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Utopia and Nonviolence  
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# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

## KEYNOTE LECTURES

**Tom Moylan (Ralahine Centre for Utopian Studies, University of Limerick, Ireland)**  
**“To Live Consciously Is to Sow the Whirlwind”: Reflections on the Utopian Standpoint of Nonviolence**

Like utopianism, nonviolence is frequently misunderstood, and underestimated. Rather than the passive stance that many attribute to it, nonviolence requires a robust agency that speaks truth to power in the service of radically transforming society. Drawing on my studies and my personal experience, I will reflect on the utopian qualities of nonviolence: first in terms of its general characteristics (as a form of witness and intervention and as a way of life) and then in light of the specific lineage that developed in the United States.

**Karel Thein (Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic)**  
**Cities of the Warriors, Cities of the Sages**

Ancient discourse on utopia unfolds in a wide variety of tones ranging from the nostalgic evocations of a peaceful Golden Age to the forward-looking projects of a perfectly ordered society which would be free, once again, of all internal violence. The paper will focus on how, starting with Plato, different versions of utopia oscillate between the two perspectives. Still, especially for Plato, the question is not one of reviving the remote and largely mythological past, but of creating its “modern” political equivalent. Necessarily, the issue of non-violence lies at the heart of such a project, including the strategy of purging the internal strife by means of fighting other cities. I will argue that the traces of this strategy are palpable even there where the Platonic versions of utopia yield to the Hellenistic and Greco-Roman philosophy of peace, and that they are responsible for complicity between cosmopolitanism and imperialism.

**Hoda Zaki (Hood College, Frederick, MD, USA)**  
**From Montgomery to Tahrir Square: The Transnational Journeys of Nonviolence and Utopia**

My presentation will focus on the US Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and how its leaders created new spaces for politics when political participation in its traditional senses such as voting, was denied to large numbers of black Americans. A specific definition of nonviolence emerged from the practices of the Civil Rights Movement which was influenced by Asian practices and by the participation of some leaders in, and identification with, the decolonization movement in Africa and Asia. My talk will explore how the Civil Rights Movement leaders drew upon the 1955 Bandung Conference, Mahatma Gandhi’s ideas, along with David Thoreau’s theories. These ideas were welded together in the mid-1950s in the USA, and were one step of a transnational journey of nonviolence which paralleled the “Third Way” created at Bandung by Asian and African heads of state. This complex of ideas represents multi-vocal possibilities and has aided the resurgence of nonviolence as a means of social change.

## PRESENTATIONS

**Adam Stock (Newcastle University, UK)**

### **The Politics of Clockwork: Mechanical Metaphors and the Social Body**

In contemporary usage, informed by modern science fiction, the idea of a “man machine” often appears grotesque or threatening, transgressing the boundaries of what we understand to be human and blurring lines, as Donna Haraway (1991) famously suggested, “between animal-human (organism) and machine”. The modern man-machine is in some way both beyond the human and uncannily unhuman, and is frequently presented in culture as alienated, atomised and violent: the product of post-Fordian economics and the rise of the consumer subject as much as technological developments in artificial intelligence and the integration of animal-human and machine. In this paper I trace the history of the use of clockwork imagery from the automata and political philosophy of the Enlightenment to the androids of recent films by the likes of Guillermo Del Toro, and cyberpunk novels of the 1980s-90s. I explore whether the image of clockwork has utopian potential, or whether the dominant mode of presenting both the individual and the social body as clockwork is inevitably dehumanizing and dystopian – as used most obviously, for example, in the title of Anthony Burgess’s *A Clockwork Orange* (1962).

**Alessia Ursella (University of Guelph, Canada)**

### **The Long Road to the Corner of Nonviolence: Aldous Huxley’s Personal and Literary Experience**

My paper aims at showing Aldous Huxley’s evolution from *Brave New World* to *Island*, through *Ape and Essence*. Huxley explores psychological and physical violence in the first to dystopias, in order to reach the final solution he depicted in *Island*. No matter if we read his last novel as his moral legacy or simply as a further step of reflection above the topic: Huxley leads the reader to explore a new world where not only is physical violence banned but it is also fought, helping people to overcome their illness. Psychological violence is not admitted and curing the soul is considered part of the healing process. The island represents a corner of the world where the ideas proposed by Gandhi find a fertile ground to blossom. Huxley reached this conclusion after exploring, during his life and career, many different options, including a focus on drugs and religion, possible means to reach and improve a peaceful state of mind. Furthermore, Huxley’s ideas about nonviolence deeply influenced his life, up to the point that he was denied American citizenship for defending his principles.

**Aline Ferreira (University of Aveiro, Portugal)**

### **A Feminine Politics of Non-Violence: Genes and Moral Bioenhancement**

The question of violence has been at the centre of most utopias or dystopias written by women. While they all defend non-violence, sometimes the means to achieve that peaceful state can involve the use of weapons and force. This paradoxical situation has been the object of reflection on the supposedly non-violent nature of women, tied in to essentialist notions of woman and nature, woman as nurturer and mother. While ideally non-violence should be a desideratum to achieve peace and prosperity what some of these narratives suggest is the need to engage in some violent acts to erase a future need for further violence, questioning whether violence is ever justified.

This paper will examine this vexed question by analysing a number of dystopias that will serve as case studies: Joan Slonczewski’s *Door into Ocean* (1986), Sheri S. Tepper’s *The Gate to Women’s Country* (1988) and Sarah Scott’s *Daughters of the North* (2007). I will draw on recent theoretical work on violence, including that of bioethicist Julian Savulescu, to tease out the main contours and negotiations of these knotted issues as well as the implications and desirability of a politics of non-violence dramatized in the above mentioned dystopias.

**Amber Hickey (University of California, Santa Cruz, USA)**

### **Bombs in Utopia: Land-Based Resistance at the Nevada Test Site**

Active military sites in the United States are often home to rich histories and contemporary practices of creative land-based resistance. These locations, many of which are in the southwest, are known both as the quintessential sites of the utopian imaginary of the western frontier, and as the dystopian, barren landscapes of military testing grounds. Underneath those representations lie longstanding histories of indigenous and allied activist struggles against the propagation of such colonialist and militarist actions and narratives. In this paper I discuss two key organizations that engaged in land-based resistance movements at the Nevada Test Site: the American Peace Test and the Western Shoshone Council.

The tensions at and around the Nevada Test Site are pulled tightly between differing and dynamic forces: between the deep time of geological change and rapid efforts of military personnel; between exposed bodies and shielded bodies; and between the contrasting aesthetics of military testing and

creative resistance. I focus on these two organizations in order to examine the historical and contemporary struggles involving nonviolent and violent land use as well as utopian and dystopian dynamics of space. In uniting the politics of land use and the on-the-ground work of nonviolent struggles, I explore how agents of these endeavors employ the land as a resource for resistance rather than a receptacle for violence. I point, in conclusion, toward an expanded definition of nonviolence that mobilizes for the protection not only of bodies, but also of land.

**Amnon Shapira (Ariel University, Israel)**

**"Utopia" and Non-Violence: Between This World and the World to Come**

Thomas More coined the term "utopia" in 1516, but the concept of "utopia" originated 2,300 years earlier, in Isaiah's prophesy: "In the days to come . . . nation shall not take up sword against nation; they shall never again know war."

"Utopia" expresses social and moral criticism of the existing reality, but also presents a moral alternative. More and Isaiah both did so when they criticized the extreme violence of war, while offering the vision of a future in which wars would disappear.

Jewish tradition differentiated between "this world" and "the world to come," and offered two alternatives for this world: to actively struggle against war, and to form a community. The "war against war" began in the Bible: the king was forbidden to "keep many horses", which would necessarily lessen his ability to attack. It was also forbidden to harm female war captives, and the army was commanded to "offer terms of peace" before attacking a city: this was the maximum that could be done in those times, and this is the minimum which remains in the collective consciousness: peace is preferable to war and to violence.

This concept continued into the Middle Ages, when the Jews set up communities all over the world. The community (Gemeinde) functioned as a state, whose essence was social solidarity and political well-being. This situation was not ideal, but it was the maximum that could be achieved under difficult historical conditions. It is not by chance that the utopian dream of non-violence was realized specifically in Israel, in hundreds of kibbutzim.

**Andrew Bridges (Claremont Graduate University, USA)**

**Pathology in the Forest**

In her work *The Word for World is Forest* Ursula K. Le Guin articulates a story in which a peaceful alien race turns to violence in order to liberate themselves from the inhumane treatment the human race has been subjecting them to for economic gain. In his work *Pacifism as Pathology* Ward Churchill makes the point that if one race desires the systematic extermination of another peaceful race, the fact that this race remains peaceful in the face of their extermination only aids the murderous race in performing its genocide. After the alien race in Le Guin's science-fiction novel successfully goes to war with the human race and liberates themselves from oppression, they are not able to liberate themselves from the effects of the violence they performed against humans to achieve their liberation. Their race, which was never violent before, now occasionally murders their own kind when disputes occur. Le Guin's novel ends with a conundrum concerning violence. If the alien race had not violently rebelled against humanity it is implied that they would have either been eradicated or permanently enslaved and exploited; however, through violent resistance their way of life also became extinct in the sense that the psychological effects of performing violent acts was irreversibly damaging to the peaceful people that they were. In this paper I aim to discuss possible solutions to this ostensible conundrum.

**Andrew Milner (Monash University, Melbourne, Australia)**

**Verity Burgmann (Monash University, Melbourne, Australia)**

**Tomorrow, Tomorrow and Yesterday: Eutopia, Dystopia and Violence in Marjorie Barnard and Flora Eldershaw's *Tomorrow and Tomorrow***

Marjorie Barnard (1897-1987) and Flora Eldershaw (1897-1956) were prolific Australian authors who co-wrote, under the pseudonym 'M. Barnard Eldershaw', five novels and four works of non-fiction published between 1929 and 1947. Their final collaboration, a future fiction entitled *Tomorrow and Tomorrow*, first appeared in Melbourne in 1947 and was reissued by the London feminist publisher Virago in 1983. Lyman Tower Sargent's bibliography of Australian utopian fiction describes the novel thus: 'Dystopia. Public opinion sampling used to limit liberty'. This is a reasonably accurate shorthand description of the novel's frame narrative, set in the 'Tenth Commune' located somewhere in what is now the Riverina district on the border of New South Wales and Victoria, at some time in the 24th century. This paper will argue, however, that the Tenth Commune is closer to a flawed eutopia than an outright dystopia; and that the novel's truly dystopian content lies in its core narrative, Knarf's novelistic account of mid twentieth century Australia, which

culminates in a quasi-apocalyptic destruction by fire of the city of Sydney. The extraordinary violence of this account will be contrasted to the essentially non-violent character of the Tenth Commune and both will be situated in relation to Barnard's growing involvement in the pacifist Peace Pledge Union.

**Andrzej Kowalczyk (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland)**

**Utopia and Environmental Nonviolence in the BBC Young-Children Animation *Bob the Builder: Bob's Big Plan* (2005)**

In a scholarly attempt to theorize nonviolence, basically rendered as “the alternative to violence and aggression,” Teixeira underlines that the latter concept encapsulates both “aggression [...] to fellow humans [and] to any living beings” (1999: 556). Likewise, Toh and Cawagas observe that “a critical and holistic understanding of [...] ecological violence will remind us that unless we learn to institutionalize nonviolence in our relations with planet Earth, there are and will be dire consequences for human survival” (1999: 218). One of the aspects of such institutionalization is environmental education of children (219), which, arguably, can be conducted not only at school but also in the child-oriented media.

My presentation will concern the special episode of the *Bob the Builder: Project Build It* series, *Bob's Big Plan* (2005)—a stop-motion animation broadcast by BBC—with a view to discussing the issue of environmental nonviolence as embodied in Bob's designing and constructing the utopian settlement of Sunflower Valley. In particular, I am going to focus upon the film's underlying social, political, and ideological foundations. Following Inglis's observation that “[t]he safest house of present-day Utopias is [...] to be found in the 50-year-or-so history of television tales for five-year-olds” (2010), I intend to demonstrate how the animation reflects the more general issue of utopia in children's TV programmes.

**Annette Giesecke (University of Delaware, USA)**

**Donald Dunham (Philadelphia University, USA)**

**Utopia Above the Law**

What constitutes a Utopian City? Does it have boundaries? Does it have laws? Or is it characterized, instead, by an eu-topian anarchy? These are the basic themes of Dunham and Giesecke's installation (a 58' long x14' high mural) UTOPIA ABOVE THE LAW, which formed the ideological core of the group exhibition *Imperfect City* held at the Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts in 2013.

Characterized by 'Radical Participation', *Imperfect City* was a conversation-based exhibition that evolved into a bustling, museum-scale town within the walls of the DCCA. The exhibition hinged upon interactivity and institutional transparency by drawing upon the visitor as artist. *Imperfect City* 'opened' during the planning phase with a series of town hall meetings, during which museum visitors participated in the curatorial conceptualization and implementation of this exhibition. Artists with backgrounds in philosophy, curating, architecture, sculpture, and new media worked together to build an ersatz city featuring walk-in living, working, and recreational spaces.

UTOPIA ABOVE THE LAW was designed at once to expose the inherent contradictions in any utopian endeavor or construct and to underline their very real potential to positively impact society's evolution. In particular, this installation engaged the concept of the boundary, physical and metaphysical alike, in utopian schemes. The installation was interactive, evoking intellectual and physical engagement by eliciting a dialogue with the wall, the utopia's exterior boundary: the City's residents/visitors would (and did) feel 'empowered' to write on the wall and express their thoughts on what constitutes an ideal city or respond to the utopian paradox.

**Annette M. Magid (SUNY Erie Community College, USA)**

**Utopian Dreams Revisited: A Re-Examination of Theoretical Utopic Concepts Proposed by Edward Bellamy 126 Years Ago**

The tyranny of war has long plagued almost every country, so it is not surprising that some Utopists choose to embrace a dynamic method of change which circumvents the onslaught of war. The proposals for ideal societies could perhaps be listed as dating from the Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), identified as being everything from idyllic to satiric.

Change from the horrific Civil War in the United States is also what Edward Bellamy's utopic novel, *Looking Backward: 2000-1887*, focused upon. He envisioned a non-violent solution using an industrial “war” in which progress rather than destruction and later “equality”<sup>\*</sup> rather than divisiveness were the answers to the devastation experienced by his war-torn country.

The purpose of my paper is to re-examine Bellamy's theories 126 years after he first published his block-buster novel. How have values and ideals declared in *Looking Backward* as well as *Equality* changed as we begin the 21<sup>st</sup> century? What lessons has society learned from the devastation of war and the proposals for peaceful utopic solutions? How relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is William Morris's rebuttal to

Bellamy in *News from Nowhere*? Which of Bellamy's theories have been implemented in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including mass communication (i.e. the radio/intercom Bellamy described), and which could offer hope of success in our Global Community?

By examining the success of positive, hopeful, utopic theories, perhaps solutions could be discovered for a more peaceful Global future.

\* As discussed in his second utopic volume, *Equality*.

**Artur Blaim (University of Gdańsk, Poland)**

#### **"Nowhere Plans for Nobody." The Uses of Utopia in Popular Music**

The paper explores the diverse uses made of both the name and the idea of utopia in popular music. According to preliminary estimates the name utopia appears nearly 5000 times in the names of groups, or as album and song titles. It is often used in accordance with More's formula of "strange barbaric names," or simply as a synonym of nowhere, rather than bearing any significant relation to the actual content, e.g. Frank Zappa's *The Man from Utopia*, Todd Rundgren's *Utopia*, or various albums of instrumental jazz such as Stan Getz's, or more recently Stephan Abaey's *Utopia*. Less frequent, though not uncommon, are the uses of utopia as a motif organizing particular songs, or entire albums (Brend Kisten, *Utopia*), in which they rely on the traditional modes and conventions of utopian fiction-making.

