

Masterscriptie Engelstalige Letterkunde

“A Form of Invasive Imagination”:
Globalisation and Otherness in the Postcolonial Science Fiction of Ian McDonald and
Paolo Bacigalupi

Joris van den Hoogen

S4375246

Radboud University Nijmegen

20 July 2018

Supervisor: dr. Usha Wilbers

Table of Contents

Abstract	iv
1. Introduction	1
2. Theoretical Framework: Postcolonialism, Hybridity, Globalisation and Science Fiction	7
2.1 Postcolonialism	7
2.2 Hybridity and Globalisation	8
2.3 Science Fiction: Tropes and Politics	13
2.3.1 Defining Science Fiction	13
2.3.2 Science Fiction, Difference and the Other	14
2.4 Postcolonial Science Fiction	16
3. Colonialism, Independence and the Other in Ian McDonald's <i>Brasyl</i>	20
3.1 <i>Brasyl</i> : Plot and Themes	20
3.2 Portraying Brazil in <i>Brasyl</i>	23
3.3 Science Fiction Tropes in <i>Brasyl</i>	25
3.4 The Postcolonial Other in <i>Brasyl</i>	26
3.5 Postcolonialism, Globalisation and Hybridity in <i>Brasyl</i>	30
4. Authenticity, the Marginal and the Nation State in Ian McDonald's <i>The Dervish House</i>	36
4.1 Plot and Themes of <i>The Dervish House</i>	36
4.2 Istanbul, Queen of Cities	38
4.2 Immigration and the Other	41
4.4 Globalisation, EU and Authenticity	45
5. Ecological Destruction, Corporate Imperialism and Globalisation in Paolo Bacigalupi's <i>The Windup Girl</i>	49
5.1 Plot and Themes of <i>The Windup Girl</i>	49
5.3 The Other: Refugees and Immigrants	53
5.4 The Windup Girl: Abuse, Posthumanity, Labour and Slavery	54
6. Conclusion and Further Research	60
Works cited	66

Abstract

Brasyl and *The Dervish House* by Ian McDonald and *The Windup Girl* by Paolo Bacigalupi are science fiction novels with postcolonial themes, specifically part of the cyberpunk subgenre. Jennifer Langer and Adam Roberts argue that science fiction can be used as a vehicle for political ideas, and that the genre links art and science by materialising postcolonial concepts such as authenticity and the Other. McCalmont argues for a division between different stages of cyberpunk relating to their alliance with neoliberalism and response to globalisation. Ian McDonald's fiction has a stronger alliance to neoliberalism, while Bacigalupi seems to abandon the neoliberal ideas and can be considered postcapitalist as well as postcolonial. Ultimately, McDonald and Bacigalupi moved on to write different kinds of science fiction, while mainstream science fiction such as *Black Panther* and *The Shape of Water* has adopted similar themes and setting as postcolonial science fiction.

Keywords: Bacigalupi, Capitalism, Colonialism, Globalisation, McDonald, Neoliberalism, Other, Postcapitalism, Postcolonialism, Science Fiction.

1. Introduction

The world ... is nearly all parcelled out, and what there is left of it is being divided up, conquered and colonised. To think of these stars that you see overhead at night, these vast worlds which we can never reach. I would annex the planets if I could; I often think of that. It makes me sad to see them so clear and yet so far. (Stead 190)

The infamous imperialist Cecil Rhodes reportedly spoke these words before his death, and considered the possibility of conquering the stars in the same way land on earth was colonised. A hundred years before Rhodes dreamt of colonising the planets, Jonathan Swift already imagined science fictional societies in *Gulliver's Travels* (1726). This text has been described as one of the first in the genre of science fiction writing, a prose satire which “sets the pattern for all science fiction”, and is referenced in literature and film by science fiction authors and filmmakers such as Phillip K. Dick, Hayao Miyazaki, Ray Bradbury and John Scalzi (Alkon 164, Dick “Prize Ship”, *Castle in the Sky*, Bradbury 65, Scalzi 187). At the same time the book is said to portray “colonialism in satirical images” (Stam and Spence 5). Another seminal work of science fiction, H.G. Well's *The War of the Worlds* (1898), invites the reader to compare the Martian invasion with the Tasmanian genocide (Rieder “introduction”). These works all establish a connection between the colonial period and the emergence of science fiction.

In *Colonialism and the Emergence of Science Fiction* (2008), John Rieder connects the emergence of the science fiction genre to colonialism. He argues that the “Copernican shift from a geocentric to a helio-centric understanding of the solar system provides a crucial point” as the shift changed how humans viewed other worlds, as the earth becomes only one of the many planets that exist (Rieder “introduction”). Most historians of science fiction believe that the “utopian and satirical representations of encounters between European travellers and non-Europeans” are a large part of the genre's prehistory, and *Gulliver's Travels* is one of these satires. Rieder notes that a novel such as *The War of the Worlds* can be seen as a role reversal of the binary positions of colonialism, as the white European is the colonised, instead of being the coloniser.

Through its prehistory as satirical and utopian representations of society, the genre of science fiction has always been politically aware, as it allows for a future to reflect on and satirise the present. Science fiction literature also creates dystopian worlds to satirise and uncover the problems with present society. This political awareness of the genre also creates an opening for postcolonial and political ideas to make use of the science fiction narratives to convey messages.

In *Postcolonial Science Fiction* (2012), Jessica Langer explains that the twin myths of colonialism are the Other and the Strange Land, also explored in Rieder's book. The postcolonial Other, explained by Edward Said in his book *Orientalism*, means that a Eurocentric perspective produced the idea that the Western world can dominate over the Other, by portraying the East as a savage, wild and strange place in need of European help to civilise them (Said 7). With the Strange Land, besides referencing Robert Heinlein's novel *Stranger in a Strange Land* (1961), Langer argues that discovering a new world is both an element in science fiction as it is in colonialism. Thus, this also connects to postcolonial theory, as Said believed the Western view of the East describes it as a strange place, open to be mapped and conquered by the Europeans.

While the Other in postcolonial discourse is a dehumanized non-European, Rieder states that in science fiction the Other is an "extra-terrestrial, technological human-hybrid or otherwise", which Langer argues can "signify all kinds of otherness" (Rieder 3 and Langer 4). In *Science Fiction, Imperialism and the Third World*, Hoegland and Sarwal agree that the Other in science fiction and colonialism can be "used to justify the exploitation and annihilation of people" and is often seen as a threat (Hoegland and Sarwal 10). The Strange Land in the colonial myth is the land or colonised territory the European visits or annexes, and in the tropes of science fiction it is the "far-away planet ripe for the taking" that Langer believes can signify "all kinds of diaspora and movement, in all directions" (Rieder 3 and Langer 4).

Although the genre of science fiction and colonialism share its central tropes, it does not necessarily mean the discourse of science fiction is imperialist in nature. Langer states that the genre is not an imperialist discourse in itself, but has been used "for imperialist and racist ends, sometimes deliberately and sometimes through ignorance" (Langer 45). Hoegland and Sarwal contend that science fiction and postcolonial literature respond to imperial rule, by at the same time complying with imperialism, but also subverting the imperial worldview (Hoegland and Sarwal 10).

Two different strands of postcolonial science fiction are distinguished in Langer's research. The first category is the canonical and mainstream science fiction literature that contains certain elements possibly inspired by postcolonial discourse or by the colonial process. Examples of these kinds of science fiction texts are the aforementioned parallels with British imperialism in Wells' *War of the Worlds*, the Othering, but also (mis)understanding of alien cultures in Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game* series and Robert Heinlein's *Starship Troopers*, and the themes of imperialism, Othering and oppression in Frank Herbert's *Dune*. The other category, which will be central in this thesis, is the postcolonial science fiction by authors with or without a postcolonial history, who consciously use a postcolonial context and apply postcolonial theory to their novels or stories, making use of the political awareness of the science fiction genre. She discusses novels such as Larissa Lai's *Salt Fish Girl* (2002) and Nalo Hopkinson's *Midnight Robber* (2000) and *Brown Girl in the Ring* (1999).

Langer concludes that science fiction connects art with science and she argues that the task for postcolonial science fiction is to address the atrocities of colonialism by combining science fiction and its tropes with the culture and literature of non-Western "indigenous literatures". The literature uses "oral storytelling, folktale, legend, religious text and story" to pull science fiction "away from its roots" and transforms it to become a "force for anti/postcolonial resistance and change" (Langer 151, 152 and 155).

This thesis discusses another subtype of postcolonial science fiction not comprehensively dealt with in the previous literature by Rieder, Langer and Hoegland and Sarwal. This type has authors who consciously use a postcolonial setting and apply postcolonial theory to their literature, but have no postcolonial history themselves, as they are authors with a Western background. It concentrates on the science fiction of the Northern Irish author Ian McDonald and the American Paolo Bacigalupi, who have used Asian, South American and African settings in their literature.

Ian McDonald's *Brasyl* was published in 2007 and takes place during three different time periods, the colonised Brazil of 1732 in a plot reminiscent of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899), in the postcolonial 2006 and in a future Brazil of 2032. The three strands of narration, each with three different characters all connected by the science of quantum mechanics. It shows the atrocities of the Portuguese colonisation and slavery, the modern Rio de Janeiro of 2006 obsessed with football and reality television, and a heavily patrolled Sao Paulo in 2032, on the brink of a

technological revolution in quantum physics. Both timelines in 2006 and 2032 portray Brazil as a dystopian society. Rio de Janeiro is a city obsessed and sedated by ‘trashy’ reality television, and in Sao Paulo the state is always watching the inhabitants. The novel has themes related to (post-) colonialism, as the quantum multiverse shows the hybridity and ambiguity of Brazilian identity and the willingness of the characters to change their postcolonial future, but also addresses the traumas and atrocities of colonisation. Elizabeth M. Ginway points out how the novel also has similarities with the colonial Lost Race Novel, novels such as Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Lost World* (1912), which explore uncharted parts of the world.

McDonald’s next novel, *The Dervish House*, takes place in the Istanbul of the near future, formerly the centre of the Ottoman Empire, and narrates the aftermath of a terrorist attack involving nanotechnology and brainwashing. As Joshua Raulerson argues, McDonald constructs a view of Turkish culture “giving voice to fictional subjects who occupy once-marginal, now increasingly visible, position within an emerging and increasingly multivocal global technoculture” (23). The novel at the same time describes a globalised world with Turkey as part of the European Union, but also Kurdistan is an independent nation, and Istanbul at the centre of research in nanotechnology. Even though the world advanced in technology and Turkey is part of the European Union, the Turkish see their nation state diminished through globalisation. The novel also connects Turkey as a marginal country in the European Union to Turkey as the past centre of the empire and also combines the mystical and religious Turkey with the technologically advanced Turkey.

Paolo Bacigalupi wrote *The Windup Girl*, and two stories in his short story collection *Pump Six and Other Stories*, “The Calorie Man” and “Yellow Card Man”, and they take place in a future Thailand. Thailand is one of the few Southeast Asian countries to have never been colonised, and this proves instrumental in Bacigalupi’s portrayal of Thailand as well. The novels and short stories are set in the twenty-third century, following the effects of global warming and food shortage, where Thailand is the only country not affected by the control of Western multinational food companies. The novel describes the effects of globalisation and corporate imperialism and shows the postcolonial Other through genetically altered human characters, but also through the marginalised in Thailand. The novel uses both postcolonial plot elements, such as a country defending against Western control, as science fiction tropes, such as the hybrid-humans and environmental destruction.

This thesis researches how postcolonial ideas impacted these science fiction novels written in the twenty-first century. It illustrates how the novels and short stories of McDonald and Bacigalupi discuss the hybrid postcolonial identity and how they regard the globalised capitalist world order. It also shows the novel's stance on how to respond to this globalised world order and how they respond to the neoliberal ideas as part of the cyberpunk subgenre, or if they subvert this worldview that consists of achieving maximum profit and free trade. The authors present their ideas on globalisation by creating extremely globalised worlds, where nation states are going extinct, with corporate imperialism taking their place. In these globalised countries, groups of people are being marginalised similar to the postcolonial and science fiction Other. The primary literature applies the formal and cultural aspects of the non-Western setting to the genre of science fiction, also using certain science fiction tropes. The novels also both exploit and subvert the colonial and imperial rhetoric. The novels will be read using a postcolonial reading strategy, and apply this to the themes of globalisation and hybridity in the novels, focusing on globalisation as the future of postcolonial discourse as a lasting effect of colonialism on the world order. Another question is how the authors tackle creating science fiction narratives in cultures they are not a part of.

Both McDonald and Bacigalupi have gone on to write in slightly different genres of science fiction. McDonald is publishing a trilogy of novels that have been called "*Game of Thrones in space*" and Bacigalupi has become successful writing Young Adult novels (Alexander). However, this research does not discuss those novels, as they are not set in a non-Western country and are different in theme and genre. Because some of Bacigalupi and McDonald's novels have already been discussed separately and comparatively, the scope of this thesis is limited to their novels set in non-Western countries and released after 2006. This research adds to the existing literature by choosing to look at Western authors attempting to write a postcolonial novel, consciously adapting the non-Western cultures to the science fiction genre. It also specifically looks at the future of postcolonial discourse and the lasting effects of colonialism through globalisation and corporate imperialism, as a stand in for the colonial powers present in colonial literature.

The first chapter explains the theoretical frame for the research of the novels. The thesis applies theories on science fiction, postcolonialism, hybridity and globalization proposed by scholars and authors such as Jessica Langer, Ashcroft, Bhabha, Young, Acheraïou, Kraidy and

Canclini. With the use of close reading, this thesis discusses these themes in the fiction of McDonald and Bacigalupi. It is also important to find out how the novels use science fiction tropes in their postcolonial setting, and thus a theoretical base for this is provided through the research of Adam Roberts and Roger Luckhurst. The subsequent chapters will consist of close readings of the novels *Brasyl* and *The Dervish House* by Ian McDonald and the stories “Yellow Card Man” and “The Calorie Man” and the novel *The Windup Girl* by Paolo Bacigalupi. Ultimately, the conclusion will show how the novels deal with postcolonialism, hybridity, and globalisation and how those are applied to the science fiction tropes. Langer believes “all science speaks to the necessary link between science and art, between the concrete and the transcendent” and postcolonial science fiction has the role to deny that non-Western cultures “exist in the past and have no place in the future” and argue that their cultures are “relevant, applicable and necessary” (Langer 152). The thesis concludes whether McDonald and Bacigalupi have applied the same kind of ideology in their novels.

2. Theoretical Framework: Postcolonialism, Hybridity, Globalisation and Science Fiction

2.1 Postcolonialism

To discuss the primary literature of this thesis, this chapter first describes and discusses the theoretical background of terms such as postcolonialism, hybridity, globalisation, science fiction and postcolonial science fiction. In *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin discuss what texts belong to the category of postcolonial literature. They state that the postcolonial is often seen as only the culture after decolonisation, but Ashcroft et al. broaden the term “to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day” (Ashcroft et al. 2). The postcolonial discourse disagrees whether the term can be widened even more to include countries such as the United States, Australia or New Zealand in the category. When these countries are included, they assert themselves as distinctively postcolonial by “foregrounding the tension with the imperial power, and by emphasizing their differences from the assumptions of the imperial centre” (2). As will be discussed further on in this chapter, the imperial centre, that has tensions with the marginal countries, can also be shaped as more abstract centres of global world order, such as the European Union or multinational corporations.

As postcolonial countries often have to look for an identity after decolonisation, Ashcroft et al. explain that one of the central themes in postcolonial literature is the crisis of identity, as the sense of Self has been damaged by “dislocation” because of migration or slavery or by “cultural denigration”, the oppression of indigenous personality and a longing for authenticity, which demands a “language which will allow them to express their sense of ‘Otherness’” to differentiate themselves from the imperial centre (11). The postcolonial literatures are written from the margin of the former empire, and they define this marginality as being less in relation to the “privileged centre” and “an ‘Othering’ directed by the imperial authority” (Ashcroft et al. 102). Postcolonial texts embrace the marginality and the ‘centre’ moves to the background, to validate the syncretic mixture of the centre with the margin. Issues such as “race, gender, psychological normalcy, geographical and social distance, political exclusion” supersede the normal “distinction of centre and margin and replaces it with a sense of the complex, interweaving, and syncretic accretion of experience” (103). This results in a disappearance of a centre and replaces it with an ambivalent

and more complicated view on the world, moved beyond the centre toward the periphery and the marginal.

In Bill Ashcroft's *On Post-colonial Futures* (2001), he explains how postcolonial cultures can control their future through postcolonial transformation. Ashcroft defines this transformation as "the ways in which colonized societies have taken dominant discourses, transformed them and used them in the service of their own self-empowerment" (Ashcroft 1). These strategies are used by postcolonial societies to appropriate "dominant technologies and discourses and used them in projects of self-representation" and then work as a model for how "local communities everywhere engage global culture itself" (1-2). The future of postcolonial societies lies in the "adaptation of those discourses and technologies to local needs" (2). The postcolonial transformation, as described by Ashcroft, can provide revealing parallels with the literature discussed in this thesis. In a way, the science fiction performs a similar transformation, as it makes use of the tropes of the science fiction genre and adapts them for their self-empowerment. Moreover, the postcolonial or non-Western societies in the imagined future of the primary literature also perform a form of transformation, as they adapt Western technologies to their own benefit, even building on that technology to become more technologically sophisticated than the Western societies.

2.2 Hybridity and Globalisation

In *On Post-colonial Futures*, Ashcroft explains that hybridity in a postcolonial context can be described as "the binary between colonizer and colonized, which generates variations such as black/white, teacher/pupil, adult/child" (Ashcroft 123). One of the postcolonial strategies is to reverse this binary transferring power and hybridisation in postcolonial contexts can take on different forms, such as "linguistic, cultural, political, racial and religious". Bhabha contends that cultural identity is constructed in the "Third Space of enunciation", and recognises the ambivalence and empowering hybridity of cultural identity (Ashcroft 123). Bhabha argues against the idea that after decolonisation the colonial culture needs to be replaced with an "authentic identity", as the cultural identity itself is "fluid, a continual state of becoming" as the

history of colonisation is inescapable in finding this identity. Ashcroft concludes that “culture itself is fluid, so identities are always ‘hybrid’ in the broadest sense” (126).

