

MOVING LITERARY GEOGRAPHIES

NARRATIVE FORMS AND PRACTICES OF MOBILITIES

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King's College London
300 Strand, South East Wing
Bush House, London, WC2B 4PH

Room 6.04

An Interdisciplinary One-Day Colloquium

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Centre for the
GeoHumanities



UNAM-UNITED KINGDOM
CENTRE FOR MEXICAN
STUDIES



Dipartimento di Scienze
Storiche, Geografiche e
dell'Antichità - DiSSGeA

Centre for the GeoHumanities Royal Holloway, University of London

In collaboration with:

Centre for Advanced Studies in Mobility and the Humanities DiSSGeA, University of Padua

UNAM-United Kingdom Centre for Mexican Studies

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NARRATIVE FORMS AND PRACTICES OF MOBILITIES

INTRODUCING THE INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM

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The purpose of this colloquium is to reflect on the ongoing reciprocal exchange between the 'new mobilities paradigm' and literary geographies. In particular, the event aims to interrogate the diverse ways in which the theories and methodologies triggered by the 'mobility paradigm' interact with literary geographies, including both texts and other narrative practices.

Not only does the 'mobility turn' in the social sciences offer new mobile perspectives, themes and methodologies, but it also invites us to read texts as mobile objects (value-laden things moving across space and time); to interpret them as vehicles for the circulation of ideas and cultural representations; to explore them as spatial practices that enable us to move across cities, landscapes and places. In the humanities, literary studies—and literary geographies in particular—present fertile arenas for exploring the possibilities for interdisciplinary research that have emerged from the mobility paradigm. Texts *move*, in the sense that they circulate across space and time; they migrate from one language to another; they change and relocate themselves in different cultural contexts; sometimes they are obliterated and yet leave traces behind them. Texts *move us*, as readers, in the sense they can inspire and impress, affect and persuade; they can activate and drive our thoughts and movements across space, guide our travels over time. Texts are objects and products of narrative representation, but they can be triggers for further exploration. They can set in motion new practices of reading, inhabiting, interpreting, mapping and exploring space.

Focusing on 'mobilities' invites a move beyond the mere analysis of literary texts as representations. It invites us to read narratives as practices that encourage an unceasing critical movement; an open-ended engagement with the human and non-human worlds; an ongoing exploration of new mobile methodologies and forms of narrations (fictional/non-fictional, verbo-visual, cartographic). Responding to Peter Merriman's invitation to 'rethink mobile methods', this **interdisciplinary colloquium** aims to promote 'a plural sense of what mobilities research is, has been, can be and should be' (Merriman 2014). We aim to expand 'the number of disciplinary perspectives on movement and mobility, working across disciplinary boundaries', involving in our sessions

scholars with very different backgrounds: from literary to cultural studies, from geography to the creative arts. Drawing upon a plurality of methodological approaches, this event aims to offer a space for transdisciplinary dialogue in which to explore new theoretical and empirical avenues.

Session One, ***Im-mobilities of Power and Affect: Literary Texts, Ethnographies and Maps as Counter-narratives*** brings together on-going research about intensely mobile subjects who challenge the ways in which space and place are configured because of their diversely marginal and transitory existence in urban spaces and territories. Moving across different types of borders and boundaries, these subjects disrupt notions of home, shelter, inside/outside and thus problematise the role of narrative in the articulation of these experiences.

Session Two, ***Moving Plotlines: Mapping, Walking, Reading and Performing narratives***, comprises five contributions that reflect upon the representation of mobile spaces and practices within literary texts, as well as on the ability of their plotlines to trace new itineraries and map unpredicted routes across real space.

Session Three, ***Creating/Creative Mobilities***, brings together four contributions by art practitioners whose creative research is variously engaged with mobile narrative methods, and the narration of moving stories, spaces, identities and ideas. Their artistic endeavours both engage with creative mobilities but are also able, themselves, to 'create' and explore unforeseen ideas, representations, and practices of mobilities. The session aims to create a new space for discussion across the borders between mobility studies, literary geographies and the expanding field of the geohumanities.

Finally, the Colloquium will come to a close with a shared roundtable titled ***Moving Forward: Future Dialogues on Narrative Mobilities***. We invite all attendees –both presenters and members of the audience– to engage in an active conversation on topics and questions that have emerged from the research presented and discussed throughout the day, to take advantage of the diversity of the papers and people, and reflect on the transdisciplinary entanglements emerging from the panels. Last, but not least, we foresee this colloquium as an opportunity to establish a network of scholars working across disciplines, in the fields of literary geography, the humanities, the arts and mobility studies.

Launched in 2016, the **Royal Holloway Centre for the GeoHumanities** promotes the dialogue and collaboration between arts and humanities scholars and practitioners, geographers, and the creative, cultural and heritage sectors. It showcases and fosters work in the arts and humanities on issues that have a strong geographical resonance, such as space, place, landscape and environment.

This event is organised in collaboration with the **UNAM-United Kingdom Centre for Mexican Studies** and the **Centre for Advanced Studies in Mobility and the Humanities of the University of Padua**, and it is part of a broader collaboration between the Royal Holloway Centre for the GeoHumanities and the Department of Historical and Geographic Sciences and the Ancient World (DiSSGeA) of the University of Padua in the context of the Excellence Project 'Mobility and the Humanities'.

CONVENORS

Nattie Golubov is Professor of English at the Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. Her research interests include a focus on ideas of community in contemporary literatures in English, and literary and cultural theory. Her recent publications include the co-authored entry for “Biopolitics” in *The Routledge Handbook to the History and Society of the Americas* (2019), the edition of a multi-authored collection of critical essays on television, *TVficciones: reflexiones críticas sobre televisión estadounidense* (2019) and a monograph on neoliberalism and the popular romance novel.

