



easlce

Newsletter Vol. 15.1 Summer 2020

Dear EASLCE-members and friends,

when writing the latest column in December, I deemed the (political) times to be breathless. Little did I know what tumultuous first few months the new decade would have in store. I can only hope that this newsletter finds you and your loved ones in good health and spirits wherever you are on our planet. I wish for your safety from the virus and its socio-political, economic or psycho-emotional side-effects as well as your protection from any kind of turmoil, violence, or discrimination.

Balancing academic work and our social life under the ever-changing distancing conditions is a bit delicate. How can we be compassionate about everything that is going on but not too distracted from the work at hand, which after all defines *our* contribution? How can we be caring but not let ourselves be exploited from the emotional burdens of such crises? As environmental humanists and educators, I remind myself, our job is not to whip up emotions but to think, discuss and work on the knowledge base. It is our work to analyze and contextualize, to reach out and then go back to connect old and new information. It is to read and write, to teach and advise no matter how distant or asynchronous.

It is therefore with great joy that I report about just that, ongoing academic work going on in our association. The newsletter holds a number of calls that are pinpointing discussion about anti-racism and enslavement that reach back into history and find connections to the present, and that report on publications and activities going on, in and around EASLCE.

Let me direct your attention to a joyous and positive development: our webinar coordinators Nikoleta Zampaki and Julia Ditter have used the outward turmoil to enthusiastically establish an new forum particularly geared towards the exchange of ideas especially amongst our postgraduate members: Please check out *Arcadiana: A Blog About Literature, Culture and the Environment*. Our tireless webmaster Michael has set up the beautiful and practical webpage for this new forum. Please note (and respond to) the call for contributions in this newsletter.

Yet, I cannot spare you a drop of bitterness: Over the past months, Margarita, Alexa and I have keenly observed the pandemic situation and have frequently discussed the (possible)

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<https://www.easlce.eu>

consequences for our conference. Although, in many parts of Europe, the long period of lockdowns is slowly coming to an end, we are rather worried that the onslaught of the CoVid 19-Pandemic is not quite over yet.

Whatever we decide, we will not be able to proceed with any sense of safety until a medicinal relief or vaccine have been found and globally distributed. In case there were further waves of infection, the organisers as well as any conference goers would likely be confronted with institutional or national travel bans, closed borders, transportation issues or cancellations. It is therefore that we have to postpone our 9th conference by one year (to October/November 2021).

Although the temporary tweaking of the biannual conference rota is unavoidable,

we want to keep the election for the next executive board as well as the (opening) seats on the Advisory Board on schedule. Please make sure your membership is valid and do update you list of who to nominate for the Advisory Board. Shortly, in a letter to EASLCE members, we will inform about the election procedures and time period.

With best wishes for your health and well-being, I conclude my newsletter column here and, in the fall, will pass on the baton to the next EASLCE president.

All the best,
Uwe Kuchler
EASLCE President

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How to become a member of EASLCE?

Visit our web site at: <http://www.easlce.eu>

For further information contact Alexa Weik von Mossner: treasurer@easlce.eu

Call for Papers

CfP: “*Blood on the Leaves / And Blood at the Roots*”: Reconsidering Forms of Enslavement and Subjection across Disciplines

~~June 18, 2020~~: Pre-conference panel on getting published & networking event for postgraduate students and early career researchers and practitioners

~~June 19-20, 2020~~: Conference at the University of Warwick, Coventry, UK

In light of Covid-19 situation, the conference has been postponed to the 2020-2021 academic year, more details to come. Please keep sharing your work with us, the call for papers is open until further notice.

This event aims to open a multicultural space beyond institutional and geographical boundaries to foster discussions and to listen to a variety of voices, addressing the problems of enslavement and subjection. In this space, this conference seeks to explore the various figurations and conceptions of enslavement and subjection across disciplines - from philosophy to literature, from the arts to the social sciences, to mention only a few - and beyond territories.

Enslavement and subjugation are not only concerns of our past but urgent problems of our *present* and *future*. The title of the conference directly refers to Billie Holiday's 1939 performance of *Strange Fruit* so as to emphasise both the human and environmental impact of forms of enslavement and subjection which have - literally and metaphorically - left “Blood on the leaves / And blood at the Roots.”