The hybrid “dual orientation” of postcolonial identity allows the subject the ability “to appropriate colonial technology without being absorbed by it – which disrupts the monologic impetus of the colonizing process” (Ashcroft 126). In the ambivalent and hybrid postcolonial identity, the image exists in which the West is hybrid, and at the same time is seen as against their interest, but also their possible saviour. Bhabha questions “the rigid binary of colonizer and colonized, ruler and ruled” by opting for a definition of culture, discourse, and identity as “fluid and ambivalent, rather than fixed and one-dimensional” (Acheraïou 90). Bhabha sees hybridity as a possible resisting and liberating force against the “colonizer’s cultural, political, and ideological domination” (Acheraïou 95).

In his book, *Questioning Hybridity, Postcolonialism and Globalization* (2011), Amar Acheraïou criticises Bhabha’s theory for being “synchronic” and constricted to the nineteenth century and for evading the discussion of race (Acheraïou 102). In his book, Acheraïou moves away from the synchronic view of hybridity, meaning a perspective stuck in with the nineteenth century, and moves towards “diachronic approach encompassing a much wider historical, political, and ideological spectrum” and also “prove that all cultures are hybrid” (Acheraïou 1). Acheraïou criticises the apparent ambivalence of hybridity because it is “underscored in order to contest monolithic notions of race, culture and identity”, but at the same time, is seen as an “anti-imperialist agency” (Acheraïou 103). Bhabha promotes hybridity as an aesthetic, cultural and racial force to contest binaries, purity and essentialism. Although scholars such as Bhabha believe hybridity should be promoted as a “positive, emancipating agency”, hybridity is a term shrouded in ambivalence (102). Working on Bhabha’s theory of hybridity, Robert Young discussed this ambivalence, as it at the same time is organically “hegemonizing, creating new spaces, structures, scenes” and also intentionally by “diasporizing, intervening as a form of subversion, translation, transformation” (102).

Acheraïou argues that the discourse of hybridity seems to be a “totalizing discursive practice”, not only limited to postcolonial countries, but as he states, also to countries such as New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, and the United States (107). When rethinking the discourse of hybridity in a larger scope, instead of synchronic, this outlook on hybridity is diachronic, as it both “embraces the remote past and remains attentive to the immediate global present” (107). For

the primary literature of this thesis, diachronic hybridity plays a large role. If hybrid identities are not limited to postcolonial countries or a specific time period, the novels by McDonald and Bacigalupi feature this hybridity. *Brasyl*'s characters identify with Brazilian culture but are also aware of their different cultural backgrounds. The Turkish identity in *The Dervish House* oscillates between Russian influence from the North, European influence from the West and Asian influence from the East. *The Windup Girl* features not only Thai characters, but American and Chinese, and most importantly the genetically engineered windup girl, who struggles with her Japanese and Thai, but also her artificial identity. In these texts, colonisation, and later globalisation, forces a hybrid identity on the characters.

When looking at the current status of hybridity, Acheraïou notes the increasing influence of globalisation, which he characterises as “intense transnational interconnectedness in the fields of economics and finance, politics, technology, communications, and culture” (Acheraïou 163). Because of this phenomenon, the nation-state loses influence and sovereignty, while a “global economic and institutional order” gains influence (163). He notes the unevenness of the financial investments caused by globalisation, as it is mostly centred around a handful of countries such as China, Brazil, Mexico and Argentina, while other countries in South America, Asia and Africa receive a small portion. Besides that, institutions such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations could work against these developing countries, as they are severely undemocratic (164). Ultimately, Acheraïou notices an absence of globalisation in postcolonial studies.

Marwan M. Kraidy connects hybridity to globalisation in *Hybridity; or the Cultural Logic of Globalization* (2007), and generalises it to mean that hybridity can be seen as a cultural effect of globalisation. He argues that globalisation and hybridity mean “traces of other cultures exist in every culture” (Kraidy 148). Kraidy envisions hybridity as the cultural logic of globalisation “whose comprehension requires a relational, processual and contextual approach to hybridity” (Kraidy xii). He argues that hybridity leads to transformation of both sides and that it is not posthegemonic, as it does not mean that inequality is over because “unequal intercultural relations shape most aspects of cultural mixture” (148). Ultimately, hybridity has a positive effect when it fulfils its political potential and provides empowerment “in which individuals and communities are agents in their own destiny” possibly leading to hybridity as a “progressive, hopeful discourse” (161). This could mean that if people make use of the hybrid identities

themselves it can be a liberating concept when used to mitigate social tensions. Luis Quinn is aware of his multicultural identity, and uses both his Irish and Portuguese roots, and in *The Windup Girl* Emiko attempts to blend in with normal people, but also uses her advantages as a genetically engineered human.

Other scholars have noted the malleability of hybridity. An example is given by Andy Furlong in *Youth Studies* (2012), of young Muslims in Indonesia who have lead culturally hybrid lifestyles, by drinking non-alcoholic beer, using Western technology to access religious texts, by buying cosmetics that are halal, or through synthesizing Indonesian clothes with Western influences (Furlong 237-238). In the literature of McDonald and Bacigalupi, Western technology is used and adapted by the characters for their own benefit, often surpassing the West. Néstor García Canclini describes hybridized cultures in *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity* (1995), exploring the tensions and conflicts between democratisation and modernisation influenced by globalisation in Latin America. He argues that Latin American nations have a hybridisation of modernity and national culture as their goal, by at the same time retaining the traditional (Canclini xvi). In *Brasyl*, reality television and telenovelas play a large role, but the traditional and the modern are also combined in a hybridised Catholicism.

Next to hybridity, Ashcroft et al. discuss other new ways to look at postcolonialism in the twenty-first century. One new way is widening the term to fit in the twenty-first century because society can never be entirely free of the effects of imperialism and “globalisation are the evidence of the continuing control of the “West” over the “Rest”” (Ashcroft et al. 194). Thus a new definition of the postcolonial can be refined so postcolonialism can refer to all cultural productions that engage with the lasting effects of colonial power, including its new manifestations such as multinational corporations (195). In this way, Ashcroft sees globalisation as the enduring effect of colonial and imperial relationships of the West with the Rest. Ashcroft et al. see globalisation as the “ultimate and unavoidable future of post-colonial studies”, as globalisation cannot be understood without the power relations of the twenty-first century that are the “economic, cultural and political legacy of western imperialism” (216). Postcolonial literatures can also give “clear models for understanding how local communities achieve agency under such pressures” (216). Instead of the old-fashioned imperialism, the world is now seen as a “more sophisticated view of the systems which operate in world culture” (216). In this globalised world, imperialism is not only a “deliberate and active ideology” but also a “combination of

conscious ideological programs and unconscious ... structures of programmed connection and engagements” (217). Ultimately, in the reading of globalisation, postcolonial theory might be very useful in analysing where the local meet larger “hegemonic forces”, similar to how imperial powers impose force on the marginal (217).

Ashcroft argues that globalisation can be viewed as “either the dynamic operation of nation states or the operation of a single world system” (Ashcroft 30). He states that even though “nations are still the principal actors within the global political order, corporations are recognized as the dominant agents in the world economy” in a globalised world (30). Through globalisation, capitalism now has the role of the imperial power, with the same kind of imperial rhetoric, and local events are influenced by global events and in the same way “the local community can take hold of the global influence and transform it to local uses” (31). The processes described by Ashcroft are relevant for the futures imagined in the primary literature. He argues that the postcolonial strategies used are caused by the effects of colonisation, even though this happened far away and in the past and thus are still relevant because colonialism is the “militant material working of European modernity” and “the repercussions and contradictions of which are still in evidence in the global structure of neo-colonial domination” (35). The ‘local’ characters in *Brasyl*, *The Dervish House*, and *The Windup Girl*, are all affected by the globalised world, through foreign influences in the shape of government agencies, companies or other institutions. However, the characters also make use of the global to improve the local. For example, the Turkish characters in *The Dervish House* are reaping the benefits of their involvement in the European Union or through their own multinational companies.

Another issue of conflict in postcolonial discourse is *who* belongs to the postcolonial. An example is whether the literature of Irish or African-Americans or Turkish or Thai, could be considered postcolonial. Some argue that postcolonialism can be considered a “reading strategy” which can “illuminate diverse contemporary and historical cultural phenomena” as colonialism has had such a widespread impact on the way the world is shaped in the twentieth century, that the strategy is relevant for a large quantity of texts (201). Thus, by making use of the postcolonial ‘reading strategy’, and texts such as McDonald’s *The Dervish House* and *The Windup Girl* can be read applying postcolonial theory, even though no former colonies are at the centre of the texts.

2.3 Science Fiction: Tropes and Politics

2.3.1 Defining Science Fiction

In the words of Farah Mendelson, “science fiction is less a genre ... than an ongoing discussion” (Roberts 24). The term first came of use in the 1920s, as before that date it was referred to as “imaginative fiction” (4). Adam Roberts explores the different possible definitions of science fiction in his book *Science Fiction: the New Critical Idiom* (2006). Science fiction texts usually contain “some imaginative or fantastic premise” as it “distinguishes its fictional worlds to one degree or another from the world in which we actually live: a fiction of the imaginative rather than observed reality” (Roberts 1).

A helpful definition in the discussion of the primary novels in this thesis is a “formalist” approach (2). This approach attempts to define science fiction through examples from science fiction and describing the essence of the genre and boil the genre down to rules in the texts (2). The historicist definition wants to define the genre by describing the history of the genre and find the “megatext of SF”. The megatext is the “conglomeration of all those SF novels, stories, films, TV shows, comics and other media” and science fiction texts always refer in some kind of way to this megatext. In contrast, Luckhurst believes the historicist definition produced a broader and more inclusive definition of science fiction (Luckhurst 11). Roberts agrees, but states histories can be different for different people as it can be predominantly “male, adolescent, machine-oriented type of writing” or on the other side as a “mode through which groups who have often been socially marginalised can find imaginative expression” and who see the alien in science fiction as a means of exploring race issues or themes of alienation using metaphors (Roberts 3). Luckhurst argues that science fiction occurs only in societies in which technology is prevalent. The technology in science fiction can have different goals. It can work as an “unproblematic positive force, serving as the ... determining agent for progress” (Luckhurst 5). However, it can also be seen as “profoundly traumatic” in literature that “is pierced or wounded by invasive technologies, that subvert, enslave and ultimately destroy” (5). Ultimately, technology is an ambivalent force in science fiction, and it works in a similar manner in postcolonial science fiction. In one way, technology can be a liberating force, but at the same time an oppressing one. Another definition explained by Roberts, states that science fiction is a symbolist genre where the

novum “acts as symbolic manifestation of something that connects it specifically with the world we live in” which puts emphasis on the political awareness of science fiction (Roberts 14).

Roberts attempts to explain how science fiction is different from other types of “imaginative fiction” such as fantasy or magic realism. Although all imaginative texts contain “substantive differences between the world of the text and the world the readership actually lives in”, an important difference is that other types of fantastic fiction do not explain the details of how the world differs to ours. However, in science fiction, the changes are “made plausible within the structure of the text” (5). One of the key features of science fiction is the “grounding of SF in the material rather than the supernatural” and the premise of science fiction requires “material, physical rationalisation, rather than a supernatural or arbitrary one” (5).

The imagined world of science fiction always has a point of difference from reality, and Darko Suvin calls this point of difference the “novum” (Roberts 7) These points of differences are what the premises of science fiction are based on, and are the focus of the novels becoming “the strength of the mode”. In the primary literature read for this thesis, Ian McDonald’s *Brasyl* has the novum of quantum technology, *The Dervish House* has nanotechnology, and Paolo Bacigalupi’s *The Windup Girl* has the nova of bioengineering, genetic engineering and the storing of energy in windup springs. Also, these nova might reveal certain thematic elements for the novel, which will be discussed in the coming chapters.

2.3.2 Science Fiction, Difference and the Other

This thesis concentrates on postcolonial science fiction that takes place in non-Western countries, and some feature Westerners encountering these cultures. Roberts argues that science fiction is about “the encounter with difference”, and the nova of science fiction “provide a symbolic grammar for articulating the perspectives of normally marginalised discourses of race, of gender, of non-conformism and alternative ideologies” (Roberts 17). He states the genre has “progressive or radical potential” and an “ability of the genre to access otherness”, which aligns with Langer’s belief in the political awareness of science fiction and its connection with postcolonialism (17-18). This means when the novels of this thesis, which are set in non-Western countries and feature marginalised people, possibly have even more potential for political awareness.

Another point that Roberts raises is that the demographic of science fiction, which often had been predominantly white and male, clashes with the possible progressiveness of the genre. However, with authors such as Hopkinson, Butler, Le Guin, Lai and many others, this should arguably not be the case anymore. Westfahl believes that there is a reason for the progressiveness of the genre despite the white male audience. The authors and readers of science fiction loved spaceships in a time in which most people dreamt of cowboy icons, and thus they felt rejected and ridiculed by society. This meant they bonded with people and characters that also felt out of place in the world. This meant although its white male dominance, early science fiction stories included “arguments against the prejudice and racism” and “celebrations of oppressed workers struggling against evil bosses” and proto-feminist ideas (qtd. in Roberts 19).

Roberts thus concludes that reading science fiction is “about reading the marginal experience coded through the discourses of material symbolism” as it “allows the symbolic expression of what it is to be female, or black, or otherwise marginalised” (19). The readers and writers of science fiction often feel marginalised, and that is why Westfahl argues that they also argue against prejudice and racism, and thus this could possibly reveal the reasoning behind the non-Western setting of the novels.

In the essay “Some Things We Know about Aliens”, Istvan Csicsery-Ronay discusses how the alien functions as an Other in a science fiction text. He argues that the science fiction genre is occupied with the New and the Other, the New is the Future at the centre of the modernist text. The Other is the subject of adventure fiction. In science fiction the two are combined in one genre. The aliens from science fiction are derived from ancient epic tales, such as the cyclopes or the Amazons, or from mythology (Csicsery-Ronay 1). The word alien has its origins in the meaning of ‘stranger’ ‘foreigner’, and in the United States, it is associated with illegal aliens. Aliens have different meanings in science fiction texts. They may be “the conscience of our morally obtuse species” or the “unimagined past”, “what we oppress and repress” or “They may arrive only to draw attention to our incompleteness” (3). The reason aliens exist is “because the human species is alone. The lack that creates them is an Other to whom we can compare ourselves.” (5).

Science fiction aliens have traditionally been modelled on otherness, such as “children, women, machines, marginalized peoples, animals, and ‘anomalous genders” (12). Csicsery-Ronay argues that “marginalized cultures are the favoured models for humanoid aliens” as they

are “a continuation of imperial adventure fiction’s tradition of Orientalizing the inassimilable cultures of empire” (13-14). Even though it used to be openly racist in early science fiction, in more recent works, authors write more socially acceptable forms to spread a political message. Ultimately, Csecsery-Ronay argues that the Other often mirrors a marginalised person, which is often stronger, but also inassimilable to humankind.

Ultimately, science fiction as a genre is difficult to define, as there are formalist, historicist or symbolist definitions. For the discussion of the postcolonial science fiction in this thesis, the focus on difference and the Other is an important distinction, as the political awareness and the progressive possibilities of the genre allow for a postcolonial worldview to be projected on the genre and on the primary texts discussed in this thesis. In this way, the symbolist view on science fiction allows the novas to be a metaphor for the political and cultural issues of postcolonialism, globalisation, capitalism and, although the authors are Western, the science fiction gives a voice to the marginalised groups in the world, through characters in the science fiction text.

2.4 Postcolonial Science Fiction

John Rieder’s *Colonialism and the Emergence of Science Fiction* (2008) and Jessica Langer’s *Postcolonialism and Science Fiction* (2011) are the most recent and most comprehensive works on the convergence of those two genres. John Rieder describes how colonialism and the emergence of science fiction in the past centuries have occurred in connection with each other and states that the classic oppositional trope exists in both science fiction and colonial fiction. As explained before, the central tropes of the science fiction genre are the science fictional Other, often an alien or a non-human, and the faraway planet to be conquered (Rieder 3). He argues these are similar to the twin myths of colonialism, the Other and the Strange Land. The historic switch from a geocentric to a helio-centric worldview allowed people to imagine “other worlds in relation to our own” as earth is “one more among the incalculable plurality of worlds” (Rieder 1). In the colonial age, Europeans “mapped the non-European world, settled colonies in it” and at the same time they “developed a scientific discourse about culture and mankind” (Rieder 2). This meant a broadening of the worldview, where difference was possible and the universe was larger than they initially imagined.

In early science fiction, the central themes are taken from evolutionary theory, anthropology and the Social Darwinian ideologies. The genre of science fiction has its prehistory in the utopian and satirical literature of the 16th and 17th century. Another link that Rieder points out is that science fiction “comes into visibility first in those countries most heavily involved in imperialist projects – France and England” (2). He thus directly links the imperial worldview with imagining a world beyond our own. Ultimately, Rieder can find the most similarities in the themes that science fiction shares with colonialism, as it “lives and breathes in the atmosphere of colonial history and its discourses” and he ultimately believes that the rise of the genre of science fiction has always been linked to the rise of colonialism (2).

Langer and Rieder both argue that the theme of the Other often takes shape through the science fiction trope of the “extra-terrestrial, technological human-hybrid or otherwise” (Rieder 3). This concept of the alien in science fiction often has much to do with racial tension as Csecsery-Ronay argued, although the Other in science fiction is usually not human, it has been dehumanised and alienated like the postcolonial Other. Langer argues that this extra-terrestrial “comes to signify all kinds of otherness”, and Ericka Hoagland and Reema Sarwal expand on this in their introduction to *Science Fiction, Imperialism and the Third World* (2010) (4). They state that both science fiction and postcolonial theory respond to imperial rule and argue that science fiction at the same time participates in the imperial project while also subverting it. For example, the novel *The Windup Girl*, has American imperialistic multinational corporations exercising influence on Thailand. However, the companies are not from New York or Los Angeles, but from Iowa, and thus the novel subverts the expectations of the reader. Hoagland and Sarwal also see the Other as the marker postcolonialism and science fiction share, and the Other in both science fiction and postcolonialism is “used to justify the exploitation and annihilation of people, whether red, black or green; it is used to explain how repulsion and desire can exist concurrently; and it signifies an ever-looming threat of contamination (by sex or disease) as well as violence” (Hoagland and Sarwal 10).

