



5th **ASLE-ASEAN** Ecocritical Conference

ABSTRACT BOOK



23-25 November 2023

School of Liberal Arts

Mae Fah Luang University

Chiang Rai, Thailand

POSTHUMAN SOUTHEAST ASIA



NOTICE

This Abstract Book contains the program and the abstracts of the papers that will be presented at the 5th ASLE-ASEAN Ecocritical Conference. This event, hosted by the School of Liberal Arts, Mae Fah Luang University, will take place in Chiang Rai (Thailand) from 23rd to 25th of November 2023.

The book is distributed free of charge to all registered participants at the conference. It is also available for download as an e-book from <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/>

The program detailed in this book has been printed on November 1st, 2023. Up to the start of the conference, there could be minor changes in the schedule and format of the presentations due to unforeseen circumstances. The most updated version of the conference program is available at any time in the following webpage: <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/program/>

5th ASLE-ASEAN Ecocritical Conference Abstract Book

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1st November 2023

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5TH ASLE-ASEAN ECOCRITICAL CONFERENCE POSTHUMAN SOUTHEAST ASIA

As human actions continue to undermine the sustainability of Earth's ecosystems and the stability of the planet, posthumanism seeks to overcome the legacies of humanism by exploring from a non-anthropocentric perspective the ongoing entanglements of humans and nonhumans. A variety of approaches to the human, the nonhuman, the inhuman, and the posthuman have been at the center of recent work in ecocriticism and across the environmental humanities. Many scholars view posthumanism as a paradigmatic change that is not only reconfiguring academic knowledge about naturecultures, but also giving rise to new and unexpected ways of being-together in a more-than-human world.

Ecocritics and other scholars interested in Southeast Asia are also actively engaged in posthumanist inquiries. After all, this is a region where humans and nonhumans have always been deeply entangled, from the indigenous and ancient traditions of animism to the variegated and blooming creativity of contemporary literature, art, music, drama, film, and other media.

In this international conference, we want to explore and discuss all these naturalcultural entanglements, the various ways in which we can speak of a posthuman Southeast Asia. But we also hope to provide a forum where scholars, researchers, students, writers, artists, and activists based or

working on Southeast Asia may contribute to the global conversation about the Posthumanities.

The conference will be hosted by the School of Liberal Arts, Mae Fah Luang University, during the 23^d, 24th and 25th of November 2023. It will include onsite and online presentations (hybrid format), with the university's campus in the province of Chiang Rai, north of Thailand, as its main venue. This book details the academic program and collects all the abstracts of the papers that will be presented at the conference, as well as the biographical notes of authors and presenters.

WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS, MAE FAH LUANG UNIVERSITY

Dear participants of the 5th ASLE-ASEAN Ecocritical Conference,

I am delighted to extend a hearty welcome to all of you as we convene this prestigious academic event, which for the first time will be hosted by Mae Fah Luang University in Thailand. This gathering represents a significant milestone in our scholarly efforts to understand the intricate relationships between literature and the environment in Southeast Asia, one of the most culturally diverse and ecologically rich regions on our planet.

Literature has long been a powerful vessel for expressing human thoughts, emotions, and reflections on the world. It has the unique capacity to bring the human experience closer to the natural world and, in doing so, offers a platform to engage with the complex interplay between culture, nature, and society. The exploration of Southeast Asian literature and culture during this conference will shed light on the profound ways in which we humans relate to our surroundings as we grapple with ongoing environmental challenges.

Throughout the conference, we will have the privilege of learning from scholars, authors, students, and researchers who have come from all over ASEAN and beyond. Your insights, expertise, and dedication to unraveling the cultural and literary dimensions of this region's ecologies will

undoubtedly inspire us all as we collectively endeavor to find more sustainable ways of living on this planet.

As the Dean of the School of Liberal Arts, I am proud to witness this academic congregation, which exemplifies our commitment to fostering the exchange of ideas, the pursuit of knowledge, and the preservation of our environment. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to our dedicated conference organizers, presenters, and sponsors, without whom this event would not be possible.

I invite you to actively participate in the presentations, panels, discussions, debates, and social events that this conference offers. Together, we can embark on a journey of exploration and enlightenment, deepening our appreciation for the diverse ecosystems, cultures, and literatures of Southeast Asia.

I thank you for your participation and look forward to personally welcoming all of you to Chiang Rai.

With warm regards,



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sorabud Rungrojsuwan
Dean, School of Liberal Arts
Mae Fah Luang University

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SCHEDULE

Day 1

23 November 2023

FROM	TO	ACTIVITY	PLACE
7:00	8:00	Registration	E4 main lobby
8:00	8:30	Opening	E4 Pradu Daeng 1 (PD1) Zoom ID: 91958004384
8:30	10:00	Keynote Presentation 1	E4 Pradu Daeng 1 (PD1) Zoom ID: 91958004384
10:00	10:30	Morning Break	E4 main lobby
10:30	12:00	Parallel Panels A1-A6 Onsite/Online/Hybrid	See details on parallel panel sessions
12:00	13:00	Lunch Break	E4 main lobby
13:00	14:30	Parallel Panels B1-B6 Onsite/Online/Hybrid	See details on parallel panel sessions
14:30	15:00	Afternoon Break	E4 main lobby
15:00	16:30	Parallel Panels C1-C6 Onsite/Online/Hybrid	See details on parallel panel sessions
16:30	17:30	Late Afternoon Break Transportation to Mekong Basin Civilization Museum	E4 main lobby/entrance
17:30	20:00	Welcome Dinner & Cultural Performance	Mekong Basin Civilization Museum

Day 2

24 November 2023

FROM	TO	ACTIVITY	PLACE
7:00	8:00	Nature Walk	MFU Botanical Garden Departing from E4
7:30	8:30	Registration	E4 main lobby
8:30	10:00	Keynote Presentation 2	E4 Pradu Daeng 1 (PD1) Zoom ID: 91958004384
10:00	10:30	Morning Break	E4 main lobby
10:30	12:00	Parallel Panels D1-D7 Onsite/Online/Hybrid	See details on parallel panel sessions
12:00	13:00	Lunch Break	E4 main lobby
13:00	14:30	Parallel Panels E1-E7 Onsite/Online/Hybrid	See details on parallel panel sessions
14:30	15:00	Afternoon Break	E4 main lobby
15:00	16:30	Parallel Panels F1-F6 Onsite/Online/Hybrid	See details on parallel panel sessions
16:30	16:40	Short Break	E4 main lobby
16:40	17:45	Roundtable	E4 Pradu Daeng 1 (PD1) Zoom ID: 91958004384
17:45	18:00	Closing	E4 Pradu Daeng 1 (PD1) Zoom ID: 91958004384

Day 3

25 November 2023

FROM	TO	ACTIVITY
8:30	9:15	Transportation from Mae Fah Luang University to Doi Tung (departing from E4 building)
9:15	11:15	Visit Doi Tung (Gardens, Royal Villa, Hall of Inspiration)
11:15	11:45	Transportation to Pha Mhee (Akha village)
11:45	13:30	Akha Lunch and Cultural Performance in Pha Mhee
13:30	13:45	Transportation to Tham Luang
13:45	15:15	Visit Tham Luang Cave and Blue Lagoon
15:15	15:45	Transportation to Golden Triangle
15:45	16:05	Stop at Golden Triangle
16:05	16:25	Transportation to Chiang Saen
16:25	17:30	Visit Chiang Saen historical site
17:30	18:15	Transportation back to Mae Fah Luang University (arriving at E4 building)

This is an optional Ecocultural Tour arranged only for conference participants who have signed up and paid the additional tour fee at registration. The itinerary may be subject to modifications up to the time of departure.

PLENARY SESSIONS



Day 1

23 November 2023

Opening

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sorabud
Rungrojsuwan
Dean, School of Liberal Arts
Mae Fah Luang University

Time	8:00–8:30
Room	E4-PD1
Zoom	919 5800 4384
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Chitra Sankaran
President, ASLE-ASEAN
National University of Singapore

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ignasi Ribó
Chair, Conference Organizing Committee
Mae Fah Luang University

Keynote Presentation 1

*Creaturely Texts: Multispecies
Encounters in the Posthuman Era*

Prof. Dr. Pramod K. Nayar
University of Hyderabad

Time	8:30–10:00
Room	E4-PD1
Zoom	919 5800 4384
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Welcome Dinner & Cultural Performance

Traditional and contemporary dance performances featuring deities and mythical animals from the Himmapan forest.

Dinner at a traditional Lanna market (*kad mua*) offering various local foods and beverages.

Hosted by the Mekong Sub-region Arts and Culture Research Unit.

Time	17:30–20:00
Place	Mekong Basin Civilization Museum
Delivery	Onsite

Day 2

24 November 2023

Nature Walk

Guided visit to Mae Fah Luang University Botanical Garden. Transportation to the garden will depart from E4 at 7:00.

Hosted by Dr. Jantrararuk Tovanonte, Head of MFU Botanical Garden.

Time	7:00–8:00
Place	MFU Botanical Garden
Delivery	Onsite

Keynote Presentation 2

Cultivating Vegetal Wisdom: Prospects for Posthuman Plant Studies in Southeast Asia

Adj. Assoc. Prof. Dr. John C. Ryan
Southern Cross University

Time	8:30–10:00
Room	E4-PD1
Zoom	919 5800 4384
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Roundtable

Can the Nonhuman Speak? The Future of Posthuman Ecocriticism in Southeast Asia

Moderators: Sirikorn Bamroongkit and Ignasi Ribó

Panelists: Pramod K. Nayar, John C. Ryan, Chitra Sankaran, Lily Rose Tope, Zainor Izat Zainal, Chi Pham

Time	16:40–17:45
Room	E4-PD1
Zoom	919 5800 4384
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Closing

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sorabud Rungrojsuwan
Dean, School of Liberal Arts
Mae Fah Luang University

Time	17:45–18:00
Room	E4-PD1
Zoom	919 5800 4384
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

PARALLEL PANEL SESSIONS



Day 1

23 November 2023

Panel A1

Vulnerability and Solastalgia in the Anthropocene

Moderator: Zainor Izat Zainal

Travails of Modernity: Precarious Lives
in Amitav Ghosh's *The Living Mountain*
and Anuradha Sharma Pujari's *The
Forest Wails*
Debajyoti Biswas

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	E4-PD1
Zoom	919 5800 4384
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Solastalgia in Philippine Flood
Narratives
Lily Rose Tope

“Aada pa gad an mga tudluk ha akon dum dum...”: Post-Disaster
Resilience, Eco-Nostalgia, and Eco-Mapping in Victor Sugbo's Post-
Haiyan Poetry
Jessa Amarille

Ecopsychology: Human Nature Bonding in Healing Trauma
Hardev Kaur

Panel A2

Becoming Cyborgs: Posthuman and Transhuman Subjectivities

Moderator: Rakesh Kumar Pankaj

Foreshadowing the After Human: A
Transhumanist Study of *P. S. I Love You*
Cupidlyn Gravador

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	E4-518
Zoom	993 6784 4142
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Becoming We: Posthuman Subjects in *Mongrel*
Helmi Naufal Zul'azmi & Ramayda Akmal

Humans, Cyborgs, Time, and Urban Life from a Posthumanist
Perspective: The Case of Nhat Phi's Novel *The Hired Sleeper*
Hai Ninh Do

The Death of *Which* Author? Unraveling Posthuman Authorship in
Penyair Sebagai Mesin (2023) by Martin Suryajaya
Leon Woltermann

Panel A3

Multispecies Ethnographies in Southeast Asia

Moderator: John Ray Hontanar

Human-Nonhuman Engagements:
Multispecies Ethnographic
Representations of Marine Animals in
Joseph Beal Steere and Cuthbert
Collingwood
Li-Ru Lu

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	E4-507
Zoom	958 8068 9108
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Farmers, Fermentation and Better Coffee: Creating Quality in
Vietnam
Skylar Lindsay

Cannabis Cosmology and Intercultural Challenges among Taiwanese
Growers in a Highland Village of Northern Thailand
Henrik Møller

Panel A4

Raising Environmental Awareness Through Eco-film

Moderator: Nathan Snow

Animal Impersonation, Ecojustice, and
Mariam the Dugong in the Video Clip
“Don’t Let Mariam Die for Nothing”

(2019)

Phacharawan Boonpromkul

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	E4-508
Zoom	939 8997 8987
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

The Trend of Movies as Tourism

Promotion: From Picturesque Landscapes to Eco-consciousness in
Vietnam

Giang Hoang

Giờ xanh Must Return!