**Barbara Klonowska (Catholic University of Lublin, Poland)**

#### **Colliding Dystopias in Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis***

The four comic books published by Marjane Satrapi first in France in 2000-2002, and then worldwide present the story of a growing-up girl against the background of the Iranian Islamic revolution, and then her subsequent exile in Europe and return to the home country as an adult woman. In 2007, the comics were adapted for the screen and the film based on them, *Persepolis*, co-written and co-directed by Satrapi herself, achieved international success. Both the comics and the film present and contrast several kinds of dystopias, starting with the Iran of Ayatollahs, the Vienna of the mid-1980s, and the post-revolution Iran. All of them are construed as political and communal projects, and all of them, though in different ways, turn out equally oppressive for an individual, stifling their freedom and emotional development. The paper will discuss first the construction of particular dystopian visions created in the comics and film, to move to the medium-specific techniques employed to evoke them, different in the case of comic books and audiovisual presentation. Analysing narration, character construction, dialogues and the visual outlook I will argue that the two versions of *Persepolis* present not merely two different kinds of dystopia, Iranian/religious and Western/secular, but also two different aesthetics and poetics of rendering them.

**Barbara Kowalik (University of Warsaw, Poland)**

#### **Nonviolence and the Question of Imitation: The Vision of Peace in Middle English *Pearl***

The paper discusses the problem of mimetic desire as a powerful destroyer of peace, leading to repeated eruptions of conflict and crisis, resolved through violence in archaic societies, according to René Girard's theory. In this context, a medieval poetic vision of peaceful society is analysed. The vision culminates in the Middle English dream poem *Pearl* and is discussed here as the anonymous Christian author's imaginative solution to the threat of violence, based on the idea of uncompetitive imitation. Because of its formal accomplishments and enigmatic mode of expression, *Pearl* has had many admirers and has been hermeneutically challenging, but recent criticism attempts to situate the poem in the social and political contexts of late fourteenth-century England. I shall focus on the poem's vision of the heavenly city of New Jerusalem, derived from the Vulgate Apocalypse and encapsulating a social organism whose *modus vivendi* differs from the competitive ways of the earthly *civitas*. The poem describes the heavenly city as the "sight of peace", following the usual medieval interpretation of the name *Jerusalem*. The *Pearl* poet unfolds a rich symbolic image of Heaven, depicting nonviolent, happy coexistence of a large social community whose members, perplexingly enough for a modern reader, look exactly the same.

**Borjana Dodova (Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Czech Republic)**

#### **The Overview Effect**

The Overview Effect is summary term for a special type of emotional reaction reported by many astronauts who had the opportunity to see the Earth from the outside; that means from the orbit or further. Some of them spoke about this distant view as a life-changing experience which influenced their basic values and made them more conscious and concerned about our planet and humanity. The big distance erased political boundaries between countries and turned the planet into a beautiful and fragile whole. Michael Collins, who was piloting the command module during the Apollo 11 mission, once regretted that "*the view from 100 000 miles has been the exclusive property of a handful of test pilots, rather*

than the world leaders who need this new perspective, or the poets who might communicate it to them." If we take this constraint seriously and try to overcome it we get a utopian vision which isn't based on any change of the social order nor change of human nature nor abolition of technologies, but on pushing forward what we already have, our technologies, individualistic values and desire to fly. Using Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization*, Charles Fourier's passionate attraction, and developing the ideas from Frank White's book *The Overview Effect: Space Exploration and Human Evolution* I would like to interpret the project of the widespread Overview Effect stated by the American Overview Institute as a new alternative to commonly known utopias.

**Brian Greenspan (Carleton University, Canada)**

#### **Co-Creative Destruction: Virtual Demolition as Nonviolent Resistance**

This talk introduces our virtual memorial to Lansdowne Park, a forty-acre park alongside Ottawa's Rideau Canal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Since 1847, Lansdowne has witnessed exhibitions and royal jubilees, as well as military exercises during the Boer War and both World Wars.

Today, pageants of imperial and state-sanctioned violence have given way to occupation by transnational capital. In 2008, a private redevelopment plan, codenamed "Lansdowne Live!," was adopted without competitive vetting or public consultation. Local groups opposed the design process as well as the sole-sourced plan itself, which gives over acres of public lands to private retail space and condominiums.

Working with a local museum, we are preserving the park in an augmented reality memorial for mobile devices that uses the physical landscape as an interface to the historical archive. *Lansdowne Revived* will provide on-site access to the park's documented history, including newspaper, archival photos and architectural drawings, as well as community-oriented redevelopment plans that fell by the wayside. Built on the StoryTrek 3.0 platform, our motion-activated browser will allow users to reenact the park's utopian history by walking forward or, by reversing direction, move time backwards and undo the current creative destruction.

To ensure that the project is anticipatory as well as restorative, we're calling upon local residents to "reclaim the common" (Hardt) by adding their own site plans to our map database. Our goal is to transform the city itself into a dialectical interface for recovering forgotten visions of the future Ottawa that never came to pass.

**Chelsi Dimm (Claremont Graduate University, USA)**

#### **The Role of Violence in Narratives of Globalization and the Potential for Utopia**

I will articulate the role of violence in prominent theorists on globalization. It will show the necessity of violence in models of globalization like Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations*. It will also show the more non-violent means that post-modernists such as Hardt and Negri in *Multitude* use to bring about a new future. A liberationist theory of globalization, such as Reiger et al in *Beyond the Spirit of Empire*, draws a distinct line between the side of the oppressor and of the oppressed and takes the side of the oppressed to bring about change, through violence if necessary. Kung proposes an ethical system to bring about societal change in *Global Responsibility*, rather than the use of violence.

All of these theorists look to keep in place or to bring about a new form of society that they view as a Utopia. They begin with their description of the world as it currently is and postulate a means to either keep this ideal system, or to move away from it to another type of society, their Utopia. In maintaining or forming another vision of society ideas of violence and non-violence often come into play. I will explore the nuanced role of violence. In some of these narratives it brings about a desired utopia and in others non-violence is what will bring about a utopia. The desire for or against violence or the necessity of violence is prescribed by the type of Utopia one wishes to bring about.

**Chris Pierson (University of Nottingham, UK)**

#### **Proudhon's Property: A Liberal Utopia?**

Proudhon is best remembered as the man who insisted that 'property is theft'. And he has a privileged place in both the anarchist and utopian canons. But it has long been recognized that Proudhon was a critic only of certain forms of (private) property - and not of the institution itself. Like Rousseau, a lover of paradox, Proudhon also insisted (almost in the same breath) that 'property is freedom'. In this paper, I seek to tease out Proudhon's vision of property relationships (focusing upon his late and unpublished *Theory of Property* as much as the much better known *What is Property?*). I consider whether Proudhon set out to describe a liberal utopia and whether his several views of property can be sensibly reconciled.

**Dan Smith (Chelsea College of Arts, University of the Arts London, UK)**

**Reading Memory Palace**

*Memory Palace*, an exhibition held at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (18 June - 20 October 2013), offered a form of dystopian science fiction narrative set among the ruins of London. The exhibition was conceived of as a means to consider the present and future status of the book as a physical artefact, and to explore reading, narrative, physicality and space as necessary dimensions of the book in an age of technological diversification. The curators set out to generate a book as a materially immersive environment, a network of elements relating ultimately to an embodied subject. *Memory Palace* is a reading format.

To generate their narrative, the curators commissioned author Hari Kunzru to write a short story. The fragmented narrative he produced was then interpreted by 20 graphic designers and illustrators, who responded with visual works that are not discrete objects but integrated elements in a physical environment. Kunzru's story reveals details of a capture and interrogation, of survival, violence and non-violence in a post apocalyptic urban landscape. This paper will investigate the experimental form of reading in relation to Moylan's model of critical dystopia, and whether the graphic and spatial elements undermine the fairly conventional and restorative content of Kunzru's text. Finally, the embodied encounter of the narrative as a whole will draw upon Ruth Levitas' recent work *Utopia as Method*, in particular her discussion of ontology, dignity and grace.

**Darcy K. Leach (Bradley University, USA)**

**When Freedom is *Not* an Endless Meeting: A New Look at Efficiency in Consensus-Based Decisionmaking**

It is widely believed that there is an inevitable trade-off between participation and efficiency in the decision-making process, or, to quote Polletta's well-known book on participatory democracy, that "freedom is an endless meeting."

This paper re-examines the question of efficiency in 12 collectivist-democratic social movement groups from the German autonomous and nonviolence movements. 63 semi-structured interviews were conducted with 4-8 members of each group. Respondents were asked what they thought the biggest challenge was in using a consensus process to make decisions, why they thought consensus was worth trying anyway, the length of their meetings, how long it takes to make a typical decision, the biggest problem their group had had in trying to sustain a nonhierarchical structure, and what advice they would give to newly forming groups that want to be as democratic and egalitarian as possible.

Through controlled comparisons, the study examines three factors hypothesized to affect a group's ability to use consensus efficiently: length of experience using the consensus model, their views on nonviolence, and the degree to which consensus is the norm in their local activist milieu. Findings suggest that older groups, groups that see hierarchical decision-making as structural violence, and groups located in towns with well-developed social movement scenes where consensus decisionmaking is the norm are demonstrably more efficient in their use of consensus decisionmaking. The paper concludes with a discussion of the implications of these findings for strategies of nonviolent cultural revolution, and for the practice of movement groups considering whether to adopt a consensus-based structure.

**Darren Webb (University of Sheffield, UK)**

**Education and the Construction of Hope**

This paper outlines an ethnographic research project exploring the construction of hope across a range of educational sites and other social settings. The project operationalizes the 'modes of hoping' framework developed by Webb and presented at previous USS conferences. The project has two basic aims. Firstly, to investigate how hope operates as a tool of government. The project is concerned with how subjectivities are shaped through the construction of hope within the school, how the discursive construction of hope teaches us to feel, appraise, express, and behave in accordance with certain cognitive, emotional and behavioural frames. Secondly, in addition to studying how power operates in and through the construction of hope, the project also strives to uncover the utopian traces, the utopian fragments, the utopian glimpses, to be found in policy, practice and children and young people's lived experiences.

**David M. Bell (University of Nottingham, UK)**

**Fast Food/Slow Food: The Scales and Temporalities of Food in Utopia. (Or, Does Goldman Sachs Care if You Raise Chickens?)**

In *Red Plenty* – Francis Spufford's fictional retelling of Soviet history – Nikita Khrushchev visits New York and admires the hamburger. For him, it is a symbol of America's utopianism; its mission to deliver an 'ordinary luxury built up from goods turned out by the million so that everybody could have one'; and a

prime example of its skill in 'lining up the fruitfulness of mass production with people's desires'. Yet utopian understandings of food often shy away from such a large-scale harnessing of desire, focusing instead on the ethical and environmental horrors of mass production; and offering locally sourced food as the truly utopian gastronomical vision. Here, slow and local trump fast and global; and McWorld is a dystopia, pure-and-simple. But could there be something in Khrushchev's observations? Is the marxist philosopher Jodi Dean right to wear a t-shirt saying 'Goldman Sachs Doesn't Care if You Raise Chickens?' And what about the chickens?

Drawing on utopian and dystopian literature such as *Red Plenty*, Dan Hancox's *The Village Against the World* and Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*; as well as recent theoretical interventions by Jodi Dean, Fredric Jameson, Greg Sharzer and that strange collection of people known as the 'accelerationists', this paper will consider the production and consumption of food in societies at different stages of economic history; and disentangle arguments for localism and globalism, respectively. Arguing that many of the binaries this debate encourages (fast vs. slow, local vs. global, nature vs. culture) are in fact unhelpful, it will playfully suggest ways in which food could play an important role in the transition to full communism.

### **David Robbins (Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic)**

#### **"Let Us Not Be the Victims of Words": "Utopian" Ideas and Practices in U.S. Context**

This paper will examine some general theoretical and practical/performative/pragmatic tendencies of "utopian" initiatives in the United States, particularly as manifested in the nineteenth century and in contrast to contemporarily conceived and undertaken European "utopian" experiments.

A principal characteristic that has distinguished the cultural entity that embodies the United States from its European counterpart(s) has been, from colonial times, the availability in America of more unstructured space, literal and figurative: less ubiquitously appropriated, less under the control of "constituted Faculties" and other traditional valorizing (cultural) authorities, and less subject to their various forms of coercive force. Situated in a cultural/political paradigm/entity institutionalizing and valorizing progressive/"revolutionary" change and belief in the imminent possibility of contrafactuality (i.e., subjunctivity, hope) rather than in one where persistence and official/authoritative valorization of an institutionalized and entrenched "ancien regime" perturbed the orbit of most "progressive" undertaking into a more intense energy level, U.S.-sited change-oriented experiments did not need to be so absolutist in aims, language, and chronological/societal intensity. They had, as it were, more space and time to operate in parallel and interact with other cultural currents, and to project a more gradual and incremental intersection/merger with them over a longer time frame. This dynamic has often left both participants and observers questioning where the frontier between "utopianism" and "reform" might, if it exists at all, be said to lie in the U.S. context, as compared to its European counterpart(s).

Among issues to be addressed by this paper in the above context are:

- 1) What does "utopian" signify if there is general belief in the possibility of contrafactuality (subjunctivity, hope) as valorized in U.S. culture?
- 2) One way of salvaging "utopian" as a discrete category in the potentially erosive U.S. political/cultural environment/ecology is to construct "utopian" undertakings as an alternative to compromise-infested and politics-laden process of "reformism," distinguished from reformism's confusions, half-measures and frequent contradictions by its rigorous, fully articulated set of ideas/blueprints implemented fully according to the structures and dynamics of the blueprint, often under the leadership of the architect him- or herself or of her/his designated surrogate or heir. A chronic defect tied to the virtues of this avatar of "utopianism" was a marked tendency to inflexibility and adaptability over time, as "integrity" and "fidelity" to the original plan—and frequently to the original planner as well—often became obstructive and divisive issues. Ironically, in this way, "utopian" experiments founded under an imperative for innovation were thus doomed/fated to become defensive/conservative ideological and administrative bastions over time. A second chronic dissonance around "blueprint" utopianism was its problematical relationship to the U.S. cultural paradigm in which it was immersed, a cultural paradigm that impugned cultural/political authority, distrusted coercive structures and forces, and, concomitantly, fostered a pervasive distrust of leaders, "leadership," and the implied anti-democratic division of culturally-proclaimed "equal citizens" into "leaders" and "followers."
- 3) A second way of rescuing "utopianism" as a viable category/nomenclature under U.S. conditions was to undertake to regard/practice it as a sort of literary genre in which certain "pure" ideas/concepts/practices are shown to be tragically vulnerable to the "foul dust" of real-world conditions. The authors of such elegiac/ironic narratives, poised between nostalgia and provocation, generally prided themselves on their aura of detachment, avoiding any direct, practical suggestions for application of the lamented ideals and thus keeping utopia and utopian discourse, as they understood it, "pure" of practical advocacy. This kind of "utopianism" was not designed to produce action directly (i.e., not

“practical”/performative/pragmatic as regards immediate aims, results, and outcomes), but to create a “working mood” by its contrast between actual and ideal values/practices that will, indirectly, energize remedial and corrective action over time. It is thus aspirational, motivational, hortatory, prospective, in mood and tone. This approach, which Ernst Bloch designated the “utopian impulse,” has, historically, been much better able to retain an unsettled/unsettling, flexible, experimental, open, progressive character than has “blueprint” utopianism. One branch of this genre might instructively be viewed, I will argue, as constituted by the innovative, anti-European American literary form of the “romance,” as understood and designated by Emerson and Hawthorne, emphasizing individual autonomy, indeterminacy, agency, and the ubiquitous possibility of change/contrafactuality through spontaneous individual initiative as a basis for hope.

**Dominika Kozera (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland)**

**In Search of Utopia – Three Different Methods by Three Different Communities to Achieve the Same Goal. Various Shades of Utopia in *The Chrysalids* by John Wyndham**

*The Chrysalids* by John Wyndham depicts post-apocalyptic times where there are pre-industrial rules with the emphasis put on agriculture. People are divided and governed by theocratic ideas shared throughout Labrador – the only land where life exists. The ostracized group – mutants who look or behave differently – lives far away in exile in the Fringes country. As a typical example of misfits and undesirables, they are pushed to the periphery deprived of food or any access to basic supplies. At first glance such a juxtaposition reminds one of a utopian-dystopian combination. The more careful a scrutiny of these lands is, the more complex the real nature of the two seems to be. It turns out, for instance, that both communities fulfill basic assumptions of a utopia suggested by Chad Walsh. Moreover, the two societies complement each other as they live in a symbiotic relationship. Their stormy relationship, however, is based on the constant fight, which results in the arrival of Sealands – another community that is far more advanced technologically and intellectually. Although the three vary remarkably, they share one distinctive feature – all of them strive to be utopian.