Langer discusses several science fiction writers who write in a postcolonial context and describes how they use postcolonial themes in their texts. In her first chapter, she looks at the representation of Native Canadians in science fiction. Often, Native Canadians are exploited in fiction to create a multicultural aura. However, Langer explains Native themes are prevalent in Canadian science fiction. She argues Canadian Science Fiction helps to bring to the forefront the

complex problem of Canadian identity and its discontents as well as problems of postcoloniality more generally” (Langer 54). The science fiction genre is “both used and subverted – in its combination with orature, folktale and other traditional modes of narrative to express many aspects of Canadian colonial and postcolonial identity and to agitate for social justice” (Langer 54). This form of postcolonial science fiction subverts the conventions of the genre by melding the usual science fiction tropes, with formal elements from the writer’s cultural heritage. The concepts of identity and authenticity are also closely linked to postcolonialism and the novels in this thesis.

Langer discusses some novels by postcolonial authors in depth, such as *Salt Fish Girl* (2002) by the American born Canadian writer of Chinese descent Larissa Lai, and *Midnight Robber* (2000) and *Brown Girl in the Ring* (1999) by the Jamaican born Canadian writer Nalo Hopkinson. These novels contain diasporic science fiction narratives, similar to the postcolonial theme of displaced people often ousted from their homelands also described by Ashcroft. *Salt Fish Girl* is a juxtaposition of historical fabulism and a science fiction future dystopia, and the novel is concerned with themes such as alienation and systematic oppression (Langer 61).

The second novel discussed is Nalo Hopkinson’s *Midnight Robber*. The novel combines the traditional science fiction tropes of planetary colonialism, interdimensional travel and a near-omniscient computer with influences from Caribbean culture and history (Langer 64). Hopkinson uses the postcolonial “multiply layered concept of identity” which is “inherent to diasporic identity” (Langer 64). Next to this view on diasporic identity, the novel also uses colonial discourse. The planet to be colonised is described as “dark” and in need of enlightenment and referred to as a woman to be impregnated by a man, and both of these were inspired by colonial rhetoric. Ultimately, the novel shows the colonists on the planet to “simultaneously escape and reinscribe their own histories of colonization and oppression”, thus subverting and resisting imperial ideas (Langer 80). Langer also discusses Hopkinson’s *Brown Girl in the Ring*, a novel about section of a futuristic Toronto walled off from the rest of the city. Langer argues that the novel also combines the futuristic dystopian setting with Caribbean cultural beliefs. Hopkinson portrays a vision of future Canada in which the salvation for Toronto does not come from “technological progress” but from Caribbean spirituality and religion, which puts forward the idea that “a paradigm, or a religion, other than Canada’s dominant one is not only good but is actually essential” (Langer 140).

Both these novels are examples of what Langer sees as the primary element of postcolonial science fiction. She concludes science fiction is “the necessary link between science and art, between the concrete and the transcendent” (Langer 151). Science fiction materialises theoretical ideas, and postcolonial science fiction thus materialises the themes and ideas of postcolonialism. Postcolonial science fiction then occupies another role, as it addresses “the injustices perpetrated by colonialism in all its forms” by combining science fiction with “indigenous literatures, oral storytelling, folktale, legend, religious text and story” (Langer 152). Langer argues that postcolonial science fiction writers use the political awareness of science fiction for their own goal, as they pull science fiction “away from its roots” and transform it to become a “force for anti/postcolonial resistance and change” (Langer 55). Langer’s reading of contemporary novels provides a theoretical framework for the research of the primary literature in this thesis, as these novels have postcolonial themes and deal with the effects of imperialism on the world, and the following chapters will use this framework to analyse these novels.

3. Colonialism, Independence and the Other in Ian McDonald's *Brasyl*

3.1 *Brasyl*: Plot and Themes

Ian McDonald is a science fiction author, who was born in Manchester in 1960 but has spent most of his life in Belfast, where he still lives and works today (“Women’s Christmas”). His view on Northern Ireland is that it is a “post-colonial process of disengagement that failed half-way through” and that it has a hybrid identity in the sense that its people are unable to “engage fully in either Irish or UK society” (Grevers).

His novel *Brasyl* was published in 2007 and takes place in the colonised Brazil of 1732, a postcolonial Brazil in 2006, and a futuristic Brazil in 2032. The novel continues the precedent of his previous novels and explores the future of a non-Western society. Although his first published novel took place on Mars, his second novel, *Chaga* (1995), was set in Africa and explored the AIDS crisis. McDonald’s most well-known and most academically-read novel is *River of Gods*, in which he creates a future India and mixes future technologies with ancient beliefs, and portrays how India is affected by future technologies such as nanotechnology and artificial intelligence. McDonald’s subsequent novel *Brasyl* was the recipient of the British Science Fiction Award and was nominated for science fiction awards like the Hugo Award, regarded by most as the highest accolade for a science fiction novel, and it was also nominated for the Locus award, the John W. Campbell Memorial Award, and the Nebula Award (“*Brasyl* (2007) A novel by Ian McDonald”). The novel also appeared on the longlist of the Warwick prize for writing, a non-science fiction award, and was nominated alongside fiction and non-fiction books such as Joseph O’Neill’s *Netherland*, and Naomi Klein’s *The Shock Doctrine* (“The Warwick Prize for Writing”). It was also received well outside of science fiction publications. In the *Australian Financial Review*, Simon Hughes calls the book “truly vertiginous” and it was the book of the week in the *Sunday Age* and is seen as “intensely vital” by Lucy Sussex. In *The Guardian*, Eric Brown describes the novel as “an accomplished work” and Keith Brooke describes McDonald as “one of the most critically acclaimed genre writers of his generation” (Hughes 120, Sussex 42, Brown and Brooke). Although the non-science fiction press receives the novel positively, McDonald’s fiction is still labelled by critics as genre fiction of a lower status than other fiction.

Brasyl and McDonald’s other fiction are often considered to be of the cyberpunk subgenre of science fiction (“*Brasyl* by Ian McDonald”). This subgenre is defined by David Ketterer in

Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy (1992) as “a combination of low life and high tech” and it displays technology such as artificial intelligence and quantum computing and places that in a lower class context (Ketterer 141). The story of *Brasyl* is composed of three strands of narration, each with three different characters, all connected by the same novum: the science of quantum mechanics and its effect on the characters. The first, chronologically, is the story of the Portuguese-Irish Jesuit priest Luis Quinn, who has been sent into the rainforests of Brazil to find a Jesuit who has gone rogue and established a cult called the “City of God” (a plot which is clearly inspired by Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899)). In the Amazon rainforest he travels with a geographer, Robert Falcon, and together they see the atrocities of Portuguese colonisation, such as the slavery and native tribes struck with disease.

The second strand is that of Marcelina Hoffman, a producer of ‘trashy’ reality television shows and a practitioner of capoeira, in the Rio de Janeiro of 2006. When she is researching for a television programme about an old goalkeeper responsible for losing the World Cup, she gets entangled in a cult based on the existence of parallel quantum realities. In 2032, the former gang member Edson Jesus Oliveira de Freitas lives in a heavily surveillanced Sao Paulo and finds out about quantum technology through Fia, who is a quantum-computing specialist. Ultimately, all strands of narration are connected through the quantum multiverse. Marcelina’s narrative explores the parallel realities through the possibility that Brazil could have won the World Cup. The Jesuit Priest sees the multiverse of realities through a hallucinogenic frog whose eyes are so sensitive it can see a single photon of light and see “the fundamental quantum nature of reality” which gives Quinn the power to see and choose from the alternate realities to find his answers (McDonald 296). He starts the Order to protect everyone from finding out that the whole world is a multiversal quantum computer.

In 2032, Marcelina shows up from the past to save Edson and Fia from the Order Quinn had started. Ultimately, it is explained that the “original universe, the one in which we all lived our lives the first time – died long ago ... But intelligence always tries to find a way out, a way not to die with the stars, and so it created a vast quantum simulation of its own history, and entered it” (McDonald 384). Marcelina’s goal is to end this simulation, to create another quantum event, and free the universe. The novel closes with an open ending with the hope of a possible revolution against the oppressive Order. This oppressive Order suppressing knowledge about the

multiverse can be seen as a metaphor for the oppressive Portuguese Empire keeping knowledge out of Brazil.

McDonald's previous novels have been analysed and discussed by Jerome Winter in "Epistemic Polyverses and the Subaltern: The Postcolonial World-System in Ian McDonald's *Evolution's Shore and River of Gods*" published in *Science Fiction Studies* (2012). Winter believes that McDonald's work "engages with a fundamental tension between the Global North and South" (Winter 459). He also explores the idea that McDonald is a Western writer writing about non-Western countries. McDonald, even though he sees Northern Ireland as postcolonial, is not like Langer's authors, as he appropriates different cultures, and explores global issues. Shameem Black calls this "entitlement" as McDonald is "telling stories not considered one's own, particularly when the teller approaches these stories from a position of privilege, is often described as a form of invasive imagination" (qtd. in Winter 459). However, Winter believes that McDonald subverts the imperial discourse as he uses "decolonization narratives", is aware of the global system and shows the "subaltern", a person from the colonial periphery, as an active agent (Winter 459). His novels evoke "both the rampant inequalities of the world-system as well as the hybridized subversion of these dynamics" which culminates in a mix of globalisation, neo-imperialism and science fiction in a portrayal of global inequality (Winter 460). McDonald displays the adverse consequences of the world system for developing nations and he applies the tricontinental critique which shows the "lag effects of European colonialism around the globe", while still showing that Western technology does not "own a monopoly on the future" (461 and 463). These lag effects take form in the multinational corporations in the globalised world, and the inequalities of the world are subverted through showing technological advances in countries such as Brazil, Turkey and Thailand.

Jonathan McCalmont discusses the history of the cyberpunk genre and its relation to neoliberalism, also referring to McDonald's fiction. In his article "Cyberpunk without the Iron Lady" (2012), he distinguishes multiple phases of cyberpunk. The cyberpunk subgenre of science fiction is a good example of how science fiction is a vehicle for political ideas. The novels in the first phase "articulate a deep sense of distrust and frustration with existing institutions" and the protagonist is a "competent individual who has somehow managed to fall through the cracks of middle-class life". These early cyberpunk protagonists should not be seen as ideologically motivated "angry rebels but as aspiring corporate raiders" (McCalmont). In the second phase the

middle-class protagonists “intentionally position themselves outside of the ‘mainstream’ of their culture” and McCalmont states these novels have a “celebratory smugness” (McCalmont). He criticises another tendency of the second phase of cyberpunk: its alliance with neoliberalism and the tendency of science fiction writers “to globalise cyberpunk narratives by exporting them from America to the developing world (as in Jon Courtenay Grimwood’s Arabesk trilogy and the works of Ian McDonald)” (McCalmont). Although these novels resituate the science fiction to a non-Western setting, McCalmont criticises McDonald for being neoliberally complacent and not criticising free-market globalisation and institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank. He criticises these novels for “the complacency and the sense of entitlement of a wealthy middle class”, and not until phase three will cyberpunk criticise neoliberalism (McCalmont). These analyses by Winter, Black and McCalmont are also relevant for McDonald’s *Brasyl*, and the rest of this chapter will explore these themes and discussions in the novel.

3.2 Portraying Brazil in *Brasyl*

Because McDonald himself is not Brazilian and has never lived in Brazil, he is writing about Brazil from an outsider’s perspective, what Black sees as “a form of invasive imagination” (qtd. in Winter 459). In his review of *Brasyl*, Adam Roberts argues this novel is not set in Brazil at all. He believes that the novel creates a Brazil that is a “hyperbolically rendered, false-colour, triple-ly Brazil” and is the Brazil that people stereotypically think it is, as it is portrayed as “pepped-up, vibrant, sexy, coffee-flavoured, samba-rhythmic and spontaneous” (“*Brasyl* by Ian McDonald”). *Brasyl* “squeezes out the mundane, the dreary, and the depressing” to create a country that is “more vital than the existences of you and I”, which for the actual Brazil is not necessarily the case. The novel creates a science fiction setting with *Brasyl*, even in the 2006 narrative. Although the genre is often referred to as cyberpunk, Roberts sees the narrative of this novel as “cyberfunk”, “cybersoca” or “cyberbaile”, because of its colourful and musical nature, and he states that McDonald even attempts to show the music in the novel’s style, as he uses the “dancing-about-architecture trick of capturing the fluid somatic rhythms on the page” (“*Brasyl* by Ian McDonald”).

McDonald seems to have attempted to portray a recognisable Brazil, which is at the same time exotic enough for the reader. McDonald uses a certain Portuguese vocabulary to make the

novel feel more Brazilian, and provides the reader with an glossary. Roberts argues that McDonald's Brazil is not a country taking itself seriously (McDonald 420). This Brazil is in Roberts' eyes a "trashy" country, which as a cyberpunk novel makes it more in touch with the lower classes. The plot of the 2006 narrative references the "Fateful Final" of the 1950 football World Championship in which Brazil lost against Uruguay (56). Edson and Fia end up in a "pocket universe" acting as a safe haven in the "multiversal quantum computer" in the shape of the "Maracanã Stadium in circa 2006" (380). Even though Marcelina is not a football fan, "the location has a kind of special significance to us". However, she would have "loved a beach, maybe the Corcovado, the Sugar Loaf, the Copa, but we daren't get overambitious" (380-1). These locations carry cultural significance for the Brazilians in the novel, and McDonald creates a Brazil stereotypically obsessed with football, beaches and religious statues.

Roberts argues that the novel turns football, something relatively trivial, into something essential and vital. According to Roberts the whole novel is concerned with "trash". The characters can be considered the trash of society as well. Marcelina is a television producer of trashy reality programmes who regularly goes to a Botox clinic, Edson is a boy who grew up on the streets and Quinn is an outsider as a priest who concerns himself with slavery. Roberts states that McDonald "finds the poetry and the energy of the outcast, the refuse of society", as trash can also be seen as "the ejected, the marginalised, the overlooked" ("*Brasyl* by Ian McDonald"). This overlooked and marginalised person is the subject of cyberpunk novels as described by McCalmont. This is also expressed through the science fiction nova. From all of the alternative multiversal realities, their reality is the worst. There are massive differences inside McDonald's Brazil and Rio de Janeiro as well. Marcelina thinks:

Rio has always been a city of shifting realities, hill and sea, the apartment buildings that grew out of sheer rock of the morros, the jarring abutments of million-real houses with favela newlywed blocks, piled on top of another. And where the realities overlap, violence spills through. (McDonald 296)

McDonald lays bare the differences in Rio itself, showing the contrasts between the middle class and the upper class in the rich and poor parts of the city. As the trash of Rio de Janeiro, these favelas are "tucked away like an infolded navel into the hills behind Arpoador" and they are "that

unspeakable elephant of cheap labor upon which the Copa depended” (55). Even though this section is set in 2006, McDonald places the science fiction cyberpunk trope of a dystopian underclass in the Rio de Janeiro of the present, revealing the political awareness of science fiction. Brazil is a country that is not taken seriously, mostly because of its ‘trashy’ and exotic nature. However, as will be expanded on in the following sections, this portrayal is influenced by the lasting effects of colonialism.

3.3 Science Fiction Tropes in *Brasyl*

The fact that McDonald uses the genre of cyberpunk and the dystopian trope in *Brasyl*, points to a certain awareness that McDonald has of science fiction tropes. McCalmont concentrates his stages of cyberpunk on neoliberalism and *Brasyl* somewhat complies with his definition of the second phase of cyberpunk, as Quinn, Marcelina and Fia are middle-class characters who position themselves intentionally in the margins of society, while Edson is a lower-class character. McCalmont criticised McDonald’s fiction for transporting his story to the third world without having critique on the neoliberal capitalist world-system. However, McDonald shows his awareness of the science fiction and cyberpunk history and its connections to postcolonialism in *Brasyl* as well.

John Rieder argued that the origins of science fiction lie in the changing dynamics of science and the broadened view of the modern world brought on by the extensive European exploration overseas starting in the fifteenth century. Csecsery-Ronay explained in the second chapter that creatures from mythology inspired aliens in science fiction. *Brasyl* does not feature any extra-terrestrial aliens but instead features their mythological origins. Falcon describes the creatures from the Amazon, and writes that “the boto is some mermaid-creature that rises from the river at night to take human lovers and father pink-skinned children; of the curupira with its feet turned the wrong way, deceiver of hunters, protector of the forest”, the “uakti” who are the size of ships, and the “Amazons themselves” after “whom this river was (mis)-named (McDonald 144). These aliens bear the same characteristics as aliens as they are mostly humanoid creatures, and portray an Other or a certain fear, as they all reside in “the river of fear”. The “boto” are feared for their sexual transgression and different coloured children; the “curupria” are feared

because their deceptiveness and their bodily deviation, and the Amazons themselves might represent the fear of female empowerment.

As stated before, McDonald makes use and is aware of certain science fiction tropes. *Brasyl* uses tropes such as an Utopia in the Amazon forest called the “Marvelous City”, and the Favela as the science fiction trope of an underclass supporting the middle classes (287). The characters also mention certain scientific concepts, such as “Everett’s many worlds theorem”. This theory is created to reconcile the paradoxes created by quantum mechanics by theorising infinite “parallel universes that contain every possible quantum state” (297). Mr Peach describes “Fermi’s Paradox” as for why “humans are the only intelligence in the universe”. Fermi’s paradox is explained through the idea of the multiversal quantum computer, as there are no “alien intelligences out there because what we think of as our universe is” a quantum simulation (368). In 1733, Falcon speaks of the Butterfly Effect, the idea that “the simple effect of treading on a forest butterfly in the past might set in motion a chain of events that make it impossible for Luis Quinn Society of Jesus to even exist, let alone gawotte merrily through time” (322). The Butterfly effect is a common trope in science fiction, coined by physicist Edward Lorenz in 1968. By placing its origins in the eighteenth century McDonald also locates the origins of science fiction in that period. The time travel paradox trope is subverted in another section, as Marcelina hears of a fictional film about going back in time to change the outcome of the Fateful Final.

