De paso* (2011), permite advertir que en él la poeta intenta hacer balance de su vida. Escrutar ese saldo en términos de experiencia intercultural y transfronteriza, así como determinar a través de qué recursos y estrategias discursivas se sirve para comunicárnoslo —literariamente hablando—, son los ejes de este análisis hecho desde la perspectiva de los estudios culturales y de género.

LOURDES LÓPEZ ROPERO
University of Alicante, Spain
lourdes.lopez@ua.es

Sounding the Memorial Urban Landscape:
Monuments and Contramonumental Discourse in Recent Writing in English

This paper engages with the fictional depiction of monumental space in the city of London through an analysis of Monica Ali's *In the Kitchen* (2009). Monuments are material reincarnations of the memory of nations and collectivities inserted in the urban landscape and generally celebrating key events and figures in the history of those groups. And yet, as sites of memory, they may fall into oblivion, become detached from the everyday lives of citizens and even develop into places of controversy rather than being emblems of shared values and ideals. In a postcolonial context, the "epic" discourse embodied in monuments, "with its celebration of hero's battles, conquests and journeys" is prone to being problematized, given its "legitimization of political authority and the foundation of nations and empires," to quote Birgit Neumann. Even if the presence of monumental forms of remembrance may seem relatively marginal in Ali's lengthy novel, and even if the titular kitchen is a more prominent —if much less grandiose— locale in the text, I aim to show that they are pivotal to her political agenda and attest to the power

of literature to articulate the complexity and challenge the mutability of this type of social space, which Henri Lefebvre describes as having "an horizon of meaning." I will address the tension between the diminishing relevance of the epic ideology embedded in London's monuments as portrayed in Ali's text, and the existence of continuities between the histories of conquest and oppression they commemorate and the barbaric practices of the new global economy. The latter are embodied in the kitchen at the Imperial Hotel, where the novel's protagonist works as Head Chef. With its corporate owner, its respectable Victorian façade, its renovated twenty-first-century interiors and a multinational taskforce of ambiguous legal status, the hotel functions as an emblem of the global economic system in the former imperial city.

MARÍA JESÚS LÓPEZ SANCHEZ-VIZCAINO
University of Córdoba, Spain
ff2losam@uco.es

Cape Town in Zoë Wicomb's Fiction: Urban Affiliation and Homely Secrets

As critics have repeatedly pointed out, spatial politics—manifested in a constant engagement with questions of belonging, exile, return and genealogy—plays a key role in Zoë Wicomb's fiction, populated by characters who, like herself, straddle South Africa and Scotland. Uneasily posed between the local and the cosmopolitan, the particular and the global, her characters' troubled sense of identity—often due to their "coloured" identity—cannot be made to fit the traditional concept of "homeland". In such a context, national affiliation, associated with hegemonic and excluding ideologies, is replaced by urban affiliation—namely with the city of Cape Town—as the main space in which a sense of being at home in the world may be found. Thus, I intend to examine the key role played by the city of Cape Town in works such as *You Can't Get Lost in Cape Town*(1987), *Playing in the Light* (2006) or *The One That Got Away* (2008), in which their female protagonists' process of identity formation is intimately tied with their experience and performance of the urban. The possibility, however, of finding oneself "at home" is often traversed by an experience of strangeness and displacement, mainly related to the feeling of alienation of South African coloureds in relation to public and official institutions and narratives, with the subsequent emphasis on invisible, hidden or secret urban spaces of belonging.

RUSSELL MCDOUGALL
University of New England, Australia
rmcdouga@une.edu.au

London, Madrid and Redonda: a Caribbean Kingdom in Exile

Most people find micronations (i.e. invented nations, lacking "official" international recognition) hard to take seriously; and it is true that they are often intentionally ludic. But politically, philosophically, socially, economically and of course geographically they are also extremely diverse. Nonetheless, with the exception of those that exist purely as virtual entities, most micronations have this in common: they are territorial; they hypothesise entirely new physical spaces. To many of these the idea of the city is crucial. Some claim residential territory within an existing city. Others invent their own fictional cities. Yet from a scholarly perspective the city life of micronations is completely unexplored terrain.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

69

The Kingdom of Redonda is perhaps unique, first because it is primarily a literary kingdom, with its own rich literature. (Most of its kings, and a good proportion of its aristocracy, have been writers.) Second, it functions in exile, claiming territory in the Leeward Islands of the West Indies that officially belongs to Antigua and Barbuda but holding court in London and Madrid. This paper explores the city life of the Caribbean micronation of Redonda as it has been performed and recorded in London and Madrid through the reign of four successive and self-appointed kings: 1. King Felipe (better known as *M.P. Shiel,* who vies with Claude Mackay for the title of the first West Indian author and is credited with possibly the first future history series in science fiction); 2. King Juan I (the British neo-Georgian poet and anthologist, *John Gawsworth*); 3. King Juan II (British author and publisher, founder of Centaur Press, *Jon Wynne-Tyson*); 4. King Xavier (the Spanish novelist and founder of the publishing house, Reino de Redonda, *Javier Marías*). The paper will also consider the place of the city in European exile fantasies of the Americas.

JOHN MCLEOD
University of Leeds, United Kingdom
J.M.McLeod@leeds.ac.uk

Northern Trespasser: Writing David Oluwale and the City of Leeds

In this paper I explore both the conceptual and material provenance of "trespassing" as a progressive mode of challenging the certification and surveillance of legitimated modes of urban dwelling for so-called strangers. Trespassing presents a challenge to abstract as well as concrete notions of being and dwelling. On the one hand, the term's profane, anti-authoritarian semantic resonances mean that trespassing is always a dangerous contestation to power, one that has distinct noumenal and phenomeological consequences. On the other hand, its violation of the ring-fenced realms of capitalised space—"No trespassers!"—locates trespassing as a rhizomic affront to the vertices of capital's walls, fences and checkpoints. I open up these ideas by looking at literary representations of the life of a Nigerian migrant in 1960s' Leeds, David Oluwale, who was killed by the Leeds City Police, as in Caryl Phillips's long fiction-essay "Northern Lights" (2007). By thinking through David's life in terms of the dangerous designs of trespassing, I explore the ways in which his tragic life and death in the city of Leeds has been productively requisitioned today to tell a distinctly postcolonial story, one which defiantly continues to trespass on corporate, commodified city space today.

CONCEPCIÓN MENGÍBAR
Independent Scholar
cmrico25@gmail.com

Performing the Island in the Caribbean Shakespeares

The relationship between the rural and the urban in the Caribbean is closer to Elizabethan times than to Eurocentric patterns in our contemporary societies. The Caribbean lacks the linearity that European societies have been built upon. Its patterns are based on a fractal fragmentation that is able to adapt and create transformation. In this sense there is scope for Shakespeare's work to be devoured, cannibalized and stripped of the high culture usually associated with the Bard.

The island space in itself represents a totally different concept to the European mirage of Eden and reflects a Caribbean aesthetic which embraces chaos as part of its reality, especially in the city. Due to the geographical proximity of town and country on the islands, there remains the constant possibility of feedback in the flow of people who abandon the rural setting to live in an urban space. Rural folk elements, explored from a political, sociological and cultural standpoint to provide fresh perspectives in the city, become stylized poetically but remain easily recognizable by audiences who share a rural past.

I intend to explore how Shakespeare is appropriated as an empowering tool by Caribbean artists who define the idea of island on their own terms. In this process, Shakespeare's work takes different shapes: as in the streets of carnival in Carriacou with the combative recitation of *Julius Caesar* in the Shakespeare Mas. Shakespeare's work is also transformed through *repentismo cubano* (a competitive exercise of improvisatory street poetry) as well as the powerful visual and musical references which redefine Caliban's world in *Otra Tempestad* by Teatro Buendía. In this regard, Flora Lauten and Raquel Carrió audaciously orchestrate a uniquely New World response at the core of high culture as their Cuban players perform a different version of *The Tempest* in Spanish at The Globe in 1997.

ALICE MICHEL
University of Orleans, France
alice.michel@univ-orleans.fr

Writing the Emergence of Urban Culture in Colonial Melbourne: Mary Fortune's "Down Bourke Street" (1869)

The texts of the anonymous "Waif Wander," now known as Mary Fortune, a highly popular nineteenth-century Australian writer who fell into oblivion after her death, show a deep insight into women's place in the construction of the colonial urban society in Australia. This paper shows that in "Down Bourke Street" (*The Australian Journal*, January 1869), Fortune provides colonial readers with urban ethnographic journalism, written from the street, by a transgressive woman.

"Down Bourke Street" offers a journey in colonial Melbourne on a Saturday night, mapping the city as well as its inhabitants (I). The reader is guided through a precise itinerary by the female narrator, determined to include the reader in a shared experience. Yet the process of mapping gives way to wandering, when "Waif Wander" offers her thoughts on the colonial society of the post-gold rush Melbourne, urbanised and modernised, and on the emergence of the urban colonial culture in Australia that Bourke Street symbolises. As wandering increases, narrating the city takes the form of a performance (II). The narrator is both a performer and a spectator of the performance of the crowd in Bourke Street. References to light and movement saturate the narrative, alongside a metatextual reflection on the limits inherent to the recording and writing of the sounds of the city and its inhabitants. The journey down Bourke Street is also a metaphorical crossing of the boundaries of gender and genre in colonial Australia (III). Bourke Street is a microcosm of the urban colonial society of Victoria, enabling Fortune to highlight the tensions surrounding the construction of the Australian society. Through her transgressive and digressive walk and recording of urban Melbourne, Mary Fortune also inscribes herself in the male tradition of the *flâneur* writing the city, doing so with a vignette which oscillates between journalism, autobiography and fiction.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

71

MAITRAYEE MISRA
Guru Ghasidas Viswavidyalaya, India
maitrayeemisra1989@gmail.com

Open Cities, Closed Minds: Immigrants' Experience of Race, Urbanity and 'Nigerpolitan-ism' in Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah*

In this twenty-first century, different forms of globalization have paved the way for easy intercontinental migration and made the middle class educated youth of the previously colonized countries its prominent beneficiary. Moving westward from the place of origin in any Asian or African nation for a better life and a "global" attitude is like the fulfilment of a long-cherished dream. To them, the "West" is the urban, the haven of freedom and liberal cosmopolitanism. But post-immigration experience often disillusions them, and the dislocated youths with their disfigured dreams desperately carry on re-casting their identities in newer moulds for better socio-cultural assimilation. In this context I would like to use Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Americanah* as a case study, where Ifemelu— the fictional protagonist and female immigrant in America from Lagos, reinvents herself after learning new lessons on racial identity during her expatriation of thirteen years in several American cities, and finds out the unexplored—"another version" of herself before she finally returns to Nigeria. Ifemelu's lover Obinze is another example of middle class educated African youth, who shares Ifemelu's dream of settling in "somewhere" more urban and cosmopolitan in the "West", moves to London and ultimately returns to Lagos completely disillusioned. In this paper I investigate how their experiences as immigrants to the urban spaces of the "West" burden them with new loads of knowledge of racial identity and discrimination. I will show how Ifemelu's blog becomes a virtual expression of her newly acquired sense of urbanity in America: the open, spacious American cities inhabited by people so closed and confined! It is also pertinent to point out how Saskia Sassen's observation, "[T]he duality, national versus global, suggests two mutually exclusive spaces—where one begins the other ends" ([The Global City, 2005, 32), becomes useful in examining Ifemelu's perception of urbanity in America: how she responds to her acquired notions of "global" urbanity and its limitations in the American cities she stays in, alongside her "national" sense of urbanity that she had experienced in Lagos. I will also focus on the idea of "Nigerpolitan-ism" within the national space of Nigeria as something very significant to gauge the transformation of the returnees' minds and their acquired sense of urbanity during migration.

RADHIKA MOHANRAM
Indian Institute of Technology Gandhinagar, India
MohanramR1@cardiff.ac.uk

Incongruent Urbanities: Reading Calcutta as a Postcolonial Text

The memory works of scholars like Walter Benjamin and Pierre Nora follow in the footsteps of ancient Greek and Roman notions of memory. Benjamin posits the city to be a repository of people's memories and its buildings to be mnemonic symbols that reveal hidden and forgotten pasts and Pierre Nora posits that there are four different types or sites of memory, symbolic, functional, monumental and topographic. The Greek notion of *ars memoria* closely links place and memory in that items to be remembered were located in specific places of memory, thus ensuring their easy recuperation by conceptually touring these places. This link is exploited by the nation, one of modernity's main mnemonic community, by its construction of public memory through memorial

images and spaces. These memorials subscribe either to national myths, ideals or political needs commemorating wars, heroes etc. Indeed, nations mediate their citizen's recuperation of memory by valorizing certain moments of its history and occluding others so that the citizens become amnesiacs.

This paper uses as its backdrop the 1947 partition when India and Pakistan gained independence from Britain and were subjected to partition simultaneously. Considered to be the largest transaction of populations in history, the Indian partition produced over 12-15 million refugees. This catastrophic event is, however, marked by forgetting rather than memory primarily due to a lack of memorials of any form in both countries. Lacking a material form, the memory-work of the community either fails or must employ alternative forms of remembering. Using a phenomenological frame in this paper, I will examine a site of memory of the Indian partition, the city of Chandigarh, the post-partition city built especially for replacing the past with the future. How does the architecture of Chandigarh negotiate forgetting to produce memory of the Indian partition?

