



Dear EASLCE-members and friends,

as the first major heat wave of the year strikes Europe (and Alaska), some of us have experienced an exciting ASLE-Conference at the *University of California* in Davis. Again, the conference has attracted more participants than previous venues and will grapple with all the ambiguity and difficulty that this kind of growth entails: with many parallel panels, highly inspiring presentations and other innovative formats, four diverse plenaries and – most importantly – more than 1100 participants on a vibrant, beautiful and expansive campus.

What I personally found most moving was the lunchtime panel – pushed in-between an already crowded schedule – focusing on California wildfires. The local organizers made sure to address the seemingly awkward coincidence of the previously announced title for the conference – *Paradise on Fire* – and the occurrence of one of the most catastrophic wildfires in the city of Paradise (only miles from Davis in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada) on November 8th, 2018. The local organizers convened a (former) inhabitant of Paradise, wildfire-management experts, an architect and an activist to discuss the issues at hand. They made sure that the choice of title was to bring together the world of ideas and metaphors with that of natural catastrophes. By combining those different paths, this panel was intriguing and stimulating: the pragmatic ways of dealing with the aftermath of catastrophe, with the sadness and human tragedy that it entails next to finding new, intellectual and epistemological ways of researching and rebuilding a future.

As announced in the previous newsletter, the ASLE-conference also hosted our annual membership assembly with a good turn-out of European and other international Ecocritics to discuss current matters of our organization. Particularly crucial is the care and alertness we have to take with regards to recent phishing attacks on the Advisory Board. On the positive side, I was very glad to be able to announce the location and time for our next biannual EASLCE-conference hosted by Margarita Carretero González: It will take place from 3 to 6 November 2020 in the beautiful city of Granada in Spain. As Granada has been a crucible of cultures since the Middle Ages, the conference is to center on translations, cultural as well as interspecies encounters and cross-fertilizations. The exact title of our 9th biannual conference and the call for papers will be distributed shortly.

With best wishes for a good and productive summer,

Uwe Küchler
EASLCE President

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Call for Papers

CfP: *Narratives of (Un)sustainability: Assessing U.S. Oil Culture*

Interdisciplinary Conference at Université de Lausanne

September 27-28, 2019

Until newly-elected Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez propelled the “Green New Deal” into the public discourse following the 2018 midterm elections, ecological issues had remained largely absent in American political debate and agenda. Unsurprisingly, the US emerges as a longstanding contributor to the rising concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, one of the leading causes of climate change. The holder of one of the most important carbon footprints, the US ranks among the most unsustainable states. If the “American way of life” were to be replicated on a worldwide scale, its rate of resource consumption and waste production would require close to five planets to sustain itself. Since the end of WWII, the US has accumulated a colossal ecological debt at the expense of future generations, whose access to natural wealth is substantially jeopardized, and developing economies, which rely on a much lower resource supply.

Climate disruption is a symptom of this socio-economic matrix of unsustainability and of the unclaimed “check” or hidden cost of the US and other countries’ dysfunctional modes of existence. Specifically, unsustainability results from the harmful triad consisting of fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas), a high-energy society, and economic growth. As Nathaniel Rich explains, “historically, energy use had correlated to economic growth” and Americans had grown accustomed to the idea that “the more fossil fuels [they] burned, the better [their]

lives became.”* The refusal to address pressing environmental issues by engaging the country in broad, systemic changes (for instance through a national plan for a fossil fuel phase-out) attests to the pervasiveness of oil culture and its coterminous ideology of perpetual growth in American society. That being said, counter-narratives that seek other ways of relating to the environment and of living on earth’s rhythms have emerged in the past years (from the US itself and from elsewhere), and they offer an avenue for moving past the oil predicament.

With Prof. Stephanie LeMenager (University of Oregon, author of *Living Oil: Petroleum in the American Century*), an expert on America’s petroleum culture, as our keynote speaker, we would like to invite scholars from various disciplines to reflect on the narratives surrounding the US oil culture. We conceive of this conference as an opportunity to explore both ends of the spectrum: from narratives of how unsustainability fuels the oil culture by disseminating ideas such as the existence of inexhaustible abundance or the possibility of a technological “fix” to all environmental ailments, to narratives of sustainability that demonstrate how American culture could be changed through an awareness of the fundamental incompatibility between a politics of infinite growth and a finite biosphere.