When Marcelina believes she has an evil twin working against her the novel is self-aware about the “great archetype” of “the twin separated at birth, one spun into the neon and sequins of the Copacabana; the other to obscurity hungry, and now she had returned to claim her birthright” (253). Marcelina herself is aware of this science fiction trope in the megatext. This awareness of the science fiction megatext appears in the colonial past, the postcolonial present and the future, and thus connects the history of the genre with the colonial past and deals with its lasting effects.

3.4 The Postcolonial Other in *Brasyl*

In the past strand of the narrative, Quinn is a foreign outsider exploring Brazil. The other characters can be seen as outsiders as well. The cyberpunk often has its main characters being outsiders or anti-heroes, outside of society, and this ties in with the postcolonial concept of the Other. Edson is a young man who grew up on the street, but he is not only an outsider in that

regard. Cheryl Morgan believes that McDonald has tried to write a better transsexual and gender fluid character through Edson in *Brasyl* because he is described “effortlessly and naturally gender-fluid (and bisexual to boot)” (Morgan). Edson has a sexual relationship with Mr Peach, and they have “superhero sex” together dressing up, pretending to fight and he feels “burningly embarrassed” (McDonald 265). Edson met the man when he was 13 and he gave him peaches to eat. He says Fia might have “some clever educated middle class judgement about that” (265). Edson’s bisexuality comes through in the way he cares for Fia, as he maintains his relationship with Mr Peach while also falling in love with Fia. Edson’s portrayal as an Other can be concluded to be transgressive in a social, racial and sexual manner. McDonald argues for freer ideas on sexuality and relationships in this novel.

The character of Fia functions as an elaborate parallel of the immigrant Other or the extraterrestrial out of place as a Stranger in the Strange Land. Fia is transported from her own reality and universe to Edson’s reality, as an immigrant is transported or wilfully moves from one country to another. The language used to talk about different realities can be regarded as similar to how immigrants are portrayed in immigrant fiction. In the Brazil where Fia used to live, technology and culture both appear to be very different from Edson’s Brazil. Edson thinks that Fia “liked being an outsider. She liked being the rebel, the *quantumeira*” (218). Similar to a character in the first stage of cyberpunk, she consciously places herself outside of society. In Edson’s reality, wear their computers as accessories or clothes, however, in Fia’s reality they have their bodies covered in tattoos as they are “more... intimate... with ours”, and they are described as “wheels, cogs meshing; arcs spirals, paisleys, fractal sprays and mathematical blossoms. A silvery machine of slate-gray ink covers her torso from breastbone to the waistband of her leggings” (218-9). Later in the novel, Edson stares at Fia’s body, imagining “the wheels and spirals turning” (262). The quantum technology in Edson’s universe is “decades ahead of anything we have. It’s like it’s come from the future. Every part of this is beautiful” (313). Fia says, “where I come from, it’s rude to stare” and Edson replies, “Where I come from, people don’t have things like that tattooed on them” (262). This conversation shows the difficulties of cultural differences in a relationship, which is also a problem of immigrants.

As explained before, Fia judges Edson for his relationship with Mr Peach as he calls him *Sexthinho*. Fia hears Edson’s voice and it makes her feel “self-conscious, tit-naked in an alien universe” (265). Fia is being affected by being in this universe that is alien to her, and “Edson

knows this world is killing Fia” as she is “piling into the sofa to sit curled up against the armrest silently flickering her eyes over A World Somewhere ..., fridge feeding, putting on weight. And sex is completely out of the window” (365). Her university degree appears to be worthless in Edson’s world because “she’s a postdoc researcher into quantum economic modelling who stumbled from one universe to another by luck and desperation, and she is expected to direct the sharpest theoreticians Texeira money can hire” (367). Fia’s largest fear, similar to an immigrant’s fear, is that someday the question is asked: “Who told you you could do this?” (357).

Besides Fia as an immigrant from another universe, the Native people of Brazil are also portrayed as the Other in all the narratives. The leader of the “City of God” Gonçalves describes the race of the índio as:

... a race under discipline. They have been given over to us by God to be tried, tested, and, yes, admonished, Father. Through discipline, through exercise comes spiritual perfection. God requires no less than the best of us as men and as a nation sacred to Him. These diseases are the refiner’s fire. (McDonald 241)

Gonçalves sees the native Brazilians as inferior to the Europeans and he believes the rampant diseases are God’s punishment for their infidelity. Gonçalves believes the theological ideas of the Bible are “far beyond the comprehension of these simple people” (242). Contrastingly the Jesuit Luis Quinn resists the Othering of the Índio as he believes that Gonçalves is “guilty of preaching false doctrine: namely, that the people to whom you have been sent to minister are without souls and that it has been granted you the power to bestow them” (241). One of the tribes is depicted as exotic and although they are portrayed positively, their beliefs are stereotypical for the “Noble Savage” (Ellingson 6). The “Iguapá” are normal humans but are portrayed as being more in contact with nature and the multiverse. They were...

... forced from their traditional terrains as other peoples flee the bandeirantes and lesser orders. ... they are known as a race of prophets. They seem to believe in a form of dream-time, akin to real time, inverted. All tribes and nations consult them, and they are always right. Their legend has bought them immunity: the Iguapá have never been involved in any of the endemic warfare that so delights these people. (McDonald 243)

Gonçalves believes it is his task to convert this tribe to Christianity and sees it as his ultimate goal. Converting the Iguapá tribe by force is difficult as they “trap their forest trails with snares and pitfalls; they could hold at bay an entire colonial army” (278).

Despite the fact that they have good defences and revered for their knowledge, the tribe is described as savage and exotic. Their village is described as “poor and mean foul with the filth of peccaries and dogs, huts sagging, thatch rotted and sprouting” and the children all had “sores and boils”, and are described to have “golden faces” (278). In another section narrated by Falcon, he scientifically describes the native people. He notes their features as if they are alien or animals and not fellow humans, stating that “some of the golden-faced warriors were still uncircumcised boys” and that they have “Such singular crania; they must be achieved in infancy by binding the head, as was the custom of many of the extinct people of the Andes” (285). In his notebooks, Falcon depicts the Índio women “naked but her skin painted gold” and they carried “Amazonian plants and animals in their hands, snakes and jacarés beneath their feet” (346). Falcon has a sexual relationship with an Iguapá woman, and he narrates her exotically as well. He makes love to her “roused and repelled in equal measure by the soft spicy fullness of her flesh and the golden, alien contours of her skull” (319). This description portrays her as alien and exotic, instead of a fellow human being. Despite the exoticisation of the native Brazilians the Iguapá are still seen as the legitimate owners of the knowledge of the multiverse in the postcolonial present and future, again regarding the tribe as being more in touch with the nature of the universe. After a fifth pandemic, only 20 Iguapá remained in 2028. Yanzon, the Olympic archer, is known as “The last Iguapá” and “first hunter of the Order”, and his tribe have always “known of the labyrinth of worlds and the caraibas who walked between them” (371)

Gonçalves wants to convert the tribe to Christianity no matter what and subject them to his ideas. Quinn questions Gonçalves’ motives for colonising and subjecting the Iguapá:

... what did Gonçalves wish with them? So simple a thing as conquest? The triumph of the tyrant is not his aim. He styles himself a political philosopher, a social experimenter. ... He sees himself a true man of God: did he seek that prophetic power to destroy it? Or is his overweening vanity so great that he seeks that power for himself, to know without faith, to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil? (McDonald 278).

Gonçalves' true motive is questioned and with that Quinn asks the motive of all colonisers and imperialists. He does not want to triumph over them, but he only wants the feeling of power over other people. The ultimate power over the tribe is more important than the financial profit. Through portraying the native Brazilians and African slaves as inhuman and Gonçalves' ideology, McDonald seems to argue that the motive is not conquest and triumph or commercial wealth, but the feeling of seeking Godlike power over the Other is what drives the imperial project, not economic power or ideology. In *Brasyl*, the Other takes many different forms, such as the sexually transgressive Edson, the immigrant Fia, or the native Brazilians. An underlying reason for their depiction as Other is the lasting effect of imperialism, as they are exoticised and treated as inferior, and mistreat for being different.

3.5 Postcolonialism, Globalisation and Hybridity in *Brasyl*

Although McDonald appears to make a clear statement on the motive for the Portuguese imperial project through Gonçalves' ideology of Godlike power over inferior people, the opposite is also true. Other characters describe Portugal as a "mercantile empire" and the subjugated slaves "were but gears and windlasses in a vast dark engenho never ceasing, ever grinding, crushing out commerce" (48 and 144). Here McDonald argues that subjecting slaves was a means to an economic end, not the end itself as he portrays Gonçalves' motives. Falcon sees the empire as solely commercial as well, believing that Nation Building is neglected because "wealth was the sole arbiter" and thus there was no "university, not even a printing press in Brazil" and knowledge was reserved only for the Portuguese centre (144). Ultimately, Brazil is a "commercial adjunct, nothing more" which meant the culture and authentic identity of Brazil went on to be suppressed for hundreds of years.

This crisis of identity due to colonisation is a notable characteristic of postcolonial literature, as the countries have often been denied knowledge and their own culture during the colonising process. This crisis of identity is articulated in the Brazilians' obsession with the Fateful Final, which functions as a test of their worth on the world stage. Marcelina describes the World Cup as their way of showing the world the beauty and authentic identity of Brazil through football. After the Second World War "a new world had risen" and this was their opportunity to

show the world “this was the World Cup of the Future in the Nation of the Future” (56). The people who were at the disastrous World Cup Brazil lost in 1955 call themselves “survivors” as they now realised that they “weren’t as great as we believed we were”, they were not part of “a great future” (59). The characters in the novel call the events “our Hiroshima. I don’t exaggerate” (56). While the Japanese lost their independence and confidence and hundreds of thousands of lives, Brazil lost their national authenticity because of a football match. The characters see the World Cup as their moment to prove their authenticity and independence to the world, and end up believing they failed to show it, as “after the Fateful Final nothing was the same again” (56). Fundamentally, the obsession with this final lays bare the insecurity of the Brazilians caused by their cultural oppression during and after colonisation.

The multiverse introduced in this novel is a way for the characters to cope with this trauma of failed display of independence and strength. As argued by Gregory Benford, postcolonial societies return to the site of conflict and trauma, which McDonald explores here using the possibilities of the multiverse (Langer 84). Marcelina does research for a television programme to put the footballer responsible for the loss on trial. *Brasyf* describes how the Fateful Final could have played out in a different reality. In the multiverse, Edson sees all possible outcomes in “not one Fateful Final, it is thousands, flickering through each other” (383). Barbosa, the footballer responsible for the original loss now has a “photo of a goalkeeper making a spectacular save” which is “not there in the original Maracãna. I mean the one where I come from” and says “on average, we win” (383). Seeing all the possible outcomes, the characters return to the site of trauma and this possibly gives them regained pride in their national authenticity and independence.

Other characters experience their own traumas through the multiverse. These traumas are all related to the traumatic colonisation of Brazil and its aftermath. When applying the tricontinental critique, the concept of the multiverse in the novel also displays the lasting effects of colonisation on Brazilian society. In the multiverse, Edson sees his possible future as a professional footballer, but in his reality, he is a poor boy from the streets. He hears the announcer shout “Senhors, Senhoras, I present to you, Edson Jesus Oliveira de Freitas. Superstarrrrrrrrrr!” (382). Mr Peach tells the story of how he could have gone to Miami with his father. He says that “Twenty years ago I could have gone. Open arms, they’d have had me”, and his father is “leading the life I could have led. I should have led” (264). Edson tells Mr Peach

“there was nothing you could have done” (264). These traumatic encounters with the different realities demonstrate how the postcolonial situation affected their lives by showing realities in which they are more successful.

However, McDonald also provides hope for the characters, because he argues “you can reprogram the universal quantum computer”, as Fia says to Marcelina because it is just “time and information” (381). Quinn states that the multiverse “can be manipulated” and that we live in an artificial reality. The Order that was set up in the eighteenth century believes the world must remain in that dream, and retain the status quo. However, “some believe we must wake, for only then we will see a morning” and break with the status quo (410). In this way, McDonald seems to argue that the position the characters are in can be ‘rewritten’, and that there is hope for a better future for them. The group of people fighting against the Order in the novel can be thus seen as a resistance against this status quo, similar to a resistance against a colonial power or a globalised capitalist system.

McDonald’s *Brasyl* is not only postcolonial but also portrays the colonisation of South America. Quinn is one of the only Jesuits who criticises slavery, and his section is an eighteenth-century rewrite of Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*. In this rewrite, the Brazilian Amazon is the “river of fear” instead of the Congo river, and instead of Marlow having to locate Kurtz, Quinn has to find Gonçalves (144). Both novels also address “the Madness” of imperialism. In *Brasyl*, Gonçalves has gone mad with power, and a native woman “went into the river” because “in the madness of her torment she may have made an end of herself” (145). Similar to in *Heart of Darkness*, Quinn describes the atrocities of Portuguese slavery. Quinn sees a slave, “an índio, bow back and bow legs, yet his muscles were like bands of iron” and he sees the “carved and painted negro slaves cutting cane” (38). The slaves are like “cattle; slaves coffled together by wire of purest gold threaded through their earlobes” (43). Quinn is part of “the Society” a group of people against “a natural order of races: the white, the black, the red” and says “slavery is an alien state to me” (45 and 130). Quinn makes the former slave Zembla a free man and believes that slavery is not a good system, as he argues, “the paddles of three willing men are worth a whole fleet of pressed slaves” (191). Quinn functions as a stand-in for the reader, as slavery is an alien state to the twenty-first-century reader. However, just as Marlow in *Heart of Darkness*, he is a passive observer of the atrocities of imperialism. Ultimately, Quinn and McDonald seem to be

more involved with the complexities of the multiverse, than with changing the situation of the slaves in the colonial reality.

The eighteenth-century section of the novel mimics and subverts the tropes and style of colonial writing. Falcon keeps an expedition journal, and this kind of travel literature was often the way people in the imperial centre heard about the colonies. The writing style also adopts certain colonial tropes, such as the scientific description of native inhabitants and phrases such as “So it had been colonized” and they “laid claim to the territory within” (337). In the final scene of the novel, Falcon imagines “two women standing there in the dim, one a white woman with a head of curling golden hair, the other of an Asiatic cast and complexion, her hair dark red. A black man waited under the eaves of the forest” (411). The figures he imagines are the other characters in *Brasyl*, but the scene is also reminiscent of a popular style of painting from the colonial period, the *Casta* paintings by artists such as Albert Eckhout, who painted scenes of “various ethnic groups present in the colony” of Brazil (Lugo-Ortiz and Rosenthal 231). Another stylistic and narrative device McDonald uses is that of the Lost Race Novel, described by Elizabeth Ginway. She believes that *Brasyl* is an updated Lost Race novel, “complete with adventurer, princess, missionary, evil priest, local uprising, and cultural conquest” (Ginway 323). The evil priest figure is played out by the Western hero Quinn and the corrupt priest Gonçalves. The Adventurer is Marcelina, who is a practitioner of a martial art. The Pagan Princess is Fia, “a high priestess of fashion and quantum physics” (Ginway 326).

The colonial section also shows the colonial view of the world through science and the modern world. The scientist Falcon has a pendulum, which he says swings differently closer to the equator and to determine “the exact shape of our globe” (90). Falcon describes the heliocentric worldview, which Rieder linked to the emergence of science fiction. Falcon performs a “Mass of science, a memorial that the proofs of physics were as true in the forest of the Rio do Ouro as the Paris Salons” (316). In this section, Falcon decentralises modern science by arguing this world might be “one of a prodigious – perhaps infinite – array of worlds, all differing in greater or lesser degrees” (316). Again Falcon portrays a similar idea as Rieder, but he uses the multiverse to describe the hybridity of cultures in the world. This postcolonial idea of hybridity is also represented in Quinn’s character. Quinn is a Portuguese and Irish priest, but also speaks Latin, Greek, English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian, Arabic and the *lingua geral* (131). The characters in the novel form a very hybrid diverse group of people. Quinn is a priest of

mixed European descent, Marcelina is a white German television producer, Fia is of Japanese descent and has red hair, and Edson is a black man. The novel also shows the hybridity of Latin American and Brazilian culture. In *Brasyl*, Catholicism is often mixed with different cultures or modern technology. Marcelina mixes the Catholic idea of saints with the modern technology of television and even Hindu religion. She states she pictured “Our Lady of Production Values” as “the Blessed Virgin crossed with a many-armed Hindu deity—those arms holding cameras, sound booms, budgets, schedules—smiled from within her time-code halo” (108). Quinn uses Catholicism to adapt his religion to the Native idea of the multiverse, by inventing “Our Lady of All Worlds” creating a crucified Christ with “at his feet a woman, face upturned in marvelment, orbs in each hand and upon her brow, her own feet resting upon a golden frog” (321). These hybrid Catholic saints point to a hybridity in Brazilian culture caused by the ripples of colonialism, with Catholic belief being forced on native Brazilians.