VICENTE ENRIQUE MONTES NOGALES
Universidad de Oviedo, Spain
montesvicente@uniovi.es

De la aldea a la ciudad:
la transformación de las funciones de los narradores oesteafricanos

Las funciones sociales de los *griots*, los bardos de África occidental, han conocido grandes transformaciones debido al éxodo rural y a la emigración internacional. Si antiguamente eran los educadores de los príncipes en las cortes reales, embajadores, mediadores en caso de conflicto, maestros de ceremonias y, principalmente, guardianes de la tradición, en la actualidad muchos de ellos sobreviven gracias a la música o a su participación en eventos en los que consiguen una recompensa económica a cambio de los elogios que dirigen a los asistentes. La admiración que despertaban sus conocimientos ha sido frecuentemente sustituida por el enojo que provoca su insistente solicitud de bienes materiales, lo que ha originado que no pocos sean juzgados con severidad en el siglo XXI. Las entrevistas realizadas a *griots* permitirán ilustrar nuestro análisis.

SALLY ANN MURRAY
Stellenbosch University, South Africa
samurray@sun.ac.za

Wayward Narrations: Re-storying Durban's Citiness via Jahangeer's Urban "City Walks" and the Life Stories Chapbook *Along the Way*

Discourses of postcolonial citiness encourage the imagining of city space as constituted not merely as strategic spectacle of pragmatic capitalism and urban planning (Simbao 2015) but also as elusive "narrative object" brought into being through (re)storying. This presentation essays "alternative ways of imagining the city through unconventional literary forms and focalizations" (Leow 2015: 724): a city walk, and a collection of life stories called *Along the Way*. The first text is a wayward archi-textual intervention, a "City Walk" created (and video-archived) by the Mauritian artist-architect-activist Doung Anwar Jahangeer in the postcolonial South African city of Durban. Jahangeer's project

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

73

reflexively performs the possibilities and limits of De Certeau's "pedestrian enunciations", hoping to unsettle the received, founding narratives of a city's established emplacement. His walk enables creative connections of the in-between—between historically divided suburban peripheries and "inner city"—via an interplay of psychogeographic derive, autoethnographic narrative, and memoried oral history. The second text is the chapbook *Along the Way*, a participatory assemblage of "mundane" lived stories gleaned from conversational encounters with diverse Durban residents during a particular city walk performing links between margins and centres, from township to market interchange, to harbour. *Along the Way,* like Jahangeer's City Walk, evokes citiness as a resource of resourceful "diver*city"* and multipli*city*. Both of these urban texts were created under the auspices of a 2008 South African instalment of the international Cascoland public art initiative, and my presentation explores nodes of imaginative alignment among geographical locales, oral histories, printed visual-verbal textualities and methods of literary-critical analysis, finding valuable "ellipses, drifts and leaks of meaning" (De Certeau 1984: 107) in more official versions of urban identity.

SHALINI NADASWARAN
University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
shalininadaswaran@um.edu.my

Writing Sefi Atta's Female Characters in the City of Lagos

Lagos can be said to be the heart of Nigeria, an urban, metropolitan city. This African metropolis is often used by contemporary Nigerian writers like Helon Habila, Chris Abani and Teju Cole among others to explore layers of significance within diverse spaces of representation as means of imagining and understanding African/Nigerian urban spaces. As a myriad of contradictions, Lagos is on one hand depicted through an intense, exciting, somatic experience that stimulates the senses with various sights, sounds and smells but at the same time reveals itself as a space of impoverishment, fragmentation, isolation and despair. This dystopia negotiates the vulgar opulence of the rich and powerful vis-a-vis the struggles of the poor. Lagos can also be read as the cornerstone for understanding the unmitigated crises of the Nigerian nation-state. In line with her contemporaries, Sefi Atta trenchantly uses Lagos as the canvas for her works, depicting the postcolonial Nigerian experience, more specifically Nigerian women's experience within this peripheral, hegemonic space. This paper will discuss how Lagos impacts and forms the identity of Atta's women, depicting the urban space as a dangerous terrain for women who attempt to navigate and carve a space of living for themselves in its paradoxical cityness. The rapid change as well as diversity of Lagos, interwoven with a range of female narratives, instigate further examination of the location of women within the disjuncture of chaotic African urbanism.

RITA NNODIM
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, USA
R.Nnodim@mcla.edu

Streetchildren, Pavement Dwellers, and Bombay's Urban Poor – Literary Imaginings of (Dis)Placements, (Dis)Embodiments, and the "Right to Stay Pu"'

Drawing on approaches in emotional geography, urban (cultural) studies, and feminist philosophy, my interdisciplinary paper is an inquiry into literary imaginations of the lives

of Bombay's urban poor. Fictionial texts such as Rohinton Mistry's *A Fine Balance*, Meher Pestonji's *Sadak Chhaap*, and Anosh Irani's *The Song of Kahunsha* reflect literary imaginaries of the lives of Bombay's pavement dwellers, streetchildren, and urban squatters marked by multiple "expulsions" (Sassen 2014) that undermine the embodied and emplaced nature of human existence. A close reading of these novels suggests literary interventions in which the urban poor encounter and confront urban "discursive and performative regimes of dispossession" (Butler and Athanasiou, 2013), thus (re)negotiating experiences of displacement and disembodiment in order to reclaim the "right to stay put" (to borrow from Weinstein's book on Dharavi, 2014). In Irani's novel, Chamdi counterposes to the dystopian world of streetchildren and pavement dwellers the utopian imagination of Kahunsha, a city of no sadness; in Pestonji's novel, Rahul and other streetchildren cling to a sense of human beingness under conditions of permanent impermanence; and in Rohinton Mistry's work, a memory quilt is woven that seeks to reassert the entangled, emplaced, and embodied lives of marginalized people in the city.

JOPI NYMAN
University of Eastern Finland, Finland
jopi.nyman@uef.fi

Valletta-London All Night Long:
Mediterranean Mobilities in Vincent Vella's *Slippery Steps*

In Vincent Vella's recent English-language novel *Slippery Steps: A Maltese Odyssey* (2011), the representation of urban space combines the levels of the national and the transnational by emphasizing mobility between Valletta, Malta and London, UK. Rather than seeing the main characters' mobility as a mere effect of globalization, the paper argues for a need to read the two cities in tandem to understand their intertwinement and meaning in the making of transcultural subjectivity and Maltese identity in history. Through the narratives of the protagonist, Paul, growing up motherless in Valletta and Reno's story of labour and diasporic life in London from the late 1950s to the 2000s, the novel shows how metropolitan spaces are linked European spaces sometimes considered "peripheral." Rather than seeing the Mediterranean as limiting and bordering Europe, as a site of exclusion and othering, it emerges as a site that gives articulation to entangled histories and cultural encounters [M. Dobie, 2014) and as "complex geopolitical, cultural, and historical space . . . concentrat[ing] our attention on the cultural cross-overs, contaminations, creolizations and uneven historical memories" (I. Chambers, 2008). What Vella's novel shows is a historical process of transculturation that presences itself in Malta and extends to other spaces. Examining Vella's literary representation of mobility and encounters between Malta and Britain, the paper seeks to contextualize Maltese literature in English in histories of Mediterranean mobility and transculturation. Rather than reading it as a mere example of a postcolonial nation seeking to define their own identity or grappling with national historical traumas, as suggested in traditional postcolonial theory in the 1980s, I argue that this text locates its subject matter in migration and transnational mobility. In other words, Vella's *Slippery Steps* emphasizes how Maltese identity is one characterized by constant mobility and movement between Malta, the UK, and other Mediterranean spaces. In this process the novel reflects on the role of the postcolonial city and the diverse communities and identities that are performed and negotiated in both Valletta and London.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

75

CLAUDIA NOVOSIVSCHEI
Babes-Bolyai University, Romania
claudia.novosivschei@gmail.com

Diorama versus Spatial History of a City Performed by its Elements

Pointing out to the flaws of diorama history, which reduces space to stage, legitimizing the dominant discourse and making historical individuals actors "[fulfil] a higher destiny," Paul Carter proposed in *The Road to Botany Bay* (1987) a spatial history: a "history that discovers and explores the lacuna left by imperial history", and which "begins and ends in language." However, fourteen years later, Peter Carey in a piece of mock travel writing, *30 Days in Sydney*, returns to the stage and actors metaphor, if only to twist it: he highlights the setting to the detriment of the actors and it is the stage that runs the show and imposes on the actors. According to the Australian architect Peter Meyers, Sydney's Second City, i.e. the one developed by the settlers, "is probably the largest urban system ever built from, and upon, an existing fabric. Certainly, no historical city in the Americas is so directly constructed from the urban structure of the preceding civilization, nor made with a more culpable silence." In the case of Sydney, the soil, the plants and the animals proved an insurmountable challenge to its British settlers; their degrees of difference and disobedience foiled any attempts to erase what stood before. Peter Carey notes that "the city is elemental," in the sense that earth, water, air and fire cannot be circumvented in Sydney. Referring to and distancing from Carter's approach, I intend to focus on the stories told by Carey's characters, and to question, given the setting, the role of individuals and communities. How does social history reflect the holes in language and the guilty silences that bind the Second City to the First?

BRITTA OLINDER
Gothenburg University, Sweden
britta.olinder@eng.gu.se

The Urban Drama of Québec City in Conflict. Janice Kulyk Keefer's "Waste Zone".

The point of departure in Janice Kulyk Keefer's "The Waste Zone", her version of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land,* is the summit in Québec City of the 34 Heads of State of the Americas taking place in April of 2001. The city with its buildings, streets, parks, people and historical associations is the setting, palpably present all the time. The long poem in five sections and provided with copious notes, as in Eliot, is a clear instance of writing back from the former colony to the metropolis, marking its divergence from European culture as well as its distance from the US, especially in the person of President Bush. As a satirical work it not only points out the failings of democracy, the gulf between rich and poor, the unfair treatment of First Nations people and immigrants, the rights as well as the responsibilities of citizens, but also holds up modern commercialism with all its tricks and sharp practices to ridicule. Even so, the playfulness and humour along with the resilience and perseverance of the ordinary person in the street show the wish for real improvements and reconciliation. The use of today's different media in references to newspapers, radio hosts and the like, add to the embodiment of a variety of urban encounters. In its picture of Québec as the scene of popular demonstrations and police brutality as well as of a high-level political playground, Keefer writes the city as a post/colonial text.

JUAN IGNACIO OLIVA
University of La Laguna, Spain
jioliva@ull.es

Post-Pastoral Ecotones: (Lea-)Living the Canadian Material City

Whiston Spirn, problematizing Horace's code of *Dulce et Utile*, poses the following: "[t]radition is opposed to innovation, function to meaning, ecology to art. Is nature sacred *or* profane? *Can* tradition and innovation be reconciled? Should landscape be shaped as *art* or as *sustaining habitat*? ("Polemical Dialogues" 244). These questions are being asked nowadays by the theorists of neo-pastoralism, a term applied not only to obvious contemporary bucolic environments but also to modern urban scenarios in order to obtain a more sustainable spatial growth and social conviviality in human habitats. This paper therefore aims at revising contemporary Canadian poetry by migrant authors as a contest to the so-called classic dichotomy rural vs. urban setting. Using material ecocriticism as my theoretical frame (i.e. Tuana's "viscous porosity", Iovino's "material reading of places,") and new readings of pastoralism (Gifford's "[Anti]Post-Pastoralism"), a series of formulations will be put into question: a) Is there really such a distinction as the aforementioned, in the poeticizing of living/lived places, or is it rather that confessional texts subjectivize the milieu and makes it either "idyllic" or "atrocious"? b) Are the tensions between space and difference in global post-urban cities affecting the management of nostalgic spatial losses? c) Is the complex "polychromatic" gaze of multicultural authors an ecotone that distorts their vision of the environment they inhabit? and d) Can these elaborated answers find a "third space" (Bhabha), or an interstice, where the post-pastoral dialogue –deprived of its (e)utopianism— is effected? To this purpose, a comparative study of the sarcastic images of London, Ontario & Toronto in the voice of Spanish self-exiled academic and writer Jesús López Pacheco (*Ecologues & Urbanes*) will be undertaken, together with the metamorphic look at Canadian landscapes by South Asian authors like Rienzi Crusz ("Summertime at Waterloo Park"), Himani Bannerji ("Apart-hate"), Lakshmi Gill (Fredericton Highway Bridge"), or Stephen Gill ("Green Snow"), among other examples.