This paper focuses on the difference in the way utopia is perceived by the members of these groups. For each community, the ideal has a different value and therefore is achieved by various methods (the use of violence and nonviolence, the desire for domination and conquest). This means that the idea of utopia is a concept open to interpretation which depends on needs of a particular society.

**Elizabeth Russell (Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona, Spain)**

***Women in Black* and *Cities of Peace*: Demanding the Impossible?**

Is peace a *something* which is impossible to articulate, an “abstract discontent” with the way things are or is the question itself no longer relevant? According to Žižek’s *Demanding the Impossible* (2013), “the agents of change [are] those people who are deprived of their substance, like ecological victims, psychological victims, and, especially, excluded victims of racism, and so on”.

*Women in Black* is the name given to a world-wide network of very small groups of women who periodically hold vigils for peace. They do not fight for peace. They do not organise mass demonstrations.

The groups of Women in Black mostly exist in countries which have suffered recent traumas of war, the loss of loved ones and the violation of women’s and men’s bodies. The creation of *Cities of Peace* is similar in that many of the cities listed in the website (of the same name) are cities which have been ravaged by violence.

This paper will attempt to analyse the concept of peace as a claim for non-violence according to the evident paradox in this claim. My paper will draw from the discussion by Judith Butler, *Frames of War* (2010) and Cynthia Cockburn, *antiMILITARISM*(Sic! 2012).

**Elżbieta Perkowska-Gawlik (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland)**

**Intertextual Taming of Dystopia in Barry J. Gardner’s Webcomic’s Frames**

The proposed paper will examine Barry J. Gardner’s website focusing on its most recognized part: a webcomic entitled *Hyperbolic Dystopia*. An analysis of the reader’s cognitive process of domesticating dystopian issues while surfing Gardner’s website will scrutinize two kinds of interrelated frames – the graphic frames, which not only immerse the reader in Gardner’s dystopian world, but also provoke his/her (re)telling and visualizing the narrative progression of the story presented; and the invisible frames prompted by common knowledge or the reader’s experience concerning totalitarian systems. The analysis of the aforementioned invisible frames that can be traced in *Hyperbolic Dystopia* will examine the function of intertextual echoes of classic dystopian novels, such as Zamyatin’s *We*, Huxley’s *Brave New World*, or Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. It will be argued that the echoes may cause a predetermined reception of an otherwise tremendously open-ended art form.

**Emiliano Ranocchi (Università di Udine, Italy)**

**Machine and Violence. Wiener's Conception of the Machine Applied to Two Works of Early Modernism (Sosnkowski, Čapek)**

In Polish modernism the machine is often perceived as a synecdoche of modernity as a whole. In my presentation I would like to draw attention to the only novel of a forgotten Polish writer from the period between the two World Wars. The novel in question is entitled *A Car, You and Me (Love of Machines)* and was published in 1925. In particular I would like to compare the main character's dystopian nightmare about machines taking control over the world, dooming the human race to extinction, with the thematically analogous comedy of Karel Čapek *R.U.R.*, which could have influenced the Polish writer. The subject I would like to focus on is that of a good machine vs. a bad machine (in the direction traced by Norbert Wiener in *Cybernetic*) – a good machine is one which is capable of empathy. In both fictions there is the suggestion that technology and civilization detached from feelings lead necessarily to violence and war (Sosnkowski's novel is much more drastic than Čapek's comedy drama: in the dream machines retain certain key features in common with people, such as sexual desire they vent on women). Nevertheless, at the end of *R.U.R.* Čapek delineates the vision of a couple of robots (male and female), who are capable of loving each other. Sosnkowski too seems to have had a foreboding of another possibility: that of an intelligent machine (represented in the novel by the main character's car), which empathetically understands and realizes what man is thinking and feeling.

**Emine Şentürk (Atılım University, Turkey)**

**Family as a Place of Isolation to Create a New World: *Dogtooth***

Dystopian writings mostly tend to study the structure of societies or governments, but not specifically the family concept and the family structure. *Dogtooth* is a distinctive movie in that aspect because it focuses on the family structure of a specific family which can be regarded as microcosm of the macrocosm. The three teenagers are educated by their parents but improperly since all the words gain new meanings and are invented by their father who is the authoritarian figure. There is no individual freewill in this family because all reality is created and invented by the father. The children cannot go outside because they are taught to be afraid of outside. The submission of the family members to the over-controlling father is the basis of this "happy" but weird family. To achieve this "happy" family, there is a constructed inner domestic balance and anything to disturb this balance is terminated by the patriarchal figure. There are pre-determined rules and these rules cannot be broken; otherwise, there can be deadly consequences. There is an illusion of reality in the house, and anything from the outside can disturb this illusion. Considering the relation between powerful society and helpless individual, this paper will discuss whether the struggle of individuals may provide any individual autonomy and self-determination or does not change anything because social or communal benefits are always superior to personal benefits. The representation of society in the form of a family creates the curiosity but darkness and pessimism because it is clearly presented that there is no escape and there is no freewill or freedom.

**Fátima Vieira (Universidade do Porto, Portugal)**

**Food and Non-Violence: The Activity of the Portuguese Vegetarian Society in Porto in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

This paper offers the first results of a study of the activity of the Portuguese Vegetarian Society, established in Porto in the early 20th century (from 1911 to 1914). It examines the way the Society's official journal, as well as the writings of the three most active vegetarians – Amilcar de Souza, Jaime de Magalhães Lima and Ângelo Jorge – presented vegetarianism as the only possible social, political, economic and ethical path for the establishment of a sustainable and non-violent society. The paper pays particular attention to the variety of strategies designed to promote vegetarianism, from the publication of pictures of healthy long-lived vegetarians to the translation of books with a thorough description of the different kinds of anticarnivorous diets and nutrition information and advice. It further tries to assess the scope of influence of the Portuguese Vegetarian Society in the lives of its three thousand associates, as well as its relationship with the Nativist Centre established in Lisbon in 1913.

**Gregory Claeys (Royal Holloway, University of London, UK)**

**The Anti-Utopian Argument Revisited**

The talk considers the major allegations linking utopianism to twentieth century totalitarianism, focussing on theories of political religion. It attempts in particular to probe the issue of the ethics of chiliasm.

**Grzegorz Maziarczyk (The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland)**

***BioShock: Interactivity and (Non-)Violence in Playable Dystopia***

Taking as its starting point Noah Wardrip-Fruin's concept of playable media, my paper will seek to analyse the dystopian aspects of the *BioShock* video game series. It will first discuss the multimodal and transmedial semiotic mechanisms whereby a video game can be endowed with dystopian characteristics. In the *BioShock* series the peculiar nature of the society is first indicated in the instruction manual, then clearly signalled by the imagery employed to build the setting, the underwater city of Rapture in the original game and the floating air city of Columbia in *BioShock Infinite*, and finally considerably extended by audio diaries, which the player finds throughout each game.

These audio messages are just one example of how the format of the video game allows construction of a playable dystopia, which can be interacted with in a manner that goes beyond the passive reception of classic literary or filmic dystopias. Just as they epitomise the new mode of dystopian representation, they also exemplify the ways in which the *BioShock* series transcends the generic conventions of the first-person shooter, in which the player's engagement with the game is often reduced to ruthless elimination of virtual opponents. The construction of *BioShock* video games not only invites the player to explore the fictional universe and thus reconstruct the utopian origins of post-apocalyptic Rapture and the dystopian underpinnings of supposedly utopian Columbia, but it also makes a choice between violence and non-violence a crucial element of gameplay.

**Iolanda Ramos (NOVA University of Lisbon, Portugal)**

***New Cultural Centres, New Utopias: A Nonviolent Revolution***

There is a network of independent cultural centres that reinvent the place of culture in society and in the urban scenario all over Europe. Usually located in buildings from industrial heritage, these centres encourage cooperation instead of competition, bringing together not only artists and cultural actors but social workers, local councillors and researchers who raise concerns about social and political issues. By being spaces of freedom and creativity, as well as of citizenship, cultural sites combine utopia and pragmatism. They inspire intentional communities and promote the development of new economic patterns, fostering the solidarity economy as an alternative to the liberal economic model. Drawing on a couple of case studies, this paper aims to discuss how European networks of intercultural exchange thus challenge established cultural policies in general – and on a local level in particular – so as to build a sustainable future for the independent cultural sector by means of a nonviolent revolution.

**Izabela Curyłło-Klag (Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland)**

***Objection to War in Contemporary English Fictions Depicting the Western Front***

My paper will consider representations of anti-war sentiment in contemporary English-language fictionalizations of the Western Front. Taking into account Pat Barker's Great War trilogy of the 1990s, her two more recent books *Life Class* and *Toby's Room*, as well as texts by other authors, e.g. Sebastian Faulks's *Birdsong* or John Boyne's *The Absolutist*, I will reflect on the importance of pacifist attitudes in modern re-imagining of the conflict. Very often, contemporary narratives revive the anti-war protests of the past by placing them in the context of various forms of social oppression: female confinement, intolerance towards sexual minorities, victimization of enemy aliens, and misunderstanding of psychological trauma. Considerable emphasis is also laid on the act of bearing witness to violence and the responsibilities connected with re-telling or otherwise representing occurrences at the Front. The novels I wish to discuss foreground the ethical dilemmas protagonists face when reporting to military superiors, confronting the bereaved family, writing or painting the war. While pacifist sentiments are not always officially endorsed in such situations, they may be implied through a specific choice of word and/or image.

**Jacqueline Dutton (University of Melbourne, Australia)**

***Alternative Utopias in Burma/Myanmar: Violence, Nonviolence and Faith in the Future***

Burma/Myanmar is a nation anchored in utopianism, with each new regime promoting different dreams, enforcing its ideology, and transplanting its capital to a new locale. From the multiethnic, oecumenical tolerance of ancient Bagan with its accompanying proliferation of stupas and pagodas in the 10th-12th centuries, to the stark concrete emptiness of Nay Pyi Taw's current seat of parliament, the re-creation of the national capital has exemplified the re-making of dominant ideology and political theology. Historian, urban heritage activist and peace broker Thant Myint U called these new and often competing ideals "alternative utopias" (*The River of Lost Footsteps* 2006).

In this paper, I want to explore some of the more recent alternative utopias, such as first president U Nu's plan for a socialist democracy, as well as the ensuing military regime's promises, and their

relationship to an underpinning cultural propensity for social dreaming, that arises from the Buddhist worldview.

I will analyse the ways in which these utopian projects have consistently been eroded by violence, despite the nonviolent Buddhist foundations of these beliefs and initiatives. In this way, I will demonstrate the dystopian turn in Burmese/Myanmar politics, as well as its corollary – the enduring faith in utopia that provides hope for the future – whether Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is elected to the presidency or not.

**James E. Block (DePaul University, Chicago, IL, USA)**

**Edson Luiz André de Sousa (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil)**

#### **Locating Utopia's Presence in Times of Doubt: A Workshop on the Political and Moral Imagination**

Utopian thinking (and imagining) with its belief in social and personal transformation is clearly an act of faith, a willingness, an eagerness to visualize, to experience, to be called to what is not immediately present. It is in fact through our conviction and concrete hope that utopian possibilities achieve presence as guides to a more realized future. What are the springs for this faith in transformation? How does this sense of presence arise with its new possibilities and what are its political and moral features? How do we experience and picture and communicate and share what we have evoked? What actions and journeys might we be willing to take on the basis of its call?

In this workshop, two facilitators actively engaged for decades in utopian thinking, writing, and pedagogy and in socially transformative activism and workshops in the United States, Europe, and working together in Brazil would like to offer a workshop to consider with participants these questions of the political and moral imagination. We are under no expectation that this dialogical process will be straightforward. Our goal is to encourage participants (and ourselves) in this process of illuminating the utopian impulse. To this end, we are striving to help all participating to face and express their anxieties about transformation and change, about challenging present structures and confronting (often sharply) existing power relations and about the role of violence. Above all, we will seek to explore ways of dealing with the many voices that counsel doubt and negation in our time (including those within us), that accept the status quo simply because alternatives seem difficult to imagine. It is this imagining as an individual and group experience that we hope by working through our dreams of possibility and the challenges to unfolding them to encourage and share.

**Jill Belli (New York City College of Technology, CUNY, USA)**

#### **Digital Desire and Utopian Dreams: Building the Good Life from Happy Data**

Self-help and positive psychology (the science of human flourishing) are essentially utopian projects: they intervene in what they consider to be unsatisfactory and attempt to create and educate for something better. The recent explosion of what I term “digital happiness” has revolutionized these efforts to assess and maximize well-being by using the tools and methods of big data, sentiment analysis, crowdsourcing, social networking, the quantified self, and biometrics. This paper first provides an overview of these initiatives, demonstrating their efforts to track and triangulate individual internal emotional states, networked virtual data and connections, and real social relations and policies. This paper then positions their rhetoric and ideology within the larger discourses of self-help, positive psychology, and utopian studies, problematizing digital happiness's politics and pedagogy, which teach us to be certain types of people in pursuit of the good life without consideration that its notions of the “good” are not morally universal but inextricably bound to particular ideological assumptions, cultural contexts, and interpretations of what is positive, valuable, and desirable. I demonstrate how digital happiness showcases competing tensions of individual improvement and social justice, apolitical progress and politically engaged action, and descriptive reporting and prescriptive advice typical of self-help and positive psychology. In doing so, I critically interrogate these projects' utopian aspirations, analyzing their aims and methods for instantiating different ways of being and living, of creating both the happy person and the good society in the image of (and from the) raw data of individuals' emotions.

**Jim Arnold (New Lanark Trust, UK)**

#### **Robert Owen and Utopian Non-Violence**

Robert Owen (1771-1858) is a well known Utopian Socialist of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. He became famous because of his work at New Lanark and his many publications. This paper looks at him as a practical historical example of how utopianism and non-violence were part of the life and work of this eminent businessman and social philosopher. In particular, it takes the conference theme and examines the implications of his non-violence policies and actions in the context of the contemporary violence of British and world society. The paper reviews, how non-violence was applied to civil society in New Lanark in

1800 – 1825, what Owen's views were on violence in society in general, and how he developed his ideas from 1825 until his death in 1858. Owen also had thoughts on international violence, and these are examined. The paper considers the actions of a non-violent activist and his role and appreciation in society, and how an individual advocating progressive social views relates to his general community.

In conclusion, it makes an assessment of Owen's general influence in relation to the conference theme.

#### **Joan-Mari Barendse (Stellenbosch University, South Africa)**

##### **To Remember or Forget a Violent Past: Artefactual Memory in Alastair Bruce's Post-Apocalyptic Novel *Wall of Days* (2010)**

South African writer Alastair Bruce's post-apocalyptic novel *Wall of Days* (2010) portrays a society with a violent history. Two settlements, Bran and Axum, fight over resources for years before signing a peace treaty. A condition of the treaty is "the Programme", in which both settlements maintain a sustainable existence. According to the rules of "the Programme" citizens which burden the society (i.e. the old and weak) are executed. The citizens of Bran eventually revolt against "the Programme" and banish their founder and leader, also called Bran, from the settlement. The novel begins with Bran returning home after a ten year exile on an island. Upon his return, no one seems to recognize him and they also deny the settlement's violent past.

Here, I explore Bran's attempt to reconstruct history from the remains of a pre-apocalyptic time in a space inhabited by people who choose to forget. In the novel, as in many recent post-apocalyptic portrayals, contemporary items are depicted as archaeological artefacts (see Anderson 2012 and Kearney 2012). I link my analysis to Buchli and Lucas's (2001) and Harrison's (2011) discussions of the archaeology of the contemporary past, a field in which new meaning is given to everyday items by using archaeological methods. Furthermore, I explore how material culture and the archaeological process in general relate to issues surrounding memory and identity (see Moshenska 2009 and Radley 1990). While it is not clear whether the novel is set in South Africa or not, these are pertinent issues in post-apartheid South Africa.

