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Mart Velsker Other Faces of the Literature of a Second City: Tartu and Its Parts

Sophie Wennerscheid ‘Second sex’, ‘Second Skin’ and ‘Second City’: Concepts of Secundariness in Contemporary Swedish Literature and Film
From the organizers

We are delighted to welcome all participants in the conference Literary Second Cities to the city which is called Turku in Finnish (and English) but Åbo in Swedish. While not the second city in terms of size in twenty-first-century Finland, Turku/Åbo was for six hundred years the capital of Finland, when Finland was part of the Swedish Kingdom between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries. Today, as we shall hear together with many other cities and topics in the course of the conference, it fulfils many second-city roles.

We would like to say thank you to the bodies, funds and organizations which have provided support of various kinds to the conference:

Ämnet Engelska språket och litteraturen vid Åbo Akademi (Ämnesansvariga: Brita Wårvik, Tuija Virtanen-Ulfhielm)

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Åbo Akademi University

Organizing Committee
Jason Finch (Åbo Akademi University)
Lieven Ameel (University of Helsinki)
Markku Salmela (University of Tampere)
Emma Kanckos (Åbo Akademi University)
Petter Skult (Åbo Akademi University)

Conference assistants: Eva Normann, Annette Byskata (September-December 2014); Evelina Salo (May-August 2015); Daniela Mattsson (August 2015) (all Åbo Akademi University)
Programme

Venue: Arken, Tehtaankatu/Fabriksgatan 2, 20500 Turku/Åbo, Finland

Wednesday 19 August

16.00-17.30: HLCN Business Meeting, Auditorium Donner
All conference participants are welcome to attend, but please email Jason Finch (jfinch@abo.fi) if you are planning to come, so that we get an idea of numbers and can move to a bigger room if necessary

Thursday 20 August

8.30-9.30: Registration, Arken foyer


9.40-10.40: Keynote address, Marc Brosseau, ‘Cities in Fiction: Perspectives from Literary Geography’. Auditorium Armfelt [chair: Jason Finch]

10.40-11.00: Coffee, Arken foyer

11.00-12.30: Parallel Sessions A and B

A. Auditorium Westermarck: In Suburbias [chair: Emma Kanckos]
Lieven Ameel and Tuomas Juntunen, ‘Riku Korhonen’s Tales of Two and One Nights as Satirical Reflection on the Suburban Fragmentation of Community’
Martin Dines, “Abstract and Ordinary’: Life on the Grid in D.J. Waldie’s _Holy Land: A Suburban Memoir_”

B. Auditorium Radiatorn: **From Centre to Secondary** [chair: Topi Lappalainen]
Lena Englund, ‘From Harare to New York and Back Again: Harare as a Literary Second City in _When a Crocodile Eats the Sun_’
Olesya Ivantsova, ‘Second-hand City: Treasures and Ghosts of Leningrad in the Writings of Joseph Roth and Stephan Zweig’
Giada Peterle ‘Beyond Venice: Italy’s North-Eastern “Diffused Urbanisation” as a Network of Literary Second Cities’

12.30-13.45: Lunch (participants free to choose where)

13.45-15.15: Parallel Sessions C and D

C. Auditorium Westermarck: **Second City Poetry** [chair: Petter Skult]
Adam Borch, ‘The Provincial City in Eighteenth-Century English Poetry: The Case of Bristol’
Silja Laine, ‘Places Near and Far in the Literary Works of Jarkko Laine’
Ene-Reet Soovik, ‘A Town of Birds and Seasons: Jaan Kaplinski’s Poetic Tartu’

D. Auditorium Radiatorn: **Shadow Capitals** [chair: Jason Finch]
Mirka Ahonen, ‘Redefining Literary Paris: The Banlieues and Changing Urban Experience’
Peter Jones, “‘Something More of the Melodrama”: A “Transpontine” Renaissance in South London’
Svante Lindberg, ‘City Walks, _Vergangenheitsbewältigung_ and the Phantom Pains of Memory in Berlin and Paris: Shadow Cities in Two Texts by Régine Robin and Patrick Modiano’

15.15-15.30: Coffee, Arken foyer

15.30-16.30, Session E. Auditorium Armfelt: **Staged Cities** [chair: Adam Borch]
Anthony W. Johnson, ‘Topography and Early Modern Drama: Ben Jonson’s Second Cities’
Markku Salmela, ‘Still Learning from Las Vegas: Imagining America’s Urban Other’

Guide: Mikko Laaksonen, MA [literary scholar; author of books on architecture and public transport in Turku]
Optional; free for all registered conference participants.
The walk will explore the architecture of the university area: historic industrial buildings renovated for Åbo Akademi by Pekka Mäki, modernist university buildings for the University of Turku by Aarne Ervi, for Åbo Akademi buildings by Erik Bryggman and Woldemar Baeckman as well as the remains of the historical city around Turku Cathedral and the Old Great Square. The walk will take around one hour. Start: Arken front yard ten minutes after the conference sessions end; finish at Old Great Square (Vanha Suurtori/Gamla Stortorget), around 500 m from the restaurant Hus Lindman and the Market Square (Kauppatori/Salutorget).

19.00-22.00: Conference dinner, Hus Lindman

Friday 21 August

9.00-10.30: Parallel Sessions F and G

F. Auditorium Westermarck: Provincial Cities and Europe’s Peripheries [chair: Markku Salmela]
Anni Lappela, “‘I have not been further than Krasnoyarsk”: The Topos of a Provincial Siberian City in Roman Senchin’s Minus’
Haley Laurila, ‘Museum of Dreams: Place and Memory in Aleshkovsky’s Stargorod’
G. Auditorium Radiatorn: **Border Cities** [chair: Lena Englund]
María Antonia Oliver-Rotger, ‘Beyond Tijuana “la Horrible”: Postmodernity and the Critique of Global Capitalism in the Works of Chicano and Mexican authors’
Ilonka Persic, ‘Dublin and Trieste as Literary Cities in the Works of James Joyce and Italo Svevo’
Elle-Mari Talivee, ‘Narva: Literary Border Town’

10.30-10.45: Coffee, Arken foyer

10.45-12.15: Parallel Sessions H and I

H. Auditorium Westermarck: **Apocalypse and Dystopia** [chair: Lieven Ameel]
Adela Catana, ‘From “Pleeblands” to “Districts”: An Exploration of the Marginal Cities in Margaret Atwood’s *MaddAddam* and Suzanne Collins’s *The Hunger Games*’
Juho Rajaniemi, ‘The Principle of No Hope: Two Types of Urban Dystopia’
Petter Skult, ‘Post-Apocalyptic Fiction and the Ruins of the City’

I. Auditorium Radiatorn: **Second City Topographies** [chair: Evelina Salo]
Orly Cortés, ‘The Urban Paradox: Unearthing Mexico City through Novels and Artistic Maps’
Mart Velsker, Other Faces of the Literature of a Second City: Tartu and Its Parts’

12.15-13.30. Lunch (participants free to choose where)

13.30-15.00: Parallel Sessions J and K

J. Auditorium Westermarck: **When and Where a Metropolis Stops** [chair: Tommi Alho]
Esra Almas, ‘Tanpinar’s Istanbul: Reinventing the Demoted Capital’
Sonja Frenzel, ‘Crossing the Black Atlantic: Entangling Literary Urban Environments Beyond the Canon’
Sarianna Kankkunen, ‘Urban Wilderness, Periphery of the City: Postmodern Spatial Poetics in Maarit Verronen's Prose Fiction’