PILAR OSORIO
University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA of America
piliosorio1@gmail.com

Consciousness Awareness in *Abeng* by Michelle Cliff

This paper explores the construction of post-colonial consciousness from both a female and an adolescent perspective in *Abeng* (1984) by Michelle Cliff (1946-2016). This study defines consciousness according to the Third Frankfurt School's studies on recognition. My work analyses how the main character, Clare, deals with contempt, how she acknowledges her own role in perpetuating it, and how her desire to know and comprehend is the result of the empathy she develops for "the despised". In this way, the awareness of the legacy of the colonial system and her participation in it is the result of an emotional observation plus the acquisition of knowledge of her family's history. This history embodies the tension between the urban/cosmopolitan aspiration that denies colonialism against a regional need of preserving memory and standing up against postcolonial dynamics. Analyzing this tension will show that there is no such thing as "local" in Jamaica but that local is related to colonized: the colonized were as foreign as the colonizers. The materialization of this awareness and this tension in the narrative will

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

77

be analyzed using three categories: 1) issues related to the body (race and gender, where race will embody the idea of local) and the social expectations they generate, 2) issues related to language and knowledge (local and imposed language/s), and 3) the official history and the untold story (the local and the imposed).

LIZABETH PARAVISINI-GEBERT
Vassar College, USA of America
lizabeth liparavisini@vassar.edu

Cartagena de Indias:
The Post Colonial City, Rising Sea Levels and the Urban Poor

The walled city of Cartagena (Colombia), once a major center of colonial political and economic activity, has been a UNESCO World Heritage site since 1984. A city made up of islands, like Manga, Manzanillo and Barú, it is one of Latin America's most vulnerable urban spaces —environmentally endangered due to its unique exposure to rising sea levels, coastal erosion, higher water temperatures, the intensification of storms, and other impacts of climate change. The paper looks at concerns about environmental justice among Cartagena's poorest populations through their representation in various "narratives" focused on the city's vulnerable communities, among them those of Gabriel García Márquez (*Love in the Time of Cholera*, *Of Love and Other Demons* and *Chronicle of a Death Foretold*) and artist Ruby Rumié, both of whom explore poor Cartagena communities as spaces for "exiled" populations whose social separation had its roots in slavery and a history of racial and colonial oppression. They are, not surprisingly, the most vulnerable to climate change, their lives and livelihood the most threatened by rising sea levels.

The paper focuses primarily on Ruby Rumié's complex installations on the seaside neighbourhood of Getsemaní, which offer fascinating visual "narratives" of how vulnerable communities respond to the threat of climate change. Rumié (1958) has focused her work for more than a decade on this historical neighbourhood, chronicling its vulnerability to urban development and rising sea levels, and marking its spaces as endangered. In *Getsemaní: Subject-Object, 1998-2012*, Rumié focuses on the neighbourhood inhabitants as people who will eventually be "displaced and dispersed, thus breaching their traditions, customs, everyday routines, social solidarity and collective memory." Her various projects invite the viewer to reflect on the community's intangible wealth as endangered and join those of other artists from Cartagena addressing the city's neighbourhoods as vanishing communities vulnerable to climate change and the on-going economic fixation with tourism development.

EMMA PARKER
University of Leeds, United Kingdom
enep@leeds.ac.uk

Doris Lessing's London: Postcolonial Life-Writing in the City

This paper explores how recent developments in the field of postcolonial life-writing offer new readings of Doris Lessing's autobiographies and memoirs. Born in Persia and raised in Rhodesia, Lessing lived for most of her adult life in London. It is perhaps unsurprising then that her autobiographical work depicts a life lived across borders. Drawing on a range of memoirs and autobiographies such as *Walking in the Shade, Under My Skin,*

Going Home and *African Laughter,* I trace the complex connections in her life-writing between the cityscape of London and Southern Rhodesia. Lessing's autobiographies reject a binary model of empire based on an imperial centre and colonial peripheries, instead describing a complex web of connections encompassing the metropolitan and the rural; although by day she would explore the grey streets of London, at night she would dream of the Rhodesian veld, experiencing "long sad dreams of frontiers and exile and lost landscapes".

Through this relationship between the Rhodesian landscape and post-war London, I highlight how Lessing responded to a much broader twentieth-century history of decolonisation, positioning the personal history of her subject *I* in relation to a wider history of colonialism and the British Empire. Recent publications by Gillian Whitlock (2015) and Bart Moore-Gilbert (2009) have attempted to define postcolonial life-writing, offering readers and critics new understandings of "transnational and transcultural passages of life narrative". Combining these recent critical advances with my own readings, I highlight how, in the spaces and journeys between London and Rhodesia, Lessing experimented with new ways to write a life which spanned the colonial and postcolonial eras.

EVA PELAYO SAÑUDO
University of Oviedo, Spain
evaps88@hotmail.com

**Performing Italian American (In)famous Ties/ Sites:
Mean Streets, "Intimate Wars" and Surrogate Families
in Louisa Ermelino's Spring Street Trilogy**

Italian American male urban performances figure prominently in writing and art: the urban is embodied as male, as a gangster world, while women are (falsely) excluded from the materiality and imaginary of street activity, in accordance with the varied power relations underlying general social/spatial organization and the production of knowledge (McDowell 1993, Rose 1993, Sibley 1995). The "mean streets," by now a trope of Italian American community and artistic production, are all but devoid of rules. They are governed by strict, ritualized gendered codes for public appearance, the *bella figura* (Barone 2006, Gardaphe 2006) which is at the centre of Louisa Ermelino's representation as viewed from the vantage point of the microcosm of a street. Thus, the rituals of mother-son bonding or stereotypical views of *mammismo* (D'Amelia 2005) are shattered in *The Black Madonna* (2001), when exaggerations on the use of magic and religion are mediated by critical awareness on power relations; rather than passive adoption and reproduction of religious tradition, we learn of an explicit desire to control that is repeatedly affirmed to compensate women's lack of power. *Joey Dee Gets Wise* (2004) carries this depiction of the troubled/troubling family to the surrogate one of gangs (Díaz 2004, Gardaphe 2006, Laurino 2001, Vigil 1993), breaking with the expected male behavior as dictated by the gangster model and offering an (urban) extension of the concept of "intimate wars" or "everyday terrorism" (Massaro 2015, Pain 2014) which happen at these extreme sites of homosocial bonding (Connell 2005, Flood 2008). Finally, in its context of violence, the approach to *The Sisters Mallone: Una Storia di Famiglia* (2013) also constitutes an emblematic examination of the more general theorization by feminist geographers on fear and danger as ruling, or even excluding, women's movements in public spaces (Valentine 1989, Pain 1991, 1993, 2001). Again, Ermelino makes especially patent the performance of identity as the sisters are repeatedly

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

79

shown to be aware that their security and freedom as girls/women in a distinctly male-ruled urban (con)text is dependant on the appropriate enactment of certain codes.

SENATH WALTER PERERA
University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
senath_p@yahoo.com

The Urban and the Counter-Urban in Post-War Sri Lanka:
Rajith Savanadasa's *Ruins*

Contrasting the urban with the counter-urban was a regular phenomenon among Sri Lankan English writers after the socio-political revolution of 1956 —which had effectively downgraded English— had lost its volatility and it was deemed "safe" to re-employ the coloniser's language. These writers critiqued the town and privileged the village perhaps conscious that they (and by implication the city) had been guilty of neo-colonial exploitation. In the process, as Thiru Kandiah suggests, they projected "…meaninglessness, fragmentation, unrealisation, alienation, *angst, anomie* and so on" as characteristics of urban living. This was contrasted with the "pristine" village which provided solace and serenity to the urbanites who wished to escape therein. Though this issue was in abeyance when insurrections, pogroms against the Tamil community, expatriation, and the ethnic war provided writers with more topical themes in later years, it re-emerged after the cessation of the war with urbanites grappling with a still insecure peace, the availability of "new" money, Western mores that threatened traditional values, drugs, and the desire for instant gratification. This paper explores the contemporary version of the dichotomy as characterized in Rajith Savanadasa's *Ruins* which has largely avoided the facile generalizations adopted by previous writers in handling the same theme. Although the rural has much to offer the urban, it is not a panacea for urban angst and has its limitations as well. A combination of Sri Lanka's true (as opposed to a militant) Buddhist ethos, interactions with the village, the realization that the night club culture is fraught, and a willingness to engage productively with the older generation allows for a degree of repose and hope. Significantly, in this new scheme, the counter urban is furthered by the rural as well as the self-reflexive, "reformed" urban.

IRENE PÉREZ FERNÁNDEZ
University of Oviedo, Spain
perezirene@uniovi.es

Reimagining the Transnational Metropolis:
Towards a New Literary Cartography of that "unfamiliar place" Called London

London as a centre of global relations with its continuous flow of people and capital has been branded a transnational metropolis. Nonetheless, "the metropolis regularly fails to deliver the freedom, personal renewal, and worldly access that, in time-honoured big-city fashion, it is seen to promise" (Ball, 2004: 6). This statement could not be more appropriate for the analysis of Zadie Smith's *The Embassy of Cambodia* (2013) and Maggie Gee's "The Artist" (2006), two literary works which are timely in the light of the Modern Slavery Bill and the current so called "refugee crisis". The Embassy of Cambodia and "The Artist" centre their narrative on London's invisible city dwellers; dispossessed migrant workers relegated to the margins of society, yet physically located at the centre of

the metropolis and supporting its financial development. Drawing on Doreen Massey's views of space as a set of social relations, as "the realm of multiple trajectories" (2005: 89), I shall study the ways in which Smith's and Gee's literary works bring to the foreground the inherent contradictions of London as a cityscape where global processes and histories collide with local stories of transnational survival. Moreover, it is my contention to stress the paramount importance of literature as a representational space that offers the possibility of reimagining the metropolis, re/inscribing its spatial meanings and, therefore, following Henri Lefebvre's seminal conceptual triad, produce (an alternative) space. Besides, I shall argue that these narratives do not only validate the inhabiting practices of those socially forgotten and silenced at the heart of the metropolis, but ultimately stir consciences and cry out for collective responsibility.

BIBIAN PÉREZ RUIZ
Camilo José Cela University and Autonomous University of Madrid, Spain
pbperez30@gmail.com

The Healing Quality of Nature in Big Cities: An Example in Madrid

Our inner impulse to enhance purely geographical locations with significant dimensions in order to transform them into meaningful places is an undeniable human feature. Humans have always longed to feel attached to the places, people, ideas or objects that surround them, a process known as developing a "sense of place." I share the view that gardens and orchards have worked throughout history as privileged locations to stimulate all sorts of links, social and emotional, to what enfolds us and, at the same time, facilitate a deeper exploration of very profound wishes and beliefs, probably due to their philosophical and utopian dimensions.
Cities are spaces so complex that they can at once promote productive encounters, exchange of ideas and successful cultures of cohabitation while, simultaneously, leading to loneliness, anonymity and alienation for some of its inhabitants. In our globalised world, the widespread phenomenon of (ecological) urban gardens has acquired a similar role. Urban gardens originated in Manhattan in the 1970s as a response to the dark side of major cities, in an attempt to bring nature at the forefront and to involve citizens in the solution of the problems of their neighbourhoods while at the same time revamping denigrated urban spaces. This paper formulates the hypothesis that the contact with nature urban gardens provides has healing qualities since such gardens can be used as effective tools for the reconstruction of wounded identities, particularly for those who are on the verge of exclusion, as I will show in an example from the city of Madrid.

FERNANDO PÉREZ GARCÍA
University of Oviedo, Spain
UO189253@uniovi.es

Flickering Bodies: Psychogeography and Paracosmic Vancouver
in Wayde Compton's *The Outer Harbour*

In this paper I will elaborate on Black Vancouver's Afroperipheralism and urban experience through a critical analysis of Wayde Compton's *The Outer Harbour,* a short story collection in which characters and the urban space merge to produce a narrative exploration of identity, place, gentrification and racism through blueprints, grant applications and straight prose. The key event in the collection is the geological

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

81

development of a volcanic island in Vancouver's harbour and how different individuals and collectives claim this space throughout a twenty-four-year span, the island successively becoming the site for a radical First Nations activist community, a luxury apartment tower and finally a prison for illegal immigrants. This claiming for a racialized space in the city stems from the invisibilization and uprootedness of the black community after the demolition of Hogan's Alley, the only black neighbourhood in the area, during the urban renewal of the 1970s. The demand for local Canadian, Vancouverite roots, departing from the Pan-African discourses and writing against elision by the national narrative, is reflected in the dis/embodied urban encounters, the use of holograms and the superimposing of racialised imaginary spaces and alternative realities in the actual space of the city through live action role playing-games. Finally, the confusion of holograms with immigrants reveals the failure of the discourse of the nation-state to recognize racialised bodies in the post-colonial world. Drawing from urban theories of space such as David Harvey's 9-way matrix, Edward Soja's "thirdspace", Doreen Massey's progressive sense of place and Odile Hoffman's vision of spatial capital, I will analyse the dis/location of the racialised body in the city and the performance of/through urban space that disrupts the dominant metanarrative reflected in Compton's work. For these purposes I will develop the concept of Afroperipheralism for community demanding a place of their own in the national narrative.