Trinh Dinh Thi Vu

Panel A5

The Nonhuman in Southeast Asian Children's Stories

Moderator: Gayatri Pillai

Textual and Ideological Representation
of Animals in Selected Indonesian
Children’s Stories

Simon Arsa Manggala

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	E4-509
Zoom	971 2929 6912
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Exploring the Agency of Animal
Characters in an Indonesian Children’s Story

Diksita Galuh Nirwinastu

Nightmarish Futures and Grim Realities: Glimpses of Somber Themes
in Rene O. Villanueva’s Stories for Children

Eliezar Iñigo

Panel A6

Posthumanism as Resistance

Moderator: Maria Anjelica Wong

The Portable Portrait of the Human and the Nonhuman Tree in Sumana Roy's *How I Became a Tree*: Creating Bio(Art) through Urban Home Gardens during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Ujjwal Khobra

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	None
Zoom	993 3029 6221
Language	EN
Delivery	Online

New Eco-poetics in Protest Literature: Renovating the Philippine Eco-poem

Sophia Athena Ramos

Posthuman Embodiment and the Grotesque Body: Understanding Epigenetics and its Abject Figurations in Greg Bear's *Darwin's Radio*

Reshma Sanil

Panel B1

Narrating More-than-human Movement in Southeast Asia: Land, Air and Sea

Moderator: Lauren Rebecca Clark

Human and More-than-human Migration and Invasion in Cauvery Madhavan's Fiction

Lauren Rebecca Clark

"Sudhana and Manohara": The Influence of Eastern European Folklore on Ecological Worlding in Mekong River Literature

Wasinee Sutiwipakorn Topoonyanont

The Narratives of Underwater Experience with Whale Sharks in Social Media Groups and the Issue of Climate Change Ignorance

Pasoot Lasuka

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	E4-PD1
Zoom	919 5800 4384
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel B2

Vietnamese Ecocriticism

Moderator: Chi Pham

Literary Arts in the Era of AI:
Interdisciplinary Creativity and the
Future of Multimedia Literature
Giau Duong

Eco-consciousness from a Child's
Perspective through Nguyen Nhat
Anh's *Crying on the Tree*
Dang Nguyen Huong Trinh

Urbanization and Ecological Damage: A Study of "Nham Mat Nhin
Troi" by Nguyen Xuan Thuy and "Linh Dieu" by Nguyen Van Hoc
Thi Huong Thuy Le

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	E4-518
Zoom	993 6784 4142
Language	EN / VN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel B3

Exploring Posthuman Entanglements

Moderator: Nanthanoot Udomlamun

Inhabiting Thresholds: Transhuman
Practices and Relations across Anchors
of Wetness
Deepta Sateesh

Dreaming of Change: Ursula K. Le Guin
and the Daoist Posthuman
Owen Harry

Rethinking the Mind/Body Dichotomy: The Posthuman Condition
and the Environment's Temporality in Merlinda Bobis's *Locust Girl*
and Thi Ngoc Ha's "The Spirit Pond"
Wisarut Painark

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	E4-507
Zoom	958 8068 9108
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel B4

Phytocritical Investigations: Attending to Southeast Asian Plants and Flowers

Moderator: John Charles Ryan

Bloody Branches and Crimson Petals:
Examining Floral Discourse in Maria
Elena Paulma's "The Bougainvillea"
Thomas Leonard Shaw

Plants and Memories: Taiwan and
Two Trees Make a Forest
Iping Liang

Phyto-Investigation of the Vegetal Intelligence of Tropical
Arborescent Flora in Contemporary Indonesian Poems by Afrizal
Malna and Hanna Francisca
Henrikus Joko Yulianto

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	E4-508
Zoom	939 8997 8987
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel B5

Posthumanist Readings of Dystopian Fiction

Moderator: Kiu-wai Chu

Wannao Disease: A Symbol of Youth
Resistance in *Siamese Graveyard* by
Prapt
Kamonlaporn Sirisophon

Configuring Posthuman Pedagogies in
Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* and
J. G. Ballard's *Crash*
Soorya Alex

Conservation, Capitalism, and the Death of the Human: A
Posthumanist Reading of Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*
Mahesh Krishna

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	E4-509
Zoom	971 2929 6912
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel B6

Revisiting Green Romanticism from Vietnam

Moderator: Bratati Barik

The Ecological-Spiritual Complex in Novels of Southern Vietnam in the First Half of the 20th Century

Linh Truong Thi

The Sense of Romantic Self in William Blake's Poetry: A Poetry of Meditation

Manh Mai The & Thi Bao Anh Nguyen

The Art of Nature Description in

Southeast Asian Romantic Novels from the Perspective of Ecocriticism

Manh Mai The

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	None
Zoom	993 3029 6221
Language	EN
Delivery	Online

Panel C1

Animal Narratives in Southeast Asia

Moderator: Thomas Leonard Shaw

Liminal Characters in Non-Liminal Environments: Spacing Humanimality in Kathrina Mohd Daud's *The Halfing King*

Hana Ghani

Myth and Animal Resistance in Vietnamese Animal Stories: The Case of "Raw Fish" and "Giát Market Day"

Chi Pham

Posthuman Animal Narratives in and of South and Southeast Asia

Chitra Sankaran

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	E4-PD1
Zoom	919 5800 4384
Language	EN
Delivery	Hybrid

Panel C2

Indigenous Naturecultures in Indonesia

Moderator: Anna Christi Suwardi

Indigenous Rights and Connectivity to Nature: Non-Traditional Security in an Indigenous Community of Dayak Benawan (West Kalimantan, Indonesia)

Nikodemus Niko

Knowledge Exchange between Indigenous (Orang Suku Laut) and Modern Peoples on the Management of Coastal Resources in the Riau Archipelago (Indonesia)

Khairi Rahmi & Rizky Octa Putri Charin

“Reparation” of Life in the Metamanasi Area of East Nusa Tenggara Province After the Conversion of Mangrove Forests to Salt Mines

Eventus Ombri Kaho

Indigenous Revivalism: *Kaketbon* and New Paths Towards Post-Anthropocene Ecological Revival in Indonesia

Ferdinando Septy Yokit

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	E4-518
Zoom	993 6784 4142
Language	EN / IN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel C3

Reconstituting Environmental Pedagogies in Thailand, China, and the Mekong Region

Moderator: Omsin Jatuporn

Reclaiming Posthuman Roots and Ecological Subjectivity in Curriculum and Knowledge Production in the Mekong Region

Omsin Jatuporn

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	E4-507
Zoom	958 8068 9108
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Mobilizing for Ecological Sustainability through School-Community Partnerships: A Case of Local-led Organization in the Northern Provinces of Thailand

Piyachai Nakon

Sustaining Ethnic Minority Literacy Through Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: The Case of a Public School in the Yunnan Border Area

Rong Hu

Panel C4

Serious Play: Ecocriticism of Sports and Video Games

Moderator: Fabio Calzolari

Displacement of Nature and Indigenous People in the 39th SEA Games in the Philippines: Towards an Ecocriticism of Sport Mega-Events

Jason Paolo Telles

Posthumanism and Cross-species Alliances in the Thai Video Game

Timelie

Vickie Monthong

The Hero's Journey in Green Pixels: Folk Ecologies, Topophilia, and the Environmental Legal Culture in the RPG Game *SanThai: New Legend*

Legend

Paweenwat Thongprasop

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	E4-508
Zoom	939 8997 8987
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel C5

Past, Present and Future of Southeast Asia: Ecocritical Approaches

Moderator: Deepta Sateesh

On “That Other Time”: Man, Nature,
and Existential Mysteries in Asian
Stories of the Past
Regie Amamio

Towards Expanding the Literary
Through Explanatory Notes in the Posthuman Era
Niccolo Angelo Vitug

Cockfighting in India and Bali: A Critical Posthumanist and New
Materialist Exploration of Cultural Spectacle
Saripalli Ravikiran

Multispecies Modalities: Towards a Historiography of Posthuman Art
from India, Southeast Asia, and Australia
Vijayalekshmi Ramachandran

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	E4-509
Zoom	971 2929 6912
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel C6

Dystopia, Anxiety and the Posthuman

Moderator: Jennifer Rebecca Ortuoste

Violet Rain’s *Love InExtinct*: An
Intriguing Case of Queer Ecology,
Anthropomorphism, and De-extinction
Rujeeluck Seelakate

“Survival Is Insufficient”: Imagining
Utopia within Dystopia in *Station Eleven* and *Human Acts*
Md Abu Shahid Abdullah

Reading Anthropocene Anxiety in Cecil Rajendra’s Poetry
Muhammad Syaukat Mustafa Kamal & Zainor Izat Zainal

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	None
Zoom	993 3029 6221
Language	EN
Delivery	Online

Day 2

24 November 2023

Panel D1

Contemporary Southeast Asian Eco-theatre

Moderator: Kirstin Pauka

Theatre of Animals and Gods: Zoo
Animals Perform Themselves to
Educate Humans
Catherine Diamond

Jaga Alam: Performance-based
Environmental Education and Balinese Shadow Theatre
Kirstin Pauka

Performing Disasters and (Re)Interpreting Indigenous Ecological
Knowledge as Post Disaster Mitigative Approach through Applied
Theatre Practice
Dennis Gupa

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	E4-PD1
Zoom	919 5800 4384
Language	EN
Delivery	Online

Panel D2

Writing Beyond the Human

Moderator: Hamoud Mohsen

Posthuman Writing and Writing
Posthumanism in Contemporary
Vietnamese Poetry: The Cases of
Nguyen Binh Phuong and Nguyễn
Quyến
*Tran Ngoc Hieu & Tran Hoang Kieu
Trang*

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	E4-518
Zoom	993 6784 4142
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Unraveling More-than-human Entanglements and Rethinking Planetary Resilience: A Material Ecocritical Reading of Tash Aw's *We, the Survivors*

Nanthanoot Udomlamun

Non-anthropocentrism and Environmental Ethics in Gary Paulsen's *Hatchet* (1986)

Rao Na & Florence Toh Haw Ching

The World Is Not Only About Humans: Re-reading Vietnamese Poems from Before the 19th Century

Thu Van Phan

Panel D3

Blue Ecocriticism: Southeast Asian Water Ecologies

Moderator: Johanna Götz

Into the Nước: Submergence and Resurgence in Vietnamese Environmental Film

Karen Siu

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	E4-507
Zoom	958 8068 9108
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

The Way of Water: An Elemental-Ecocritical Reading of Selected Literary Works by Rabindranath Tagore and Amitav Ghosh

Shibaji Mridha

Rivers and Their Trysts with Humans in the Wasteocene: A Study of Selected Documentaries on Teesta and Mekong

Pratiksha Pradhan & Vijayalekshmi Ramachandran

Panel D4

Indigenous Ontologies of Southeast Asia

Moderator: Noe John Joseph Sacramento

The Lua and their Buffaloes: The Interweaving of Ritual, Territory, and Interspecies Relations

Nicolas Lainé & Suriyawut Ketui

(Re)Affirming Ecological Dependence: Evidence from the Alternative Healing Narratives of Sibugaynon Folk Healers
Joseph Casibual

Exploring Traditional Ecological Knowledge in India and Southeast Asia: A Posthumanist Study of Folk Culturalism

Rakesh Kumar Pankaj

The Environment as Kapwa: An Exploration of the Three Ecologies and Interconnectedness in Hiligaynon Eco-poetry

Maria Anjelica Wong & Antonio D. Salazar Jr.

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	E4-508
Zoom	939 8997 8987
Language	EN
Delivery	Hybrid

Panel D5

Posthumanist Eco-film Studies

Moderator: Trinh Dinh Thi Vu

This Strange, Small Beast: On Apichatpong Weerasethakul's *Sud Pralad* (2004)

Christian Jil Benitez

Disability, Animals, and Environmental Injustice in *The Way Station*: From Short Story to Film

Thuy Nguyen Thi Thu

Into the Quest of Humans and Nature:

An Ecocritical Analysis of Hayao Miyazaki's *Princess Mononoke*

John Jay Morido

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	E4-509
Zoom	971 2929 6912
Language	EN
Delivery	Hybrid

Panel D6

Indigenous Naturecultures in Vietnam

Moderator: Sophia Athena Ramos

Indigenous Knowledge in Khmer Folk
Literary Works of Southern Vietnam
Pham Thi To Thy

Culture that Respects Nature: A Case
Study of the Folklore of the Mnông
and Stiêng Ethnic Groups
Thi Thoi Ha

The Value of Indigenous and Traditional Ecological Knowledge in “Xa
Nu Forest”
Hoang Thi My Nhi

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	None
Zoom	993 3029 6221
Language	EN
Delivery	Online

Panel D7

Posthuman Fictions: Dystopia and Hybridity

Moderator: Ujjwal Khobra

Posthumanism in Prabda Yoon’s
Basement Moon and Kazuo Ishiguro’s
Klara and the Sun
Isaraporn Pissa-ard

(Re)imagined Bangkok: An Ecocritical
Reception Study of a Thai Cli-Fi Novel
Pimpawan Chaipanit

Transcending the Transhuman: Exploring Empathy and
Posthumanism in Paolo Bacigalupi’s *The Windup Girl* and Kazuo
Ishiguro’s *Klara and the Sun*
Tanvir Mustafiz Khan

Time	10:30–12:00
Room	None
Zoom	914 5788 5639
Language	EN
Delivery	Online

Panel E1

Posthuman Animation

Moderator: Jason Paolo Telles

Posthuman Ecoscapes: Synthetic
Materiality and Distributed Cognition
in Southeast Asian Animation

Nathan Snow

The Posthuman Umwelt: Multispecies Justice in Daisuke Igarashi's
Manga World

Kiu-wai Chu

Notes on Animating a Haunted City: Urban Ecocriticism and Netflix's
Trese

Louise Jashil Sonido

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	E4-PD1
Zoom	919 5800 4384
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel E2

Southeast Asian Political Ecologies

Moderator: Henrik Møller

Heterogeneous Territories in
Cambodia's Resource Frontiers

Eunbi Ko

Forest to Live/Forest to Manage:
Knowledge, Narratives and Actions in
Nui Chua National Park (Vietnam)

Hang Thi Thu Truong & Christian Culas

Changing Forests in Vietnam's Southwest Border War: A Study of
The Wasteland by Suong Nguyet Minh

Nguyen Thuy Trang

Art as Political Ecology/Political Ecology as Art? Exploring Affect and
the Ontological Politics of the Mekong River

Johanna Götz

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	E4-518
Zoom	993 6784 4142
Language	EN
Delivery	Hybrid

Panel E3

Speculative Fiction and the Posthuman

Moderator: Soorya Alex

Humanity and Humanness of
Nonhuman Characters in *The Lunar
Chronicles*
Theresia Enny Anggraini

The Posthuman in Contemporary
Singaporean Speculative Fiction
Gayatri Pillai

The Conflicts between Humans and Robots in Viet Linh's Science
Fiction: An Ecocritical Study of *Strange Planet*
Thu Ngo Bich

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	E4-507
Zoom	958 8068 9108
Language	EN
Delivery	Hybrid

Panel E4

Queer Posthumanism

Moderator: Joseph Casibual

Locating the Ma-aram: Animism and
Indigenous Memory in Kinaray-a Agi
Poetry
John Ray Hontanar

Feeling Queer Posthuman: Affective Posthumanism in Randel
Kenan's *A Visitation of Spirits*
Saran Mahasupap

Entangled Invisibilities: Nature in *Tingle: Anthology of Pinay Lesbian
Writing*
Alexandra Bichara