*Nathaniel Rich, „Losing Earth: The Decade We Almost Stopped Climate Change.“ *The New York Times*, 1 August, 2018.

Possible topics could include, but are not restricted to:

- (un)sustainability in American literature/ popular culture / public discourse
- the relationship between the oil culture and prevailing US national narratives or myths
- the impact on American culture of rapid technological development based on a seemingly limitless supply of fossil fuels throughout the 20th century
- the effect of the oil peak or the 1973 oil crisis on American cultural imagination and literary production
- the role of ecological writing (petro-fiction, cli-fi, eco-gothic, the naturalist essay, nature poetry, ...) in helping US citizens imagine a different future
- narrating the transition: towards a post-carbon America
- Native American perspectives on resource exploitation and on sustainability
- gender and ecology: masculine extractive, exploitive systems vs. feminine regenerative, cyclic approaches
- the public and political role of writers and scholars in helping the US envision a more sustainable culture

Please send a paper abstract of 200-300 words and a short biographical note of 100-150 words by **June 30, 2019** to audrey.loetscher@unil.ch and agnieszka.soltysikmonnet@unil.ch

CfP: Teaching Human-Animal Studies

Symposium at Leuphana Universität Lüneburg

January 23-25, 2020

In recent years, the field of human-animal studies has experienced an unprecedented growth. Indeed, the animal turn, as Harriet Ritvo called this paradigm shift, has promoted “new understandings of the role of animals in the past and at present.” Among other aspects, scholars have begun to explore the agency of animals and to discuss their influence on storytelling and the construction of knowledge. Given these developments and the emergence of human-animal studies as a distinct institutionalized discourse, it is somewhat surprising that the questions of how we teach human-animal studies and how this field may change didactics have received little attention.

Therefore, the symposium “Teaching Human-Animal Studies” aims at exploring

different ways of teaching human-animal studies in school and university classrooms. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to, the connections between teaching human-animal studies and

- animal auto/biographies
- interspecies communication
- literary, cinematic, and comic animal studies
- historical human-animal studies and animal historicity
- practices of human-animal relations
- animal spaces, animal places, and animal geographies
- the material turn in human-animal studies

We welcome papers addressing these issues from inter- and transdisciplinary angles as well as from across human-animal studies disciplines, including geography, anthropology, literary studies, art history, history, cultural studies, and philosophy.

The symposium, which is organized by Micha Edlich, Andreas Hübner, and Maria Moss under the auspices of the Institute of English Studies, will be held at Leuphana

Universität Lüneburg from January 23 to 25, 2020. Please send your abstract (in English or German) of no more than 300 words and a brief biography to teaching.has@leuphana.de by **August 1, 2019**. Presentations will be 25 minutes followed by a discussion.

Select papers will be published.

CfP: *Down to the Farm*

Call for Contribution to a special issue of *Green Letters* on Agriculture and Environment



While the UK Government's recent policy document *A Green Future* describes farmers as 'the true friends of the earth', cultural accounts do not necessarily concur. For example, the relationship between modern British nature writing and agriculture has been a vexed and complex one. This has particularly been the case since the post-WW2 intensification of agrarian production, which has impacted so negatively on ecosystems. Although there have been positive representations of farming within this genre, it has more

often been either actively vilified, with the farmer castigated for the 'pitiless onslaught on the biodiversity supposedly in his care' (McCarthy, 2015), or elided from accounts of the UK's nature by writers seeking out places untouched by cultivation.

While there are grounds for sympathising with both of these perspectives, they might also be seen as neglecting the broader systemic pressures on farmers – especially at a time when small farms are closing down at a rapid rate to be replaced by 'mega-farms', and when farming has

one of the highest suicide rates of any profession – and as perpetuating an under-examined and unhelpful schism between farming and environmentalism that requires urgent scrutiny. After all, over 70% of the land area of the UK is under agricultural use, and the future of the nation's biodiversity is closely tied to the kinds of farming practices that will be adopted – and supported both ethically and in terms of their consumer choices by the public – in the coming years.

This is an appropriate moment, then, to launch a special issue of *Green Letters* that investigates cultural representations of farming. While our focus will be on contemporary culture, we also welcome proposals that explore earlier works in order to trace the genealogy of modern cultural perceptions of farming. We would also be delighted to receive proposals that offer an international perspective.

Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- Agricultural life writing
- Regionally-specific accounts of farming
- Farming in children's literature
- Pastoral and georgic tropes in poetry and prose
- Nature writing and farming
- The agrarian novel
- Agriculture on film and TV (e.g. *Dark River*; *God's Own Country*; BBC 2's *This Farming Life*)
- The city farm; the factory farm; the family farm; farming and gender
- Owning land; belonging to the land; hefting; farming and mental health

- Representations of the rural; the 'urban/rural divide'
- Farming in an international context (e.g. the global south, the EU, and/or relationships between UK farming and other global regions)

- Farming-themed computer games (for example, *Farmville*; *Stardew Valley*)
- Working with livestock; animal capital
- Farming and soil; cultural histories of soil
- Nature-friendly farming initiatives, rewilding, wilding
- Farming in the Anthropocene

We welcome proposals for articles of 6000-7000 words. Please send abstracts of 500 words to the editors at georgic@leeds.ac.uk by **July 15, 2019**.

Selected contributors will be contacted by the end of July and asked to supply their full article by 31st January 2020 in order to start the double-blind peer review process. The special issue is scheduled for publication in late 2020. We especially welcome articles by, or focusing on the work of, women, non-binary, LGBT*, indigenous, disabled and working class writers, and authors of colour.

Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism is the journal of ASLE-UKI (the UK- Ireland branch of the Association for the Study of Literature and the Environment). It is a peer-reviewed journal published by Routledge and supported by Bath Spa University and the University of Worcester. *Green Letters* explores interdisciplinary interfaces between humans and the natural and built environment.

'*Seagulls following the plough*', photograph by Charles Topham. Used with permission from the Museum of English Rural Life, University of Reading.

Conference Reports

Report on the workshop

Reenchanting Urban Wildness: To Perceive, Think and Live with Nature in Cities

June 11-14, 2019

By Bénédicte Meillon

Location: Université de Perpignan Via Domitia, France

The UPVD eco-poetics workshop first organized an international conference in 2016 that gathered over a hundred eco-poetics specialists, exploring the theme “Dwellings of Enchantment: Writing and Reenchanting the Earth”. As it turned out, most papers tackled human wonder at the natural world outside of cities—a rather telling symptom of the pregnancy of our dichotomous thinking, still prompting us to conceive enchanting nature as opposed to disenchanted culture and cities, if not humans. With seventy percent of humans predicted to be living in cities within a couple of decades, it appeared crucial to complete the work started in 2016, by calling for a second conference dealing with urban eco-poet(h)ics, addressing human and nonhuman intra-actions within urban milieus. Hence the international gathering in eco-poetics and environmental humanities that took place in Perpignan, June 11-14 2019 under the aegis of the CRESEM, to promote transdisciplinary research on “Reenchanting Urban Wildness: To Perceive, Think and Live with Nature in Cities”.

Braiding together many different academic disciplines, the conference program included participations from ecocritics as well as anthropologists, architects, art historians, arts specialists, ethnologists, geographers, philosophers, sociologists, urbanists, as

well as many artists. Insisting on the need to work toward more embodied consciousness and knowledge grounded in sensitive intelligence, the four ecofeminist co-organizers (Caroline Durand-Rous, Margot Lauwers, Béné Meillon, and Claire Perrin) had called upon the participation of various artists. On top of the traditional papers and posters, the conference therefore included a number of performances and workshops fully integrated into the program, ranging from readings of eco-poetry (Nathalie Blanc and Clara Breteau, David Lloyd, Karen Houle), and nature writing (Belinda Cannone and Nathanael Johnson) to contemporary and hip hop dance (Joanne Clavel and Laurence Pagès, the *Influences* company lead by Francky Corcoy), the live performance of a graffiti (Valencia street artist Julieta), the exhibition of hybrid sculptures by Charles Dalant, urban naturalist drawings by Marine Cressy, and a film projection (*Wasteland*, by Lucy Walker and Vik Muniz, 2011). The keynote lectures were also planned to cross different approaches to the question of the reenchantment of urban wildness, with the participation of geographer Nathalie Blanc (CNRS), philosopher Serenella Iovino (University of North Carolina), and zoopoetician Anne Simon (CNRS).

The hundred academics and artists gathered for this cross-disciplinary conference successfully managed, on the one hand, to redefine ecopoetics as a set of practices and ethical values that go beyond the single field of literature, encompassing many artistic ways of creating poetic echoes and translations of the more-than-human world, as well as ways of living one's daily lives that strive toward poetic reinhabitation. On the other hand, this conference cogently demonstrated that urban habitats can

provide multispecies dwellings of enchantment, re-entangling humans with their animal, vegetal, mineral, and elemental, fellow urban companions.

