



Dear EASLCE-members and friends,

“The best laid schemes o’ Mice an’ Men / Gang aft agley”, Robert Burns sentenced more than two centuries ago in his poem “To a Mouse”. Indeed they do! Without any warning, irrespective of our species, an imprudent plough or a regal submicroscopic pathogen can turn our world upside down, smashing our best laid plans in its wake. Who would have thought back in September 2018, when we parted ways in Würzburg with a “see you in Granada” in our lips, that November 2020 would bring us together not in Granada, but conforming one of those animated mosaics that have now become so familiar to all of us? In 2020, an organism that is not even alive forced the world to stop; SARS-CoV-2 brought with it not only a tremendous threat to our health and world economy, but also an invitation to reconsider our way of life. Suddenly, many of the things we believed should have been done the day before yesterday could actually wait for another month; what was really important took over what we had labelled as urgent. In order to save lives, the best thing to do was hit the brakes and stay home.

In the early days of the lockdown, I boldly and optimistically claimed that coronavirus could save the world. I hope you won’t take me wrong; I was not then and am not now underestimating the loss of life, the prolonged suffering, the ongoing fear, and the general heartache caused by the

pandemic, but part of me hoped that we could take the time to sit down and ponder what kind of world we were living in, if a sudden but necessary pause could be as deadly for many people as the virus itself. Was this fragile network the best we could do?

On the bright side, while humans were forced to stay indoors, the world outside breathed. The spring of 2020 was silent in a different way: less noisy, more musical. Birdsongs replaced the roar of car engines, and animal species never before seen in an urban environment ventured into the empty city streets. In other circumstances, I could have enjoyed the change: I could work from home, so neither my life nor my living was threatened, but knowing that this was the privilege of a few not the right of the many, I felt guilty, instead. However, even as the death toll escalated, I refused to lose sight of other figures that rarely hit the headlines. More than seven million people had led me to claim that coronavirus could save the world: those seven million who die every year from diseases caused by exposure to fine particles in polluted air, ranging from stroke, heart disease, lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases and respiratory infections

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which include, yes, pneumonia. Could humans take the cue from that pause to learn that another air was possible and millions of deaths preventable? Would something, anything be done about this?

Sadly not. Humans excel at many things, and putting paper over the cracks is one of them. On this occasion, it took the shape of - understandably - a race to find a cure for the new disease that would take us back to the old normal as soon as possible, but - not so understandably - without pausing to assess if and how that old normal might have contributed to the crisis; in fact, pushing into the background what had been pressing issues at the end of 2019. A time will come when this new virus won't pose the current threat to our lives, but the old threats have not gone away simply because the new one has taken front page. Last November was the warmest ever recorded, and, unless temperatures dramatically drop in December, 2020 may very well debunk 2016 as the hottest year on record. On the positive side, the US will rejoin the Paris Agreement; on the negative, as lockdowns lift and the pandemic wears off, suspension and altered enforcement of environmental laws are being announced for the sake of growth. The loss of biodiversity most certainly will bring about new pandemics, and yet environmental organizations fear that the green tape will be cut at a greater speed than ever before.

In this, my first column as President of EASLCE, I know I am preaching to the choir, as ecocritics are well aware of the ethical

roots of our ecological crisis. Yet, I'd like to stress how much more important the role of the humanities has become in order to, as Donald Worster put it almost thirty years ago, "help with the understanding" of the role played by our ethical systems in the global crisis. And I am happy to say that EASLCE is doing a great job. Among the most recent activities, *Arcadiana* became a reality in the spring, thanks to the joint efforts of Judith Ditter, Nikoleta Zampaki and Michael Marwick's wizardry; webinars have been hosted by Scott Slovic, Greg Garrard and Alexa Weik von Mossner (twice, in the latter case, due to popular demand) - and *Ecozon@* - freshly revamped by Michael - already has titles lined up till Spring 2022 for its special focus sections. Our postponed conference will hopefully take place in Granada next September, followed by Perpignan in 2022. Indeed, EASLCE is in excellent health!

Let me finish this first address by expressing what an immense pleasure working with Uwe and Alexa has been, and how grateful I am to have shared with them the tasks of the EB and warm conversations. My gratitude also goes to Reinhard and Sybille for having accepted the vice-presidency and the treasury, respectively. I am looking forward to working with you.

I wish you all the best for the festive season and for the year that is about to begin. May 2021 be a joyous one!