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	E4-508
Zoom	939 8997 8987
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel E5

Posthumanism and the Capitalocene

Moderator: Jessa Amarille

Post-Marxism and the Pluriverse:
Antagonism and Universality Across
More-than-human Worlds
Min Seong Kim

The Island of No Extinction: Singapore
and the Aesthetics of Late Liberalism
Tania Roy

Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Environmental Justice, and the
Capitalocene in Suchen Christine Lim's *The River Song*
Swapnit Pradhan & Madhav Dubey

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	E4-509
Zoom	971 2929 6912
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel E6

Changing Ecologies in Southeast Asia

Moderator: Md Abu Shahid Abdullah

The Cognitive Transformation of the
Environment in South Vietnamese
Literature from 1954 to 1975
Le Ngoc Phuong

Urbanites, Intellectuals, and the Wave
of Urban Ecology in Vietnamese Novels
in the Early 21st Century
Trinh Dang

Ecofeminist Discourses in Mindanao: Unraveling Critical
Entanglements of Memory and Lived Experience
Jennifer Rebecca Ortuoste

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	None
Zoom	993 3029 6221
Language	EN / VN
Delivery	Online

Panel E7

Ecocritical Insights and Reflections

Moderator: Arka Mukhopadhyay

Ecocriticism in the Works of Mahmud
Dulatabadi

Soolmaz Moeini

“How I Remember”: Sense of Place
and Nostalgia for Homeland in Barbara

Jane Reyes’s Poetry

Elvis Galasinao

Logging Into the Virtual Cockpit: Defining the Neoliberalization of
Philippine Cockfighting through an Ethnography of E-sabong

Aaron Philip Dela Cruz

Time	13:00–14:30
Room	None
Zoom	914 5788 5639
Language	EN
Delivery	Online

Panel F1

Ecofeminist Readings of Southeast Asian Literature

Moderator: Lily Rose Tope

Finding the Ecofeminist Voice in the
Palanca Winning Short Stories of Alice

Tan-Gonzales

Elaine Monserate

“The weaving of hidden dimensions /
through ours”: Jane Hirshfield’s Poetry about More-than-human
Nature and Amanda Lee Koe’s Eco-stories

Deirdre Byrne

Questioning Male Dominance: An Ecofeminist Reading of *River* by
Nguyen Ngoc Tu

Anh Nguyet Tran Thi

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	E4-PD1
Zoom	919 5800 4384
Language	EN / VN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel F2

Environmentality in Southeast Asia: Crisis and Subjectivity

Moderator: Hang Thi Thu Truong

Thou Shall Not Touch: Central
Philippines' *Mari-it* in Posthumanist
Discourse and Environmental
Protection Policy
Noe John Joseph Sacramento

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	E4-518
Zoom	993 6784 4142
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

An Ecocritical Analysis of Thai People's
View of Air Pollution in Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai
Fabio Calzolari

Governing a Voluminous and Volumetric Atmosphere: A Case Study
of Forest Fires and Haze Pollution in Northern Thailand
Chaya Vaddhanaphuti

"Cursing Modernity": Michiko Ishimure's Creative Nonfiction of
Minamata
Tsutomu Takahashi

Panel F3

The Posthuman and the Postcolonial

Moderator: Tania Roy

The Early 20th-century Dutch East Indies in Sherlock Holmes' Anthropocene Unconscious in "The Dying Detective" (1913) by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
Ming Panha

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	E4-507
Zoom	958 8068 9108
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Swan Dreamings: Refugees, Revenants, and the Stakes of World Literature in Alexis Wright's *The Swan Book*
Graham Huggan

When the Land Itself Metes Out Justice: Corruption, Retribution, and the Haunted Island in Caroline Hau's *Tiempo Muerto*
Maryanne Moll

Panel F4

Cultivating Environmental Consciousness through Literature

Moderator: Owen Harry

Contextualizing Identity through Environmental Consciousness in Southeast Asian Fictions
Paloma Chaterji

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	E4-508
Zoom	939 8997 8987
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Living Land and Landscape in Malaysian Literature: An Ecological Reading of Selected Works
Hamoud Mohsen

Ecocritical Symbolism in Veeraporn Nithiprapha's *The Blind Earthworm in the Labyrinth*
Kan Rattanachote

The Same Moon in Science and Poetry: An Ecofeminist Analysis of Galileo Galilei's *Dialogue* and William Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads*
Hyun Sohn

Panel F5

Southeast Asian Literature Across Species Boundaries

Moderator: Antonio D. Salazar Jr.

Blurring of Boundaries in Selected Short Stories of Tagore and Bao Ninh: A Posthumanist Perspective
Bratati Barik

Posthuman Animism and Contemporary Malay Anthropomorphic Literature
Zawiah Mohamad Rasep

A Universal Brotherhood in *The Diary of a Cricket* by To Hoai
Hoang Thi Quynh Trang

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	E4-509
Zoom	971 2929 6912
Language	EN
Delivery	Onsite

Panel F6

Ecosophical Engagements

Moderator: Pimpawan Chaipanit

Ecology, Historicity, Narratives: Tracing
the Location of Culture in the Mythical
Desert of Buddhist Jātakas
Arka Mukhopadhyay

Revisiting Education in the
Anthropocene: Insights from the Posthuman Turn
Rangga Mahaswa

Aisthesis from a Non-anthropocentric Perspective: Artistic Research
in the Context of Situated Production of Knowledge
Katarzyna Ferworn-Horawa

Time	15:00–16:30
Room	None
Zoom	993 3029 6221
Language	EN
Delivery	Online

Note: Only the names of registered participants who will be presenting the papers are given in this section. The names of non-registered co-authors may be found in the abstract.

ABSTRACTS



Plenary – Keynote Presentation 1

Pramod K. Nayar

University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, India

Creaturely Texts: Multispecies Encounters in the Posthuman Era

Abstract: This talk will focus on the theme of multispecies existence and encounters in contemporary literary fiction and non-fiction. It will examine themes and texts in which the human-nonhuman boundary is breached in significant and mutually constitutive ways. It assumes that human-nonhuman exchanges are instances where the human self is refused primacy and is characterized by a distributed self and a relationality with other lifeforms. As will be argued, the focus of “creaturely texts” is the mutually constitutive nature of human and nonhuman identity, as well as the openness of human subjectivity, identity, and ontological state to other lifeforms. The talk will be structured in three main parts. The first part will develop the concept of “landscape of fear” that ecologists like Almo Farina have theorized. This refers to how humans have transformed the landscape and oceanscape for the nonhuman, and how the landscape responds. It will then move on to a different form of the landscape of fear that is visible in contemporary literature, where humans and nonhumans share vulnerabilities. It will be argued that their embodiment is embedded in a specific context where certain species of humans and nonhumans are both disposable lives. The second part of the talk will focus on texts that highlight acts of xenocommunication, that is, communication that occurs across species. The third and final part will turn to “biomutation narratives” (David Herman’s term) of two kinds: texts where the human is “in dialogue with an other” and texts where the human metamorphs into the other. In particular, instances of zoomorphism, cross-species kinship, and species passing will be discussed.

Pramod K. Nayar (PhD) FEA, FRHistS, is a Professor at the Department of English, University of Hyderabad, India, where he also holds the UNESCO Chair in Vulnerability Studies. His newest books include, *Nuclear Cultures* (Routledge 2023), *Life/Writing* (Orient BlackSwan 2023), *The Raj* (Bloomsbury 2023), the edited 6-volume collection, *The Imperial Archives* (Bloomsbury 2023), *Alzheimer's Disease Memoirs* (Springer 2021), *The Human Rights Graphic Novel* (Routledge 2021), *Ecoprecarity* (Routledge 2019) among others. Forthcoming is *Vulnerable Earth: The Literature of Climate Crisis* (Cambridge).

John Charles Ryan

Southern Cross University, Lismore, Australia

Cultivating Vegetal Wisdom: Prospects for Posthuman Plant Studies in Southeast Asia

Abstract: As agents of food, medicine, material, pleasure, inspiration, solace, and wisdom, plants are vital to human societies. In the present era of biodiversity decline, however, the future of botanical life is precarious. The situation is especially acute in Southeast Asia, a botanically complex region that is home to fifty-thousand plant species and four global biodiversity hotspots. While the number of scientifically documented taxa continues to increase, the region’s flora remains threatened by climatic instabilities, land use changes, and habitat loss including high rates of deforestation. Consequently, many plants could become extinct before being taxonomically described. This ecological urgency offers a basis for examining possibilities for the growth of transdisciplinary plant studies in Southeast Asia. Plant studies respond to these exigencies by emphasizing the social, cultural, and environmental significance of plants, botanical communities, and human-flora relations. Intertwining the epistemologies of the arts, humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, the field aims to elucidate the lives of plants, their interactions with other life forms, and their interconnections with humankind. This presentation will provide a synopsis of developments in transdisciplinary plant studies from a posthuman perspective, distinguishing the field from critical plant studies, human-plant studies, plant humanities, plant geography, ethnobotany, and economic botany. Through the analysis of literary and cultural texts, plant studies aim to articulate ideas of memory, temporality, corporeality, creativity, and conviviality in the vegetal world. Opportunities for cultivating plant studies pedagogy and research in Southeast Asia reflect the region’s diversity of plants and human-flora traditions. Partnerships between academic, government, and conservation sectors would engender dialogue between plant studies and the well-established domains of agriculture, engineering, law, and ethics.

John Charles Ryan (PhD) holds adjunct appointments at Southern Cross University and Notre Dame University in Australia as well as Susquehanna University in the US. His research focuses on Southeast Asian ecocriticism, the environmental humanities, eco-poetics, and critical plant studies. His publications include *Environment, Media and Popular Culture in Southeast Asia* (co-edited, Springer 2022), *Introduction to the Environmental Humanities* (co-authored, Routledge 2021), *The Mind of Plants: Narratives of Vegetal Intelligence* (co-edited, Synergetic 2021), *Plants in Contemporary Poetry: Ecocriticism and the Botanical Imagination* (Routledge 2018), and *The Language of Plants: Science, Philosophy, and Literature* (co-edited, U. Minnesota Press 2017). His poetry collection, *Seeing Trees: A Poetic Arboretum* (Pinyon 2020), explores the idea of consciousness in plants. For more information, visit www.johncharlesryan.com.

Debajyoti Biswas

Bodoland University, Kokrajhar, India

Travails of Modernity: Precarious lives in Amitav Ghosh's *The Living Mountain* and Anuradha Sharma Pujari's *The Forest Wails*

Abstract: Amitav Ghosh's fiction and nonfiction continue to inquire into the relationship between colonization and climate change and its effect on human and nonhuman lives. In one of his recent nonfictional works *The Nutmeg's Curse*, Ghosh explores the history of Banda islands (Indonesia) and its connection with the nutmeg. Highly valued in the European markets for its culinary and medicinal properties, nutmeg also became the target of mercantile capitalism and the subsequent cause of the destruction of the villages by the agents of the Dutch East India Company. Ghosh metaphorically presents the advent of European mercantile capitalism and the destruction of local cultures, economies, and ecologies. While mercantile capitalism gradually made way for industrial capitalism, the connection between industrialism and modernity as an essential marker of postcolonial nations invariably links the fate of the postcolonial nations with the effects of modernity on local ecologies. Taking this as a vantage point, this paper proposes to read two fictional works (Sharma Pujari's *The Forest Wails* and Amitav Ghosh's *The Living Mountain*) and see how unorganized modernity can damage ecology in India (as well as in other postcolonial countries of Southeast Asia). Whereas Ghosh's telescopic approach gives us a bird's eye view into the trajectory of planetary crisis, Pujari sees the travails of modernity as a social impasse that causes irreparable damage to ecology. *The Forest Wails* shows that while environmental debates rise and ebb in the political arena, the literary responses to such incidents try to navigate into the lives of people sandwiched between their struggle for survival and the political mantra of development. The paper draws from the works of Vandana Shiva, Ramachandra Guha, Madhav Gadgil, and Wolfgang Sachs to argue that modernity only benefits a select few capitalists, whereas its adversity is faced by the poor. These two works of fiction are chosen for their use of the mountain as a symbol. The mountains in these works encapsulate metaphorically the subsistence of tradition and the damages it sustains from Western modernity. Both these works may be seen as anecdotal parables

that encapsulate humanity's tryst with modernity and precarious futurity, thereby traversing the limitation of regional reading. The paper argues that, while the anxiety of loss of the home is perennial in a modernized society, the inevitable developmental journey (law of precedence) of everyman leads to the intensification of the Anthropocene crisis.

Keywords: Anthropocene, solastalgia, Northeast India, modernity, terraforming

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Debajyoti Biswas (PhD) is an Associate Professor and Head of the Department of English, Bodoland University. His areas of interest are northeast India, nationalism and identity, and the environmental humanities. His writings have appeared in journals like *South Asian Popular Culture*, *English: Journal of the English Association*, *Journal of Narrative and Language Studies*, *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, *Postcolonial Studies*, *Rupkatha Journal*, *Journal of International Women's Studies and Humanities*, and *Humanities & Social Sciences Communications*. He has edited *Nationalism in India* (Routledge 2021) and *Global Perspectives on Nationalism* (Routledge 2022). ORCID: 0000-0001-5041-8171. E-mail: deb61594@gmail.com

Lily Rose Tope

University of the Philippines, Quezon City, Philippines

Solastalgia in Philippine Flood Narratives

Abstract: Solastalgia is defined as “the distress caused by the transformation and degradation of one’s home environment” (Albrecht 45) and connects climate crisis to the mental, emotional, and spiritual responses of human inhabitants. As a concept related to place, it explains the ecological grief and eco-anxiety of a community that is susceptible to onslaughts of nature and yet remains in a beloved place, despite experiencing powerlessness due to nature and human institutions. Floods can take on the function of causal and natural shaper of place. They are a result of human excess and nature’s response and resistance to that excess. Based on selected flood narratives from the Philippines, solastalgia will be explored as an ambiguous relationship between floods and Filipino human communities. The study will examine how floods, a nonhuman but ubiquitous presence in Filipino life, can bring both distress and comfort, “a form of homesickness when one is still at ‘home’” (Albrecht 45). Albrecht, G. “Solastalgia: A New Concept in Health and Identity.” *PAN Philos. Act. Nat.* 2005, 3, 41.