BEATRIZ PÉREZ ZAPATA
University of Zaragoza, Spain
varela.zapata@usc.es

Freedom in the City? Walking and the Reclaiming of Space and Identity in Zadie Smith's *NW*

The suburban places inhabited by the characters of Zadie Smith's novels can be seen as embodiments of class and race that influence their identities and often create a conflictual relationship with their origins. In *NW* (2012) class, race, and geography merge to portray an image of London that is claustrophobically (sub)urban. The lives of the four main characters are defined and connected by the state of Caldwell in which they grow up. The novel establishes connections between the lower classes, suburban (un)belonging, and shame and depicts the suburbs as a nowhere place. Keisha Blake, a thirdgeneration diasporic character of Jamaican origin, is of particular interest for this paper, as she transforms herself from Keisha to Natalie in order to fit into her university circle, mostly white and middle-class, and avoids any connection to her past as represented by Caldwell. This paper will focus on the chapter "Crossing," in which Natalie Blake walks back to and through the neighbourhood where she grew up, an action which confronts her physically and affectively with her lower-class past. This experience will be analysed not only through postcolonial theories of space and dwelling, but also in light of the philosophies of walking: Natalie walks in order to seek the freedom of not being anyone and escape the performative roles she has taken up. As she wanders through Caldwell, she first rids herself of any identity to then create a dialogue between her two subjectivities, which provides her with some momentary freedom. However, this stroll also shows the constraints of inequality and the physical and psychological walls it builds. This study will show the contradictions between the fixed coordinates which the novel provides and the fluidity of movement and identity that some characters seek, and it will ultimately expose the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, freedom, and the entanglement of neoliberalism and postcolonialism in contemporary London.

MAGDALENA PFALZGRAF
Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany
magdalena.pfalzgraf@gmx.de

The Failed City as a Space of Transnational Movement and Transcultural Encounters:
NoViolet Bulawayo's *We Need New Names*

The crisis-driven out-migration of Zimbabwean citizens in the post-2000 period has become one of the most prominent topics in contemporary Zimbabwean writing. Among the texts which have attracted particular attention is NoViolet Bulawayo's novel *We Need New Names*, which tells the story of a young girl, Darling, and her friends, growing up in a shanty town in an unnamed Zimbabwean city resembling Bulawayo who dream of leaving their crisis-ridden country. The novel's powerful portrayal of transcontinental migration and Darling's coming of age in the US has been the subject of a range of scholarly engagements with the novel. This paper turns the gaze to the various mobilities taking place before Darling leaves for the US and focuses on the depiction of the Zimbabwean city of her childhood as a site of transnational movement and global encounters. Of particular interest are the ways in which mass emigration shapes the city and, in particular, the experience of urban childhood. This paper will also examine the portrayal of the city as a recipient of transnational movements: while for Darling and her friends the city is primarily a place from which they seek escape, it is also a space of incomers and a platform for the participation in different aspects of globalization (cultural, economic, medial) which turn it into a site of global encounters. In addition, this paper will scrutinise the ways in which intra-urban mobilities, as performed by Darling and her friends, relate to wider frameworks and dynamics of transnational movement and transcultural exchange, paying particular attention to the ways in which the children cross inner-city borders and negotiate the global in the local space.

MARÍA SOFÍA PIMENTEL BISCAIA
University of Vigo, Spain
msbiscaia@ua.pt

Posthuman Urbanities and Counter-Urbanities:
Jane Alexander's Postcolonial Affects

In his essay "In Africa and Beyond: Reflections on Jane Alexander's Mutant Universe", Pep Subirós —curator of *Jane Alexander: On Being Human* and editor of *Urban Diversity: Space, Culture and Inclusive Pluralism in Cities Worldwide* as well as of *Jane Alexander: Surveys (From the Cape of Good Hope)*— describes how his fascination with the South African artist was not primarily with the ostensible monstrosity of the figures she portrays but with the naturalization of violence in her works. Famously, Alexander's sculptural installations expose the animal hybrid as the expression of political subjectivities/representations: the apartheid regime in her native land and the ensuing dehumanizing processes. Combining non-human animal forms with human animal ones, Alexander's artworks display a formal and technical excellence which delivers a compelling emotional impact, along with a warning about historical consequences. Though acting as embodiments of the traumatized society which characterizes post-apartheid South Africa in their aggressive and violent qualities, the artworks also express ambivalence by conveying qualities such as peacefulness and propriety.

      Alexander's work has received considerable attention from contemporary scholars who have resorted to G. Deleuze, J. Derrida, H. Bhabha, and M. Douglas to inform their

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

83

readings. In this presentation, I suggest to investigate Alexander's work with a focus on the urban and the counter-urban. Beyond South Africa and even beyond Africa, Alexander's posthumans (Haraway and Braidotti) are positioned in urban settings where postcolonial effects are displayed: from endemic violence to community displacement, urban conflict, poverty, migration issues, social control and security measures. However, as ambivalence pervades figures and tableaux, a counter-urban discourse of affects can also be detected. Postcolonial urbanities running from the ecologically endangered marshes to the cathedral, to fenced compounds, to the court, and to the city street are transformed by Alexander into spaces where Being is negotiated and Becoming gains ground. Alexander's posthuman creates affects (Deleuze) which emerge in the fluid space of urban and counter-urban forces, where, beyond violence, affirmativeness can also be conceived. However, the question must be posed: is affirmativeness a sound and consistent response in Alexander's work? And what does it say about contemporary postcolonial urbanities?

RALUCA-MARIANA PINZARI
University of Oviedo, Spain
pinzariraluca@uniovi.es

"Identity Jenga" at the Roundhouse Poetry Slam Finals. The Use of Irony and Witty Humour in Urban Performances

"We must all play this game of identity jenga" is a statement brought forward on the stage of the Roundhouse Main Space, London, by Vanessa Kisuule, a young slam poet from Uganda residing in the UK. She was the winner of this competition in 2014 and became an active voice for black women through performed poetry.

Roundhouse is a well-known urban performance space for young people to grow creatively as individuals whatever the gender, social class, colour, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion or political convictions. Through poetry slams (Gregory 2009, Somers-Willett 2009, Johnson 2010, Rivera 2013) young people have been encouraged to view their life experiences as an inspiration for their creative rhyming work. Most often, the language adopted abounds in the mastertrope of irony (Hutcheon 1995) to expose brutal logic and give easy access to puzzling and distressing truths.

The purpose of this paper is to address the following questions: What can these poetry slams for young people show us about the new constructions of black diasporic femininity and masculinity through the use of irony? How does gender performativity intertwine with the use of intentional irony and witty humour in these kinds of urban performances? What can these poets tell us about the role of poetry slams in contemporary society?

In my attempt to answer these, I will explore the visual performances of two slam representatives for the young generation of the African diaspora living in London: Vanessa Kisuule (winner in 2014) and Caleb Oluwafemi (winner in 2015).

PAOLA PRIETO LÓPEZ
University of Oviedo, Spain
prietolopezp@gmail.com

Writing from the Fringe: Black British Experience in Urban Drama

Since the 1980s, but more prominently during the first decade of the twenty-first century, the work of Black women playwrights in the UK, mainly second-generation migrants, has increased in great numbers, achieving not only greater visibility on the stage, but also gaining wider recognition and ultimately entering mainstream venues (Goddard 2015; Griffin 2003). Drawing on Griffin's work on Black and Asian playwrights and their theatricalization of experiences of Black migrant identities in England (Griffin 2004), I will analyse the urban plays *Gone Too Far* and *Off the Endz* by Bola Agbaje and Mojisola Adebayo's *Desert Boy* in order to explore the ways in which they narrate and perform the urban, reflecting on the experiences of oppression and racism that inform the lives of Black migrants in multiracial Britain. By doing so, I will explore their contribution to the assertion of an Afro-British identity that subverts stereotypical and patriarchal views imposed on the migrant, while at the same time creating spaces of encounter in the city in which audiences are asked to rethink assumptions about race and gender, thus mapping Black experience in the urban tradition of drama.

In this paper I argue that the¡ plays transgress not only physical boundaries, as they are appropriating a typically white-male dominated urban space such as the theatre, but also emotional and metaphorical frontiers by means of using techniques that defy traditional theatrical conventions. Through the blurring of genres and using alternative modes of temporality that connect Black experiences of racism and heterosexism in contemporary London with Afro-diasporic heritages, these works contest concepts such as black identity, gender, and race, constructing them otherwise in their plays. These productions can be conceived as a vindication of the need for a new national identity that incorporates their voices and bodies, while reclaiming a space for black female playwrights on the British urban stage.

ANCA-RALUCA RADU
Universität Göttingen, Germany
Anca-Raluca.Radu@phil.uni-goettingen.de

Dionne Brand's *Love Enough* (2014):
Rewriting Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* (1925)

The aim of this paper is to situate Dionne Brand's latest novel *Love Enough* (*LE*, 2014) intertextually both with its predecessor in Brand's work, *What We All Long For* (2005), and with the genre of urban fiction and its modernist tradition. Firstly, the paper suggests that in *LE* the Canadian novelist takes up the post-ethnic project more consistently than in her previous Toronto-based novel. With some notable exceptions, in which the characters' focus on their ethnical origins proves detrimental, ethnicity does not take central stage in the characters' urban lives. Instead, other aspects of the individual, such as gender and sexuality, a concern for the environment, movement and human encounters in the urban space, anticonsumerist attitudes, or the expression of subjectivity through art gain more substance in Brand's construction of subjectivity. Secondly, structurally as well as narratologically, *LE* displays an intertextual link to Virginia Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway* that can be seen as going beyond the merely coincidental. In terms of its genre, *LE* re-modernises urban fiction by its adaptation of the modernist urban novel to

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

85

the conditions of the contemporary globalised city, subscribing to a "politics of drifting" and opening "an alternative to the boundedness of home and the nation-state" (Marlene Goldmann). Set in twenty-first-century Toronto, about a century after Woolf's London-based fiction, Brand's novel hails from a complex geography modulated by several factors among which globalization, migration and multicultural urbanity are some of the most conspicuous. Brand re-conceptualizes the modernist urban novel by highlighting two prominent features of urban life in particular, which remain subdued, although they are addressed to some extent, in Woolf's novel: identity politics (ethnicity, gender and sexuality) and urban lifestyle (immigration and movement, environmentalism, consumerism and technology).

LUCA RAIMONDI
Independent Scholar
luca.raimondi@kcl.ac.uk

"The Charm of Madras Towns": R.K. Narayan's Urban Imaginings

This paper seeks to assert the originality of R.K. Narayan's imaginary town of Malgudi as a site of contestation of India's urban space. The hypothesis that supports this study is that, compared with the ideological discourses on rural and urban India elaborated during British colonial rule and after Independence, the construction of Malgudi over fourteen novels (1935-1990) represents a narrative gesture towards the formalization of an alternative urban model. Narayan's strategy of "literary decolonization" and creative resistance against the dominant representations of space in the Indian context is based on the interpolation of the imaginary town within a larger fictional universe that is explicitly fashioned on the referential world. Distinct from the rural imaginings and the urban settlements designed in the colonial and post-colonial era, as well as the villages and cities that punctuate the world of the novels, Malgudi becomes the literary equivalent – and an ideal model – of the "Madras towns" described by Narayan in a talk on All India Radio in 1945, where the anthropic element is mitigated by the natural environment according to a principle of balanced coexistence between urban and rural. Following a geocritical investigation of Malgudi that will assert its alter-urban identity, I will finally point to a number of its non-literary incarnations. Pictured on national television (Doordarshan's *Malgudi Days* series), in films (*Guide* by Dev Anand), and recreated in the form of a real-life residential development (Jeyram Malgudi in Kalpakkam), Malgudi's porous topography has been largely overlooked and its interpretation has been biased by dominant discourses on space pivoted around the polarity between city and village. Against these readings, my paper recognizes Narayan's imaginary town of Malgudi as both a paradigm and an invitation to rethink India's urban space.

ALEJANDRO RAMÍREZ MÉNDEZ
University of California, Los Angeles, USA of America
aramirezm@ucla.edu

(Trans)cending Urbanity: Trans-Urban Narratives, Decolonial Landscapes and the Recognition of Cultural Identity in Alejandro Morales' *The Rag Doll Plagues*

Global cities are no longer considered solid pieces protecting the cultural and national identity of the countries, but rather, as Kimberly DeFazio suggests, "transnational space[s] of financial flows." These post-industrial landscapes, these contemporary metropolises

are nourished by the transnational interchanges that promote the mixture and transformation of social and cultural practices. In an age of post-national excitement, cities communicate with other cities in the realm of informational exchanges; organized around "networks," the inter-urban dialogue encourages the formation of "soft urban spaces" (Castells) where geographical differences and human experiences collide. But in the midst of this global fervour, losing the ground of identity can lead us to overlook the colonial powers that still rule and police the order of the social space. Therefore, this paper explores the concept of trans-urban narratives as a metanarrative phenomenon of urban cultural interconnection and relation between mayor global centres in the Western Hemisphere. Can the sociopolitical conditions captured in art and literature help to decolonize and exorcize the ghosts of hegemonic power embedded in the urban landscape of twin cities (El Paso, Texas/ Ciudad Juárez, Chihuaha), or cities with common ethnic population (Mexican population in Los Angeles and Mexico City)? Can trans-urban cooperation heal the wounds of colonial occupation? By analyzing the work of Mexican American writer Alejandro Morales' *The Rag Doll Plagues*, this presentation will study the influence of trans-urban narratives as a means to understand the migratory flow of cultural products between cities (Los Angeles/ Mexico City), and the intrinsic mechanism of spatial decolonization.