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#### **Johannes Thomann (University of Zurich, Switzerland)**

##### **Overcoming Gender Borders and Cessation of Violence: The Utopian Conclusion of the Arabian Nights in the Earliest Manuscript Tradition**

The junctim of gender borders and violence became only a major topic in 20<sup>th</sup> century feminism. All the more remarkable is the case of a 15<sup>th</sup> century Arabic narrative in which gender roles are the main topic and overcoming them leads to the cessation of violence. It has been stated that "concepts of utopia are foreign to the world of *The Thousand and One Nights*" (Fudge 2012), and indeed, the standard version presents a conclusion in which Scheherazade assumes the traditional role of a housewife and mother. A more complex narrative is preserved in the oldest manuscript tradition. In this version, Scheherazade narrates a series of stories of women with exceptional capabilities and characteristics situated in Mamluk Cairo. Then she presents her political manifesto against autocracy and convinces the king to choose her as his political advisor. Scheherazade and her sister receive male robes and swords as a sign of their status on equal terms with the king and his brother, and henceforth power is split and delegated to reliable representatives. This utopian conclusion – staged in faraway China – is in sharp contrast to the previous stories of the violent and corrupt regime of the Mamluk captains of police, which were a faithful portrait of the Egyptian and Syrian audience's reality, while the conclusion might have appeared as an unattainable utopian fiction of a liberal society, very much in the sense of "optarim verius quam sperarim".

**Jorge Bastos da Silva (Universidade do Porto, Portugal)**

**Appraising and Re-appraising the “Little Golden Book”: Some Notes on the Early Editions of More’s Utopia in Several Languages**

Thomas More’s *libellus uere aureus* was published in no less than seven languages in the course of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth centuries: Latin, German, Italian, French, English, Dutch and Spanish. The present paper will consider some features of those early editions in the light of the question: How did the canonization of *Utopia* take place? The paper will focus on a small selection of discursive aspects as well as material components of the books. In particular, it will pay attention to the interpretive hints inscribed in the front matter, which are likely to have contributed to a specific understanding of the status of the work and of its author.

**José Eduardo Reis (Universidade Trás-os-Montes e Alto Douro & Universidade do Porto, Portugal)**

**The Ethical Issue of Animal Rights and Its Narrative Representation in Two Portuguese Literary Utopias**

The issue of animal rights has been a matter of intellectual debate and theoretical reflection within the Anglo Saxon Utilitarian school of thought, since the Australian philosopher Peter Singer published his pioneering work *Animal Liberation* in 1976. One of the central theses of this book is a rationally argued attribution of a moral status to non-human animals, based on Singer’s ethical principle “of equal consideration of interests”. From this egalitarian, non species-limited principle, Singer extends the self interest in not being subjected to physical suffering to all sentient creatures. The ethical thought of Singer thus provides a logical ground for the choice of a vegetarian diet based on the application of moral principles to animal life. In a way, the relative originality and consistency of Singer’s theoretical contribution lies in a long, albeit marginal, intellectual tradition in Western culture which pleads for a morally based vegetarianism. In the light of this underground cultural tradition, this paper will discuss the issue of animal rights and analyze, from a philosophical perspective, its narrative appropriation in two Portuguese morally-oriented vegetarian literary utopias of the first quarter of the twentieth century, *Irmânia* by Angelo Jorge and *Redemption* by Amílcar de Sousa.

**Joyce Rothschild (Virginia Tech University, Blacksburg, VA, USA)**

**Towards a Cooperative Economy and Democracy 2.0**

Two trends over the last couple of decades, probably each unstoppable, are creating an employment crisis in the US and other highly developed societies: First, globalization of production has and is moving millions of jobs to lower wage countries. Second, automation and the innovations that have come from the silicon chip (e.g., computers and robots) have already and will continue to eliminate the need for whole occupations, thereby disrupting tens of millions of jobs. Unemployment remains stubbornly high by US standards, and workforce participation rates at their lowest level since xxxx, thus, exerting a downward pressure on wages and the highest income inequality levels in several decades.

As jobs grow scarcer in our society, the author argues, we will have to find a way to *separate income from work activity* if we are to avoid the specter of a hugely increasing number of adults without jobs or job prospects, and the mass poverty and political instability that would accompany that situation. This article proposes a radical alternative to that future: It proposes a co-operative economy, wherein workers and members of the community in which the productive facility reside *share ownership*.

Drawing on the theory of “binary economics” developed by Robert Ashford, but modifying it in certain crucial respects, the author argues that her model for a co-operative economy would create more jobs domestically, while it would also economically anchor our productive enterprises in our communities and regions. Specifically, the author shows how a cooperative economy, along the lines she is suggesting, would accomplish a number of crucial things: (1) It would disconnect work activity from income for members of the community, thereby ensuring a future income stream for many who would otherwise have little or no income, thus supporting the aggregate demand needed for the economy to grow, while reducing both poverty and inequality. (2) For those workers who work directly in the co-ops, it would provide genuine voice in the workplace. The workers/co-operative owners, together, would make workplace decisions and manage themselves. From this “work without bosses” would come dignity at work: the sense that one is self-managed and autonomous in providing a valuable product or service to others in the society. (3) Because this model splits the net earnings of the enterprise on an 80/20 basis, it greatly reduces poverty; yet, it sustains a material incentive for people to work, as working members of the co-operative will share or invest 80% of its net earnings. Ample findings from others’ studies reveal that workers’ co-operatives manage to financially reward their worker-owners much more than do conventionally owned enterprises in the same industry. (4) This model of shared ownership would develop in its participants a keener capacity for political voice, a view first put forward by J.S. Mill, and as a

result, would support broader democracy in the society at large. (5) This model of shared ownership would provide a basis for greater fellowship especially among the worker-owners, who would now be united in seeking a super-ordinate goal. Competition for ladder moves up a hierarchy make little sense when incumbency in positions within the enterprise are rotated, democratically voted upon and subject to recall. Settings of this type reward, and thus produce, openness, sustained dialogue, fairness in dealings with others, and good judgment. (6) Finally, this model of shared ownership would create greater happiness or well-being for its members, both in the community and in the workplace, freeing community owners from the necessity of finding work (that may not exist in the future) or starving, while providing a forum for sustained dialogue and camaraderie among those who do the work of the enterprise.

The author reviews and summarizes findings from many research studies in support of the above claims, and ends by arguing that only a shared ownership model operating in a market can accomplish the above, while countering the growing inequality and structural unemployment that plague our society. Only this sort of locally-based, shared ownership can take us to what she calls "Democracy 2.0".

#### **Justyna Deszcz-Tryhubczak (Wroclaw University, Poland)**

##### **Searching for Personal and Collective Freedom: Ursula Le Guin's *Powers* as Radical Fantasy**

Radical Fantasy, a term proposed by Fredric Jameson and developed by William Burling to define a fantastic genre characteristic of late postmodernism, is marked by an interest in ethnically diversified groups of the oppressed who collectively organize themselves in the often violent struggle to effect social change. The radical trend in fantasy has also developed within children's and young adult literature: in Radical Fantasy fiction for young readers, the combination of fantastic worlds in need of reform and a conception of a child-as-utopian who questions adult normativity by inspiring and leading collective action turns out to be an appealing medium for exploring mechanisms of oppression and possibilities of subversive actions. Such contents can be found in China Miéville's *Un Lun Dun* or Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*. Yet, there are texts which can qualify as Radical Fantasy even if at the same time they problematize processes of collective rebellion and young protagonists' involvement in them, including their participation in violent actions. In this presentation I examine the process of building a utopian world in *Powers*, the third volume of Ursula K. Le Guin's young adult fantasy series *The Annals of the Western Shore* (2004-2007). Focusing on the young protagonist's developing understanding of the complexities of attaining freedom, I argue that *Powers* can be seen as the author's critical intervention in the genre of Radical Fantasy in that it negates the idea of revolutions as inevitably culminating in the repetition of violence.

#### **Justyna Galant (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland)**

##### **Jens Lien's *The Bothersome Man* - On the Taste of Cake and Breaking the Cycle of Eternal Recurrence**

A toned-down, stylised vision of comfort, peace and security, *The Bothersome Man* proposes a land of satisfying moderation in lieu of a land of plenty. Fully exploring the comic potential of basic binary oppositions, Jens Lien creates a cinematic world whose every aspect is subject to estrangement and where self-inflicted violence tempts as an alternative to the tragicomic samsara of undramatic reality. Dissatisfied with the available standardised versions of life, the film's alienated protagonist Andreas is a tireless searcher for an alternative life less sterile and deficient. Itself a satire on a motionless, emotionless and eternal utopia, the film transpires as a kinetic dystopia where lack of movement and change describes a reality too bothersome to accept.

#### **Katarzyna Baran (Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona, Spain)**

##### **Read and Don't Forget the Past: Non-Violent Strategies in Recent Young Adult Dystopias**

Dystopian literature for young adults and children is often considered to have similar effects to fairy tales. Critics of children's literature claim that both genres, through the use of metaphor and extrapolation, make their readers critically aware and offer them guidelines through existing power relations. Such writings manifest that the status quo is not a stable construct and that once it has been challenged a new order can be established. Therefore, dystopian literature for young adults can help them to raise their political and social consciousness.

Recently there has been an unprecedented upsurge of interest in young adult dystopian fiction with numerous novels achieving bestseller status. Most of these novels include violence as part of the solution to the problems haunting the worlds portrayed in them. This paper analyses three novels: Lois Lowry's *The Giver* (1993), Rodman Philbrick's *The Last Book in the Universe* (2002) and Ursula K. Le Guin's *Voices* (2006). All of them break this pattern and opt for non-violent strategies instead of resorting to force and aggression in endeavours to bring down the oppressive rule. They also warn against dangers of

cultural amnesia and prove that the past, memory and literacy can be empowering and trigger off resistance and change.

**Katarzyna Pisarska (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland)**

#### **Defending Olympus: Utopia, Posthumanity and (Non)Violence in the *Appleseed* films**

This paper explores the theme of (non)violence in the utopian context as presented in two Japanese animated features, *Appleseed* (2004) and *Appleseed: Ex Machina* (2007). Set in the twenty-second century, the films depict Earth in the aftermath of a nonnuclear global war which decimated its population and put the life of the planet itself in danger. In this post-apocalyptic world the haven of peace and security can be found in Olympus, a gigantic city-state where men, cyborgs and human clones called bioroids live side by side. However, the utopia of Olympus, which was intended as a refuge from the world of violence, turns out to be shaken by internal political conflicts and inspired terrorist attacks, which call into question Olympus's initially peaceful purpose.

It is my belief that while advocating the benefits of technological development which will eventually allow humans to transcend their biological limitations and form a posthuman utopia of peace and order, the *Appleseed* films simultaneously offer a critique of techno-political hegemony and the double-edged power of surveillance and control. By the same token, the films point to human individuality as having the potential to create utopian enclaves in the conflicted world and, simultaneously, as being conducive to violence and dystopian chaos. Paradoxically, the bioroids of *Appleseed*, "who were designed never to feel anger or hatred," and thus make perfect politicians and mediators, eventually become perfect soldiers whose judgment is not clouded by extreme emotions. As such, the *Appleseed* films communicate an anti-utopian message, disproving man's pacifist dreams by showing violence as destructive yet indispensable in protecting and making possible the culture of peace.

**Kenneth Hanshew (University of Regensburg, Germany)**

#### **Robot (R)Evolution: K. Čapek – A. Tolstoy**

Karel Čapek's *Rossum's Universal Robots* aka *RUR* may not be the first science fiction drama – that honor goes to Dragutin Ilić's *Posle milijon godina* [*In a Million Years*] (1889) – but it did introduce the word robot to the world and is the most famous science fiction drama, translated immediately into more than thirty languages and staged repeatedly to this day. Less known is the fact that Čapek's play inspired the Russian science fiction writer Aleksey Tolstoy, later famous for *Aelita*, to write his own play about revolutionary robots, *Bunt mashin* [*The Revolt of the Machines*] shortly after *RUR*'s debut. The later play's many similarities to *RUR*, which caused Maxim Gorky to view it as an act of plagiarism, did not help *Revolt* to fame even when Russian spectators did not know Čapek's play. *Revolt* was quickly forgotten and even excluded from editions of A. Tolstoy's complete works. The proposed paper endeavors to ascertain this overlooked play's relationship to *RUR* as an adaptation to both determine the reason for *Revolt*'s fall into oblivion and to explain *RUR*'s longevity. The study's premise is that Tolstoy's failing is not to be found primarily in either overt plagiarism nor in too great a dependence on *RUR* (Minc-Malevich), but rather in his shift from robot evolution to revolution, in his abandonment of Čapek's relativism for unambiguous politics, as well as in his comparative lack of attention to aesthetics.

**Krzysztof M. Maj (Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland)**

#### **March of the Automatons. Channelling the Violence in Robotised Societies**

It is widely known that any dystopian society is usually in a desperate need of designing various safety valves (Orwell's "Two Minutes of Hatred" or Lem's "rage inhibitors [*szatochtony*]") to dissolve any constraints bestowed upon insubordinate citizens. In this paper I will show possible foundations of this tradition in Polish dystopian fiction, pivoted around the so called "procrustics", a term coined by Stanisław Lem in *Eden* to denote a practice of "tailoring human nature to pre-established theories". Lem's "nanotechnological" utopia from his *Observation on the Spot* [*Wizja lokalna*], Janusz A. Zajdel's short story *869113325*, or Adam Wiśniewski's (Snerg's) novel *Robot*, express grave reservations about robots, machines, automatons, and robotised (mechanised, automated) societies in general, showing possible consequences of the "vendor lock-in" impact of the machines on their own creators—long before *The Matrix* or any contemporary cyberpunk narrative of that ilk. This "vendor lock-in" mechanism, which within economics denotes creating artificial demand for a product, quite appropriately describes a trap which awaits anyone willing to resolve the conflict between our need for non-violence and simultaneous inefficiency in fulfilling that utopian desire. And so, in Snerg's *Robot* the eponymous non-human being tries to solve the mystery of the world ruled by the Mechanism that drains human knowledge, in Zajdel's *869113325* an abandoned citizen realizes his dependence and full reliance on automated household which forces him to exercise vacuously on income-generating "work-machine [*pracmaszyna*]", and, last but not

least, in Lem's *Observation on the Spot* the problem of machines controlling machines once again recalls the paradox of the watchman (*quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*).

**Lars R. Vadjina (Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen, Germany)**

#### **Jimmy Carter - A Non-Violent Utopian?**

Jimmy Carter, the 39th President of the United States was not famous for taking violent or even military approaches to solve conflicts or problems. He relied on his ability to negotiate and resolve conflicts peacefully. He is a lifelong proponent for human rights and peace. The description "one of the greatest humanitarians of our time" would fit the 2002 Nobel Prize winner very well.

At a time when solar panels were used only by NASA or by science fiction authors in novels he had those put up on the roof of the White House. Also, he forced a limit on gas consumption on cars manufactured for the US market when the American Way included V8 engines.

To understand President Carter it is important to know where he came from, who he considered his role models and what shaped him to become such a different president with such a different but highly moral philosophy and values. He can certainly be considered a non-violent president and thinker with utopian ideas which influenced the following generations.

**Lucifer Hung (Shih Hsin University, Taiwan)**

#### **The Multiple-Faceted Lens of Queer Gender Extrapolation and the Dialectical Engagement of (Non-)Violent Transformations in Joanna Russ' Science Fiction Writings**

This paper concentrates on exploring multiple dimensions of queer genders and sexualities presented in Joanna Russ' science fiction writing. My core argument will articulate its genealogy and contextualization both within and without contemporary queer studies and SF discourse. Russ' characters embed rich non-normative gender expressions and female masculinity; they disrupt, destroy, and re-write the status-quo of gender representations in English science fiction realm. By constructing these textual worlds and anti-normalized characters, stories and novels by Russ continue to come out as striking (and sometimes aggressive) examples to wrestle with gender and social norms and request innovative analysis outside regular domains of old-guard heterosexual feminism. By investigating socio-cultural-sexual dynamics of Russ' writings, I will extrapolate cultural and political agendas in new wave SF and gender politics since the 1960's, in which gender imaginations of feminist science fiction both forge habitation to include barely recognized queer masculinity in speculative fiction and determine ideological arguments on queer SF.

Thus, my analysis on transgender masculinity in Russ' writing will argue for her avant-garde and fantastic narratives to build on paradigm shifting of vibrant and "violent" female characters and social formations in the SF venue. These embodiments have been born to feminist SF since the beginning of the new wave movement and their rich diversity and resplendent incarnations have transformed normative gender politics in profound ways. Russ performed actively as a queer SF novelist and has enriched multiple female-ness to the extent that it eventually brings out the genesis of queer masculine archetypes in science fiction and fantasy writings.