Ultimately, McDonald’s *Brasyl* portrays a Brazil that can be considered trashy, but also hyperbolic and more vital and interesting than the Brazil in the real world. The text applies the tricontinental critique on the world as Winter described, as the novel displays main characters that are shunned and transgressive, but it also shows how the worldview is thoroughly colonial and postcolonial, even though it is seen as a neoliberal complacent novel by McCalmont. Ginway claims that *Brasyl* is about Quinn and Marcelina working against “a mysterious, evil and repressive Order that exists to enforce a linear view of reality – the history of colonial winners – that represses and oppresses African and Amerindian culture” (Ginway 326). Even though it subverts the colonial powers, McDonald does give the idea that “members of the largely white cultural elite” such as Marcelina and Quinn need to “rescue” them (Ginway 326). Fia’s situation is a clear metaphor for a non-Western immigrant and the Native tribes of Brazil are portrayed as Others and also exoticised. Gonçalves can be seen to represent imperialism. His idea of colonialism is that he wants ultimate Godlike power over them, and is not actually interested in money or triumph. Despite this, the Portuguese do claim to see Brazil as a commercial venture only, and there is no effort to build a nation or create a centre of knowledge in Brazil. This lack of identity is still visible in their Fateful Final, which is Brazil’s lost search for greatness and identity.

The science fiction elements in the novel are also used to portray the postcolonial worldview. *Brasyl* uses a certain awareness of the science fiction tropes and McDonald uses the

multiverse to show the possibilities of a postcolonial future, as the multiverse can be reprogrammed, but the multiverse also displays postcolonial trauma. McDonald makes use of a certain colonial and postcolonial worldview, also using the structure of the Lost Race Novel as described by Ginway. The novel describes a hybrid and globalised Brazil, as the characters have very diverse backgrounds, and the novel mixes Catholicism with modern technology and native beliefs. Although *Brasyl* could be seen as a novel portraying the problems of the postcolonial and hybrid Brazil in a neoliberal globalised world dealing with the ripples of imperialism, voices such as Ginway and McCalmont would disagree, arguing that McDonald complacently portrays a neoliberal world in which the white middle-class cultural elite willingly place themselves outside of the mainstream to help the lower class Other in need of rescuing.

4. Authenticity, the Marginal and the Nation State in Ian McDonald's *The Dervish House*

4.1 Plot and Themes of *The Dervish House*

After *Brasyl*, McDonald's next novel, *The Dervish House* (2011), takes place in a futuristic Turkey. While *Brasyl* is set all over Brazil, this novel takes place in one central city, Istanbul. Even though Istanbul is not necessarily postcolonial, Constantinople was the centre of the Ottoman Empire between 1453 and 1922, and a postcolonial reading of *The Dervish House* reveals many themes are inspired by the same issues as postcolonialism, such as authenticity and the postcolonial Other. The novel opens and ends with a bird's-eye view of the city, and also places the city in a global context:

The white bird climbs above the city of Istanbul: a stork, riding the rising air in a spiral of black-tipped wings. A flare of the feathers; it wheels on the exhalations of twenty million people, one among then thousands that have followed the invisible terrain of thermals from Africa to Europe, gliding on to the next, ... the migration splits. Some head north to the shores of the Black Sea, some east to Lake Van and the foothills of Ararat but the greatest part flies West, across Anatolia to the glitter of the Bosphorus and beyond, to the breeding grounds of the Balkans and Central Europe. ... There has been a city on this strait for twenty-seven centuries but the storks have been crossing twice a year for time only held by the memory of God. (*The Dervish House* 3)

This first paragraph introduces almost all of the major themes present in the novel. A stork flies over Istanbul and the twenty million people who live there, and it places those storks in a globalised context, as they migrate from Africa to Europe. This introduces the foreign influences in Turkey, as the storks go North to Russia, East to Anatolia and to Central Europe. It also introduces the historical connection to the Ottoman and Roman Empire, as the city has been there for twenty-seven centuries.

Central to *The Dervish House* is a terrorist attack on a public tram in the centre of Istanbul and the week following this event. The novel takes place in a future Turkey struggling with its identity. This future Istanbul is more prosperous, globalised and modernised now that it is part of

the European Union. Istanbul went from the centre of an empire to one of cogs at the margin of the machine that is the European Union. All the main characters of this novel live in “the old Adam Dede Dervish House in Eskişehir” (*The Dervish House* 8). Necdet Hasgüler sees the bombing of the tram and begins to hallucinate Islamic religious images, such as djinn and Hızır, the Green Saint, a figure from the Quran. Necdet and his brother discover that Necdet is not the only one who suddenly started to see djinn after the attack. After the terrorist group abducts Necdet they reveal that they used the attack on the tram to spread nanotechnology that induces religious hallucinations. The terrorists create these religious hallucinations to create a Turkish identity, which they believe has been lost because of globalisation. Can Durukan is a boy with Long QT syndrome. His parents closed him off from the world using a new technology. He sees Istanbul through using BitBots, which are nanobots that can change into any shape. With these nanobots, he spies on the site of the suicide bombing, and finds another bot recording the incident and later sees the terrorist group kidnap Necdet. He brings the information to his Greek neighbour Georgios Ferentionou, one of the only Greeks left in Istanbul and part of this marginalised group. Ferentionou is a Terror Economist, betting on Terrorist attacks, and is recruited by a think tank. Adnan Sarioğlu is a money trader who wants to trick his investors by trying to sell worthless gas from Iran. Through Ferentionou and Sarioğlu the novel portrays characters with work and profit as their sole ambition, and making money on terror attacks and fake gas reveals their lack of ethics when it comes to profit. Adnan’s wife Ayşe Erkoç is a collector of religious artefacts, and is asked to search for the mystical “mellified man”, a man mummified through honey. Marketing specialist Leyla Gültaşlı is offered a job in her cousin’s Nanotechnology company that is at the start of a new industrial revolution. The novel ends with Georgios saving Can from a failed terrorist plot, Ayşe finding the mellified man, and Adnan buying the nanotechnology company capable of changing human DNA and introducing the first industrial revolution coming from the Islamic World.

The Dervish House portrays a very different Turkey than the Turkey of today. Although at the time of writing, Turkey was closer to joining the European Union than it is today, it was still far away from reality. The novel touches on issues similar to those of postcolonial countries, as they focus on authenticity and national identity, marginalised groups, and globalised capitalism. This chapter will discuss how the novel portrays those issues, and how these ideas can be connected to postcolonialism.

4.2 Istanbul, Queen of Cities

McDonald's *The Dervish House* places great importance on Istanbul's urban environment, its people and its history. When looking at the urban environment of cities, non-Western experiences are often ignored. A postcolonial reading of urban environments would discuss cities such as Rio de Janeiro, Istanbul and Bangkok, even though they might be of less global economic importance than New York or London, but are still worth discussing in terms of how they function as cities. Leslie McLees explores a postcolonial approach to Urban Studies. She believes "cities of the Global South are often framed in calamitous terms: chaotic, crowded, sprawling, and representative of a growing urban crisis" (McLees). Dystopian images of non-Western cities mostly come from developmentalist and economical approaches which see the situation in the cities as failed economic development. In "Global and World Cities: A View from off the Map" (2002), Jennifer Robinson argues that understandings of cities are based on a small group of Western cities and that there is a dualism between urban studies focused on Western cities, and development studies based on places once called 'third-world cities' (Robinson 531). Instead, Robinson attempts to use both, and applies urban studies to discuss third world cities, not only looking for what they lack economically but also looking at how they function as a city.

In *The Dervish House*, McDonald places Istanbul between these two images of the city. Although the Istanbul of 2027 has developed into a city of global economic and political importance through its involvement with the European Union, the city has some characteristics of a city in the Global South, such as that it is described as being chaotic and sprawling. *The Dervish House* explores the nature of the city through its sounds, sights, and smells, and looks at it from different perspectives. The narrator describes the different ways in which the characters can experience "Istanbul, Queen of Cities" (4). The novel starts with a description of the sounds the city makes in the morning:

It is the hour of prayer but not yet the hour of money. Istanbul, Queen of Cities, wakes with a shout. There is a brassy top note to the early traffic, the shrill of gas engines. Midnotes from taxis and dolmuşes, the trams on their lines and tunnels, the trains in their deeper diggings through the fault zones beneath the Bosphorus. From the Strait comes the bass note of heavy shipping ... The throb of marine engines is the heartbeat of Istanbul. (*The Dervish House* 4)

The sounds are mechanic and industrial, and not human or natural. The industry of capitalism has taken over the historical aspects of the city. Can goes through a similar ordeal when he wanders through the city alone for the first time. He experiences Istanbul through the smell of “coffee and mint and mastic, old metal and charcoal and furniture polish. Lemon and diesel. The asthmatic tang of gas, the sour of rotting fruit” (372). These sounds and smells are not those of a historical city, but they are the industrial sensations of a city of global importance. The metallic sound of brass, the sound of engines and trains and trams is what characterises the city in this section. Using Robinson’s and McLees’ images of the city, Istanbul is portrayed as an industrial and economic power but is sometimes described as chaotic and sprawling urban environment. However, the industrial environment also conveys a sense of decay through concepts such as old technology such as diesel and gas and the image of rotting fruit, which could point to a developing city again.

Can has seen the city before, “but that was screen life. That was life in 2D”, now he actually goes outside (372). Now he really experiences Istanbul, as it “is another sensation to feel the tug of slipstream and the seismic rumble of a tram passing, to see the gulls circling over the minarets of Sinanpaşa, to smell the oily bilge water lapping against the quays” (372). Can notices that “everyone, everything he sees has a purpose” (372). Then Can takes out his earphones that close him off from the world. He finally hears the city. Can experiences the stereotypical idea of the chaotic and crowded Global South as he “can hear Asia. It sounds like cars and emergency sirens” (374). He hears “flags snap and belly above him” and the sounds of engines. He also hears the noise of activity like “feet clang on metal stairs” and the crackle of radio (374). Can finally realises the multiplicity of the identities in Istanbul as “every voice is different” (375). The city is as much economical and organised, as it is chaotic, just as it is Western and Eastern, and both European and Asian, revealing the city’s hybridised identity.

Georgios and Ayse both experience the city from different perspectives. Georgios looks at Istanbul as a geographer and economist. He categorises the inhabitants of Istanbul through “geographical, social and religious affiliations” (87). He sees an entirely different Istanbul for every commodity, “for every activity that can be analysed and modelled, there is a city” (87). Ayse walks the streets of Istanbul and experiences the city similar to the literary type called the Flâneur (Bartosch 223). As Bartosch explains, when walking through the city it is a “Flâneur’s

pace that engenders new ways of seeing one's environment" (Bartosch 223). Ayse experiences "how the history was attracted to certain locations in layer upon layer of impacted lives in a cartography of meaning ... compiling an encyclopaedia of how space had shaped mind and mind had shaped space through three thousand years of the Queen of Cities" (132). The whole city breathes history as "streets follow ancient, atavistic needs. Tramlines track ancient watercourses" and everything in the city is a culmination of events that happened thousands of years ago (132).

McDonald writes the city of Istanbul as if it is one of the characters in the novel, as a living and breathing entity. A heat wave hits the city, and the "chorus of air-conditioners" is heard and "one by one they spin up, stirring the heat into ever-greater gyres of warm air. The city exhales a subtle breath of spirals within spirals, updrafts and microthermals" (4). In the final paragraph of the novel, all the different narratives come together in one all-encompassing city, similar to how the multiverse combines the narratives in *Brasyl*. Istanbul contains the "stork spiraling up on the thermals above the corporate towers", the gas in the pipelines, the "Mellified Man", "the secret name of God, written across Istanbul", and "the stir of djinn and rememberings" in "the twilight of Aden Dede Square, outside the old dervish house" (472). The final line again establishes Istanbul as a character in the novel by being referred to as "she", stating "This is Istanbul, Queen of Cities, and she will endure as long as human hearts beat upon the earth" (472). The different perspectives and experiences of the city culminate into a historical city of Istanbul with a multiplicity of identities, in a hybrid city with both an Asian as a European identity. Through a postcolonial and urban reading of the novel, non-Western cities such as Istanbul are discussed as economically and industrially active, but also historically and politically important. This clashes with the idea that Istanbul is part of the Global South, and McDonald discusses this city as an industrial, historically rich and economic city but at the same time a chaotic and crowded informal city.

4.2 Immigration and the Other

Istanbul is a city of immigrants and many people are marginalised. With multiple metaphors, McDonald reveals the Turkish fear and dislike of the marginal, especially of immigrants or marginalised groups that are not part of modern secular Turkish culture. The first lines in the novel can be seen as a metaphor for immigration with migrating storks. The storks spend their autumn in Africa and their summer in Istanbul. In a similar vein, humans moving from the European part of Istanbul to the Asian part, are compared to birds “all across the Bosphorus bridge, through every arterial of vast Istanbul, every second the ceaseless pump of traffic shifts and adjusts, a flock of vehicles” (31). Next, the “self-guiding cars fluster and part like panicked chickens as Adnan piles through. There is a time to peel out from the flock” (31). Immigration changed when Turkey became part of the European Union. When “the Caucus and Central Asia found that the front door to Europe now opened onto theirs”, tens of thousands and saw it as an entry to Europe and “flooded” to the West (21). The use of flooding compares it to a dangerous force of nature. The immigration after becoming part of Europe reinvigorated the idea that Istanbul is a major metropolis. McDonald describes the city was “a city of peoples before and knows it shall be again, a true cosmopolis” (21). Because of this event, the “time of the Turk is ending” and it will be the time of the “Georgians, Greeks: sojourners alike” (21). This does not mean there will be no more Turks left, but that marginal groups will gain more influence. The immigrant changing Turkish identity is compared to nanotechnology invading the human DNA. Leyla is scared of the technology that she imagines crawling inside her and compares it to the legends of mountain men “invaded and hollowed out by lice so that they were nothing inside but swarming vileness” (128).

This section reveals a fear of the different and invasive, possibly of the invasive immigrant, and a marginalised Other. Another metaphor for the immigrant is the history of Marmara Island. In the 1920s, the Municipal authority was concerned about the feral dogs “terrorizing the streets” (173). These dogs caused fear on the streets as “old women were being savaged, babies dragged from prams, drunks found half-eaten in the gutters in the morning” (173). The municipality found that there were too many to get rid of so “they brought them all here, dumped them and the dog nature sort it out. Within a year not a single dog was left” (173). The manner of handling this problem shows a similar fear of the different and invasive. Through

immigration, McDonald points out the problematic relationship the Turkish have with the Other. The marginalised people of Turkey such as the Greeks, the Jews and the Armenians are called “the lost peoples of Istanbul” as they are the “remnants of the old empire”, and as marginal groups are treated as subhuman (133).

An important marginal group in *The Dervish House* is the group of Greeks left in Istanbul. The Greek population used to be significant before the “ethnic cleansing of 1955”, also known as the Istanbul pogrom, when many Greeks left afraid of ethnic attacks (20 and 138). After this fewer Greeks remained in Istanbul and “all the Greeks in Eskiköy could now fit in one teashop” (17). In 2027, they “fit around one table” and because the community is so small “every death is a small holocaust” (21). Greeks are discriminated against in Istanbul, mostly by the Grey Wolves movement, who hand out leaflets and defile Greek churches with texts such as “God is Great. Infidels will burn. Greek paedos” and they leave “human urine” on their front porch (200). The Greek people in Istanbul are remnants of this empire but are not welcome for being Christian and different.

The Greeks are not the only marginal group mistreated because of their ethnicity. Georgios believes “all minorities possess a sense for being watched” (60). When Turkey has an economic or political crisis, it “always comes down on the Greeks, and the Kurds and the Armenians. And the Jews” (295). Leyla is prejudiced against Kurds and does not see them “as scientists” but rather as shepherders committing “honour killings” (225). Even though Turks work with Kurds in their daily lives, they are prejudiced against them (153). Leyla is prejudiced through propaganda that affects her like “a water table, dripped into her like the irrigation of the polytunnels through family, friends, television and news and mosque and school” (225). The image of Kurds is that they are “conservative and insular” and “aren’t really proper Turkish citizens” and thus Leyla realises that “she’s a down-home Demre racist” (225). This means Leyla is aware of her prejudices and explains how the Turkish state influences the people with anti-Kurdish propaganda.

The deviant is almost always vilified in the novel. Women who want a career are different because “women don’t have a career, it’s against nature” and it was implied to Leyla that she should become a carer and her sister would have the babies (151). The Other is portrayed negatively in more ways. The magical djinn that Necdet sees, appears to be based on a negative Asian stereotype, as the djinn is “a grossly obese baby, slit-eyed and puff-faced” (64). Terrorists

are expected to be men with beards but are actually “well spoken, educated” because “fanaticism is a middle-class vice” and they wear a “decent suit, clean shirt and neatly knotted tie” (88). Turkey is a divided country, between Turks, Greek and Kurdish, and, Christians, Atheists and Muslims, who often see each other negatively.

It can be concluded that in the novel everyone who deviates from the standard secular modern Turk is marginalised and seen as an Other. This might reveal another fear of the Turkish: they are concerned for the loss of their Turkish authenticity caused by outside influences, and are concerned by the influence of people different than the secular Turk. The novel shows the Turkish marginalise groups out of fear and hatred of the marginal and keeping their authentic Turkey similar to how the former Ottoman Empire would have.

4.3 East versus West

In postcolonial literature, the difference between the imperial centre and periphery is often an important theme, such as in *Heart of Darkness*, which portrays both London as Belgian Congo and their differences. In *The Dervish House* the differences are also seen in Turkey itself. The Western European part of Turkey and Istanbul is the rich and powerful centre, while the Eastern Anatolia represents the poor periphery.

Leyla and her family are from the poor southeastern part of Turkey, and she moved from Demre to Istanbul with her sisters. They all graduated from the same school to become successful in the west. The sisters became successful, as one went to Frankfurt to work in an investment bank, one moved to work in a start-up outside Ankara, and the other went to marry her boyfriend in Antalya. This reinforces the idea that the West is full of career opportunities while the East is where women marry men. The east is seen as “a shithole. But it’s our shithole” (96). Necdet’s friend wants to take him to the European side of Istanbul, because the East is a “downward ramp of slacking, small time cannabis dealing, sitting on a stool by the front door staring down at the highway”, while the West means “order, stability, quiet, a sense of right and the divine” (124). The European side is often associated with the rich and powerful centre. Along the European shore, there are “pastel houses” with “bigger cars, faster boats, deeper docks, further from their neighbours’ shadows” because “money and class have always clung to the edge of Europe” (27).