Keywords: solastalgia, floods, flood narratives, place, eco-anxiety

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Lily Rose Tope (PhD) is a Professor at the Department of English and Comparative Literature, University of the Philippines, Diliman. She has a PhD from the National University of Singapore. She is the author of *(Un)Framing Southeast Asia: Nationalism and the Post Colonial Text in English in Singapore, Malaysia and the Philippines* and co-editor of *An Anthology of English Writing from Southeast Asia*. She has written various articles on Southeast Asian literature in English, Asian literature in translation, Philippine Chinese literature, and Philippine literature in English. She was also an issue editor for the *Journal of Southeast Asian Ecocriticism*. E-mail: lrtope@up.edu.ph

Jessa Amarille

University of the Philippines Tacloban College, Tacloban City, Philippines

**“Aada pa gad an mga tudluk ha akon dumdum...”:
Post-Disaster Resilience, Eco-Nostalgia, and Eco-
Mapping in Victor Sugbo’s Post-Haiyan Poetry**

Abstract: This paper examines the concepts of post-disaster resilience, eco-nostalgia, and eco-mapping in selected poems from the collections *Taburos Han Dagat* (2014), *Poems from Ground Z* (2021), and *Gimata* (2022) by Waray poet Victor N. Sugbo. These books, published post-Haiyan, form part of Philippine ecoliterature, which deals primarily with the human relationship with the environment pre- and post-disaster. Most contributors to this genre come from Eastern Visayas, the part of the country ravaged by the super-typhoon Haiyan. Using an ecocritical lens, the paper analyzes how Sugbo’s poetry employs a kind of romanticism and sentimentalism that results in a personal memory map that transcends into an ecological map. This eco-map retrieves names and memories of the region’s flora and fauna and traces pre-disaster sea- and landscapes vis-à-vis the poem’s persona’s recollection and longing of a seemingly utopic past and philosophizing of a present that is less than the ideal. The paper thus explores the role of nostalgia in rebuilding realities (both the tangible and intangible) after disaster and devastation, and in reinforcing the relationship between humans and the natural environment. This study of the affinity of the people of Eastern Visayas, one of the most vulnerable populations to environmental catastrophes, with their physical environment as portrayed in Sugbo’s poetry adds to the discourse on ecocriticism. More than establishing Eastern Visayas eco-poetry as a genre, it appraises the value of this body of work in understanding human life and existence in the Anthropocene.

Keywords: ecocriticism, post-disaster resilience, eco-nostalgia, eco-mapping, Waray literature, Eastern Visayas eco-poetry

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Jessa Amarille is an Assistant Professor at the Division of Humanities, University of the Philippines Tacloban College, where she teaches communication and literature courses. She earned a BA in Communication Arts from UP Tacloban in 2012 and finished an MA in English Studies (Anglo-American Literature) at UP Diliman. Her research interests include Chicana literature, Waray literature, eco-poetry, and ecocriticism. ORCID: 0009-0006-2714-3126. E-mail: jaamarille@up.edu.ph

Hardev Kaur

Universiti Putra Malaysia, Selangor, Malaysia

Ecopsychology: Human Nature Bonding in Healing Trauma

Abstract: In recent years, many studies have been conducted in various fields and aspects of life to ascertain how traumatic events bring about adverse effects to affected victims. Natural disasters, for instance, have played a huge part in the ever-growing traumatic ordeals experienced by many as it often “leaves the spiritual domain in disarray” (Wilson and Thomas, 168). Since trauma has, unfortunately, been a common occurrence for many people, several different studies and fields have developed to help trauma victims understand and heal from their devastating experiences. Eco-psychology is seen as an emerging area of study that helps to better understand the effectiveness of human-nature bond in negotiating trauma. Eco-psychologists recognize that a capacity to live in balance with nature is essential to human emotional and spiritual well-being, “a view that is consistent with the healing traditions of indigenous peoples of past and present, but lacking in present-day Western psychological theory” (Roszak and Kanner, 1). This deeply bonded and reciprocal relationship between humans and nature is crucial in helping to heal the trauma experienced by an individual. This study will explore the relationship between humans and nature and how this union is crucial in helping to heal trauma. A central aspect of this study is to identify the role nature plays in the awakening of the ecological unconscious of those who have faced natural disaster as well as investigating the therapeutic role nature plays in negotiating the psychological trauma experienced.

Keywords: ecopsychology, trauma, nature, bonding, healing

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Hardev Kaur (PhD) is an Associate Professor at the Department of English, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia. Her research interests are African and Caribbean literature and trauma studies. ORCID: 0000-0001-6979-8370.

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Panel A2 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/061>

Cupidlyn Gravador¹ & Joseph Reylan Viray²

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²Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines

Foreshadowing the After Human: A Transhumanist Study of *P. S. I Love You*

Abstract: This paper is a transhumanist study of the novel *P.S. I Love You* by Cecilia Ahern (2003). It is inspired by the research paper by Liaqat, Q. (2022) on the Pakistani novel *Trespassing* (2003). While the latter proved that transhumanism is present in literary texts that feature less advanced technologies, this paper proposes that human transcendence beyond the mortal body is also possible even in non-advanced technologies. Using mind uploading as the specific lens, the paper examines how the main protagonist lived after his human body through the ten love letters he left for his widow before his death. The study of transhumanism gets broader as time elapses, seeking to be a gateway to the inclusion of non-advanced technologies in further or related studies. This paper contends that technology is technology no matter how advanced it may be. As long as the intersection between humans and technology serves the purpose of human immanence and immortality, the transhumanist inquiry is worth examining.

Keywords: transhumanism, mind uploading, alterity, immanence, immortality

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Cupidlyn Gravador has a BA in English and MA in English (Philippines). She is a Lecturer at Mae Fah Luang University (Thailand), where she teaches English and literature courses. Her interests include postcolonialism, transhumanism, and comparative literature studies. E-mail: cbgravador@gmail.com

Joseph Reylan Viray (PhD) is the Director of the Research Institute for Culture and Language (Polytechnic University of the Philippines). He has a BA in Philosophy with minor in Sociology, Bachelor of Laws, and PhD in Philippine Studies (Language, Culture, and Media). E-mail: jbviray@pup.edu.ph

Panel A2 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/084>

Helmi Naufal Zul'azmi & Ramayda Akmal

Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Becoming We: Posthuman Subjects in *Mongrel*

Abstract: This paper explores posthuman subjects formed through language in *Mongrel*, a climate-fiction series published in 2021. In posthumanism, there are extensive discussions about clones, hybrids, aliens, and cyborgs. However, the existence of shamanism, mythology, and technology intertwined with climate change has yet to be widely addressed. These components are critical in *Mongrel*. This paper uses a discursive approach and posthuman concepts to connect meaning, representation, and context. One of the posthuman conditions that befalls the characters in *Mongrel* is the ecological crisis. They respond to the crisis by planning and building *paguyuban* and strive for ethical relations by considering the needs of animals, plants, and robots when they reside in the same space. Basically, the formation of posthuman subjects refers to the ever-changing process of “becoming we.” Initially, it is a human and animal assemblage. Then, the alignment shifts to human, animal, technology, clone, shamanic processes, and Kalia dimension that enhance its capabilities. Even if “we” is made up of the same assemblage, its capabilities may change as a result of a readjustment of the shared understanding of the challenge or predicament at hand. In addition, there is the queer family that destabilizes the ideal family. Finally, there are also monsters who are an amalgamation of elements such as human, animal, technology, shamanic ceremonies, Kalia dimension, and mythological creatures.

Keywords: Mongrel, climate change, posthuman subjects, shaman, monsters

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Helmi Naufal Zul'azmi is studying a master's degree in Media and Cultural Studies at Gadjah Mada University. He has been exploring fantasy science fiction from a posthuman framework for his thesis. His first article "Praktik Peliyanaan dan Pendisiplinan Tubuh Lewat Bahasa Kekerasan di Percakapan Twitter" was published in *Sasdaya: Gadjah Mada Journal of Humanities*. His most recent piece "Kucing Pororo: Upaya Melampaui Pesohor Internet" was published in 2023.

Ramayda Akmal (PhD) graduated from Gadjah Mada University and obtained a doctoral degree at the Asien-Afrika-Institut, Universität Hamburg. She is a Lecturer at the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Gadjah Mada University. Her first novel *Jatisaba* won the 2010 Jakarta Arts Council Novel Writing Competition. Her second novel, *Tango & Sadimin* (2017), was the runner-up in the UNNES International Novel Writing Contest. Her latest work *Aliansi Monyet Putih* was published last year.

Panel A2 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/164>

Hai Ninh Do

Institute of Literature, Hanoi, Vietnam

Humans, Cyborgs, Time, and Urban Life from a Posthumanist Perspective: The Case of Nhat Phi's Novel *The Hired Sleeper*

Abstract: Through the analysis of Nhat Phi's *The Hired Sleeper*, this paper explores the writer's artistic fiction. The novel presents cyborg/transhuman characters who can hire someone else to sleep in their stead using a connector, which allows them to efficiently use the 24 hours of the day. From the perspective of posthumanism, the paper focuses on how the relationship between humans, cyborgs, and time is handled in this world of transhuman characters. The novel indicates that humans cannot overcome their own limits as natural beings and cannot be separated from time: sleeping time, living time, existing time. The paper also highlights the writer's queries about modern humans in urban life and the journey to search for identity in the flow of time. The analysis will demonstrate how posthumanism is remarkably expressed in this work of contemporary Vietnamese fiction.

Keywords: cyborg, transhuman, posthumanism, urban life, Người ngủ thuê

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Hai Ninh Do (PhD) works at the Department of Vietnamese Contemporary Literature, Institute of Literature, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences. E-mail: haininhdovh@gmail.com

Leon Woltermann

University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany

The Death of *Which* Author? Unraveling Posthuman Authorship in *Penyair Sebagai Mesin* (2023) by Martin Suryajaya

Abstract: This paper examines the question of human-machine authorship as represented in the book *Penyair Sebagai Mesin* [Poet as Machine] (2023) by the Indonesian scholar Martin Suryajaya, which marks a pioneering exploration in the field of Indonesian literature. The book contains 176 poems generated by an AI model trained with texts of various Indonesian poets. In addition, the book encompasses some theoretical considerations, a description of the technical procedure, and analyses of the poems written by the human coauthor. Firstly, this paper aims to showcase the book's uniqueness by addressing the difficulty of allocating it to a specific genre. Building on that, the paper explores different perspectives on the issue of the book's authorship: Who are the agents involved in its construction and what are the assumptions that allow certain agents to be placed as authors over others? Subsequently, the paper aims to dismantle and compare these assumptions, each of which shape different standpoints towards the question of authorship by emphasizing certain aspects, elements, or processes in the construction of the book. The paper argues that the book facilitates diverging perspectives on the question of human-machine authorship. It demonstrates the complex and dynamic constellations between agents involved in its construction. In this sense, the book blurs the distinction between human and machine-generated writing while leaving the choice to the reader to take a perspective. Thereby, the book points to the predicament of to what extent we as humans are willing and prepared to cede parts of our agency to machines in cultural production.

Keywords: authorship, agency, posthuman, artificial intelligence, Indonesian poetry

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Leon Woltermann is a student of Southeast Asia at the Asia-Africa-Institute, University of Hamburg, Germany, focusing on digital society in Indonesia against the cultural and religious background of the country. He is interested in examining the interplay between innovation and tradition. He holds a BA in Southeast Asian Studies and MA in Digital Humanities. E-mail: leon.woltermann@gmx.de

Lu Li-Ru

Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, National Sun Yat-sen University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan

Human-Nonhuman Engagements: Multispecies Ethnographic Representations of Marine Animals in Joseph Beal Steere and Cuthbert Collingwood

Abstract: For most 19th-century Western travelers, Formosa (now Taiwan) was little-known. To explore this terra incognita, plenty of Western explorers and natural scientists visited Formosa after the opening of the ports of Ta-kau and Keelung for trade in 1860. These travelers made observations, collected specimens, and documented the mostly unknown landscapes and species, including marine animals, of Formosa. Mostly written in the form of travel journals, the works of these Western travelers were pioneering writings that delineated Formosa's flora and fauna and recorded the natural history of Formosa in the 19th century. This paper focuses on the works of two Western travelers in this period: Joseph Beal Steere (1842-1940) and Cuthbert Collingwood (1826-1908). The paper looks at Steere's and Collingwood's accounts of Formosan marine animals to argue that they pioneered the genre of "multispecies ethnography," as shown in Steere's *Letters from Formosa* (1873) and Collingwood's *Rambles of a Naturalist* (1868). The paper addresses the following questions: How did Steere and Collingwood represent Formosan oceanic animals and their multispecies environments in their works? How did Steere and Collingwood represent the entanglements of humans and nonhumans in their delineations of Formosan oceanic species? How did Steere's and Collingwood's accounts of Formosa's marine animals present lively interspecies relationships and express proto-ecological sensibilities that would make them pioneers of the genre of multispecies ethnography?

Keywords: marine animals, 19th-century Formosa, multispecies ethnographies, Cuthbert Collingwood, Joseph Beal Steere

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Skylar Lindsay

University of Bristol, Bristol, United Kingdom

Farmers, Fermentation and Better Coffee: Creating Quality in Vietnam

Abstract: Coffee farming is an increasingly precarious livelihood in much of the world, as farmers struggle with minimal profits, environmental crises, and the inequities of the coffee industry. These challenges are especially pronounced and distinct in Vietnam, as the country has a reputation for producing low-quality, cheap coffee. Some farmers have sought to improve their livelihoods by working to increase the quality of their coffee, often by improving the methods they use to process fresh coffee cherries into dried green beans. All coffee processing involves fermentation, as yeasts and bacteria change the coffee bean in ways that alter its flavors and aromas. This research asks the following: how are coffee farmers in Vietnam creating quality through fermentation and improved processing? This research draws on ethnographic fieldwork with farmers and coffee roasters in Vietnam to trace how farmers work with microorganisms to improve their livelihoods. Building on science and technology studies (STS) and commodity studies, this research brings a deeper, richer understanding of agrarian change and value chains. It shows how the intricate interplay of farmer practices, on-farm ecological relationships and the production of quality are contributing to a re-valuation of Vietnamese coffee as a commodity.

