



Dear fellow EASLCEans:

As the academic course progresses, we face a new year with hopes of better fulfilments and new challenges for our Association. May also 2015 be a time for personal success and spiritual renovation and may we, human animals, find a better way of inhabiting our biosphere without destroying it in numbers.

That said, I want to start this letter by informing of the holding of the 2015 off-year AGM EASLCE meeting. As most of you know this year ASLE will hold its conference in Moscow-Idaho in June 23-27 2015 and I know that some of you will be attending and have expressed a preference for that one, whereas another possibility, ASLE-UKI, has confirmed to me that the conference will be held in Cambridge September 2-4 that same year. After a brief survey and due to some professional and personal circumstances of members of the board, the AGM will definitely be held during ASLE-Moscow next June 2015. I will inform you of the exact dates and venue in due time via the distribution list, with the hope to see many of you then and there.

On a separate issue, I want you to be informed that taking profit of my attendance in Brussels next January to serve as member of a PhD ceremony, gently invited by our dear colleague Franca Bellarsi, I will have the opportunity to visit the premises and chat with her about the organization of our next biennial EASLCE conference to be held in Brussels 2016. Among other things, we can discuss about the convenience of expanding our format to other kinds of panels, posters, etc. and about the management of space for parallel sessions, after which I will write you with input of the decisions made by the advisory board. I hope

all the improvements and steps forward that we can undertake will serve to expand and consolidate our already ten-year-old Association which has now reached a solid and lasting ground in academic terms.

In this sense, our Vice-president, Serpil Oppermann has continued the task of consolidating EASLCE webinars. The latest one has taken place with Dr. Stephanie Le Menager, University of Oregon, December 13, 2014 (7 pm CET) about "The Cultures of Energy." Moreover, our Treasurer, Alexa Weik von Mossner, is keeping the records of the Association efficiently. I want to thank them both for being such a good team and hope we will be running our duties as smoothly as always in this year to come. In addition, the webpage of the Association is being continually updated thanks to our webmaster, Michael Marwick; the website and the distribution mailing list prove adequate vehicles for the spreading of news, events, academic conferences, etc. about environmentalism and ecocriticism worldwide;

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**EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE
STUDY OF LITERATURE, CULTURE
AND ENVIRONMENT**

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Please note the **editorial
deadline** for the next issue:

June 15, 2015

Contact: Sylvia Mayer at
[sylvia.mayer\(at\)uni-bayreuth.de](mailto:sylvia.mayer(at)uni-bayreuth.de)

showing therefore the interdisciplinary and international level of our studies in this “global village” (as Marshall McLuhan puts it) which we live in. May I remind you in this way that the webpage is there to serve us and reiterate the wide possibilities included in it, thus inviting you to visit more frequently and update your personal data on a regular basis.

Last but not least, let me say a few words about our Journal Ecozon@, which has reached its ten issues after five years of intense and fruitful existence, and thus pays homage to the arduous work of its team, with Carmen Flys Junquera on top of them. She is accompanied by Axel Howarth Goodbody, Imelda Martín Junquera, Diana Villanueva Romero, Irene Sanz Alonso, Serenella Iovino, Hannes Bergthaller, Roman Bartosch and Paloma Villamil Agraso, as editorial members, and they are enriched by a plethora of peer-reviewers and advisors, many of them fellow members of EASLCE and other first-rank associations and academic institutions. All of which testifies to the ever increasing interest and quality of the product that was generated by the research group GIECO in Alcalá de Henares, Spain, under the auspices of the Franklin Institute for American Studies at the

University of Alcalá, and later supported officially and enthusiastically by EASLCE in Europe. Ecozon@’s latest issue (Volume 5.2 2014), devoted to “Northern Nature” and edited by Werner Bigell, is a patent proof that we were not wrong when betting for the Journal. Consequently, on behalf of EASLCE I want to congratulate Carmen Flys and the rest for providing such a most worthy recipient of environmental literary and cultural studies at international level and wish them all the best for the future of the Journal.