This exploration, as we intend it, takes the form of a reconsideration because we believe that enslavement and subjection need to be continuously ‘considered again’ and ‘rethought’ to extend and problematise understandings and approaches to these key themes. Each time we return to these issues, we fix in our mind something that we ought not to forget and we learn something new that we ought not to

neglect. In this conference, we would like to reconsider and return on the multiple facets of the problems of enslavement and its evolution in modern forms of subjections, taking with us and keeping in mind the following words:

“[E]ven as we experienced, recognized, and lived subjection, we did not *simply* or *only* live in subjection and as the subjected.” (2016:4)

In this quote, describing her family's struggle as Black Americans in the 1950s US, Christina Sharpe's words and italics highlight an insidious pitfall in methodological approaches to the study of slavery and its legacies in a number of academic disciplines. These approaches are often conducive to a consideration of subjected individuals and communities “*simply* or *only*” as ‘enslaved’ people. These subjected agents become objects of study only as ‘slaves’ rather than subjects endowed with their own agency, thinking and feelings, and this tendency continues in post-slavery and race studies.

Hence, the very attempt to study and understand (post-) slavery and subjection poses the risk of falling back into another type of objectification and dehumanisation of ‘subjected subjects.’

As for example, Saidiya Hartman notes in relation to archival studies that “[t]he archive dictates what can be said about the past and the kinds of stories that can be told about the persons cataloged, embalmed, and sealed away in box files and folios. To read the archive is to enter a mortuary; it permits one final viewing and allows for a last glimpse of persons about to disappear into the slave hold.” (2007:17)

In light of these words and cognizant of this danger, the conference would like to propose a reconsideration of enslavement and subjection that aims to de-objectify and do justice to the humanity of what we have called the ‘subjected subjects,’ of the subjects of uneven (hi)stories of a brutally imposed condition, that is not just part of our past, but also continues to have disastrous impacts on our society and environment. Thus, we also aim to further consider the ecological dimension of enslavement and subjugation as tightly knit with the human one, promoting a de-reification of ‘nature’ and the ‘natural.’ Thereby our purpose is to illuminate systematic and structural issues of our current climates.

The best way to carry out this reconsideration, in our view, is to create a space to listen and to discuss, bringing together diverse contributions across disciplines and institutions, within and without academia. We are convinced that only an inter-and-trans-disciplinary enterprise, which encourages human and intellectual diversity, enables a reconsideration of the problems of enslavement and subjection, as well as of the ways in which we approach these topics. For this reason, we welcome papers both from different fields of study and that tackle the issue of enslavement and subjection at the intersection of different

disciplines. This space is not only open to scholars from all over the world, but also to activists and artists who wish to discuss their political engagement with and artistic approaches to the themes. We welcome other presentation formats such as roundtables, discussion, jam sessions.

We invite abstracts on topics including, but not limited to:

- Forms of enslavement across time from Antiquity to today
- Figuration and representation of enslaved people and/or slavery and more broadly subjugation in the arts (music, visual and performing arts, film, tv and media studies, theatre and drama, literature and graphic novels, etc.)
- (Hi)Stories of slavery and oppression as well as resistance, emancipation and liberation and memory studies
- Philosophers’ views on slavery as well as the philosophical significance of the concept of enslavement and subjugation in the history and practice of philosophy
- Philosophical accounts of servitude as a condition
- (Political) Ethics of enslavement and/or subjection
- Traces of slavery and enslavement in our time, structural racism, #BlackLivesMatter, minority activism movements and social (in)justice
- Gendered and reproductive enslavement and labour, housewifization and women’s emancipation movements and activism, #NiUnaMenos & #Metoo
- The role of colonisation and slavery in building Europe and the United States and its economy as well as debates surrounding restitution and reparation
- Decolonising the University and the syllabus, and decolonial methodologies more broadly
- The evolution of slavery, indentured labour and forced migration

- Modern slavery and human and animal trafficking
- Contemporary economies of tourism and/or neo-liberal practices of extractivism as forms of enslavement and subjugation
- Commodification of bodies and lands and their intertwined relations
- Traces of slavery on the environment, plantationocene, climate change, uneven developments and environmental justice
- Human-Animal relations, animal ethics and their exploitation and rights
- Extinction as a result of exploitation and subjugation.