Topi Lappalainen, ‘The Turku Tram in Literature’
Jörgen Scholz, ‘Reykjavik Calling: The Atom Station by Halldor Laxness, a Modernist City Novel in Iceland’
Sophie Wennerscheid, “Second Sex”, “Second Skin” and “Second City” Concepts of Secondariness in Contemporary Swedish Literature and Film’

15.00-15.15: Coffee, Arken foyer

15.15-16.15: Keynote address, Bart Keunen, ‘Second Cities and Mediopolitan Utopias: Imagining Growth and Hybridity in Modern Literature’. Auditorium Armfelt [chair: Lieven Ameel]

16.15-17.00: Closing words and next steps, Auditorium Armfelt [chair: Jason Finch]
Marc Brosseau (University of Ottawa)
Cities in Fiction: Perspectives from Literary Geography

While much of the early geographical interpretations of literary texts dealt with XIXth century realist novels (often set in rural and regional settings) most of the recent research is concerned with literary representations of the city. After a synthetic overview of geographers’ engagements with literature, this presentation will try to critically assess the different geographical approaches to fictional cities, discuss their relative merits and identify some of the most promising emerging trends. Although literary geographers have not engaged literary representations of “second cities” per se in an attempt to understand how they compare with fictional “alpha cities”, the presentation will draw on various case studies of various North America “second cities” such as Los Angeles, Toronto and Montreal. These examples illustrate the tendency of novels to focus mainly on the inner workings of urban social life or the city as a self-contained universe. However, when cities’ connectivity is involved, the immediate local surroundings or links with other global cities is perhaps more important than their relationship with their primate city.
Second cities can be analyzed by means of two models of scaling, based on either temporal or spatial parameters. The first model uses growth (an evolution in time) as a central metaphor and can be found in the Mumfordian vocabulary of urban theory (polis, metropolis, megalopolis). It concentrates on the economic expansion within modern capitalism and on the technological and social side effects of the economic modernization process. The second model, which is only implicitly used in contemporary theory, is based on a different metaphor that stems from physics. By viewing urban phenomena as “states of matter” (spatial states that are lucidly called “states of aggregation” in Dutch and German) they can be conceived more easily as heterogeneous forms of urbanity in late modern society. Such forms include radical suburbanization and even postsuburbanization, urbanity as part of the so called global village, and the ongoing success of older commercial towns in the European economy. Moreover, urban forms can within this frame of reference be more adequately seen as fundamentally hybrid, as a combination of different “states of aggregation”.

The notion of “second city” differs greatly when used in one of both discursive contexts. Most commonly, second cities are defined in terms relating to the growth model but recent reflections on what I would like to call “the mediopolis” opt for the alternative contextualization.

Artistic representations of second cities (e.g. Dickens’ Coketown, the 19th century Manchester novel, novels situated in peripheral European capitals or in major economic centers outside the leading nation states) seem firmly rooted in the first discursive context. Nevertheless, some inspiring instantiations of the literary city escape from this powerful model. If one looks closer at the representation of urban life in recent Western literature, one can find accounts of urbanity that reflect a fundamental hybridity. The concept of mediopolis could play a key role in discovering the utopian core of those artistic representations.
OTHER SPEAKERS
Mirka Ahonen (University of Turku)
Redefining Literary Paris: The Banlieues and Changing Urban Experience

Literary portrayals of Paris have become increasingly diverse in recent decades. Since young writers with an immigrant background began to write in the 1980s about their own life in the banlieues, representations of different suburban spaces have played an important role in shaping the literary Paris. These banlieue narratives describe the experience of young second and third generation immigrants and portray a very different image of Paris.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss how the banlieue narratives construct a new urban experience and challenge the traditional way of describing the city of Paris. Seen through the traditional model of the center/periphery, the banlieues are traditionally regarded as trivial places, observed purely from the perspective of and in relation to the city center. They are seen as isolated locations of social, cultural and economic exclusion, where people feel alienated, or as non-places, according to Marc Augé (1992) meaningless spaces of transit and anonymity. However, as the debate over the banlieues is intertwined with new type of discourses, such as immigration, integration policy, ethnicity and Islam, the banlieue narratives bring forth new urban themes and motifs, and create a more many-sided image of Paris.

This paper focuses in particular on the novels of Faïza Guène, which portray daily life in a Parisian banlieue from the perspective of a girl with an immigrant background. It examines how the female protagonist’s urban experience is constructed in the novel, and how the novel provides new, more multifaceted interpretations of Paris and its banlieues.
Esra Almas (Halic University)

Tanpınar’s Istanbul: Reinventing the Demoted Capital

The shift from the Ottoman Empire to Turkish Republic changed the nature and the significance of Turkey’s largest city, with its millennial history including two empires. The move of the capital from Istanbul to Ankara meant Istanbul’s peripheralization in the newly founded Turkish state. For those who were familiar with the waning glory of the former capital, the demoted and dilapidated city provided the poetic matter to establish new urban networks. For poet and novelist Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar (1901-1962), whom many consider the greatest Turkish novelist of the twentieth century, the subordinate status of the city provided the material to his idiosyncratic poetics. Tanpınar’s literary cityscape, reflecting his knowledge of and affinity for Western literatures, notably French modernists, follows the tradition in Ottoman and Turkish letters to represent the city in relation to Western capitals. Yet, his oeuvre also repositions his city as part of new networks and contexts, turning its relegation into a poetic subject. His melancholic depictions of Istanbul’s hazy topography, notably in Five Cities, his yet untranslated essays on the city, display a peculiar understanding by no longer solely prioritizing the city’s former status as an oriental capital, but by linking it with European cultural capitals renowned with their despondent beauties. This paper explores how Tanpınar’s essays undermine the city’s demoted political significance by focusing on Istanbul’s topography and how as a result they resituate it in a new urban constellation.
Lieven Ameel and Tuomas Juntunen  
(University of Helsinki)  
*Riku Korhonen’s Tales of Two and One Nights as Satirical Reflection on the Suburban Fragmentation of Community*

In our paper, we will examine Riku Korhonen’s *Kahden ja yhden yön tarinoita* (‘Tales of two and one nights’; 2003). This novel offers a kaleidoscopic overview of the fates of a large set of characters living in a suburb of Turku, Finland. It is a text that problematizes the idea of urban community within the spatial context of the “second city” in two distinct ways. First, as a novel that takes much of its momentum from Finland’s former capital, Turku; and second, and perhaps more importantly, in the way it presents the suburb as a second (and repressed) city within the city. The suburban area in this novel appears here not only as a darker mirror image of Turku itself, but as the everyman of post-war Finnish (sub)urbanization.

We analyse Korhonen’s work as a satirical commentary upon late twentieth-century discourse of urban development, in particular with regards to the rise of the suburb in post-war Finland, and to more recent social projects that aim at investing suburban life with a renewed sense of community. The complex structure of the novel invites a reading that emphasizes the extent to which the narrative construct mirrors, questions and re-enacts the fragmentation of the urban fabric and the social cohesion in the post-industrial city. In our exploration of the connotations of this “secondary city” of sorts in the novel, the analysis of spatial metaphors will be of particular importance. The suburb appears as a “low” and “base” stratum of urban meaning, a repressed past reality that fatally hinders the protagonists’ endeavours to reach panoramic heights.
Adam Borch (Åbo Akademi University)
The Provincial City in Eighteenth-Century English Poetry: The Case of Bristol

I propose to present a paper on the role the city of Bristol plays in early eighteenth-century English poetry.