The program is available online:

<https://ecopoeticsperpignan.com/programme-reenchanter-le-sauvage-urbain-reenchanting-urban-wildness/>

EASLCE Conference Report

The Garden: Ecological Paradigms of Space, History and Community

September 26-29, 2018

By Lucy Rowland

Location: University of Würzburg, Germany

Coinciding with the 2018 State Horticultural Show (Landesgartenschau) in Würzburg, itself a city of gardens—the baroque Hofgarten at the Residenz, the Fürstengarten at the Festung Marienburg, the Botanic garden of the University, and the Lusamgärtlein with the memorial grave of Walther von der Vogelweide—this conference investigated the human experience of gardens and gardening as a

paradigm for reconceptualizing space, history, and community in the 21st century.

Please find the conference report by Lucy Rowland on the following webpage:

<https://landlinesproject.wordpress.com/2018/10/22/a-conference-report-on-the-garden-ecological-paradigms-of-space-history-and-community-easlce-university-of-wuerzburg-september-26-29-2018/>.



Research Projects



Turkey's first Environmental Humanities Research Center was founded at Cappadocia University by Prof. Dr. Serpil Oppermann and Assist. Prof. Dr. Sinan Akıllı in October 2018.

The Center will

- provide a platform for cooperation between the environmental humanities, arts, and sciences,
- integrate insights from multiple disciplines, and
- develop new theoretical approaches, knowledge practices, and narratives on human-nonhuman relations.

The Center aims

- to conduct multidisciplinary research in cooperation with national and international environmental humanities centers, academic institutions, global networks, environmental organizations, and relevant private entities
- to work toward maintaining the sustainability of more-than-human environments in global and local contexts;
- to ensure social and political awareness and acknowledgement of the biotic rights of all species;
- to promote environmental ethics and sustainability, as well as to develop transdisciplinary projects on climate justice, biodiversity justice, and ecological justice issues.

The Center will work

- to move the focus from finding technological solutions to complex ecological challenges amplified in the Anthropocene age to framing them within ecocultural frameworks, in material-discursive contexts.
- work toward integrating environmental humanities programs in higher education and thus promote interdisciplinarity in Turkish universities..

For more information about the Center, please visit:

<https://ehc.kapadokya.edu.tr> .

The Center has organized a two-day conference on “Environmental Humanities in the Anthropocene Age” on March 7-8, 2019. Serpil Oppermann and Sinan Akıllı have also recently launched a new journal, called *Ecocene: Cappadocia Journal of Environmental Humanities* as a digital, open-access, peer-reviewed, international, and transdisciplinary journal. It is a biannual journal, publishing a Winter issue in December and a Summer issue in June. It aims to develop new insights and theories about the current material and conceptual challenges in the field. For more information about the journal, please visit:

<http://ecocene.kapadokya.edu.tr/Anasayfa.aspx> .

Courses

Ecocritical Theory: Literature, Culture and Environment

PhD Course at University of Agder, Norway

September 25-27, 2019

The University of Agder invites applications for the PhD course “Ecocritical Theory: Literature, Culture and Environment”, taking place in Kristiansand, Norway, on 25-27 September 2019. Detailed information on the course contents and the registration form can be found at

<https://www.uia.no/en/events/phd-course-lit606-ecocritical-theory-literature-culture-and-environment>.

The course will provide insights into a variety of theoretical approaches related to ecocriticism, such as critical theory, risk theory, postcolonial ecocriticism, the “material turn” and material ecocriticism, as well as cognitive narratology and empirical ecocriticism. The main focus will be on the combination of ecocritical theory and practice, and thus on the applicability of the theoretical

approaches presented and discussed to the practical analysis of literary and filmic texts and genres. Students will also have opportunity to discuss and receive feedback on their own work-in-progress. The course lectures will be held by internationally leading researchers in ecocriticism and related fields.