**Ludmiła Gruszewska-Blaim (University of Gdańsk, Poland)**

#### **"We May Have to Torture Him in Room 101, Said Julia." The Uses of Dystopian Classics in Fan Fiction**

Dystopian imagery popularized by the matrix novels of the genre, such as *Brave New World*, *Animal Farm*, *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, *A Clockwork Orange*, inspires not only contemporary professional (screen) writers, who construct their own dystopias referencing the classic source texts, but also countless unprofessional fiction scribblers motivated by popular culture. Among samples of fanfiction that the proposed paper will analyse, the majority constitute an interesting material for the study of different treatments of dystopian conventions by authors whose priority is to pay tribute to, alter, expand, or correct the source text as (re-)constructed on the basis of adaptations or cultural equivalents, e.g. key-words, key-images, quotes, names, titles, etc.

**Lyman Tower Sargent (University of Missouri-St. Louis, USA)**

#### **Everyday Life in Utopia: Other People/Relationships**

Utopias tend to focus on institutions rather than the way people live their daily lives. In this paper I look at one aspect of those daily lives, relations with the other people in utopia. Given the time available, I discuss five topics, friendship, neighbors and neighborhoods, communication with others, sex, marriage, and divorce, and death.

**Magalie Fleurot (Bordeaux University, France)**

**Peace and Love in the 19th Century: Charles Fourier's Industrial Armies as "Benevolent" Instruments of Construction**

In *Anti-Oedipus*, Gilles Deleuze called men "desiring machines" and believed that their production is triggered by desire and that their lives can be built - and reclaimed - thanks to the same process. More than a century before Gilles Deleuze, Charles Fourier, the French utopian thinker, claimed exactly the same and underlined the dangers of repressing desire. In his works, he described a future society where all human passions, good or bad, would no longer be subdued but channeled and used to serve that society. That is how sexual passions cease to be the targets of moral reprobation and are utilized as an incentive, especially in the case of the Army. Indeed, in the future, young men and women will desire to be part of military groups and thus industrial armies will be formed according to sexual and amorous tastes. Those regiments would no longer be instruments of destruction and warfare but would be sent around the world to build bridges, fertilize deserts and become "benevolent" armies. We will first focus on the non-violent philosophy of Charles Fourier, in the very organization of what he called "series". We will then proceed to the more specific theme of the Industrial Armies and to their link with the romantic policy. Our final analysis will lead us to the actual themes of peace and love in the realization of Fourier's theories, in France and abroad.

**Mahmood Nawzad Khoshnaw (University of Leicester, UK)**

**Plato: The Making of a Greek Utopia in Greece**

Plato's *Republic*, which marks the inception of the utopian genre, is a city born out of necessity, and proves that 'justice', at both the individual and the state levels, could be obtained and maintained. However, as the dialogue evolves between Plato and his interlocutors, it becomes evident that the nature of the *Republic* does not permit or encourage its expansion and domination over other cities. This paper seeks to demonstrate that whilst the *Republic* was intended to serve as an exemplar for the Hellenistic world, it was by no means a universal recommendation for all worlds and all times. The city, far from being universal, is Greek, and particularly designed to suit Greek citizens of the time despite its use of universal values to prove its applicability and validity. Indeed, Plato himself clearly articulates his rejection of expansionist and colonialist trends. This paper draws on Plato's own words to argue that the *Republic*, being the first utopia, is not intended as a 'universalist' or as a 'colonialist' tool, as a number of critics have claimed that these ambitions characterise the utopian genre since its inception.

**Maja Wojdyło (University of Gdańsk, Poland)**

**From Intergender Abuse to Technogender Non-Violence. Sexual Revolution in *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* by David Foster Wallace**

The title of the thirty four short stories collected in *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* aptly summarizes their content: all of them depict different kinds of hideousness, most often displayed within the context of late twentieth century intergender relationships. Claiming that David Foster Wallace signals thematic, ideological and spatio-temporal continuity between his stories, the proposed paper will explore elements of violence in the portrayed relationships, to further focus on the non-violent technogender vision of a dystopian future depicted in the short story entitled "Datum Centurio". As the dystopian narrative is a fictionalized three-page long dictionary entry that defines the concept of 'date', the paper will analyze not only the phraseological plane of the text but also its specific page layout which seems to considerably influence the reader's expectations. It will be argued that the assumed discursive neutrality (i.e. non-violent use of language) resulting from the formal (e.g. graphic) attributes of the text is defied by violence manifested on the phraseological and, by extension, ideological planes. Dystopian undertones of the technogender vision run parallel to violence of non-violence.

**Manuela Salau Brasil (Ponta Grossa State University, Brazil)**

**Utopia and Nonviolence in Brazilian Universities: The Case of the Incubator for Solidary Enterprises (IESol/UEPG)**

Amidst the crises of the 1990s in Brazil, whose cruellest outgrowth was the escalation of unemployment and poverty, a movement arose in the universities that sought not only to tackle the issue academically but also to take action in order to mitigate the most direct consequences of the crises and to propose profound changes in society. This movement originated the "Technological Incubators of Popular Cooperatives", currently with more than 70 units throughout Brazil, the purpose of which is to contribute to the construction and invigoration of the foundations of an anticapitalist form of economy: solidarity economy. To accomplish this, incubators follow and assist groups of workers in generating employment and income in an interdisciplinary initiative addressing both the economic dimension and the furtherance

of a different way of living and interacting in society. The present paper explores the relationship of solidarity economy with the incubators in Brazil and proceeds to examine one of them in particular: the “Incubator of Solidary Enterprises” (IESol) of Ponta Grossa State University (UEPG), Brazil. This analysis consists of describing the work methodology of IESol, the groups it assists, the most relevant achievements and the major challenges in the seven years it has been operating. Lastly, based on this experience, considerations are made concerning to what extent Brazilian university-based incubators represent spaces not only for nonviolent resistance but also for the social production of utopias, with repercussions that transcend the academia and impact society as a whole.

#### **Maria Cândida Zamith Silva (Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto, Portugal)**

##### **William Morris and *News from Nowhere*: The Pursuit of a Dream of Beauty and Nonviolence**

William Morris was always true to his ideals. He was, persistently, the most altruistic visionary of the nineteenth century. In his “concrete” Utopia he did not depict an imagined world, but tried to describe a prophetic view of what his dear London might become when utilitarianism and competition were put aside and everybody could work with pleasure, and enjoy the beauties of life in peace.

Always a pacifist and a dreamer, Morris dedicated his whole life to fight, with his word, his money and his example, to promote better conditions of happiness to the working classes, based in the belief of the benefits that “a change of the basis of society” would bring, together with a return to Nature and to the communal life and comradeship of the Middle Ages.

Considered by some as a kind of proto-communist, in fact he did not think of political solutions until he had repeatedly failed to create beautiful personalized household commodities, clothes, decorations, furniture or housing at a cost accessible to the budgets of the lower classes.

It is my contention to follow briefly Morris’s life and doings, and thereafter I will focus on the final jewel of the legacy of his altruistic dream: *News from Nowhere*. Such a dream remains, unfortunately, in the realm of Utopia, but it is unquestionable that any society would greatly profit by following most of his advices and examples.

#### **Maria Odette Canivell (James Madison University, USA)**

##### **“The Legend of the Treasure of the Florid Place”: A Dystopian View of the Conquest**

Miguel Angel Asturias’ seminal work *Legends of Guatemala* is a collection of stories and legends that combine a Surrealist approach with Magical Realist elements.

Like its hybrid literary styles, *Legends* also evinces an amalgam of characters and settings that are steeped in the Spanish-colonial lore and the Pre-Columbian Maya heritage. In effect, some of the stories take place in convents, where nuns are possessed by the devil, while others harken back to the beginning of the colonial period, even if they narrate stories about Maya history and pre-Columbian traditions.

The “Legend of the Treasure of the Florid Place,” one of the narratives in *Legends of Guatemala*, begins the day that the conquistadores arrived in Guatemala, and presents to the reader a dystopian view of the Conquest, following in the tradition of Bartolomé de Las Casas: *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, the “memorial” which paved the way for the infamous Spanish *Black Legend*.

Tracing the footsteps of Las Casas, Asturias paints the picture of an idyllic society which, in a “day that lasted many centuries” turns from a utopian, orderly, and innocent civilization, into a dystopian nightmare, one which, the “Cuco de los sueños,” the Nightmareman Asturias introduces as his literary alter ego, would have been proud to call hell.

In my essay I will discuss how Asturias and Las Casas use literature to effect political change, using both *Legends of Guatemala*, and in particular the “Legend of the Treasure of the Florid Place,” and de Las Casas historical/literary account. Both written narratives, detailing the plight of the indigenous population, confront military power with the might of the pen and resulted in a non-violent “concientización” (awareness) of the need to influence the political decisions, which had resulted in the mishandling of the population of the New World.

#### **Maria Varsam (Independent Scholar)**

##### **Healing Memory? Overcoming the Trauma of History in Octavia E. Butler’s *Kindred***

Octavia E. Butler’s *Kindred* can be characterized as a neo-slave narrative which borrows from the dystopian genre to explore issues of history and memory in order to illustrate the continuing effects that the legacy of slavery has on natal ties in contemporary society. In parallel narratives that intersect violently, Butler re-examines vertical relationships between women in slave society as well as horizontal relationships between master and slave to question stereotypes which burden the present as a result of the dominant official history written from the masters’ point of view and accepted as the only true version of slavery’s past. By bringing to the surface traumatic events of the slave’s experience, Butler’s *Kindred*

provides a 'working through' of both personal and social trauma in order to create a narrative of resolution for the slave's and master's descendants which leads both to a new and better understanding of self and other. This paper will utilize trauma theory based on Freud's early writings and developed by Cathy Caruth and others to trace the process by which the traumatic legacy of slavery continues to poison the present but simultaneously works as a catalyst for the creation of a new narrative of self and society. The intersection of critical dystopia and neo-slave narrative is the ideal – non-violent – solution to investigate, re-interpret and depose of memories which have proven traumatic for race relations in the present. Through this new narrative, personal identity and official history are transformed through a more honest understanding of the past which acknowledges its traumatic violence but is not constituted by it.

**Marta Komsta (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland)**

**The Carnival and the Bomb in Richard Lester's *The Bed-Sitting Room***

*The Bed-Sitting Room*, Richard Lester's 1969 cinematic curio, is often considered a precursor to the work of Monty Python owing to its intensely absurdist aura that allowed some of the critics to classify the picture as a nonsensical farce. Set in the post-nuclear wasteland formerly known as London, the film consists of a series of campy sketches structured loosely around the main love plot which involves some of the characters changing into a wardrobe, parrot or the eponymous bedsit.

In effect, what comes to the fore is the intrinsically (post-) carnivalesque essence of the film in question highlighted by the all-encompassing corrosion of meaning in the world after the end. I want therefore to argue that Lester's work is a particularly intriguing example of a post-apocalyptic dystopia grounded in a relentless serio-comic attitude to the event of global annihilation. The topsy-turvy reality created by the Bomb is thus made evident in its spatial arrangement as the grotesque body of the land finds its counterpart in the numerous instances of surreal transformations that signify the omnipresent semiotic havoc.

**Mary E. B. Green (Ryerson University, Toronto, Canada)**

**Lost Utopia, the Trojan War, Helen, and Twentieth Century Poetry**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Homeric legend of the Achaean-Trojan war enjoyed preeminence as a subject in poetry after the First World War – mostly because the destruction caused by the First World War was so often likened to that of the Trojan War, the archetypal war of Western civilization. For many writers, the sense of hope experienced at the turn of the century for a better world, for a new utopia was vanquished; now a devastated dream. Poets such as W.B. Yeats, Ezra Pound, Edwin Muir, Rupert Brooke, and Robinson Jeffers, to name a few, all have appropriated classical figures, events and motifs from the Trojan saga to express and explore the effect(s) of war in their own century, often depicting a rather dim, grim, 'unheroic,' even 'anti-heroic' portrayal of post-war circumstances in our dystopic world. Women poets also, to use Adrienne Rich's term, "re-vision" mythic female figures of war, employing the Trojan War as a vehicle for personal expression. As Alicia Ostriker notes, the Trojan War stands as a prototype not only for historic conflict but also for all failures in human self-knowledge. Thus while linguistically and culturally diverse, what poets such as Parker, Pastan, Atwood, Gluck, to name a few, have in common is their protest of heroic ideals, war, inequality and injustice in general, as they re-vision characters such as Leda, Helen, and Cassandra.

**Matthew Wilson (Royal Holloway, University of London, UK)**

**Frederic Harrison, a Utopian Positivist Sociologist**

To historians of the Victorian era, Frederic Harrison (1831-1923) was an intellectual of many vocations. He is remembered as a social investigator, defender of trade unionism, ardent anti-imperialist and proponent of nonviolent social reorganisation. This essay connects these activities to Harrison's vocation as a Positivist sociologist. My aim is to demonstrate how his lifework supported the industrial and intellectual aspects of Auguste Comte's utopia, the Occidental Republic. We will therefore begin with a critical account of Comte's republic, which is found in his four-volume *System of Positive Polity* (1848-54). Comte's British followers thought of this work as a sociological treatise for realising utopian ideals. Harrison came to believe, as such, that the missing link between squalid manufacturing centres and the realisation of idyllic, virtuous republics was the united body of labour. To legitimise, systematise and strengthen the institution of trade unionism, he collected sociological 'facts' relating to working conditions and unionist activities throughout the nation. His industrial survey findings appeared in the popular press, scientific journals and Royal Commission proceedings. Via press and platform, Harrison delivered educational lectures to unite workers under the banner of the scientific creed of Positivism. He relayed the notion that the working mass could orient the focus of the British aristocracy away from offshore exploits

to a civilising mission at home. We will see that Harrison thought of his surveys of towns past and present, advocacy of trade unionism and popular education lectures, as contributions to the peaceful realisation an ideal Positivist city.

**Michael Jackson (University of Sydney, Australia)**  
**King Utopos and Niccolò Machiavelli in Making "Utopia"**

Saint Thomas More (1478-1535) is the godfather of utopia since coining the word in his book *Utopia* (1516). In contrast Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) has an unalloyed reputation for evil. The adjective 'Machiavellian' and the noun 'Machiavellianism' are in daily to summon dark images. Despite these polar reputations, Machiavelli and More have much in common. We argue that the common ground between their political theories rests on the belief that politics has a logic of its own. Both saint and 'devil' depart from conventional morality. Politics is the community of communities and its foundation and perpetuation are paramount and doubtful in a hostile world. By making Utopia a remote island More solved some of the political problems Machiavelli's Florence could not avoid. Italy was a battlefield and Machiavelli's purpose was far more immediate than the gentle edification of satire; it was to free *Signora Italia* from its own divisions and foreign interventions. We conclude that *The Prince* might reveal the true story of how King Utopos founded Utopia in More's book *Utopia*. While expressing it in different ways, both Machiavelli and More knew that good can come from evil. Equally, Machiavelli's reputed political realism recognizes the reality of morality, loyalty, honour, and respect, while the saintly More made a case for very unsaintly practices.

**Nainu Yang (National Kaohsiung Normal University, Taiwan)**  
**Parable of the Talents and the Necessity of Violence**

In Octavia E. Butler's *Parable* series, although it seems that the protagonist Lauren attempts to build a utopian community with the aid of a new religion she created based on her principles of democracy and nonviolence, Lauren never gave up utilizing the means of violence to protect herself and her community. Actually, the fact that the destruction of the Earthseed community at the beginning of *Parable of the Talents* brings up a question whether the dream of a utopian community based on the principle of nonviolence is feasible. The story leads us to examine the violence of the law and how to resist it. Under normal circumstances, the regulation of law gives people restraints about what to do and not to do. The ultimate punishment of the one who is guilty deprives him or her of their civil rights. To borrow Giorgio Agamben's terms, the person is under the condition of bare life to a certain degree. However, the problem is, when the law turns into a form of violence, that is, when the law becomes the tool of a certain social group to achieve its goal, it forces the ones who refuse to obey its goal to submit themselves to the sovereign power by depriving them of all their civil rights, leaving them in the status of bare life. That is what happened in *Parable of the Talents*. Lauren's reaction to the violence of the law is violence. Under the extreme condition, the relationship between change and law is dynamic as well as transcendental. In other words, the change is possible only when it lays itself outside the law. *The Parable of the Talents* gives us an exemplar to examine the necessity of violence in the perspective of law and change.