In many significant ways, Bristol was the second city of Great Britain in the eighteenth century. As Daniel Defoe said in the 1720s, it was “the greatest, the richest, and the best port of trade in Great Britain, London only excepted.” In literature, its status as ‘second’ city is more tenuous, however. Bristol features consistently in travel accounts and novels, but in poetry it is remarkably absent. Here, cities such as Bath and Edinburgh are much more conspicuous provincial counterparts to London. That said, a few poems do draw specific attention to Bristol, most notably Richard Savage’s London and Bristol Compar’d. A Satire. (1744), William Goldwin’s A Poetical Description of Bristol (1712) and Isaac Smart’s much revised and extended version of Goldwin’s poem, A Description of the Ancient and Famous City of Bristol (1751). This paper will focus on the role Bristol, the city, plays in these poems, addressing questions such as ‘How is the city represented?’ and ‘How is its relationship to London perceived?’

Studies of the city in eighteenth-century English poetry have tended to concentrate almost exclusively on London (e.g. Rogers 1980; Ellis 2006); arguably a natural outcome given the capital was very often the primary focal point for poets of the period. In considering the city, scholars have often focused on a traditional (or classical) city-country dichotomy (e.g. Mack 1969). Studies on the role played by the provincial city is limited (one exception is Hammond 2001) and, to my knowledge, Bristol is yet to receive critical attention. Through an analysis of the poems by Savage, Goldwin and Smart, I wish to increase our understanding of the significance Bristol (and the provincial city) has as a specific place and locale in eighteenth-century poetry. In doing so, the paper also aims to contribute to a discussion about what constitutes a ‘second’ city in literary and cultural terms.
Adela Catana (University of Bucharest)

From “Pleeblands” to “Districts”: An Exploration of the Marginal Cities in Margaret Atwood’s MaddAddam and Suzanne Collins’s The Hunger Games

This essay is based on two recently published dystopian trilogies Margaret Atwood’s MaddAddam and Suzanne Collins’s The Hunger Games and aims to compare the marginal cities they depict – the pleeblands and the Districts. Set in a futuristic version of the United States, these novels sound a warning signal regarding numerous problems of the contemporary society including corruption, criminality, totalitarianism, fanaticism, aggressive corporations and mass media, failed scientific experiments, environmental degradation and war.

Poor, crowded and dirty, the pleeblands and the twelve Districts are places where people suffer, are abused, tortured or even executed. Constantly controlled by the CorpSeCorps or by the Peacekeepers, the inhabitants seem to live in huge prisons, surrounded by electrified walls, while their only purposes are to work for and entertain the rich. However, these places can also become hidings for numerous outcasts or rebels who try to fight the system, start a revolution. Though shocking, the pleeblands and the Districts are nothing more than the cities, we, ordinary people, live in. Passive or too accustomed to them and our current situation, we fail to see their cracks and take action.
Orly Cortés (National Autonomous University of Mexico)

The Urban Paradox: Unearthing Mexico City through Novels and Artistic Maps

Mexico City is a complex and paradoxical urban space. From its foundation, the city has grown by absorbing the peripheral urban settlements. In 1979, the Templo Mayor and the monolith of Coyolxauqui, the Aztec moon goddess, were discovered in downtown Mexico City beneath the Colonial constructions. Literature and other artistic expressions created in the 1980’s show the relevance of the urban underground, both in the physical space of the city and in the construction of identities through social movements such as feminism and the Gay Rights Movement. In other words, Mexico City is the sum of different, smaller cities, both vertically - where the pre-Hispanic city lies - and horizontally, where the society is fragmented. This paper is a comparison between Literature and Artistic Cartography’s representations where the novels El vampiro de la colonia Roma, Las aventuras, desventuras y sueños de Adonis García by Luis Zapata (1979) and Sintiendo que el campo de batalla... by Paco Ignacio Taibo II (1989), as well as the artistic maps Mapa de la Ciudad de México by Víctor Muñoz (1981) and Derrumbe by Mónica Mayer (1986) allow a phenomenological analysis that explores a diversity of second cities that create and define Mexico City in the eighties. These works of art question the predominant power apparatus and show the paradoxes in which the Mexican capital is founded. The addition of cities that results in the city that exists nowadays provides multiple meanings, and warrants a dialogue between visual arts, literature, the reader and the space.

Relevant time period & Country(-ies): 1980's, Mexico
Key words: Comparative Literature, Map art, City Studies
Martin Dines (Kingston University)
‘Abstract and Ordinary’: Life on the Grid in D.J. Waldie’s Holy Land: A Suburban Memoir

The proliferation of suburban-set memoirs in the US over the last two decades is perhaps mainly a consequence of the aging of the baby boomers, most of whom were reared in suburban developments built in the post-war years. Notably, the authors of these autobiographical accounts have sought to situate the suburban municipalities in which they grew up within broader metropolitan and regional contexts. In doing so, their narratives rather accord with contributors to the ‘New Suburban History’, who have demanded more sophisticated, imbricated accounts of the development of cities and their suburbs than those offered by classic suburban histories, or for that matter, much suburban-set fiction. Many suburban-set memoirs explicitly seek also to connect their locations to even wider networks of signification. They do so in part to contest the commonality that suburbs are merely adjunctive territories to cities, or non-places devoid of either history or identity. This paper focuses principally on Holy Land (1995) D.J. Waldie’s memoir of life in the post-war suburb of Lakewood, California. Waldie’s altogether de Certeauan account of walking the streets of Lakewood challenges in particular the panoptic visions of his hometown produced by aerial photographers which show it to be a terrifyingly rationalised grid of uniform streets disconnected from any social context – images which have dominated the suburban imaginary for decades. Yet, Waldie also emphasises the abstract nature of the grid in order to connect Lakewood to other geographies and narratives: from the development of the city of Los Angeles to the Nazi extermination camps, and from the geological history of Southern California to the Word of God. By insisting that the grid is both an abstraction but also a material reality and a mode of life with a complex history, Waldie addresses a dilemma that characterises much American suburban-set memoir: to articulate the particularity and contingency of suburban locations while demonstrating scope for imagining these circumscribed environments in new ways.
Lena Englund (Åbo Akademi University)

From Harare to New York and Back Again: Harare as a Literary Second City in *When a Crocodile Eats the Sun*

In this presentation I will examine Harare (Zimbabwe) as a literary second city as portrayed in Peter Godwin’s memoir *When a Crocodile Eats the Sun* (2006). The memoir recounts Godwin’s travels between New York and Harare, 1996-2004. I argue that Harare is secondary to him in a very complex way. During the period covered in the memoir, Godwin had an emotional attachment to the city as his elderly parents still lived there while his professional and private life was located in New York. The escalating economic crisis in Zimbabwe also overshadowed his travels. The aim with this presentation is to examine the descriptions of Harare and New York in the memoir, and Godwin’s ambivalent relationship to the two cities. Which city is truly secondary to him? Can such a distinction be made? What does the secondary status mean for Godwin?

The question of transnationalism arises in this context. JoAnn McGregor (2010) concludes that Zimbabweans have migrated to all continents, and that these migrants come “predominantly from Zimbabwe’s elite and middle classes”. Transnationalism and being able to move across continents has everything to do with privilege, to which Rauwerda (2009) adds: “Rhodesian whiteness no longer has a country; it is necessarily on the move”. Godwin is a privileged white professional and his status is significant for this discussion. I analyze this complex relationship between the primary nature of New York and the secondary nature of Harare and their significance for Godwin and his writing.

Key words: Peter Godwin, Harare, New York, transnationalism
For a long time Birmingham has been ranked in cultural importance behind not only London but other British cities: Manchester, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh. Yet this is a major city, ranked second by population in the UK and for many decades one of the industrial powerhouses of the world.

