

Editorial

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***Mapping the Impossible* 2021/22 Editorial Board**

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The Editorial Board of *Mapping the Impossible* is so pleased to present our very first issue. Back in late 2020, we identified an underrepresented area of academic publishing, and decided to address the situation by establishing a new journal. *Mapping the Impossible* is inspired by the tremendous work being done by students during their time on the University of Glasgow’s Fantasy MLitt, who are often making completely unique but unpublished contributions to fantasy scholarship during its ongoing establishment in academia. As such, our journal is focused on publishing early-career research into fantasy and the fantastic. It was important to us that the journal should also contribute towards the career development of everyone involved in it, so we decided to make both its editorial board and pool of peer reviewers entirely composed of students. Being students, we are all-too aware of the drawbacks of subscription-based publishing, and as such, have established the journal with the idea that it should be an open-access resource. The result is a journal exclusively run by, for and with the help of undergraduate and postgraduate students from all over the world, available to everyone to read for free. We are *Mapping the Impossible: Journal for Fantasy Research*, and this is our first publication.

This special issue is the result of a collaboration between *Mapping the Impossible* and the University of Glasgow’s annual fantasy conference, GIFCon (Glasgow International Fantasy Conversations). In 2021, the theme of GIFCon was “Beyond the Anglocentric Fantastic”, a hugely important topic investigating the influence of Anglonormativity and Anglocentrism in fantasy and the fantastic and inviting presenters to look beyond them, at the wider world of fantasy. GIFCon is a conference aimed specifically at early-career researchers looking at fantasy, and it felt entirely appropriate for *Mapping the Impossible* to put out a call for papers at the event, encouraging

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Mapping the Impossible is an open-access student journal, publishing peer-reviewed undergraduate and postgraduate research into fantasy and the fantastic.

presenters and attendees to submit their papers to us for publication. After GIFCon, we put out a wider call to the world at large, and the response was overwhelming. As such, we are delighted to present four papers that represent the spirit of GIFCon's 2021 theme, examining fantasy and the fantastic beyond the Anglocentric.

We have a great number of people to thank for making this issue possible. The University of Glasgow's Centre for Fantasy and the Fantastic was also established in late 2020, and its members have been invaluable in helping us set up – with special thanks going to Dr. Dimitra Fimi, Dr. Matthew Barr, Dr. Matthew Sangster and Dr. Robert Maslen. In late 2021, the Centre accepted our proposal for funding, made in the face of continued unfair payment practices in academic publishing, which is allowing us to take a small step towards properly recognising the efforts of our authors by offering a token reward for each paper we publish. Thanks should also be given to our sister publication, *Press Start*, who have been publishing early-career research in game studies for many years now, and have been generously teaching us all we need to know to make the launch of *Mapping the Impossible* a success. Recognition must be given to our Press Officers, Hannah Barton and Judith Schofield, who continue to do stellar work spreading the word about *Mapping the Impossible*, and making sure that our calls for papers end up in the right hands. Lois Langmead is responsible for the amazing artwork used to decorate the *Mapping the Impossible* website, and, of course, we have to thank our incredible anonymous peer-reviewers for all the hard work they have put into this issue, working behind the scenes. Most of all, we would like to thank our authors, whose excellent research is available for you to read below.

Our first paper, 'To English and Back Again: Preserving the Complexities of Fantastic Creatures on the Journey Between Languages' by Martine G. Ræstad and Grace A.T. Worm, examines several strategies used by translators when it comes to translating fantastic creatures between languages, and the problems inherent in each strategy; highlighting common compromises made by translators, and the way that those compromises have affected the depiction of fantastic creatures across different cultures. Their paper concludes with a case study examining how the word "giant" has been used to gloss or translate the *jotunns* of Norse mythology, resulting in simplification and contradiction.

Then, Gabriel Elvery coins the term "Digital Fantasy" in 'Of Heroes and Heartbreak: Digital Fantasy and Metaphors of Affect in *Ni No Kuni: Wrath of the White Witch*', by using a psychoanalytic framework informed by Fantasy theory to investigate how the Japanese Role-Playing Fantasy video game *Ni No Kuni: Wrath of the White Witch* offers a depiction of, and engagement with, emotional issues via its deployment of literalised metaphors of affect. "Digital Fantasy" is used to describe video games, such as *Ni No Kuni*, which evoke Fantasy worlds and use the imagery of Fantasy as a means of communicating emotion.

Next, Madalena Daleziou, in “‘This Land Doesn’t Die [...] It Lives on Like This. Like a Fairy-Tale’”: Topography, Identity and Recovery through the Fantastic in Elias Venezis’ *Aeolian Earth*”, uses concepts from J. R. R. Tolkien’s essay, ‘On Fairy Stories’, to study manifestations of the fantastic in *Aeolian Earth*, considering the national identities and geopolitical conditions that created them. Throughout Venezis’ narrative, Greece is both lovingly mythologised by locals and then exoticized as a mythical land by non-Greek characters, and Daleziou’s paper examines how those discourses within the novel act as a counterpoint to one another, exploring how fantasy is used by Anglocentric and non-Anglocentric perspectives when applied to a country and culture that lies outside the Anglosphere.

Finally, Judith Schofield examines a classic of Russian literature in ‘Reading *The Master and Margarita* by Mikhail Bulgakov as Fantastic Literature’ in the context of Rosemary Jackson’s *Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion*. Schofield demonstrates how Jackson’s theory both functions and requires adaptation within the Soviet-Communist context of Russia in the 1930’s, and in doing so, situates Bulgakov within the genre of fantasy, and suggests ways in which fantastic theory can shift its focus away from the Anglocentric.

Once again, we would like to thank everyone who has come together to make this first issue of *Mapping the Impossible* possible. We hope this issue offers a window into the amazing work being done by early-career researchers studying fantasy across the world.

Best wishes from the *Mapping the Impossible* editorial board!