CRISTINA RIAÑO ALONSO
University of Oviedo, Spain
cristinarianoalonso@gmail.com

Emotions and Embodied Urban Spaces in Leila Aboulela's Short Fiction

This paper seeks to examine the relation between emotions and urban space in the fiction of the Sudanese-Scottish writer Leila Aboulela. Focus is placed on the short stories "Souvenirs," "The Boy from the Kebab Shop," and "The Museum," published in her collection *Coloured Lights* (2001). Drawing from Sara Ahmed's theories of affect, this paper will first of all analyse how the dislocation of the characters is used to tackle issues of the mystification of both the East and the West, alienation, and fear. Secondly, it will interrogate the mutual construction and consumption of the East and the West by concentrating on the social and spatial contrasts offered in the representation of the Sudanese city of Khartoum and the Scottish city of Aberdeen. Thirdly, it will revise how individual and collective bodies are constructed through the work of emotions in the framework of the contact between individuals from an Eastern background in this particular Scottish setting. It will be argued that in these short stories fear draws its force from past histories and stereotypes in order to classify and group some bodies together. Thus, fear works through the Orientalist discourse to shape present spaces and social relations, establishing a distance and making the very borders between the imagined Eastern Other and the imagined Western Self. It will be contended that in Aboulela's writing the "souvenirs" act specifically to subvert distorted images of the East in the West. They are confronted with clichéd imaginings of Europe in order to destabilise this alienating system of representation. Against an overall negative and pessimistic view on the possibility of actual dialogue between cultures, these stories offer alternatives to established power relations and cultural hierarchies, working towards a more egalitarian share of the global city.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

87

ANDREA RODRÍGUEZ ÁLVAREZ
Universidad de Oviedo, Spain
andrearodriguez@uniovi.es

Discussing Affective Spaces and Identity:
Refugee and Local Perspectives on Glasgow in Karen Campbell's *This Is Where I Am*

This paper will explore the role of affectivity in the negotiation of urban spaces, identity and hope, as well as how it can become a tool to explore the contradictions and tensions of post-devolution multicultural Scotland in Karen Campbell's novel *This Is Where I Am* (2013). Firstly, I will contextualize the novel within the debate on collective identity characteristic of the previous years to the Scottish independence referendum when *This Is Where I Am* was written. Focusing on current research on emotional geographies, I will examine the role of emotions in the making and unmaking of borders with others and how emotional geographies can become a tool for questioning identity in urban postcolonial contexts. In this vein, I will analyse the portrayal of the negotiation of urban spaces in Glasgow as depicted in the novel, which focuses on the perspectives of a Somali refugee and a Glaswegian woman who enter a mentorship program managed by the Scottish Refugee Council. As part of the program, they will meet once a month at a cultural landmark of the city. I will argue that the novel offers an emotional exploration of these geographies of the city from both perspectives, allowing the reader to acknowledge the role of emotions in shaping urban spaces and to explore the tensions of multicultural Glasgow and the contradictions generated by the city's past as Second City of the British Empire.

CARLA RODRÍGUEZ GONZÁLEZ
University of Oviedo, Spain
rodriguezcarla@uniovi.es

Dysfunctional Urban Rhythms in Luke Sutherland's *Venus as a Boy*

This paper will analyse Luke Sutherland's fiction in the light of affect and urban theory, in order to explore the dysfunctional spaces of social interaction portrayed in his novella *Venus as a Boy*. It focuses on the representation of the British metropolis as a nuclear node in the flux of global forms of violence exerted on diasporic individuals, which are juxtaposed with ethnic tensions in the Orkney Islands. In order to do so, special attention is paid to Saskia Sassen's analysis of the socialisation of ethnic minorities in global cities and the development of "urban capabilities" as strategies to challenge diverse forms of segregation in the urban space. Emotional spaces of security are studied in relation with various forms of sexual violence imposed on urban bodies, as well as with the public spaces they occupy in Sutherland's post-human geographies of fear. The perception and performance of the novella's spaces will be studied in relation with the bodies that inhabit them and, in this vein, it will be necessary to make use of Henri Lefebvre's *Rhythmanalysis* to compare the imprint of different rhythms—"secret," "public," "dominating-dominated"—on the social relations of the areas portrayed in the text.

M. PILAR ROYO-GRASA
University of Zaragoza, Spain
m.prg@unizar.es

Reading the Symbolic Routes of Gail Jones's *A Guide to Berlin* (2015)

The homophones "root" and "route" are two terms which have been generally taken as opposites. While "roots" tend to be associated with origins and some static meaning, the term "route" is said to connote mobility. Like the idea of travelling, the concept of route tends to point to "new directions and reconceptualizations of space" (Wilson et. al., 2010: 2). In her latest published novel, *A Guide to Berlin* (2015), Gail Jones locates an "uprooted" Australian character called Cass in the city of Berlin, where she tries to come to terms with the sense of displacement that has accompanied her since her childhood. Her fondness for Nabokov leads her to visit the Russian writer's house at Nestorstrasse 22. There she meets an Italian character who invites her to join a group of international Nabokovian readers living in Berlin. Every week the six members of this group gather in an apartment where each of them tells his or her "speak-memory," i.e., some personal story about themselves which they have not dared tell anyone before. Just as Nabokov's work functions for the six characters as a symbolic route towards their lost ones and others, each of the "speak-memories" that these characters share with the other joiners of the group opens up a network of trans-historical and transpersonal connections and affinities among them. My paper seeks to track down the meaning and function of some of the symbols that appear in these speak-memories, and to analyse how the characters' personal stories inscribe specific locations of Berlin with new meanings. I will argue that Gail Jones's text offers a guide to an incompletely charted Berlin where both characters and readers are invited to move across temporal and national routes. The novel thus turns Berlin into a transnational space of encounter and solidarity.

ELIZABETH RUSSELL
Rovira I Virgili University, Spain
liz.russell@urv.cat

Street Art Projects: Ways of Seeing / Ways of Reading

This paper will look at examples of street art in various cities as part of Leonie Sandercock's vision of the "Mongrel City" as described in her work *Cosmopolis II* (2003). It will first define the concept of "mongrel" and then establish how street art can change not only empty or run-down spaces which are depressing to live in, work in or walk through but also how it can evoke powerful emotions of belonging and community-living together within a framework of freedom of speech and political protest. Through Sandercock's idea of the city's "Songlines", street art can be understood as an art that brings together citizens, government authorities, planning and city-building professionals. In this sense, it can be considered part of a utopian project as it attempts to deal with conflict situations which might arise in urban landscapes, whilst at the same time giving empowerment to citizens who do not know how to "talk to each other" or are simply not interested in each other's stories of grief or exclusion.
Most of the street art projects discussed in this paper have acquired a privileged space online which makes them available globally to all internet users. I apologise, therefore, for the fact that this inevitably limits my study and its conclusions.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

89

ZUZANNA IWONA ZAREBSKA SANCHES
University of Lisbon, Portugal
zuzanneus@sapo.pt

Women in Cities: the Case of Ireland and Portugal

This paper aims at an analysis of urban spaces in cultural and literary narratives from Portugal and Ireland, two countries considered economically and politically peripheral in comparison with continental Europe or mainland United Kingdom. Looking at fictional and non-fictional discourses, I will try to delineate the map of urban trends, points of divergence and similarities in the face of the growing global conflicts, the power of centres, anxieties and local intricate structures. The paper will resort to works by Portuguese and Irish voices, such as the writer and sociologist Maria Filomena Mónica, her infamous autobiography "*ID*" (*Bilhete de Identidade*) and *My Europe* (*Europa Minha*); Mary Dorcey, Deirdre Madden and Mary Morrissy and their vision of Baile Atha Cliath in fiction and in press. Above all I will analyse the role and the place of women in cultural and literary industries and will try to de-codify the norms that keep the gender differences and imbalances intact, delineating culture-, home- and city-scapes.

SUZANNE SCAFE
London South Bank University, United Kingdom
scafes@lsbu.ac.uk

Gender Violence and the Embodied Urban Encounter:
The Short Fiction of Marlon James and Kei Miller

Fiction, Middleton and Woods argue, "has a special relationship with the city" because it offers a "structure of feeling adequate to our experience of abstract space" (278). It is constantly in motion, and known only by the affective attachments –or repulsions– with which its spaces are filled. While the city cannot be said to be *only* a representation, it is at least as much felt as it is known. The textual spaces constructed by the shape and structure of fiction can be used to mirror the geographical spaces of the city, reflecting and participating in a transformative process of "worlds touching each other… where all kinds of things [are] brought into relation with one another … through a continuous and largely involuntary process of encounter (Thrift, 2008: 139). This presentation focuses on the short fiction of Caribbean authors Marlon James and Kei Miller, and examines the effects of what Angela Harris defines as "gender violence" on their fictional maps of the city (2011: 13). In the process of revealing the causes and effects of violence against women and men, these stories expose the structures of "hegemonic masculinity" (23) that underpin both the dominant institutions to which the stories refer and the structure of the city itself. This hegemonic identity is a privileged style of masculinity, or the most proper way of being a man; and in the Caribbean context, as Keith Nurse notes, the white male ideal is a metaphor for a hegemonic masculinity that, in different cultural contexts can take on "a darker hue" (2004: 6). I argue that the short fiction of these writers both uses popular, dichotomised conceptions of the city of Kingston and troubles this dichotomy. Worlds touch, transgressing seemingly demarcated borders between the haves and have nots, the lit and the unlit. And the violent consequences of those encounters both intervene into and confirm popular narratives of cultural, class and gender difference.

VERONIKA SCHUCHTER
Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom
veronika.schuchter@ntu.ac.uk

Aritha van Herk's Imaginary City of Calgary

Calgary, a city that is well known as a cowboy town and popular business hub for the oil industry, is often upstaged by more widely known metropoles within and beyond Canada when it comes to featuring as both backdrop and performer in literary works. By challenging this perception and by addressing the conference's theme of the global city as post/colonial text and performance as an urban practice, this paper wishes to explore Calgary as a site for literary experimentation by bringing together Aritha van Herk's long poem "Calgary, this Growing Graveyard" (1990), her collaborative project with photographer George Webber *In This Place: Calgary 2004-2011* (2011) and her latest prose poetry collection *Stampede and the Westness of West* (2016). I will focus on van Herk's vigorous juxtaposition of the urban and the rural –the graveyard as an extension of the rural, the recurring image of the fence reminiscent of settlers in the prairies, and the poetic intervention on the annual rodeo event Stampede– painting a place that in many ways performs and recreates rural realms within the urban, a city whose name is derived from the Old Norse for "cold garden". Drawing on feminist geography (Massey 1994, 2005; McDowell 2003), this paper wants to show how van Herk's poetic mediations explore the Western Canadian city between urban spectacle and rural tranquillity, posing vital questions about peripheries within the centre, while also offering alternative ways of inscribing women's history on male dominated colonial discourses of the city.

ASTRID SCHWEGLER CASTAÑER
University of Baleric Islands, Spain
astrid.schwegler@uib.es

"We've Boundless Plains to Share": Multiethnic Parallel Spaces and the Multicultural Utopia and in Shaun Tan's Surrealist Representations of the City

Australia's policy of multiculturalism has been the recipient of many criticisms due to its utopian ideal of cross-cultural interaction and coexistence while retaining a white Anglo-Celtic national identity. The conflicting quality of those ideologies has been intensified by the changing geopolitical climate, the increased influx of refugees and the "war against terror" that have exacerbated the fear of the other, particularly of the outwardly different. It could be argued that instead of an inclusive society shaped according to the ideals of multiculturalism, Australia is composed of "multiethnic places" (Vince Marotta, 2007: 41), whereby spaces and cities are shared but the ideals of cross-cultural interaction and acceptance have not been achieved. This generates the existence of what Kathleen Blair calls "parallel societies where cultural groups merely co-exist alongside each other with little need for interaction" (Blair, 2015: 435). At the same time, while "global interculturalism" is valued through experiences of travel and the exercise of one's intercultural skills to learn and to come into contact with distant groups, "local interculturalism," that is the interaction with groups living in one's community, is not put into practice (Will Kymlicka, 2003: 159). Shaun Tan's picture books *The Lost Thing* (2000) and *The Arrival* (2006) use surrealist representations of the city to explore the relationship between the other, urban space and interculturalism. Both works illustrate the utopian impulses derived from the incompatibility of the multicultural ideal with a multi-ethnic reality mentioned above. In the case of *The Lost Thing* the dystopian world

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

91

created by Tan highlights the existence of parallel societies in which the mainstream community and the individuals that are otherised are separated, while *The Arrival* presents a utopian society through the eyes of the migrant other, defamiliarising the city in order to dislocate readers and encourage their exercising of local intercultural skills.

