



Dear EASLCE members and friends,

As we get ready to say goodbye to another year, review of what has gone in our lives in the last 365 days comes almost automatically to all of us, as does the list of projects - which may or may not take the form of resolutions - for the year about to begin. Reviewing what 2021 has meant for our association, I think it is fair to say that it has been a good one, even if we had to postpone our conference for yet another year. That this decision was taken quite early in 2021 meant that we could all concentrate on other projects, and a look at our website bears witness to the health of our association.

Technology has opened proverbial windows when traditional doors closed and, as announced in the annual AGM, EASLCE will be hosting monthly social hours where all members are invited to talk in an informal setting over Zoom. The first one took place on December 9th and, although only five people could attend, it was a fabulous experience that I will most certainly repeat whenever possible. It was great to get in touch and talk informally as we would have done in person over a coffee or a drink. In order to make these meetings available to the greatest number of members, dates and times will change every month. The next one has been scheduled for **January 11th at 17.00**. We hope to see you there!

EASLCE has recently been asked to express support for the research project “South Asian Representations of Indigenous Epistemologies: Ecofeminist Solidarities for Sustainable Futures”, led by Prof. Antonia Navarro-Tejero, from the University of Córdoba (Spain). With the enthusiastic response from both the Executive and the Advisory Boards, and pending approval of the research project by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, EASLCE will function as an External Observer for the project, which will certainly open up new avenues for collaboration with researchers outside the association.

We have our long-awaited conference to look forward to in 2022, but there is a high chance that it will coincide with the postponed ASLE-UKI conference, announced for the same dates that I shared with those attending the AGM. In order to avoid this being the case, the Granada team is trying to find a venue for the following week, hoping that those of you wanting to attend both conferences may contemplate the possibility of having an Anglo-Spanish academic tour, travelling from Northumbria

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to Granada in the first fortnight of September 2022. As soon as a venue can be confirmed, the call for papers with the new dates will be reissued.

By the time this newsletter reaches you, Julia Ditter will have passed on her duties as webinar coordinator and blog editor for *Arcadiana*. Lena Pfeifer, who has been coordinating the webinars with Julia, will continue in her role and is currently assessing applications for the new position advertised, as are the current editors of *Arcadiana*. As President of EASLCE, I'd like to express my warmest gratitude to Julia for her extraordinary work and wish her all the best in this last year of her PhD dissertation.

Hoping, as ever, that you are all healthy in body, mind and spirit, may I send you my best wishes for the festive season and the new year. May 2022 bring us together in person again.

*Margarita Carretero-González*  
EASLCE President



## Upcoming Conferences

### Le sublime dans l'anthropocène : matérialité, agentivité, et affect - The Sublime in the Anthropocene: Materiality, Agency and Affect

**Date:** March 11, 2022.

**Venue:** Salle de l'Horloge, University of Liège, place du 20-Août n°7, 4000 Liège, Belgium.

Introduced as an aesthetic and rhetorical concept by Longinus in ancient thought, the notion of the sublime has a venerable history in arts and culture. From Thomas Burnet and Joseph Addison to Edmund Burke, Immanuel Kant and the romantic poets, theorists of the “natural sublime” have described a fraught relationship between humans and a natural world perceived as vast and overpowering. While the natural sublime is still prevalent in nature writing and photography, versions more attuned to environmental disruption, technology or (non-)human agency have emerged. These revisions of the sublime avoid romanticized representations of nature to *include* technology in the presumably pure and untrammelled wilderness (e.g., the “technological sublime”). Besides, they shed light on ecological responsibility and concerns (e.g., the “ecosublime” [Rozelle 2006] or “organic sublime” [Outka 2011]) such as on variable forms of toxicity (the “toxic sublime” [Peeples 2011]) or on an embodied and multi-sensorial experience of landscapes and materiality (the “haptic sublime” [McNee 2016]). However, no comprehensive notion of an “Anthropocene sublime” yet exists, and the jury is still out on whether the sublime can be a viable aesthetic mode in the context of the Anthropocene at all.

This international one-day conference will engage in discussions on the affordances and limits of the sublime for figuring modes of materiality and (non-)human agency in contemporary art and literature. Participants will mobilize recent theories in new materialism, material ecocriticism, object-oriented ontology, (critical) posthumanism, and affect theory to elaborate and interrogate a materialist account of affect and the sublime adapted for the environmental reality of the Anthropocene. In order to develop a rich and multifaceted account of an “Anthropocene sublime,” the conference will query the sublime’s relation to other adjacent aesthetic categories and affects such as the weird, the gothic, the beautiful, the “stuplime” (Ngai 2005) and wonder (Economides 2016). Presentations will position the sublime as a key artistic strategy to represent (non-)human materiality and agency as well as the affects customarily associated with the Anthropocene and related environmental crises.

