



Dear EASLCE members and friends,

As I write my last column as President of EASLCE, I can't help but experience a tinge of sadness at the fact that I will be meeting you in person in such capacity only once: at our next conference in Granada. The occasion on which I should have taken the baton from my predecessor, Uwe K uchler, almost two years ago will see me passing it on to our current vice-president, Reinhard Hennig. Indeed, as I quoted from Robert Burns in my first President's Column in the winter of 2020, "The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men / Gang aft agley". It seems that we are now back to normal, a "new normal" that, unfortunately, looks as little promising as the old one. The Covid pandemic may be under control, but the Russian invasion of Ukraine has been added to the catalogue of armed conflicts around the world, and, as a result of climate change, the temperatures some parts of Spain and France experienced in mid-June were more than 10 degrees Celsius (50 degrees Fahrenheit) above average for this time of the year, with Italy facing its worst drought in seven decades. Not a happy prospect.

In the emails we have been exchanging on account of the EASLCE conference in September, some of you have shared with me a feeling of uneasiness at getting excited about a long-expected conference when the world seems to be falling apart.

That feeling also strikes me from time to time, but I admit that it does so less and less often, as my conviction increases that what we do is tremendously important, in fact vital, for the well-being of the planet and all its lifeforms. There is no doubt in my mind that ecocritics have taken up the challenge Elizabeth Simmons posed in 2010, acting as a "progressive cultural force that not only provides critique but also offers workable ideas and inspiration in the real-world struggle to achieve social justice and restoration of the earth" (*Brave New Worlds. How Literature Will Save the Planet* xiv). Simmons argues that it is out of fashion in the academy to say that words have the power to transform people. Well, that has never been the case among ecocritics. Ours is an academic activism, and while I am not bold enough to affirm, as Simmons does, that literature will save the planet, I know that, without it, it most certainly won't, and young voices are fortunately aware of it.

- Research projects 3
- Publications 4
- Conference Reports 5

Let me share with you the news that filled me with hope barely a week ago, when the name of 18-year old Gabriel Plaza, the student who obtained the highest grade in the university entrance exams in Madrid, went viral, not because of the grade itself, but because of the degree he is going to study. His 13.964 out of 14 enable Gabriel to choose among the most coveted degrees, yet he will study Classical Philology, for which he required only half of the grade he obtained. To the opinionated who claims that Gabriel will be wasting his talent in a “useless degree” (yes, some people are that bold) he replies that he is “a humanities student to the core”, that he is passionate about words, and that he wanted to get top grades not only out of personal satisfaction, but also because of the metaphorical megaphone they provide to communicate his passion for the humanities, and proclaim how necessary they are in a world in crisis. Such clarity of mind in someone so young in the midst of so much noise is certainly encouraging, and on this note I want to end my column.

But before I sign off, let me welcome Linda Hess as the new webinar co-coordinator. Linda took over from Julia Ditter in October, and Julia is still acting up as *Arcadiana* Communications Officer. Thank you both, and Lena Pfeifer, for your enthusiastic generosity with your time and energy. It has been a tremendous pleasure to work with Reinhard and Sibylle in the Executive Board, exchange ideas with members of the Advisory Board, and get to know more people (I hope even more in the future) through our Zoom social hours, which I will most certainly keep attending as frequently as possible. I feel honoured to have presided over our association for almost two years, and incredibly fortunate to be part of the EASLCE academic family.

Hoping, as ever, that you are all healthy in body, mind and spirit, I wish you all a great summer, a much deserved holiday and I look forward to welcoming you in Granada in September.

*Margarita Carretero-González*  
EASLCE President



# Research Projects

## Cinema and Environment: Affective Ecologies in the Anthropocene

Funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation

This project reflects on how contemporary cinema can allow us to resituate ourselves within what is known today as the Anthropocene. With a focus on what Alexa Weik von Mossner terms “affective ecologies”, we set out to explore cinema’s capacity to question the binary oppositions that underpin anthropocentric discourse, such as human/non-human, life/matter or nature/culture, thereby problematizing the term Anthropocene itself.

