Contents

Programme ........................................................................................................................................ 3

Panel 1a: Mermaids in fairy tales and fantasy fiction ........................................................................ 5
  M.N. Meimaridi, ‘Come seek us where our voices sound’; Reading the Mermaid in Harry Potter’ .... 5
  Andy McCormack, “Now listen, this is important”: Andersen’s sea-witch, Disney’s Ursula, and the
  making of a cultural icon’ ..................................................................................................................... 5
  Francesca Arnavas, ‘British and Irish Mermaids in Four Contemporary Fairy Tales’ ..................... 6

Panel 1b: Sacred waters: the benefits of water in myth and folklore ............................................... 6
  Ulker Yusifova, ‘The sea as chthonic place in eastern mythological thinking’ ................................. 6
  Mariam Zia, ‘Khizer and the “Sea of Stories”’ .................................................................................. 7
  Rosalind Kerven, ‘Native American “Salmon Country”: A Sacred Place Beneath the Sea’ ............. 7

Panel 2a: The sea in poetry and soundscapes .................................................................................... 8
  Ellen Howley, ‘The Mythic Sea in Irish and Caribbean Poetry’ ......................................................... 8
  Alexandra Chereches, ‘The image of the sea in Romanian oral poetry’ .............................................. 8
  Sarah Hymas, ‘Towards a Stranding: An Installation’ .................................................................... 9
  Nvard Vardanyan, ‘Maritime Themes in the Armenian National Epic “Daredevils of Sassoun’ .... 9

Panel 2b: Demonised waters: the dangers of sea, lake and bog in folklore .................................... 10
  Dr Tommy Kuusela, Sea Monsters and Sea Worms in the North’ .................................................... 10
  Dr Ya’acov Sarig, ‘Coping with Supernatural Sea Entities: Folk Beliefs in the Nordic Countries’ ... 10
  Sarah Birns, ‘The “Forsaken Country”: Folklore of the Marshland’ .............................................. 11

Panel 3a: The romance of the sea ...................................................................................................... 11
  Dr Maria Tausiet, ‘Love in a Whirl: Sea legend and Self-Knowledge’ ............................................. 11
  Fern Ennis, ‘The White Ladies of Whitby: Coastal Legends and Bram Stoker’s Dracula’ ............. 12
  Olle Jilkén, ‘Aquatic Heterosexual Love and Wondrous Cliché Stereotypes: Amphibian masculinity
  and the beast bridegroom motif in The Shape of Water’ ............................................................... 12

Panel 3b: The sailor as hero or villain ............................................................................................... 13
  Ben Littlejohns, “All that is left of us are the monsters in the stories they tell their children”:
  Mediating Pirate Narratives through Storytelling’ ......................................................................... 13
  Alison Habens, ‘Laughing Sailor: seaside attraction or archetypal shadow’ .............................. 13
  Teo Rogers, “The Cleverest Men At This Fishing”: Mythologizing the Basque Whaling Industry’ .. 14

Panel 4a. Speculative water dwellers ............................................................................................... 14
  Thomas Moules, ‘Reclaiming Dagon: An Examination of Ruthanna Emrys’ Engagement with H.P.
  Lovecraft’s Folklore of the Sea’ ........................................................................................................ 14
Cecilia Inkol, ‘The Robot Magic Mermaid’ ................................................................. 15
Dr Maxim Fomin and Prof Séamus Mac Mathúna, ‘Collectors and Collection of Maritime Memorates in the 19th-20th cc. Ireland and Scotland’ ........................................................................................................ 15

Panel 4b: Shipwrecks .............................................................................................................. 16

Dr Cathryn Pearce, ‘Lured by False Lights: Wrecking in Cornish Folklore in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries’ ................................................................................................. 16
Eilis Phillips, ‘Cannibal Waters: Sailors and the Monstrous Maritime Space’ ..................... 16
Catherine Cole, ‘La Perouse and the Myth of the Shipwreck’ .............................................. 17
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-9.30 a.m.</td>
<td>Registration (30 mins)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.30-10.30 a.m.</td>
<td>Keynote by Sophia Kingshill (1hr)</td>
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<td>10.30-10.45 a.m.</td>
<td>Tea break (15 mins)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.45 a.m.-12.00 p.m.</td>
<td>Panel 1 (1hr 15 mins)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.00-1.00 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch (1 hr)</td>
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<td>1.00-2.20 p.m.</td>
<td>Panel 2 (1hr 20 mins)</td>
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<td>2.20-2.40 p.m.</td>
<td>Tea break (20 mins)</td>
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<td>2.40-4 p.m.</td>
<td>Panel 3 (1hr 20 mins)</td>
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- M.N. Meimaridi, ‘Come seek us where our voices sound’; Reading the Mermaid in *Harry Potter*
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- Francesca Arnavas, ‘British and Irish Mermaids in Four Contemporary Fairy Tales’

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- Ulker Yusifova, ‘The sea as chthonic place in eastern mythological thinking’
- Mariam Zia, ‘Khizer and the “Sea of Stories”’
- Rosalind Kerven, ‘Native American “Salmon Country”: A Sacred Place Beneath the Sea’

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<td>Tea break (20 mins)</td>
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<td>4.20-5.40 p.m.</td>
<td>Panel 4 (1hr 20 mins)</td>
<td>(Re)creating Coastal Folklore</td>
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<td>Thomas Moules, ‘Reclaiming Dagon: An Examination of Ruthanna Emrys’ Engagement with H.P. Lovecraft’s Folklore of the Sea’</td>
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<td>Catherine Cole, ‘La Perouse and the Myth of the Shipwreck’</td>
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<td>From 5.40 p.m.</td>
<td>Drinks followed by dinner</td>
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Panel 1a: Mermaids in fairy tales and fantasy fiction

M.N. Meimaridi, ‘Come seek us where our voices sound’; Reading the Mermaid in *Harry Potter*

‘Come seek us where our voices sound
We cannot sing above the ground’


In the Victorian era monkey torsos were stitched onto large fish tails, addressing the public’s desire to behold a mermaid. These exhibits, apart from offering access to the grotesque, spoke to an innate need in man to mirror himself in nature. Dorothy Dinnerstein in *The Mermaid and the Minotaur* (1976) suggests the various mysterious and fantastical hybrids that emerge in the imagination both embody humanity’s ‘sense of strangeness on earth’ and provide a route to negating it. While creatures like centaurs or mermaids have a longstanding classical and mythological history, these beings are also continually reinvented for new audiences and in new spaces, perhaps most acutely and interestingly in narratives aimed at a young readership. In this paper, I take as my subject matter J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series (1997-2007) and focus in particular upon her representation and reinvention of the figure of the mermaid.