Keywords: agriculture, multispecies environments and ethnologies, science and technology studies, commodities, Vietnam

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Skylar Lindsay is a human geographer at the University of Bristol researching agrarian change and the production of commodities, quality, and value. He comes from a background working with local communities around infrastructure and development projects. His PhD research asks how coffee farmers in Vietnam work with value chains and agricultural science to increase the quality and value of their coffee. This project is driven by a need to deepen understandings of development among policymakers, industry, and consumers, from the perspective of commodity producers. His research is grounded in critical political ecologies of development, commodity studies, and science and technology studies. E-mail: Skylar.Lindsay@Bristol.ac.uk

Henrik Møller

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Cannabis Cosmology and Intercultural Challenges among Taiwanese Growers in a Highland Village of Northern Thailand

Abstract: The decriminalization of cannabis in Thailand in 2022 has attracted foreign growers into a booming, but volatile cannabis market. This paper discusses the cannabis cosmology and the business challenges of two Taiwanese growers in northern Thailand. The paper first discusses how the cannabis growth cycle involves adjustment and timing of stimuli based on the interpretation of the plants' responses. The Taiwanese cannabis growers, who are the focus of this paper, describe the plants as their children. Thus, the paper conceptualizes their activity as care work. Chanting Buddhist mantras to the plants and arguing that smoking cannabis affords them religious insights, they further posit cannabis plants as recipients and transmitters of religious animation. Secondly, the paper discusses how cultural differences posed challenges for the Taiwanese growers. They had decided to grow cannabis in a highland village of the northern highlands because the local population spoke Chinese and had historical links to Taiwan. However, failing to establish social relationships prevented them from tapping into the established distribution and sales channels. The paper conceptualizes the challenges of the Taiwanese cannabis growers as a form of human-nonhuman learning and interaction that demands ontological openness to alterity in its own terms. While their perception of the similarities between cannabis plants and human children made the Taiwanese growers adapt their care work to the plants' responses, their approach to a new socio-cultural context, perceived to be similar to their own, led to challenges in adapting to cultural differences which affected their functional business relationships in the cannabis trade.

Keywords: cannabis, Thailand, intercultural communication, cosmology, alterity

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Phacharawan Boonpromkul

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Animal Impersonation, Ecojustice, and Mariam the Dugong in the Video Clip “Don’t Let Mariam Die for Nothing” (2019)

Abstract: Produced by the Department of Environment Quality Promotion of Thailand, the Thai video clip *อย่าปล่อยให้มารีียมตายฟรี* (2019) [Don’t Let Mariam Die for Nothing] features a man standing trial for littering and killing several animals, including Mariam, a famous dugong in Thailand. This research paper examines (1) the method of animal impersonation used to give voices to nonhumans in this video, (2) the issue of ecojustice concerning environmental crimes and legal enforcement, and (3) the use of dugongs (and Mariam in particular) as a representation of endangered species. The research found that the representation of animal characters produces inconsistent messages and ludicrous effects despite the serious matter at hand. In addition, regarding the theme of environmental justice, the mock courtroom drama invites a comparison between the verdict given in this video and the real penalty in current environmental regulations. Also, the video forwards an argument that littering is an environmental crime but does so in a reductive manner. Lastly, it is crucial that the video’s keystone character is Mariam, a real young dugong raised under the care of the locals and medical staff, before it got sick and died in 2019, allegedly from plastic consumption. The article demonstrates how Mariam featured prominently in the media and how its death became a big call on environmentalism and animal conservation largely due to anthropomorphic representation. Importantly, these findings can spark off debate in the field of ecocriticism, environmental ethics, environmental laws, and environmental communication.

Keywords: animal impersonation, environmental justice in fiction, Mariam the Dugong, environmental communication

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Giang Hoang

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The Trend of Movies as Tourism Promotion: From Picturesque Landscapes to Eco- consciousness in Vietnam

Abstract: In 2002, after the success of the movie *Blood Letter* by Victor Vu, located in the Vietnamese province of Ninh Binh, there was a bloom of commercial films shot in famous places and a growing trend of movies aimed at promoting tourism, such as *Story of Pao* (2006), *Beautiful in Every Centimeter* (2009), *I Will Come Back* (2013), *Yellow Flowers on Green Grass* (2015), *Father and Son* (2017), and *Sunset Promise* (2019). Many domestic critics and audiences responded positively to this movement and expressed their pride when national scenic spots were shown to international spectators. The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism opened a nationwide public campaign to prop up these films. However, behind the eye-catching frames, the picturesque landscapes, and the smooth cinematography, it is not clear whether films like these support the ecological discourse of preserving the indigenous natural landscape. This paper will address this question, considering the effects of socialist nationalism and the mass production of capitalism in cinema and popular culture. How do these films affect the eco-consciousness of audiences? How do they provide viewers with a firm belief in the indestructible and sustainable beauty of the national landscapes? And how do they distract viewers' visual interest from practical issues? The paper also examines the environmental state of the tourist sites after the movies were released, to figure out the consequences on the environment of these tourist-promoting films.

Keywords: tourism promotion, picturesque landscapes, eco-consciousness, socialist nationalism, mass production

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Giang Hoang (PhD) is a tenured Lecturer and the Head of the Arts Studies Department, Faculty of Literature, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University. She was a visiting scholar at Harvard-Yenching Institute and at the Harvard Asia Center. Her research centers on the relations between eco-cinema and the socio-political discourses in Asian films. She has published several monographs and over 50 essays on global cinema and arts, both domestically and internationally. Her publications have appeared in *ISLE*, *Journal of Urban Culture Research*, *Asian Studies*, and *Journal of Narrative and Language Studies*. ORCID: 0000-0003-1535-6862. E-mail: gianghc@gmail.com

Trinh Dinh Thi Vu

Ho Chi Minh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam

***Giờ xanh* Must Return!**

Abstract: This will be a reportage film focusing on the need for an environmental project like *Giờ xanh* (*Green Hour*) to be maintained and developed. The author is the co-founder of this self-filming collaborative project, filmed in English by volunteers, in Vietnam and various other places around the world. The report will revolve around the reasons why *Green Hour* was born, why it is no longer developed, and why it should continue. *Green Hour* focuses on reducing arbitrary littering in Vietnam and fostering environmental awareness. The government has not supported these efforts and it has been difficult to change awareness of people in Vietnam about these issues. The project, however, was followed by thousands of young people and big companies, such as Phu My Hung, Bridgestone Vietnam, and Pepsi Vietnam, as well as celebrities. *Green Hour* has been six years in development. The project is widely known, with volunteers from various generations. And yet, Vietnam is still not as clean and green as expected. Supporting the goal of a clean environment for Vietnam, but also for the whole world, the film is a call for action on sustainability.

Keywords: Green Hour, Earth Day, garbage, biodiversity, Vietnam's environment

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Trinh Dinh Thi Vu is a Lecturer and Communications Director at the Center for Skilled Education and Community Communication (SECC), a social organization. She has created and directed projects like Green Hour, Dance for Kids, or Building Tottochan School. E-mail: dtv.trinh@hutech.edu.vn

Simon Arsa Manggala

Universitas Sanata Dharma, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Textual and Ideological Representation of Animals in Selected Indonesian Children's Stories

Abstract: Folktales are told and handed down from generation to generation to deliver moral values. They employ things and matters from the environment to get close to their readers, children. Anthropomorphic animals combined with supernatural powers often appear in folktales to add to the wonder of the tale. Therefore, animals play certain roles in folktales. This paper aims to reveal how animals in folktales are represented ideologically and delivered textually in selected folktales from Indonesia. The folktales are titled “The Buffalo's Victory,” “Kancil Steals Cucumbers,” “The Frogs,” and “The Caterpillar Story.” The paper uses thematic structure analysis and transitivity analysis from Systemic Functional Linguistics. Thematic structure analysis will show how the words or phrases related to animals are foregrounded in the folktales. Transitivity analysis reveals the ideological representations of the animals by the choice of verbs and processes of the clauses in which animals participate. The study shows that animal characters are important in folktales. However, it also shows that, whenever there are human characters, they are more thematized than animals in the clauses. In folktales, animals are imbued with human characteristics. This ideological representation might serve as a clue about how animals are perceived in society. The textual and ideological representation of animals might indicate that animals and humans are always interconnected. This research also suggests a critical perspective on how folktales are told.

Keywords: animals, ecocriticism, folktales, language, stylistics

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Simon Arsa Manggala has a bachelor's degree in English Letters and a master's degree in English Language Studies, from Universitas Sanata Dharma, Indonesia. He loves to read folktales and examine their linguistic styles. He is also interested in creative writing and the processes of story (re)production. He yearns to introduce Indonesian folktales to global readers.

Diksita Galuh Nirwinastu

Universitas Sanata Dharma, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Exploring the Agency of Animal Characters in an Indonesian Children's Story

Abstract: Animal characters in children's stories are often used symbolically and metaphorically to reveal moral values, implying the anthropocentric perspective that human beings are superior to animals and other creatures. Animal characters are usually depicted as lacking agency insofar as they act based on orders given by human characters and rarely show initiative. This study aims at exploring how animal characters are portrayed in an Indonesian children's story entitled "A Tale of Two Sisters," focusing on the agency of the animal characters in the story. "A Tale of Two Sisters" is a children's story from Bali. The story exposes the relationship between two sisters who finally reconcile after their experiences with numerous animal characters. It has some similarities with the famous story of Cinderella. In the story, the agency of animal characters can be seen through their capacity to act, initiate, and choose. This study focuses on the literary representation of animal characters in the tale by highlighting the authorial voice and the distribution of speech of the animal characters. The study argues that the animal characters in the story display the capacity to initiate actions without being given orders by human characters. They also show the capacity to choose what actions they will perform. However, to a certain extent, the animal characters in the story are still silenced and muted, as shown by their limited utterances.

Keywords: agency, animal, characters, children's stories, folktale

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Diksita Galuh Nirwinastu is a faculty member of the English Letters Department of Universitas Sanata Dharma, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. She earned a master's degree in literature from the English Language Studies, Universitas Sanata Dharma. Her research interests are literature teaching, children's stories, and digital literature.

Panel A5 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/165>

Eliezar Iñigo

Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Nightmarish Futures and Grim Realities: Glimpses of Somber Themes in Rene O. Villanueva’s Stories for Children

Abstract: Rene O. Villanueva (1954-2007) was a Filipino writer regarded as “the father of modern children’s literature in the Philippines.” During his long career, Villanueva wrote around a hundred storybooks, children’s poems, and young adult novels. He often wrote about myths, legends, lives of heroes, and historical events. He was nominated for the Hans Christian Andersen Award in 2002. This paper introduces Villanueva as writer and legend in the field of children’s literature in the Philippines and gives a preview of his works. Alongside his usual themes, Villanueva’s creativity and brilliance in story writing is shown by his treatment of dystopia, human rights, and sustainability. He was also able to combine the futuristic, the mystical, and the grave, while illuminating and enlightening its intended readers. The paper will focus on the stories “Blip!” “Emang Encantada at ang Tatlong Haragan,” and “Nemo, ang Batang Papel.” This study aims to show the charm and power of Villanueva’s writings, while contributing to the scholarship about children’s literature in the Philippines and Southeast Asia.

Keywords: Rene O. Villanueva, Philippine literature, children’s literature, storybook, Philippines

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Eliezar Iñigo is a former instructor at University of the Philippines Los Baños. He has a bachelor’s degree in Philippine Studies from UP Diliman. A former participant of Darmasiswa Scholarship Republik Indonesia from 2019-2020, he is now a graduate student of applied linguistics at Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta. His undergraduate research, dealing with the life and work of Rene O. Villanueva, will be published this year by the University of the Philippines. E-mail: eliezar.inigo@yahoo.com

Panel A6 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/020>

Ujjwal Khobra

Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, Uttarakhand, India

The Portable Portrait of the Human and the Nonhuman Tree in Sumana Roy's *How I Became a Tree*: Creating Bio(Art) through Urban Home Gardens during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Abstract: As a personalized, meticulously curated, living example of bio-art, a modicum of creative *becoming* and *becoming-with*, a utopian ideal of posthuman sentience, our home gardens represent “us,” a conflictual entanglement of the human and nonhuman other(s) that foregrounds multitudinous possibilities of *becoming* more than just our species. This paper endeavors to extend a posthuman reading to the act of creating home gardens and becoming-trees while confronting our anthropocentric anxieties and the burdens of becoming redundant during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. More specifically, the paper depicts the tree/garden as a biological system of organic matter and storytelling amidst crises, while foregrounding a *more-than-human contact zone* where nonhuman agents perform and articulate vitality. The paper draws on Sumana Roy's theoretical imbrications between “becoming-a-tree/garden” and “becoming-with or more than a tree/garden” in her work *How I Became a Tree* (2017). The aim is to situate a de-colonial animistic relationality while highlighting generative and affirmative ethics of trans-species embrace, to encounter our collective planetary realities of death, decay, and growth. In so doing, the paper offers a fantastical yet ecosophical approach to bridging the ontological gap between the human and the tree/garden, a nonhuman organic entity presented here as a *storied* apparatus.