The final program will be published at [https://www.cipa.uliege.be/cms/c\\_6629963/fr/le-sublime-dans-l-anthropocene](https://www.cipa.uliege.be/cms/c_6629963/fr/le-sublime-dans-l-anthropocene).

## Works Cited

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## Calls for Papers

### AAAS Conference 2022 Salzburg: Narrative, Environment, Social Justice

Oct. 21-23, 2022

Recent years have seen a re-politicization of the US public sphere and dominant discourses. This re-politicization often revolves around two inherently intertwined dimensions: the environment and social justice, with environmental justice movements like Fridays for Future or Extinction Rebellion and more pronounced foci around race and gender (e.g. the Black Lives Matter and #MeToo movements), and on the other hand economic justice movements like ATTAC or Occupy Wall Street, asking whether any possible alternative to neoliberal capitalism is imaginable at all. A similar pattern of polarization is at work with right-wing populist movements questioning the legitimacy of calls for social justice, instead

telling their own stories of neglect and apparent marginalization.

These battles over hearts and minds (and ballots) are carried out on the battlefield of language in general and narrative in particular: which side tells the most convincing stories and has the most engaging narrative frames to offer?

The 49th annual conference of the Austrian Association for American Studies invites presentations on the stories we tell about our environment, or about pressing social issues of the past or present. How do we frame our experiences in these areas through narratives, and to whom do we tell them, when, where, and why?

Possible topics for presentations may be related but are not limited to:

- narratology and narrative theory/studies
- pedagogy
- environmental studies and environmental justice
- social justice
- queer narratives of resilience, and LGBTQ counternarratives and counterpublics
- the local or the global, and glocalization
- ecocriticism and climate fiction
- area studies, diaspora studies, diaspora politics, and climate emigration
- critical whiteness studies

- African American studies
- Ethnic studies
- Indigenous studies

**Confirmed keynote speakers:**

Erin James, University of Idaho

Greta Olson, University of Giessen

Alexa Weik von Mossner, University of Klagenfurt

Please send proposals for panels or individual presentations (300 words max.), with a 50-word bio note, by **May 15, 2022** to [Joshua.Parker@plus.ac.at](mailto:Joshua.Parker@plus.ac.at) and [Robert.Winkler@plus.ac.at](mailto:Robert.Winkler@plus.ac.at), noting whether you would prefer to do a live online presentation, or to attend in person.

**Planetary Precarity and Future Habitability  
February 18 & 19, 2022**

Anxiety, job insecurity, zero-hour employment, environmental degradation, state violence, underfunded healthcare systems, zero-hour contracts, bioeconomies, and fragmented families are among the new conditions of the neoliberal age. These realities underpin the current discourse on precarity and precariousness in relation to the global environmental crisis: manifested as accelerated consumption and extraction of natural resources, acidification of oceans, chemicalization of life, deforestation,

melting of the cryosphere, and increase in radioactive waste. These ongoing erosions and contaminations, following extreme weather events and exploitation of natural resources, continue to reduce the earth's sustainability and habitability. Planetary precarity demands collective actions and solidarities, a commitment to move beyond extractive measures and develop innovative concepts about the planet as a shared home.

Increasingly the connection between precarious labour, environmental catastrophe and neoliberalism has become linked in the public consciousness with demands for a Green New Deal such as those of Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. These call for public policy to address climate change, support job creation in the transition to renewable energy, and reduce economic inequality. As UN Secretary General, António Guterres points out the world is on a knife edge in the race to halt accelerating climate change and worsening impacts. 2021 is a 'make or break' year. Demands for urgent action by Greta Thunberg ahead of the 26th UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow in November 2021, create political waves. Others calling for planetary care and repair include Achille Mbembe, who urges decolonisation (including that of the curriculum) on a planetary scale and to "reconstruct the world in common" (or "to reinvent forms of life in common that go beyond the requisite of the nation state, ethnicity, race, religion, and so on" (2019, online)); and Amitav Ghosh, who echoes Mbembe in situating the global crises in the flawed notion of modernity and selective progress (2016).

This international, online conference aims to examine these planetary crises with a demand for planetary thought-actions-praxis that acknowledges the interconnectedness of all forms of life. Our concept note is constructed in the hope that pressing issues facing humanity can be addressed collectively, blurring the divide of

global north and global south. We aim for consciousness raising, for example, about how looming disasters glimpsed in the rear mirror, such as the lurking sixth extinction of the planet, can be averted; and how carbon democracies arising in the wake of neoliberalism can be challenged and dismantled.