Such creatures are, of course, themselves inherently dualised; they are both of land and of sea, of human and of animal. Yet in Rowling’s fantasy landscape, these creatures are deployed to speak to a particular principal of unification, not only between human and animal but also between different human cultures. In a world itself fraught by tensions, between good and evil, muggles and wizards, and most importantly, between humans and animals, it is within these boundary spaces that compromise and ultimately change can exist. Interaction with the mermaid necessitates a transgression into their realm or in the limited spaces between. Travelling to this boundary and beyond, outside the comfort of the known, challenges the self to understand and be understood. This paper will explore how both the *Harry Potter* series and its accompanying taxonomy of imaginative creatures, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, shapes the mermaid to teach a lesson in ethics and otherness aimed at young readers but also tied to older histories.

Andy McCormack, “‘Now listen, this is important’’: Andersen’s sea-witch, Disney’s Ursula, and the making of a cultural icon’

The best-known story of sea and shore, ‘The Little Mermaid’, has migrated from the coast and culture of Hans Christian Andersen’s 19th-century Denmark to the very heart of contemporary global children’s entertainment, as the watershed film responsible for Disney’s renaissance in the late 1980s, and the bedrock of its subsequent stranglehold over the diverse media of children’s culture. The success of the film rests significantly in the tentacles of its villain, Ursula the sea-witch, whose song ‘Poor Unfortunate Souls’ marks at once the turning point in the narratives of the little mermaid herself, and indeed the success of the animation studio which re-birthed and recast Andersen’s tragic heroine as an all-American princess.

Through threefold analysis of this singularly important scene:
1 a close reading of the scene’s ‘meaning’, material to the plot and themes of Disney’s *Little Mermaid*,
2 comparative analysis between Disney’s Ursula and her literary progenitor, the sea-witch in Andersen’s *Den Lille Havfrue*, through the lens of genetic criticism (Joosen, 2018)
3 and an exploration of Ursula’s contemporary incarnation in the popular cultural psyche via adaptation (Hutcheon, 2006) and rememorying (Waller, 2018) studies,

I hope to articulate and understanding the fascinating function Ursula has come to embody in the contemporary cultural consciousness.
Andy McCormack
A former early-years teacher, Andy McCormack is an AHRC-funded PhD candidate at the Centre for Research in Children’s Literature at the University of Cambridge. Ursula was the focus of his M.Phil. dissertation; his current research analyses the represented relationship between children’s authors, texts and readers in contemporary culture for adults.

Francesca Arnavas, ‘British and Irish Mermaids in Four Contemporary Fairy Tales’
As Skye Alexander has pointed out, there has always been a peculiar, intense fascination with merfolks in the UK and Ireland: “more than three million people make their homes along the United Kingdom’s coastline of nearly 20,000 miles, and people who live near the sea always swap stories about mermaids. Ireland (...) has its share of mermaid legends as well” (Mermaids, 93). This paper addresses the persistent presence of this attraction for the enigmatic sea creatures, taking as examples four contemporary interpretations, by Scottish author Kirsty Logan (The Gloaming), Irish novelist Louise O’Neill (The Surface Breaks), and by two English writers, Imogen Hermes Gowar (The Mermaid and Mrs Hancock) and Jen Campbell, with her collection of short stories The Beginning of the World in the Middle of the Night, in which sea folks make more than one appearance. What all these stories have in common is the hybrid status of mermaids, transposed from the sea to the land, and portrayed as complex beings in between the natural and the unnatural. These four contemporary authors propose the figure of the mermaid as a fascinating embodiment of existential and social doubts on what “normality” means, showing how being in between different worlds is something more common than expected.

Francesca Arnavas
Francesca Arnavas finished her PhD at the University of York in September 2018, under the supervision of Dr Richard Walsh. Her thesis deals with a cognitive narratological approach to Lewis Carroll’s Alice books. She is currently teaching as an associate at the University of York and working on her post-doctoral project, which is about the concept of ‘unnatural narratives’ regarding fairy tales and fairy tale retellings, with special attention to Victorian fairy tales.

Panel 1b: Sacred waters: the benefits of water in myth and folklore
Ulker Yusifova, ‘The sea as chthonic place in eastern mythological thinking’
This article explores the place of the sea as an image in eastern mythological thinking. During the investigation, the sea is encountered in the East in the following cases:
- The sea is the most commonly used detail in the starting formula of fairy tales. In the initial formula of fairy tales, the sea is a symbol of far distances. Heroes of fairy tales have to go through several seas to reach hidden places. When the hero of the fairy tale has to perform any difficult test, passes the seas, crosses the mountains.
- In Turkish folklore, the model of the world’s creation was originally built on the sea. The sand on the hand of God was thrown over the sea, and became the continents.
- In Greek mythology, the god Poseidon lives under the sea. In some ancient eastern folklore, the horses of the heroes were born from the horse living in the sea (from the horse of God). The sea is a chthonic place from this point of view.
- The image of Khidir, in some folklore, lives in the sea. He is immortal because he drank abi-hayat (water of immortality). Alexander the Great, who went to search for abi-hayat in the ‘The tale of Alexander’, wanting to become as immortal as Khidir, was angry and killed his cook and threw it into the sea. The cook comes out of the sea as a sea monster. The sea was abi-hayat. But Alexander could not drink it.