Margarita Carretero-González
EASLCE President



Call for Papers

Call for Special Issue of *Interval(le)s* on

"The Pastoral: New Trajectories in the Anthropocene"

Guest editors: Stefano Rozzoni (University of Bergamo / Justus Liebig Universität Gießen)

& David Lombard (Université de Liège / University of Leuven)

Deadline for abstract submission: January 15, 2021

"Pastoralism is a species of cultural equipment that western thought has for more than two millennia been unable to do without" (Lawrence Buell, 1995).

Since its very beginning, Ecocriticism – and its so-called four "waves" – has highlighted the inextricable entanglement of the pastoral with Western perceptions, representations and conceptualizations of the environment (Buell 1995; 2005; Slovic 2010). The recent emergence and multiplication of analytical perspectives, theories, and neologisms related to this subject, including the 'post-pastoral' (Gifford, 1999), the 'postmodern pastoral' (Corey and Waldrep 2012), and the 'necropastoral' (McSweeney, 2015) has evidenced its absolute centrality in current debates on culture and the arts while interrogating problematic notions such as "wilderness" and "frontier" as well as the disorienting affective dimensions of the "abject" and the "sublime". In addition, the relative cohesion of a plethora of different perspectives on the pastoral, when they attempt to move beyond traditional issues of nostalgia and escapism, corroborates the establishment of a new step within its long-standing evolution which should not be overlooked.

While 'pastoral' continues to remain a "contested term" considering the "bewildering variety of works" to which it has been attributed (Loughrey 8), Donna Haraway's urge to "stay with the trouble" (2016) invites scholars to engage with the

intricacy of this notion through a transdisciplinary method inspired by new materialist trends and the "New New Synthesis" in arts which seeks to bring together human and nonhuman realities, practices and ecologies (63). And while Leo Marx first discussed 'complex pastoral' in the presence of a textual reference undermining the reader's appreciation of the idyll (5-11) today, new aspects of pastoral complexity are called into account when reflecting on the epistemological stance advocated by the burgeoning field of the Environmental Humanities (Oppermann and Iovino, 2017). Such critical approaches can help us meet the imaginative challenges of representing and interpreting current crises, from climate change to global pandemics, with which the pastoral coexists and mutates, together with its contradictions and paradoxes.

In this regard, we are launching a new issue of *Interval(le)s*, the online journal of CIPA, dedicated to the exploration of emerging pastoral trajectories in contemporary culture, while creating a space of scholarly debate for new ways of interpreting, performing, and developing this concept, particularly in regard to how it negotiates the idea of the human-nonhuman relationship. Through this call, we invite studies that investigate new displays of

the pastoral in fields of study, including literature, architecture, the visual arts, media, and advertisement. In addition, interest is also expressed in regard to research which, by adopting a more retrospective glance inspired by a renovated ecocritical hermeneutics, wishes to reevaluate the archive(s) of Western culture in regard to the many manifestations of the pastoral from Hesiod to our times.

Authors are invited to submit a 200-word bio and a 300-word abstract to

stefano.rozzoni@unibg.it and david.lombard@uliege.be by **January 15, 2021**.

The authors will be notified of abstract acceptance by February 1. Manuscripts (6000-7000 words including in-text MLA references and bibliography) are expected by April 30 (and revised manuscripts by June 18) for publication in September 2021.

Should you have any questions, please contact the aforementioned guest editors.

CfP: *Collapse and Extinction: Art, Literature and Discourse*

Conference

April 29, 2021

Stockholm University (on location and online)

Deadline for proposals submission: January 15, 2021

In the past few years, discourses on collapse have been more and more visible in the public space, as if it was too late to address the major challenges posed by climate change. The idea of systemic collapse is not new, as many civilizations had what was called *Kulturpessimismus* in Germany at the turn of the 19th.

What is striking about the current situation is the multiplication of theological, scientific and philosophical discourses dealing with the notion of collapse, as if the globalization process with its main ideas (rapidity of exchanges, acquisition of new markets, cult of growth) reached its final phase. The cultural images of collapse are further endorsed by the extinction of biological species and disappearance of familiar biological communities.

This conference aims to question the notion

of collapse and analyse how it contributes to produce new aesthetical and semiotic forms as well as new kinds of reading. What kind of literary genres appear in parallel with a discourse on collapsology (science-fiction, dystopia, essays, post apocalyptic fiction)? Do these genres include a direct form of ideological interpretation of the world? How do they relate to the factual processes of climate change and sixth mass extinction? What type of reading do these works trigger?

Comparison is the key to understand the emergence of these new genres. The conference welcomes analysis of works that have a relation to the notion of collapse so that a comparative corpora can be built. One objective is to analyze literary works on collapse in Romance literature but other case-studies or comparisons are welcomed.