Organized by the international research network, *Challenging Precarity*, this conference seeks to address (but is not limited to) the following sub-themes:

- curricula of planetary thinking and collective well-being
- the biopolitics of extraction and neocolonialism
- petro-capitalism and environmental catastrophe
- representations of politics of World energy in films and literature
- decolonization as a form of planetary thinking
- a planetary survival aesthetics
- queer ecology as planetary perspective
- eco materialism: human and human-non human interactions
- challenging neoliberalism and the challenges of the Green New Deal
- alternative modernisms and alternatives to modernism: Gulf Futurism, Afro-Futurism, Sinofuturism and Indigenous Futurism
- historicity of planetary imaginaries
- bio-inclusive and intercultural ethics

Analysis using any of these subthemes should be focused within the fields of literary and cultural studies. We invite abstracts of no more than 300 words. Proposed panels of 3-5 scholars are also welcome.

#### **Timelines:**

**Submission of abstracts: December 15th, 2021**

**Acceptance email: December 30th, 2021**

Abstract needs to be submitted to the following email addresses:

[om\\_dwivedi2003@yahoo.com](mailto:om_dwivedi2003@yahoo.com)

[schmidt-haberkamp@uni-bonn.de](mailto:schmidt-haberkamp@uni-bonn.de)

[janet.wilson@northampton.ac.uk](mailto:janet.wilson@northampton.ac.uk)

#### **Organisers:**

Janet M. Wilson (University of Northampton, UK)

Om P. Dwivedi (Bennett University, India)

Barbara Schmidt-Haberkamp (University of Bonn, Germany)

#### **References**

- Adamson, Joni, and Salma Monani, eds. 2020. *Ecocriticism and Indigenous Studies: Conversations from Earth to Cosmos*. London: Routledge.
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# Conference Reports

## BALTEHUMS II

The Second Baltic Conference on the Environmental Humanities and Social Sciences (BALTEHUMS) was successfully held on November 1-2, 2021, organised by Estonian Centre for Environmental History (KAJAK), Tallinn University, Estonia on the occasion of its 10th anniversary. The aim of the conference was to serve as a *Treffpunkt* for the researchers of topics related to human-environment interactions in the Baltic region as well as to provide an overview of the research projects in environmental humanities currently carried out in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The conference was held fully in web. The program of the conference was compact and well-assembled panels created an amplifying effect to individual topics. Approximately 150 people attended the conference, 50 of whom were present throughout both 10-hour-days. BALTEHUMS II included 50 regular presentations, 2 keynote speeches (Kate Brown, MIT, on Soviet kitchen gardens, and Michael Loader, University of Glasgow, on protests against damming for hydroenergy in Latvia in 1950s), 2 social events, a virtual exhibition and a roundtable on environmentalising Baltic art histories organised together with Latvian centre for contemporary art.

Individual sessions were dedicated to environmental history, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, semiotics, archaeology and ecocriticism. Although the disciplinary array of the participants was wide, the strong regional aspect of the presentations created connections and

provided parallels that facilitated mutual understanding. Three out of the conference's 15 regular panels were dedicated explicitly to literary ecocriticism, featuring discussions of Latvian eco-theatre, landscape markers in Henning Mankell's prose, significance of weather in travel writing, the notion of bioregion, literary imagination of extinction, poetics of ecological protest songs, the normative nature of the notion of 'nature', depiction of ocean in Christine Montalbetti's novel, nature imagination as reflected in the works of Estonian writer Jaan Kaplinski and Latvian writer Alfreds Bels.

A number of major research projects in environmental humanities currently carried out in the Baltic region were showcased through the presentations, such as „Estonian environmentalism“ led by prof. Ulrike Plath in Tallinn University, "Competing Discourses of Nature" by cultural geographers of University of Latvia, as well as a project about the interaction of humans and river Daugava from the same university and a project studying environmental behaviour of humans from the perspective of semiotics and sociology carried out in University of Kaunas, where the next BALTEHUMS meeting in spe will take place.