That is all for now. While I’m writing this, a quasi-winter evening is coming to a close and soft rain is falling on stereotypically “sunny” Tenerife, showing that nature is free to choose and deceive the many tourists that are visiting the island in search of eternal springtime. However paradoxically, the island is greener than ever after days of watery precipitations. In Europe, holiday lights embellish the streets and increase the energy waste. Yes, we, human animals, are contradictory in terms. Receive my fondest wishes and greetings for 2015.

Juan Ignacio Oliva
EASLCE President

International Graduate Seminar / Call For Applications

Graduate School in Environmental History Läänemaa, Animals in Transdisciplinary Environmental History Estonia, May 13-15, 2015

KAJAK, the Estonian Centre for Environmental History at Tallinn University Institute of History, in cooperation with the University of Tartu and Rachel Carson Center for Environment & Society (LMU Munich) and with the support of European Society for Environmental History are pleased to announce a three-day graduate seminar in environmental history hosted in the Estonian countryside. This graduate seminar will offer intermediate to advanced graduate students the opportunity to present and discuss their work, to network with other researchers from across the world, and participate in practical workshops.

The 2015 graduate seminar, “Animals in transdisciplinary environmental history,” will explore animals as historical agents and as a lens through which to understand past environmental transformations. The instructors of the course include specialists from environmental history as well as from neighbouring disciplines of archaeology, anthropology, ethnology, biosemiotics, and literature. The event will therefore focus distinctly on transdisciplinary methods for historical research outside of archival work.

Issues to be discussed during the workshop include, but are not limited to:

- Animal representations: how are animals represented in different media, cultures, and languages;
- Animals and catastrophes: the impact of natural and anthropogenic catastrophes on non-human others;
- Animals as resources: animals as food, labour force, means of transport, entertainment, and the impact of their use on natural environments and human culture;
- Animal remains as resources for history writing: bones, shell, fur, skin, and scales as historical sources, what they do and do not reveal and how they can be analyzed;
- Animal and inter-species communication: how non-human animal species communicate with each other and humans, how they make sense of the world and what humans mean to them;
- Animals assisting humans: how animals have helped humans to fulfill tasks or access resources.

A workshop on popular science writing will also take place and the summer school will end with an open roundtable on animals assisting humans.

The graduate seminar aims to gather 15 graduate (and post-doctoral) students together with junior and senior scholars who will all give formal and informal presentations, personal and public feedback for promoting rich methodological discussions in a friendly atmosphere. The discussions are concentrated into thematic blocs that include a presentation from a senior scholar, oral presentations by the doctoral students, feedback for each of the presentations both from instructors and other participants, general discussion and a practical workshop or a field trip. All participants are expected to make a 20-minute oral presentation and give constructive feedback to other presentations. They are also expected to submit a draft of a chapter or article (approximately 4000 words) one month before the summer school

and prepare a popular science article (max 500 words) on their topic for the Arcadia project (<http://www.environmentandsociety.org/arcadia>) that will subsequently be edited and reworked during the writing workshop and submitted to Arcadia for publication.

All doctoral students and immediate post-docs working on the above topics are welcome to apply. An application for the graduate seminar consists of sending the organizers:

- 1) a curriculum vitae;
- 2) an abstract of the presentation and outline of the research topic (ca 300 words);
- 3) a letter of support.

All accepted participants will receive free room and board during this three-day seminar (in shared rooms), but participants are responsible for their own transportation to and from Estonia. Travel between Tallinn and the seminar venue is covered by the organizers. Limited travel funds may be available on a scholarship basis for competitive applications.

The working language of the summer school is English. While fluent English is required, this is a multilingual international event where all participants are expected to listen and cooperate. Native speakers of English may at times need to slow down and speak clearly.

The course will give 3 ETCS.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: January 10, 2015

Please send all queries and application to Kadri Tüür: tyyr@ut.ee

The graduate seminar and the Assistant animals workshop are financed by the European Union through the European Social Fund (Estonian Graduate School of Culture Studies and Arts), Norwegian-Estonian Research Cooperation Programme grant EMP151 "Animals in changing environments: Cultural mediation and semiotic analysis," Estonian Research Council grant ETF9419, European Society for Environmental History, and the Rachel Carson Center for Environment & Society (LMU Munich).