Literary coverage of Birmingham since the 1970s has been in the mode of the comic and seriocomic novel in the writings of David Lodge (born 1935) and Jonathan Coe (born 1961). My paper examines some aspects of their treatment of Birmingham, in Lodge’s case given the fictionalised name of Rummidge which closely resembles Bromwich and Brummagem, historic vernacular names for the city which gave rise to the word Brummie, used for both a person raised in Birmingham and a characteristic accent of English. Works covered include Lodge’s Changing Places (1975) and Nice Work (1988), and Coe’s The Rotters’ Club (2001). The focus is on Birmingham as somewhere experienced and on the shared memories it contains, for example of its industrial past and present.

At the heart of the paper is a curious and little-known side of Birmingham. Here, Britain’s most purist and long-lived group of surrealist artists operated between the 1930s and 1950s. Among them was Conroy Maddox (1912-2005), whose Balsall Heath house became a focus for the city’s counter-culture in the 1940s and 1950s. While Birmingham is a city which might to the layperson seem the very opposite of surreal, I use this heritage to trace elements in the Birmingham fiction of Lodge and Coe which could be understood as surreal. Particularly this has to do with acts of displacement and decontextualization. Could there be something about Birmingham’s very secondary status as a large city which seems the opposite of a high-cultural metropolis, which makes it itself surreal?
Sonja Frenzel (University of Düsseldorf)
Crossing the Black Atlantic: Entangling Literary Urban Environments Beyond the Canon

The discipline of literary urban studies seems to have established its own canonical hierarchies: It centres, as the conference abstract maintains, “disproportionately on the biggest and most glamorous of (Western) world cities: the likes of London, Paris and New York.” As popular subjects of countless literary works, these metropolises have been rendered both favourably and unfavourably in all genres and at all historical periods. In the modern age, London urban poetry became a particularly thriving field of art, in which the rapidly growing urban environment was described mainly in its contested relationships to its surrounding natural environment. From perspectives in Anglophone literatures, too, London’s urban environment was characterised by its stark contrasts to the poets’ experience and perception of Caribbean or African natural environments.

The conference “second cities” invites a different kind of perspective on the tensions between London’s urban environment and its “other(s)”: after all, London as “heart” – and hence, “first” city – of the British Empire vitally depended, and continues to depend, on “second cities” in the former colonies. Simultaneously, though, these “second” cities may themselves be considered vibrant urban centres – and hence, “first” cities – within their respective national and regional contexts. The paper proposed intends to gather a wide array of voices, both canonical and marginal, so as to compare their representations of (post-)colonial urban environments in Africa and, more tentatively, also in the Caribbean. From a perspective in postcolonial ecocriticism, this paper examines not only the intricate interwovenness of human beings’ experience, perception and performance with their urban environments, but also the lingering tensions inherent in today’s increasingly globalised processes of meaning-making and knowledge production. In sum, the theoretical framework thus devised will, hopefully, open up innovative ways of theorising the contested relationships between human beings, (poetic) representations and urban environments – as they jointly transcend the boundaries delineating “first” or “second” cities.
Olesya Ivantsova (McGill University)

Second Hand City: Treasures and Ghosts of Leningrad in the Writings of Joseph Roth and Stephan Zweig

What happens to a city when it gets ripped off its empire, its status as a capital, its name, and a substantial part of its population? The case of St. Petersburg/Petrograd/Leningrad is examined in this paper as reflected in the writings of Joseph Roth and Stefan Zweig. Their essays about Leningrad published in 1928 create an image of a city that is abandoned and seemingly useless but still is full of treasures; its inhabitants are so deeply connected with the past that they resemble ghosts. Although the young Soviet state was a popular destination for Western travellers at that time, only less than a half of them visited Leningrad. This fact makes Roth’s and Zweig’s texts especially valuable for analyzing the literary construction of the image of early Soviet cities. Zweig emphasizes that he sees the Soviet Union through the prism of the Russian literature and history; for him, Leningrad continues to be a city of noblemen and of Raskolnikov. Roth’s very critical articles about his journey to the Soviet Union were being published in Frankfurter Zeitung from September 1926 until February 1927; however, his text about Leningrad did not become a part of this series and was published more than one year later. This fact indirectly confirms an exceptional status of Leningrad among other Soviet cities and difficulties of fitting it into the frame of the new Soviet reality. Going beyond the traditional rivalry of Moscow and St. Petersburg, the authors reflects on the unique role of the city which from its very beginning symbolized the connection between Russia and the West. Roth’s and Zweig’s observations can be seen as valuable accounts of the events and circumstances that have shaped (and are still continuing to shape) the image of this city reflected in literary works and collective memory.
Anthony W. Johnson (Åbo Akademi University)
Topography and Early Modern Drama: Ben Jonson’s Second Cities

Literary cities are seldom straightforward affairs. For as Bertrand Westphal memorably stressed in Geocriticism ([2007] 2011), the transpositions, superimpositions, projections and recollections which go into the construction of a fictional metropolis are multilayered, and the result is almost invariably hybridized and plural with respect to the representation of any given city. Regarding the topic of the present conference, this phenomenon is particularly acute because ‘second cities’ – which, by definition, are tethered in a binary relation to other (‘first’) cities – necessarily exist in some sort of commensal or symbiotic relation with their counter-image, imaginatively partaking of its presences and absences. Where, too, novels tend to offer a purely imaginative space for the realization of second cities, one of the affordances of drama is that it must ground its action within an actual ‘theatrical’ space (which may, in turn, serve to ironize, undermine, or confirm the imaginative locale that is being represented). Nor are such theatrical spaces culturally, historically, or generically neutral. Within early modern British theatre, for example, much of the staging was founded on largely Italian preconceptions concerning dramatic representation in the ancient world (see Anthony Johnson, Ben Jonson: Poetry and Architecture (1994); or Henry Turner, The English Renaissance Stage and Early Modern Theatricality (2006 and 2013)).

A case in point is the drama of that iconic London playwright Ben Jonson, who revised several early comedies (changing their locale from Italy to London), and whose tragedies prided themselves on their detailed representation of the spatiality of antiquity. Focusing on one comedy (Every Man in His Humour [1598/1616]) and one tragedy (Sejanus [1603-4/1616]) – and cognizant of recent work such as Julie Sanders’s The Cultural Geography of Early Modern Drama (2011) – the present paper seeks to reinvestigate the implications of Jonson’s second cities from the perspectives opened up by contemporary cultural geography.
Between 1890 and 1910, novelists from the ‘cockney school’ challenged the static image of south London as a dingy cultural backwater. This talk will look at little-known narratives by William Pett Ridge, Albert Neil Lyons, Somerset Maugham and Edwin Pugh that depict a culturally contested region where ostensibly ‘minor’ forms of pleasure and commerce become fundamental the fabric of everyday life in the city. The word ‘transpontine’ was used by Victorian social commentators to refer to the ‘Surrey-side’ melodramas, sensational fiction and cosmopolitan street cultures associated with the South. Despite its derisory and distantiating connotation, this term constitutes an important conceptual anchor for this enquiry because it preserves the sense of a transitional movement having taken place. During the nineteenth century, the river Thames did not constitute an impermeable cultural barrier and this paper will be targeted at plotting the narrative bridges that cut across simplistic binaries separating north from south, slum from suburb and centre from periphery. At the turn to the twentieth-century ‘social investigators and external agencies’ were increasingly shifting their attention away from the East End and toward districts in the South. Writers such as Charles Masterman (the Liberal MP) expressed concerns that reformers had failed to counteract the rise of ‘popularity’ and that these deteriorating conditions gave rise to potentially menacing metropolitan identities. But novels such as William Pett Ridge’s *Mord Em’ly* (1898) and Albert Neil Lyons’ *Arthur’s* (1908) deliberately sought to counter a bleak vision of south London’s criminogenic streets and offered an alternative to this monolithic conception of metropolitan identity.
The topic of this presentation is the peripheral experience of urban nature in Maarit Verronen’s prose fiction. Maarit Verronen, a contemporary Finnish author, is known for her depictions of social outsiders and strange, dream-like worlds. Nevertheless, her works also include several urban novels and short stories that emphasize the everyday experience of a postmodern city. A prominent feature of Verronen’s spatial poetics is the presence of urban nature. In her case, this doesn’t refer to parks or other cultivated sites, but nature reserves, city islands and recreational areas that have maintained some degree of wilderness. In my presentation, I will explore this urban wilderness and its role in her fictional worlds, especially in the novel *Saari kaupungissa* (2007) and *Karsintavaihe* (2008). The presence of urban wilderness presents a heterotopic alternative to the city. Verronen’s prose depicts the ways in which nature and wilderness frame urban areas and provide means of coping with experiences of otherness and marginality. Sites of urban wilderness are key spaces for Verronen’s protagonists: these places offer a sense of belonging. In addition, the interplay between a character and urban nature provides models on how to balance inner selfhood with external powers, a theme that is omnipresent in all Verronen’s prose. Finally, I will take a brief look at Verronen’s dystopian city images and the way they depict sites of urban wilderness and their destruction. This process is most clearly illustrated in the novel *Karsintavaihe* (2008).
Mikko Laaksonen (University of Turku)


