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# INTRODUCTION TO THE ARTICLES

## ACADEMIC ARTICLES

“Apocalypse” is one of those words that have not lost but gained meaning over time. In Ancient Greek, “apokálypsis” means “uncovering” or “revelation.” However, medieval interpretations of the Book of Revelation as a prophecy of the end of the world have survived to this day, to the point that we see apocalypse not as any divine (though negative) revelation about the present or the future, but, necessarily, as a construction of a moment where the very fabric of society is torn apart.

Emulating and paraphrasing that famous poem by Robert Frost, in the end, it does not matter much how the world will end. Apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic narratives are appealing insofar as they make evident the anxieties and uncertainties of a fast-changing world. The past 30 or 40 years have witnessed a massive reinvention of apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic narratives: futuristic dystopian societies where basic human rights no longer exist, and zombie invasions where the very concept of humanity is undermined, seem to illustrate our deepest fears of displacement, not just physical, but cultural. The attacks on the World Trade Center in 2001 marked the unofficial beginning of the twenty-first century as a time we must all live in fear, and the fact that 9/11 was televised live all over the world was apocalyptic both as end-of-world narrative and as a revelation that everything would be different from then on. It is fair to say that contemporary post-apocalyptic narratives tend to be essentially political in nature, critical of the present moment, more than prophetic about the future.

All the articles that answered our call for papers and are published here in the academic section of the current issue of *LiNQ* demonstrate the multiple interpretations apocalypse may have, but they all have a certain idea of displacement and/or dispossession in common. An article that evokes this issue’s cover image, Virginia Frade’s “*The Hunger Games* and the Game of Silences: The Apocalypse within the Apocalypse” analyses how Jean Baudrillard’s ideas of simulation and simulacra may be applied to the dystopian universe based upon the centrality of the spectacle created in the narrative.

Zombies are almost synonymous with apocalyptic narratives these days. Stephen Joyce’s text, “Eating Time: The Cultural Significance of the Zombie Apocalypse” and Tim Lanzendörfer’s “Max Brooks’s *World War Z: An Oral History of the Zombie War*: Conservative

Armageddon and Liberal Post-Apocalypse” discuss the emergence, permanence and significance of the undead from two distinct perspectives. Whereas Joyce deals precisely with the sociocultural anxieties that made possible the emergence of the zombie takeover, proposing that the genre goes beyond the superficial fears of terrorism and pandemics, and is actually cathartic in times of late capitalism and its pressures, Lanzendörfer’s reading of Max Brooks’s novel suggests that the post-apocalyptic world the narrative creates is essentially ambivalent, as it seems to solve many of the social problems Western society faces, but at a very high price.

Louise Loomes’s “‘Armageddon Begins Here’: Apocalypse in Alexis Wright’s *Carpentaria*” discusses the complex but relevant parallels between biblical myths of creation and destruction (in terms of form and content) and the centrality of storytelling in Wright’s novel, to focus on both the historical dispossession and the present-day recognition of Australian Aborigines. Destruction of the old and creation of the new are also themes present in “Retelling Apocalypse in Margaret Atwood’s *Oryx and Crake* and *The Year of the Flood*” by Melissa Cristina Silva de Sá. The author examines two of the novels that compose Atwood’s *MaddAddam* trilogy, focusing on how the Canadian novelist builds a world driven not by nation-states but by corporations and how capitalism is the demise of the world it maintains. De Sá’s analysis starts from the recurrence of the theme of the apocalypse in Canadian literature to examine the novel’s apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic (even posthuman) worlds.

I hope the articles here may be apocalyptic, not in the sense of Armageddon, the end of the world as we know it, but in the original sense of revelation, opening our eyes to different, possible readings of our present and future surroundings.

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