Giada Peterle is a Post-doctoral Researcher and Lecturer in Literary Geography at the University of Padua (DiSSGeA). Her recent publications revolve around literary geographies and comic book representations of contemporary urban spaces and mobilities, the opportunity to map and perform literary texts, and the engagement with creative writing/drawing/mapping practices as methods of research (*Cultural Geographies*, 2017a and 2017b; *Social & Cultural Geography*, 2018).

She was the coordinator of the geo-artistic project *Street Geography. Drawing Cities for a Sustainable Future* (Padova September–October 2018) and is currently working –as a geographer and comic book author herself– on a co-authored anthology on five Italian neighborhoods, titled *Quartieri. Viaggio al centro delle periferie italiane* (‘Neighborhoods. A Journey at the Centre of Five Italian Peripheries’, BeccoGiallo 2019).

Veronica della Dora is Professor of Human Geography at Royal Holloway, University of London and co-director of the Centre for the GeoHumanities. Her research interests and publications span historical and cultural geography, the history of cartography and Byzantine studies with a specific focus on landscape, sacred space and the geographical imagination. Her monographs include *Imagining Mount Athos: Visions of a Holy Place from Homer to World War II* (University of Virginia Press, 2011), *Landscape, Nature and the Sacred in Byzantium* (Cambridge University Press, 2016) and *Mountain: Nature and Culture* (Reaktion, 2016). She has recently completed a book project on perceptions of global space from Antiquity to the present by way of the ‘mantle of the Earth’ metaphor, and is currently working on a new monograph on the cultural history of lighthouses.

PROGRAMME

Room 6.04, Bush House (SE Wing - Strand House), London, WC2B 4PH

8.45-9.00

Registration and welcome breakfast

9.00-9.45

Keynote speaker

Lynne Pearce Lancaster University

'Walking Out': Courtship Mobilities in the World War 2 Diaries of Audrey Deacon and Doreen Bates

9.45-10.00

Coffee break

10.00-11.30

Session 1

Im-mobilities of Power and Affect: Literary Texts, Ethnographies and Maps as Counter-narratives

Jessie Speer School of Geography, Queen Mary, University of London

Home Becomes Body, City Becomes Home: Homelessness and the Collapsing Geographies of Scale

Marco Mogiani University of Vienna

'We speak nothing other than the language of how to go under a truck': Migrant Counter-narratives of Mobility Across the Port/border Area of Patras

Marina Guglielmi Department of Literature, Linguistics and Cultural Heritage, University of Cagliari

From Collective Im-Mobilities to Individual Mobilities. The Case Study of Italian Asylums

Anna-Leena Toivanen University of Eastern Finland

Postcolonial Cartographies of Paris: Everyday Urban Mobilities in Michèle Rakotoson's *Elle, au printemps* and Alain Mabanckou's *Tais-toi et meurs*

11.30-11.45

Coffee break

11.45-13.30

Session 2

Moving Plotlines: Mapping, Walking, Reading and Performing Narratives

Jon Anderson School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University

Mapping and Moving Through Literary Geographies: The Plotlines of Literary Atlas

Dave McLaughlin Brunel University, London

Rugged Writing: The Community-Sustaining Potential of Landscape Writing

Adrien Frenay and **Lucia Quaquarelli** Université Paris Nanterre

Espace, Déplacement, Mobilité / Re-Thinking Space from a Mobile Point of View. A CRPM's Research Project

Nicola Kirkby King's College London/University of Edinburgh

Plotlines: Ramifying Literary Form, Railways, and Mobility in Victorian Popular Fiction

13.30-14.30

Lunch break

14.30-15.30

Session 3

Creating/Creative Mobilities

Richard Carter University of Roehampton

Entangling Air, Sea, and Sensors: Wavescapes and Waveforms

Amy Spencer Bath Spa University

Ambient Literature

Olga Doukeridou Artist

Re-Inventing Utopias

Jani Babak and **Christian Edwardes** Arts University Bournemouth

Reimagining Naqqali: Digital Mobilities and Ancient Storytelling

15.30-15.45

Coffee break

15.45-17.00

Roundtable

Moving Forward: Future Dialogues On Narrative Mobilities

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A B S T R A C T S

**KEYNOTE
ADDRESS**

'Walking Out': Courtship Mobilities in the World War 2 Diaries of Audrey Deacon and Doreen Bates

Lynne Pearce

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This paper will draw upon a chapter of my forthcoming book - *Mobility, Memory and the Lifecourse in Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture* - in order to illustrate the recent research I have undertaken on the formative role of mobilities of different kinds in the generation and sustenance of intimate relationships. In particular, the book explores the continuities between the 'tracks' - both literal and metaphorical - that we lay down at the start of a relationship and the ways in which we reprise, and memorialise, it in after years.

The textual case study for my chapter on 'courtship mobilities' (broadly defined) focuses on two World War 2 diarists - Audrey Deacon and Doreen Bates. While Deacon records the evolution of a highly conventional courtship and marriage, Bates tells the extraordinary story of an extramarital 'affair'. Both diaries nevertheless demonstrate the extent to which the exceptional mobilities associated with the war impact upon the way in which these relationships came to be defined and how they were remembered. The paper will open with a brief overview of the rapidly expanding subfield of 'mobility and the humanities' and reflect upon some of the challenges faced by literary scholars, in particular, as they seek to locate their historical and 'subject-centred' research within the posthumanist mobilities debates prevalent in geography and the social sciences.

Lynne Pearce is Professor of Literary and Cultural Theory at Lancaster University where she has worked for nearly 30 years. Her recent publications in the field of mobilities scholarship include *Drivetime: Excursions in Automotive Consciousness* (EUP, 2016), *Mobility and the Humanities* (co-edited with Peter Merriman) (Routledge, 2018) and *Mobility, Memory and the Lifecourse* (Palgrave Macmillan 2019 - in press). She is currently director for the Humanities at Lancaster's Centre for Mobilities Research (CeMoRe).

