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Editorial 2/2016

*Aino-Kaisa Koistinen, Jyrki Korpua & Hanna-Riikka Roine*

When Summer lies upon the world, and in a noon of gold  
Beneath the roof of sleeping leaves the dreams of trees unfold;  
When woodland halls are green and cool, and wind is in the West,  
Come back to me! Come back to me, and say my land is best!  
(Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings* 466)

The summer is coming, and with it arrives the second issue of *Fafnir* in 2016!

This issue presents texts that are closely connected with the topical question of the relationship between technology and works of fiction - and the interconnections between the fantastic and science fictional through technology. Furthermore, the texts both offer new openings in the field of speculative fiction research in our journal (such as Indian science fiction and horror in children's culture) and continue the discussion on current issues (such as the representations of posthuman).

Curtis Carbonell's article "*Schismatrix* and the Posthuman: Hyper-embodied Representation" concentrates on the dominant trope of posthuman in science fiction. The article reads Bruce Sterling's *Schismatrix* stories as presenting representations of trans- and posthumans that are definitive for twenty-first century science fiction and argues that these stories represent posthumans within the context of the modern fantastic.

Sami A. Khan introduces the study of Indian science fiction to *Fafnir*. In his article "Goddess Sita Mutates Indian Mythology into Science Fiction: How Three Stories from *Breaking the Bow* Reinterpret the *Ramayana*", Khan analyses the potential of Indian science fiction in English to "science fictionalize" mythological beings. The article deliberates on the intersection of mythology, technology and gender in Indian science fiction through the study of science fictional reinterpretations of goddess Sita in three short stories.

Lee Raye's article "'Blue skies, green grass': Is *The Redemption of Althalus* a reliable biological record?" presents a viewpoint to fantasy fiction that may be new to many and even controversial to some: a form of the distant reading quantitative experiment. He investigates whether high fantasy worlds can be naturalistic with the example of *The Redemption of Althalus* by David and Leigh Eddings. His findings, based on a collection of references to flora and fauna in the novel, suggest that the biology of *Althalus* is predominantly based on the primary world western forested mountain ecoregion of the United States.

Saradindu Bhattacharya's essay "Magical Technology in Contemporary Fantasy" examines how contemporary writers of fantasy fiction employ magical technology in their works as an interface between ideas of the human "self" and the non-human "other". As illustrative examples, he uses three popular fantasy series, *Harry Potter* series, *Bartimaeus* trilogy and *Percy Jackson* books.

We are also proud to present Susanne Ylönen's *lectio praecursoria* "Lastenkulttuurisen kauhun maastoa kartoittamassa" ("Mapping the Experiences of Horror in Children's Culture"). It is based on Ylönen's doctoral dissertation *Tappeleva rapuhirviö: kauhun estetiikka lastenkulttuurissa* (*The Fighting Crab Monster: The Aesthetics of Horror in Children's Culture*), which she defended on 5 March 2016 at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland. Ylönen discusses the various ways horror in picture books aimed at children appear and may be interpreted through a three-part topography that includes an uplifting approach termed "aesthetic sublimation", a beautifying approach called "aestheticizing" and a degrading or comical approach termed "aesthetic sublimation".

In addition to the three articles, essay and *lectio praecursoria*, this issue includes a book review in Finnish and a seminar report. Kati Kanto reviews Ylönen's abovementioned doctoral dissertation on the aesthetics of horror in children's culture. Sanna Lehtonen reports from the sixth national conference of fandom studies in Finland, "The rise of the nerd/geek culture" ("Nörttikulttuurin nousu"), which was held at the University of Jyväskylä in March.

Finally, at the end of the journal, you will find a call for papers for our issue 4/2016, "Speculative Fiction in Comics and Graphic Novels". We invite papers, essays, interviews, overviews and such that focus on speculative fiction in, for example, genres of comics, graphic novels and graphic narratives, cartoons, animations, anime or manga.

Our next issue is scheduled for September 2016. In the meantime, *Fafnir* wishes our readers an enjoyable summer!

## Works Cited

Tolkien, J. R. R. *The Lord of the Rings*. Fourth Edition. London: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995. Print.