This paper analyses the sea as a chthonic place through various prisms in Eastern mythology.

Ulker Yusifova
Ulker Yusifova is a PhD student from the Azerbaijani National Academy of Sciences / Folklore Institute. She has a Master’s with honours from the Faculty of Philology of Baku Slavic University (2010-12). She started her professional career as a lab assistant at Baku Slavic University in 2013. She has been a teacher at the same university in the Department of Azerbaijani Literature from 2017. She teaches several periods of Azerbaijan Literature. She has represented Azerbaijani science in numerous international conferences, symposiums, and is the author of more than 10 scientific articles.

Mariam Zia, ‘Khizer and the “Sea of Stories”’

*The Adventures of Amir Hamza* is a pseudo-religious epic loosely built around the life and exploits of Prophet Muhammad’s uncle, Hamza ibn Abu Talib, who conquers lands on earth and in Qaf, the realm of jinn, peris, devs and talismans in the name of the ‘True Faith’. In his miraculous adventures, Hamza and his companions are helped ‘by the will of Allah’ through Khizer, the patron saint of the seas and those who voyage across water bodies in folklore.

In Islamic folklore and miniature paintings, Khizer is represented as an old, wise man floating in the waters on a fish. Through a reading of the stories and adventures that take place in and around water in *The Adventures of Amir Hamza*, this paper seeks to understand the role of Khizer in Islamic folklore in the Subcontinent and by virtue of that in the storytelling tradition of the *dastan*.

In the Quran, Khizer is represented as the wise man who counsels Moses while in the Hadith, he is the bearer of the *Water of Life* that allows invincibility. These stories involving Khizer will be discussed within a greater dilemma for the *dastan* tradition in general: here are stories locked in a dichotomous relationship between the religious-historical and the areligious-ahistorical.

Mariam Zia

Mariam Zia completed her PhD in Critical Theory from the University of Sussex, United Kingdom. Her thesis titled ‘Religious Orientations and “The Uncanny”: A Reading of *The Adventures of Amir Hamza*’ was supervised by Professor Nicholas Royle. She is currently working as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Social Sciences at the Lahore School of Economics, Pakistan. Before beginning her PhD, Dr. Zia was associated with broadcasting and journalism, reporting on health, education and terrorism in Pakistan.

Rosalind Kerven, ‘Native American “Salmon Country”: A Sacred Place Beneath the Sea’

The indigenous peoples of British Columbia in western Canada have long regarded salmon as a major foodstuff. This gave rise to a rich mythology about these fish, which hatch out in freshwater rivers, migrate long distances to the sea where they spend most of their lives, then travel upriver again to spawn and die. This paper will explore two ancient myths, from the Bella Coola and Tahltan nations, about journeys to the fabled ‘Salmon Country’ under the sea. It will feature the location and landscape of this sacred place, how it is accessed and how the Salmon People live there in human form. All will be revealed through the eyes of two legendary human youngsters – one female, one male – who find themselves magically transported to Salmon Country, adapting to the strange environment and learning important ethical lessons from their adventures. Issues arising from these stories range from fantastical phenomena (shape-shifting, the resurrection of the dead) to realistic wisdom (the mutual dependency of people and fish, the importance of conserving natural resources). Combining scholarly reportage with a little storytelling, this will portray a ‘fabled coast’ totally different and more fabulous than anything found in Europe.

Rosalind Kerven

I am the author of 60+ books in 22 countries for publishers including CUP, OUP, British Museum, British Library, National Trust. I have been collecting and retelling world myths, legends and folktales for over 30 years: please see my website, [www.workingwithmythsandfairytales.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.workingwithmythsandfairytales.blogspot.co.uk). This paper draws on in-depth research through old archives conducted for my latest book, *Native American Myths collected 1636-1919*. I have wide experience of talking engagingly to audiences and have
previously presented papers to several Folklore Society conferences. Kerven has contributed a number of features to the Sussex Centre’s Gramarye journal – including one on Native American myths for the winter 2018 issue.

**Panel 2a: The sea in poetry and soundscapes**

**Ellen Howley, ‘The Mythic Sea in Irish and Caribbean Poetry’**

Contemporary poetry from Ireland and the Caribbean displays an interest in coastal areas and the sea. As island spaces, these regions produce poets who contemplate the relationship between land and water as a way to understand their present moment. Key to this engagement with the oceanic is the idea of the mythic sea; an unknown space that is infused with ancient stories, legends and folklore. This paper explores the work of four poets – Lorna Goodison (Jamaica), Seamus Heaney (Northern Ireland), Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin (Republic of Ireland) and Derek Walcott (St Lucia) – and their use of the mythic sea to examine questions of identity, history and landscape. Homeric influences sit alongside local tales of selkies, mermaids, and submerged islands, while ancient voyage narratives such as the Irish imramma and macabre reimaginings of the slave trade weave their way into their poetry. Through this comparative lens, the particularities of each tradition become evident as the similarities are drawn out. The universal and local resonances of myth in Ireland and the Caribbean are brought to the fore, demonstrating myth’s usefulness as a tool of critique of the contemporary moment in two infrequently-compared regions.

**Ellen Howley**

Ellen is a PhD candidate in the School of English at Dublin City University. She received a BA International in English and French from University College Dublin (2014) and an MSc in Literature and Modernity from the University of Edinburgh (2015). She has also studied at Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV) as part of the Erasmus programme. Her research focuses on contemporary Irish and Caribbean poetry and is concentrated on the work of Nobel Laureates Seamus Heaney and Derek Walcott as well as current Professor for Poetry Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin and Jamaican Poet Laureate Lorna Goodison. She has published in the Irish Literary Supplement.