CAITLIN STOBIE
University of Leeds, United Kingdom
ences@leeds.ac.uk

Posthumanist Performance and Situational Veganism in Zoë Wicomb's *October*

South African-Scottish writer Zoë Wicomb's latest novel, *October* (2014), is her most globally-minded text to date: set in the United Kingdom, East Asia and South Africa, it alternates between a range of characters and diverse settings including the cities of Glasgow and Macau, and a small town called Kliprand. At surface level, the opposition of such contrasting spaces could suggest that the novel is mostly concerned with a simplistic rural-urban binary. Considering recurring preoccupations with animal ethics in the text, however, it is evident that the nature-culture dichotomy is more nuanced: it is a device that foregrounds the complexities of principled eating (and living) as a modern woman. Much of the narrative involves conversations between two female characters who initially appear to be foils: one is a childless and well-travelled "modern woman" whose partner has recently left her in order to start a family, while the other is a rural wife and mother who works part-time at the local butchery. Yet as the plot develops, both of these women demonstrate what feminist philosopher Karen Barad calls a "posthumanist performative" account of "naturalcultural practices". That is, they experiment with the application of animal ethics in order to philosophically decentre and deconstruct the human subject. Simultaneously, however, the novel shows how ethical eating is troubled by classist complicity or miscommunication, as the two women reconceptualise veganism to suit their material conditions and lived realities. In this paper, I argue that their ethical performances destabilise the perceived divide between nature and culture, and allow readers to interrogate the material and discursive production of intersecting prejudices in postcolonial contexts. I further analyse how, through repeated ruminations on interspecies encounters and transcultural exchange, Wicomb limns a situational vegan praxis – but also warns that cosmopolitan creatures must be open to conflict, futility and imperfection.

CHERYL STOBIE
University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
StobieC@ukzn.ac.za

Charms, Blessings and Compromises in *Sweet Medicine*: Black Women's Bodies and Decolonisation in Southern Africa

In Panashe Chigumadzi's debut novel, *Sweet Medicine* (2015), the young black protagonist overcomes the drawbacks associated with her "Strong Rural Background" by acquiring a mission-school education and a tertiary degree in Economics, leading to a job in Harare, Zimbabwe. However, as the country is in the throes of its 2008 economic crisis, Tsitsi's education and employment fail to provide for her economic needs. This failure prompts her to compromise her Catholic values by using her charms to seduce an older, married man. When she fears his attention has strayed elsewhere, she turns to a

traditional healer for charms to overcome her rival and ensure the devotion of her "blesser" by means of pregnancy. *Sweet Medicine* dramatises issues including opportunities offered in an urban context, conflicts between traditional and modern modes of behaviour, and somatic and emotional options open to women in a patriarchal, corrupt social system. The novel is bookended by scenes illustrating Tsitsi's appointment with the healer and its aftermath, highlighting their significance. This presentation draws upon theories of postcolonial feminism, including Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi's analysis of the power of black women as authors and characters in *Juju Fission* (2007). I explore possible readings of the novel as cautionary tale, an exercise in cynicism, or a call for equality and social justice. While the setting of *Sweet Medicine* is Zimbabwe, Chigumadzi lives in South Africa and has published her novel in this country. I therefore deem it appropriate to draw parallels between the textual depictions of competing belief systems, urbanisation and gendered power differentials with current social phenomena in South Africa, such as tertiary students' demands for a free, quality, decolonised education, as expressed in the hashtag #FeesMustFall, and the demand for gender equality by feminist activists associated with the movement.

JULIA SZOŁTYSEK
University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland
julia.szoltysek@us.edu.pl

Orhan Pamuk's Delightful Obsessions: City, Novel, Museum

The city has now long functioned as a literary protagonist, alternating or encompassing the conflicting roles resultant from sets of binary oppositions imposed on it, i.e. that of nature (variously understood as, among others, threatening wilderness, benign respite, or the last bastion of innocence) and culture (embracing all accompanying civilizational aspects and fluctuating values, as well as dangers and risks). Thus, the city's strong standing in literary tradition and its fiction-producing potential are only to be expected. Orhan Pamuk's *oeuvre* subscribes to this urban trend in contemporary, (post-)postmodern literature, and Istanbul, the postimperial city, serves as the author's source of inspiration, constituting the setting for many of his works and one of their leading characters. As I wish to argue in the present paper, though, Pamuk goes a step further in his reliance on the city as a technical device applied in the construction of novels. Through focusing on *The Museum of Innocence*, Pamuk's 2008 novel, I intend to show how Istanbul, an amorphous and fluid spatial subjectivity, in the role granted it by the author extends the convention according to which a city may indeed be responsible for producing fiction, and performs a double feat. *The Museum of Innocence*, having emerged from the very fabric of the city, produces the material space of the actual Museum, a geographically-specific and physical object. The core of my argument here lies in how one spatial order produces another but only through the mediation of the literary order. Working from this premise I endeavour to explore the reality of Istanbul functioning in the novel as a hothouse for obsessions and compulsive behaviours, in an attempt to see to what degree the city's conflicted history and geographical divide along with its consequences result in the internal split of that space, absorbed also by its inhabitants and their frequently contradictory motivations and loyalties. Drawing on Pamuk's re/discovery of Istanbul as a repository of countless stories told through odd, incomplete, dismembered objects, retained largely by the city's spurned and denigrated archivists, I make an attempt, following the author himself, to "vindicate" the lonely collectors resuscitating the city's mangle of objects, historical through their very insignificance and commonplace. The present proposal aims to probe the shifting

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

93

grounds of the (post-)postmodern condition in an effort to dismantle the intertwining threads of Pamuk's narrative and its physical extension, in order to show how the ultimate love story, the minute record of an individual's everyday life in a postimperial metropolis, and the testimony of compulsion come together in the joint "Museum of Innocence Project," signalling a "Third Space" in which the personal and the seemingly insignificant acquire legitimization and autonomy.

DEEPIKA TANDON
Delhi University, India
deetandon@gmail.com

The Fractured City: Genocide in a National Capital, Delhi 1984

I propose to explore the relation between performance and urban history, using documentary history to prise open the relationship. I will look at Delhi, the national Capital of India, which witnessed the brutal massacre of 4,000 Sikhs, predominantly male, in a supposedly spontaneous expression of public grief following the Prime Minister's assassination by her Sikh bodyguards on 31st October, 1984. The numbers of those raped, maimed or missing remain unknown. Between the 1st and the 4th of November approximately 50,000 Sikhs were displaced within the city, their homes, shops, factories, and temples looted and burnt. The worst affected areas were slums in Outer Delhi. The Sikhs here were poor and working class who, together with other urban poor, were "esettled" there when slums in Central Delhi were "cleaned" in 1975. In 1984 another kind of "cleansing" was performed, exposing the deeply fractured character of the city, and its continuous migrations. I will read photographs, reportage and films to explore how the memory of violence has been documented and performed, reproduced and reused. For instance, the recurring spectacle of Sikh men being burnt alive using kerosene, documented by photographers and journalists, was at the time used to raise questions about the systematically orchestrated nature of the violence. This image still haunts the cinescape of films on 1984, but has the performance of the memory changed, with the re-envisioning of the urban? In 1984, despite the absence of social media, information circulated speedily enough for citizens' resistance and relief activities to be organised. Can the current re-appropriations performed through social media similarly heal fractures, or perform a more effective erasure? And will *Widows Colony*, where homeless Sikh widows "rehabilitated" by the government still await justice after 32 years, continue to image Delhi's continuous disenfranchisements and the shaping hand of the state?

VERONICA THOMPSON
Athabasca University, Canada
thompson@athabascau.ca

"Jihadists in the Woods":
Ausma Zehanat Khan's *The Language of Secrets* and the Toronto 18

Ausma Zehanat Khan's The Language of Secrets is inspired by the Toronto 18, an "ill prepared group of terrorists whose plan to bomb Parliament Hill was thwarted by the RCMP and CSIS in 2006" (Sue Carter, MetroNews 20 Jan. 2016). Khan's novel begins with the death of Mohsin Dar, an undercover RCMP officer who has infiltrated a terrorist group and is subsequently shot at their training camp at Algonquin Park. Detective Esa

Khattak, head of Toronto's Community Policing Section and a Muslim, is assigned to investigate Dar's murder without alerting the Toronto terrorist cell, which is under investigation by INSET (Integrated National Security Enforcement Team). The Language of Secrets is Khan's second police procedural in which Esa Khattak is assigned to a case framed by current global political events. Khattak's investigation of this crime leads him to an inner-city mosque and a cast of suspects that cause him to contemplate 'the decadence of imperial power, and . . . the societies whose internal corruption had permitted the imperial expansion. Who even now suffered from postcolonial identity crises' (Khan, 2006: 111). This paper will examine postcolonial urban identities as constructed by Khan through her representations of Muslims, Islam, Islamophobia and the war against terror. In addition, the paper will argue that Khan's novel disturbs definitions of the "terrorist" and posits alternate constructions of Muslims in the face of mainstream media representations.

KATAYOUN ZAREI TOOSSI   **REZA ETEMADI NIA**
Vali Asr University of Rafsanjan, Iran   *University of Birjand, Iran*
ktoossi@birjand.ac.ir

Muhsin Hamid's *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* and the Limits of Empathy in Transcultural Urban Encounters

Despite the pluralistic nature of human societies and urban life today, coexistence has, perhaps, never been so difficult. The transforming face of European cities as a result of the recent refugee crisis, the question of national identity and the ever-present fear of terrorist attacks have made the limits of empathy a viable question in today's transcultural relationships. The present paper examines Muhsin Hamid's affective engagement with the discourse of empathy in his second novel *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2008). The novel makes an attempt to show the difficulty of initiating a dialogue between the west and the world it deems as the enemy of its cherished values in the immediate aftermath of post 9/11 New York and Lahore. In order to show the ways in which Hamid problematizes the dominant way of understanding and cultivating empathy, the paper draws on Carolyn Pedwell's argument in *Affective Relations: The Transnational Politics of Empathy* (2014) posed against the view that unquestioningly regards empathy as an emotional solution to complex, structural, political and economic problems in transnational and transcultural encounters. According to Pedwell, empathy can be a tool of cultural mastery and at the service of the current late, liberal capitalist intentions, and thus, a site of conflict, aggression and negotiation. The novel's atmosphere of misunderstanding, lack of trust and a sense of foreboding for a disastrous ending suggests that, in our troubled times, a different mode of affective connections that moves beyond emotional identification gained by a translational mode of knowledge formation about the other, might untie our Gordian knot of urban coexistence.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

95

HAYLEY TOTH
University of Leeds, United Kingdom
enhgt@leeds.ac.uk

Urban Embodiment in Xiaolu Guo's A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers

This paper will consider, through a composite lens of contemporary postcolonial theory, spatial theory and phenomenology, the significance of urban practices, especially walking, in the formulation of (new) (feminine) subjectivities. Taking as a starting point the difficulty of articulating one's identity and agency in a new, previously unknown and potentially alien city, I will argue for a consideration of phenomenological spatial practices (such as walking) as acts of resistance or counter-discursivity, in opposition to not only cartographical discourses but, equally, and by extension, notions of urban propriety, which I will suggest are grounded implicitly in (neo)colonial ideologies of homogeneity, assimilation, and the erasure of difference and otherness. The processes by which postcolonial peoples find voice and home in what are posited as "host" cities are unsurprising difficult, but they are also complex and intertwined. Migration in general, postcolonial authors tell us, demands a change of consciousness and, often, a change of voice. Xiaolu Guo makes the reader acutely aware of this concession in her novel *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*, as she uses a first-person narrative voice and a faux-dictionary form to tell her Chinese protagonist, Z's, story. In the place of the stable subjectivity and corporeality which a permanent home, knowledge of urban propriety, and linguistic fluency and dexterity might provide, and in opposition to the laws laid down to her by her language tutor, Mrs Margaret, her English lover, and the dictionary she carries with her, Z, I will argue, draws her own highly feminine cartography as she negotiates the city in unwritten, anarchic, and sometimes dangerous ways. It is here that we find a counter-discourse to the city itself: the narrator practices space in a way which adheres to neither the norms nor expectations of the urban, and which defies, specifically, cartographical convention. Through what effectively translates as a rejection of formalised urban rituals of embodiment, then, Z paradoxically recovers a sense of feminine agency whilst simultaneously undoing the hegemonies of stability and immutability on which the urban rests.