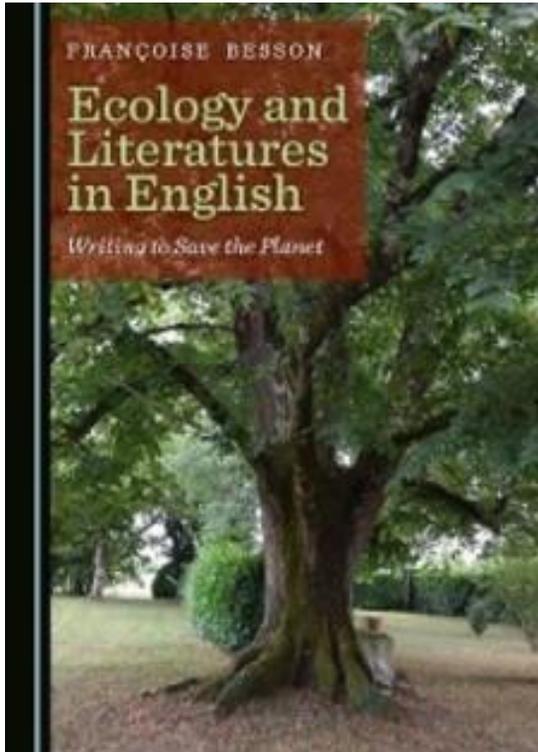
The course awards 5 ECTS. Participation is free of charge, but registrants need to be enrolled in a relevant PhD program. The deadline for registration is **August 29, 2019**.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact lise.moss@uia.no.



Publications

Ecology and Literatures in English. Writing to Save the Planet



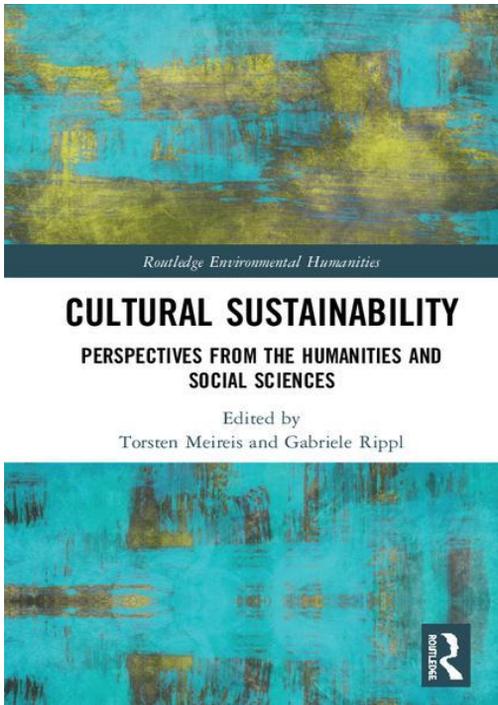
Besson, Françoise. *Ecology and Literatures in English. Writing to Save the Planet*. Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019. [ISBN 978-1527518049].

In all latitudes, writers hold out a mirror, leading the reader to awareness by telling real or imaginary stories about people of good will who try to save what can be saved, and about animals showing humans the way to follow. Such tales argue that, in spite of all destructions and tragedies, if we are just aware of, and connected to, the real world around us, to the blade of grass at our feet and the star above our heads, there is hope in a reconciliation with the Earth.

This may start with the emergence, or, rather, the return, of a nonverbal language, restoring the connection between human beings and the nonhuman world, through a form of communication beyond verbalization. Through a journey in Anglophone literature, with examples taken from Aboriginal, African, American, English, Canadian and Indian works, this book shows the role played by literature in the protection of the planet. It argues that literature reveals the fundamental idea that everything is connected and that it is only when most people are aware of this connection that the world will change.

Exactly as a tree is connected with all the animal life in and around it, texts show that nothing should be separated. From Shakespeare's theatre to ecopoetics, from travel writing to detective novels, from children's books to novels, all literary genres show that literature responds to the violence destroying lands, men and nonhuman creatures, whose voices can be heard through texts

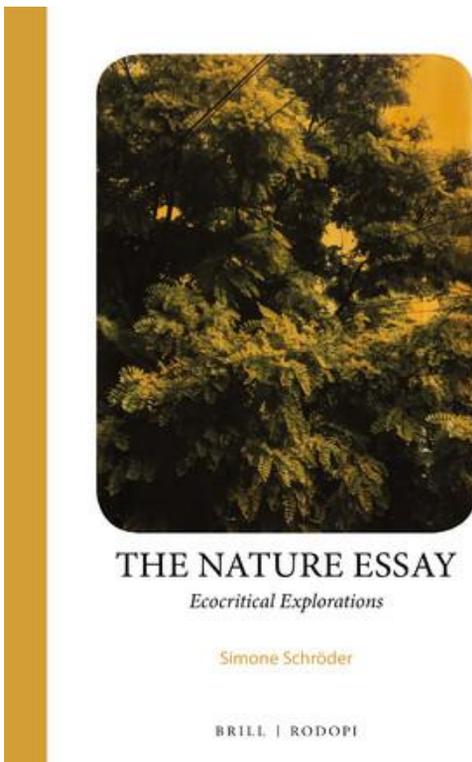
*Cultural Sustainability
Perspectives from the Humanities and Social Sciences*