**Alexandra Chereches, ‘The image of the sea in Romanian oral poetry’**

Linking Western and Eastern civilizations, the Black Sea has always been an emblem of mystery and enigma. In Romanian oral poetry we can find several motifs that reveal how the sea implies an inscrutable space, especially in those poems that connect love and longing. This longing or nostalgia comprehends the Romanian dor, a word that is ‘at the center of a constellation of meanings related to the experience of a specific pain: that which one feels as a result of missing something or someone (a person or a cherished place), or as a result of an intimate hope (a desire for what one considers to be a deep fulfillment, for example, the return of a lost relative or friend, a return home, and so on)’ (Vasilu 2014: 228). Thus, by analysing several metaphors and symbols of the sea, we will expose in this paper how Romanian oral poetry conceives the Black Sea as a source of all kinds of superstitions and magical powers.

**Selected bibliography:**

Apan, Ioan Sorin, Taina Mării Negre. Oceanografie şi Folclor (Braşov: Litteralia, 2013)
Cornis-Pope, Marcel and John Neubauer (eds), History of the Literary Cultures of East-Central Europe: Junctures and Disjunctures in the 19th and 20th centuries, Volume II (Amsterdam / Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004)
Alexandra Chereches
PhD student at the University of Jaén, Spain, with a project financially supported by the Spanish Department of Education, Alexandra focuses on orality and migration amongst the Romanian community in Madrid, recording tales, legends, myths and superstitions. In 2015-2017, she was awarded a Fulbright scholarship at Villanova University, PA, where she could also study several testimonies about rites of passage in Romanian folklore. She finished my Master’s in Hispanic Studies “with honours”. She has published books and articles related to translation, oral literature and folklore, and participated in international congresses in Spain, Mexico, Portugal and Poland.

Sarah Hymas, ‘Towards a Stranding: An Installation’
An audio artistbook: stiff black card open wider than comfortably held, revealing words glimmering out of the dark: ‘whiskers of saltmarsh’, ‘whale plouters’. Shadows flit across each spread.

Headphones reveal a droning shruti box, country rock guitar, and a speaker: a woman walking out to the tideline, a whale softening to mud, thoughts of fertility, of pollution, a wandering over the lost and found.

Towards a Stranding re-territorialises the shoreline as audiobook. Interiority is exteriority and subjectivity expands to encompass multiple relations. Each listening/reading forms a new encounter, folding into and out of the pages.

This accompanying introduction to the soundscape of Towards a Stranding moves between poem and philosophical exploration of the Deleuzian-inspired notion of becoming-sea. Terrestrial and marine existences dissolve into each other, blurring philosophical and creative research. Illustrating how the lyric enacts the process of becoming, we experience shifting subjectivities, entanglements between the self and other, disrupting notions of authority and a fixed anthropocentric perspective. This poetic-ecocritical paper charts ways in which deterritorialization of language and form might open up the lyric as a site of discovery for its protagonist and reader/listener.

Sarah Hymas
Sarah Hymas is in her third year of a NWCDTP funded creative critical literature PhD at Liverpool University. She is researching how the lyric can inhabit the ocean in a co-worlding of the human and more-than-human. Her writing appears in print, multimedia exhibits, as lyrics, installations, short films and on stage; she also makes immersive walks. In 2017 she was shortlisted for the Ivan Juritz Award for Creative Experiment, and her artistbook ‘Wave Motion’ featured in the TLS. ‘Recovery’, an expanding artistbook on the duration of marine plastics, is held in the permanent collection of the National Poetry Library.

Nvard Vardanyan, ‘Maritime Themes in the Armenian National Epic “Daredevils of Sassoun”’
Water and sea, beings originating from water and coming out of water have significant roles in the Armenian national epic ‘Daredevils of Sassoun’, from the origin of the epic heroes of Sassoun, born from one and a half handfuls of water drunk by Tsovinar, to the power obtained from drinking water and the horse and armour found in a church under the sea. Water mythology is one of the most ancient layers of the Armenian epic. Tsovinar, the mother of Armenian epic heroes, is known in the Armenian mythology as the Goddess of Seas, her equivalent is the sky-dwelling milk cow Tsovyal, whose mooing becomes one with thunder. This quality of thunder characteristic to Tsovinar is transferred to her sons, who find under the sea the main weapon of the thunder hero: fire horse Kurkik Jalali and Tur Ketsaki (lightning sword). However, the quality most characteristic to the thunder hero is the fight against the sea dragon, which is also a common motif in the ‘Daredevils of Sassoun’. It has to be noted that here the hero’s victory over the dragon is manifested not in the killing of the dragon but in taking a ring with a gem from the mouth of the dragon. The dragon fight is the precondition for the princess’s hand in the plot. Armenian folklore studies interpret this plot as a relic of the sky thunder myth.
Accepting as basis the existing opinions, the paper will discuss the plot anew, considering it in the context of the new research into mythology of maritime beings.

**Nvard Vardanyan**

Nvard Vardanyan has been an associated professor in the Chair of Armenian Literature, Yerevan State University, Armenia, where he reads Academic Courses on Armenian Folklore, Armenian Literature and the Epic ‘Daredevils of Sassoun’ in the University. He is also an associate researcher at the Department of the Folklore of the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia.

His professional interests include folklore, folk tales, folk songs and epics. He is the author of 24 scientific works and two monographs and has participated in a number of Armenian and international conferences.

**Panel 2b: Demonised waters: the dangers of sea, lake and bog in folklore**

**Dr Tommy Kuusela, Sea Monsters and Sea Worms in the North’**

In this paper, Kuusela will present different descriptions of sea monsters as reported in the Old Norse world, and compare them with later depictions of similar monsters believed to inhabit lakes and seas until the present day. My source material dates roughly from medieval descriptions of sea monsters to younger reports in the Nordic countries; for example the worm of Seljord in Norway, Storsjöodjuret in Sweden, and the Lagarfljót worm in Iceland. As Kuusela works in one of Sweden’s biggest folklore archives, he will pay special attention to folklore accounts of the Storsjöodjuret (“The Great Lake Monster”). Many of the legends collected in the Folklore archives describe how sea monsters have been born and give explanations for their unnatural size. The questions Kuusela would like to answer are: how are the different monsters perceived? Is there a difference between monsters in a lake and the sea? Is there continuity in the depictions? Do the narratives have anything in common? How are they understood by their informers and observers?