**Natalya Domina (Western University, Canada)**  
**The Fragmentary Flight from History: Victor Pelevin's Violent Entry into the Non-Violent Void**

Unlike Vladimir Putin, who is now actively pursuing his violent utopian project, Victor Pelevin, in his 1996 dystopian novel *The Clay Machine-Gun*, models a Russian non-violent literary utopia. Pelevin's ultimate futuristic project for Russia is a void that is achieved through arranging and re-arranging various historical fragments.

This paper examines how the violent actions of Pelevin's four scenarios, which aim to arrive at the non-violent utopia, are ruled by the questions of means and ends. In addition, the paper discusses how the violent fragmentariness of the form itself, which Pelevin uses as the main technique, tends to constantly force the text to collapse, to become that very void that the main character gets to discover. This fits quite well with the theme of the Russian cultural disintegration after the 1917 Russian Revolution and after the downfall of the Soviet Union. I argue that it is this fragmentariness that paradoxically bridges the gap between the Russian "before" and "after" and, thus, gives Pelevin's dystopia a new meaning by introducing a new function, a function not prophetic, but rather pacifying.

**Nicole Pohl (Oxford Brookes University, UK)**  
**The Deliverance of Evil: Utopia and Evil**

My paper traces the problem of evil in utopia from Thomas More to the Marquis de Sade. Utopian thought recognizes human imperfection and the basic dualism in human nature. Utopias are discourses on human

nature and the possibility of a better human society rather than simply blueprints of perfection, indeed they imagine an imperfect utopia, or, differently put, a utopia suited for imperfect creatures. With examples from early modern to Enlightenment utopias, I will argue that the question that arises in utopian thought is not if evil exists but how to deliver us from evil.

**Oddvar Holmesland (University of Agder, Norway)**  
**Nonviolence and Pleasure in Thomas More's *Utopia***

The conflicting interests of individual freedom and institutional order in Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) have never ceased to engage critics. Many see the work as advocating a hegemonic communist state, and some a sternly puritanical regime. Stephen Greenblatt's recent book *The Swerve* (2011) adds to these approaches, revealing a recognizable position: there is no pre-social self, for the self is the product of ideology, of power, constructed according to publicly accepted standards. Greenblatt particularly stresses the disciplining function of religion through the Utopians' fear of punishment in the afterlife.

Yet this stress on fear contradicts the Utopians' basic concern which is "to lead a life as free of anxiety . . . as possible," because, beyond ideology, "nature herself prescribes . . . pleasure, as the goal of our actions." That fear of punishment in the afterlife should incite people to live pleasantly in this life, does not make sense. The pursuit of pleasure must rather be viewed as a defence against fear.

This paper traces More's definition of pleasure to Epicurean philosophy. It will explore how More seeks to reconcile freedom and order through the Epicurean idea of pleasure as *ataraxia* (tranquillity/equanimity).

**Olga Pavlova (Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic)**  
**When Does Fiction Start to Be Dystopian?**

Dystopian literature can be seen in different ways. Some people include it into the utopian genre, sometimes it is a type of sci-fi. According to Umberto Eco, a utopia is a possible world which is parallel to ours but very often inaccessible.

The society displayed in utopian or dystopian novels is not identical to the real one, but the difference always depends on which aspect of life these books are focusing on. The fiction world only proposes the models by which social relations should be arranged. Fictional "decoration" (technical achievements and scientific progress) becomes a part of the novel's system, the author of the utopias or dystopias can afford to be more carried away by their imagination, but it never goes farther to exceed "limits" of the world physically possibilities.

At the same time, we must always remember, that the boundaries between positive and negative utopias is not sharp. Most of the utopias are deterrent examples, this means that they perform the same function as in other cases the negative utopia. So when does fiction start to be dystopian? I will try to answer this question in this study.

**Patricia Sørensen (University of Gdańsk, Poland)**  
**Heaven, Hell and All in Between: Utopia, Dystopia and Mennipean Satire in *A Voyage to the World in the Centre of the Earth***

The paper offers an analysis of the complex interplay between utopian, dystopian, and satirical elements in the anonymous 18<sup>th</sup> century utopia *A Voyage to the World in the Centre of the Earth*, which introduces a variety of different worlds: from the essentially corrupt contemporary England, through a radically non-violent utopia beneath the earth's surface comprising a micro-dystopia of earthlings within its boundaries, to peculiar fantastic worlds situated in outer space. All these worlds are employed as a way of realizing the dominant satirical function counterbalanced with a literally unreachable model of an almost perfect society.

**Patrycja Podgajna (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Poland)**  
**Slapstick as a Utopian Weapon in Juliusz Machulski's *Embassy* (2013)**

The proposed paper seeks to examine the ways of projecting utopia by neutralizing violence inscribed in the Nazi totalitarian system by employing the elements of humour and slapstick comedy in Juliusz Machulski's recent film *Embassy* (2013). Set alternately in contemporary and wartime Warsaw, the film exemplifies historical counterfactual which centers on the hypothetical alteration of the real-world history and the projection of radically alternative events. In Juliusz Machulski's film, the historically subversive substitution of the factual involves the creation of a counterfactual character of Adolf Hitler as well as an alternate course of history, in which the atrocities and mass violence of World War II had never occurred. This alternative scenario is encapsulated in the utopian projection of Polish and Jewish communities coexisting peacefully in a non-destroyed Warsaw. A central part of the argument is that the projection of

this utopian vision is realized by the employment of slapstick comedy and humor which serve a two-fold function. While intratextually they facilitate the projection of a better, yet counterfactual future world, extratextually the neutralization of violent actions and symbols through slapstick and ridicule serves an educational purpose, i.e. the diffusion of fascination with pro-Nazi ideology and organizations.

**Paul Davis (University of Worcester, UK)**

**Douglas Wotherspoon (University of Worcester, UK)**

### **Producing Hope through Practice. The Promise of Expansionist Pragmatism in Generating New Everyday Utopias**

This paper uses pragmatist thinking to reconsider the status of utopian projects. The argument begins by noting the defensive attitudes of many utopian advocates. This defensiveness appears due to two sentiments: that many political movements remain hostile to utopias; and that the capacity of societies to generate new utopias may be declining. Focussing on the latter assertion, the argument notes that many utopias remain uncounted, so how is falling generative capacity to be gauged? It is asserted instead that the capacity of societies to generate new utopias remains undimmed. Yet, both the mechanisms through which utopian production is done, and the qualities of the utopias themselves need further deciphering if they are not to be overlooked.

This argument builds on Gardiner's (2004) idea of everyday utopianism, reinterpreted using the network pragmatism associated with Latour (1999). Through this lens, two examples of the playing out of everyday utopias are explored. These relate to ongoing extensions of democratic representation to non-humans; and to increasingly assertive claims to moral conduct in making war through autonomising machines. Using the lessons of these examples, four qualification requirements for a network pragmatist reading of everyday utopias are generated and contrasted with conventional utopias. These qualifications relate to: grandeur, reflexivity, normalisation and extensionism. Taken together, these qualification requirements may function as a specific test for utopias to counter ubiquitous market tests and support a specifically utopian ontological politics.

**Peter Evans (University of Bristol, UK)**

### **Violence and Revolution in Late 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Socialist Utopian Literature**

Socialism is often conceived in terms of reformist as against revolutionary strands. Reform evokes peaceful approaches: lawful, constitutional, and often described as evolutionary, as against revolutionary. Revolution meanwhile often evokes violence, and if not armed insurrection and the overthrow of governments, then at least direct seizure of political power. Yet in the socialist utopias of the late nineteenth century, this was not how revolution, or indeed evolution, were generally conceived. Through several case studies, this paper engages with the question of what their approach therefore was?

In general their approach to revolution was closer to that of Marx than Blanqui. They posited the development of socialism from what they perceived as the evolutionary laws of history, predicated on both the economic Industrial Revolution, and a shift in mental conceptions and psychology compared to the "Copernican Revolution". Unlike Marx however, these authors wanted to reason out how the socialist system would look ahead of time, deploying these images in the service of education and proselytisation.

As with the American Fourierists and Associationists, they generally maintained an approach of "peaceful revolution". Whilst insurrection and the overthrow of governments was certainly understood as political revolution, these socialists desired social revolution. For socialists from a number of outlooks, strictly political revolution was only a first step, necessary insofar as it would secure the democratic republic – a prerequisite to, and means of effecting, a transformation of society understood as "revolutionary". Non-violent and violent approaches thus depended on national context, but revolution was always the aim.

**Peter Sands (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA)**

### **Violence and Nonviolence in U.S. Utopian Fiction and Film**

U.S. utopian fictions from the early Republic to the present day employ a range of narrative strategies to monitor and control normal human behaviors, including violence. Those strategies sometimes mask highly coercive social structures, such as those in Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, or address problems of state and personal violence consequent upon economic and social upheaval, as in Octavia Butler's *Parable of the Sower* and *Parable of the Talents*. Indeed, as utopian fiction matured in the new nation, its narratives moved from depicting thoroughly repressed violence (Mary Griffith's *Three Hundred Years Hence*) to state-sanctioned coercion and bodily discipline (Bellamy) and into more psychologically nuanced direct confrontation with the problem of violence (Gilman's *Herland* and Lewis's *It Can't Happen Here*). By the end of the nineteenth century, the advent of the dystopian novel in Ignatius Donnelly's

*Caesar's Column* put violence front and center. But while contemporary utopian, and especially dystopian, fiction presents violence as part of the rich tapestry of human behavior, few offer critical solutions to the problem. This paper argues that Alex Rivera's 2008 film, *Sleep Dealer*, presents a workable anti-violence solution that draws on contemporary alt-globalization activism. Rivera's film privileges community action over individual response, suggesting ways in which small nonviolent actions can combat the larger, impersonal predations of capital in a coming age of statelessness and globality. This paper situates Rivera's film in the historical trajectory of U.S. Utopian literature and film and argues that it presents a critical utopian narrative very much of the present moment.

**Regina Martin (Denison University, USA)**

**Post-Work Politics and Professional Society in *The Buddha of Suburbia***

In *The Problem with Work* (2012), Kathi Weeks joins the call for a post-work political practice. Her project is a self-described utopian one, but the solutions she proposes—a guaranteed basic income and the 6-hour work day—fall short of the utopian horizon of a fundamentally restructured work culture that offers an alternative to our current “work society.” In this paper, I argue that reading Hanif Kureishi's *The Buddha of Suburbia* (1991) through the lens of Weeks's polemic helps us to better understand the limitations of her argument. While not itself a utopian novel, *Buddha* nevertheless provides us with a character who engages in a practice of utopian thinking and espouses a post-work politics. Haroon, the title's “buddha of suburbia,” counsils his professional-class followers to refuse work, but to do so, they will also need to abandon the accoutrements that identify them with professional-class status. In other words, they will have to abandon the practices of consumption that mark them as professional class. Kureishi's novel exposes the ways in which the value placed on work in our “work society” is a function of professional class hegemony, which is produced and reproduced via a peculiar configuration of consumption practices. Thus, in order to imagine a post-work politics, Kureishi's novel suggests that we will also need to imagine a post-consumption politics.

**Rev. Marvin E. Ceynar (Retired, USA)**

**How One Czech Fit into a German Utopian Village**

Seven ways I moved from outsider to insider status: reflections on seven decades of my Amana Colonies (Iowa, U.S.A.) communal experience--my parents' role, hard work, education, singing, strong friendships, religion, and a good reputation.

**Ronny Hardliz (Middlesex University, London, UK)**

**Building Body: Non-Construction as Nonviolent Utopian Spatial Embodiment**

This paper will take Michel Foucault's *Le Corps Utopique* as the starting point for an exploration of situated performative practice as a site of embodied spatial utopia, particularly with regard to the practice of dissertation-writing or thesis-building in the field of artistic research. Myself being a PhD candidate in this field the paper will ‘per force’ become an experimental lecture performance for testing the neologism Non-Construction that serves as the key ‘hole’ in the construct of my dissertation ‘*wall sandwich*’ – *The Architectural in Art Practice from Destruction to Non-Construction* (working title), intended to produce an original determination of ‘the architectural’ for art practice. Beyond this development of utopia as a site of embodied and situated spatial (architectural art) practice, as opposed to placing utopia outside the body, the paper will draw on Herman Melville's *Bartleby the Scrivener* in order to further develop on the nonviolent quality of such embodied utopia, thus qualifying Non-Construction in contrast to violent destruction. Following Giorgio Agamben's reading of *Bartleby* as a radical ‘decreation’ from live into pure state of potentiality the paper will note some key passages in Melville's text that focus on the body as the site of utopia. These will allow for a comprehension of Non-Construction as nonviolence existing beyond the dichotomy of destruction and creation, which continues to be the main instrument of a now globalized interest driven society. Rather than (violent) resistance *Bartleby*'s formula ‘I'd prefer not to’ then must be seen as an immeasurable mirrored model of our consumed lives.

**Ryszard W. Wolny (University of Opole, Poland)**

**Jerzy Kosinski's *The Painted Bird* as a Post-War Eastern European Dystopia**

Jerzy Kosinski's *The Painted Bird* stirred a furore in the USA shortly after its publication in the 1960s with its explicit presentation of premeditated crimes, horrors and human annihilation of the Jewish population in Eastern and Central Europe. The response from the then Polish authorities was a ban imposed on the novel and any information on its author, the Polish-born Jewish emigrant to the U.S. lifted only after the democratic changes in Eastern Europe in 1989.

Now, with the upsurge of violence in Ukraine and elsewhere in the East, the problem of Eastern and Central Europe as the territory of destruction and human annihilation comes back with all its atrocities. Therefore, the aim of my presentation will be to pose a question whether Kosinski's depictions of Poland and Polish people in his novel were just defamatory or close to the truth about Eastern Europe as a whole (Auschwitz, Birkenau, Katyn 1940, Prague 1968 or Budapest 1956).

**Shashi Khurana (University of Delhi, India)**

#### **Experiments with Non-Violence: A Literary Representation**

In India, non-violence is looked upon as a home-grown instrument spearheaded by Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi who was glorified into a "Mahatma" (Great Soul) figure and icon. Gandhi's experiments with non-violence were initiated as a movement initially to resist oppression in South Africa. As an instrument of resistance the movement engaged itself closely with the oppressed and issues concerning the oppressed. The agency of the marginalised was central to the movement. Over time, women were included and became involved emotionally as well as ideologically. The concept of 'Ram Rajya' as a socially just society was visualised as an achievable reality by adopting the principles of love, humanitarianism and tolerance, cutting across caste, class and gender. During the 1930's the movement gathered momentum and for the first time women and the marginalised acquired public visibility as threats to the status quo. Though leading to situations of violence, the movement evolved into an alternative force touching upon lives, governance and significantly redefining the projected and internalised identity of a multi-lingual and multi-cultural body of people. Raja Rao's (1908-2006) *Kanthapura* (1938) captures the impact of the movement on the minds of the people who are riding on the wave of secular ideals. This paper is an attempt at analysing the interconnections between Literature and Society through narrative fiction, structured around local traditions of narration to highlight the socio-political scenario responding to the non-violent movement which became part of the freedom struggle across the nation.

**Shellie Michael (Volunteer State Community College, USA)**

#### **Hawthorne's Blithedale as Tangible Transcendentalism**

One frequent criticism of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Blithedale Romance* is that the novel fails to give readers a clear picture of life on a 19<sup>th</sup> century American commune. Further, according to this view, in fictionalizing his time at Brook Farm, Hawthorne renders little or no assessment of the communitarian experiment in which he participated during the 1840s. In contrast with this position, I argue that despite the author's stated intention in the preface to avoid judgment, and despite the narrator's ambivalence, the novel does comment on the merits and drawbacks of communitarianism. Specifically, I examine the way the novel portrays the commune as fulfilling – or failing to fulfill – various Transcendentalist ideals. Two areas of Transcendentalist concern I examine are these tensions: the individual vs. society and thinking vs. doing. I begin by considering Transcendentalist views on these binaries, and then I look at how they manifest or are realized in the fictional world of Blithedale.