PETRA TOURNAY-THEODOTOU
European University Cyprus, Cyprus
P.Tournay@euc.ac.cy

Writing the City: Notes from Nicosia, the Last Divided Capital of the World

Within the lively Cypriot literary scene of works written in English, Nora Nadjarian and Aydin Mehmet Ali constitute two of the most audible voices. In this paper, I will examine selected stories from Nadjarian's collection of short stories entitled *Ledra Street* (2006) and two pieces by Mehmet Ali, a short story titled "Women of Nicosia" (2004) and a graphic piece called "The Women of Nicossienses" (2013). Nora Nadjarian's collection takes its title from the main commercial street in the historical center of the capital of Nicosia, Ledra Street, which was severed in two following the island's partition in 1974. This choice of title serves as a strong spatial symbol of partition and programmatically reflects the collection's dominant theme of division that pervades the majority of the stories. In her stories Nadjarian, who as an Armenian-Cypriot writing in English embodies a split identity herself, addresses the various face(t)s of division, in which the private reflects the public and vice versa. If many of the stories deal with the legacy of

colonialism, which led to the island's division, Nadjarian equally takes into account the changed demographics and geopolitical shifts currently occurring in a globalised world as they affect the small island nation. Some of her stories offer an intervention into Cypriot memory politics while others provide a perspective on the current state of this historically and presently multicultural nation. Similarly, Turkish-Cypriot writer Aydin Mehmet Ali's pieces offer a reflection on the changed and fluid demographics of Nicosia in recent years, paying special attention to the influx of large numbers of migrant workers, the majority of which are women from Sri Lanka and the Philippines who work as domestic helpers in Cypriot households. More specifically, in my paper I wish to explore how these women writers, who both occupy a hybrid position, write the city as a locus of encounters in the *contact zone* —to speak with Marie Louise Pratt— or as a historical and contemporary "Grenzlandschaft" (Saskia Sassen, Sueddeutsche Zeitung, 5 June 2016), as a liminal space, in which the paths of the mighty and the powerless cross and intersect.

ASHA VARADHARAJAN
Queen's University, Canada
varadhar@queensu.ca

"Gimme Shelter": New Perspectives on Displacement and Habitation

Gundula Eldowy's exhibition of photographs entitled "Home is a Distant Country/Land" traces the character and culture of East Germany in order to expose a society and economy that appear to have ground to a halt. One of the photographs features a blond child in a nightdress with the wings of an angel while the poster for the exhibition displays Kunst and Kultur as rubble bringing Walter Benjamin's/Paul Klee's Angel Of History immediately to mind. Eldowy made me want to rethink the connotations of displacement and refuge because so many of her figures are embodiments of loneliness, disgrace, and function without spirit. She captures the rhythms of urban life that pulse unheard and unrecorded and far from victorious even as she depicts denizens rather than outsiders. Refugees, of course, preoccupy both hostile and hospitable discourse these days, but I want to look at vignettes of displacement that delineate historical transitions in the notion of habitation and appear either anomalous or unusual in relation to the construction of the figure of the refugee or to the characterization of refuge in contemporary discourse. To this end, I look at Minette Walters' novel *The Cellar*, Samuel Selvon's "Obeah in the Grove" (both set in London), Shaunak Sen's film *Cities of Sleep* (Delhi), and Eldowy's photographs (Leipzig and Berlin). Walters and Selvon rethink habitation from the perspective of vengeance and wicked glee, while Sen's film brings the discussion of displacement sharply down to earth in its meditation on the affect and effect of sleeplessness on homeless bodies. All of these artists, writers, and auteurs make it impossible to think simply in terms of victims and abjection, creating instead subjects who are repositories of dignity, menace, spirit rather than mind, and who inhabit bodies in rhythms of contemplation, sleep, ecstasy, and industry.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

97

JESÚS VARELA ZAPATA
University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain
varela.zapata@usc.es

Escaping the Garrison:
The Constraints of Small Urban Settlements in Canadian Writing

Northrop Frye has referred to the geographical circumstances which have conditioned the building of Canada, and are subsequently found in the literary imagination of the country: the need to rely on public works to build means of communication that help overcome great distances and isolation as well as the hostile conditions of Nature. Frye talks about the process that culminated in the foundation of the earliest inhabited centres, which offered safety and social interaction but also imposed on the individual compliance with strict rules and longstanding confinement. Margaret Laurence's *A Jest of God* provides a portrait of the archetypal individual stranded in a small urban environment. The protagonist is presented as a young woman who is afraid to venture out of the narrow boundaries of her apartment, and for that matter, of her closely-knit society. Furthermore, far from enjoying the quietude and the comforts of family life, she is driven by this suffocating environment to a level of anxiety bordering on madness. Therefore, the narrative serves to expose the structures that have trapped this woman's body and soul. It is no wonder her dreams and day-dreams take her elsewhere, mainly to wild and exotic landscapes which are very often connected with images of loons, the birds that have longstanding symbolic connections with the vast Canadian landscapes. In this way, we realize that the oppressive milieu, which could be otherwise interpreted in broad generic terms as that of any other small community in the world, is pervaded by all the physical features and social constraints of a provincial prairie town.

SABRINA VETTER
Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany
sabrinavetter@hotmail.de

Journeys of Unbelonging:
Community and City Life in Aboriginal Australian Road Movies

The road movie as a film genre offers many different approaches to storytelling. It follows the overall themes of movement and travelling, but its narrative structure is not bound to a specific tone. Genre films can be comedies, dramas, thrillers, action, horror or hybrids; they can feature stories about travelling from one place to another as well as exploring places and people along the road. While the central motif of the genre is geographical shift, it most often explores the search for home – and inextricably linked: the search for identity. This talk will focus on two films focused on Indigenous Australian stories and experiences of journeying from community to city life: *Beneath Clouds* (2002) by Ivan Sen and Warwick Thornton's *Samson and Delilah* (2009). Sen's work focuses on the coming-of-age of Aboriginal Australian characters in a framework of seeking love, romance, sexuality and, eventually, the self, on contested land in contested spaces. Thornton focuses on the supposed differences between outback and city as experienced by Aboriginal characters in his film. Both works depict how leaving home and searching for a possible new one goes hand in hand with the search for an identity – an Australian and Aboriginal one. While Australia with its vast landscapes, rural areas and pastoral pasts serves as a unique but also challenging background for the road movie film genre, both films depict journeys from life in Australia's Indigenous communities to the urban

spaces in cities. Therefore, the filmmakers' works are marked by depicting a stark contrast between rural community life and urban city-dwelling, meanwhile focusing on the journey in-between as well as on hopes and promises about the possibilities urban life supposedly has to offer. This paper will look at how these two Australian road movies depict the struggle of their young protagonists crisscrossing Australian landscapes of unbelonging in a search for what it means to be Aboriginal AND Australian.

MARTINA VITACKOVA
University of Pretoria, South Africa
m.vitackova@gmail.com

Love Hppens in Cape Town. Cape Town as the Urban Landscape of Contemporary African Romantic Fiction

Ankara Press, the new African romantic fiction publishing house, launched in December 2014, attempts to challenge stereotypes and offer an alternative to classic popular romantic fiction. Under the motto "a new kind of romance" the imprint strives to picture romantic relationships of contemporary African women "in a healthier and more grounded way." Their novels are set in diverse African urban locations and their heroines are young African urbanites.

The paper analyses the two Ankara Press novels set in Cape Town, *The Elevator Kiss* by Amina Thula (2014) and Aziza Eden Walker's *The Seeing Place* (2016), and looks specifically at the ways in which the city is depicted in the novels, and what role the city plays in the plot. The analysis concentrates on the gendered use of the city, as well as the experience and understanding of the urban space through the gendered lens. Combining gender studies, urban studies and popular fiction studies the paper shows how women imagine and create space within the urban context. A popular romantic trilogy *The Malan Sisters* (2007-2008) by prominent Afrikaans writer Sophia Kapp, also set in Cape Town, is used for comparison. This brings the ethnicity axis into the analysis and enables us to show how the gendered experience of a concrete city can differ, depending on both ethnicity and class.

ALEX WANJALA
University of Nairobi, Kenia
nelungo@uonbi.ac.ke

Performing the Urban through Kenyan Hip-hop Music: King Kaka, the Swahili Shakespeare

In Kenya, there is a large and growing body of popular art that is disseminated in Sheng, a language that in its current form can neither be categorised as a local or foreign language. The language portrays a reality that brings together dwellers in the Kenyan capital, Nairobi, a reality which is spreading and is being perceived —mostly by youth— in other urban enclaves in Kenya and, due to contemporary media forms, is also reaching rural Kenya; this reality is the fact that younger Kenyans are in the process of creating a new culture and language that merges the global with the local, and are thus subjects of modernity. Arjun Appadurai argues that in the post-electronic age of modernity, there are changes in the role of the imagination due to certain distinctions including that "between the individual and collective senses of the imagination [and that] collective experiences of the mass media, especially for film and video can create sodalities of worship and

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

99

charisma. These sodalities are often international, even post national and they frequently operate beyond the borders of the nation" (2006: 8). My paper focuses on a Kenyan personality who, through his performance of hip-hop music, acts as a cultural ambassador for Sheng speakers, propagating through popular art the lifestyle of urban youth. The paper will interrogate the lyrics of the self-styled Swahili Shakespeare, while examining his songs as contemporary Kenyan poetry.

MICHAEL WESSELS
University of the Western Cape, South Africa
mwessels@uwc.ac.za

Violence in Selected Indian and South African Novels:
Representations of Urban and Rural Spaces of Injustice and Resistance

Several recent novels in English by Indian and South African authors explore the theme of violent political resistance to the entrenched injustices of the hierarchical Indian social system and the institutionalised system of racial domination of South Africa respectively. The novels move between rural and urban settings in ways which illustrate the forms injustice and resistance assume in these different environments. This paper will investigate and compare the ways in which urban and rural spaces are constitutive of modes of injustice and resistance in four of them: Jhumpa Lahiri's *Lowland* (2013), Neel Mukherjee's *Lives of Others* (2015), Mandla Langa's *Texture of Shadows* (2014) and Nkosinathi Sithole's *Hunger Eats a Man* (2015). The first two chart the consequences for their protagonists of their participation in the Naxalite insurrection in the late 1960s. While Langa's *Texture of Shadows* does not question the decision to engage in armed struggle against the apartheid regime, it refuses to evade the bitter consequences of this decision for both individuals and the country more generally. Nkosinathi Sithole's *Hunger Eats a Man* situates the theme of resistance in relation to the extreme poverty and inequality in the contemporary South African countryside as opposed to an urban area, but it does end with the invasion of an urban space by the dispossessed rural poor.

JANET WILSON
University of Northampton, UK
Janet.Wilson@northampton.ac.uk

Embodied encounters:
The city and an alternative world of possibility in Coetzee's *Slow Man* (2007)

This paper examines the marginalizing of the metropolitan space of Adelaide in J. M. Coetzee's novel, *Slow Man* (2007), due to the reduced mobility of the protagonist after losing a leg, and in relation to narrative self-consciousness about the construction of the text. Seeing corporeal enfeeblement as an analogue to the waning of fictional powers, it suggests that the novel's metafictional dimension, the struggle for authorial control between the hero, Paul Rayment, and his alter ego, Elizabeth Costello, masks a search for alternative realms of meaning, given that the corporeal body is no longer fitted to its environment. As the urban milieu becomes more circumscribed and as the fictional world expands, hidden feelings, dependencies and memories emerge. The narrator's struggle towards fictional mobilization, paralleling his physical immobility, and his "othering" by Costello, provides a level of fictional performativity. The paper examines how Coetzee's construction of his protagonist in terms of corporeal suffering introduces a

change of scale in thinking about regional and global connectivity. Although Paul Rayment's physical horizons shrink following the loss of his leg, he finds transnational connectedness through recognising his migrant identity, and through his embodied urban encounters with diasporic others. Conceptual remapping, catalysed by his problematic engagement with nurses and carers and his struggle with the writing process, focuses on the spatiotemporal realities of the metropolis and the nation state. These markers of location are revalued in his reach towards an imaginary alternative world from which new solidarities may emerge.

WOLFGANG ZACH
University of Innsbruck, Austria
Wolfgang.Zach@uibk.ac.at

Aboriginal Australians and the City in Jack Davis's Plays

By transferring the European social model to Australia and armed with the doctrine of *terra nullius,* the colonizers introduced the private property of land and the development of cities, which were alien to the indigenous peoples, destroyed their traditional nomadic livelihood and disrupted their social life and culture. Too poorly armed to successfully fight the invaders, the indigenous people had to give in to the dominance of the colonizers. For the whole period of the massive decimation, extreme deprivation, and enforced segregation of the indigenous population under colonial rule "the city" was the domain of the colonizers, and it was only after the mitigation of the racist legislation in the second half of the 20th century that Aboriginal families moved to the cities in greater numbers, which soon led to the development of a sizable minority of "fringe-dwelling urban blacks". This is the historical and social background to the depiction of the Aboriginal people as well as of their relationship with the colonizers and the city in the work of Jack Davis (1937-2000), a part-Nyoongah from Western Australia, one of the great pioneers of political activism for Aboriginal rights from the 1960s onwards and the most important Aboriginal playwright of the period. In his plays written over ca. 30 years until towards the end of the millenium he dealt with each phase in the colonial history of the indigenous population and especially of the Nyoongahs in Western Australia. He dramatized Australian history since the arrival of the Europeans to the present day from an Aboriginal perspective in his successful first full-length play *Kullark* (1978), the life of Aboriginal people in the 1920s/30s under strict "white" control at "reservations" in *No Sugar* (1985), and their fighting for entrance to the "white" city after World War II in *In Our Town* (1990). His main theme, however, was the life of contemporary "urban blacks": he dealt with their family life in *Kullark* (1978), in his most successful play, *The Dreamers* (1982), as well as in his later play *Barungin* (1988), and he took up Aboriginal urban homelessness in his monodrama *Wahngin Country* (1992). As can be seen from this brief account, the relationship of Aboriginal people to the city is a central theme in Jack Davis's plays. Therefore, this will be the theme of my paper.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

101

LAURA ZANDER
Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany
laura.zander@ymail.com

Postapartheid Johannesburg. Urban Ambiguity in South African Literature

Johannesburg, South Africa's largest and richest city, is not only representative of South Africa's image as Rainbow Nation but is as frequently associated with violence and conflict. As Saskia Sassen contends in *The Global City*, the colonial city concentrated power in a single site, while the global city is a highly organized "network of strategic sites" –economic, technological, and cultural— that transcends national boundaries (Sassen 2001, 348). This certainly holds true for Johannesburg, an urban space associated with multiethnic encounters as much as with unequal wealth. The South African authors Nadine Gordimer and Achmat Dangor have engaged with Johannesburg to depict violence and crime in the aftermath of the apartheid era. Gordimer's *The House Gun* (1998) and *No Time Like the Present* (2012) on the one hand, and Dangor's *Bitter Fruit* (2001) on the other, create an urban space that provides the backdrop for fear as well as trauma, a silent witness to rape and car crashes, to street muggings and breakins. Nevertheless, in these texts Johannesburg also bears the capacity for transgressing boundaries and contesting inequality, a space for coming together in order to build a better future. In their works, both authors depict characters with the ability to find some meaning in their traumatic experiences and the courage to break the cycle of violence. Instead, by reaching out to others, differences are overcome to allow for support of each other in times of crisis. Thus, this paper sets out to analyze the ambiguity of the global city of Johannesburg and its potential of providing a space to live in postapartheid South Africa.