***Landscapes, Natures, Ecologies:
Italy and the Environmental Humanities***



We need new figurations for the humanities. We need to explore intellectual pathways in which critique goes together with creativity. We need critical practices that, defamiliarizing consolidated patterns of thinking, escort us out of the safety zones in which anthropocentrism, Eurocentrism, sexism, speciesism, ableism, constitute the normal discourse of our cultural paradigms. These inspiring ideas were expressed by the philosopher Rosi Braidotti in her keynote lecture on “Posthumanist Paradoxes” held in Zurich at the 2014 Conference of the American Association for Italian Studies. Intervening in a debate in which traditional humanistic approaches play a major role, Braidotti courageously called the audience to think beyond the usual disciplinary categories, and to embrace the more hybrid, inclusive, and ontologically participative mode of the environmental humanities. From a different angle, historian Dipesh Chakrabarty, in his essay “Postcolonial Studies and the Challenge of Climate Change,” echoes Braidotti’s stirring call to action as he expresses the need to “view the human

simultaneously on contradictory registers: as a geophysical force and as a political agent, as a bearer of rights and as author of actions; subject to both the stochastic forces of nature (being itself one such force collectively) and open to the contingency of individual human experience; belonging at once to differently-scaled histories of the planet, of life and species, and of human societies.”

What do these calls mean for Italian studies? How can the rich tradition of Italian culture and Italy itself—in its multiple, historical, imagined, textual and material-discursive forms—contribute to these challenges? In our envisioned volume, tentatively titled *Landscapes, Natures, Ecologies: Italy and the Environmental Humanities*, we address these very issues. A necessary step to answer these questions, we believe, is that of *defamiliarizing* the imagination of Italy—often frozen in essentialist anthropological categories, romanticized in the aesthetic cliché of the “beautiful land,” and fixed in the human-centered discourse of classical humanist thinking—and to engage with the “disanthropocentric” voices and aspects of the Italian cultural horizon.

We envisage a volume of essays which focus on the many (often dissonant) landscapes, natures, and ecologies of Italy, meant both as a physical territory and as a terrain for cultural imagination. In our mind, the Italian landscapes discussed in this volume will go from the Arcadian dreams of rural perfection to the living nightmares of the ecomafia’s Triangle of Death; its *natures* will embrace medieval *Bestiaria*, Ortese’s mysterious iguanas, pumas and turtles, as well as the rapidly disappearing Apennine brown bear, *Ursus arctos marsicanus*, or the alien species “invading” our

ecosystems; its ecologies will entail the uncontaminated beauty of Alpine regions as well as the Po Valley megalopolis and the “continuous cities” emerging every day from the thousands of hectares of agricultural land inexorably sacrificed to cement. Looking for narratives which “give a voice to objects, elements, forces,” as Jeffrey Cohen says, our gaze will include seas and volcanoes, the land and the atmosphere; we will reflect on literary texts, films, songs, art, as well as toxic bodies, urban systems, and all sorts of eloquent materialities which emerge in the Anthropocene. Drawing on cutting-edge studies in ecocriticism and all the major fields of the eco-cultural debate, our goal is to build a creative critical discourse that elicits differences, pluralities, hybridizations, conflicts, and encounters, thus positioning Italian studies within the broader horizon of the environmental humanities. All of the essays will be thoroughly grounded in the latest developments in environmental discourse (including, for example, material ecocriticism, feminist environmentalism, posthumanism, animal studies, bio- and eco-semiotics, environmental justice and postcolonial environmental ethics, eco-activism, etc.). We welcome contributions from all

areas and subjects of Italian studies, with a historical range from the Middle Ages to the contemporary age.

We are asking for articles of 6000 words, including footnotes and bibliography, following the MLA format. Proposals, in the form of 400-word abstracts, can be sent to the editors via their academic e-mail.

Deadline for abstract submission:

February 15, 2015.

Deadline for manuscript submission:

October 30, 2015.

Editorial team:

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Artwork: Luciano Fabro, *Italia rovesciata*, 1968, Steel and paper. Collezione Gino Viliani, Casale Monferrato.