**Sheri Dorn-Giarmoleo (Claremont Graduate University, USA)**

#### **Forbidden Knowledge**

The physical representations of violence are barbaric and may be the most lethal but they are not the most dangerous. It is the violence that we do not see that is systematically institutionally housed (accepted as democratic and normal) that is villainous. Considering that all thought is mediated by power relationships that are social and historical in construction; that facts can never be isolated from the domain of values; that the relationship between concept and object is never stable or fixed and is mediated by social relations of capitalist production and consumption; that language is central to the formation of subjectivity (conscious and unconscious awareness); this paper will advance a discussion on Immanuel Wallerstein's term *utopistics*, to ascertain if education (K-16) may help in transforming a performance base cultural reality – a violent cultural reality that stealthily perpetuates the "inevitability" of capitalism and the "impossibility" of human meaning – utopia.

**Stankomir Nicieja (University of Opole, Poland)**

#### **"Slavic Noir": Eastern and Central Europe as the Ultimate Dystopian Space**

From a strictly geographical viewpoint, Central Europe, as the name suggests, is located at the very heart of the Old Continent. Moreover, numerous studies and guidebooks describing Central Europe often highlight the undeniable and profound contribution of the region's inhabitants – from Copernicus to Kafka – to the development of European civilisation. On the other hand, however, it would be disingenuous to pretend that the division into East and West is only a matter of geographical distinction. A sizable gap in

living standards and infrastructural sophistication, as well as distinct historical experience, continue to separate the central-eastern part from the “proper” (i.e. Western) core. Therefore, when one begins to analyse literary representations of Central Europe created in the West, it becomes immediately evident that the region is often presented as a peculiar liminal space, a place where the material and rational mix freely with the supernatural and uncanny. Central Europe emerges from those visions as a space inhabited by primitive, even savage people, sometimes living in the shadows of supernatural monsters, like Lokis or count Dracula. Contemporary cinema seems very reluctant to break away from this tradition. On the contrary, it eagerly conjures up visions of the grim and grotesque East and even some directors from the region contributed to the “Eastern noir” genre. In my paper I would like analyse several selected English-language films like for example *Hostel* (2005) or *Borat* (2006), but also films depicting the Holocaust and Stalinist purges which, with varying degrees of literalness, reinforce the grim legend of Central Europe. I would also like to show the most popular motifs and images in those films and present their gradual evolution in the last decade.

**Susan J. Palmer (Concordia University, Canada)**

### **Children of Utopia: Childrearing in the Twelve Tribes, Controversies and State Intervention in Germany, Canada and the USA**

In September 2013 there was a massive raid on the Twelve Tribes community in Klosterzimmern and Wörnitz, Germany. 160 police and social workers from the Jugendamt (Youth Services) arrived at dawn to seize 40 children from this international NRM. This study describes the trajectory of this church-state conflict and the conflicting worldviews of the opposing parties. This includes an exploration of the religious rationale behind the Bible-based disciplinary practices, and the role of children in the group’s vision of the Millennium. The legal, political and “anticult” factors behind the Jugendamt’s decision to seize the children by force and place them in temporary custody will also be analyzed. The various issues raised by this event; definitions of “violence”, the rights of parents in unconventional religious minorities, and how religious freedom principles are applied to second generation members of NRMs will be discussed.

**Susanna Layh (University of Augsburg, Germany)**

### **Ecotopia’s Dystopian Turn**

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the first literary utopias decisively concerned with environmental matters appear. As a critical reaction to the euphoric belief in progress and technology of the Industrial Age various authors, as for example William Morris’ in *News from Nowhere* (1890), imagine Arcadian worlds of peace, harmony and ecological balance, where man lives in perfect unison with nature. These ecotopian counter-narratives to capitalist and consumption-oriented industrial society are echoed in numerous utopian texts since the late 1960s. Ernest Callenbach’s *Ecotopia* (1975) specifically, or critical utopias such as Marge Piercy’s *Woman on the Edge of Time* (1978) present idyllic utopian microcosms based on environmental awareness. With the dystopian turn of the genre since the 1980s ecotopia also takes on a new shape. The possible results of a nuclear war or accident, the global environmental crisis and thinkable further ecological catastrophes obviously necessitate other poetological means to narrate environmental concerns. Novels such as Juli Zeh’s *Corpus Delicti* (2009) or Dirk C. Fleck’s *GO! Die Ökodiktatur / GO! The ecodictatorship* (1994/2006) reflect contemporary ecopolitical discussions in differing dystopian mode. They portray fictional totalitarian regimes in which formerly ecotopian ideals are now enforced on man. In these dystopias the necessity to save humanity and the planet results in brutal governmental restrictions, the oppression of free will and sometimes pure violence.

This paper focuses exemplarily and comparatively on the generic transformation of the utopian-dystopian literary tradition from an ecocritical perspective thereby examining the cultural representation of nature and environment, mankind’s relationship to nature and the changing ideas of man going along with it.

**Tamara Prosic (Monash University, Melbourne, Australia)**

### **Non-Violence, Cultural Hegemony and the Russian Revolution**

The 1917 Russian revolution has traditionally been portrayed as a violent overthrow of state government. In different historical narratives, however, this act and its perpetrators have been differently constructed. For the Soviet historiography the 25<sup>th</sup> of October was a date of popular uprising, portrayed and celebrated as the heroic feat by the masses; the alleged violence explained as the last resort against government unresponsive towards popular demands. For Western historians, especially those leaning towards the right of the political spectrum, the main actors were the Bolsheviks, a minority armed group, who seized power without popular support in a *coup d’etat*; violence in this case inherent in the illegality of the changeover process. As it is always the case in conflicting claims the truth is somewhere in the middle. The

October Revolution was neither a work of the masses, nor was it *coup d'etat* by a small group of conspirators without popular support. In both cases, however, the claim of violence has been misleading. The 1917 revolution was almost bloodless. The paper attempts to explain the non-violent nature of the October Revolution by employing Gramsci's concepts of cultural hegemony, war of position and war of manoeuvre. However, in opposition to Gramsci, who argued that war of position leading to hegemonic position of proletarian values ensued in Russia only after October 1917, the paper claims that such war was already won before October.

**Teresa Botelho (Nova University Lisbon, Portugal)**

**Utopian Ethics in a Time of Violence: Writing "Enemies" in Contemporary Fiction**

A few weeks after 9/11, an essay by Don DeLillo for *Harper's Magazine* with the title "In The Ruins of the Future" reflected on the paradoxes of the responsibility of the writer to create a counter-narrative to the narrative that ended in the rubble, questioning the protocols of representation not only of grief, but of the unaccountable, of an otherness so alien that it appeared reduced to an idea. How, he asks, does a writer imagine the "apartness", the "righteous fever in the brain" that wrought the killers, and how does one respond to "the sense of disarticulation" carried by the term "Us and Them" that "had never been so striking, at either end?"

Considering Levinas' concept of ethical duty towards the other, articulated in terms of recognition, even when that other is radically separated from our sense of ethical obligation by making himself or herself our enemy, this paper considers how post 9/11 literature has responded to the ethical solicitations of representing the "enemy" focusing primarily on two texts: John Updike's *Terrorist* (2006) and Mohsin Hamid *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2007).

**Tessa Morrison (The University of Newcastle, Australia)**

**Fortified Utopia**

Albrecht Dürer was a polymath of the late 15<sup>th</sup> and early 16<sup>th</sup> century. He is generally known as a painter, engraver, printmaker, mathematician and art theorist, but architect, social reformer and utopian writer are not in the list of his achievements. However, in 1527, Dürer published *Etliche Unterricht, zur Befestigung der Städte, Schlösser und Flecken* (Instruction on the Fortification of Cities, Castles and Towns). He began this book in 1525 at the height of the Peasants' Revolt when violence dominated the countryside and the iconoclasm that occurred around Nuremberg would have been a real fear for Dürer. The book contains plans for bastions, a hermitage fortification for a vulnerable boundary of the country and a large portion of this book is dedicated to the design of the city within the fortifications. Secure and protected the city design is planned on a grid of 16 squares with a central 4 squares being preserved for the Royal Palace. Dürer gives details of all of the buildings and their purpose; the city is not for the soldiers but it is full of artisans. It is the ideal city for artisans where both working and living conditions far outweigh the reality of early sixteenth century Germany. Using the text, this paper reconstructs the city and then considers how this fortified Utopia is compatible with Dürer's life's work as an artist and polymath.

**Timothy Miller (University of Kansas, USA)**

**Ecovillages: Utopian Enclaves of Peace and Ecology**

Although environmental issues are central in the public marketplace of ideas today, one set of experiments in ecological engagement remains largely off the public radar. Slowly, over the last two or three decades, ecovillages have expanded their presence in much of the world, amounting to a worldwide network of experiments in peace and environmental reform.

Today's ecovillages are mainly known for their strong environmental commitments, but they deserve recognition as centers of peace as well. Most of them actively seek to minimize human conflict, both within their communities and between the communities and their neighbors, who sometimes are skeptical, at least, about the projects themselves. Most practice consensus decision-making, and typically they have structured programs for conflict resolution. The ecovillage lifestyle, in other words, is not just about environmental reform and sustainability, but about humans living in constructive harmony with each other. Although the record of the human race in conflict situations is rather sorry, the ecovillages are pointing out a path toward a positive human future.

This illustrated presentation will examine several ecovillages in different parts of the world, describing their work for both ecology and peace. Among those covered will be Tamera in Portugal, Santo Daime Ecovillage in Brazil, the Ecovillage at Currumbin in Australia, and Torri Superiore in Italy.

**Ulrich E. Bach (Texas State University, USA)**

**Nonviolence as Aporia of Utopia: Theodor Hertzka's *Freiland***

According to sociologist Norbert Elias, in the course of civilization, Western European societies have required more stability and supervision. In his book *The Civilizing Process* (1939), Elias argues that monopolization of violence warrants more self-restraint from both the government and the individual citizen. This social "cultivation," which is adopted from certain rituals of conduct, produces internalized feelings of shame, but also creates an exclusive class system within the society. In other words, violence is an unredeemable constituent of modern society, and an aporia for the creation of a pacifist utopia.

In my conference presentation, I would like to apply Elias' insights to Theodor Hertzka's *Freiland* (1890), an Austrian utopian narrative that takes place in the empty space of East Africa. *Freiland* is about the desire to inhabit previously unpopulated territory. The enchantment of unspoiled nature, together with the absence of any sign of civilization, exemplifies an exoticist gaze within the larger context of European colonialism. Accordingly, rather than dwelling on the confrontation with hostile warrior tribes, Hertzka presents an idyllic empty space waiting to be civilized. That is to say, for the author it is not the encounter with Africans that brings about an altered self but, rather, the imagined spatial transfer, with its revelation of natural beauty that would dissolve the preexisting social problems in Vienna. The question that remains is whether Hertzka's non-violent aestheticism is good enough to constitute *Freiland* in the heart of Africa.

**Urszula Terentowicz-Fotyga (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland)**

**The City that "Saw War": Dystopian Past, Utopian Moment**

The paper proposes to look at two contemporary digital 3-D films about Warsaw of the past: *The City of Ruins* (2010), a five-minute recreation of the plane flight over the city destroyed during the Second World War and *Warsaw 1935* (2013), a digital reconstruction of pre-war Warsaw. The first one is shown as part of the exhibition of the Museum of the Warsaw Rising, the second, produced by a group of enthusiasts, is shown in cinemas.

At the end of the Second World War, following the two uprisings, Warsaw was methodically levelled down so that the city practically ceased to exist. The two films confront the traumatic experience of *urbicide* – the murder of the city (Berman) in different ways: *The City of Ruins* through a traumatic repetition of the dystopian past and *Warsaw 1935* through a utopian projection of urban no-place. Both try to recreate the narrative that was denied by the communist propaganda; both employ advanced technology to recreate the past that can no longer be found in the materiality of space.

**Valérie Narayana (Mount Allison University, Canada)**

**Psychopathy and Non-Violence in Louise Michel's Novels**

The award-winning clinical research of Dr. Robert Hare, which confirms the existence of individuals apparently devoid of empathy, presents quite a challenge to those believing in social progress. His belief is that many psychopaths do not end up committing violent crimes, managing instead to lodge themselves in corporations and various working milieus, creating serious damage to society. While Hare's work bolsters its chilling observations with clinical results, the notion of individuals devoid of conscience is far from being a recent one.

This proposal is part of a larger project, which examines the representation of individuals devoid of conscience in nineteenth-century French fiction. In this optic, utopian fiction is particularly interesting as its social intentions are sorely tested by the notion that such beings might exist. I will use as an example Louise Michel's (1830-1905) novels, in particular *Les Microbes humains* (1886) and *Le Claquedents* (1890).

While the author's anarchico-utopian thought has been well documented through her letters and biographical writing, Michel's fictional writing has recently garnered attention for its very particular style. These particular novels were written after her return from exile in New Caledonia, a consequence of having participated in the French Commune. They document her gradual shift from *Communarde* to *Anarchiste*. I will examine her dark but at times humorous treatment of such beings. I shall also explore the various forms of resistance provided by her fictional devices.

**Vincent Geoghegan (Queen's University, Belfast, UK)**

**Althusser, Machiavelli and the "Theoretical Utopia"**

The starting point of the paper is Althusser's claim in *Machiavelli and Us* that 'Machiavelli's utopia ... is not an ideological utopia; nor is it for the most part a political utopia. It is a theoretical utopia'. The paper seeks to explicate the nature of the theoretical utopia and explore its utility as a concept. It then explores the notion of Machiavelli as a utopian – at first sight a startling claim given Machiavelli's reputation as a

'realist' – and whilst noting Althusser's (and Gramsci's) stress on Machiavelli's vision of an Italian national state shifts focus to the theorisation of the modern secular state to be glimpsed in Machiavelli. As part of this, in line with the theme of the conference, there will be discussion of the relationship between violence and the modern state.

**Wei-Yun Yang (Yuan Ze University, Taiwan)**

**Canopus in Argos: Ancient Wisdom in Dialogue with Violence**

Violence has always been part of human existence. In her *Children of Violence* series, Doris Lessing presents Martha Quest as the heroine in search of a solution to deal with the traumatic impact on people who suffer from violence in wars. *The Four Gated City*, the fifth of the series, gives a utopian vision of the community surviving the third world war. New forms of humans are born and a paradise regained. When the reader enters into the imaginative world in Lessing's *Canopus in Argos* series, you realize that the ancient wisdom is interwoven as a thematic thread connecting the five novels within the series. This paper intends to study the essence of the ancient wisdom embodied in Canopus in *Shikasta* and *Sentimental Agents in the Volyen Empire*. I will examine the functions Canopus serves for building up and maintaining the development of human civilization. The original design of Canopus is to create a paradise in which the harmony between humans, animals, nature, and the universe prevails. However, because an evil force corrupts the mind of the first race, the history of mankind is degenerating and the regenerating force from Canopus tries to prevent the total destruction of the civilization. In analyzing the two mock trials in *Shikasta* and *Sentimental Agents* respectively, I will focus especially on the way Canopus wisely prevents the violent confrontation through a precise planning of the mobile structure of space, language and actions to dissolve the potential violence.

**Wendy Schutte (Colonies of Benevolence, the Netherlands)**

**Hans van der Laan (Colonies of Benevolence, the Netherlands)**

**The Colonies of Benevolence; Heaven or Nightmare?**

The 5 *Colonies of Benevolence* in the Netherlands and Belgium were established as a solution to poverty in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (1818-1824). This vision of a new society went hand in hand with workschemes, education and moral instruction and got immense support from all towns and cities in the Kingdom, by crowdfunding.

In model villages and a model landscape, the ideal circumstances were created to reform thousands of paupers into 'good' and free farmers. The three major pillars of the policy of the *Society of Benevolence* were to facilitate labour, education and religion. Disciplining in the colonies was framed in all kinds of regulations and systems: the mandatory uniforms, the timetable, the colonies' own monetary system, motivation schemes and punishment, but also in the organisation of the constructed facilities such as schools, churches, soup kitchens, sickbays and homes for the elderly. However, the idea of a makeable society and makeable people revealed to be difficult to be put in practice. The ideals of the Enlightenment, with which it all once started, developed notably in the later state institutions into a system of repression and abuse of power.

The story contains the birth of the modern Western-European welfare state, and is on the other hand a 'black page' in the history of the Low Countries. The landscape it produced, with hierarchic structures and typical buildings, is a landscape people are proud of nowadays. It is on the Tentative List of World Heritage of both the Netherlands and Belgium.

