

CFP for Guaranteed ChLA Session at MLA 2027 conference in Los Angeles:
Postcolonial Fantasy for Young People

The last few years have seen the publication of a number of fantasy novels for young people written by authors from the postcolonial diaspora, including Tomi Adeyemi's Legacy of Orisha trilogy, Jordan Ifueko's Raybearer series, Nnedi Okarofo's The Nsibidi Scripts series and Roshani Chokshi's The Gilded Wolves series. Additionally, there are YA fantasy series that deal with hierarchies and inequities resulting from colonization and settler colonialism, such as Naomi Novik's Scholomance series and Cherie Dimaline's The Marrow Thieves duology. Naomi Wood and Anuja Madan note in the introduction to *The Lion and the Unicorn*'s special issue on "Children's Literature and Postcolonial Fantasy," "Some of these texts intervene in and contest hegemonic concepts of time, selfhood, reality, knowledge, adolescence, and ways of being, offering alternate epistemologies, subjectivities, and tools of narrativization. Many rewrite historical events to grapple with the traumas of colonial history and force recognition of the ways colonization has shaped the present, while creating space for the self-expression of voices that have been suppressed; others create futurisms with a blueprint for ethical, equitable relationships. Dismantling deeply held conceptions and beliefs in multifarious ways, postcolonial fantasy's world-building embodies possibilities for a better world and invites diverse readers to enjoy a marvelous that 'loves them back'" (Wood and Madan xii).

Papers are invited on the subject of postcolonial fantasy for young people. Themes could include but are not limited to:

- The various ways in which contemporary fantasy fiction for young people grapples with the continuing legacies of colonialism and settler colonialism;
- The ways in which contemporary postcolonial children's/YA fantasy reorients/reshapes and decolonizes (a still predominantly) white genre of fantasy;
- How postcolonial children's/YA fantasy exposes or critiques global colonial/postcolonial inequities and/or British/American cultural imperialism;
- How postcolonial children's/YA fantasy frees the space of fantasy and imagination for young people traditionally seen as being on the margins;
- How postcolonial children's/YA fantasy creates Indigenous futurisms, Afrofuturisms, Africanfuturisms and Indofuturisms;
- How we may categorize the genre of children's/YA postcolonial fantasy: some common themes in the category of postcolonial fantasy for young people;
- How postcolonial speculative fiction for young people creates allegories for colonialism and real-world conflicts emerging from colonization;
- The tension between dystopic themes and futurisms in postcolonial fantasy for young people.

Please send abstracts of 350 words and a 100-word bio to amadan@ksu.edu by March 1, 2026. Notification of decisions will be sent by March 15th. Panel organizer: Anuja Madan, Associate Professor at English Department, Kansas State University.