The contemporary urban society is formed by modernization processes, which often are in conflict with each other. The modernist housing projects and apartments were planned to promote life moulded strongly to certain models – such as families formed of working parents and children and mobility with car. However, the modernist suburbs in Finland did not mould life of their residents to conform to the ideals of modernity. They became stages of the consumer society, created various subcultures and the unemployed and poverty were later concentrated there. Still, parts of modern life are still in effect in them.

In the paper, I will discuss these conflicts through analysis of two Finnish novels, both situated in ‘second cities’. Riku Korhonen’s Kahden ja yhden yön tarinan (2003, ‘Stories of two and one nights’) is situated in suburban Turku. Monika Fagerholm’s Diva (1998) takes place in Espoo. In both novels, the environment is slightly altered but serves as a metaphor of the subject cities.

Korhonen’s episodic novel presents the historical change in a fictitious Turku suburb from late 1970’s to early 2000’s early and later stages of consumer society and the suburb’s role as a stage of new lifestyles differing from the modern ideals. The suburb is not a separate ghetto, but an organic part of the city.

Fagerholm’s Diva concentrates on the life of an intellectually and sexually precocious young girl in affluent 1970’s Espoo. The central character and her friends use the available meanings both from media and consumer culture to patch together new meanings. The environment of the novel is a loosely fictitious model of the Swedish-speaking life in affluent Southern suburbs of Espoo.
Silja Laine (University of Turku)
Places Near and Far in the Literary Works of Jarkko Laine

Jarkko Laine (1947-2006) was a Turku born poet and a novel writer. Laine was known for his clever usage of local dialect and descriptions of local urban environment, but at the same time he was a pioneer in the multi artistic underground movement, and writer of politically radical and erotic pop songs. The regional, international and artistic aspirations in his work form an interesting combination that also changed over time. Laine was known to write about topical issues and react quickly to current events. According to him, poetry was the best way to express meaning to current events near and far. The paper will set out to analyze the meaning of time and place, and distances between places in his literary production; how a small northern town in Finland relates to the world and how Laine articulated this relation at different times.
Topi Lappalainen (University of Helsinki)
The Turku Tram in Literature

The first horse-drawn tram began operating in Turku in 1890, one year before Helsinki, making Turku the birthplace of Finnish tram traffic. The tram company went bankrupt in 1892, ending the horse-drawn era rather quickly. The electric trams were in traffic in Turku from 1908 to 1972. Plans to reintroduce the tram are being seriously discussed in Turku.

Turku has a long literary history. *Turku: kirjailijan kaupunki* (Turku: the city of the writer) is something of an encyclopedia published by the Finnish Literary Society in 2008 on Turku in literature. Pages 114-120 in this literary historical guide book are dedicated to tram-related quotes. Apart from that, the book also includes a lengthy tram-themed quote from a short story by Veli-Pekka Lehto that was published in a 1996 Turku anthology *Turku-retkeni* (My Turku trip).

The key question in my paper is: How has the Turku tram been depicted in literature? A starting point for my odyssey to the nostalgic world of the Turku tram is *Godnatt treans spårvagn* (‘Goodnight tram number three’), an autobiographical novel by the Finland-Swedish author Henrik Jansson. ‘Step by step, in our enchanted forest: between the trees runs tram number three in Turku’ (Jansson 2000, my translation). In Jansson’s book the tram is a memory belonging to the lost world of childhood. Another point of reference is the pessimism in the avant-garde work *Haamumaili* (‘The Ghost Mile’) by Jarkko Laine where there is a mention of ‘trams pushed off the bridge into the river’ (Laine 1968, my translation) in a literary work of the period when trams were still in traffic in Turku but the decision to end tram traffic had already been made.
Anni Lappela (University of Helsinki)

“I have not been further than Krasnoyarsk”: The Topos of a Provincial Siberian City in Roman Senchin’s *Minus*

Though Moscow is politically the first city of Russia, the first literary city is undoubtedly St. Petersburg. Vladimir Toporov’s classic works about “the Petersburg text” in Russian literature and Yuri Lotman’s analyses of the semiotics of the city are the most evident examples of St. Petersburg’s canonical position in the literary studies. Instead, all the second, third and peripheral cities are only now emerging into the urban literary studies in Russia and abroad.

An author, who describes provincial Siberian cities in his novels, is Roman Senchin. He was born in 1971 in Kyzyl, the capital of Tyva Republic in southern Siberia, and lived in different provincial cities before moving to Moscow in the 1990’s. At present Senchin is one of the figureheads of the so-called Russian “new realism”, a realistic literary trend of the 2000’s, known for its social and even political thematic.

Senchin’s earlier novels depict the life in peripheral Siberian cities and villages. His main work, *The Eltyshevs* (2009), portrays the degeneration of an ordinary Russian family in a Siberian village, while the protagonist of his novel *Minus* (2002) dreams about bigger cities (such as Novosibirsk, not always Moscow) living himself in a peripheral city in southern Siberia. In the novel *Led pod nogami – Dnevnik odnogo provinciala* (2010) the protagonist moves from Siberia to Moscow to start a new life.

I examine the topos of provincial cities in Senchin’s novels. Not only the 19th century Russian critical realism, but also the so-called Soviet village prose has undoubtedly influenced Senchin’s almost naturalistic style and thematic. However, while village prose authors wrote about the relationship between man and nature, portraying life in the countryside, Senchin describes the relationship between man and the city. In Siberia, this relationship is very specific also from the points of view of geocriticism and multinationalism. Being geographically part of Asia, Siberia has closer relations with Asian cultures than Russia on the Western side of the Ural Mountains. In Senchin’s novels, the protagonists’ awareness of multinationalism and the closeness of Asian countries manifest in the text various ways.
Haley Laurila (University of Michigan)