**Dr Ya’acov Sarig, ‘Coping with Supernatural Sea Entities: Folk Beliefs in the Nordic Countries’**

The relationship between human beings and their marine surroundings created a unique relationship between them and sea ghosts, monsters and other evil creatures. They arise from the depths of the ocean when sailors or fishermen break the taboo of trespassing into their realm. In this paper Sarig intends to illustrate the evolvement of maritime-related folk beliefs and customs of avoidance against the malice of these beings in Norwegian, Icelandic and Faroese cultures.

One of the main figures in such encounters is, for example, Draug, a ghost of a sailor or fisherman, who drowned and was not buried in a sacred ground, or Klabautermann – an entity responsible for the safety of ships and boats. Another threatening supernatural creature is Nökk – a nature spirit residing mainly in lakes and rivers, who lures people to dance with it or ride on its back whenever it takes the shape of a horse, subsequently shedding off his rider to drown. Noteworthy are also Sjörå – the “Masters of the sea” – denoting water spirits that inhabit lakes or the open sea, the serpent Jörmungandr or the Midgard Serpent (Miðgarðsormr), sealskin women, mermaids, whales and many more.

Alongside the rites and customs that were aimed to avert any potential harm to people who were exposed to such entities, the enmity between the maritime supernatural creatures and human society nurtured also modes of defying them in the Nordic countries, on which the paper will focus.

**Dr Ya’acov Sarig**
Dr Ya’akov Sarig holds a BA in Hebrew Literature and an MA in Anthropology – both from the University of Haifa. He earned his PhD in Hebrew Literature from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, specialising in folk literature. He spent an academic year in the Department of Folklore at the University of Oslo, and later was granted a fellowship for a year at the University of Copenhagen. Dr Sarig taught Israeli Culture and Society, Hebrew Literature in Translation, and Hebrew Language at Michigan State University in East Lansing (MI). In addition, he is invited every year to Finland, where he conducts a Hebrew Ulpan and a special training course for Hebrew teachers.

Currently, Dr Sarig serves as faculty member at the Department of Hebrew Literature of the Al-Qasemi Academy—Academic College of Education in Baqa al-Gharbiye, and is also advisor at the Department of History of The Open University in Ra’anana. His great love is Scandinavian culture and mythology. He is the author of a book on Scandinavian mythology as well as an annotated translation of Icelandic sagas (to be published shortly).

Sarah Birns, ‘The “Forsaken Country”: Folklore of the Marshland’

Limmophobia – or fear of the marsh – is commonplace enough that examples of it abound in literary and cinematic landscapes, with the marsh manifested either as an ominous framing device in the narrative, or even more overtly as a central antagonist. The marshland is a liminal space that mediates land and sea; in this paper, I explore the notion of folklore of the marsh (supernatural creatures, ghost stories, legends, etc.), as the mediator through which we grapple with our uneasy relationship with the setting, and our underlying fears of what it might conceal. I draw from examples of cross-cultural folklore as well as theoretical models to tease out the nuances of why the marsh is so Other to us. In so doing, I aim to demonstrate how marshland shapes a sense of place for those in its environs disparate from that of an over-arching maritime setting.

Sarah Birns
Sarah Birns is a graduate student in George Mason University’s Folklore Studies program, where she also serves as president of the program’s Folklore Roundtable group. Her research interests include literary folklore; dark tourism; occupational folklore, particularly sea shanties and coal mining song; local color literature; and Icelandic folklife and festival. She recently completed ethnographic fieldwork in southern West Virginia collecting oral histories of coal miners and dance hall attendees, and is currently involved in a project with the Smithsonian concerning ginseng; her research will in part contribute to the planning of the 2020 Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C.

Panel 3a: The romance of the sea

Dr Maria Tausiet, ‘Love in a Whirl: Sea legend and Self-Knowledge’

The British film I Know Where I’m Going! (1945) treats the close relationship between life and myth in a masterly way. A young woman who thinks she knows what she wants experiences a deep personal transformation during an interrupted journey to Scotland to marry her wealthy boss. A rough sea storm forces her to take refuge in a small island in the Hebrides, where she comes into close contact with the traditions, legends and values of the local residents. There she comes face to face with herself and with her conflicting feelings, as she slowly falls in love with an impoverished local laird.

The film, although fictional, takes an unusually ethnographic approach to the island community as it blurs the boundaries between reality and fantasy, vigil and dream, reason and desire as well as between history and fairy tales. The transformative power of folk narrative is especially revealed in the medieval legend of the nearby Corryvreckan whirlpool, which centers around the love-and-death story
of a prince who dared to challenge Nature. In parallel, the woman’s psychological turmoil reaches a peak when she enters the whirlpool and suffers the consequences of her hubris.

Myth provides here an opportunity to catharsis, and teaches the heroine a vital lesson. Anti-materialism triumphs over the well-planned business marriage, while the threatening sea monsters and curses give way to self-discovery and true love.

María Tausiet
María Tausiet is a scholar at the University of Valencia (Spain). She has worked for the Spanish National Research Council (Madrid) and has been invited as Scholar in Residence at the University of Virginia (USA). Her research focuses on Early Modern and Contemporary Spanish Religious History and Religious Anthropology. She has published books on witchcraft, religion, magic, demonic possession and the history of emotions, as well as a substantial body of articles on magical geography, folklore and legends. Her latest books are El dedo robado. Reliquias imaginarias en la España Moderna [The Purloined Finger. Imaginary Relics in Early Modern Spain], (Abada, 2013), Abracadabra Omnipotens. Urban Magic in Early Modern Spain (Palgrave, 2014), and Mary Poppins. Magia, leyenda, mito [Mary Poppins. Magic, Legend, Myth] (Abada, 2018). See also http://seronoser.free.fr/maria/.