We invite individual proposals for 20-minute papers, as well as proposals for panels (three 20-minute papers), for roundtables, jam sessions, or any other format to present artistic production or to address activism, etc.

Please send an abstract (200-300 words) and a brief biography to bloodontheleaves2020@gmail.com. **The Call is open until further notice.**

For more details please see <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/english/research/conferences/bloodontheleaves>.

We strongly encourage submissions going beyond Western scholarship and from scholars at any stage of their careers.

Confirmed Keynote Speakers:

Professor Kaiama L. Glover (Columbia University),

Professor Robert Bernasconi (Penn State University),

Dr. Monique Allewaert (University of Wisconsin-Madison),

Dr. Meleisa Ono-George (University of Warwick)

Supported by the Institute for Advanced Studies (IAS).

Funded by the University of Warwick Centre for Philosophy, Literature and the Arts (CRPLA), The Humanities Research Centre (HRC), the Environmental Humanities Network (EHN), the Yesu Persaud Centre for Caribbean Studies (YPCCS), the Department of English and Comparative Studies, the Department of Philosophy, the British Comparative Literature Association (BCLA) and The Royal Historical Society (RHS).



CfP: Ecocriticism and Old Norse Studies

Fourth Workshop of the Ecocritical Network for Scandinavian Studies (ENSCAN)

University of Agder, Norway

November 26-27, 2020



Ecocritical Network for Scandinavian Studies



THE ÁRNI MAGNÚSSON INSTITUTE
for Icelandic Studies

Please note: Participation is possible both on site in Kristiansand, and online. We encourage people who do not wish to travel to participate online. For participants on site without own travel funding, some bursaries for covering accommodation costs are available. If travel restrictions are still in place in autumn, the whole workshop will be organized digitally.

Ecocriticism, that is, research on the relationship between literature, culture and environment, is a rapidly growing field. With some exceptions, the focus of ecocritical research so far has been on the present and the recent past. However, the current environmental crisis also makes it relevant to consider how humans in pre-modern times perceived their environments and interacted with them. Pre-modern Nordic literature and culture include a huge variety of sources that can be explored from an environmental humanities perspective.

The fourth workshop of the Ecocritical Network for Scandinavian Studies will therefore ask how approaches from ecocriticism and related fields can be utilized in Old Norse studies. How, for

example, do the sagas of Icelanders imagine the environmental conditions of the Viking Age? What roles do environmental risks play in the bishops' sagas, contemporary sagas and the kings' sagas? What kinds of environmental imagination can we find in legendary sagas and chivalric sagas?

What insights can documentary sources such as annals, law codes, charters and other administrative records give us regarding environmental issues of the time? To what extent do runic inscriptions relate to environmental aspects? Does Eddic and skaldic poetry preserve memories of pre-historic changes in climate and environment? What results might material-ecocritical or posthumanist readings of Old Norse literature yield? And what are the potential pitfalls when applying concepts from contemporary environmental discourse (such as sustainability, resilience, or the Anthropocene) to the interpretation of pre-modern texts?

We invite papers combining theoretical approaches drawn from ecocriticism and related fields with the study of any aspect of Old Norse literature and culture.

Researchers from all career stages are encouraged to submit a proposal of up to 300 words for a 20-minute paper (that will be followed by a 10-minute discussion) to reinhard.hennig@uia.no by **August 31, 2020**.

The language of the workshop will be English. Papers presented at the workshop will be published as part of a peer-reviewed edited volume.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the workshop organizers Reinhard Hennig (reinhard.hennig@uia.no), Emily Lethbridge (emily.lethbridge@arnastofnun.is), and Michael Schulte (michael.schulte@uia.no).

Further information can also be found on the ENSCAN website at www.enscan.net.