Keywords: posthuman, COVID-19 pandemic, nonhuman, tree/plant/garden, gardening

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Ujjwal Khobra is pursuing a PhD in Posthuman Studies and the Anthropocene at the Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee, India. She completed a BA in English Literature from Zakir Husain Delhi College, University of Delhi, and an MA in English Literature from the Department of English, University of Delhi. Her areas of interest include posthuman studies and the Anthropocene, speculative fiction, and science and technology studies. Her ongoing doctoral research work focuses on “Posthuman Entanglements, Posthuman Bodies and the Anthropocene in Select Contemporary Indian Speculative Fiction in English.” ORCID: 0000-0002-5271-3518. E-mail: ukhobra@hs.iitr.ac.in

Panel A6 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/168>

Sophia Athena Ramos

University of the Philippines-Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

New Eco-poetics in Protest Literature: Renovating the Philippine Eco-poem

Abstract: Current definitions of ecopoetry have yet to account for the possibility of an overlap between the traditions of protest poetry and nature poetry, alongside the counter-hegemonic circuits of dissemination unique to Philippine literature. These enable multiple valences for articulating resistance, not just for the text as an object but as an existing cultural artifact. This short paper, which abbreviates a much longer work, presents several examples that renovate current definitions of ecopoetry and legitimize formerly illegible avenues for ecopoetic practice. The history of Philippine protest literature, in tackling landlessness and the many forms of agricultural/agrarian struggle, articulates an ecological understanding of the land (and/or land ethic) outside of established circuits of capitalist knowledge production. This includes knowledge that is folkloric and indigenous, reflecting an ecological relationship with the land embedded within the culture, which is untranslatable into English. It would come as a detriment to Philippine eco-adjacent poetry to overlook the environmentalist relation to the natural components of agriculture present in protest poetry. This is not a reproach for earlier claims that have so far overlooked the eco-adjacent verse in the Philippine protest literary tradition, but rather a nudge towards the possibilities embedded in more “illegible” texts or texts that evade “legitimized” modes of dissemination.

Keywords: ecopoetry, eco-poetics, Philippine literature, protest poetry, Philippine anglophone poetry

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Sophia Athena Ramos graduated in Creative Writing from the University of the Philippines. She writes ecopoetry and makes zines. Her research interests include ecopoetry practice, transmedia literature, children’s literature, and uncreative writing. She cares for her 13-year-old cat and what her friends call an indoor *gubat*. E-mail: ramossophia22@gmail.com

Reshma Sanil & Rashmi Gaur

Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee, India

Posthuman Embodiment and the Grotesque Body: Understanding Epigenetics and its Abject Figurations in Greg Bear's *Darwin's Radio*

Abstract: According to Moira Gatens, a Spinozist account captures the body as productive and creative. This renders the molecular biology of our body as distinctly posthuman with its focus on embodied experiences that are “instantiated, local and specific” (Hayles 49). This paper aims to show the rhizomatic shift from the anthropocentric discourse around the Human Genome Project to “nomadic-becomings” materialized in the symbiotic interaction of genome with its external and internal environments. This plasticity of the human genome is termed epigenetics. The concept will be studied by analyzing the speculative narrative of Greg Bear’s novel *Darwin’s Radio* through the theoretical perspective of critical posthumanism to understand the transformation of the “recognizable” human body into the “grotesque.” The changing roles and relations of the genetic social imaginary and body are studied in the paper by analyzing the corporeal abjection, hybrid virus-human posthuman agency and the cultural anxiety brought out by species reproduction that does not fit the normative categories. The paper will analyze hybridity and othering as eroding of the human body and that which gesture towards new potentialities and becomings. The abject body that is situated as “grotesque” due to genetic mutations is studied in the paper as posthumanist performativity to substantiate that agency and the production of knowledge have always been the emergent product between human and nonhuman agents as well as material and discursive phenomena. This analysis, by providing a broader understanding of how the genome records environmental exposure that further alters gene expression, is particularly relevant for Southeast Asia, as it correlates ecological adaptation and human biological evolution in the region.

Keywords: epigenetics, grotesque, becomings, abject, posthumanist performativity

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Reshma Sanil is a research scholar at the department of Humanities and Social Sciences (English), Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee. Her research focuses on the interdisciplinary realm of post-genomics and its material embodiment. Her work cuts across the theoretical aspects of posthumanism, material feminism, and feminist technoscience, as well as the medical humanities and cultural studies intersecting the field of genomics. ORCID: 0009-0008-1346-9728. E-mail: reshma_s@hs.iitr.ac.in

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Lauren Rebecca Clark

Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Human and More-than-human Migration and Invasion in Cauvery Madhavan's Fiction

Abstract: Cauvery Madhavan's novels *Paddy Indian* (2001) and *The Tainted* (2020) address issues of migration, war, and identity in Southeast Asian (Indian) cultures. They also focus on migration, interactions of animal and plant species, as well as diseases. *The Tainted* mediates Anglo-Indian with (Anglo)Irish experiences from pre-independence India and Ireland up until the 1980s. Madhavan prefaces *The Tainted* discussing the Connaught Rangers regiment in India. *Paddy Indian* (2001) focuses on the singular plight of an Indian doctor working in Dublin. The latter is a humorous novel though no less connected to postcolonial and ecocritical approaches, as well as critical plant and animal studies. Madhavan's characters are displaced, restricted, and discriminated against due to their (mixed) ethnicities. Her more-than-human characters are invasive species and unwanted diseases which accompany the processes of cultural migration and India's history of colonialism. The humanistic and more-than-human approaches to migration in Ireland and in India will be discussed in this paper. By humanistic, the author refers to the tendency to frame human beings in an anthropocentric way, implying dominance in a hierarchy where the human species and its outputs has a vantage point. Drawing from the Feral Atlas (2020) project, more-than-human aspects of migration and invasion that appear in Madhavan's work will be scrutinized. Here, the "feral qualities" of the ecosystem of migration (in both Indian and Irish communities) in more-than-human entities are highlighted. For instance, the regiment in *The Tainted* is threatened by transmitters of cholera, dysentery, rabies mosquito, and snake bites, whereas in *Paddy Indian* medical conditions migrate with Dr Padhman into hostile territories.

Keywords: Southeast Asian literature, ferality, critical plant and animal studies, ecocriticism, postcolonialism

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Wasinee Sutiwipakorn Topoonyanont

Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand

“Sudhana and Manohara”: The Influence of Eastern European Folklore on Ecological Worlding in Mekong River Literature

Abstract: This study, taking intertextuality and ecological worlding into the analysis, examines the relationship between humans and nature as represented in the Thai folktale “Sudhana and Manohara.” The story revolves around the romance between a human prince and a bird-like ethereal being. Stories of animal maidens appear across Arctic seas, from Siberia to Alaska and Northern Scandinavia down to the interior of northern continents and India. These routes reveal the compelling natural phenomenon involved in bird migration. This story of love, loss, and redemption manifests the cosmivision of how humans associate with natural phenomena, which guide them during celebratory seasons. A similar theme is shared from Europe to India and has reached Thailand in the form of Pannasa Jataka. In this tale, ecological worlding is turned into a Buddhist pedagogical narrative, reworking the “national geo-body” towards nature and more-than-human worlds within the borders of the state. As part of a society with globalized connections, the story has undergone transformations and re-articulations in fanfiction culture. The “Sudhana and Manohara” story has thus become a hypertext, constituting a liminal space between mainstream narratives and new conceptualizations of the natural environment. This paper argues that these folktales are worth exploring since they could contribute to reviving peaceful coexistence between humans and nature. Moreover, new forms of digital culture help diversify audiences and open new markets for individual authors to explore natural phenomena.

Keywords: Sudhana and Manohara, ecological worlding, bird migration, intertextuality, fanfiction

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel B1 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/085>

Pasoot Lasuka

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The Narratives of Underwater Experience with Whale Sharks in Social Media Groups and the Issue of Climate Change Ignorance

Abstract: This paper examines the narratives of underwater experiences shared by Thai free divers in their social media groups. The focus of the research is on the media representation of whale sharks, a prominent subject in marine tourism, and the free-diving tourists who swim underwater to capture photos and videos with these creatures. Initially, the researcher hypothesized that these media representations would build on ongoing conversation in such a way that the images of animal and environmental landscapes on social media could reinforce the commodification of nature for economic gains in the Capitalocene. However, drawing upon analyses of textual evidence within social media groups and direct observations at renowned marine tourist destinations, the study revealed a nuanced perspective that goes beyond the mere identification of the practice. This paper argues that the intricate narratives of free divers, by attempting to make the underwater experiences unique and beautiful in the online social space, may inadvertently contribute to what is termed “the reflexive ignorance of climate change.” The term denotes the systematic cultural operation that results in deliberately singling out a set of knowledge, climate change in this case, so that a certain positive economic outcome can be achieved. The narrative construction of unique and mystical underwater experiences with whale sharks can be seen as fostering ignorance.

Keywords: climate change, social media, diving, blue humanities, blue media

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Pasoot Lasuka (PhD) is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Humanities, Chiang Mai University.

Giau Duong

Vietnam Nation University Ho Chi Minh City, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam

Literary Arts in the Era of AI: Interdisciplinary Creativity and the Future of Multimedia Literature

Abstract: An ancient Chinese story tells how Zhuangzi dreamed that he was a butterfly and, upon waking up, did not know if he was Zhuangzi who had dreamed of being a butterfly or a butterfly dreaming of being Zhuangzi. In the 17th century, Shakespeare's character Hamlet struggled throughout his life to answer the question "To be or not to be?" In the chaotic and agnostic world of AI, Zhuangzi's dream and Hamlet's dilemma seem relevant to understanding the uncertainty about the exclusive creative position of humans. We express concerns, critique, and in some instances even censure the swift advancement of AI due to its encroachment upon the most fundamental underpinnings of modern society: intellectual property rights and cultural creativity. Literature confronts numerous challenges and requires adaptation and innovation. Since the foundation of literature is creativity and creativity is boundless, the combination of literature and AI undoubtedly holds great potential. This paper addresses one of the most promising aspects of combining literature and technology: the emergence and development of multimedia literary projects. Alongside the challenges, the paper will delve into the future of literary creation and reception in the AI era. The paper discusses the following questions: (1) How will the growth and explosion of machine learning and AI affect literature? (2) What are the challenges and threats faced by writers in the AI era? (3) How can multimedia literature adapt, integrate, and develop in the future?

Keywords: ChatGPT, generative AI, AI literacy, interdisciplinary studies, multimedia literature

Language: Vietnamese / **Delivery:** Onsite

Giau Duong holds a bachelor's degree in literature education and is currently pursuing a master's degree in foreign literature at the Vietnam Nation University Ho Chi Minh City (Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities). Her research interests are foreign literature, adaptation studies, and applied literature. She is currently employed at a consulting and business training company in Binh Duong, specializing in Marketing as a content creator. E-mail: giauduong021099@gmail.com

Dang Nguyen Huong Trinh

Institute of Literature, Hanoi, Vietnam

**Eco-consciousness from a Child's Perspective
through Nguyen Nhat Anh's *Crying on the Tree***

Abstract: Nguyen Nhat Anh is a leading children's writer of modern Vietnamese literature. Most of his works often delve into the beautiful but mysterious spiritual world of children and adolescents. In addition, some of his recent works also deal with the relationship between children and the environment. This paper explores the relationship between children and the natural environment in his work *Khóc trên cây* [Crying on the Tree]. Here, the writer exploits the special point of view of children to show the different behaviors towards the environment. Thanks to their keen intuition and pure love for the natural environment, children often make their own choices about how to behave with the environment, regardless of economic considerations. Rather than leading children, adults may sometimes learn from children about kindness and good manners in relation to the environment.

Keywords: Nguyen Nhat Anh, children's stories, ecocriticism, ecological consciousness

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel B2 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/174>

Thi Huong Thuy Le

Vietnam Institute of Literature, Hanoi, Vietnam

Urbanization and Ecological Damage: A Study of “Nham Mat Nhin Troi” by Nguyen Xuan Thuy and “Linh Dieu” by Nguyen Van Hoc

Abstract: In recent decades, along with the radical changes in economic and social life, ecosystems have been experiencing tremendous impacts. With the shifts in our living spaces happening very quickly, people are not sufficiently aware of the environmental problems they are facing. Several contemporary Vietnamese writers have addressed the ecological risks in their works, as an active example of putting ideas into practice. Some of them have drawn their inspiration from the ecosystems themselves. Nguyen Xuan Thuy and Nguyen Van Hoc are two authors, both of them born after the 1970s, who have successfully put their environmental concerns into words. This paper analyzes Nguyen Xuan Thuy’s “Nham mat nhin troi” and Nguyen Van Hoc’s “Linh dieu” to understand their approach towards the protection of our living space and the development of a harmonious life with nature, which are the keys to sustainable development.

Keywords: ecosystems, urbanization, ecological damage, case studies, sustainable development

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel B3 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/068>

Deeptha Sateesh

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Inhabiting Thresholds: Transhuman Practices and Relations across Anchors of Wetness

Abstract: Amidst the dark wet jungles and hamlets of certain parts of South and Southeast Asia, are sentient beings who inhabit watery ecotones (Neimanis, 2012), dwelling between mountains and plains, between day and night, and between the rains and monsoonal respite. They move and shapeshift with the rhythms of seasons, listening to the terrain, enlivened in the advent of dramatic change. These transhumans hold deep and intimate relations with the natural world, nurtured through attentiveness and care for the more-than-human beings, material processes of terrain, and earth-atmosphere fluidities. They move and correspond with non-linear rhythms, responding to unpredictability. This paper explores the world of indigenous animist practices as movement arts, thinking through the notion of liminality, inhabiting thresholds, across “anchors of wetness.” By walking through the environment, a transcorporeal engagement, the paper weaves these customary practices as waterlines (Coelho 2021) amongst humans, biota, and earth. It exposes orientalist views of these practices as articulated by colonial explorers, surveyors, and missionary workers, who described these ancient practices as “devil-worship,” initiating the erasure of relationalities between humans and landscape, humans and other beings, in these contentious and aqueous tropical terrains. The paper attempts to decolonize thinking around environment-custodian relations by immersing in an aqueous imagination, to highlight the operations of these wetscapes and their transformations. Situated knowledges of these places are held in everyday practices of dwelling and fluid embodiments of walking, revealing the importance of continually reading patterns of environmental change, and how to respond to them in these shifting ecologies.