Fern Ennis, ‘The White Ladies of Whitby: Coastal Legends and Bram Stoker’s Dracula’
In Bram Stoker’s Notes for Dracula: A Facsimile Edition, editors Robert Eighteen-Bisang and Elizabeth Miller have observed that Stoker’s preliminary research for his novel ‘contains more material on Whitby than on any other topic.’ Notably, this research includes handwritten memoranda on ‘legend[s] of bells at sea & white lady in Abbey window.’ The implications of this can be felt within the novel from the moment Whitby is introduced as a seascape ‘full of beautiful and romantic bits,’ haunted by saints and known by the fin-de-siècle as ‘the scene of part of “Marmion,” where the girl was built up in the wall.’ This paper comments on the influence of coastal lore in Dracula, with reference to how these intimations of Whitby’s literary and folkloric history offer a new perspective on how the novel then frames the vampiric conversion of Lucy Westenra. Exploring Lucy’s character as a second ‘white lady’ in dialogue with the local apparition of St Hilda and in relation Whitby’s fancied history as a place of punitive burial, this paper looks at what new dimensions emerge when the implications of coastal romance are reinstated at the heart of Stoker’s most complete and emotionally complex vision of the vampire.

Fern Ennis
Fern Ennis is in my first year of doctoral research at the University of Warwick, funded by the Wolfson Foundation. My project looks at the British reception of Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué’s fairy tale novel Undine and explores the fusion of fantasy and religiosity in literary representations of human-nature hybrids across the long nineteenth century.

Olle Jilkén, ‘Aquatic Heterosexual Love and Wondrous Cliché Stereotypes: Amphibian masculinity and the beast bridegroom motif in The Shape of Water’
This paper addresses the representation of the amphibious creature, Amphibian man, in the award-winning romantic fantasy film The Shape of Water (2017). The study is divided into two parts, the first examines how The Shape of Water communicates with earlier texts and myths portraying aquatic entities such as the Yacuruna from the Amazonas, Gillman from The Creature from the Black Lagoon (1954) and The Siren from The Darkest Dungeon (2016). The second part focuses on the folkloric tradition of monstrous love interest, also popular in contemporary media-lore. The paper concludes that The Shape of Water is a classic beast bridegroom fairytale with not-so-new representations of masculine ideals. The film’s diverse characters give an impression of an understanding for marginalised subjects but the paper finds that the message gets lost behind traditional gender roles. Amphibian man differentiates from his aquatic female counterparts through masculine attributes such as an athletic-
abled body, exterminated believes of castration, heroic (and brutal) achievements and his closer likeness to reptilians instead of feminine conditioned fishes.

Olle Jilkén and Lina Johansson
Olle Jilkén has a master in gender studies and a bachelor in arts management. His earlier research includes analysis of modern representations of illustrated mermen, the queer status of the Swedish TV-show Melodifestivalen and representation of queerness in ancient Nordic mythology. His theoretical interests revolve around critical culture studies, queer theory, gender studies and critical masculinity studies. olle.jilken@gmail.com

Lina is a master graduate from Stockholm University. She earned two master’s degrees, the first in Translation Studies (with Japanese as source language) and the second in Gender Studies. Her research has mainly dealt with gender representation in Japanese pop culture. Recently, her focus has shifted towards minorities’ representation in Japan. lina.mj.johansson@gmail.com

Panel 3b: The sailor as hero or villain

Ben Littlejohns, “‘All that is left of us are the monsters in the stories they tell their children’: Mediating Pirate Narratives through Storytelling’

The pirate has undergone an extensive transformation in order to become one of the best loved figures in popular culture today. His journey is a fascinating one, though, as literature and historical record both appear to tell very different stories. In this paper, I will be examining the various ways in which the real-life pirates of the Caribbean have been vilified by history. I will attempt to chart a direct line of influence from the excesses of Charles Johnson’s A General History of the Robberies and Murders of the Most Notorious Pyrates (1724), via Robert Louis Stevenson’s Treasure Island, to two of the most popular modern re-tellings of the pirate myth – Disney’s Pirates of the Caribbean, and the Starz series Black Sails. I will use these examples to demonstrate how modern pirate stories draw on corrupted narratives. These narratives were intended to demonise a group who existed outside the traditional social order. In so doing, it robbed minority groups of identifiable heroes, and I will argue that pirates continue to be simple archetypes, instead of complex figures capable of challenging the established narrative.

Ben Littlejohns

Ben Littlejohns gained his Mlitt in Fantasy from the University of Glasgow in 2017, and is currently working on a proposal for a PhD looking at the influence of pirates on development of the early novel. When not indulging his love of all things pirate, he can often be found reading fantasy novels or playing video games.

Alison Habens, ‘Laughing Sailor: seaside attraction or archetypal shadow’

Jolly Jack, the Laughing Sailor, is a vintage automaton that sat on Clarence Pier, Southsea, for over thirty years, disturbing the locals and attracting tourists with his sinister mechanical mirth. Coin-operated, risibly basic in construction, he embodies a maritime myth, the genius loci as fairground attraction, but is now stored ‘out of order’ at the city museum.

As a collaborator in the Supernatural Cities project at the University of Portsmouth, Habens has reimagined the character of Jolly Jack for a Creative Writing research output and performed pieces at sites of magical geography along the Pompey coastline, bringing the laughing sailor to life in contemporary poetic engagement with his creepy legend.