CfP: *Ecozon@ 12.2 Autumn 2021*

Eco-Georgic: From Antiquity to the Anthropocene

Guest Editors: Sue Edney (University of Bristol), Philipp Erchinger (University of Duesseldorf) and Pippa Marland (University of Leeds)

Georgic, a genre or mode of writing about agricultural labour and rural life, is typically concerned with ways of being at work in an environment that tends to overtake or resist all human efforts to master it. As David Fairer has argued, georgic nature is always, to some degree, out of tune with our human endeavours to live in agreement with it (2011). It therefore constantly challenges us to adapt to its changing conditions. In Virgil's Georgics, for example, human activities of cultivation and construction are repeatedly threatened to be overrun or swept away by the life of the more-than-human world--the world of pests, storms and droughts--in and through which they have to proceed. Georgic work, in short, takes place in a "world in process whose rewards are hard won" (Fairer 2015: 111). Hence the genre's interest in all products of human skill and invention by means of which the earth, not necessarily a comfortable place, can be made to yield its fruits (Beck 2004).

Yet, while georgic, from today's perspective, is often quickly dismissed as being deeply implicated in outdated anthropocentric and

nationalist ideologies of cultural improvement, industrialisation, exploitation and colonisation, it also addresses a number of questions about the relations between human and nonhuman spheres that, in our contemporary historical moment, seem urgent and fresh.

Thus, this issue of *Ecozon@*, taking its cue from Fairer's concept of "Eco-Georgic" (2011), proceeds from the assumption that the georgic mode, with its interest in the messy involvement of human and nonhuman action, resonates with current debates in ecocriticism and the environmental humanities. Like much recent work in this field (Abram 1996, Alaimo 2010, Bennett 2010, Moore 2015), georgic literature often presents human culture as a way of working through, rather than being opposed to, nature. The daily work of sustaining, understanding, refining, and transforming human existence, it suggests, is inextricably caught up in, rather than separate from, the evolution of non-human matter and life. Last but not least, the georgic tradition affords a consideration of the changing functions of literature.

For georgic has always reflected the use of the pen through the work of the plough, creating analogies between the making of poetry and the cultivation of the land. As a result, it poses questions about the relationship between the arts of writing and farming and, more generally, between literary and non-literary ways of working with the material world.

We invite articles that explore the ecology of georgic literature in all its theoretical and historical implications and shades. Conceptually, we encourage contributors to think of georgic in three ways: as a specific generic tradition that has its roots in Hesiod and Virgil, reaching its heyday in seventeenth and eighteenth-century verse; as a more fluid way of writing that, as “a rhizomatic underpresence” (Goodman 2004: 1), has remained influential throughout the history of literature, informing not only poems, but also fictional prose, essays and travel reports; and, finally, as a mode that is gaining new relevance and vitality as contemporary writers increasingly find themselves “writing to” the multifaceted crisis of the Anthropocene.

Submissions could address, but are not limited to, one of the following topics:

- Re-readings of the georgic tradition in the light of ecological and ecocritical concerns
- Issues, such as human-animal relations or the weather, that are relevant to the georgic tradition

- Farming and literature
- Anthropological and ecological aspects of literary labour or work
- Cultural histories of soil
- Georgic’s relation to pastoral and other genres
- Rewilding, wilding, land sharing
- Georgic ontology and epistemology
- Queer and feminist Eco-Georgic
- Georgic and contemporary ecocritical theory
- Anthropocene Georgic

Please direct any queries to the editors Sue Edney (sue.edney@bristol.ac.uk), Philipp Erchinger (Philipp.Erchinger@uni-duesseldorf.de), and Pippa Marland (P.J.Marland@leeds.ac.uk).

Manuscripts of 6000-8000 words may be submitted via the journal platform as early as **December 2020** and no later than **January 15, 2021**. Authors must comply with the guidelines indicated on the platform. Title, abstracts, and keywords must be provided in the language of the article, English, and Spanish. MLA style should be used for citations. Permission must be obtained by the author for any images used, and the images should be included in the text. Manuscripts will be accepted in English, German, and French. Though it is not an essential requirement, we highly encourage potential authors to make prior contact with the editors by submitting a preliminary abstract (approximately 500 words).

References:

- Abram, David. *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-than-Human World*, Vintage Books, 1996.
- Alaimo, Stacy. *Bodily Natures: Science, Environment, and the Material Self*, Indiana UP, 2010.
- Beck, Rudolph. “From Industrial Georgic to Industrial Sublime: English Poetry and the Early Stages of the Industrial Revolution”, *The British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 27.1 (2004): 17-36.
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- Moore, Jason W. *Capitalism in the Web of Life*, Verso, 2015.