IM-MOBILITIES OF POWER AND AFFECT

LITERARY TEXTS, ETHNOGRAPHIES AND MAPS AS COUNTER-NARRATIVES

SESSION 1

Home Becomes Body, City Becomes Home: Homelessness and the Collapsing Geographies of Scale

Jessie Speer

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This paper is based on a larger research project that examines memoirs and oral histories of contemporary American homelessness as a genre of subaltern knowledge and theory. Over the past two decades, free digital publishing platforms and new activist archives have enabled an explosion in the production of memoirs and oral histories of homelessness, yet these texts have been largely unexamined in academic research. I analyse this genre to frame homelessness not as an object of empirical study but as a location from which people critically reflect on the loss and absence of housing. Research involved a close reading of more than 70 memoirs and 300 oral histories from cities across the United States, including self-published e-books as well as texts that have been widely anthologized, translated and republished. Read together, such texts overwhelmingly represent homelessness not as a condition of living outside for extended periods, but of continually cycling between precarious places of refuge. Many narrators argued that this turbulent cycle was the result of gendered domestic norms and capitalist housing markets.

In this paper, I argue that the geography of coerced mobility challenges normative understandings of the body, home, and city as separate and nested scales. Many life narrators refer to their bodies as homes, as they carry all domestic comforts and protections—food, bedding, and shelter—with them as they move throughout the city. At the same time, the entire urban landscape becomes a domestic space, with several ‘rooms’ scattered across the city, including hidden refuges to store a mattress or cook over a gas stove, emergency shelters to access showers, or publicly accessible bathrooms. Yet because of the fragmented and impermanent nature of this domesticity, piecing together a sense of ‘home’ places ever-greater demands on homeless people’s everyday mobility. As the home collapses into the intimate and immediate space of the body, and expands into the vastness of the urban sphere, homelessness reveals that notions of scale themselves are fluid and context dependent. The life narratives of those whose homes exist outside of market housing—carried on the body or scattered across the city—show how hegemonic relations of scale are bound up in the landscape of private property, and in the particular commodity of the rented or owned home. Based on a reading of these narratives, I argue that the geographies of homelessness challenge the ways in which capitalist markets and states arrange and imagine space.

After working as an eviction defense attorney and witnessing the cyclical nature of housing displacement, **Jessie Speer** began researching the larger economic dynamics that produce widespread homelessness in the United States. Her master’s thesis involved an ethnography of homeless encampments in California, and her doctoral research turned towards contemporary memoirs and oral histories of homelessness as a way to redress the historic devaluation of homeless people’s knowledge. In future projects, Jessie plans to return to the practice of legal advocacy in collaboration with grassroots groups in London as a way to resist the merging of anti-migrant and anti-homeless policies under Brexit.

'We speak nothing other than the language of how to go under a truck': Migrant Counter-Narratives of Mobility across the Port/Border Area of Patras

Marco Mogiani

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On any given day, the port/border area of Patras (Greece) bustles with a multiplicity of agents that continuously encounter and clash, creating variegated spatio-temporal narratives of mobility and struggle. Driven by different and sometimes conflicting purposes, lorries, workers, passengers and migrants traverse the port/border area at various speeds and visibilities: while lorries follow the strict timetable of ferryboats and the requirements of the just-in-time distribution networks, workers circulate to and fro the restricted area abiding by the port security regulations, and passengers move along safe and recognisable designated routes. With their unpredictability and turbulence, migrants constantly attempt to surreptitiously infiltrate and disrupt the regular unfolding of events, moved by their desire to reach other European countries.

Drawing from ethnographical research in the abandoned factories that migrants squat in front of the port, this paper explores the multifarious counter-narratives of (im)mobility that migrants produce and enact for their everyday survival and efforts to escape. It will do so by investigating three interrelated moments of these counter-narratives: the domination of their own bodies, the creation of a specific language, and the production of visual cartographies of mobility. In the everyday ritual of border crossing, body performance acquires indeed crucial importance: the body should conceal uncertainties and imperfections, and simultaneously be concealed to the alert glance of the officer. The re-appropriation of body cannot take place without a resolute self-control over mind, which dominates the body, regulates its movements and grasp its immediate surroundings. The most direct instrument to perceive, decode and command the surrounding world is language: through the (re)invention of language, migrants re-appropriate everyday objects and activities, give them a unique name and subvert their significance. Graffiti and writings also acquire great importance, embodying migrants' restlessness and determination to continue their journey and to obtain eventually their long-awaited freedom of movement.

Through the continuous intertwining of these three interrelated moments, migrants not only re-appropriate the empty spaces of the factories, but also trace and perform more impalpable corporeal and mental imaginaries, thus simultaneously claiming their silent yet powerful rights to settle in the city and to escape towards other destinations. The paper will eventually argue that, despite the constraints of the European border regime, which forces migrants in a precarious state of (im)mobility, these combined moments bring to light borderless imaginaries through which migrants conceive, represent and re-appropriate their escape routes, redrawing and enacting their own counter-narratives of settlement and mobility.

Marco Mogiani has recently obtained his PhD in Development Studies from SOAS, University of London, and is currently University Assistant at the University of Vienna. His interdisciplinary research looks at borders as meeting points of different multi-scalar processes: neoliberal economic restructuring, European and national migration policies, and migrants' autonomy. He has done extensive fieldwork in Italy and Greece, employing qualitative methods such as participant observation, semi-structured and informal interviews, mapping and counter-mapping, and critical policy analysis.

From Collective Im-Mobilities to Individual Mobilities. The Case Study of Italian Asylums

Marina Guglielmi

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The purpose of my work is to study the relationship between systems of collective immobility (prisons, mental hospitals) and individual mobility systems (the everyday life of those leaving / entering the total institutions).

In particular the aim is to inspect immobility-mobility relations through the works and actions of Franco Basaglia, inspired by Michel Foucault. Foucault's theories on psychiatric power and on asylum spaces become a practical outcome and a political gesture in Basaglia.

In *Discipline and Punish* (1976) as well as in his Lectures at the Collège de France (1974-1976) Foucault speaks of the power of 'normalization' to which individuals are subjected when a wall separates them from the rest of society. Basaglia draws inspiration from this in talking about the 'objectification' of the psychiatric patient and when he observes the loss of psychic and motor autonomy of those subjected to immobility.