Duration: 12/06/2020 to 31/12/2023

Research Team:

- Verena Conley (Harvard University)
- Libe García Zarranz (Norwegian University of Science and Technology)
- Katarzyna Paszkiewicz (University of the Balearic Islands)
- Andrea Ruthven (University of the Balearic Islands)
- Alexa Weik von Mossner (University of Klagenfurt)

For more information about the project, please visit:

<https://www.ub.edu/adhuc/en/research-projects/cinema-and-environment-affective-ecologies-anthropocene>

## Narrating the Mesh (NARMESH)

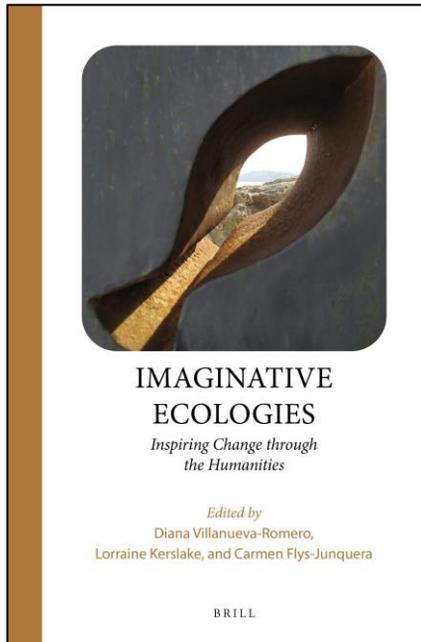
Funded by the European Research Council

The [NARMESH](#) project, based at Ghent University in Belgium, is ending in July 2022. It focuses on the intersection of ecocriticism and narrative theory, aiming to develop and consolidate the field of econarratology in Europe. Among the book-length publications deriving from the project are:

- Caracciolo, Marco. 2021. *Narrating the Mesh: Form and Story in the Anthropocene*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.
- Caracciolo, Marco. 2022. *Contemporary Fiction and Climate Uncertainty: Narrating Unstable Futures*. London: Bloomsbury. Available in Open Access [here](#).
- Caracciolo, Marco. 2022. *Slow Narrative and Nonhuman Materialities*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Caracciolo, Marco, Marlene Marcussen, and David Rodriguez, eds. 2022. *Narrating Nonhuman Spaces: Form, Story, and Experience Beyond Anthropocentrism*. New York: Routledge.
- Lambert, Shannon. 2021. *Bodies of Knowledge: Experimenting with Science and Affect in Contemporary Literature*. PhD dissertation, Ghent, Belgium: Ghent University. Full text available [here](#).
- Ulstein, Gry. 2021. *Weird Fiction in a Warming World: A Reading Strategy for the Anthropocene*. PhD dissertation, Ghent, Belgium: Ghent University. Full text available [here](#).

## Publications

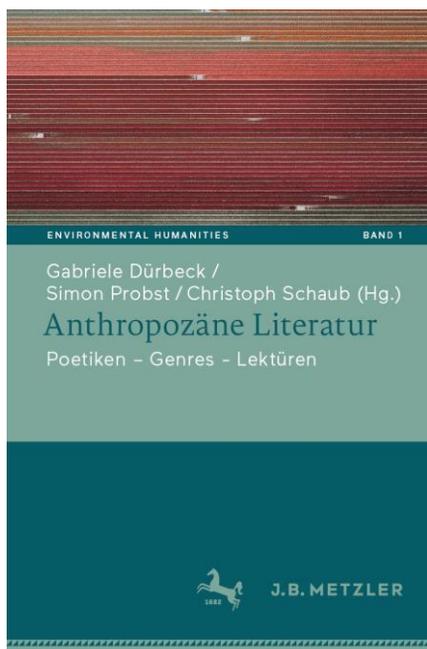
Villanueva-Romero, Diana, Lorraine Kerslake and Carmen Flys-Junquera. *Imaginative Ecologies: Inspiring Change through the Humanities*. Brill, 2021.



More information:

<https://brill.com/view/title/60287?language=en>

*Anthropozäne Literatur. Poetiken – Genres – Lektüren*. Edited by Gabriele Dürbeck, Simon Probst, and Christoph Schaub. Berlin: Metzler/Springer 2022.



More information:

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-662-63899-6>

# Conference Reports

## Teaching Ecocriticism in Scandinavian Studies (Bonn, 9-10 June 2022)

The most recent workshop held in cooperation with the Ecocritical Network for Scandinavian Studies (ENSCAN) was hosted by the University of Bonn and organised by Judith Meurer-Bongardt and Thomas Fechner-Smarsly. As its theme, it tackled the teaching of ecocriticism, in a range of contexts – in and outside Scandinavia, in primary and secondary schools, and at universities. Attendees came from three main areas; those involved in teacher training in Nordic literature; those teaching Scandinavian Studies outside of Scandinavia; and those teaching contemporary Nordic (and Old Norse) literature in Scandinavia.

Given this wide remit, workshop discussions quickly found common ground and all of the papers generated lively conversations. One particular theme was the development of methodologies for teaching “litteraturkompetanse for bærekraft” (LKB), or literature for sustainability, with presentations from across Norway exploring different aspects of this key strategy in Norwegian education. A second theme was the choice of texts and approaches when developing ecocritical course syllabi: the anglocentrism of much ecocritical theory and analysis is one challenge here, as the tension between global problems and the implicitly localised and bordered concerns of national literary traditions. Participants

were generous in sharing their own course methods in contents, ranging from individual text choices to pedagogical tools and new elements such as field trips and creative writing assignments. The presentation of two undergraduate students on their experience of different kinds of teaching was a welcome reminder at the end of day one on the importance of including students in discussions about university courses!