Keywords: movement arts, liminality, wet ontologies, situated knowledge, decolonization

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Owen Harry

National University of Singapore, Singapore

Dreaming of Change: Ursula K. Le Guin and the Daoist Posthuman

Abstract: In their emphasis on perceiving and relating to the world as fundamentally interconnected rather than divided into separate human and nonhuman realms, various religious traditions of Southeast Asia, most prominently Buddhism and animism, offer valuable resources for countering the anthropocentrism of humanist thought. Scholars have recently argued that posthumanists should pay greater attention to such traditions, with some pointing to Daoism as corroborating and even potentially radicalizing posthumanism. The confluence of these perspectives may be seen clearly in the work of the American writer Ursula K. Le Guin, who consistently positions Daoist thought in direct opposition to anthropocentric humanism throughout her speculative fiction. While posthumanist critics have acclaimed Le Guin for her experiments in multispecies subjectivity, they tend not to pay any consideration to the role that Daoism plays in these experiments, perhaps due to associations made throughout Le Guin scholarship between Daoism and passivity or quietism. In this paper, I read Le Guin’s most explicitly Daoist novel *The Lathe of Heaven* (1971) to demonstrate how its protagonist embodies Daoist concepts and in doing so conforms largely to Rosi Braidotti’s model of posthuman subjectivity as dynamic, embodied, and relational. Rather than simply noting how Daoism reflects posthumanist theory, however, I argue that reading the novel in light of recent re-evaluations of the concept of *wuwei* (non-action) suggests an alternative conception of human agency and a spiritual technology that may inform the posthumanist project.

Keywords: Daoism, religion, posthumanism, speculative fiction, subjectivity

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Owen Harry (PhD) is an instructor at the National University of Singapore, where he previously completed his PhD in English Literature. His dissertation “Posthuman Ecospiritualities in American Literature” examined the importance of the religious imagination, particularly Buddhism, Christianity, and animism, in the work of contemporary American environmental writers who seek alternatives to notions of human separation and superiority. He has published articles on Gary Snyder and Richard Powers, both of which were developed from papers given at ASLE conferences. ORCID: 0000-0002-3252-2669. E-mail: oharry@nus.edu.sg

Wisarat Painark

Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand

Rethinking the Mind/Body Dichotomy: The Posthuman Condition and the Environment's Temporality in Merlinda Bobis's *Locust Girl* and Thi Ngoc Ha's "The Spirit Pond"

Abstract: This presentation aims to examine how the idea of posthumanism is inextricably interwoven with one's conception of the environment's temporality in Merlinda Bobis's *Locust Girl* (2019) and Thi Ngoc Ha's "The Spirit Pond" (2010). Specifically, it incorporates Robert Pepperell's notion of the posthuman condition (2003) and Jane Bennett's notion of vital materialism (2010) to shed light on how one's notion of the mind/body affects one's grasp of time. To elaborate, Pepperell's posthuman condition captures the interconnectedness of the human mind, body, and the environment, while Bennett emphasizes the nonhuman agency which can immensely affect one's conception of the environment's seamless temporality, thereby debunking the notion of rigidly demarcated time. In this light, the paper argues that both the novel and the short story delineate the collision between human and nonhuman temporality which aligns with human's notion of the rigid demarcation between the human mind and body. This analysis of the literary texts also suggests that the characters' development of the posthuman condition deepens their conception of time as they become cognizant of the environment's prolonged temporality. Ultimately, the corpus illuminates the characters' epistemic shift, depicted in the heightened perception of nonhuman materiality, as well as the exposed discursive construction of the human/nonhuman dichotomy. Essentially, this presentation exhibits how one's attentiveness to "a vital materiality," "to act, animate, and produce effects," encompasses both epistemological and ontological dimensions.

Keywords: ecocriticism, posthumanism, temporality, new materialism, ontology

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel B4 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/042>

Thomas Leonard Shaw

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Bloody Branches and Crimson Petals: Examining Floral Discourse in Maria Elena Paulma’s “The Bougainvillea”

Abstract: Jemma Stewart, on her reading of the garlic flower in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*, recognizes that the language of flowers offers “a lens through which to investigate imagery and meaning, as well as cultural and synesthetic evocation in literature” (2018, 326). To a degree, scholarship on images of the flower abound in Gothic criticism and their symbolizing of a variety of concerns – death, tragedy, and poor health to name a few. This paper, while informed by this critical tradition, moves away from reading flowers as simply symbolic of such concerns towards a more discursively complex conception of flowers. In particular, it seeks to examine Maria Elena Paulma’s “The Bougainvillea” through an elucidation of the bougainvillea – both plant and stem – as the central source of unease and anxiety within the narrative. The paper aims to illustrate how the bougainvillea plays a role in framing a discussion of institutional, religious ideas and the tensions they engender with regards to space, indigenous beliefs of spirituality and the “monstrous,” while revealing the syncretic form that underpins a discourse of the floral. I argue that this articulates uniquely Philippine historical contestations. Ultimately, this paper will be informed by the insights enabled by a coupling of both postcolonial Gothicism, ecogothic approaches to literature, complicated by the cultural specificities of a Philippine worldview.

Keywords: floral discourse, ecogothic, postcolonial gothic, Philippine literature in English, fiction

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Thomas Leonard Shaw is a queer, liminal poet-theorist and a faculty member at the Department of English and Comparative Literature, UP Diliman. His latest publication is an essay on the representation of Siargao and islandic space in several chosen films, published in *Environment, Media, and Popular Culture in Southeast Asia* (Springer). He has several upcoming publications on Philippine gothic literature and Philippine horror cinema. His research interests include gothic and horror studies, memory studies, and Philippine literature in English.

Iping Liang

National Taiwan Normal University, Taipei, Taiwan

Plants and Memories: *Taiwania* and *Two Trees Make a Forest*

Abstract: This presentation explores both the material and metaphorical aspects of *Taiwania* (*Taiwania cryptomerioides*), the coniferous tree in the Cupressaceae family that is also the tallest tree species in Taiwan. The paper will include two parts: (1) the discovery and naming of *Taiwania* by Japanese botanist Bunzō Hayata in 1906 from the perspective of environmental history, and (2) the representation of this species in the family memoir, *Two Trees Make a Forest*, by Taiwanese Canadian writer Jessica J. Lee (2019). Trained as an environmental historian, Lee writes the natural history of the island to learn more about its vegetation, as well as her family’s memories embedded on the island. Employing the approach of materialist ecocriticism, the paper argues that both the material and metaphorical aspects of *Taiwania* signify a “vegetal common” between the natural and the human, as Dipesh Chakrabarty has pointed out in his seminal essay (2009).

Keywords: *Taiwania*, critical plant studies, Jessica Lee, natural history, family history

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel B4 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/078>

Henrikus Joko Yulianto

State University of Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

Phyto-Investigation of the Vegetal Intelligence of Tropical Arborescent Flora in Contemporary Indonesian Poems by Afrizal Malna and Hanna Francisca

Abstract: Plants communicate with humans through their process of growth since they originate from seeds until they evolve into a robust life form. Through this natural metabolism, plants transform their physicality from an early morphology to their later inflorescence. Examples of this process are banana and papaya, tropical plants of Southeast Asia. This paper overviews some of Indonesian contemporary poems that use the images of banana (*Musa sapientium*) and papaya (*Carica papaya*) as arborescent floras that simultaneously act as ecological agents with their own values and benefits for humans and nonhumans. These poems include “banana tree november” and “banana tree on an intercity bus” by Afrizal Malna and “The Papaya Tree’s Mistake” by Hanna Francisca. These poems embody phytophotographic elements as they depict plants, not as sessile objects, but as organic and intelligent organisms that affect humans through their natural growth, as they flower into earthbound bountiful structures. The ways they evolve from seedling to mature stages substantiate plants’ intelligence, expressed through a kind of plant script or “nonverbal forms of expression” (Ryan, 2020) that interweave their inherent vegetal articulations with human’s personal growth from naivety to maturity. Malna’s surrealistic poetics, in juxtaposing banana with cultural artefacts, and Francisca’s phytopoetics, in embracing papaya as a long-standing plant for all seasons, epitomize their way of anthropomorphizing these arborescent plants. This contributes to raising care about the roles of vegetal species for human and nonhuman life on Earth.

Keywords: inflorescence, banana, papaya, phytophotography, phytopoetics

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Kamonlaporn Sirisophon

Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University, Nonthaburi, Thailand

Wannao Disease: A Symbol of Youth Resistance in *Siamese Graveyard* by Prapt

Abstract: The emergence of a new strain of the Covid-19 Delta variant in Thailand in 2021 was followed by lockdown of Bangkok and other areas. Problems of vaccine distribution and a deteriorating economy led to protests in various parts of Thailand. This study investigates Wannao disease in Prapt's dystopian novel *Siamese Graveyard* by examining its causes, symptoms, social reactions, and crisis management by the government. Patients infected with Wannao disease can be compared with uncontrollable Covid-19 cases. The chaos in the uncivilized area and ineffective crisis management concerning the rapidly growing numbers of cases underline the military government's poor management of the Covid-19 situation and question the legitimacy of the military government. The disease itself can be read as a symbol of youth resistance to the military government when public protests were impossible and uproars in social media could not be heard.

Keywords: youth resistance, Covid-19, Thai military government, dystopia, Thai literature

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Kamonlaporn Sirisophon is a Thai scholar interested in young adult fiction from various countries. Her most recent publication is on the morality of young adult characters. She is currently conducting research on teaching literature in distance education. E-mail: kamonlaporn.sir@stou.ac.th

Soorya Alex

Kannur University, Kannur, India

Configuring Posthuman Pedagogies in Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* and J. G. Ballard's *Crash*

Abstract: This study is a comparative analysis of Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*, set in Thailand, and J. G. Ballard's *Crash*. The paper examines how human interventions in *The Windup Girl* disrupt the natural world, ecology, space, and nature. It also delves into how humans transform into cybernetic systems in *Crash*, ultimately ushering in a shift from traditional liberal humanist ideals to a complex posthuman material world. These two novels are approached within the theoretical framework of posthumanism. Specifically, the paper investigates the reconfigurations and transformations of the human body within the realm of cyber-reality. Drawing on the sociology of cyborgs and machine culture, the paper explores the intersection of humanity and technology and its social and cultural implications. Both novels raise crucial questions about how machines reshape the human body and challenge centuries-old anthropocentric perspectives. The paper also integrates the concept of the cyborg as a representation of nonhuman agency, disrupting ontological paradigms in the Anthropocene. As humanity stands at the crossroads between humanism and posthumanism, profound changes in desire, form, and expression are observed, with the human body becoming profoundly intertwined with prosthetic materiality. These novels offer posthuman insights that illuminate the interface where humans and machines merge, giving rise to new posthuman ontologies. Additionally, both novels explore the futures shaped by technological advancements, biotechnology applications, and related innovations.

Keywords: posthumanism, machine culture, cyborg, prosthetics, body politics, techno-culture, agency, object world, Thailand

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Mahesh Krishna & Nagendra Kumar

Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee, India

Conservation, Capitalism, and the Death of the Human: Environmental Discourse in a Posthuman World

Abstract: In cultural studies, discourse is a term that refers to the process of “meaning-making” or knowledge formation in a culture through the use of language. In Foucault’s work, discourse is the specific way in which a culture constructs, negotiates, and determines what knowledge is, how power operates, and where sociocultural value is placed, very often through specific objects and/or practices that culture produces. This paper is an attempt to study the discourse of environmentalism in a world that has become (or has been rendered) posthuman, through the analysis of Paolo Bacigalupi’s science fiction novel *The Windup Girl* (2009). Science fiction has always been in the vanguard of resistance and serves as an excellent vehicle for expressing ideas that may seem outlandish and revolutionary but are imminent and inevitable. The work in question is set in near-future Thailand, amidst rising sea levels and the explosion of extreme late-stage capitalism. The plot focuses on the journey of Emiko, a genetically engineered superhuman “windup” created in a laboratory. Being one of the only nations in the world that has survived, Thailand’s Environment Ministry is the most powerful arm of the government due to the role it played in combating various strains of genetically engineered diseases that caused havoc in the “post-Contraction” world. This paper attempts to study how the discourse of environmentalism operates in a posthuman world, where the argument of human exceptionalism is abandoned, not merely on moral grounds, but at a physical level.

Keywords: posthuman ecocriticism, ecological posthumanism, narrative agency, Foucault, dystopian fiction, Thailand

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Linh Truong Thi & Thu Ta Anh

Thu Dau Mot University, Binh Duong, Vietnam

The Ecological-Spiritual Complex in Novels of Southern Vietnam in the First Half of the 20th Century

Abstract: Ecocriticism began in the 1970s with the work of Raymond Williams but gained momentum in the 1990s. Facing the threat of increasingly harsh human living environments (drought, flood, earthquake, disease, etc.), ecological criticism places literary works in relation to the natural and social environment. It serves to clarify the interaction between people and the natural and social environment to overcome environmental problems affecting human life. This is a form of interdisciplinary research between literature and branches of social sciences, such as culture, politics, ethics, ideology, as well as natural sciences such as environment, geography, biology, etc. Many researchers have studied and implemented ecological and human issues in literature under many aspects such as spiritual ecology, moral ecology, religious ecology, ecological humanities, or feminist ecology. This paper explores southern Vietnamese novels in the first half of the 20th century. Through the analysis of the novels *Thầy Lazarô Phiền* [Master Lazaro Phien] (Nguyen Trong Quan, 1887), *Người bán ngọc* [The Seller of Pearls] (Le Hoang Muu, 1924), *Đêm tối của người tội tử hình* [Last Night of the Death Penalty] (Le Hoang Muu, 1925), and *Tôi Có Tội* [I Am Guilty] (Phu Duc, 1935), the paper focuses on developing forms of mental ecology: the hatred complex, the tormented complex, and the regret complex.

