

EACLALS Triennial Conference 2023: 6-10 June 2023, Sorbonne Nouvelle University

“Imagining Environmental Justice in a Postcolonial World”

CALL FOR PAPERS

EXTENDED DEADLINE: 15 NOVEMBER 2022

Several colleagues who wish to participate have asked the committee for more time to submit proposals, so we are extending the deadline to 15 November 2022.

For the 2023 conference of EACLALS (European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies), we invite delegates to:

- bring postcolonial literatures and arts into conversation with environmentalism;
- investigate the power of narratives in all literary genres, as well as images and artistic performances, to evoke environmental injustice; and
- explore the breadth of what environmental justice may mean in postcolonial contexts.

We invite contributions for 20-minute papers or 90-minute panels addressing the conference topic. Please send a 300-word abstract for individual papers or 450-word abstract for panels, accompanied by a short biographical note on all speakers (100-150 words) and 5-6 keywords to EACLALS2023@sorbonne-nouvelle.fr by 15 October ~~October~~ November 2022.

We prefer that you participate in the EACLALS 2023 conference in person. However, we are scheduling some online sessions for scholars who can't afford to travel to Paris and to reduce the ecological impact of the conference. To privilege in-person interaction, we aim to limit the proportion of online participation to a third of all sessions. Speakers who wish to participate online should clearly indicate that in their proposal. Fees to register for the conference will be lower for online participants.

Confirmed keynote speakers:

Amanda Boetzkes (University of Guelph, Canada)
Elizabeth DeLoughrey (University of California, Los Angeles, US)
Graham Huggan (University of Leeds, UK)
Claire Omhovère (Université Paul Valéry – Montpellier 3, France)
Imre Szeman (University of Toronto Scarborough, Canada)

The global ecological and climate crisis is strongly linked to modernity and its history of imperialism, colonisation, capitalism, and exploitation of resources. Postcolonial literatures foreground these connections: key texts include Nadine Gordimer's *The Conservationist* (1974), Judith Wright's "For a Pastoral Family" (1985), Patricia Grace's *Potiki* (1986), Thomas King's *Green Grass, Running Water* (1999), Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* (2005), Alexis Wright's *Carpentaria* (2006), Helon Habila's *Oil on Water* (2011), Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner's "Tell Them" (2012), Uzma Aslam Khan's *Thinner than Skin* (2012), and Imbolo Mbue's *How Beautiful We Were* (2021). These powerful stories reveal the colonial origins of ecological devastation and its dramatic consequences for the Global South. These texts have also prompted new theoretical concepts such as the "slow violence" of delayed destruction (Nixon 2013) and the "plantationocene" (Haraway 2015).

After a turn to ecocriticism developed in the anglophone world in the 1980s, with influential voices coming out of the Americas, a fruitful dialogue in the mid-2000s between the fields of postcolonialism and environmentalism (Huggan 2004, Nixon 2005) gave rise to postcolonial ecocriticism and its distinctive approach to environmental questions.

Postcolonial ecocriticism tends to focus on social ecology and its tensions, and considers nature in the contexts of human uses, built environments and degraded landscapes. Postcolonial ecocriticism sheds light on the links between colonisation and contemporary social, economic, and environmental issues. It pays heed to ways in which human exploitation transforms ecosystems, limits access to natural resources, and generates pollution and other hazards. It is wary of nostalgia for a pure landscape standing outside history, and conscious of the difficulty of representing the nonhuman environment (Cilano and DeLoughrey 2007).

To make these links between colonisation and environmental issues, postcolonial ecocriticism redirects customary postcolonial questionings by triangulating them with the relations between the human and the nonhuman. In doing so, it often favours a materialist approach, attempting to make sense of environmental issues by drawing on climate science, environmental law, geography, and other sciences, which it sometimes challenges. It is also aware of the local specificities of ecological issues linked to colonial history, while acknowledging their global context. As awareness spreads of the need to share the earth's resources sustainably and fairly, shifting perceptions of the environment are changing people's sense of responsibility and accountability, individual and collective. In this context, postcolonial ecocriticism reflects on better ways of inhabiting the world and promoting environmental justice.

In one of its best-known early formulations, environmental justice was what grassroots activists in the United States in the 1980s demanded in answer to the environmental injustice and racism that forces disadvantaged, vulnerable, racialised populations to bear the brunt of environmental degradation and pollution (Holifield, Chakraborty and Walker, 2018). Use of the notion of environmental justice then spread beyond the United States, in particular through the action of Indigenous peoples and the development of ideas related to social ecology, such as the "environmentalism of the poor" (Martínez-Alier 2002), social justice, and climate justice.

Topics and approaches can include, but are not limited to:

- eco-injustice and race / ethnicity
- eco-injustice and indigeneity
- eco-injustice and poverty / marginality
- environmental justice discourse and literary genre
- the language of environmental justice discourse
- the rhetoric of "toxic discourse" / "toxic politics"
- environmental justice, monolingualism, and translation issues
- environmental justice in relation to local and global contexts
- environmental justice in comparative context
- environmental justice and:

aesthetics

affect

artistic activism ("arctivism")

capitalism

climate justice

conservation / discourses of purity /
"postcolonial pastoral"

decoloniality

ecofeminism

human rights

interdisciplinarity

intersectionality
materialist approaches
multispecies justice
nature protection
neocolonialism / “toxic imperialism”
pedagogy

petrocultures
science
the nonhuman
the writer activist
tourism
transnationalism

Organising committee: Aline Bergé (Sorbonne Nouvelle), Kathie Birat (U. of Lorraine), Estelle Castro-Koshy (James Cook U.), Jaine Chemmachery (Sorbonne U.), Cédric Courtois (U. of Lille), Xavier Garnier (Sorbonne Nouvelle), Fiona McCann (U. of Lille), Marie Mianowski (U. Grenoble Alpes), Claire Omhovère (U. Paul Valéry – Montpellier), Alexandra Poulain (Sorbonne Nouvelle), Sandrine Soukai (U. Gustave Eiffel), and Kerry-Jane Wallart (U. of Orléans).

Information about the conference is available (and will be updated) at: <http://www.univ-paris3.fr/eaclals-2023-imagining-environmental-justice-in-a-postcolonial-world-746756.kjsp?RH=ACCUEIL>

If you have any questions, please contact Christine Lorre (Sorbonne Nouvelle, convener) at: EACLALS2023@sorbonne-nouvelle.fr