Following more than two years with scarcely any in-person conferences, the workshop that took place in Bonn was the first chance for some of us to socialise again. It is a great credit to organisers that they were able both to create the opportunity for in-person networking whilst still allowing those unable or unwilling to travel to join digitally. During the two days in Bonn, the technology worked faultlessly, the hybrid format allowed roughly equal numbers of digital and non-digital participants to interact, and it felt like a good way to reboot the academic event after the hiatus. Lessons have been learned – we all know now both to value the precious chances to meet and socialise in the same place, and also to be grateful for the technology that keeps us connected across distance.

The workshop provided a rich opportunity to exchange ideas with each other and gain insights on the different kinds of research projects and teaching that are underway in our different university settings. Besides comparing methods and techniques, participants shared their research across a wide range of subjects from the sea, conservation, and local history to legends, poetry, sci-fi and food ethics, in both formal and informal conversations. It was great to see such a diversity of interests brought together in an overarching shared commitment to teaching and to bringing the best of ecocritical thinking into the classroom. It bodes well for the future of ecocriticism in Scandinavian Studies!

*Katie Ritson*



## **Officers**

### **Executive Committee**

#### **PRESIDENT**

DR. MARGARITA CARRETERO-GONZÁLES  
Senior Lecturer, Dept. de Filologías Inglesa y  
Alemana  
Universidad de Granada  
Granada, SPAIN

#### **VICE PRESIDENT**

PROF. DR. REINHARD HENNIG  
Professor of Nordic Literature  
Department of Nordic and Media Studies  
University of Agder  
Kristiansand, NORWAY

#### **TREASURER**

DR. SIBYLLE MACHAT  
Lecturer, Department of English and American  
Studies  
Europa-Universität Flensburg  
Flensburg, GERMANY

### **Advisory Board**

PROF. DR. ALEXA WEIK VON MOSSNER  
Associate Professor  
Department of English and American Studies  
University of Klagenfurt, AUSTRIA

PROF. DR. SERENELLA IOVINO  
Professor of Italian and Environmental Humanities  
University of North Carolina  
Chapel Hill, USA

PROF. DR. BÉNÉDICTE MEILLON  
Associate Professor  
University of Perpignan  
Perpignan, FRANCE

PROF. DR. CATRIN GERSDORF  
Chair of American Studies  
Julius-Maximilians-Universität Würzburg  
Würzburg, GERMANY

PROF. DR. AXEL GOODBODY  
Dept. of European Studies & Modern Languages  
University of Bath  
Bath, UK

PROF. DR. SERPIL OPPERMANN  
Kapadokya Üniversitesi, Department of English  
Language and Literature  
Nevşehir, TURKEY

PROF. DR. UWE KÜCHLER  
Professor of Teaching English as a Foreign  
Language  
English Department  
Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen  
Tübingen, GERMANY

PROF. DR. SYLVIA MAYER  
Chair of American Studies/Anglophone Literatures  
and Cultures  
University of Bayreuth  
Bayreuth, GERMANY

PROF. DR. LORRAINE KERSLAKE  
Departamento de Estudios Ingleses  
Universidad de Alicante  
Alicante, SPAIN

PROF. HEATHER I. SULLIVAN, PhD.  
Professor of German and Comparative Literature  
Trinity University  
San Antonio, Texas, USA

DR. HANNA STRAß-SENOL  
Director of Study Environmental Humanities  
Development  
Ludwig-Maximilians-University  
München, GERMANY

NATHALIE BLANC  
Directrice de Recherche au CNRS & Directrice du  
Centre des Politiques de la Terre  
Université de Paris  
Paris, FRANCE

## International Affiliates

ASLE (USA)

<http://www.asle.org>

ASLEC-ANZ

(AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND)

<http://www.aslec-anz.asn.au>

ALECC-CANADA

<http://www.alecc.ca>

ASLE-INDIA

<http://www.asleindia.webs.com>

ASLE-JAPAN

<http://www.asle-japan.org>

ASLE-KOREA

<http://www.aslekorea.org>

ASLE-TAIWAN

<https://asletaiwan.org/>

ASLE-UKI

<http://www.asle.org.uk>

ASLE-ASEAN

<https://aseanasle.wordpress.com/>

OSLE-INDIA

<http://www.osle-india.org>

**Editorial deadline  
for the next issue:  
December 01, 2022**