**“Pastoral: Past, Present, Future”
Green Letters / 20 (1) Winter 2016**

Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism is the journal of ASLE-UKI. It is a peer-reviewed journal published by Taylor and Francis and supported by Bath Spa University and the University of Worcester. *Green Letters* explores interdisciplinary interfaces between humans and the natural and built environment. Submissions (by abstract) are invited for our themed winter 2016 issue.

Pastoral has recently been undergoing one of its periodic transformations. The papers from two conferences are about to be published: ‘The Afterlife of Pastoral’ in Australia and ‘Pastoral: the

Poetics and Politics of Place’ in France. A further conference on ‘Pastoral Sounds’ has recently taken place in France. Irish pastoral has suddenly come to the fore in books by Oona Frawley (*Irish Pastoral: Nostalgia and Twentieth-Century Irish Literature*, 2005), Tim Wenzell (*Emerald Green: An Ecocritical Study of Irish Literature*, 2009) and Donna Potts (*Contemporary Irish Poetry and the Pastoral Tradition*, 2011). A recent edited book *Eco-Joyce* (2014) has three chapters engaging with pastoral. Renaissance studies have been enlivened by ecocriticism, as in Ken Hiltner’s *What Else is Pastoral?* (2011), as has eighteenth century

studies (e.g. David Fairer's work on 'Eco-Georgic'). Yet, ecocritics have often dismissed classical pastoral texts without actually engaging with their complexities. Essays such as Charles Martindale's 'Green Politics: The Eclogues' in his *Cambridge Companion to Virgil* (1997) remain to be followed up by ecocritics, while the tradition of Georgic literature has been almost entirely ignored within ecocriticism. What, though, is clear is the scope for reading pastoral, anti-pastoral and post-pastoral cultural texts through the perspectives, for example, of material ecocriticism, ecofeminism, environmental justice, biosemiology, communications studies, green media and cultural studies, and eco-musicology.

Accordingly, in an attempt to do justice to the full range and ecological interest of pastoral we invite proposals on any topic that attempts to re-think the broad pastoral tradition from a broadly ecocritical perspective. Without prejudice to other submissions, we would be particularly interested in papers on:

- the Georgic tradition
- contemporary Georgic
- pastoral and sound
- pastoral and environmental communication
- the complexities of classical pastoral literature
- 'dark' pastoral and pastoral theory

Each article will be accompanied by an abstract, a brief biographical note, and keywords. Manuscript length should be between 4000 and 6000 words and authors are asked to follow the journal's 'Instructions for Authors' which can be found at the web address given below. Eventual submissions will be made via the Scholar One submission system, information on which will be provided on acceptance of the abstract. Please note that it is important that articles should have a broad ecocritical flavour and be informed, to some degree, by ecological theory.

To have a submission considered please send an abstract (maximum 500 words) to both John Parham (the co-editor of *Green Letters*) and Thomas Pughe, co-guest editor of this edition. Their e-mail addresses are j.parham@worc.ac.uk and pughe-perrot@club-internet.fr. The abstract should specify the envisaged word length of the finished article. It should be sent as an anonymous attachment in Word document format along with a covering email giving your name, address and institutional affiliation. The deadline for abstracts is **January 5, 2015**. A decision as to which articles will be commissioned will be made by the start of **February 2015**. Please note, though, that the deadline for first draft submissions – **April 13, 2015** – is tight.

For more information about Green Letters, see our website at <http://tandfonline.com/loi/rgrl20>.

ASLE Translation Project

ASLE-ad hoc Translation Committee: Criteria for Proposals to Translate Ecocritical Books into English

Committee members: Heather Sullivan (chair), Trinity U.; Chia-ju Chang, Brooklyn College; Serenella Iovino, U. of Torino, Italy; Serpil Oppermann, Hacettepe U., Turkey; Stephanie Posthumus, McGill U., Canada; Modhumita Roy, Tufts U.