Call for Contributions

CfC: *Arcadiana*

Blog of the European Association for the Study of

Literature, Culture and Environment (EASCLE)

Co-editors: Julia Ditter (PhD Cand., Newcastle-Upon-Tyne/ UK) & Nikoletta Zampaki (PhD Cand., NKUA/ Greece)

Arcadiana is a blog about the environment in literature and culture. It is hosted by postgraduate members of the European Association for Literature, Culture and the Environment (EASLCE). Arcadiana was created in response to discussions in the 14th EASCLE Webinar “Ecocriticism Going Public” with Scott Slovic. We discussed the importance of contributions by humanities scholars to public conversations about environmental issues. Literary and cultural enquiries help us to navigate our world and are vital in understanding our relationship to the nonhuman world, and the crises that we are facing at the moment. This blog was created as a platform to enable postgraduate and early career researchers from the environmental humanities to communicate their research and thoughts on current events and discourses in a publicly accessible manner. We follow the aims laid out by EASLCE.

What we publish

We invite submissions on the subjects of literature, culture and the environment by postgraduate and early career researchers working in and across the disciplines of the environmental humanities who are interested in making the field accessible to a public audience. Posts can discuss topics from all periods of literary, cultural and natural history from all geographical areas but should highlight their ongoing relevance in relating them to a current moment or event.

Op-eds / commentaries 800 – 1,000 words

address current political or cultural events, discuss the role of (historical and contemp.) literature in navigating these events, may focus on a particular site, event or cultural text in relation to current events, ...

Reviews 800 – 1,000 words

of books (academic, nonfiction, fiction), films, video games, conferences, ...

How to submit

Please send an email with the subject line “Pitch” to info@arcadiana.easlce.eu, including:

- a 200-word proposal summarising your post, including its topicality, and the format of your submission
- a short bio including your research areas
- a statement of your schedule (i.e. when you can submit the full article)

We aim to respond within two weeks. If you don't hear from us feel free to send a follow-up email.

At the moment, we can only accept submissions in English, German and Greek but we hope to be able to provide editing for other European languages in the future. All submissions will undergo an editing process which includes comments, suggestions and copy-editing. We hope that you will consider sharing your thoughts with us and enjoy your experience of the blog.

Reports

International Postgraduate Workshop “Ecocriticism and Narrative Form”

Organized by Oikos, GCSC Giessen, in association with EASLCE

by Anna Tabouratzidis, PhD Candidate, Justus-Liebig-University Giessen, Germany



A collaborative workshop organized by the research group Oikos brought together twelve international PhD students and postdocs at the International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture, Giessen, in December 2019; the event provided a fruitful space for in-depth discussion of the emerging field of “econarratology”. The workshop was framed by a masterclass on Monday 9th, and a keynote lecture on Tuesday 10th December, both given by Professor Erin James (University of Idaho).

Prof. James opened the masterclass with an icebreaker: she asked all participants in speed-dating style to shortly present their current project and ask one pressing question they had in relation to narratology; this already opened up important discussions about the method’s

goals and limits. She then gave a short introduction to her seminal first book, *The Storyworld Accord* (2015), which was one of the first publications to address the potential cross-fertilization between ecocriticism and narratology. She also presented more recent work, an edited volume in collaboration with Eric Morel entitled *Environment and Narrative: New Essays in Econarratology* (Spring 2020) as well as her second book *Narrative in the Anthropocene* (under contract with Ohio State UP).

These publications ask: What can narrative teach us about our current geological epoch, the Anthropocene, and what can this epoch teach us, in turn, about the stories we tell about humans and the non-human world?

One of Erin James' strategies and goals is to find environmentally relevant knowledge where it is not immediately apparent, for example in non-realist fiction and postcolonial literature. Additionally, in her current project she critically investigates the reliability of narratological concepts such as narrative space regarding dominant cultural perceptions of a 'stability of nature'.