**Museum of Dreams: Place and Memory in Aleshkovsky’s Stargorod**

Memory has proved a singular obsession for post-Soviet Russian literature as writers attempt to make sense of the trauma that has characterized the past few decades. The collapse of the Soviet Union constitutes the dominant historical event to which contemporary intellectuals obsessively return in an attempt to represent the trauma of this lost historical moment. Russian writer Petr Aleshkovsky’s short-story cycle *Stargorod* represents an important trend in post-Soviet literature aimed at combating what Svetlana Boym refers to as restorative nostalgia currently evident in official Russia’s efforts to create a specific manipulated image of the past. This version of history inevitably and consciously elides many aspects of the more recent past. His fictional Stargorod, the location of some fifty different short narratives, divided between the last years of Soviet power and twenty years later, is the site of a historical intervention that posits a turn to reflective nostalgia as a project that will prove more productive as Russia endeavors to create its future. *Stargorod* is about the memory and history of a certain time and place, but one not told as a grand historical narrative. If these stories are connected with a history of everyday life in a moderately-sized provincial town, one that stands in opposition to the ostentatious mythologies of Moscow and St. Petersburg. *Stargorod* resists narrative wholeness, yet still imparts a memorable and elaborate sense of place, particularly remarkable for a Russian provincial location. Indeed, *Stargorod* figures as a memory-scape of the decades of Soviet transition. In considering the ways in which this work engages with memory through its prolific images of museums, ideas about preservation, and archeology, as well as the (often painful) recollections of the city’s inhabitants, this examination of Aleshkovsky’s work will attempt to discern that “metaphysical essence,” in the author’s words, of a place buried underneath the layers of the text.
Svante Lindberg (Åbo Akademi University)
City Walks, Vergangenheitsbewältigung and the Phantom Pains of Memory in Berlin and Paris: Shadow Cities in Two Texts by Régine Robin and Patrick Modiano

I will focus on the palimpsest city and the shadow city as they appear in two contemporary French texts dealing with European big city space (Berlin and Paris). The second city will be understood as the city of the past and as the city of certain (民族) groups, for example the Jewish city. This city within the city may no longer exist although there are traces of it. This city is to a large extent the object of re-narration and of reformulation, something that happens in the personal hermeneutics of the narrating protagonists.

Régine Robin is a French sociologist, linguist, historian and writer of Polish-Jewish origin, who has had most of her career in Québec. She has written several fictional and semi-fictional books on the city, among others the novel La Québécoïte (1983) which deals with an immigrant’s difficult insertion into Montreal. Patrick Modiano is the 2014 literary Nobel Prize laureate in whose works the different layers of the city (Paris) is a recurrent theme. In this presentation I will discuss Robins essay on Berlin, Berlin chantiers. Essai sur les passés fragiles and Modiano’s novel Dora Bruder from a shadow city perspective.

Using Michel de Certeau’s idea of space as practised place, I will first examine the physical encounter with city, the being in the city. I will then discuss the contemporary city as the expression of a wish to even out and to master the past (Vergangenheitsbewältigung) and the problems that are inherent in this. Finally, I will treat the traces of this dissimulated past in urban geography. The focus will be on the real pains and phantom pains that these remaining fragments cause the narrators as well as the community at large as this is told in the texts studied.
References:
Francesco Marilungo (University of Exeter)
The Capital of Otherness: The Literary Representations of Diyarbakir, or the Urban Voice of Kurdish Identity in Turkey

Undoubtedly, Istanbul is worldwide the best known Turkish city and the most represented in Turkish literature. With Istanbul: Memories and the city (2003), Nobel Prize awarded writer Orhan Pamuk, gave the city a huge international resonance, while also establishing on the national level the coordinates of the discourse about the combination of urban space, memory and literary representations.

Concurrently, Diyarbakir, Turkey’s largest city of the Kurdish southeast, since at least the 1970s began to take on the role of oppositional city, occasionally being called ‘the unofficial capital of Kurdistan’. In the Turkish political and cultural discourse Diyarbakir (in the Kurdish language called Amed) has become a symbol conveying antagonistic notions of otherness, ethnic diversity, insubordination, while politically advocating autonomy and independence. In the media level, Diyarbakir can be nominated to signify Kurdish political and cultural actors and/or demands, whilst Istanbul represents the economic and cultural pulsing heart.

Thus, Diyarbakir can be understood as a ‘second city’, because it represents and voices the largest ‘second’ ethnic identity of Turkey: Kurdish identity. In Kurdish culture Diyarbakir is a powerful identity symbol. Furthermore, having been home historically to a large Christian minority, especially Armenian, Diyarbakir is a privileged location for the articulation of a multicultural discourse that contradicts and undermines at its foundations Turkish exclusive nationalist narrative.

In my presentations, I will bring examples of literary representations of Diyarbakir taken from diverse corpuses and genres (memoirs, fiction, poetry), selected from a time span ranging from the 1980s until today, written in Turkish and Kurdish languages. Through these literary examples, I will try to show how writers articulate around Diyarbakir discourses of multiculturalism and alterity in the Turkish national context. Furthermore, I will look at how such discourses are produced in response to and combination with the main national discourse about urban space, memory and literary representations formulated by Pamuk.
Beyond Tijuana ‘la horrible’: Postmodernity and the Critique of Global Capitalism in the Works of Chicano and Mexican authors

The geopolitical and economic relations between Mexico and the United States from the mid 19th century until today have had an effect on the urban development of the border town Tijuana, a fast-growing enclave in the south side of the world’s most heavily transited border (Martínez, 1994; Ganster & Lorey, 2008). Since the nineteenth century, trans-border economic relations, cultural entanglement, and immigration have changed the town’s demographic and socio-cultural make-up. Tijuana has often and increasingly been associated to dystopia, chaos and unruliness, which are the main elements of its literary and cultural “black legend” (Fox 1999; Klahn 2000; Cota Torres 2007) or what Luis Humberto Berumen terms “Tijuana la horrible”.

From the viewpoint of cultural geography, it has been suggested that Tijuana’s postmodern urban reality increasingly resembles the postmodern fantasy of its representations (Alden 2000) as a future world city characterized by dislocation, hybridization and deterritorialization. While it is true that some authors have chosen to see Tijuana as a laboratory for the dissolution of boundaries or the threat of corrupting influences, other authors draw on the border town to produce interesting critiques of globalization and its effects on people and environment. This presentation will look at the representation of the San Diego-Tijuana urban space/s and the social relations within it in the works of Alex Rivera Sleep Dealers, Paul S. Flores Along the Border Lies and Luis Humberto Crosthwaite La luna siempre será un amor difícil and Instrucciones para cruzar la frontera as reflections on the effects of global capitalism and its ensuing inequalities on individuals and communities. Rather than a myth, Tijuana emerges here as a place whose identity is inevitably at the mercy of powerful market forces.
Tentative Bibliography:


Sleep Dealers. Dir. Rivera, Alex. Likely Story, This is That Productions. 2008.


Ilonka Persic (University of Split)
Dublin and Trieste as Literary Cities in the Works of James Joyce and Italo Svevo

This paper addresses the problem of second cities in Modernist literature, and I focus on the presence and role of Dublin and Trieste as the cities emerging in the works of James Joyce and Italo Svevo. Joyce left Dublin for Europe as early as in his twenties, choosing to live in lively, cosmopolitan centres of literary Modernism. Yet, he wrote exclusively about Dublin which, at the time, was a provincial backwater. Svevo was born in Trieste and spent most of his life there. Although the city was a powerful Austro-Hungarian harbour at the beginning of the twentieth century, for Svevo, who wrote in Italian, it remained a second city, culturally and literary remote from Italy.

I explore in this paper Joyce’s and Svevo’s representations of Dublin and Trieste as the cities which can be considered literary second cities by comparing ‘Counterparts’, one of the short stories in Joyce’s first major work Dubliners, with Svevo’s first novel Una vita. I then move on to a linkage of Joyce’s A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man with Svevo’s second novel Senilità. I argue that in all these texts the psychological tension of the main characters parallels their movements through the city. However, while in ‘Counterparts’ and Una vita the representations of the city are reduced to brief references to the city and its locations and have the purpose of contributing to the creation of the realistic layer of the text, in A Portrait and Senilità, they are laden with symbolism and reflect more potently the psychological preoccupations of the characters. My final contention in this paper is that Joyce’s and Svevo’s interest in the theme of the city can be seen as their typically Modernist gesture. The two writers wrote about Dublin and Trieste because they wanted to secure a unique position for these literary second cities within the Modernist tradition.