In 1978 the Basaglia law was approved and Italian asylums were transformed. From closed places they became open places where both public and psychiatric patients can freely come and go.

The Seventies in Italy are the historical example of the transition from surveillance-controlled systems, from a process of normalization of the individual, and from insurmountable walls to individual mobility systems. This saw the introduction of the process of individualization and the questioning of the role of security devices.

From the point of view of architecture, the walls become elements of mobility that can be traversed in both directions: by those who are leaving the total institution and by those who have decided to enter it (to carry out research).

The consequences are manifold. At the social level when inmates leave the barriers they are transformed from a generic group of patients into a group of individuals. On the psychic level, the sense of having a marked destiny is interrupted and the only common element remaining is the fear of mobility in both directions: what will I find on the other side of the wall?

The first experiment takes place in Trieste, 11 August 1975: mental asylum patients take part in a psychiatric mobility experiment that has never been tried before. They leave the walls of the asylum where they are locked up and fly over Trieste in a plane. It is a special flight organized just for them by the psychiatrist Franco Basaglia. The director Stefano Agosti makes a documentary, *Il volo*.

The Italian movement of democratic psychiatry proposed by Basaglia works on the elimination of walls, barriers, cages, restraining beds. When a wall ceases to be just a prison device or a barrier and becomes a narrative device (because it gives life to narrative), it can be included in Wall studies.

There are numerous literary, cinematographic and documentary works that show the transition from collective immobility to individual mobility: inmates recover the chance to express themselves and become individuals once again. Some Italian documentaries from the 70s are investigated here in the light of Wall studies and theories of transformation from collective asylum immobility to individual mobility.

Marina Guglielmi is Associate Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Cagliari. Her main research areas are: geocriticism (the relationship between literature, space, geography and cartography), psychoanalysis (the representation of psychiatric hospitals in literature and visual culture), Women Studies, Translation Studies, having authored and edited various books and papers on these subjects.

She is the Editor in Chief of the International *Journal of Comparative Literature "Between"*. Among her latest publications: *Sorelle e sorellanza nella letteratura e nelle arti* (ed. with Claudia Cao, 2017) and *Raccontare il manicomio. La macchina narrativa di Basaglia fra parole e immagini* (2018).

Postcolonial Cartographies of Paris: Everyday Urban Mobilities in Michèle Rakotoson's *Elle, au printemps* and Alain Mabanckou's *Tais-toi et meurs*

Anna-Leena Toivanen

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Urban spaces play a central role in the postcolonial literary imaginary. Representations of European metropolises like London and Paris frequently foreground the figure of the migrant as a postcolonial city-dweller and explore the hybrid qualities of the metropolis (see McLeod 2004; De Souza & Murdoch 2013; Perfect 2014; Amine 2018). The emphasis on migrancy in studies focusing on postcolonial literary representations of Western metropolises reflects the general tendencies of postcolonial studies, which is a field that has paradigmatised the figure of the migrant. The figure of the migrant embodies such central postcolonial concerns as displacement, transculturation, and (un)belonging. However, literary representations of cities also illustrate the importance of everyday mobility practices in the construction of (postcolonial) urban spaces and identities (see Jensen 2009: 140; Beck 2013: 111; Murray & Upstone 2014b: 193; Prytherch & Cidell 2015: 19-20). Until now, studies on postcolonial literary cities have not paid much attention to everyday urban mobilities. This is mainly because in postcolonial studies promote a restricted understanding of mobility: it is often reductively used as a synonym for global migratory movements, or as an intangible metaphor for 'the migrant condition'. It is therefore not surprising that racialized/postcolonial subjects are only rarely recognized as mobile subjects or travelers beyond being migrants (Loingsigh 2009: 2-3).

In order to promote a wider understanding of postcolonial mobilities that takes 'the actual fact of movement seriously' (Cresswell 2010: 18), I read two Francophone diasporic African novels, Michèle Rakotoson's *Elle, au printemps* (1996) and Alain Mabanckou's *Tais-toi et meurs* (2012), through a mobility studies lens. Both novels highlight the characters' everyday urban mobilities, in the Parisian underground in particular. I demonstrate how these texts use everyday urban mobilities in their constructions of the postcolonial metropolis and the metropolitan postcolonial mobile subject. Both novels feature African migrants who have recently arrived in Paris under irregular conditions. Rakotoson's protagonist Sahondra, a young Madagascan woman, leaves her native Antananarivo in an unorganized attempt to pursue her studies in France. The novel, giving articulation to the postcolonial urban uncanny, foregrounds the mobility theme by depicting Sahondra's everyday urban travel in detail. Mabanckou's thriller features a young Congolese man who goes to Paris to work in a diasporic Congolese underworld community. As typical of crime fiction and the thriller genre, the novel's plot and imaginary rely heavily on mobility and sus-

pense: being an irregular migrant and a petty criminal, the protagonist is constantly on the run. I read the protagonists' uses of mobility systems and the narratives' production of urban cartographies as a means of inscribing their newly established migrant selves in the metropolitan space, and argue that the anxious aspects of their mobilities convey the challenges of the process of becoming a modern, postcolonial metropolitan mobile subject. I am also interested in the texts' poetics of mobility, that is, how the generic features of the thriller in Mabanckou's novel and the uncanny qualities of Rakotoson's novel translate the mobility theme into form.

Dr. Anna-Leena Toivanen is a Senior Researcher and docent in postcolonial literary studies at the University of Eastern Finland, and a former Marie Skłodowska Curie Fellow at the University of Liège. Her current research project focuses on the poetics and politics of Afro-European mobilities in Francophone African literatures. Her recent work has been published in *Studies in Travel Writing*, *Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, *Research in African Literatures*, *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, and *Matatu*. Her chapter on labour mobility in contemporary African diasporic fiction features in *The Routledge Handbook of African Literature* (2019).