This paper will include a spoken word performance given at Southsea Castle and the Square Tower, a rhythmic and rhyming account of Jack’s history and legacy, and a critical commentary on Habens’ creative process; exploring the inspiration and perspiration behind the writing of these verses from a Jungian perspective. Habens will discuss how the ‘shadow’ seemed to appear when she accessed the
voice of this archetypal tar, and how metaphors for depression (specifically the PTSD old seamen who laugh on cue know) surfaced, when I expressed his ancient mariner’s tale.

**Alison Habens**
Alison Habens is course leader for Creative Writing at the University of Portsmouth. Her PhD is on ‘divine inspiration’ in literature and she runs research project Ink:Well – Life-writing for Wellbeing. Her publications include novels *Dreamhouse*, *Lifestory* and *The True Picture*, with other stories, articles, poems and plays (alisonhabens.com). She also teaches at Skyros Writer’s Lab.

**Teo Rogers, “The Cleverest Men At This Fishing”: Mythologizing the Basque Whaling Industry**
The industrious and enigmatic Basques were among the first peoples to participate in commercial whaling, most likely beginning in the late seventh century. As the demand for whale products was amplified throughout Europe in the ensuing centuries, Basque whalers made longer and more distant voyages in pursuit of their targets, sailing as far as Newfoundland, Iceland, and Brazil. The whalers’ exploits became legendary in their home countries as well as across Europe. Where does the Basque whaling industry fit within the exploratory milieu of medieval and Renaissance Europe, and how does it become mythologised within this zeitgeist? In this paper, I will explore the impact of Basque whalers on the narrative and occupational cultures of later (and contemporary) European societies involved in the whaling industry. I draw my argument from historical sources, archaeological evidence, and folkloristic theory concerning narrative and legendry.

**Teo Rogers**
Teo Rogers is a graduate student of Folklore at George Mason University. He serves as the historian of the Folklore Round Table, the university’s student-led folklore organisation. His research interests include Basque legend and folktale; occupational maritime folklore; Ancient Egyptian religion; Near Eastern mythology; supernatural landscape; and historical folklore, particularly the relationship between nationalistic movements and the utilisation of folklore within them. He recently completed an internship at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, where he worked on the 2018 Folklife Festival as an intern for the Catalonia program.

**Panel 4a. Speculative water dwellers**

Thomas Moules, ‘Reclaiming Dagon: An Examination of Ruthanna Emrys’ Engagement with H.P. Lovecraft’s Folklore of the Sea’
H. P Lovecraft’s 1933 story ‘The Shadow Over Innsmouth’ is one of his longer and more well-known works, and comprises an extended screed about the supposed horrors of race-mixing. The story begins with the description of government raids on the town, and the suggestion that its residents were put into concentration camps. Ruthanna Emrys’ two *Innsmouth Legacy* novels (*Winter Tide*, 2017, and *Deep Roots*, 2018) take this as the starting point for an exploration of the culture and religious practices of the Innsmouth folk. This paper will examine Emrys’ deconstruction of Lovecraft’s initial ideas through the lenses of postcolonial and queer theory. What Lovecraft saw as blasphemous worship of a monstrous sea-dwelling god becomes, through Emrys’ work, a complex and misunderstood body of folklore and history. When not described by an inveterate xenophobe, the sea-based folklore and religion of the Innsmouth folk becomes an interesting and varied set of religious and cultural practices that provide real spiritual value to practitioners of them. By bringing more varied perspectives to Lovecraft’s work, Emrys takes the best aspects of Lovecraft’s worldbuilding and attempts to redeem them.

**Thomas Moules**
Thomas Moules studied for an MLitt in Fantasy Literature at the University of Glasgow, and they are currently focused on writing non-fiction, with an essay due to be published by Luna Press later this year.

**Cecilia Inkol, ‘The Robot Magic Mermaid’**
The following renders a philosophical interpretation of the mermaid as an emblem of magic and time using the ideas of Jung, Deleuze and Heidegger.

There is a secret river that underlies the material world, a flowing stream of metal. It is the structure that connects all things in its nexus, unbeknownst and unseen to a scientistic understanding. This river is the collective unconscious, a technological unconscious. There exists an alien intelligence that inhabits and guides the movements of this structure that orients all life, spirit of the metallic stream. She is the robot mermaid, and the transformations she issues can be conceived as magic, defined as a form of causality that supersedes the limitations of the material order.

The metal mermaid’s magic is the flowering, opening and transformation of this structure of the unconscious. Hers is the primordial alchemy of enchantment. She is becoming, the way that life and truth transforms, effloresces. Her magic unconceals new arrangements of her form through the openness of the clearing that makes room for the new. This clearing is a portal, and offers passage to oneself and to the alien other, with the potential to impart access to untrodden landscapes of time.

**Cecilia Inkol**
Cecilia Inkol is PhD student, designer, filmmaker, animator and artist at York University in Toronto, Canada. She has previously published a philosophical interpretation of the mermaid as technological using the ideas of Nietzsche, Jung and Deleuze.

**Dr Maxim Fomin and Prof Séamus Mac Mathúna, ‘Collectors and Collection of Maritime Memorates in the 19th-20th cc. Ireland and Scotland’**
Having been engaged in research on maritime memorates, personal accounts of extraordinary experiences at sea, collected by folklore collectors in Ireland and Scotland between 1847-2002 from various members of coastal communities (beachcombers, fishermen, boatmen and coastal dwellers), we will seek to examine the collectors themselves, asking questions about their upbringing, work in and relation to the coastal communities, their professional status, attitudes to informants and to the process of folklore collecting. Those collectors were primarily male, and due to the character of the maritime profession, primarily worked with male respondents, but they were different in terms of their educational and social background, which had an inevitable effect on the data they produced and the editorial practices they followed. Various accounts of the folklore collectors’ engagement with the life of coastal communities have not been previously studied and would be an important pathway to follow when analysing the character and narrative features recorded. How personal were these accounts? Did collectors’ imagination, emotions and phantasy inform their writing? How removed they were when penning down the dramatic accounts of drownings, shipwrecks, near-escapes, sightings of mermaids and sea-beasts? These and other questions will be dealt with during our talk, along with analysis of multiple versions of similar plots, recorded by these collectors in different times and places in the Gaelic-speaking areas of Ireland and Scotland.