ASLE representatives: Mark Long, Vice

President; Amy McIntyre, Managing Director; and Paul Outka, President

In order to support work in ecocriticism from international scholars and to expand exchanges across cultures and continents, the ASLE Committee for Translations seeks proposals for books to be translated into English. Proposed

books should be ecocriticism or fiction/non-fiction with a clear relationship to environmental issues, and must already have been published in a language other than English. For accepted projects, we provide funding to support the translation of these books. We also encourage authors to seek English-language publishers, particularly in the U.S., Canada, or Great Britain.

Funding for accepted books to be translated will be up to a possible maximum of \$1,000 each. We will award up to three translation grants each year.

Materials (and any questions) should be submitted electronically to Heather Sullivan, by **June 15, 2015**: heather.sullivan@trinity.edu.

Criteria for submission and required information include:

- Membership in ASLE or any international sister organization.
- Author name and university association, if affiliated with an institution; include full contact information (email, mailing address, and phone numbers) and a curriculum vitae. In the case of a translator applying to translate the scholarly work of someone else, provide full information, if possible, for both author and translator(s).

- Information on original place and year of publication and note any relevant copyright issues related to the original press.
- A summary in English of the project. This should include a brief overview of the book itself and a short summary of each chapter. The total summary should not exceed 3 pages.
- A rationale for why it would be beneficial if this work were translated into English, including comments on possible audience(s) and relationship to other works in the field. The rationale should also not exceed 3 pages.
- A schedule for proposed translation work that includes a likely date of completion or a specific time frame for the process.
- List of possible publishers or presses that might be interested in the translation. Applicant should briefly address feasibility of finding an English-language press.

Once the translation is complete, a copy should be sent to the ASLE translation committee (electronically) with information on the press(es) to which it has been submitted.

International Workshop / Report

“Ecological Othering and Biopolitics in the Environmental Humanities” München, Rachel Carson Center, 10-11 October 2014,

The 2014 Workshop of the Postgraduate Forum *Environment, Literature, and Culture* (ELC) with a focus on “Ecological Othering and Biopolitics” set out to investigate the manifold intersections between biopolitical inquiry in the tradition of Michel Foucault and the environmental humanities – particularly through the figure of the “ecological other” developed by Sarah Ray. To this end, an international group of twelve scholars at various stages in their academic career met in the Rachel-

Carson Center in Munich from October 10-11, 2014 in order to discuss salient theoretical texts on this topic, their own work concerned with questions of biopolitics in environmental discourses, and also personally engage with two renowned experts in the field, Dr. Clare Barker (Leeds) and Dr. Sarah Ray (Humboldt State).

In order to outline the range of the workshop topic, and clarify, or possibly complicate, its key terms,

the workshop began with discussing two main theoretical texts, the introduction to Ray's *The Ecological Other: Environmental Exclusion in American Culture* (2013) and Achille Mbembe's "Necropolitics" (2003). Ray's text was recognized for its intervention in the field by linking environmental humanities, especially environmental justice, biopolitics, and disability studies, so as to mount a critique of exclusion in American mainstream environmentalism that seeks to remove the "disabled body" from nature perceived as pristine, pure, and therefore only to be rightfully inhabited by the "fit body." In the lively discussion of the text, a number of critical points were also raised, for instance if Ray's overall claim makes use of too broad a term of "environmentalism" in order to account for its varied history, and if some forms of "ecological othering" are not more closely associated with "classism" than Ray's analysis suggests. In conclusion, the "ecological other" was judged as a helpful way of framing some of environmentalism's "blind spots," and the ways these are used to justify exclusionary policies in contexts of racism, imperialism, and ableism. Mbembe's text, read in dialogue, convincingly demonstrates how bio- and necropolitical structures manifest, particular in (late) colonial contexts in forms of architecture and infrastructure, thus forming also a particular environment in these biopolitical terms. Furthermore, the discussion of bio- and necropolitics in tandem with Ray's *Ecological Other* made clear how the principle of racial biopolitics, to justify exclusion and killing based on the notion of purifying a population, is transferred in Ray's work to the idea that a pure environment can only be attained by excluding and removing the "unfit body" from it. The discussion of the texts was followed by Clare Barker's keynote address "Environment, Disability and Postcolonial Health," that shed further light on the workshop's key concerns, and also brought to mind its political and activist significance. Demonstrating with reference to Anthony Carrigan how postcolonial environments