MOVING PLOTLINES

MAPPING, WALKING, READING AND PERFORMING NARRATIVES

SESSION 2

Mapping and Moving through Literary Geographies: the Plotlines of Literary Atlas

Jon Anderson

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The AHRC sponsored Literary Atlas project (www.LiteraryAtlas.wales) creatively explores the ongoing relations between landscape and literature. To this end, 'plotlines' (after Anderson, 2016) are imagined for twelve novels written in English and set in Wales. All geographical references (or plot-points) are registered in the chosen novels, with significant plot-points identified and sequenced. Deep mapping materials are added to each of these chosen plot-points, with historical information, satellite imagery, photos, films, critical commentary, and author interview layered together at each location. The sequencing of these points into routes – or plotlines – encourage both virtual and actual mobility through the coming together of page and place.

This paper introduces the plotlines of the Literary Atlas and offers insights into the ways in which they have been mobilised – online and in practice – by readers. Through doing so, it suggests possible futures for both theory and cultural practice in the fields of geography and mobility.

Jon Anderson is a Professor of Human Geography at the School of Geography and Planning, Cardiff University, UK. His research interests focus on the relations between culture, place and identity, particularly the geographies, politics, and practices that emerge from these. His key publications include: *Understanding Cultural Geography: Places and Traces* (2010, 2015 Second Edition), *Water Worlds: Human Geographies of the Ocean* (edited with Peters, K, 2014), and *Page and Place: Ongoing Compositions of Plot* (2014). Jon was Principal Investigator on the AHRC project 'Literary Atlas' (2016- 2018).

Rugged Writing: The Community-Sustaining Potential of Landscape Writing

Dave McLaughlin

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As much an allure as a challenge, for a spectrum of American writers from William Bartram and Thoreau to Annie Dillard and Bill Bryson, the Appalachian Trail remains a large, iconic presence in the American literary psyche, an emblem for the American wilderness experience. In recent years newer writings, such as Rahawa Haile's account of reading black authors while walking, are taking Appalachian Trail writings in new directions. Among these emerging new authors are the two thousand people who set out each year to walk the Appalachian Trail themselves. These hikers are connected through shelter registers, through their common reading of popular guidebooks and, increasingly, through online journals. On the trail, writing becomes an embodied,

material practice: laptops are heavy, trail registers are damp, ink leaks off pages.

Research in the arts and humanities is also undergoing a transformation, as literary scholars, historians, geographers, cartographers and others are working together on innovative critical and digital practices, seeking answers to contemporary questions about humanity's relationship with places and environments. It is my aim in this project to bring together these two moments in writing and research. I will ask: what happens to literature when practices of reading and writing move far from the hushed quiet of a library reading room or an author's study, into environments where, in place of tables and chairs, there is only rocks, trees and sky?

Through my current research, I plan to demonstrate the potential for new literary forms to be inscribed by new places – including collections of texts whose authors' purpose is not to write the landscape, or even to write 'literature'. By paying attention to hikers and their embodied, communal writing practices within the Appalachian Trail landscape, I will place renewed emphasis on ideas which are in danger of being lost among the new growth of innovative research: first, that digital tools are intimately bound up within embodied, material and communal practices; secondly, that literary creative agency can be a collective force, producing texts that exert affective force on the world.

My central objective is to gather and investigate digital creative writings made by people on-the-move, to unearth the more-than-representational nature of fictions and stories. I will approach them not as *things* but as processes made of the interactions between readers and texts. As Ben Anderson argues, this relational view of fiction demonstrates that textual representations (from novels and short stories to mappings) should be understood as having affective force in the world. I propose that writing and reading are practices solidly embedded in the material world. They are intimately connected to embodied, spatial practices in everyday life. Writing does not simply represent physical acts like walking – its affective force makes them happen. Cultural geographers are now recognising and investigating the force of representations in the world. The textual communities formed among Appalachian Trail hikers provide an excellent environment in which to study the forceful nature of texts and their more-than-representational role in shaping relations between people, in producing space, and in creating a quintessentially American landscape.

Dave McLaughlin teaches social science research methods at Brunel University London. He has a PhD in Geography from Cambridge University (2018). His thesis looked at fans of Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories ('Sherlockians') and their communal efforts to write and to walk Holmes into new geographies (the monograph should be out next year!). He is co-organiser of the annual Literary Geographies Roundtable Conference at Cambridge. He is currently writing about the affective, creative force of reader-generated mappings.

Espace, Déplacement, Mobilité / Re-Thinking Space from a Mobile Point of View. A CRPM's Research Project

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The presentation will display the aim of the project, previous and planned steps and intends to bring out, share and discuss, salient theoretical and methodological perspectives. The following central notions will be presented: ghost mobility, inverted recognition, relation, continuity, configuration, re-signification, performing literature, land literature.

The starting point of the project has been the acknowledgment that if it has been possible to think of localization as a privileged support to build the very idea of culture, we are undoubtedly witnessing today an inversion that transforms displacement, mobility and migration into practices having central cultural meanings. Thus, places, usually observed as still images, must also be considered as mobile supports for a multiplicity of paths and discourses with a configuring and modelling intensity.

The discourses of literature, of art, of architecture, of memory invest and configure space in a relationship of continuity that underpins human practice of space. They thus constitute one of the "places" we have at our disposal to understand how people experience the space they live and within which they move.

Adrien Frenay teaches at the Université Paris Nanterre (CSLF EA 1586). His research interests are the transformations of the 19th and 20th century French novel with a focus on mobility and means of transport.

Lucia Quaquarelli teaches at the Université Paris Nanterre (CRPM EA 4418). Her research focuses on the contemporary forms of narrative. She recently works on the relationship between walking and writing in Italian novels.

Plotlines: Ramifying Literary Form, Railways, and Mobility in Victorian Popular Fiction

Nicola Kirkby

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This contribution approaches literature and large-scale infrastructure as interlinked modes of mediating cross-country mobility in nineteenth-century Britain. If Britain's mid-nineteenth century railway networks had a structural analogue in fiction, this could be found in the popular multiplot novel. Typically published serially – hopefully to a predetermined timetable, such novels mobilise characters from various stations in life and show how their paths might cross.