**Dr Maxim Fomin and Prof Séamus Mac Mathúna**
Dr Maxim Fomin and Prof Séamus Mac Mathúna have been engaged in the study of maritime folklore as PI and CI of the AHRC-funded research project ‘Stories of the Sea: A Typological Study of Maritime Memorates in Irish and Scottish Gaelic Folklore Traditions’. They are co-authors of *Stories of the Sea: Maritime Memorates from Ireland and Scotland*, published in 2017 in Berlin. They presented at various conferences on the findings of the project, and co-organised a number of road shows on the subject of maritime memorates at Inishown Maritime Museum (Greencastle, Donegal, Ireland) and Columcille’s Centre (Islay, Scotland; poster example)
Panel 4b: Shipwrecks

Dr Cathryn Pearce, ‘Lured by False Lights: Wrecking in Cornish Folklore in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries’

Stories of Cornish wreckers focus on those who lured ships ashore using false lights during stormy nights, either by hanging a lantern around the neck of a cow or a donkey or by carrying the lantern themselves. This wrecker motif is so pervasive that it has been conflated with actual ‘wreckers’, those who sporadically plundered ships and who ‘harvested’ shipwrecked goods from the shore. The Cornish are still attempting to come to terms with the stereotype, a struggle that is at the root of their contradictory reactions to wrecking. Indeed, the custom and the legends that surround it is a core theme in the study of Cornish identity. Debates regarding the truth or falsity of false light legends have occupied historians and laypersons from the 19th century to the present. However, the debate is inherently flawed, and investigators have been led by a proverbial false light of their own. This paper will utilise a fresh perspective by analysing the constituent elements of the false light legend and by considering its historical context and function. It will draw upon a wide range of antiquarian histories, folklore, and manuscripts.

Cathryn Pearce
Cathryn Pearce is Senior Lecturer in Naval and Maritime History at the University of Portsmouth, the former editor of Troze, the online journal of the National Maritime Museum Cornwall, and currently Chair of the British Commission for Maritime History. Her research focus is on shipwrecks, lifesaving, and coastal communities in the 18th and 19th centuries. She is the author of Cornish Wrecking, 1700-1860: Reality and Popular Myth (2010).

Eilís Phillips, ‘Cannibal Waters: Sailors and the Monstrous Maritime Space’

This presentation explores the role played by the sea in transforming sailors from British subjects into cannibal monsters in 19th-century narratives. Stories of cannibalism in exotic climes circulated frequently in the British press and literature.¹ Research on these narratives largely focuses on indigenous cannibalism, or, acts of ‘survival cannibalism’ as a result of shipwrecks. This act is described as a particular ‘custom of the sea’ among sailors, which contributed to negative understandings of both sailors, and the sea itself.² High-profile contemporary cases, such as the murder and devouring of cabin boy Richard Parker by the crew of the Mignonette, deeply troubled authors, leading them to ponder that men could be driven to such barbarity.³ Insufficiently discussed, however, is the role played by maritime waters in encounters with cannibalism. This presentation analyses how sea-spaces were implicated as catalysts for the transformation of sailors into cannibals. It argues that these sources created impressions of the sea as both a corrupting and infectious force; a transmission fluid through which foreign cannibal identities were communicated to British shores and subjects.


Exploring these perceptions adds nuance to our understandings of the ways in which colonial, maritime and environmental identities and anxieties were shaped, and exposed by cannibal narratives during this period.

Eilís Phillips
Eilís Phillips is a third year PhD student and undergraduate tutor researching Folklore and Cultural History at The University of Portsmouth. Her thesis examines the ways in which nineteenth-century monster narratives in elite forms of folklore worked to mitigate guilt and culpability for the sufferings and hardships of the working classes. Eilís’ PhD is fully-funded by the Centre for European and International Studies Research, and she is a member of the Supernatural Cities research group based at Portsmouth.

Catherine Cole, ‘La Perouse and the Myth of the Shipwreck’
Britain’s colonial narratives about exploration have been dominated by the journeys of Captain Cook and the first fleet of convicts to Botany Bay, captained by Arthur Phillip. These histories speak of discovery and settlement but often fail to challenge the ways in which mythological and romanticised notions of the sea developed in the ‘New’ World.

The mysterious disappearance of the French explorer La Perouse in 1788 presented the heroic in very different ways, locating the French explorer in folkloric and mythological tales about disappearance and exile. While La Perouse’s fate was finally confirmed in the 1960s with the discovery of his shipwreck, new explorations suggest La Perouse and his crew may have survived for years longer than history formerly thought.

What does his mystery tell us about the ways in which the sea finds its way into our stories and how does the explorers’ disappearance resonate with contemporary mythologies about refuge, shipwreck and the battle between humans and the sea.

Prof. Catherine Cole
Catherine Cole is Professor in Creative Writing in The Screen School, Liverpool John Moores University. She has published three novels (Dry Dock, Skin Deep (Harper Collins, 1999 and Duffy and Snellgrove, 2002) and The Grave at Thu Le (Picador, 2006)) and two non-fiction books, (Private Dicks and Feisty Chicks: An Interrogation of Crime Fiction (Curtin University Press, 1996) and a memoir about her friendship with the late Australian poet, AD Hope, The Poet Who Forgot (UWA Press, 2008)). She is the editor of the anthology The Perfume River: Writing from Vietnam (UWA Press, 2010) and co-editor with P. McNeil and V. Karaminas of Fashion in Fiction: Text and Clothing in Literature, Film and Television (Berg UK and USA, May 2009). Her collection of short stories – Sea Birds crying in the Harbour Dark – was published in late 2017.