The masterclass and keynote framed a two-day program of intensive feedback sessions, in which the early-career researchers from Germany, Belgium, Norway, and Italy presented their dissertation projects, chapter excerpts, or article drafts and received feedback from Prof. James, Dr. Michael Basseler (GCSC) as well as their peers. The lively debates sparked numerous interesting questions, such as how to use academic knowledge and research to engage in activism and interdisciplinary work. Another theme that resurfaced repeatedly was 'the weird' as an aesthetic mode or as a particularly elusive anthological access point. The intimate and productive atmosphere allowed the participants to thoroughly discuss further topics such as:

- distinction(s) between the post-/trans-/more-than-/beyond-the-/non-/human
- the clash between the normal and the weird, weirding nature writing
- the ability of narratives to get us close to 'what it might be like' – narrative as a cognitive mode
- how climate change influences the way we read and tell stories -environmental citizenship in children's books

All participants came to agree that the 'storyworld' as a concept is very durable and productive, and that narratology is a helpful tool and method for scholars from different fields to address particularities of narrative form and highlight possible ethical implications in human/non-human environments. Thinking new formalism, ecocriticism, and econarratology together was identified as a potentially fruitful path for future research. The Oikos research group thanks EASLCE and the GCSC for their generous funding, Prof. Erin James and Dr. Michael Basseler for their valuable feedback and all participants for passionate discussion and the will to carefully read and appreciate each other's research.

Summary of the 14th EASLCE Webinar: Ecocritics Going Public

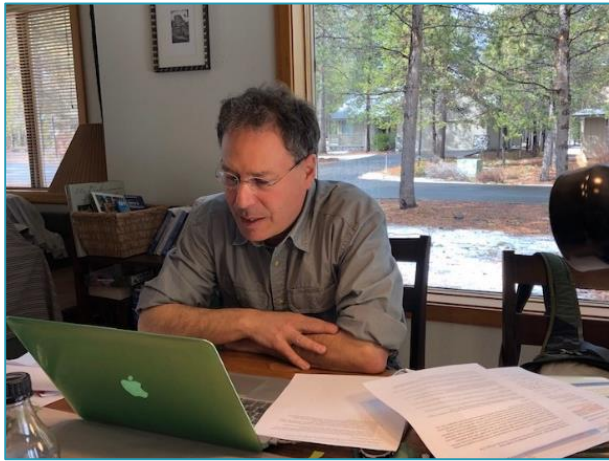
Host: Dr Scott Slovic, University of Idaho, United States

by Julia Ditter (Newcastle-Upon-Tyne/ UK) & Nikoletta Zampaki (NKUA/ Greece)

On April 6, 2020 seven enthusiastic ecocritics from various countries in Europe joined Dr Scott Slovic from the University of Idaho to discuss the values, opportunities and challenges of capitalising on their research to become public intellectuals.

Scott Slovic opened the webinar with an introduction into the world of the public intellectual, a figure that is explored in depth in the writings we prepared for the webinar. Rather than letting ourselves be

pushed to the side while scholars in the fields of economics, public policy, law and the natural sciences dominate public debate and thereby determine the decisions that are made, it is important that as humanities and arts scholars we recognise the value of our own research and find out how we can contribute our perspectives to the public conversation to benefit our fellow citizens. In our work, Slovic pointed out, we often engage with humanitarian and ecological issues in much depth and the thoughts and



Dr Scott Slovic, University of Idaho, United States

ideas we develop in such research are immensely relevant to broader public conversations. Even though we might feel that the fundamental ideas about the meaning of human nature and other phenomena that pertain to civilisation as a whole may not appear pertinent to the daily urgent conversations in the news, our positioning within environmental studies urges us to acknowledge that we can contribute something by offering strategies and forms of communication that are crucially needed to deal with the concerns of today's world.

The current and pertinent example that Slovic provided us with to think through our role as environmental humanities scholars within wider public debates is the global pandemic of Covid-19. To think about our role as scholars and/or public intellectuals at the current moment, in the middle of an enormous global crisis that clearly has ecological dimensions to it as well, he states, is both ironic and fascinating and urges us to think about possible pathways. Can we contribute any ideas arising from our research to the current debate around Covid-19? What do we have to say about the crisis – either directly or with relation to issues that are connected with it – from our perspective as experts in the environmental

humanities? How and where can we communicate our ideas? What concerns may be pushed to the background now that Covid-19 dominates the headlines but that are still relevant and happening at the same time?