Through a poignant example from Trollope's multiplot Palliser novels (1864-1879), this contribution investigates formal challenges involved in producing and managing intricately networked narratives. Trollope's series was not plotted meticulously in advance, but certain suggestive patterns do emerge when these novels are read together. As the series progresses, parallel plots confront strikingly similar problems, physically and metaphorically covering the same ground at different times in order to elucidate the workings of the British upper classes and the parliamentary machine. By attending to switch points when the story pauses, branches, changes direction, or derails altogether, we can understand how Trollope articulates links between simultaneously running plotlines. We can also gain a sense of how technological changes impacted narrative mobility, whether in the form of a particular character's journey, or the movement and topography of the novel as a whole.

I am particularly interested in the junction as an infrastructure of mobility and how writers like Trollope could use its mechanisms to organize what might otherwise be quite chaotic intersecting narratives. Representations of such systems – maps, travel guides, and early infographics – inform my approach as much the physical infrastructure itself. Such media socially distributed aspirations and frustrations regarding what mobile systems including railways could mean. They entered into a feedback loop that drew in a wide range of cultural forms such as literature, newspapers, and art. If railway construction renegotiated the relationship between British geography and mobility, how did literary culture interrogate this shifting interface?

This contribution is derived from a wider study that entangles media theory, spatial practice, and literary criticism. It therefore reflects on and reroutes the following critical insights:

- Media historian, Paul Virilio: '[railways work on a system whereby] authorization to take certain routes is only possible on the condition that others be prohibited'.
- New Structuralist, Linda K. Hughes: '[o]ne method of navigating Victorian print culture, then, is to map local formations and feasible but not overdetermined routes through the terrain, ambulating sideways'.
- Spatial theorist, Michel de Certeau: 'A space exists when one takes into considerations vectors of direction, velocities, and time variables. Thus space is composed of intersections of mobile elements. It is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it, and make it function'.

My wider aim is to assert the significance of infrastructural reading as an interpretive tool for literary geography.

Nicola Kirkby has recently completed a PhD on 'British Railway Infrastructure and the Novel, 1850-1910' in the Department of English at King's College London. Her interdisciplinary work examines how narrative form and large-scale transport and communications systems intersect in nineteenth-century culture. She has worked as a consultant for the Science Museum, and published her work with the *Journal of Transport History* and *Victorian Networks*.

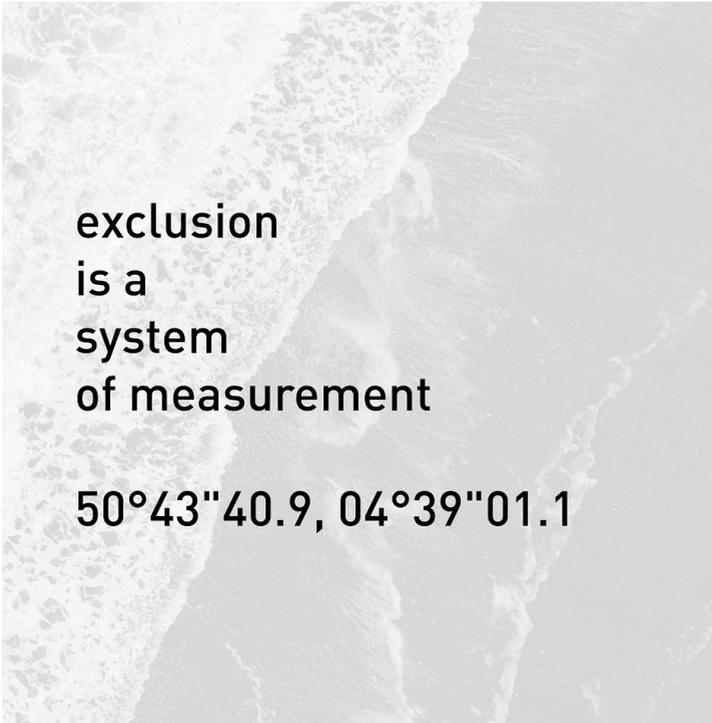
Since her recent move to a Scholarships and Funding role at the University of Edinburgh, Nicola has developed a growing interest in humanities research infrastructure within and beyond Higher Education.

CREATING CREATIVE MOBILITIES

SESSION 3

Richard Carter

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exclusion
is a
system
of measurement

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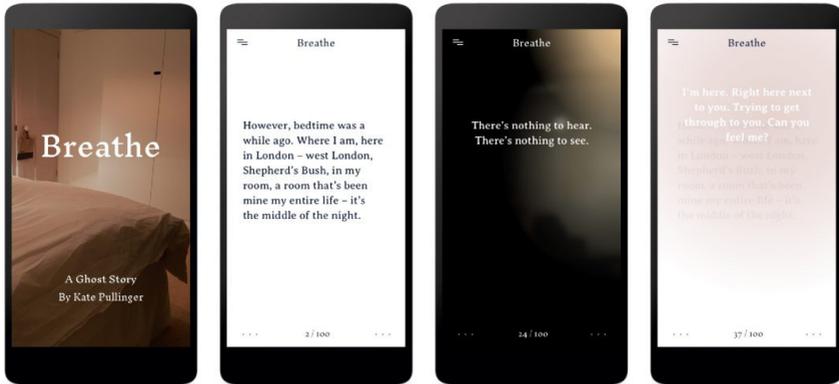
This contribution concerns an ongoing creative-critical project entitled Waveform. In this project, coastal shorelines are photographed from an airborne vantage using a camera drone, before analysing the images gathered using machine vision software that traces the edges of the shoreline. The resulting data points offer a supply of variables for another program that generates text resembling free-verse poetry, which is curated so as to engage themes concerning the coast, a changing climate, and the interrelated acts of sensing, measuring, and knowing in a scientific context.