Submission:

To submit a proposal, interested scholars should email an abstract (up to 500 words) and a bio-note (up to 50 words) for a 20 minute presentation in English to the organisers. The deadline for submitting the abstract is **January 15, 2021**.

Organisers:

Sara Bédard-Goulet, University of Tartu: sara.bedard-goulet@ut.ee; Timo Maran, University of Tartu: timo.maran@ut.ee; The research group Romkult (Cultural Studies in Romance languages), Stockholm University: crisophe.premat@su.se.



Announcement

Critical Environmental Education as a Cultural Studies Project

Juniorprof. Dr. Judith Rauscher (University of Cologne), Prof. Dr. Christine Gerhardt (University of Bamberg), and Prof. Elizabeth A. Wheeler (University of Oregon) have received initial funding from the Bayerische Forschungsallianz (BayFor) for their project “Critical Environmental Education as a Cultural Studies Project” (2020-2021). This project aims to develop innovative, site-specific approaches to environmental education by establishing an exchange between scholars from the American Studies departments of the University of Cologne, the University of Bamberg, and the University of Oregon. It investigates how popular culture can be used to teach critical environmental and civic literacy and examines cultural studies methodologies as



Bayerische
Forschungsallianz

a necessary critical framework for an intersectional and inclusive environmental education that aims to foster not only ecological awareness but also civic environmentalism.

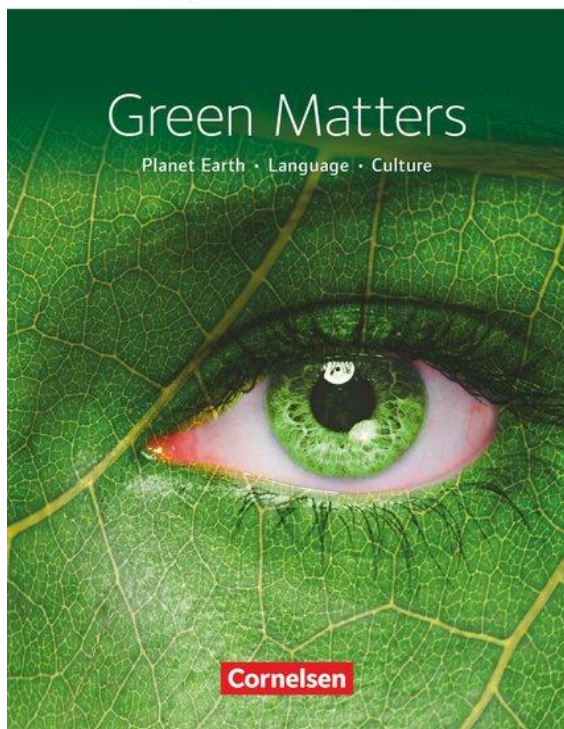
The project hopes to contribute to building more sustainable societies both by promoting culturally sensitive environmental knowledge and by implementing opportunities for service learning that encourage democratic participation as well as environmentally conscious civic engagement.

Publications

Green Matters:

Planet Earth – Language – Culture

Schwerpunktthema **Abitur Englisch**



Küchler, Uwe & Preiss, Judith. *Green Matters: Planet Earth – Language – Culture. Schwerpunktthema Abitur Englisch, Sekundarstufe II*. Berlin: Cornelsen Verlag, 2020. [ISBN: 978-3-06-036209-7].

In an age of environmental crisis, we usually expect scientists and politicians to find ways of saving the planet. But what about language and other means of communication? Texts, images and stories – what role can they play in shaping, changing or even saving our world? This reader contains materials and resources, fictional and factual, on a variety of ‘green’ topics.

Special features:

- Addresses some of the current questions on the environment
- Opens up new perspectives on environmental issues
- Offers a range of motivating tasks that will challenge the way we tend to think about the Earth, its natural habitats or the language used to describe crises
- Practises communicative and learning skills
- Expands students’ vocabulary on ‘green’ topics

The reader was designed for German secondary schools and, thus, covers relevant requirements of German curricula, e.g. climate change, saving the planet, nature and the environment, environmental awareness, global responsibility concerning the environment. What is better suited for foreign language teaching than to deal with the question of what contribution language and communication can make to solving current environmental problems? In the booklet, current as well as classic fictional and non-fictional texts and materials open up very different, touching as well as surprising perspectives on environmental issues. The students learn to express themselves appropriately in terms of content and language on questions of climate change and to reflect and evaluate their own position. The tasks of the booklet promote all functional-communicative skills and prepare specifically for the German Abitur examination.