The clear rupture between Europe and Asia inside Turkey reveals a larger trend in the world, with Europe being richer and more powerful than Asia, but it also portrays the hybridity of the city of Istanbul. However, McDonald also subverts this idea in the novel. The terrorists who bombed the tram and kidnapped Necdet compare the map of Turkey to the human mind. The woman with the green headscarf explains that the river Bosphorus is a literal gap of water between the continents, and Turkey is “seven per cent Europe, ninety-three per cent Asia”. She sees the European Thrace as the “conscious” and Anatolia as the “sub-conscious” (369). According to her, Istanbul can be compared to a neuron, and in a brain cell, the synapses never touch. Without that gap between the synapses, there would be no consciousness. Similarly, she believes “the Bosphorus is that synaptic cleft”, as the river functions as the gap between Europe and Asia. Without that there would be no conscious Turkey because “potential can flow across the cleft” (369). The hybridity of Turkish identity, meaning partly European and partly Asian, is what makes the people unique. This gap between the continents is what she believes to be essential to Turkish identity, and should be treated as its strength instead of its weakness.

Although at the regional level the Turkish government is similar to an imperial force marginalising certain groups within Turkey, they see themselves as the victims at the European and global level, and feel they are being seen as “the Sick Man of Europe” home to “the eternal barbarous Turk” and their “cloud of unreason” (116). However, the terrorists believe the opposite and see Anatolia as the cradle of civilisations and “it’s Europe that is the Sick Man” (369). Europe has never listened to Turkey because it came up with the Enlightenment, the Renaissance, capitalism, democracy and technology, and thus it owned the monopoly on the monologue of the twentieth century. However, Europe will “realize that the future is going to be a dialogue” (369). When Turkey realises its potential, ideas “can come from the Islamic World”, ideas that the world have never seen and they are “completely revolutionary ways of thinking about what it means to be human” (369). In this section, McDonald argues for a dialogue between the West and the East, instead of a monologue from Europe. Europe appears to only lecture Turkey on issues such as democracy and technology, but in *The Dervish House* the progress comes from the East and the West has no monopoly on technological and social progress anymore, even though Kurds and Greeks are still marginalised.

In *The Dervish House*, different powerful countries from multiple directions influence Turkey. The country has always been “the navel of the world” because most of Europe’s gas

supply passes through Turkey and they believe “our favoured location by its very nature surrounded us with historical enemies” (145). These historical enemies are the largest influences on Turkish culture and politics. To the North, there is Russia, in the South the Arabs, and to the East, it is influenced by Iran, and finally to the West is the European Union (45). The question where Turkey should look for help and influence has always been a discussion. For example, a character from Ankara “maintained that Turkey must always look West, not North, to the EEC, not the USSR” (59). McDonald uses ancient legends about the mellified man to illustrate these influences. The Northern school believes the mellified man was brought to Russia and then to Istanbul, the Eastern school maintains it was brought to Persia, and the Western school believes it originated from the Balkan. However, ultimately it comes to light that there is “not one mellified man” and that “nothing is known” and only theories exist (160-1). Similarly, *The Dervish House* creates the idea that there is not one country Turkey should be influenced by, but it should create a dialogue between the different cultures. Instead of blindly following one of the powerful countries, such as the neoliberal ideals of Europe or the nationalist Russia, Turkey has to create a dialogue by bringing new ideas of progress into the world. Ultimately, a very clear distinction still exists between Europe and Turkey and between Western and Eastern Turkey, like the relationship between centre and periphery, and McDonald’s characters argue this monologue coming from the West has to turn into a dialogue.

4.4 Globalisation, EU and Authenticity

Turkey is affected by foreign influences from multiple sides and is part of the globalised world order. Ultimately, Turkey seemed to have chosen Western influence and joined the European Union. The day they joined the union they waved with both Turkish and European flags. However, for many Turkish people, joining the European Union meant a diminishment in the power of the Turkish nation state in favour of globalised power. It also meant a devaluation of Turkish culture and political ideologies. These themes of diminished power and the lack of an authentic identity are similar to the themes of postcolonial literature, such as the issues with Brazilian identity in *Brasyl*.

The EU attempts to get rid of some of the habits ingrained in Turkish culture. When they joined men were not allowed to hit women anymore and people have “become litigious about

health and safety since the EU” (167 and 327). Adnan notices how many cultures are appropriated in Istanbul, and realises that at some point every country must ‘eat’ its history. He argues that “Romans ate Greeks, Byzantines ate Romans, Ottomans ate Byzantines, Turks ate Ottomans” and the European Union eats everything (95). However, ultimately “people adapt” and “you can get used to anything”, the Ottoman Empire, Turkey, or the European Union (355). As a country with a devalued cultural identity and a diminished nation state Turkey is looking for an authentic and independent identity. The EU interferes with how the Turkish deal with the Kurdish problem. Turkey carried out one final attack against the PKK “before the EU tied their hands” and the French announced a motion for a Kurdish Regional Parliament” (75). These events caused the Turkish to believe that “the Age of Atatürk is over” and the Turkish feel they have lost their National identity (175).

To regain their independent culture in a time of globalisation and as part of the European Union, the Turkish people in *The Dervish House* choose the authentic and not the newly created. McDonald distinguishes two distinct strands of authenticity. There are the people who strive for the real authentic, and those who attempt to recreate the authentic. For example, the hamams are busier than the spas because those are “sissy, indulgent, European” while the old bathhouses are “authentic and Turkish” (94). The “yalı”, the old Ottoman beach houses along the Bosphorus, sell very quickly (26). However, many are not “real yalı, those were all bought up long ago”(26). The yalı Adnan buys is “a fake, but a good fake” (26). Buying a real yalı would require much money to “return in to habitability” (27). The fake cheaper authenticity is preferred over the real authenticity by characters such as Adnan. Besides yalı, McDonald describes the Grand Bazar with “The tat, the fake” and where “the sell is all” (352). To create a religious cultural awakening in Turkey, the terrorist group in *The Dervish House* attempt to fake religious experience through nanotechnology by putting holes in their medium-term memory and filling it with false experiences (312).

The imminent revolution in nanotechnology also attempts to reawaken Turkish identity. Aso believes that in fifty years the Bazar would still look the same but “authenticity will be big” and “what won’t sell is all this domestic tat and consumer electronics” (352). Instead, anything that is real “and has the provenance to show it, will be the thing of value. People will pay for authenticity, people will pay for experience” (353). In this idealised future, Turkish culture will

flourish through nanotechnology. The Ottoman culture will return and “everyone will be gorgeous, glorious dazzling” and people will wear robes and turbans again (353).

Both the terrorists and the nanotechnology company use technology to create a distinct Turkish identity. Because of the diminishment of the nation state, Turkey feels it has to prove its worth, prove that it remains a great nation. Despite striving to be authentic, Turkish identity has become a hybrid mix of cultures with many Western influences caused by global capitalism. People do not go to the cinema anymore because “Allah was good enough to give us FlickStream” (239). Islamic Terrorist are not old men with beards and robes, but behave like rappers and wear “good jeans and boots and Superdry” (405). A Muslim woman wears “an expensive Hermes headscarf”, keeping her religious identity and at the same time adapting it to western capitalism.

This global capitalism has a large influence on the cultural identity of Turkey. After joining the EU the Istanbul urban landscape developed to be full of European multinationals such as the “Commerzbank” and the “Allianz building” (41). Turkey became the gateway to Europe and money came in through trading, property development and migrant workers, and everyone seemed to have profited from the European Union. McDonald describes ‘terror brokers’ who bet on when and where terror attacks will take place. Neil Easterbrook argues in “Cognitive Estrangement Is US” (2013) that an increasingly large part of the world economy “concerns speculative derivatives rather than material commodities” and believes McDonald’s novel illustrates that claim (Easterbrook 365). Globalised capitalism causes characters like Adnan and Ayse to have financial success as their main goal in life, as Sulendra, Ningsih and Al-Hafizh argue in “Materialism in Ian McDonald’s Novel *The Dervish House*” (2013). Sulendra et al. state that Adnan and Ayse illustrate the materialism of capitalism, as they have an “excessive ambition on working” (Sulendra et al. 294). Global capitalism creates opportunities for the characters but also causes missed opportunities. Georgios had hopes of having a “visiting lectureship, tenure in the US, or Germany or Britain” and a bestselling book, but these opportunities never came.

Ultimately, Adnan sees the European Union, not as a power that diminishes their national pride, but as a chance for Turkey as it now has “an economy that goes all the way to the South China Sea” and the country is leading on nanotechnology and synthetic biology. The Turkish nano industry will be the “new terminus of the Silk Road” and they “get to fire the starting gun of the next industrial revolution” that will change the world as much as information technology in

the previous revolution (465). Adnan believes this is the true legacy of Atatürk, and that it does not matter that “the Kurds have their own parliament” and they have to apologise for the Armenian genocide, because “Atatürk has done its job” and the issues they faced because European Union taught them “how to be Turks” (176).

Although Ian McDonald’s *The Dervish House* could not strictly be called postcolonial, the novel contains many themes and features that can be read with a postcolonial reading strategy. The city of Istanbul is described as a living and breathing character and placed in a global context and characters experience the city differently, through sound, sight, and smell and even through economics. The hybridised city of Istanbul used to be the centre of an empire, but now its identity diminished and globalised as part of the European Union and marginal groups are portrayed as an Other.

Immigration has increased as Turkey became the gateway to Europe and the novel uses metaphors of birds and invasion to discuss immigration. The many marginal groups in Turkey are portrayed as the postcolonial Other. They are attacked by nationalists or stereotyped as conservative and backwards. McDonald puts emphasis on the difference between the marginal and poorer East and the central and richer West, both inside Turkey and in a global context. The city of Istanbul is used as a metaphor for the gap between Europe and Asia. In this metaphor, the gap between East and West is the potential of Turkey, and McDonald argues for dialogue between the two sides instead of monologue. The Turkish crisis of cultural identity in a globalised world resulted in an effort to return to authenticity, even though this authenticity is created artificially through technology. However, the neoliberal European influence of global capitalism and free trade are portrayed as a positive and progressive influence on the Turkish nation. Despite the call for a dialogue and authenticity, McDonald appears to align with the European neoliberal monologue of free trade and global capitalism.

5. Ecological Destruction, Corporate Imperialism and Globalisation in Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*

5.1 Plot and Themes of *The Windup Girl*

Paolo Bacigalupi is an American science fiction writer who was born in 1972 of Italian descent. After majoring in Chinese, he became a teacher in China, and travelled through India, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Japan (Vorda). This led him to draw inspiration from his experiences in those countries to write two stories set in Thailand in his short story collection *Pump Six and Other Stories* (2008). This ultimately culminated in the novel *The Windup Girl* (2009). The novel takes on ecological crises, technology, geopolitics, posthumanity, globalisation and global capitalism. This chapter proposes that Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* fully abandons the neoliberal capitalist worldview, while McDonald praises some of the economic benefits of global capitalism and neoliberal free trade. The writers are similar by making use of a futuristic setting to portray how people marginalise certain groups of people. Bacigalupi's novel takes on capitalism in a world of ecological destruction and this chapter will apply a postcolonial reading on the effects of those in *The Windup Girl*.

The novel and two specific stories from the collection *Pump Six and Other Stories*, "Yellow Card Man" and "The Calorie Man", take place in a futuristic Thailand, which is one of the few Southeast Asian countries to have never been colonised. The novel takes place in the twenty-third century, when global warming caused large parts of the globe flood and when all the carbon fuels are gone. Multinationals called "calorie companies" sell genetically modified crops immune to diseases, but also spread diseases to attack the seeds not sold by them. The catastrophic events in this novel are caused by the global capitalism of the present. Thailand is one of the only countries remaining not controlled by the multinational corporations and one of the only remaining nation states, also having its own seed bank. The demise of the former colonies can be linked to their colonisation, as all former colonies have fallen to the calorie companies except Thailand, which has never been colonised before. The American Anderson Lake is a representative for the imperialistic calorie company AgriGen and a factory owner. Hock Seng, who is a refugee from the genocide of the Chinese in Malaysia, manages the factory.

Anderson's secret mission is to locate Thailand's seed bank and to gain control over the country and diminish the Thai nation state. The titular windup girl is Emiko, a genetically modified human created in Japan and treated as an Other in Thailand. Although she is a technically an engineered human, she dehumanised and marginalised in Thailand, where she is forced to work as a sex worker and seen as private property. Anderson Lake and Emiko end up in a relationship and when Emiko kills a group of important government people who humiliate her, she is being chased for being suspected to be an invading military windup. After a military coup, the leaders of the Trade Ministry kill the Environment ministers and they give the foreigners access to the seed bank. However, before the foreign calorie companies can enter the seed bank, the local employees kill them all. The novel ends with Bangkok flooding, with only Emiko, her creator and his intersexual lover left, and she promises him a land with only genetically created humans and the ability for her to procreate. *The Windup Girl* ends with the ultimate destruction of Bangkok and the capitalist system in place in the shape of the multinational company AgriGen, while the unnatural marginalised outsiders survive, being able to create a different future.

5.2 Ecological Crises, Global Capitalism and the Global Shift

Different than in McDonald's novels, the setting of *The Windup Girl* is as much a postcolonial world, as it is a post-apocalyptic post-petroleum world destroyed by ecological disasters such as floods and crop diseases, and Bangkok is portrayed as a dystopian city. Bangkok and Thailand are kept from flooding by "coal-burning pumps and leveed labor and a deep faith in the visionary leadership of their Chakri Dynasty" as they have avoided the flood that has "swallowed New York and Rangoon, Mumbai and New Orleans" (Bacigalupi 10). Through these ecological disasters, the Global South and Global North are turned upside down, and New York and New Orleans are drowned while Thailand survives. In his article in *Science Fiction Studies*, "The Challenge of Imagining Ecological Futures" (2012), Andrew Hageman argues that in the novel the ecological disasters "result from and drive global economic changes" (Hageman 283). The global capitalist system in place in Bacigalupi's novel at the same time causes environmental destruction but is also put in place by that same ecological disaster. The two situations keep each other alive, as the "calorie companies" provide solutions for the agricultural diseases, but they release the plagues themselves, making themselves essential. In the short story "The Calorie Man", it is explained that "Generippers make monoculture" and thus make the crops vulnerable

to diseases (“The Calorie Man”). Bacigalupi’s novel portrays a world in which capitalism can be adapted to a new economic system of ecological destruction but with “greater profit margins than the current version” (Hageman 284). This reveals a flexible capitalist system, able to be fitted to different political systems, but always striving for maximal profit margins and as much free trade as possible, essentially showing the disastrous and dystopian future of the neoliberal ideals.

In *The Windup Girl*, the twentieth and twenty-first centuries were a “golden age fuelled by petroleum and technology” called the ‘Expansion’, while the post-petroleum aftermath is called the ‘Contraction’ (302). Before the ‘Contraction’, “men and women crossed the globe in hours instead of weeks” (24). Although faster travel and global trade has declined, an issue often associated with globalisation, nation states have lost almost all influence to the multinational companies. The Thai Kingdom is one of the last remaining nation states and thrives while India and Burma starve and fall for the calorie companies (5). The Thai Kingdom survives because of their seed bank, which allowed them to “stave off the worst of the plagues” (217). Hageman argues that the novel “remaps global capitalist geopolitics” and shows a how the nation state function in a society where transnational corporations gain power, and it “explores the dynamic between capitalist commerce and ecological sustainability” (284).

In India, a Calorie Man would be able to flash “AgriGen’s wheatcrest” and get anything they want, while in Thailand the opposite is true. However, the Thai are still dependent on the foreigners for their agricultural technology as they believe that “without farang tools we would be defenceless” (306). The calorie companies seduced countries to their “patented grains and seeds” and “happily enslaved us all”, making the whole world dependent on their patented disease-free crops (217). When the novel comes to an end, AgriGen plans to invade Thailand and increase their influence. When the multinational company gets the chance, they “start shipping calories right away” and start “unloading U-tex rice and SoyPro onto the docks” (474 and 483). Because multinational companies behave as nations, attempting to increase their economic influence happens through military invasion, and the selling of their products is thus a form of warfare. The capitalism in *The Windup Girl* is a global militarised force with not countries, but multinational companies such as AgriGen and PurCal as its representative and agent. As a result, Bacigalupi portrays a future where capitalism is not ended by ecological distraught, but rather thrives on it.

Political and economic shifts are happening in the Thai Kingdom as the calorie companies gain more influence. They believe worldwide trade is “in ascendancy” and “the return to truly

global trade”, an essential part of the neoliberal ideal, is occurring again because “people like to expand” (255, 91 and 165). AgriGen and Anderson represent the neoliberal ideals of unrestricted global trade and want to establish the next global Expansion. Hageman argues that the multinational companies act as if the “economic break from Expansion to Contraction were not an inherent flaw of capitalism”, but rather an opportunity for it to increase its power and Lake plans to create “the same capitalist economic model that led to the mass decimation in the first place” (Hageman 289). The same conflict is illustrated through the two powerful government fractions. The Trade Ministry follows the neoliberal free trade ideals and sees ecological destruction as “compost for bright futures to be reaped by those with the foresight to reinvest in the same capitalist economy” (Hageman 290). Contrastingly, the Environment Ministry is a “ministry of walls” and is “combatting the neoliberal sundering of any and all barriers to global trade” to protect against ecological crises (291).

Besides the decline of the nation state, Bacigalupi’s *The Windup Girl* radically relocates the economic and political centres on a global and regional scale. Hageman argues the novel places the “present day Global South from periphery to center of this map by setting the novel in Bangkok” (Hageman 285). Because the actual Thailand is currently mostly seen by Westerners as a tourist destination, this relocation of the centre “may not seem an obvious setting for the newly emerging global economy” (Hageman 285). The multinational company AgriGen is not based in an American city in the present day centre such as New York or Los Angeles, but in Des Moines, Iowa. Hageman believes this also creates a possible future where agricultural business is more potent than “the more traditional centre of finance and/or computer and network technologies” (Hageman 285). The people in the short story “The Calorie Man” embody the faults in the neoliberal and capitalist ideology of the calorie companies. Lalji, a calorie man, sees a beggar and “aimed a kick at the boy” and does not believe he is a real beggar because the green fields of the calorie companies meant that “no child could beg with conviction here” (“The Calorie Man”). A man starves his genetically engineered mule because they are not designed to get fat but only created to convert calories into energy. The employees of the calorie companies see themselves as the feeders of the world, but ultimately created a world where their genetically created seeds are unavoidable to survive without.