are also disabling environments, Barker explored in her reading of Indra Sinha's *Animal's People*, dealing with the lasting effects of the Bhopal disaster in 1984, in which ways the disabled body can also be configured as a site for political enablement and activism in a postcolonial context. Sarah Ray responded to the lecture via video-chat and used the opportunity to raise central questions about the biopolitical conditions for ecological othering, the dimensions of temporality, spatiality and corporeality involved in these processes, and also the importance of the humanities' work in more general terms, which all provided a very fruitful ground for a lively discussion afterwards. The evening concluded with a poster session, in which Devon Grissim (Bern) presented her work on the "Ironic Other in Environmentalism" in regard to Paul Kingsnorth and the tactical discrepancies between his Dark Mountain Manifesto and his eco-fatalist essays and interviews, and Katja Rüping (Cologne) presented her work on "(Human) Nature and the Potentiality of Healing – Environmental Postcolonialism in Contemporary Indigenous Australian Narratives," which seeks to investigate how a more relational view troubles the concrete distinctions between self/other, inside/outside, body/environment in texts by Kim Scott and Alexis Wright; both projects provided added perspectives to the topics discussed and nicely rounded off the first day.

The second day was dedicated to discussing texts contributed by the workshop participants. Corinna Lenhardt (Münster) introduced the group to an excerpt of Mel Y. Chen's *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (2012), which prompted questions on how the text complexly negotiates the terms of animacy, animality, the inanimate/animate, and acting/acted-upon. The following discussion of Sebastian Huber's (LMU) chapter on "Set Theoretical Ecology," enriched this debate by outlining Alain Badiou's set theory as an object oriented ontology that can be made use of to articulate a "political ecology."

In the second session, the workshop discussed René Dietrich's (Mainz) essay on settler colonial biopolitics and an Indigenous politics of life founded on the interrelationality of all life-forms in Linda Hogan's poetry volume *The Book of Medicines*, and Lenka Filipova's (FU Berlin) chapter on localized cosmopolitanism based in a "progressive sense of place" (Doreen Massey) in Kim Scott's *The Deadman Dance* and Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*. After lunch, the workshop participants went on to talk about Karsten Levihn-Kutzler's (Frankfurt) chapter on nuclear annihilation in the context of global risk scenarios in Neville Shute's *On the Beach* and Mordecai Roshwald's *Level 7*; and Basak Agin Dönmez (METU Ankara) provided in her contribution a perspective on "posthuman ecologies" and forms of ecological othering in the animated films *Happy Feet*, *Wall-E*, and *The Lost Thing*. All of the contributions discussed demonstrated the range of projects invested in the workshop's key issues and contributed further intriguing perspectives on these questions. A closing discussion with a focus on the situation of young academics in the (environmental) humanities, and a final thanks to Hanna Straß and Antonia

Mehnert for organizing this workshop and making it such a rewarding experience for everyone involved, concluded then these two days of fruitful and inspiring conversation that may serve as one example of how to set the stage for more, much needed work that interrogates the connections and tensions between biopolitical configurations and environmental politics.

René Dietrich (Mainz)

We as organizers of this year's ELC workshop would like to thank all of the participants for making the workshop a wonderful experience with stimulating and productive discussions. We also thank EASLCE for their financial support as well as the Rachel Carson Center for providing us with a perfect workshop location. A special thanks goes to the research training group "Globalization and Literature" at LMU who made it possible to invite our keynote speaker, Clare Barker from the University of Leeds.

Antonia Mehnert & Hanna Straß (München)

Publications by Members

Reinhard Hennig. *Umwelt-engagierte Literatur aus Island und Norwegen. Ein interdisziplinärer Beitrag zu den Environmental Humanities*. Frankfurt: Lang 2014 (Texte und Untersuchungen zur Germanistik und Skandinavistik 66)

[for a summary in English see: <http://reinhard-hennig.de/en/promotionsprojekt/>]

Serpil Oppermann, ed. *New International Voices in Ecocriticism*. New York: Lexington Books, 2014