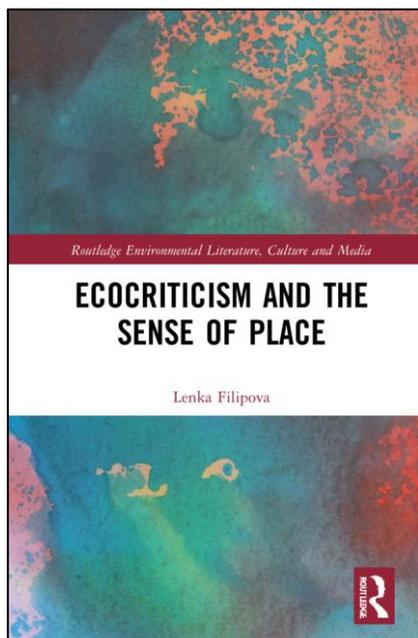
Kadri Tüür, Estonian Centre for Environmental History

The program and the abstracts of the conference are available here:

<https://www.tlu.ee/sundmused/baltehums-ii-konverents>

## Publications

Lenka Filipova. *Ecocriticism and the Sense of Place*. New York and Abingdon: Routledge, 2021.



More information:

<https://www.routledge.com/Ecocriticism-and-the-Sense-of-Place/Filipova/p/book/9780367754587>

**Bénédicte Meillon, Rachel Bouvet, et Marie-Pierre Ramouche, eds. *Textes & Contextes : Réenchanter le sauvage urbain : Explorations écopoétiques et géopoétiques de nos façons de percevoir, penser et vivre avec la nature en ville*. Volume 16.1, septembre**

Resulting from the 2019 Perpignan eco-poetics and ecological humanities international conference on the reenchantment of urban wildness, this special issue of *Textes & Contextes* brings together papers in French and English that cast light on the oxymoronic notion of urban wildness. Wary of dualistic thinking, the thinkers and artists here involved spur a reenchantment of nature in urban contexts via eco-poetic and geo-poetic approaches cueing us to better perceive, think, and live with nature within cities. The papers here collected tackle urban wildness in the light of the disenchantment/reenchantment dialectics while engaging transdisciplinary approaches, various geographical and cultural eras, and a variety of eco-poetic media—from literature, to cinema, graffiti

art, contemporary dance, and urban walking. The first of two interdependent volumes, 16.1 will soon be followed by 16.2, which will take up the same subject from the standpoint of the ecological humanities. It includes contributions by Françoise Besson, Rachel Bouvet, Claire Cazajous-Augé, Marianne Celka, Camille Deschamps-Vierø, Caroline Durand-Rous, Daniel Finch-Race, Fanny Fournié, Hélène Guillaume, Bénédicte Meillon, Sylvie Miaux, Stephanie Papa, Stéphane Sawas, Marie-Pierre Ramouche, Marinella Termite et Joachim Zemmour.

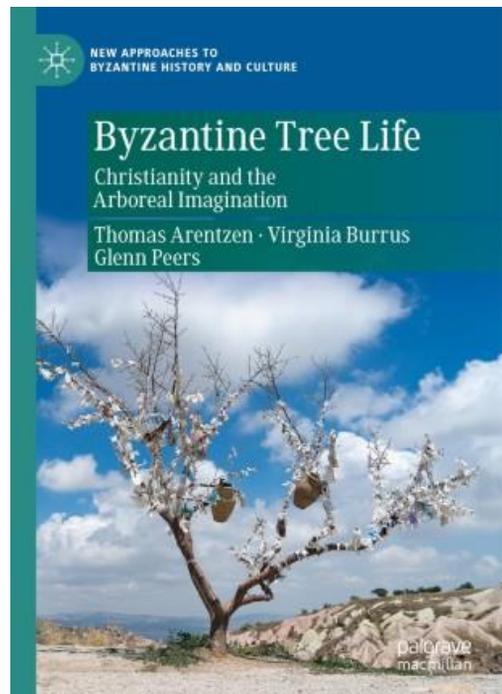
<https://preo.u-bourgogne.fr/textesetcontextes/>

**Thomas Arentzen, Virginia Burrus, and Glenn Peers. *Byzantine Tree Life. Christianity and the Arboreal Imagination*. Palgrave Macmillan 2021.**

This book examines the many ways Byzantines lived with their trees. It takes seriously theological and hagiographic tree engagement as expressions of that culture's deep involvement—and even fascination—with the arboreal. These pages tap into the current attention paid to plants in a wide range of scholarship, an attention that involves the philosophy of plant life as well as scientific discoveries of how communicative trees may be, and how they defend themselves. Considering writings on and images of trees from Late Antiquity and medieval Byzantium sympathetically, the book argues for an arboreal imagination at the root of human aspirations to know and draw close to the divine.

More information:

<https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-030-75902-5>



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**editorial deadline  
for the next issue:  
June 01, 2022**