Theme: Dublin and Trieste as Literary Cities in the Works of James Joyce and Italo Svevo
Giada Peterle (University of Padua)

Beyond Venice: Italy's North-Eastern “Diffused Urbanisation” as a Network of Literary Second Cities

Although many spatial science scholars have investigated at length the Italian ‘diffused city’ (Cosgrove 2007), literary critics have failed to concentrate on the textual representation of this primarily Venetian spatial phenomenon. Geographers, sociologists, architects and urban planners have variously analysed the urbanisation of Northern Italy from different perspectives as a paradigmatic example for analysing also other urban formations around the world. However, the ‘diffused urbanisation’ of Italian north-east has never been interpreted as something that could also provide new and unforeseen literary insights. It is still almost unexplored from the perspective of literary theory and criticism, having been constantly put on the back burner and overshadowed by the historically authoritative, culturally dominant and literarily prevailing, worldwide known key case study of literary Venice. Taking this ‘secondariness’ into account and starting from these multifocal geographical and urban analyses, the aim of this paper is to embrace a new literary perspective that goes beyond Venice’s dominant ‘literary archetype’, focusing on the largemesh, polycentric, or even ‘non-centric network’ (Cosgrove 2007) of the second cities that make up the Venetian ‘città diffusa’. Posed at the centre of a ‘geocritical analysis’ (Lévy, Westphal 2014; Tally 2013, 2011; Prieto 2012; Brosseau 2009, 1995; Westphal 2007; et al.), the north-eastern ‘dispersed city’ (Ferrario 2011) will be considered as the urban form that gave birth to a ‘sprawling city’s literature’, or a literature from and of the sprawling city, which is characterized by its proper forms (topoi), practices and modes of representation. The ‘geocentred approach’ (Westphal 2007) will bear both the geographically informed and critically accurate textual reading of three works by contemporary Italian authors. The analysis of Giorgio Falco’s L’ubicazione del bene (2009), Roberto Ferrucci’s Andate e ritorni, scorribande a nordest (2003), and Vitaliano Trevisan’s I quindicimila passi (2002) will let the uncharted vision of a network of second cities arise from Venice’s backyards and allow for the emergence of the literary centrality of these urban backgrounds.
Juho Rajaniemi (Tampere University of Technology)
The Principle of No-Hope: Two Types of Urban Dystopia

During the last years, dystopic visions have become more and more popular, especially in the literature and movies targeted to teenagers and young adults. The genre offers many interesting works of art also for more mature taste. Two important novels from the year 2009, Margaret Atwood’s *The Year of the Flood* and Ahmed Khaled Tawfik’s *Utopia*, are describing the failure of the city as a human settlement. In both books two totally different cities exist in the same area. The other, called here the first city because of its’ political and economic superiority over the second one, is a kind of pseudo-oasis still hanging on the order and the prosperity. The second city appears to be a realm of perdition and has already lost its dignity. Even if these two cities are dependent from each other, a protective wall – both physical and societal – is created to separate their inhabitants.

The purpose of the paper is to examine the properties of the first and the second city. I aim to discuss how literary dystopias reveal the absence of urban planning, how this reflects to the settings and how the characters react to it. In the course of paper, like Atwood and Tawfik in their works, I will focus on the second city, where dystopic elements are rather evident. However, as there is no second without the first, also the first city and its’ hidden dystopia is to be approached.

As the title alludes, my theoretical background will lean on the thinking of German philosopher Ernst Bloch, especially on his writings on utopia, architecture and literature. According to him, there are just two possible outcomes to history: absolute perfection or absolute destruction. For Atwood an ecological breakdown, and for Tawfik a socio-economical dead end, is inevitable, although not necessarily definitive. Bloch argues the human ability to dream of a better world never really dies. In literary dystopias human life without dreams or hope seems to be possible or even inescapable, at least occasionally. In fact, as I will claim in the paper, urban life with no hope is the very essence of the dystopia as a story.
Markku Salmela (University of Tampere)
Still Learning from Las Vegas: Imagining America's Urban Other

If cities are defined at all by the size of their population, Las Vegas could not be called a city until very recently. In 1940, only 8,422 people lived in what is now the City of Las Vegas. However, even before urban sprawl took over what is now the wider metropolitan area, the city's cultural and financial influence, based on gambling and nightlife, was remarkably out of proportion. The cultural influence does not only emerge directly out of the entertainment industry but concerns also architecture and urban form, as Learning from Las Vegas (1972) by Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour famously illustrated. When it comes to literary stories set in Las Vegas, the identification of the city as a holiday resort is evident in a number of repeated narrative patterns and moral questions. Often the sense of a temporary, personal state of exception -- reflective of the legal status of gambling in Nevada -- in a somewhat unreal environment is prominent in the protagonists' experience.

Through brief but representative textual examples, this paper investigates some ways in which Las Vegas represents America’s hallucinatory second city, the transient and out-of-the-ordinary urban other to the "real" cities of the nation, all of which have much more extensive urban histories. The purpose of this investigation is to begin sketching the revelations that Las Vegas may still be seen to offer in terms of urban life in the United States. The examples include passages from Charles Bock’s 2008 novel Beautiful Children and, rather self-evidently, Hunter S. Thompson's Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas (1972).
Jörgen Scholz (Åbo Akademi University)

Reykjavik Calling: The Atom Station by Halldor Laxness, a Modernist City Novel in Iceland

My presentation will be based on my master’s thesis, in which I focused on Halldór Laxness’ city novel *Atomstöðin (The Atom Station)* which was published in 1948. The novel is in many ways an exception in Laxness’ literary work being his only novel to concentrate on urban culture in the Icelandic capital. The starting point of my analysis is the assumption that the novel is part of a larger genre, that of the modernist city novel. Reykjavík is an extraordinary capital in terms of geographical position and size. In its history the city dealt with the same political, social and demographical changes and transformations as other major Nordic cities, just half a century later and in a different proportion. Therefore, I observe that Laxness chooses familiar ways to describe the ongoing urbanisation processes, whilst also adapting his literary expression to these new urban conditions. There are similarities to other modernist city novels in style, theme and motif which I wish to demonstrate.

The novel is considered as a groundbreaking work of urban Icelandic city culture and I aim to explore the background of this statement. In particular, I will examine the dichotomy between city space and the countryside, an element which forms a main topic in the novel. This dichotomy depends on city literature on a more general basis, and influences Icelandic literature in particular. In addition to the spatial mobility of people, goods and ideas, I will focus on political, social, moral and religious differences as shown in the novel. The presentation will be based on geocritical theory (Westphal, Tally). I will include descriptions of the city as an erotic arena, as a liberal free zone, and as an environment for a degenerated and decadent bourgeoisie that is in the process of falling apart and decaying.
Petter Skult (Åbo Akademi University)

Post-Apocalyptic Fiction and the Ruins of the City

Post-apocalyptic fiction in its secular guise has always been very closely connected to the project of modernity, and consequently the rise of the modern city and urbanity. From Richard Jefferies’ *After London* (1885) to more contemporary depictions of a post-urban world, such as Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road* (2006), the city plays a surprisingly important role in the conception of the post-apocalypse. I say surprising because, barring a number of novels written by authors who might be termed postmodern, such as J.G. Ballard’s *The Drowned World* (1962), Paul Auster’s *In The Country of Last Things* (1987), Doris Lessing’s *The Memoirs of a Survivor* (1974) and José Saramago’s *Blindness* (1995), the vast majority of post-apocalyptic fiction takes place outside the city, in its periphery, in the suburbs and often in the pure wilderness – on the road, as it were. It is in these outside spaces that society takes new root and authors begin to explore the possibility of a truly ‘post’-modern world. But even from these new enclaves of society, the city (often a major or capital city) and its potent ruins loom near.