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

103

SPECIAL PANELS

MELISSA KENNEDY
University of Vienna, Austria
Melissa.kennedy@univie.ac.at

HELGA RAMSEY-KURZ
University of Innsbruck, Austria
helga.ramsey-kurz@uibk.ac.at

MICHELA BORZAGA
University of Vienna, Austria
michela.borzaga@univie.ac.at

CAPITAL FICTIONS

The city is the spatial embodiment of capitalism, with its various forms of inequality architecturally encoded in structures of housing, transport, civic spaces, and places of work and leisure, and bodily performed in uneven access to resources, opportunities, and movement. Thus, crowded, aging public transport shares road space with taxis and latest-model prestige cars; gated communities and secured high-rise offices are built, serviced, and guarded by the poor, who live in state-housing enclaves or slums, often right next door; and hierarchies of citizenship and visa statuses render the spatial horizons of the city's inhabitants radically different. A long history of narrative represents these inequalities through interactions and imaginaries, in which the individual's daily materialities and their understanding of their place and function within the metropolis are messily entangled. This panel explores the performance and politics of these embodied inequalities in various forms of narrative and in diverse concepts of urban spaces. Our papers expand the postcolonial concept of the city to include often overlooked centres of capital. At the same time, our use of documentary, biofiction, blogs, and on-line journalism expands the remit of world literature to include other forms of globally-circulating narrative.

Melissa Kennedy begins our panel with a theoretical overview of urban inequality. Her snapshot of 150 years of London East-End fiction, journalism, and documentary maps an unchanging landscape of impoverishment closely bound to the immense wealth pouring in and out of neighbouring Canary Wharf, the world epicentre of empire's trade in commodities and today's virtual trade in finance. Situating narrative in frames of human geography and social demography illuminates the interdependence of cheap labour endlessly supplied by local and international migrants at one end of the socio-economic scale, and high executive salaries to elite transnationals at the other.

The second paper considers the urban in its most precarious state. Michela Borzaga explores the diverse forms of refugee camps, which may be official or "clandestine", "designed" by architects and administered by humanitarian organisations or "self-made" in a state of emergency and crisis. Her comparison of different camp forms across Africa (Dadaab, Sahraouis, Khartoum, Tinzawaten, and Bamako) considers the ambivalent status of these urban formations and existences, the presence of which cannot be separated from a global industry of displacement, aid, and geopolitical diplomatic posturing. Her analysis of interviews and "blog testimonies" considers the ethical dilemmas these realities raise for privileged postcolonial scholarship.

Helga Ramsey-Kurz will look at the opposite end of the wealth spectrum and address the growing competition among modern metropolises for private capital. She will reflect on the excesses of the urban wealthy as a reality stranger than fiction and the difficulty of fictionalizing such a reality. Comparing the novels *The White Tiger*, *Saturday*,

and *The Unknown Terrorist* she will discuss how Aravind Adiga, Ian McEwan, and Richard Flanagan's awareness of the social differences informing the cities they describe (i.e. Bangalore, London and Sydney) finds most dramatic expression where they stage invasions of the protected lives of the very rich.

****

SORCHA GUNNE
National University of Ireland, Galway
sorcha.gunne@nuigalway.ie

AMY RUSHTON
Nottingham Trent University
amy.rushton@ntu.ac.uk

KATE HOULDEN
Anglia Ruskin University
kate.houlden@anglia.ac.uk

SHARAE DECKARD
University College Dublin
sharae.deckard@ucd.ie

GENDERED BODIES AND MIGRANT URBAN ENCOUNTERS IN WORLD-LITERARY SPACE

Recent developments in postcolonial studies have led to a renewed turn towards materialist approaches and a concomitant interest in "world literature". This panel of four papers explores gendered representations of the city in world-literary space. Specifically, it illustrates the extent to which urban contexts reflect the inequities of the global economy and highlights how diverse female characters navigate, and re-make, the city in light of such trends. The first paper by Sorcha Gunne examines how these questions are registered in popular fiction. Marrying the conventional romance plot with consumerism, a primary feature of "chick lit" is its characterisation of modern women's lives in terms of migration to and from cities. The paper focuses on narratives of home and exile in Irish chick lit novels by Sinead Moriarty, Cecelia Ahern and Melissa Hill, exploring how tensions between tradition and modernity are expressed via a dichotomous framing of cosmopolitan urban and pastoral rural environments. The second paper by Kate Houlden contends that the journey taken by female migrant domestic workers makes visible the material realities of transnational labour flows. Héctor Tobar's portrayal in *The Barbarian Nurseries* (2011) of an undocumented, Hispanic live-in maid in Los Angeles dramatises the tense proximity between the beneficiaries and victims of urban growth. In bringing to life the everyday practices of those operating at the city's fringe, however, Tobar demonstrates the extent to which "unexpected openings for creative resistance" can still be found (Marchand and Runyan 2011: xxi). The third paper by Amy Rushton discusses how *Americanah* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and *We Need New Names* by NoViolet Bulawayo register the relationship between gender inequality, insecure migrant status and economic privilege. It frames these narratives in terms of choicelessness and exploitation, stasis rather than mobility. The migrant women of these texts, Rushton claims, prove disruptive, interstitial figures within the supposed "globality" of neoliberalism, thus positioning the experience of the migrant as melancholic rather than celebratory. The final paper by Sharae Deckard examines the urban ecology of waste depicted in Latife Tekin's *Berji Kristin: Tales from the Garbage Hills* (1993) set in Istanbul. With the global tendency towards mega-cities, subaltern groups within nation-states are frequently led to occupy garbage dumps, landfills and otherwise undesirable sites. This paper questions how Tekin's novel represents the gendering of social reproduction in the shanty-neighbourhood and highlights how, unlike upwardly mobile transnational migrants, the circuit of mobility is not an option for internal migrants, who are frequently pushed to the

16th Triennial EACLALS Conference, Oviedo 2017
Performing the Urban. Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms

105

urban margins. Working within a frame of world-literary criticism, all four papers register the contemporary material realities of gendered migration to the city.

*****

URBAN AND RURAL LIMITS IN CRIME AND PRISON NARRATIVES

SUSAN BALLYN
Barcelona University, Spain
susan.ballyn@gmail.com

Colonial to Postcolonial Penitentiary Architectural Migration?

Neo-colonial architecture is a commonplace in many ex-colonies and elsewhere, but how many examples are there of a colonial penal colony being replicated in a postcolonial country? The only one that immediately comes to mind is that of Ushuaia in Argentina which mirrors the Tasmanian Port Arthur penal station in multiple ways. While Port Arthur was built as an isolated stand-alone penal station developed from a timber station in 1833, construction of Ushuaia penitentiary began in 1902 on the eastern side of a tiny settlement of forty houses. Both architectural and documentary evidence reveal that the Argentinian government used the Australian penitential system and architecture in their construction of Ushuaia penal station. The first part of this paper will deal with the reasons and evidence as to why I believe Ushuaia is an architectural and constructional mirror-imaging of Port Arthur. In the second half, however, I would like to deal with the kind of neo-colonial Argentinian mindset which led to its construction in the first place some of which is clearly evidenced in the way the site has been set up for posterity. When Ushuaia penitentiary was built, Argentina had been independent for 94 years and yet the politics that lie behind the establishment of both the goal and the city are clearly marked by colonial attitudes towards the indigenous peoples living in the area. It is impossible to discuss how Ushuaia came about without referring to an obvious colonial mindset within a postcolonial nation. This becomes very clear when one looks at both sites as museums and the museological narratives deployed in the displays. Historically and architecturally so similar, Port Arthur and Ushuaia differ dramatically as museum sites and as document repositories both on a national and local level.

CATALINA RIBAS SEGURA
University College Alberta Giménez (UP Comillas), Spain
cribas@cesag.org

The Urban in Candice Fox's Bennet-Archer Trilogy

In the genre of crime fiction the location of the crimes is of utmost importance. Whether they happen in a city or in a rural area, they occur within a microcosm. As Reardon Lloyd explains in 'Talking to the Dead—the Voice of the Victim in Crime Fiction' (2014), the detective must go to the underworld in order to solve the mystery and restore justice and moral order. The crime novel has become a medium which is particularly suitable as a vehicle for social commentary and analysis. This is also especially interesting from a postcolonial perspective because it has also become a genre adapted by postcolonial writers themselves as a means of bringing to fruition their own literary projects. Although European and North American crime fiction has been widely studied, little attention has

been paid to postcolonial countries, such as Australia. One of the main advantages of fiction is that it is not only capable of transmitting factual information —historical, economic and political —but it also provides a voice for the silenced, it becomes a mouthpiece for the emotions and confusion experienced by disparate individuals and provides the opportunity for a psychological analysis of societies and their members in a way unacceptable or inappropriate to other disciplines and media.

Award-winning Australian author Candice Fox has created different underworlds in her trilogy *Hades* (2014), *Eden* (2015) and *Fall* (2016). In these novels, detectives Frank Bennet and Eden Archer try to find serial killers, while keeping and discovering some secrets about each other. Another main character in this trilogy is Hades, a man who lives and works in a recycling plant, makes huge sculptures out of discarded materials and also disposes of the corpses some of his clients bring him. These three novels, set in contemporary Sydney, explore different urban, suburban and rural spaces and microcosms. This presentation aims to explore the influence of locations and the types of crimes, analyze the supposed Australianness of the characters and wonder whether or not these novels and characters could be set in other big globalized cities.

CORNELIS MARTIN RENES
University of Barcelona, Spain
dutchexposure@gmail.com

Brisbane's Boundary: Nicole Watson's Aboriginal Claim on Urban Space

The godfather of Indigenous-Australian crime fiction, Philip McLaren, stood fairly alone in the genre until in 2011 a female Aboriginal author published a crime novel of comparable quality and success. Just as McLaren's first novel *Sweet Water —Stolen Land* (1993), Nicole Watson's novel, *The Boundary* (2011), won the David Unaipon award for unpublished Indigenous authors in 2009 and generally received a positive reader reception. Watson's professional experience in service of the Indigenous community informs the novel as she has worked for Legal Aid Queensland, the National Native Title Tribunal, the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency and for the *National Indigenous Times*. Watson's novel's title, The Boundary, refers to the curfew that ruled the Aboriginal presence in colonial Brisbane, and the importance the site still has in race relations. In the mid-19th century the Jagera people (Corrowa in the novel) came into South-West Brisbane to collect wood, trade and work, but forcibly expelled at night their 'Right to City' was denied. The old, discrete border between the urban and rural, wealth and poverty, power and its lack, white "civilisation" and black "savagery" survives in Boundary Street, which separates Brisbane's West-End from the central city area as it once did and continues to do the white and black communities. Watson's story of racial violence, set on this boundary, is inspired in a native title claim on South-West Brisbane's Musgrave Park—Meston Park in the novel—which is a remnant of Aboriginal ceremonial grounds. Native title was finally granted to the Jagera people by the State of Queensland in 1998, after 20 years of struggle in the courts. The latter outcome is reversed in the novel, surely to insist in the idea that the boundary between Aborigines and non-Aborigines is an apt metaphor for the difficulties that keep informing their contemporary cross-cultural relationships. Taking Watson's crime novel as a reflection on the spatial nature of race relations, this paper will trace how Indigenous-Australian embodiment, identity politics and sovereignty go hand in hand and are, at heart, loca(tiona)lly informed, therefore complicating a notion of Australian urban space as truly postcolonial.