Waveform is a meditation on the use of mobile sensory technologies to capture a world whose own mobilities of becoming, both human and nonhuman, exceeds their framings and thresholds of detection. In so doing, the project also conducts a speculative exploration of how some of these emergent characteristics can be rearticulated as part of a creative praxis.

As a creative-critical gesture, Waveform is being undertaken in response to many newly emerging cartographies, across art, science, and philosophy, which are seeking to frame (if only ever partially and provisionally) the varied modes of perception, agency, and expression that

constitute the contemporary environment at a moment of severe climatic and ecological stress. Here, the sensory infrastructures that detect and monitor these breakdowns are understood to function as part an extended actor-network, with the intersecting agencies of human and machine enacting a performance in which signals are gathered, interpretations encoded, distinctions drawn, and observations established. These sensory performances crystallise the thresholds defining that which is rendered observable, intelligible, or extraneous, but such judgements are always contingent, never absolute. Waveform endeavors to entangle creatively the liminal markers distinguishing land and sea, the visual and the textual, and the machinic versus human modes of sense-making, in order to reflect on their combined roles in constituting, across science and culture alike, our knowledge of the present moment, and the actions we might take in-response.

Richard A Carter is a Lecturer in Digital Media at the University of Roehampton. Carter is interested in researching the varied modes of nonhuman agency that manifest within digital art and literature, considering what they reveal concerning contemporary practices of knowledge production and expression. Carter's research is entangled with his creative practice, developing digital art objects that meditate on questions relating to agency and meaning in the contemporary environment.



My presentation will examine movement as a feature of ambient literature; an emerging digital literary form. This interest stems from the ambient Literature project, which was a two-year AHRC funded research programme led by UWE Bristol, Bath Spa and Birmingham. The project investigated the potential of situated literary experiences delivered by pervasive computing platforms, which respond to the presence of a reader to deliver story. Such literary experiences operate both spatially and temporally and a reader is brought into contact with a physical location as part of the narrative.

The project commissioned three works of ambient literature from established writers to understand the form, the experiences of its readers and the process of its authoring. *It Must Have Been Dark By Then* by Duncan Speakman is a book and audio experience that uses a mixture of evocative music, narration and field recording to bring stories of changing environments, from the swamplands of Louisiana, to empty Latvian villages and the edge of the Tunisian Sahara. *The Cartographer's Confession* by James Attlee combines fiction and non-fiction, imagined and real locations, to create a story of migration, loss, betrayal, and retribution that spans across London. *Breathe* by Kate Pullinger is a literary experience delivered through your smartphone that responds to your presence by internalising the world around you. Using APIs (application programming interfaces) the story leverages data about you, including place, weather, time, in order to create an experience that is personal and uncanny.

My research, developed from my involvement in the Ambient Literature project, explores how a reader experiences an ambient literary form through movement as they are asked to simultaneously navigate both a physical and imaginative world, while being embodied in a narrative.

Olga Doulkeridou

Artist
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What is mobility as a form of coercion, entrapment or atonement? How can we activate an intimate paradox, using our ability to move and to experience the invisible?

Mobile practices in art have become a tool for a physical, sensorial and cognitive experience of the everyday life as it is reflected to the place and space. My presentation will include the current outcomes of my long-term walking project in progress, *Re-Inventing Utopias*. Exploring notions of personal location, everyday survival, displacement, home and destination, the project derived from the need of a conceptual experiential practice that allows to grasp the human mobile presence in space and place, as a form of personal, social and political negotiation or as an act of coercion. The project aims to activate situations, routes, places, people, behaviors, imaginary geographies, and the poetics of the everyday life in the urban space. It contains the need for intervention and embodiment, through the concept of human mobile presence in space, as a symbolic political act. The Project is formed through the participation of artists and performers, that are invited to invent long-duration walking routes across several areas in London, carrying a white chair, and trying to discover possible positions in the city to sit or stand.

Olga Doulkeridou (b. 1986, Greece) holds a BA (hons) in Visual Arts (Ionian University, Greece), and an MA in Fine Arts at Chelsea College of Arts (University of the Arts London, London). She is the 2016/2017 recipient of Chelsea Arts Club Trust/ Zsuzsi Roboz Scholarship and she has been shortlisted for the Clifford / University of the Arts London Sculpture Award 2018. Her work is organised on many modes of experiential practices, taking the final form of large scale multimedia installations, constructed situations, actions and performances. Her main research is based to phenomenology, psychogeography and flaneur, and explores the aspects of human presence in a social, political, and cultural context, as a constant negotiation.

Jani Babak

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Christian Edwardes

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In 2011, UNESCO accepted the Iranian dramatic storytelling practice of Naqqali as an endangered art. Performed using music, poetry, or imagery, Naqqali is an ancient Iranian theatrical art. Versions of Naqqali, known as Parde-Xān, make use of a single picture or painted 'curtain', from which a narrator performs stories using the depicted figures. Naqqali is a mobile storytelling event, taking stories from community to community. Each narration is unique to the teller and flows in a different way.

This presentation draws on the practice of Naqqali to speculate on other infrastructures of performative narration, which emerge through the shifting relations between tellers, objects, and spaces of performance. The presentation will also consider examples of contemporary visual narratives: graphic novels, gaming, and the use of altered reality in traditional storytelling, where the 'user' takes on the role of narrator, and forms alternative infrastructural arrangements between narrative elements and the situations in which they are experienced. By positioning the user as performer, they become an active element in the act of storytelling, activating alternative narratives dependent on the place in which images are encountered. Here, we suggest, the movement of bodies, technologies, and artefacts mobilise and reorganise ideas and histories.