Collating contributions from internationally renowned theoreticians of culture and leading researchers working in the humanities and social sciences, this volume presents an in-depth, interdisciplinary discussion of the concept of cultural sustainability and the public visibility of such research. Beginning with a discussion of the concept of cultural sustainability, it goes on to explore its interaction with philosophy, sociology, economics, arts and literature. In doing so, the book develops a much needed concept of 'culture' that can be adapted to various disciplines and applied to research on sustainability.

Meireis, Torsten; Rippl, Gabriele (Eds). *Cultural Sustainability. Perspectives from the Humanities and Social Sciences*. London: Routledge, 2019. [ISBN: 978-0815357544].

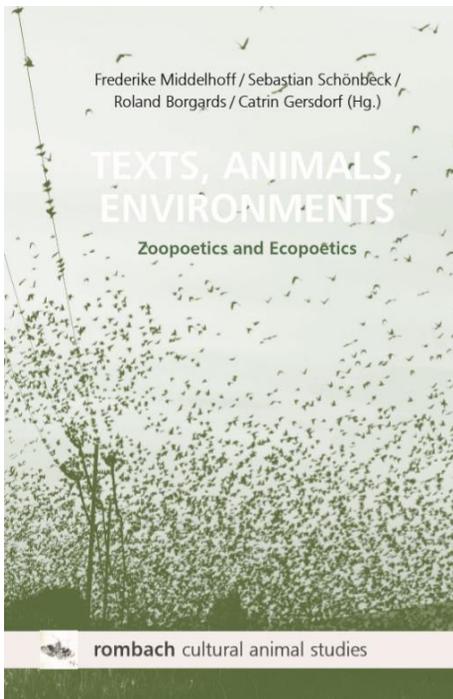
The Nature Essay: Ecocritical Explorations



Ecocritical Explorations is the first extended study of a powerful literary form born out of the traditions of Enlightenment and Romanticism. It traces the varied stylistic paradigms of the 'nature essay' down to the present day. Reading essays as platforms for ecological discourse, the book analyses canonical and marginalised texts, mainly from German, English and American literature. Simone Schröder argues that the essay's environmental impact is rooted in its negotiation of scientific, poetic, spiritual, and ethical modes of perceiving nature. Together, the chapters on these four aspects form a historical panorama of the nature essay as a genre that continues to flourish in our time of ecological crisis.

Schröder, Simone. *The Nature Essay. Ecocritical Explorations*. Boston/Leiden: Brill/Rodopi, 2019. [ISBN 978-90-04-38927-4].

Texts, Animals, Environments. Zoopoetics and Eco-poetics.

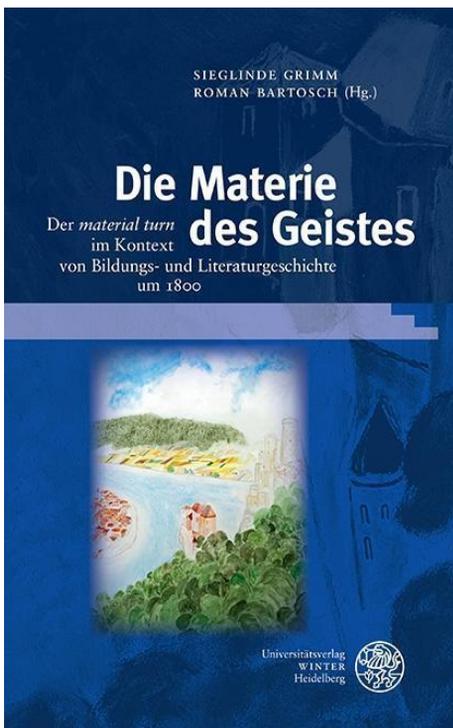


The book probes the multiple links between ecocriticism and animal studies, assessing the relations between animals, environments and poetics. While ecocriticism usually relies on a relational approach to explore phenomena related to the environment or ecology more broadly, animal studies tends to examine individual or species-specific aspects. As a consequence, ecocriticism concentrates on eco-poetical, animal studies on zoopoetical elements and modes of representation in literature (and the arts more generally). Bringing key concepts of ecocriticism and animal studies into dialogue, the volume explores new ways of thinking about and reading texts, animals, and environments – not as separate entities but as part of the same collective.