The novel complicates the idea that the Global North is the “primary, if not exclusive, engine of development for global economics”, because it is not located in Wall Street or Silicon

Valley, but rather in Bangkok and Iowa (Hageman 285). At the same time the slums, factory district and port area are the place of environmental destruction, pollution and poverty. Hageman sees Bacigalupi's Bangkok as a city divided between the Thai, refugees, immigrants, and "gluttonous corporate executives, landlords and political officials" (286). *The Windup Girl* at the same time subverts and affirms the Global North and South and other economic and political centres. However, even though the centres have relocated, the capitalist system has been kept in place and has adapted to the ecological disasters and the capitalist neoliberal system that caused those disasters.

5.3 The Other: Refugees and Immigrants

In *The Windup Girl*, Thai society alienates the marginalised groups in the country and portrays them as an Other. The Thai Kingdom is divided between different groups of Thai themselves, but also dozens of immigrants and refugees from Malaysia, Burma, Vietnam and China. The refugees are pejoratively called "yellow cards" and treated worse than others and live in "Expansion internments" (100). In these tenements, the refugees are "screwing in halls like animals, out in the open because they have given up on privacy" and Hock Seng remembers killing "a fellow yellow card" out of self-defence by driving "the knife edge of his whiskey bottle into the man's throat" (194-195). The short story "Yellow Card Man" serves as a prequel to the events of *The Windup Girl* and features Hock Seng, living in the internments and looking for a way out of his economic situation. As a refugee in Thailand, Seng is "alive while others are long dead" and he has "all the paranoia of a survivor's mind" ("Yellow Card Man"). The story appears to show the social mobility of Seng, as he moves from being a Yellow Card in an internment camp to the manager of a factory. The story shows the resentment against the Yellow Cards, as they are an "invasive species" while other immigrants are not. Seng meets the windup girl, and his story parallels hers, because like him "despite everything, she has been surviving" ("Yellow Card Man"). The Yellow Card refugees are called "calorie pirates, profiteers, and yellow dogs" and because the country is "not the same as it was" because "the people are hungry. They are angry" and "when things go bad the yellow cards are blamed" (103). Similar to the Greek in *The Dervish House*, Hock Seng keeps an eye on the people around as he is a yellow card, and being aware of their surroundings "is as much in their nature as a Cheshire's search for birds" (105). Ultimately,

Anderson believes people ultimately do not empathise with yellow cards and foreigners and “that the White Shirts could begin interning *farang* or executing them at any time, and no one would mourn” (295). This is a view on refugees that regards them as a marginal group that people do not feel empathy for.

The Thai people in *The Windup Girl* have a large amount of prejudice against the different ethnic groups in the country. Chinese refugees who have “flooded in from Malaya, fleeing to this country in hopes of success after they alienated the natives of their own” are looked down upon for not assimilating and they should have “converted to Islam generations ago, and woven themselves into the tapestry of that society” (168). The Chaozhou Chinese are more respected because they have adapted to Thai society and “they are practically Thai themselves. They speak Thai. They took Thai names” (168). Adapting to Thai society makes them worth more as a refugee.

Refugees also look down on the Thai people. The factory owner Hock Seng sees the Thai as “lazy” because “no one is in a rush” (236). The “Thai keep time in their own method” and the Thai “are all incompetent” (22 and 20). The Thai themselves distinguish between peasants and workers, who live above ground with “darkened skin” and those who work underground and inside with smooth and pale skin. The white foreigners are pejoratively called “*farang*”, or “*gaiside* foreign devil” (185). Anderson’s white features are “so strange amongst the sea of Thais and the few Japanese men” and the Americans are “an uncouth race. So confident. Very self-satisfied” and are not used to the tropical heat (312 and 492). People who deviate sexually seem to be treated better in the novel as a “trio of ladyboys” is described as “pretty”, although a slur term is used (341). However, one of the windups created is “boy and girl, together” and even Emiko is thrown off by that fact. The marginal groups in the country are seen as invaders who are taking advantage of their seed bank and they are blamed for everything, even ecological disasters, and this points to a larger mistreatment of the marginal in the world.

5.4 The Windup Girl: Abuse, Posthumanity, Labour and Slavery

The most obvious portrayal of an Other in *The Windup Girl* is the genetically engineered New Person Emiko, who is both seen as an artificial creation without a soul as a foreign intruder from Japan. Emiko is “a freak of nature transplanted from her native habitat” (52). Her artificiality and

her foreignness lead them to believe she has no right to live in Thailand. The people in Thailand ostracise Emiko. She is forced to work as a prostitute, is the property of a brothel and has to endure “her humiliation” every night but “she doesn’t have the energy to fight” (49). The men in the brothel “all laugh and point at the Japanese windup and her broken unnatural steps” and the men see her as “A joke” and “an alien toy” they own and they can play with (52-3). She is often called by pejorative terms, such as “windup” or “heechy-keecky” (153).

A man who stops her in the street says “I fought your kind in the jungles in the North. Windups everywhere. *Heechy-keecky* soldiers” (154). This might be similar to American racism against Asian people after a war against the Japanese, Korean or Vietnamese, calling them by ethnic slurs such as Chinks, Japs or Gooks. Emiko attempts to survive by seducing him. At first, the man declines in disgust saying he will not “soil himself that way ... with an animal like you”, but ultimately he wants her to get on her knees (154). This means he chooses the power he can over her, over his racism and disgust of her. Emiko turns the relationship of assaulter and assaulted around and defends herself, against her obeying nature. She is programmed to hate New People, although she is one herself. However, she ultimately realises windups cannot be worse than humans like “the client last night, who fucked her and spat on her” (223). She morally raises herself and the other New People above the natural humans, who treat her without any respect.

The people in Thailand do not see Emiko as their equal. She feels “invisible” like Ralph Ellison’s *The Invisible Man*, but at the same time she cannot “blend in amongst these people” (286). While in Thailand the windups are “trash”, In Japan they are valued for their service, although they are seen as the property of the company they are created for (229). Emiko starts to feel her existence through her relationship with Anderson. At first, Anderson “does not acknowledge her existence” because that “is proper” (312). Although they only seem to have a physical relationship, she feels “it is a relief to be loved, even if it is only for her physicality” and “for a time she forgets entirely that people call her windup and heechy-keecky. For a moment she feels entirely human and she loses herself in the touching” (314). Ultimately, Anderson seems to accept her as a person when he accepts the company of a Cheshire. The Cheshires are genetically engineered cats and are almost universally disgusted. The Cheshires are associated with the windups, and Emiko sees them as “siblings, sympathetic creatures, manufactured, by the same flawed gods” (488). The Cheshires “have no soul” just like windups, but “they breed. They eat. They live. They breathe” and “they are real. As much as you and I” (247-48). The Cheshires are a

plague and are the reason Emiko's creators decided to make her infertile. As a failed experiment the Cheshires are the reason for some of Emiko's flaws and inhumanity. Thus when Anderson wants the Cheshire to stay on his bed, he seems to accept Emiko and all of her artificialness.

Emiko is constantly aware of her difference through her inhumanity and artificiality. She sees herself as a "collection of cells and manipulated DNA" and she is treated as offal, but she is only "almost human" (49-50 and 157). The general opinion in Thailand is that windups have no soul, and will not reincarnate. Jaidee does not feel remorse when she hurts Emiko's feelings, because "it apes the motions of humanity ... Stutter-stop motion of a genetically engineered beast" (427). The Japanese are more open to hybrid forms of humanity. Emiko's Japanese owner not only saw her as an equal, but he used to say she was "more than human" (50). The New People can be seen as the future of the human race. As an improved version of the human species, the New People "have perfect eyesight and perfect skin and disease and cancer-resistant genes" (50). Emiko's designer, the genetic scientist Gibbons, argues that artificially creating life is as much part of evolution as natural mutations, and that "our every tinkering is nature" and changing our DNA is part of "our every biological striving" (344). He states the human race will perish if it clings to the past and everyone should already by windups, "It's easier to build a person impervious to blister rust than to protect an earlier version", however, "you people refuse to adapt" (345). Gibbons believes the solution to the food problems is not engineering the food, but engineering the humans to resist the diseases. Again, the New People are superior to the natural humans.

The main issue of Emiko's inhumanity seems to be her infertility. The novel ends with the hope that Emiko can be fertile in a way. Gibson explains that even though "her ovaries are non-existent", he does not care for "a woman's eggs as a source of genetic material", but he would rather use her DNA so her "children ... can be made fertile, a part of the natural world" (505). The windup's infertility can be compared to compulsory sterilisation programs as part of eugenic ideals. These programmes existed in Nazi Germany, but also in the United States (Kühl 36). Hageman argues that this "invokes a significant trope in science fiction" as Victor Frankenstein refused to create a mate for the creature fearing that "they would go forth, be fruitful and multiply, and then annihilate the human race" (Hageman 298). Ultimately, when the people of Thailand degrade Emiko and other windups as non-human, they literally dehumanise her similar to how a postcolonial Other is dehumanised.

Emiko and other New People are also seen as foreigners and invaders. Emiko's nature is foreign to Thailand, as she was created in Japan with "small pores, made for Nippon and a rich man's climate control" and it is said, "New People are more Japanese than the Japanese" as they "value discipline, order, obedience" (51 and 425). She is "transplanted from her native habitat" and has trouble adapting physically and otherwise because she "was not designed for this environment" (64). Anderson describes her as "a hothouse flower, dropped into a world too harsh for her delicate heritage. It seems unlikely that she will survive for long" in this climate (88). When it is found out Emiko resides in Thailand she is first seen as hostile, and "an invasive creature" like a Cheshire, foreign to Thailand. Ultimately, she is depicted as a foreign terrorising danger, as the ministries want to find out "who allowed this windup creature to live here for so long. How it got into the city" (399).

Emiko is not only ostracised, dehumanised and seen as foreign and is also seen as property in the global capitalist system, in a manner that is reminiscent of slavery. In "The Struggle of Being Alive: Laboring Bodies in Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*" (2017), Juliane Straetz argues that the novel shows that biotechnological possibilities allow more control of bodies that can be used for profit and are even "designed to generate maximum profit" (Straetz 2). This reveals a larger argument about utilising bodies for labour and profit in the present day. The novel explores the "position of androids in a system governed by a global capitalism" and it suggests "to reconsider the Marxist question of how value is created through work" and the labouring subject (Straetz 4). The fact that Emiko is dependent on her employment reflects on "laborers in global capitalism" especially women, who "are turned into machines who are devalued, mistreated like slaves, and left without alternatives" (Straetz 5). This low status and alienation causes both the capitalist subject and the windup girl to feel "lifelessness and not-belonging", but also through her job as a prostitute she experiences this alienation and objectification (Straetz 5-6).

Straetz believes that Emiko herself represents a "commodity", and just as capitalist subjects she is "replaceable by any other android which is constructed similarly" (Straetz 11). With this novel, Bacigalupi points out the importance of the physical body, and the fact that it is shaped by "economic requirements" and the "result of external forces operating on several levels", as Emiko's body is "carefully constructed by genetic engineers" and is basically created for economic profit instead of coincidentally created by biology and evolution. Ultimately,

Straetz concludes that Emiko's yearning to be alive causes the readers "to re-evaluate the crucial relationship between work, society, personal identity, and self-perception" in the global capitalist system of the present (Straetz 19). In this way, the dystopian future reveals something about the present capitalist society, and how it deals with the relationship between labour and personal identity.

Emiko's role as a windup in Thai society is similar to the treatment of African slaves in the colonisation of the Americas. As a genetic creation, the windups are created as the perfect slaves. She was made "trapped in this suffocating perfect skin by some irritating scientist with his test tubes" and who created her unable to adapt to her surroundings (49). She says she feels as if "my body is not mine" because her creators make her do things she cannot control as if their hands are inside her "like a puppet ... They made me obedient, in all ways" (262). Emiko has lost ownership of her body to the capitalist system, as she was created to be obedient and to create as much profit as possible. However, she constantly has to deny her nature. She has to tell herself "you are not a servant" and "she has to fight her essence not to obey" (228 and 360). The relationship she has with Anderson is similar to that of a slave and their owner. The windup feels in a special position with him, and she "should be grateful for what he is willing to provide" (316). However, the fact remains that "he will always be natural and she will always be New People, and she will always serve" (358).

To keep Emiko content, she is told there is a land populated by New People to the North of Thailand "living off the jungles" (66). At first sight, it seems this is a real country, reminiscent of the Maroons, slaves in the Americas who escaped from the plantations and started their own society. The hope of this place "runs through Emiko's head every day" because in the village and there "are no masters and they serve themselves" (220 and 358). However, it becomes clear that she is alone and "there is no village" and was told about the village to give her hope (378 and 367). Ultimately, Emiko's place in Thai society appears similar to that of the capitalist worker, but when applying a postcolonial reading she can be seen as similar to an African slave in the Americas.

At the centre of the novel are ecological crises and their economic effects, and how these affect the characters and their society. In *The Windup Girl's* future, globalisation seems to have decreased as travel around the world is difficult, however, the nation states around the world have lost influence to imperialistic multinationals and a global shift of the economic and political

centre has occurred. The Thai see the Yellow Card immigrants as a marginalised Other, but also the windup girl herself is dehumanised and ostracised from society. The New People also appear to be similar to colonial slavery, but also a Marxist commentary of the modern day capitalist plight of the labourer. Bacigalupi's novel seems to be a dismissal of neoliberalism and global capitalism, as neoliberal tendencies such as free trade in favour of ecological awareness have destructive consequences in this imagined future. Ultimately, the novel acts as a warning for today's rising sea levels, genetic engineering, rapid use of petroleum and the increase in the power of multinational companies.

6. Conclusion and Further Research

The novels *Brasyl* and *The Dervish House* by Ian McDonald and *The Windup Girl* by Bacigalupi address the issues raised by postcolonialism and show that they are far from irrelevant to the present day. Africa is one specific example, as companies from China are attempting to exercise influence through loans and investments. At the same time, French President Macron visits Africa to pledge money to funds that promote education and the digital industry in Africa to increase France's global influence and "make France great again". He stated that if France acts right, "French will be the first language in Africa – and maybe even the world – in the coming decades" (qtd. in Chhor). Africa is an example of how through globalisation, countries and multinational corporations still seek to broaden their global influence on nation states.

Jennifer Langer argued that the genre of science fiction is the contact between art and science, between the transcendent or theoretical and the material. The genre of postcolonial science fiction materialises the theoretical ideas of postcolonialism, the (anti-) capitalism, and (anti-) neoliberalism in the novels. It also addresses the injustices perpetrated by colonialism and combines the technology of science fiction with indigenous cultures. As argued in the theoretical framework, the future of postcolonial theory appears to contain issues such as globalisation, hybridity, and the marginal, and this is confirmed by the primary literature.

McDonald and Bacigalupi write postcolonial science fiction but do not have any obvious postcolonial or non-western background. As Black argued, their literature could be said to be a form of "invasive imagination" exploiting the non-Western cultures they are not a part of (qtd. in Winter 459). However, they both have some connections to the issues of postcolonialism or third world countries. McDonald sees his country of birth, Northern Ireland, as distinctively postcolonial, with the same issues of countries normally seen as postcolonial, such as difficulties with an authentic or hybrid identity and certain groups of marginalised people. Bacigalupi has lived and travelled through Asia, studied Chinese, and has experienced the issues of South East Asia.

The novels by McDonald and Bacigalupi deal with issues related to postcolonialism, hybridity, globalisation and capitalism and materialise these theoretical ideas using science fiction nova. An example is McDonald using the multiverse as a metaphor for imperial power, or Bacigalupi using artificial humans as a stand-in for the Other and the capitalist body of labour. In *Brasyl*, McDonald uses a plot similar to *Heart of Darkness* to show readers the madness of

imperialism and slavery from an outsider's perspective. In the same novel, Brazil has been culturally oppressed for hundreds of years, which resulted in issues of identity and authenticity after decolonisation.

These issues of identity and authenticity are caused by decolonisation, migration, cultural denigration, and dislocation, as tools to differentiate the marginal from the centre. In *The Dervish House* the Turkish search for an authentic identity. Nanotechnology is used to create fake religious apparitions, but also to recreate the grandness of the Ottoman Empire through clothing. As a contrast, the Thai Kingdom has never been colonised and one of the only remaining independent nation state in the world in *The Windup Girl*, which leads them to retain their authenticity in a world dominated by multinational corporations. Another response to decolonisation and globalisation is the occurrence of hybridity in culture and identity. Hybridity is a fluid state of becoming and a mixing of different cultures and is argued to be a logical result of globalisation. In *Brasyl*, characters mend native Brazilian culture with Catholicism and in *The Dervish House*, Istanbul is a hybridised city being both European and Asian, divided by the river Bosphorus.

The literature of McDonald and Bacigalupi take on the tensions between the Global North and South. McDonald portrays Europe as rich, powerful, safe and controlled, while Asia is poor, uneducated, unsafe and chaotic. However, the hybrid "synaptic" cleft between Thrace and Anatolia, the Bosphorus, is the strength of Turkey, it is what makes the Turkish identity authentic. *The Windup Girl* presents a global shift of power, turning the global power structures upside down, as the marginal becomes the centre of economic and political power. While New York floods because of rising sea levels, Bangkok remains, and the multinational companies reside in rural Iowa instead of on Wall Street.