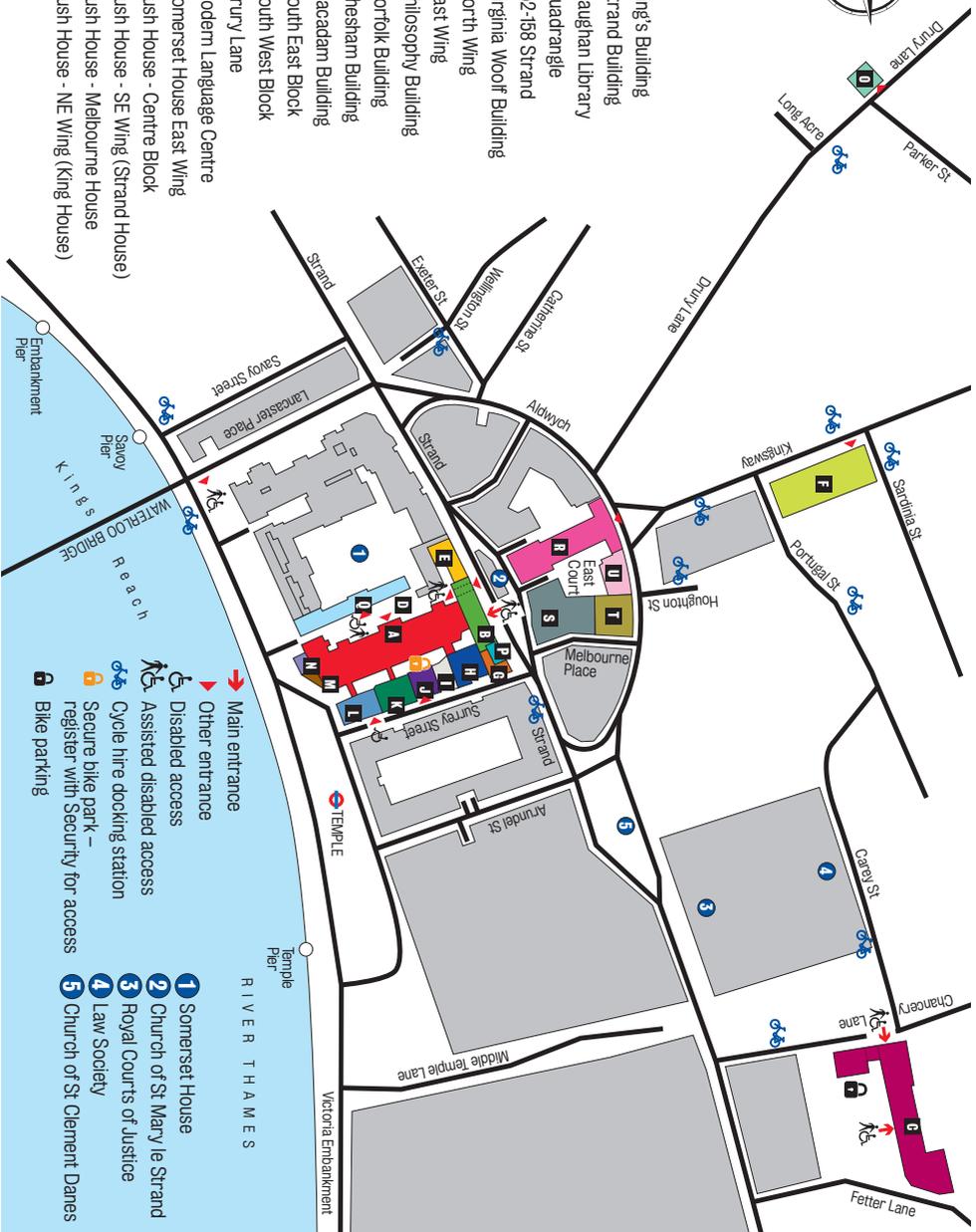
In bringing these diverse forms together, we will reflect on histories of narrative practice that might see Naqqali cast both in relation to Bergson's ideas on the 'fabulation function' and 'creative emotions'. Estimated to be a 2300 year old practice that was inspired by the Epic of Gilgamesh, Naqqali has been both a mobilised both as a way of keeping language alive, and of structuring social, political, and (more recently) religious manifestos. Whilst these practices are often understood as culturally constituted, closed, or over-coded structures, we will argue that they mobilise registers that form and reform relations between official 'readings' and aggregations of disparate attachments, projections, and lived experiences. Finally, drawing on our previous examples of contemporary visual narration, we consider whether these modes of engagement offer viable alternatives for revitalising this protected artform.

Babak Jani joint Arts University Bournemouth as a Film Production Senior lecturer in 2017. Since 2006, He has worked in camera and lighting department and in different capacities in fiction and documentary short and feature films, video arts, AR/VR projects. He has recently been involved in Games Design and Animation fields as the Cinematographer/Lighting Designer. His research interest covers the following topics: Philosophy related research into Visual Storytelling and Cinematography; Philosophical Teaching Film Production and Cinematography; VR and AR Visual Storytelling and the transformation of the cinematographic techniques; Application of lights and shadows in Video Games' storytelling.

Christian Edwardes is Course Leader for Illustration at the Arts University Bournemouth. His recent research is centred around studio geographies and the geoaesthetics of artistic production, which also form a central strand of his artistic practice. He co-edited "Non-Representational Theory and the Creative Arts" published by Palgrave Macmillan in 2019.



- A** King's Building
- B** Strand Building
- G** Maughan Library
- D** Quadrangle
- E** 192-198 Strand
- F** Virginia Woolf Building
- G** North Wing
- H** East Wing
- I** Philosophy Building
- J** Norfolk Building
- K** Gresham Building
- L** Macadam Building
- M** South East Block
- N** South West Block
- O** Drury Lane
- P** Modern Language Centre
- Q** Somerset House East Wing
- R** Bush House - Centre Block
- S** Bush House - SE Wing (Strand House)
- T** Bush House - Melbourne House
- U** Bush House - NE Wing (King House)



- Main entrance
- Other entrance
- Disabled access
- Assisted disabled access
- Cycle hire docking station
- Secure bike park – register with Security for access
- Bike parking

- 1** Somerset House
- 2** Church of St Mary le Strand
- 3** Royal Courts of Justice
- 4** Law Society
- 5** Church of St Clement Danes