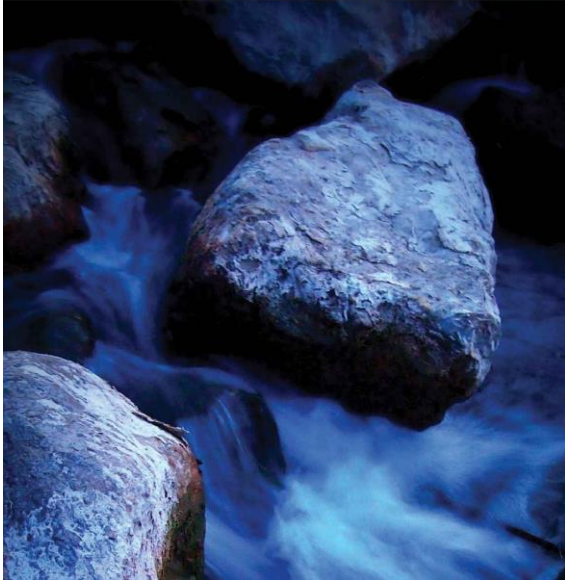
Uwe Küchler is Professor of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) at the University of Tübingen. Judith Preiß is research associate at Tübingen School of Education (TüSE).

***Dwellings of Enchantment:
Writing and Reenchanting the Earth***

DWELLINGS OF ENCHANTMENT

WRITING AND REENCHANTING THE EARTH

Edited by **BÉNÉDICTE MEILLON**



Meillon, Bénédicte (Ed). *Dwellings of Enchantment: Writing and Reenchanting the Earth*. London: Lexington Books, 2020. [ISBN: 978-1-79363-159-6].

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Joni Adamson, Isabel Maria Fernandes Alves, Françoise Besson, Claire Cazajous- Augé, Antonio Cuadrado-Fernandez, Carmen Flys Junquera, Yves-Charles Grandjeat, Wendy Harding, Linda Hogan, Charles Holdefer, Alan Johnson, Tom Lynch, Joshua Mabie, Jessica Maufort, Bénédicte Meillon, Noémie Moutel, Rachel Nisbet, Randall Roorda, Anne Simon, Frédérique Spill.

Bénédicte Meillon is associate professor of English studies at the University of Perpignan.

Dwellings of Enchantment: Writing and Reenchanting the Earth offers ecocritical and eco-poetic readings that focus on multispecies dwellings of enchantment and reenchant our rapport with the more-than-human world. It sheds light on the marvelous entanglements between humans and other life forms coexisting with us—entanglements that, when fully perceived, call onto humans to shift perspectives on both the causes and solutions to current ecological crises. Working against the disenchantment of humans' relationships with and perceptions of the world entailed by a modern ontology, this book illustrates the power of eco-poetics to attune humans to the vibrant matter both within and outside of us. Braiding indigenous with non-indigenous worldviews, this book tackles eco-poetics emerging from varying locations in the world. It underscores the postmodernist, re-mythologizing processes going on in many eco-poetic texts, via magical realist modes and mythopoeia.

Turkish Ecocriticism:

From Neolithic to Contemporary Timescapes

TURKISH ECOCRITICISM

FROM NEOLITHIC TO CONTEMPORARY TIMESCAPES

Edited by SERPIL OPPERMANN AND SINAN AKILLI



Oppermann, Serpil & Akilli, Sinan (Eds.). *Turkish Ecocriticism. From Neolithic to Contemporary Timescapes*. London: Lexington Books, 2020. [ISBN: 978-1-7936-3703-1].

Turkish Ecocriticism: From Neolithic to Contemporary Timescapes explores the values, perceptions, and transformations of the environment, ecology, and nature in Turkish culture, literature, and the arts. Through these themes, it examines historical and contemporary environmentally engaged literary and cultural traditions in Turkey. The volume reimagines Turkey in its geosocial and ecocultural narratives of multiple connections and complexities, in its multifaceted webs of histories, and in its rich multispecies stories.

Contributors

Sinan Akilli, Fatma Aykanat, Adem Balci, Burcu Baykan, Jeanne Dubino, Yusuf Eradam, Meliz Ergin, Simon C. Estok, Gülşah Göçmen, Ezgi Hamzaçebi, Emre Koyuncu, Pelin Kümbet, Donna Landry, Özlem Öğüt Yazıcıoğlu, Serpil Oppermann, Aleksandar Shopov, Scott Slovic, Louise Westling, Roger Williams, Kerim Can Yazgünoğlu, Zümre Gizem Yılmaz Karahan.

Serpil Oppermann is professor of environmental humanities and the director of the Environmental Humanities Center at Cappadocia University. Sinan Akilli is assistant professor in the Department of English Language and Literature and the director.

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**editorial deadline
for the next issue:
June 01, 2021**