In my paper I would like to discuss the role of the post-apocalyptic, ruined city in the context of post-apocalyptic science fiction: the city as ruin, the city as other, the city as memory, using Bakhtin’s notion of the chronotope as my main theoretical tool. Although I will mention a number of different works, some of which have already been listed above, my main focus will be on Margaret Atwood’s *MaddAddam* (2003-2013) trilogy, starting with the 2003 novel *Oryx and Crake*. In this trio of novels, Atwood deals with everything from post-humanism, ecological devastation and the conclusion of the culture wars to the survival of humanity. The all-encompassing dystopian citescape is the constant backdrop to her narrative, and its neo-Gibsonian character makes it an especially vital source to draw inspiration from.
Ene-Reet Soovik (University of Tartu)

A Town of Birds and Seasons: Jaan Kaplinski’s Poetic Tartu

The internationally best known contemporary Estonian poet Jaan Kaplinski was born and raised in Tartu, Estonia’s second city, that has also remained his home town for the greater part of his life. While he may currently identify his country retreat as his true home space, and even as his oeuvre need not specifically focus on urban sensibilities, Tartu still emerges as a recognizable and significant locus in many of his poems. The poet’s affiliation and identification with Tartu becomes particularly evident in the framing of his works published abroad. Thus, his first book of poetry originally written in English and published by Laurel Press was explicitly called I am the Spring in Tartu, while his correspondence with the Finnish-Swedish author Johannes Salminen appeared under the title Sjunger näktergalen än i Dorpat?, borrowing the title from an enquiry sparked by Salminen’s fascination with the town’s historical German name.

This presentation will attempt to trace the construction of Tartu in Kaplinski’s poetry, approaching the topic from three different angles. Firstly, the location and status of Tartu on Kaplinski’s poetic map of Estonia will be observed, positioning the town on a synchronic spatial plane. Secondly, Tartu as a repository of history and a palimpsestic space of diachronically accumulated meanings will be discussed. Thirdly, and most importantly, the poetic representation of Tartu as familiar living space immediately experienced via the senses by an insider will be addressed, with a special emphasis on the permeation of the city space with natural elements and the resulting porous quality of the defining boundaries of the city. The elaboration on these aspects will draw on the ideas of Franco Moretti on literary maps, the tradition of phenomenologically inclined human geography (e.g. Yi-Fu Tuan) and ecocriticism (Lawrence Buell).
Elle-Mari Talivee (Tallinn University)

Narva: Literary Border Town

The Estonian town of Narva stands on the eastern frontier of the European Union. It was once a new and beautiful baroque town, sometimes regarded in the 17th century as the second capital of Sweden. Narva Krenholm Manufacturing Company was one of the biggest cotton mills in Europe and indeed the whole world at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1944 the town shared the fate of Dresden; it was destroyed so thoroughly that only two houses survived the bombing and battles. Narva was not restored: instead it was rebuilt as a Soviet town and its original inhabitants were replaced with immigrant Russian-speaking workers.

Narva has been mentioned in several travelogues in different languages and also by the first Estonian poet Käsu Hans, who described the destruction of Tartu during the Great Northern War. The first Estonian working class novel, *The Iron Hands* (1898) by Eduard Vilde, tells the story of Krenholm.

Since the Second World War Narva in literature has largely seemed to be a phantom place. This paper investigates how Narva has reappeared in the works of contemporary Estonian writers including Tiit Aleksejev and Andrei Hvostov: is its reappearance the product of what Marianne Hirsch has labelled post-memory, an attempt to rebuild the lost city?

In addition to Hirsch, the theoretical background includes the work of Juri Lotman used to take account of Narva as an ‘eccentric city’ and border city, and the concept of the text of the city developed by Vladimir Toporov.
Mart Velsker (University of Tartu)
Other Faces of the Literature of a Second City: Tartu and Its Parts

The opposition of Tallinn and Tartu, the two major cities in Estonia, has been significant from the perspective of cultural history. Tartu is the second city in Estonia, but there have been periods during which it was the main centre of literary activity. This was particularly noticeable in the Estonian-language literature of the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, which has made it possible to attribute a central meaning to signs connected with Tartu in typical discussions of literature – here, the mainstream of Estonian literary history is converging with classic narratives of Tartu cultural history.

However, an increasing number of different approaches have been emerging side by side with this view. The presentation will discuss these possibilities in more detail, with a particular focus on examples of dividing the city into smaller territorial units and restructuring literary meanings through this. Three central possibilities arise in this connection with each provoking questions in its turn:

Historically, the central symbols of Tartu have been semanticised differently in literatures written in different languages. The distinctive and contrasting landscape elements in Tartu are a hill (Dome Hill) and a river (the Emajõgi) that have been depicted slightly differently in Estonian-language and German-language literatures, although as symbols they are shared. How can this influence the ways in which literature is spoken about?

Discussions of different neighbourhoods have emerged, with the city centre and the neighbourhoods of Supilinn and Karlova appearing as autonomous parts of the literary Tartu of the existing treatments. The signs related to the centre characteristically also appear in traditional Estonian literary histories. Other neighbourhoods have helped to launch different images of literature. What are these images like?
Attempts have been made to restructure the space and literature with the help of Marc Augé’s term of ‘non-place; for instance, a literary collection entitled Non-Tartu (Mitte-Tartu, 2012) endeavoured to explore places ideologically objected to that as if had no meaning from the point of view of dominant culture. To what degree will the “non-places” be resurrected in the discussions, and to what degree are they still simply rewritings of different types of meaningful “real places”?

The highlighted aspects are the most vivid ones among several possible problems and approaches. The talk will proceed from the premise that particular examples could give rise to general models of literature.
Sophie Wennerscheid (Ghent University)
‘Second sex’, ‘Second Skin’ and ‘Second City’: Concepts of Secundariness in Contemporary Swedish Literature and Film

Drawing on Sara Ahmed’s concept of the second skin, that is the social skin you get by getting touched and formed by the world you live in, I want to explore how processes of identity formations are described in contemporary Swedish novels and movies about young female adults growing up in ‘second cities’. My claim is that the three concepts of secundariness – ‘second sex’, ‘second skin’ and ‘second city’ – are linked in a very specific way: Growing up as a girl you are seen and touched as a female sexual body – if you want it or not. Growing up as a girl in small town Sweden means growing up in an environment where your possibilities are restricted. You are not expected to become something special, your ambitions are not appreciated, and your sexual desires have to match the norms of heterosexuality. The second skin is thus marked and formed by the city one lives in. It traps you and makes it impossible to inhabit the city as if it were home.

Contemporary Swedish film and literature as for example Lucas Moodyssons Fucking Åmål, Susanna Alakoskis Svinalängorna or Eija Hetekivi Olsson Ingenbarnsland make visible the borders restricting young female adults. But they also show ways of border-crossing and expanding the opportunities. The longing to find another way of living, the wish to escape from the second city and to become ‘first class’ are intrinsic forces that make the body move in an unexpected direction. “Härifrån till tjottahejti”, as Hetekivi Olsson’s protagonist Miira puts it.

In my talk I want to analyse how the city is inscribed into the female body and how it forms the ‘second skin’. In which way is the structure of the city described in the texts reflected in the textual structure itself? How do city and text become intertwined? And which possibilities of breaking up borders do aesthetics offer?