Referring to the webinar readings, Scott Slovic emphasised that not everyone may be comfortable with writing for the public. This may be due to a feeling that we are not properly trained, that we do not know where to start, or even that we may philosophically disagree with the idea that every scholar should also be a public intellectual. While the choice to write for the public is a personal one, those who decide to go down this path will find valuable advice in the readings of the webinar (listed again below). Two aspects were especially highlighted as central to the endeavour by Slovic: the primacy of relevance which requires us to find a hook based on current concerns rather than focusing on a broader and more timeless context, and the difference in length of op-eds that are very short compared to academic articles.

After Slovic engaged with the reading and elaborated on the examples provided in those articles, the other webinar participants joined the discussion. The topics raised included the following:

- How can we work out the relevance of our research for current public debate, especially if our research is situated within in smaller subdisciplines of ecocriticism such as ecofeminism, geocriticism, or geopoetics?
- How to avoid fatalism when talking to the general public about ecological devastation?

- How we can navigate our responsibility as public intellectuals, especially when many of the ramifications and outcomes of our writing may be unforeseen.
- As primarily literary scholars, how do we do justice to our expertise in literary analysis but at the same time maintain the relevance for the broader public?
- A discussion of examples that successfully combine storytelling, natural sciences and politics.
- The relevance of sharing our terminology and concepts from literature, poetry, and even theory to the benefit of our fellow citizens.
- How to start building our voice as public intellectuals and in which direction ecocriticism will develop.
- How we can gain more support within academia at PhD level for public work when publication records of employment committees are focused on scholarly journals, and writing for the public may

be seen as detracting attention away from our more important scholarly writing.

The discussion at the end of the webinar encompassed broadly the question of how to get started and find scholarly platforms that allow PhD students to practice writing op-eds and gain experience before approaching editors. Through the readings and the focus on both ethical as well as practical aspects of becoming a public intellectual, the webinar covered a lot of ground and generated ideas for our individual, and possibly collective, efforts to mobilise our research in order to engage with public debate.

For further information, please visit <https://www.easlce.eu/summary-of-the-14th-easlce-webinar-ecocritics-going-public/>.

Summary of the 15th EASLCE Webinar: Brexit Ecocriticism

Host: Dr Greg Garrard, University of British Columbia at Okanagan, Canada

by Julia Ditter (Newcastle-Upon-Tyne/ UK) & Nikoletta Zampaki (Athens/ Greece)

On May 2, we joined Greg Garrard for a discussion on climate scepticism and his concept of Brexit Ecocriticism. As an introduction, Garrard summarised the key arguments his co-authored collection *Climate Change and Scepticism* for us.

The new approach to ecocriticism Garrard suggests is concerned with the cognitive dissonances between accepted views about environmental attitudes. If we come to see cultural and political polarisation as the central problem in Western society, Garrard argues, the most important task is to challenge our stereotyping of those we disagree with. Such an intentional shift in perspective, he suggests, will open up a

forum for respectful debate that has been closed down by polarising echo chambers, filter bubbles, and partial news outlets.

As difficult as this may be when we find that we encounter perspectives that we perceive as irreconcilable with our own worldviews, it is necessary to try and see the world from the perspective of oppositional political cultures and identities to counter-act those currents of polarisation that threaten to tear our societies apart by hindering respectful debate across the divides. After engaging the reading, Garrard invited us to think about the implications of these ideas on our own cultures and those that we study in our projects. The topics discussed included:

- The connection between resurgent nationalisms and landscape imaginaries, including the specific situation in Germany and Greece.
- The importance of interdisciplinary research for ecocritics.
- The different values that cultures attribute to the environment and how these can be understood through national cultural and natural histories.
- Pedagogical strategies and rhetoric positions for engaging with climate sceptics empathetically, and how to make sure that our debates can engender political action.
- The heterogeneity of ecocritical research.
- Ethnocentric readings of the environment, and the predominance of Anglo- and Eurocentric discourses.
- The role of the literary scholar and public engagement.

For further information, please visit <https://www.easlce.eu/summary-of-the-15th-easlce-webinar-brexitecocriticism/>.