Middelhoff, F.; Schönbeck, S.; Bogards, R.; Gersdorf, C. (Eds). *Texts, Animals, Environments. Zoopoetics and Eco-poetics*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Rombach, 2019. [ISBN 978-3793099284]

Die Materie des Geistes

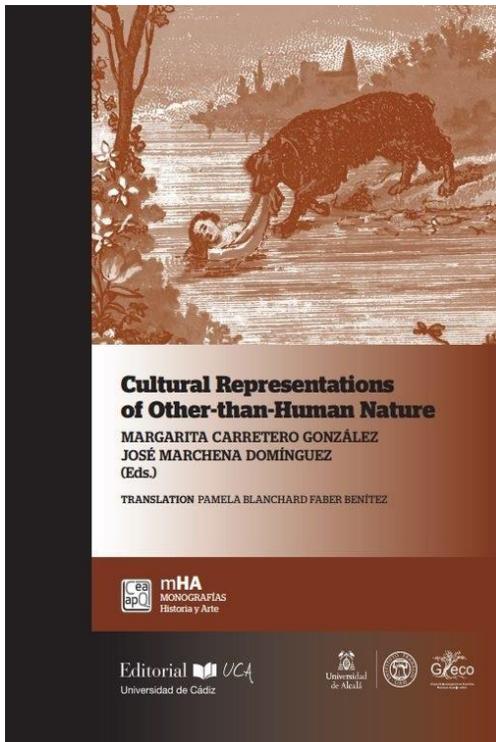
Der material turn im Kontext von Bildungs- und Literaturgeschichte um 1800



The history of education is also a history of the mind. At least this is how the story goes. The present collection of essays call this narrative into question and mobilises current cultural research on materiality and the material turn, which tries to do away with traditional dualisms that shape the relationship between society and the natural world in favour of new concepts of agency, thus effectively refiguring the meaning of mind. The volume looks at the history of education as well as educational, literary and philosophical discourses from around 1800 and thus helps historicise the material turn and theorise new approaches to reading and teaching literature from the vantage of literary materialisms and new-materialist pedagogies.

Grimm, Sieglinde; Bartosch, Roman (Eds). *Die Materie des Geistes. Der material turn im Kontext von Bildungs- und Literaturgeschichte um 1800*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2018. [ISBN 978-3825365011].

Cultural Representations of Other-than-Human Nature



One of the main goals of this collective work is to acknowledge the human and the other-than-human as part of a harmonic whole, integrated in a common environment; that is to say, to suggest the study of the human species in its own environment, looking at how it perceives itself and how it makes visible imagines and represents other-than-human nature. These essays, coming from the areas of ecocriticism, philosophy and social sciences, do not overlook a commitment to sort out the problems in our ecosystems as well as in our ethical systems, convinced that research on models and imageries from before, now and always provide us with tools to manage the modernised and denaturalised world of today. This volume is, in sum, a link in the chain of studies that aim at building a fairer planet for all the beings that share its living space.

Carretero González, M.; Marchena Domínguez, J. (Eds). *Cultural Representations of Other-than-Human Nature*. Editorial UCA, 2019. Translation by Pamela Blanchard Faber Benítez. [ISBN 978-84-9828-751-6].

Online Journal Landscapes: Heritage II



Landscapes and Language Journal is an open-access, interdisciplinary and fully refereed e-journal, publishing work within the area of environmental humanities. The chief aim of this journal is to publish scholarly and artistic material that engages the interrelationship between language and landscape in order to promote ecologically-conscious research, creativity, action and reflection. To this end, the journal publishes scholarly articles, book reviews, editorials, creative non-fiction, short stories, poems, as well as visual art works.

Landscapes: The Journal of the International Centre for Landscape and Language, volume 9, issue 1, "Landscapes: Heritage II" -<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/landscapes/> [ISSN: 1448-0778]

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**editorial deadline
for the next issue:
01 December 2019**