Similar to how the Global South is portrayed negatively by the characters in the novels, the marginal people are portrayed as the Other. *Brasyl* traces the origins of science fiction to the colonial period, and portrays mythical creatures that represent the fears of society, just as the Other is feared for their difference. McDonald also created characters that are outsiders to society, such as Quinn, who is an outsider to the other Jesuits, Edson, who is bisexual and has a fluid sexuality, and Fia, an elaborate metaphor for an immigrant from the multiverse. In *The Dervish House* immigration is compared to a flock of birds moving from East to West, and the marginal groups such as Greeks, Jews, Kurds, Armenians and anyone diverging from the

standard secular Turk are seen as remnants of the old Ottoman Empire. Prejudices against marginal people are ingrained in the culture and propagated by state television and through education, and McDonald appears to argue that they are treated as such because of Turkey's insecurities as a nation state as part of a globalised world. Bacigalupi's Thailand is divided between the Thai, refugees, and the New People. These refugees are also divided between refugees who hold on to their own culture and those who practically become Thai. The New People such as Emiko are seen as invading, non-human and artificial, but are also seen as the future of humanity as they resist all the diseases threatening humanity.

McCalmont distinguishes different stages the subgenre of science fiction, cyberpunk, in terms of their treatment of class and their alliance with neoliberal capitalism, and the novels can be classified to one of those stages as they feature lower or middle-class characters and culture, and their interactions with globalised capitalism and its institutions. McCalmont places authors such as McDonald in the second stage of cyberpunk, because of his "celebratory smugness" (McCalmont). By setting *Brasyl* in South America and *The Dervish House* in Turkey, McDonald intentionally places himself outside of middle class culture to create a certain kind of effect. Most of McDonald's characters are middle-class and fell through the cracks of middle-class life or intentionally placed themselves outside of it. McDonald describes the Portuguese Empire as a mercantile empire only interested in the profitable aspect of colonialism. However, *Brasyl* also portrays Gonçalves, who goes crazy from the power he has over others.

Next to McDonald's characters, his alliance with neoliberalism can also be explained through how he deals with the multiverse. His characters believe the multiversal quantum computer can be reprogrammed, and postcolonial traumas and missed opportunities can be overcome as characters have influence over their own destiny if they try hard enough. In *The Dervish House*, capitalism is subverted by showing the extreme ambition and focus on work of the characters. However, the novel portrays middle-class characters, and the positive influences neoliberal institutions and globalisation had on Turkey, while not showing the lives of lower class characters.

Using McCalmont's framework for cyberpunk literature, McDonald's novels could be seen as the second stage of cyberpunk, retaining a certain alliance to neoliberal ideals. Bacigalupi, however, is questioning the neoliberal approach to globalisation and capitalism. *The Windup Girl* shows the ecological destruction caused by the excesses of free market capitalism,

and an adapted capitalism is able to thrive on this destruction through multinational corporations influencing and even orchestrating coups in nation states. The form of capitalism described by Bacigalupi is adaptable, but is always striving for maximal profit margins and the ultimate removal of trade restrictions. The novel warns of the disastrous future that follows from the capitalism of the present, as resources are used up fast and multinational corporations are given more power. The New Person, Emiko, represents the capitalist body of labour, as she stands in for the people all over the world whose bodies are used for profit. Her position is comparable to a slave, as she is taken advantage of sexually, and has no right or control over her own body, that is created for maximum profit and total obedience. The people in Thailand feel no empathy towards her, as she is not seen as human, and not even as natural. In Bacigalupi's future, travel times are heavily increased because of the lack of fossil fuel. However, globalisation has increased in different terms, as multinational corporations have almost all the power over countries on the other side of the world. The novel looks more critically towards the neoliberal approach of globalisation, and thus can be considered different from McDonald's literature, and can be said to be part of McCalmont's third stage of cyberpunk literature.

Although the novels by McDonald and Bacigalupi carry postcolonial themes in terms of setting, identity, the marginal, and differences between the centre and the margin, applying McCalmont's perspective on cyberpunk also reveals a criticism of capitalism. Ashcroft et al. argue postcolonial culture covers everything "affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day" (Ashcroft et al. 2). Using a similar train of thought, the literature written by McDonald and Bacigalupi can be said to be postcapitalist science fiction literature, as it is literature affected by the capitalist system and ideology. D. Harlan Wilson's book, *Technologized Desire: Selfhood & the Body in Postcapitalist Science Fiction* (2009), analyses the body and the self as it is represented in current science fiction films and novels. Wilson argues that in those novels, biology and technology merges in dystopian capitalist futures, analysing relationships with technology and consumerism in today's consumer-capitalist society (Wilson). *The Windup Girl* and *The Dervish House* also merge technology with the biological self, through biotechnology such as genetic engineering and nanotechnology.

Both McDonald and Bacigalupi have moved on from writing the category of science fiction discussed in this thesis. Instead of novels set in non-Western settings, McDonald has written the Everness series starting with *Planesrunner* (2013), a Young Adult book series

concerning parallel universes about a boy from North London, and a series of books which have been called *Game of Thrones* in space, about a group of rivalling companies set on the Moon, with *Luna: New Moon* (2015) and *Luna: Wolf Moon* released (Doctorow). Although McDonald seems to have moved on with the familiar format of setting his novels in a country in the Global South, he keeps the themes of postcolonialism and capitalism, and the novum of the multiverse. His most recent novel, *Time Was* (2018), subverts the science fiction and the romance genre, by writing about two soldiers in the Second World War who are in a homosexual relationship, but who are also stuck in time, reminiscent of Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five* (1969). This keeps with the themes of gender and sexuality introduced in *Brasyl* and *River of Gods*. Bacigalupi has also written a Young Adult series, the Shipbreaker trilogy, set on America's Gulf Coast, and a thriller, *The Doubt Factory* (2014). With his latest novel, *The Tangled Lands* (2018), he ventures into the fantasy genre and imagines a world where the use of magic causes environmental destruction.

The idea that science fiction can be a vehicle for political ideas and postcolonial themes has moved into the mainstream in the years after the release of the primary texts of this research. The success of Neill Blomkamp's *District 9* (2009), which compared an alien invasion to the treatment of marginal groups in Johannesburg during and after apartheid, proved to audiences that science fiction can act as a vehicle for political criticism. The film also portrays a future where multinational corporations are powerful actors on a global level, and the state appears to report to the corporation, rather than the other way around. In Gareth Edwards' *Monsters* (2010) Mexico has been 'infected' by alien creatures, but more damage has been done by American military intervention than by the aliens themselves. Although both films have been received well, the films have been low budget and from relatively unknown filmmakers.

In the past few years, science fiction with postcolonial themes has not only entered the mainstream but also gained critical and financial successes. Māori director Taika Waititi's *Thor: Ragnarok* (2017) portrayed the Nordic gods as former imperial oppressors, now ignoring their colonial past and assuming that granting the decolonised societies freedom would heal their wounds as well (Adlakha). Another Marvel film, *Black Panther* (2018) is one of the highest-grossing films of all time and was well-received critically. The film situates a highly advanced society in Africa, hidden from Western colonialism, just as Thailand in *The Windup Girl*. Jessica Langer described merging cultural with science fiction tropes in postcolonial science fiction.

Manohla Dargis argues that *Black Panther* merges technology with African culture, and portrays an Africa that is “at once urban and rural, futuristic and traditional, technological and mystical”. The Best Picture winner at the 2018 Academy Awards, Guillermo Del Toro’s *The Shape of Water* (2018), conveys political messages about the treatment of the Other. Similar to *Brasyl*, the film features a creature found in the Amazon river. The film portrays oppressed people in 1960s American society because of their race, handicap or sexual identity, and uses the Amphibian creature, the Monster, as a symbol for the concept of the Other.

While McDonald and Bacigalupi’s literature have moved more towards the mainstream of science fiction, writing young adult fiction and science fiction series of rivalling families, the mainstream culture has moved more towards the postcolonial science fiction discussed in this thesis, dealing with authenticity, the marginal, and the ripple effects of European imperialism. An important subject for further research might then be how writers such as McDonald, Bacigalupi, Hopkinson, and Lai would react to the mainstream works and how they continue the trend of materialising postcolonial and postcapitalist ideas through the genre. In his acceptance speech at the BAFTAs, Del Toro said Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* inspired him for “giving voice to the voiceless, and presence to the invisible” (Del Toro). The Academy Award Winner’s recognition of Mary Shelley as the inventor of science fiction giving a voice to the voiceless, reveals that it has inspired, and will continue to inspire, the marginal of the world since the genre’s creation.

Works cited

- Acheraïou, Amar. *Questioning Hybridity, Postcolonialism and Globalization*. Palgrave macmillan, 2011.
- Adlakha, Siddhant. ““Thor: Ragnarok”: Marvel From a Postcolonial Perspective.” *The Village Voice*, 10 Nov. 2017, <https://www.villagevoice.com/2017/11/10/thor-ragnarok-marvel-from-a-postcolonial-perspective/>. Accessed 28 June 2018.
- Ahmed, Sara. *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality*. Routledge, 2000.
- Alexander, Niall. “The Long Run: Luna: New Moon by Ian McDonald” *Tor.com*, 21 Sept. 2015, <https://www.tor.com/2015/09/21/book-reviews-luna-new-moon-by-ian-mcdonald/>, accessed 15 Nov. 2017.
- Alkon, Paul K. “Gulliver’s Travels and the Origins of Science Fiction.” *The Genres of Gulliver’s Travels*. Edited by Frederik N. Smith. Delaware UP, 1992.
- Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 1989.
- Ashcroft, Bill. *On Post-colonial Futures: Transformations of a Colonial Culture*. Continuum, 2001.
- Bacigalupi, Paolo. *The Windup Girl*. Tor, 2009.
- . “The Calorie Man.” *Pump Six and other Stories*. Tor, 2008, EPUB file.
- . *The Doubt Factory*. Tor, 2014
- . “Yellow Card Man” *Pump Six and other Stories*. Tor, 2008, EPUB file.
- Bacigalupi, Paolo and Tobias S. Buckell. *The Tangled Lands*. Tor, 2018.
- Bhabha, Homi K. *The Location of Culture*. Routledge, 1994.
- Black Panther*. Directed by Ryan Coogler, Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2018.
- Bradbury, Ray. *Fahrenheit 451*. Simon & Schuster, 2013.
- Brooke, Keith. “Brasy!” *The Guardian*, 9 Aug. 2008, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2008/aug/09/fiction.roundupreviews4>. Accessed 11 February 2018.

- Brown, Eric. "A brave new world." *The Guardian*, 4 Aug. 2007, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2007/aug/04/featuresreviews.guardianreview13>. Accessed 11 February 2018.
- Canclini, Néstor García. *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity*. Translated by Christopher L. Chiappari and Silvia L. Lopez, Minnesota UP, 1995.
- Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*. 1899. Penguin Twentieth-century Classics, 1995.
- Chhor, Khatya. "Macron's soft power push in Africa is key to 'making France great again.'" *France24*, 4 Jul. 2018, <http://www.france24.com/en/20180703-macron-soft-power-push-africa-make-france-great-again-global-influence-diplomacy>. Accessed 7 Jul. 2018.
- Csicsery-Ronay, Jr., Istvan. "Some Things We Know about Aliens." *The Yearbook of English Studies*, vol 37.2. Edited by John Batchelor and David Seed. Maney Publishing, 2007, pp. 1-24.
- Dargis, Manohla. "'Black Panther' emphasis on black imagination, creation and liberation." *The EastAfrican*, 9 Feb. 2018, <http://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/magazine/Black-Panther-movie-review-NYT/434746-4298190-gq2a6v/index.html>. Accessed 28 June 2018.
- Del Toro, Guillermo. "Guillermo del Toro - Winner's Acceptance Speech, Director." *BAFTA*, 18 Feb. 2018, <http://www.bafta.org/media-centre/transcripts/guillermo-del-toro-winners-acceptance-speech-director-ee-british-academy>. Accessed 28 June 2018.
- Dick, Philip K. "Prize Ship" *Beyond Lies the Wub: Volume One of the Collected Stories*. Gollancz, 1988.
- District 9*. Directed by Neil Blomkamp, *TriStar Pictures*, 2009.
- Doctorow, Cory. "Ian McDonald returns to the harshest mistress in Luna: Wolf Moon" *Boingboing*, 28 Mar. 2017, <https://boingboing.net/2017/03/28/booksreviewsgift-guidescien.html>. Accessed 1 Jul. 2018.
- Easterbrook, Neil. "Cognitive Estrangement is Us." *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2013, pp. 364-367.
- Ellingson, Ter. *The Myth of the Noble Savage*. California UP, 2001.
- Furlong, Andy. *Youth Studies: An Introduction*. Routledge, 2013.
- GINWAY, Elizabeth H. "A Paradigm of the Tropical: Brazil in Contemporary Anglo-American Science Fiction and Fantasy" *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2013, pp. 316-334.

- Habjan, Jernej and Fabienne Imlinger eds. *Globalizing Literary Genres: Literature, History, Modernity*. Routledge, 2016.
- Higgins, David M. "Introduction: Science Fiction and Globalization." *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 39, no. 3, 2012, pp. 369-373.
- Hoegland, Ericka and Reema Sarwal, eds. *Science Fiction, Imperialism and the Third World*. McFarland, 2010.
- Hopkinson, Nola. *Brown Girl in the Ring*. Warner Aspect, 1998.
- . *Midnight Robber*. Warner Aspect, 2000.
- Hughes, Simon. "Books" *The Australian Financial Review*, 30 Nov. 2007, p. 120.
- Kraidy, Marwan M. *Hybridity: or the Cultural Logic of Globalization*. Temple UP, 2005.
- Kühl, Stefan. *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism*. Oxford UP, 1994.
- Lai, Larissa. *The Salt Fish Girl*. Thomas Allen, 2002.
- Langer, Jessica. *Postcolonialism and Science Fiction*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2011.
- Luckhurst, Roger. *Science Fiction: Cultural History of Literature*. Polity Press, 2005.
- Maurer, Yael. *The Science Fiction Dimension of Salman Rushdie*. McFarland, 2014.
- McCalmont, Jonathan. "Cyberpunk Without the Iron Lady." *Ruthless Culture*, 21 Feb. 2012, <https://web.archive.org/web/20170223164930/https://ruthlessculture.com/2012/02/21/pain-twork-2011-by-tim-maughan-cyberpunk-without-the-iron-lady/>. Accessed 2 Feb. 2018.
- McDonald, Ian. *Brasyl*. Pyr, 2007.
- . *Luna: New Moon*. Tor, 2015.
- . *Luna: Wolf Moon*. Tor, 2017.
- . *Planesrunner*. Tor, 2013.
- . *The Dervish House*. Pyr, 2010.
- . *Time Was*. Tor, 2018.
- . *River of Gods*. Simon and Schuster, 2004.
- McLees, Leslie. "A Postcolonial Approach to Urban Studies: Interviews, Mental Maps, and Photo Voices on the Urban Farms of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania." *The Professional Geographer*, vol 22, no. 4, 2009, pp. 283-295.
- Monsters*. Directed by Gareth Edwards, Vertigo Films, 2010.
- Punter, David. *Postcolonial Imaginings: Fictions of a New World Order*. Edinburgh UP, 2000.

- Roberts, Adam. *Science Fiction: The New Critical Idiom*. 3rd ed., Routledge, 2006.
- Robinson, Jennifer. "Global and world cities: a view from off the map." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, vol. 26, no. 3, 2002, pp. 531-554.
- Rieder, John. *Colonialism and the Emergence of Science Fiction*. Wesleyan UP, 2008.
- Ritzer, George. *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization*. Blackwell, 2007.
- Scalzi, John. *Old Man's War*. St. Martin's Press, 2007.
- Schwarz, Henry and Sangeeta Ray eds. *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*. Blackwell Publishing, 2005.
- Said, Edward. *Orientalism*. Penguin Classics, 2003.
- Seed, David. *A Companion to Science Fiction*. Blackwell, 2005.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein: or, The Modern Prometheus*. 1818. Pickering, 1996.
- Stam, Robert and Louise Spence. "Colonialism, Racism and Representation: An Introduction" *Screen*, vol. 4, no.2, 1983, pp. 2-20.
- Straetz, Juliane. "The Struggle of Being Alive: Laboring Bodies in Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*." *COPAS*, vol. 18, no. 1, 2017, 1-12.
- Solarewicz, Krystzof. "Cyberpunk Goes East. Challenging the Western Culture in Contemporary Science Fiction." *8th Global Conference - Visions of Humanity in Cyberculture*, July 2013, Oxford, England. Unpublished conference paper. *Academia.edu*, [https://www.academia.edu/3570100/Cyberpunk Goes East. Challenging the Western Culture in Contemporary Science Fiction](https://www.academia.edu/3570100/Cyberpunk_Goes_East._Challenging_the_Western_Culture_in_Contemporary_Science_Fiction). Accessed 16 Oct. 2017.
- Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver's Travels*. 1726. Collins Press, 1940.
- Sulendra, Yogi, Kurnia Ningsih, Muhammad Al-Hafizh. "Materialism in McDonald's Novel *The Dervish House*." *English Language and Literature E-Journal*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2013, pp. 287-296.
- Sussex, Lucy. "Brasyl; Book of the Week." *Sunday Age*, 30 Sep. 2007, p. 42.
- The Castle in the Sky*. Directed by Hayao Miyazaki, Studio Ghibli, 1986.
- The Shape of Water*. Directed by Guillermo Del Toro, Fox Searchlight, 2017.
- Thor: Ragnarok*. Directed by Taika Waititi, Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, 2017.
- Vonnegut, Kurt. *Slaughterhouse-Five*. Delacorte, 1967.

- Vorda, Allan. "The Author with the Unpronounceable Name: an Interview with Paolo Bacigalupi." *Rain Taxi*, 2010, <http://www.raintaxi.com/the-author-with-the-unpronounceable-name-an-interview-with-paolo-bacigalupi/>. Accessed 18 June 2018.
- Wilson, D. Harlan. *Technologized Desire: Selfhood & the Body in Postcapitalist Science Fiction*. Guide Dog Books, 2009.
- Winter, Jerome. "Epistemic Polyverses and the Subaltern: The Postcolonial World-System in Ian McDonald's *Evolution's Shore* and *River of Gods*." *Science Fiction Studies*, vol. 39, no. 3, 2012, pp. 459-477.