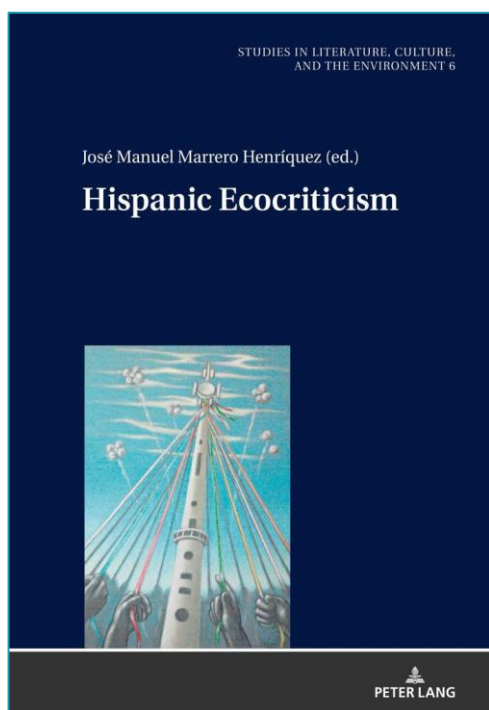
Further Reading:

- Garrard, Greg. "Introduction", in: *Climate Change and Scepticism: A Transnational Ecocritical Analysis*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2019, <https://www.bloomsburycollections.com/book/climate-change-scepticism-a-transnational-ecocritical-analysis>.
- Garrard, Greg. "Brexit Ecocriticism", in: *Green Letters*, forthcoming.



Publications

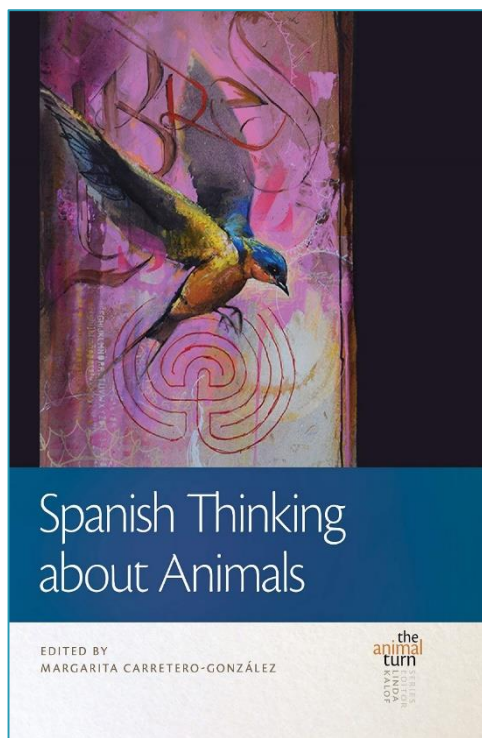
Hispanic Ecocriticism



Hispanic Ecocriticism finds a rich soil in the main topics of environmental concern in the literature of Latin America and Spain, not only as a source for renewing critical analysis and hermeneutics, but also for the benefit of global environmental awareness. In a renewed exchange of transatlantic relationships, Hispanic Ecocriticism intermingles Latin American ecocritical issues of interest — the oil industry; contamination of forests and rivers; urban ecologies; African, Andean, and Amazonian biocultural ecosystems — with those of interest in Spain — animal rights and the ecological footprints of human activity in contemporary narratives of eco-science fiction, in dystopias, and in literature inspired by natural or rural landscapes that conceal ways of life and cultures in peril of extinction.

Marrero Henríquez, José Manuel. *Hispanic Ecocriticism*. Berlin: Peter Lang GmbH, 2019. [ISBN 363178550X].

Spanish Thinking about Animals - The Animal Turn



Traditional cultural practices involving animals are being seriously questioned, heavily regulated, and, in some cases, even abolished in Spain. This essential and timely text brings together prominent scholars working in the ever-expanding field of animal studies in Spain, drawing from a variety of disciplines within the humanities and social sciences to provide an interdisciplinary look at the animal question. This collection moves away from the ideology of human exceptionalism that is still predominant but progressively losing force in the field of animal ethics in Spain. It instead includes contributions by scholars who have chosen to look at animals, to a lesser or greater degree, through an antispeciesist lens, displaying the committed attention to and respect for animal life that characterizes critical animal studies.

Carretero-González, Margarita. *Spanish Thinking about Animals. The Animal Turn*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2020. [ISBN 9781611863628].

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