**Wojciech Bartłomiej Zieliński (The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Cracow, Poland)**

**The Kantian Idea of Perpetual Peace as a Utopia Based on Rational Intellect**

In my presentation I introduce you to the Kantian idea of perpetual peace as a special kind of utopia (rather *utopia* - an ideal social construction placed in the future). Although the author of the *Critique of Pure Reason* was opposed to the concept of describing a utopia, his proposal of an asymptotic development of humanity *in* the direction of a world without violence can be considered parallel to the vision presented for example in Thomas More's book.

That proposition of the philosopher from Królewiec is an extraordinary project which is based on rational intellect. Kantian faith in this kind of human activity creates a special path to reality without violence. The starting point of this concept is nature - understood as a construction with a goal and as a state of human nature which is competition and war. Further additional features are politics and morality, which are tools used for the sake of achieving perpetual peace.

Afterwards, I would like to present to you the "requirements" placed by the Kantian proposition of the mankind's development – the role of the imperative and the consequences of its existence in this

concept (one of the tools used in order to examine this aspect will be the proposal included in the book *Eichmann in Jerusalem* by Hannah Arendt).

**Wojciech Nowicki (Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin, Poland)**

**Knives Will Be Buried but You Can Be Stoned: Utopia and (Non)Violence in *The Adventures of Mr Nicholas Wisdom* (1776)**

The paper examines the first Polish novel, *The Adventures of Mr Nicholas Wisdom* (*Mikołaja Doświadczynskiego przypadku*) by Ignacy Krasicki, poet, novelist, translator, but above all a moralist. The utopian element features prominently in the second book of three, in the picture of an idealized community located in the South Seas on the island of Nipu. Krasicki constructs the plot around the fortunes of a young Polish nobleman, variously represented as a rake, a Robinson and a picaresque. After being shipwrecked during a voyage to Batavia, he is confronted with a happy people living in the state of nature whose sustenance is simple farm produce and whose laws strictly prohibit any kind of violence. The first contact of Nicholas with the Nipians results in the confiscation of his knife, which is openly abhorred and then ceremoniously buried. Stigmatized as uncivilized, a tenuous allusion to the treatment of Gulliver in Brobdingnag and the land of the Houyhnhnms, the hero unexpectedly learns that insular benevolence at one time turned into mindless savagery when a group of young men were stoned for revealing interest in the outer world. This ambiguity, the wavering between utopia and dystopia, did not cancel out the underlying critique of luxury and corruption in eighteenth-century Poland. With its hero ending up as a good citizen and a Physiocrat, Krasicki was offering to the Polish readers a novel of education, clearly influenced by the popular philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau combined with the discourse of utopia.

**Yasin Bugra (Bogazici University, Turkey)**

**Utopia as Resistance: Adorno's Critique of the Temporal Ground of Progress**

Emerging against the tumultuous backdrop of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Theodor W. Adorno's understanding of utopia is interwoven with a radical critique of the temporal framework in which the promise of utopia is usually depicted. Unlike the socialist utopia of Lukács or the moderate progressivism of social democrats, Adorno's distaste for proleptic configurations induced him to seek the potential of redemption in the past. Adorno's engagement with the past, which manifested itself in the form of liberating the vanquished from the margins of the history written by the victors, bequeathed on his discussions an unwaveringly antagonistic tone towards the concept of progress. This paper focuses on the philosophical foundations of Adorno's general criticism, addressing in general his arguments concerning the contiguity of violence and the discourse of progress. Through this discussion, this paper will show that for Adorno the possibility of utopia crystallizes in the moment of resisting the "instruments of organization", which inflict irremediable damage not only on nature but also on human beings. Monopolized and propagated by the state, these instruments arrest the temporal indeterminacy of utopic yearnings and channel them to a predetermined site of future, thus rubbing away their predominantly critical edge.

**Yi-Chun Liu (Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic)**

**Vocalising Non-Violence in and through *Peach Blossom Spring***

Written by the Poet Tao Yuanming of the Eastern Jin Dynasty in ancient China, the *Record* and the *Poem of Peach Blossom Spring* (421) envisions Tao's idealistic world — a self-sufficient agrarian society where people live in harmony and in accordance with the natural law. Disregarding the definition of literary utopias in its strictest sense, Peach Blossom Spring is like Arcadia, in which no conflict or violence exists and all is at peace. This paper aims to examine 'non-violence' in *Peach Blossom Spring* in two aspects: its cultural content and the literary form which the poet employed to explore his ideal human society. Since it is a static state of, or approaching, perfection, Peach Blossom Spring is a closed society where no violence exists. The absence of violence, or the missing representation of violence, can be understood as 'non-violence' at large — that is, not only is physical infliction not present, but the idea or concept of violence is beyond the mental makeup of the locals of Peach Blossom Spring. This total absence of violence necessarily generates the image of non-violence, however undermined, in the author's visional world. Contrary to the understanding of (non)violence in its physical actuality, the approach with which Tao conveyed his vision is that of the abstract interpretation of nonviolence; namely, non-violence of the pen. Once the mayor of a county, Tao chose not to defy the tyrannical emperor with direct consul and reprimand. Instead, with his nonconfrontational attitude implicit in the non-violence of his pen, Tao designated an allegory mixed with imagined ideals and historical details, and hence avoided violence that might have done to him had him be explicit.

**Zofia Kolbuszewska (The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland)**

**Fantasies of Utopian Communities as Strategies of Resisting Violence in Thomas Pynchon's Novels**

Ever since his debut novel *V.* published in 1963 Thomas Pynchon has been concerned with violence as inherent in history, politics and social interactions. Yet, in each of his novels: *V.* (1963), *The Crying of Lot 49* (1966), *Gravity's Rainbow* (1973), *Vineland* (1990), *Mason & Dixon* (1997), *Against the Day* (2006), *Inherent Vice* (2009), *Bleeding Edge* (2013) the writer presents a utopian community. Admittedly, the representations of these communities are refracted through myths, urban legends, popular culture visions of idyll and harmony, and very often are parodies of and/or intertextual references to ideal, utopian societies, communities and sites familiar to the readers of Pynchon from science fiction, Victorian novels for adolescents, films, and computer games. These utopian visions contribute to the rise of dialectical images as discussed by Walter Benjamin and constitute the points of entering the a-historical reality of Benjamin's "Jetztzeit" that provides a prophetic promise of harmony and social justice as a frame of reference for utopian social endeavours, a counterpoint to the violence inherent in historical reality.

**Zsolt Czigányik (ELTE University & Central European University, Budapest, Hungary)**

**The Absence of Nonviolence in Hungarian Utopian Tradition**

Utopian and dystopian works of Hungarian literature are rarely examined in the context of a contiguous tradition. My current research attempts at establishing a coherent 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century utopian tradition that focuses on the relationship of the individual and the collective in the light of a specifically Hungarian and Central European experience of social and political structures. When trying to propose a paper concerning nonviolence, the main topic of the current conference, I was forced to recognize how rare and alien this phenomenon is from the Hungarian tradition, that even though a nostalgic longing for "happy years of peace" is rather strong, peace and nonviolence are not reflected in utopian literature – or when they are, they soon turn out to be unsustainable.

So my proposed paper rather investigates instances within the Hungarian tradition where peace can only be achieved through war, and violence is shown as a natural human condition. The following books will be introduced and given special scrutiny: Mór Jókai, *A jövő század regénye* [*The Novel of the Century to Come*] (1872); Frigyes Karinthy: *Utazás Faremidoba* [*A Voyage to Faremido*] (1916); Mihály Babits: *Elza pilóta* [*Pilot Elza*] (1933).

Emphasis will be paid on relationships with better known works and authors, such as Wells, Huxley and Orwell, who had a genuine influence on Hungarian utopian literature.

## ROUNDTABLES

### **Ideologies and Utopia**

**Chair: Lucy Sargisson (University of Nottingham, UK)**

Building on the work of such writers as Karl Mannheim and Paul Ricoeur, the chief aim of this panel is to distinguish between the concepts of ideology and utopia, and between ideological thinking and utopian thinking. Inasmuch as ideology and utopia are frequently confused or conflated in scholarly discourse, to the detriment of both utopian studies and the study of political ideologies, this panel seeks to elucidate both the distinctions and similarities or areas of overlap or intersections between them, providing novel perspectives for the analysis of both.

- (1) Lyman Tower Sargent (University of Missouri-St. Louis, USA), An Ideology is not a Utopia**
- (2) Laurence Davis (University College Cork, Ireland), Anarchism and Utopianism**
- (3) Gregory Claeys (Royal Holloway, University of London, UK), Mannheim, Ideas and Emotions**

### **Lefebvre and Utopia**

**Chair: Nathaniel Coleman (Newcastle University, UK)**

The panel on Lefebvre and Utopia seeks to redress the tendency of academic and practical, but especially architectural, appropriations of Lefebvre to underplay his Marxism and utopianism (to say nothing of his romanticism). The aim of the proposed sessions is to explore alternatives to prevailing English language readings of Lefebvre that now dominate present day understandings of his work (in view of his apparent neglect in France). The proposed panel is an outgrowth of the recent article "Utopian Prospect of Henri Lefebvre" (Coleman, 2013, *Space and Culture*) and will ideally coincide with the publication of *Lefebvre for Architects* (Coleman, 2014), which is a contribution to the "Thinkers for Architects" book series (Routledge). The panel will include three paper presentations by N. Coleman, D. Morgan, and T. Waterman on the proposed topic and will be chaired by N. Coleman. Each of the papers will be 20 minutes duration maximum in order to permit ample time for discussion following their presentation.

- (1) Nathaniel Coleman (Newcastle University, UK), Forward Through the Past: Lefebvre and Utopia**

While Lefebvre is widely recognised as a radical and progressive thinker, the sources of his critique of capitalism in the past are either neglected or considered a weakness of his project. Yet, to imagine different futures, Lefebvre necessarily looked backward, not to a golden age exactly but rather toward the pre-modern, pre-industrial, and thus pre-capitalist organization of production and individual and social life, with analogous expression in the form and character of the city. Only undue faith in progress could make Lefebvre's looking backward seem either retrograde or reactionary (morbidly romantic or nostalgic). However, his reflection on the past entailed neither rejection of industrial progress nor modernity. Rather, Lefebvre's Romanticism provided his imaginings of possible alternatives, and the pathways to them, with a solid foundation in past achievements. It is with this in mind that the proposed paper examines the intermingling of past and future in Lefebvre's thinking as the wellspring of his utopian project that turns on 'a revolutionary Romanticism oriented toward the future'.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the utopian register Lefebvre introduced to Romanticism made it possible for him to work toward alternative conditions based in prior experiences, but free of nostalgia for some impossible return to origins, and a noncritical futurology alike.

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<sup>1</sup>Löwy, Michael and Sayre, Robert. *Romanticism Against the Tide of Modernity*, North Carolina: Duke, 2001, p. 223

- (2) Diane Morgan (University of Leeds, UK), Haptic Happiness: the Utopian Promise of Architecture as Oeuvre**

Highly critical of the reduction of the built environment to a preformatted "product", a symptom of the debilitating and normalising repetition at large within society as a whole, Lefebvre asks the question: does this space still qualify as an "oeuvre"? For Lefebvre, the repetitive churning out of "puerilely functionalist" buildings, which only favour "those 'needs' which are predictably quantifiable", quash "the active ludic element, the unforeseen... spontaneous emotion and surprise" indicative of a more politically and socially progressive, a more "utopian", form of architecture. In my intervention, I wish to explore Lefebvre's propositions in the light of Benjamin's writings on the haptic innervation of the collective body and the "utopian" experiment of worker's self-management (*autogestion*) at the French watch and clock company LIP in Besançon in 1973.

- (3) Tim Waterman (Writtle School of Design, Chelmsford, UK), Adaptable Utopias as Motive Forces in Urbanism and Protest**

Michael Sorkin writes, in his manifesto “Eutopia Now!”, that “Utopia is a *telos* not a floor plan.”<sup>1</sup>In this, Sorkin is re-envisioning, for a popular architectural readership, the utopian project as an *oeuvre* and a *produit* in an explicitly Lefebvrian mode. This *becoming*, which was evident in the student protests of 1968, may be discovered as the motive force of the occupy movement, which seeks to imagine a better world and then live as if it existed. Lefebvre’s ideas are iterative, contingent, and as such propose mutable, adaptable, situated utopias that may be applied locally and specifically rather than as totalizing masterplans. This paper will evaluate the importance of harnessing the power of Lefebvre’s utopian arguments as an antidote to neoliberal masterplanning processes. This requires the embrace of a romantic notion of the mythic proportions of the everyday, which is especially strong in Lefebvre’s early writing, in which he calls for its transformation in starkly utopian terms; that the harshness of peasant or proletariat life is the creator of collective “magnificent, grandiose works”, and that this contradiction produces an imperative: “the practical effective transformation of things as they are.”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sorkin, Michael. ‘Eutopia Now!’ in *All Over the Map: Writings on Buildings and Cities*. London: Verso, 2011, p. 371

<sup>2</sup>Lefebvre, Henri. *Critique of Everyday Life Volume 1*. London: Verso, 1991, 2008, p. 13

## **Nonviolence, Violence, and Utopia**

### **Chair: Fátima Vieira (Universidade do Porto, Portugal)**

#### **(1) Antonis Balasopoulos (University of Cyprus, Cyprus), Beyond Means and Ends: Reflections on Violence and Utopia in the Work of Andrei Platonov**

Reflection on the relationship between violence as mark of the persistence of the negative and utopia tends to find itself locked in a highly persistent binary opposition: on the one hand, utopia is seen as a condition that simply does away with violence (this could be described as the “idealist” position); on the other, it is seen as a condition that simultaneously presupposes, intensifies and normalizes violence (let us call this the “anti-totalitarian” position).

The work of Soviet author Andrei Platonov breaks free from the sterility of such oppositions: because it conceives utopia not as a pacified end but as a state wherein individual and collective existence has become defamiliarized and open to relentless self-questioning; his work grasps violence neither as means to an end nor as anti-utopian “sin”. Utopia here is not what puts an end to violence, nor is violence something that marks the “failure” of utopia: they rather exist as irresolvable dimensions of a condition marked by the radical decoupling of means and ends.

#### **(2) Marco Lauri (Independent Scholar), Ουτοπία ή θάνατος: on Restructuring the World**

Social change and social agency are very important components in utopian traditions, raising long-standing problems as to how social change is achieved, and by whose agency. I will outline the modern relevance of discussions on this point in the medieval reflections on Plato's Republic, as represented by the Andalusian philosophers Ibn Bāḡḡa (d. 1137) and Ibn Rušd (d.1198). They can be argued to operate as a counter to Karl Popper's well known argument about the inherent relationship between utopian social change and totalitarian violence, as they implicitly reiterate the human need for a utopian drive.

#### **(3) Ruth Levitas (University of Bristol, UK), Violence, Harm and Utopia**

An association between non-violence and utopia is as spurious as the connection imputed by anti-utopians between utopia and violence. The blind alley into which this leads us is evident from sources as varied as William Morris, the ANC and the current situation in Syria. Taking its cue from the late 1960s Third World First 'Poverty is Violence' campaign, I shall argue that a zemiological approach, i.e. one in terms of social harm, is more fruitfully utopian than the violence/non-violence polarity.

#### **(4) Diane Morgan (University of Leeds, UK), The Timing of Peace and Its Relation to Violence**

For Jean Paul Lederach, specialist in peace and reconciliation, conflictual situations are symptomatic of “broken narratives” requiring “restorying”. To be sustainable, peacemaking requires something more than signed treaties: creative imagination is necessary so as not to “forgive and forget” but to “remember and change”. Typically artists are solicited to celebrate a peace treaty, or to represent the destruction of war. Lederach maintains that we need to recognise that art is situated within the very process and discourse of peacemaking itself.

I will be identifying a double-sided nature to peace. Peace requires the creative and restorative “restorying” of the past, and this involves a welcome but challenging break with an ultimately destructive linear notion of linear temporality. Peace also necessitates a commitment to a sustained and insistent process, with a complex relation to force, “uncompromising” in its principles, always imposing itself with “absolute necessity” (Kant, Benjamin). Where do these analyses leave us in relation to nonviolence?