Keywords: hatred, torment, regret, novels of southern Vietnam, spiritual ecology

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Manh Mai The & Thi Bao Anh Nguyen

Thu Dau Mot University, Thu Dau Mot, Vietnam

The Sense of Romantic Self in William Blake's Poetry: A Poetry of Meditation

Abstract: Romanticism was a Western artistic and philosophical movement that started in the 1770s and continued into the first half of the 19th century. The Romantic movement flourished in English and German literature around 1798, with the first edition of the *Lyrical Ballads* by Wordsworth and Coleridge, and ended in 1832, a time marked by the deaths of Walter Scott and Goethe. Romanticism focuses on the imagination as an infinite creative resource and is deeply rooted in nature. It reveres nature as a holy place where people can return and heal. Through symbols and myths, as well as archetypes, it uses narrative to express the true self of humans. In addition, Romanticism also pays attention to emotion, lyric expression, and the self, presenting the “artist-as-hero” in the process of reflecting on life. From these perspectives, this paper studies the Romantic self in Blake’s poetry. Along with Robert Burns, Blake is representative of Romanticism in England, in the same way that Goethe and Schiller represent Romanticism in Germany. His works are filled with discourses about nature, with references to the seasons (“To Spring,” “To Summer,” “To Autumn,” “To Winter”), the divine (“To the Muses,” “The Divine Image,” “Holy Thursday”), animals (“The Lamb,” “The Tiger,” “The Birds”), and plants (“The Lily,” “The Blossom,” “Ah! Sunflower”). This paper also points out connections with Zen poetry to show that Blake’s poems are not so different from the poetry of meditation.

Keywords: Romanticism, Romantic self, William Blake, archetypes, nature

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Panel B6 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/133>

Manh Mai The

University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Thu Dau Mot University, Binh Duong, Vietnam

The Art of Nature Description in Southeast Asian Romantic Novels from the Perspective of Ecocriticism

Abstract: Nature is both the material and creative space of literature. In Western literature, since the Greco-Roman period, attempts have been made to explain the relationship between humans and nature. Still, throughout history, up to the end of the eighteenth century, as religious concepts and ideas developed, people lost their sense of belonging to nature. By the Romantic period in the 19th-century Europe, nature in its material form emerged as a privileged medium to describe a place where the human was liberated from the institutions of tradition, religion, and society. Since this theme was initiated by the Romantics, there has been a wave of emotional development, fueling a powerful desire for unity and harmony with nature that has now been reawakened. Meanwhile, Eastern literary traditions in general, and those of Southeast Asia in particular, inherently share the concept of “unification of nature and man,” that is, a personification of nature, and advocate for an integration of the human spirit into the world. This paper uses ecocriticism and the naturalist concepts of Romanticism to look at works such as *Behind the Painting* by Sri Boorapha and *Midway Through Spring* by Khai Hung. Its aim is to clarify the artistic features of these Romantic novels, as they describe nature while simultaneously expressing the overall harmony between nature and humans.

Keywords: nature, humans, Romantic novel, ecocriticism, Romanticism

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Panel C1 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/091>

Hana Ghani

Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei Darussalam

Liminal Characters in Non-Liminal Environments: Spacing Humanimity in Kathrina Mohd Daud's *The Halfling King*

Abstract: *The Halfling King* portrays a world where crocodiles begin their lives as humans. After giving birth to a human-crocodile hybrid named Halfling, the mother and child move to the river jungle to live among other crocodiles. Although the human-crocodile entanglement dissolves the human/animal dualism, further dissection of the environment's interaction with humans, hybrids, and crocodiles underscores the pivotal role of dwelling in defining "human" and "animal." Regardless of their characteristics, their power and agency depend on the environment they inhabit. Here lies the disparity in Bruneian eco-imagination. The trope of humanimity insinuates the Islamic perspective that God's creations (*makhluk*) are equal. However, space continues to be dualistically portrayed as human settlements or natural environments, reinforcing the human/animal divide. This paper asserts that the tension in perspectives mirrors Brunei Darussalam's national consciousness, shaped by Islam as a national religion and its reliance on the oil industry. Ultimately, this paper aims to broaden Rinni Amran's framework on Bruneian eco-imagination by incorporating the national religion into the analysis.

Keywords: humanimity, Bruneian literature, Bruneian ecocriticism, dwelling, ecotheology

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Chi Pham

Institute of Literature, Hanoi, Vietnam

Myth and Animal Resistance in Vietnamese Animal Stories: The Case of “Raw Fish” and “Giát Market Day”

Abstract: It was not until ecological criticism was introduced into the intellectual life of Vietnam, especially the field of literary studies, in the early 2010s, that the cultural relationship with animals was questioned. Vietnamese ecocritics started reading about such a cultural relationship by questioning the absence of animals’ subjectivity. For example, Tran Ngoc Hieu and Dang Thai Ha (2017) attempt to reveal the voices of animals in post-war Vietnamese narratives, pointing to the absence of animals’ agency in war narratives as a sacrifice for the nation’s anti-colonial struggle. These authors read the image of the human-ape in Bảo Ninh’s *The Sorrow of War* as a metaphor about the inability of animals to have their forgotten tragedies and suffering in wartime recognized by humans. Following these authors’ arguments, this paper analyzes descriptive narratives of animals in two Vietnamese stories: “Raw Fish” (2005, Nguyễn Ngọc Thuần) and “Giát Market Day” (1988, Nguyễn Minh Châu). It aims to highlight how dreams and myths warn humans about the resistance of their domestic animals.

Keywords: animal’s resistance, Vietnamese animal fiction, children’s stories, myths, dreams

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Chitra Sankaran

National University of Singapore, Singapore, Singapore

Posthuman Animal Narratives in and of South and Southeast Asia

Abstract: Since ancient times, across all cultures, animals have not only been a part of human reality but also formed a large part of the human imagination. In the myths and folklore of diverse cultures around the world, animals are a ubiquitous presence. However, their existence does not necessarily give us any insights into these fellow beings, who share our planet with us because animals in human tales are, by and large, anthropomorphized, attributed human characters such that they reveal more about humanity than animality. However, there have always been exceptions to this traditional perception that marks the boundary between humans and animals. This paper discusses animals (especially tigers) and their posthuman transformations in fiction centered on or emerging from Singapore, Malaysia, India, and Myanmar. Examining the posthuman condition in Simon Chesterman's *Artifice*, set in Singapore, Amitav Ghosh's *Jungle Nama* set in Myanmar and India, and Sir Hugh Clifford's *Were-Tiger Tales* set in colonial Malaya, the paper discusses how these narratives present the liminal divide between humans and animals, and in doing so, interrogates the concept of human exclusivity that has come to be normalized in humanist narratives.

Keywords: posthuman, animal, Southeast Asian, fiction, narratives

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel C2 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/010>

Nikodemus Niko & Herry Wahyudi

Raja Ali Haji Maritime University, Tanjungpinang, Indonesia

Indigenous Rights and Connectivity to Nature: Non-Traditional Security in an Indigenous Community of Dayak Benawan (West Kalimantan, Indonesia)

Abstract: Indigenous peoples in Indonesia generally lack security. They are faced with different vulnerabilities, such as the risk of losing rights over their land and the criminalization of their customs. This paper, relying on a case study, discusses the state of the rights of indigenous peoples and the vulnerabilities they face from a non-traditional security approach. The paper focuses on the Dayak indigenous people living in Balai District, Sanggau Regency. Field data was collected through observation and interviews. The informants involved in the study belonged to the Dayak Benawan community. The study shows the existence of threats related to the rights to land management, which stem from the indigenous community itself. This situation threatens their sources of livelihood, which are often connected to nature. As a result, local knowledge about the management of natural resources has begun to disappear. Other threats are also mounting (non-traditional security), such as food crises, eroded indigenous knowledge, and natural disasters affecting the community.

Keywords: indigenous peoples, indigenous rights, customary forests, non-traditional security, Dayak Benawan

Language: Indonesian / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Khairi Rahmi & Rizky Octa Putri Charin

Universitas Maritim Raja Ali Haji, Tanjungpinang, Indonesia

Knowledge Exchange between Indigenous (Orang Suku Laut) and Modern Peoples on the Management of Coastal Resources in the Riau Archipelago (Indonesia)

Abstract: This paper aims to analyze the process of knowledge exchange between traditional and modern peoples living side by side in coastal areas. The traditional group is the Orang Suku Laut, who inhabit Berakit Village, Riau Archipelago Province. The Orang Suku Laut are marine guardians with traditional knowledge on survival, biodiversity, and marine ecosystems. This traditional knowledge faces threats, such as loss of natural resources, climate change, and especially urbanization and globalization. The group of modern people are economic actors developing Teripang (sea cucumber) products in Kampong Teripang. Teripang is one of the most important marine commodities in Berakit Village, used as raw material for food by the Orang Suku Laut. The economic actors of Kampong Teripang rely on technology as the primary tool to process Teripang into various products with high economic value. The study applies descriptive-qualitative methods (in-depth interviews) to collect data. It then studies the impact and responses toward the presence of modern people managing marine products with sophisticated knowledge and how the process of knowledge exchange occurs between the two groups. The results suggest that Orang Suku Laut do not consider sophisticated technology as a threat to their traditional knowledge. Rather, the two groups manage to collaborate with each other.

Keywords: Orang Suku Laut, indigenous people, traditional knowledge, coastal resources

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel C2 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/043>

Eventus Ombri Kaho

University Sanata Dharma, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

“Reparation” of Life in the Metamanasi Area of East Nusa Tenggara Province After the Conversion of Mangrove Forests to Salt Mines

Abstract: This study examines the conversion of mangrove forests into salt mines in traditional areas in Matemanasi, East Nusa Tenggara (Indonesia). Through this framework, the paper analyzes the process of appropriation endured by the people in the Metamanasi area as well as the “reparations” to biodiversity. The posthuman theory of Rossi Braidotti and Donna Haraway is used to analyze the connectedness between humans and nonhumans. Rossi Braidotti’s posthuman theory focuses on *zoe* which can be interpreted as life. In line with this, Donna Haraway offers a posthuman approach to cultivating kinship. This research used new ethnographic methods to realize closeness to the object under study, both in the process and the form of presentation. The data presented in this paper will be explained further using a posthuman framework, to show the dimensions of posthuman politics. Posthuman politics is seen as a posthuman ethic linked to a chain or cycle that is never broken or ended. It does not focus on humans as subjects, but rather places them as part of kinship networks in the Chthulucene.

Keywords: reparations, assemblage, Chthulucene, posthuman politics, posthuman, *Zoe*

Language: Indonesian / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel C2 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/065>

Ferdinando Septy Yokit

Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Indigenous Revivalism: *Kaketbon* and New Paths Towards Post-Anthropocene Ecological Revival in Indonesia

Abstract: This research paper aims to examine the *Kaketbon* practices of the Muyu-Are people in Boven Digoel Regency, South Papua, as an alternative effort to understand the ongoing ecological crisis in Indonesia. *Kaketbon* itself has been a way of life for the Muyu-Are people since ancient times and is now deeply rooted in their social-cultural structure. The connection between the Muyu-Are indigenous community and the forest ecology is governed through *Amop*, or customary law. This research uses a novel ethnographic method rooted on the subjects' lived experiences. Furthermore, it attempts to offer a critical analysis using the Deleuzian concept of multiplicity. This concept seeks to examine intersubjective relationships among living beings that are not singular but interconnected and influenced by various factors within specific conditions. This research also develops a political ontology in the context of post-Anthropocene ecology by taking the idea of pluriverse, which emphasizes diversity among species, both human and nonhuman.

Keywords: *Kaketbon*, Muyu, Adat revivalism, pluriverse, multiplicity, Papua

Language: Indonesian / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel C3 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/121>

Omsin Jatuporn

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Reclaiming Posthuman Roots and Ecological Subjectivity in Curriculum and Knowledge Production in the Mekong Region

Abstract: Building on Braidotti's notion of critical posthumanism and Barad's notion of intra-action, this paper foregrounds a theoretical discussion based on phenomenological curriculum inquiry in Chiang Khong district, located on the bank of the Mekong River. The curriculum was constructed through diverse lived experiences where agencies emerge through material conditions of entanglement with Mekong metaphoric ontologies. The Mekong as a space of knowledge production implies a shift from modernist anthropocentric assumptions to ecological subjectivity by embracing the vitality of life as an endless, non-linear, relational, and contextually situated nature-culture continuity. As conceptualized in ecocritical pedagogy, the emerging agencies involved in curriculum goals and practices serve to reconstruct the conceptions of citizenship, from liberal, participatory, associative and (multi)cultural to ecological citizenship. The curriculum is fully embodied in a network of intra-acting influences of human and nonhuman assemblages such as teachers' collaboration with local intellectuals, community representatives, nature-culture reality, and students' entanglement with a diverse ecology of knowledges and multiple human and nonhuman actors. Curriculum-as-lived is a temporal-spatial moment which will never happen in the same way since it is improvisational and continually becoming. The curriculum process, however, can be replicated under the leadership of teachers and school principals. Pedagogical practices, such as critical reflection, problem-posing dialogue, and consciousness, empower agencies to work in solidarity with students as agents of change. This should enrich future practices of curriculum inquiry leading to ecological transformation with social justice.

Keywords: posthuman roots, ecological subjectivity, knowledge production, ecocritical pedagogy, Mekong region

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel C3 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/131>

Piyachai Nakon

Faculty of Education, Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Mobilizing for Ecological Sustainability through School-Community Partnerships: A Case of Local-led Organization in the Northern Provinces of Thailand

Abstract: The province of Chiang Mai is severely affected by air pollution every year. Yet, the actions taken by the government to solve the problem seemingly focus on addressing mere circumstances, not the root causes. A civil society movement has emerged to propose that the PM2.5 crisis should be solved urgently. The Council of Breath (Sa Pa Lom Hai Jai), a civil society actor in Chiang Mai, intended to materialize possible solutions to air pollution and develop an eco-justice praxis in Chiang Mai and other northern provinces. This research aims to study the processes and steps taken by the Council of Breath regarding its push for environmentally oriented issues, shifting from a human-centric to an eco-centric nature-culture approach, to create healthy and environmentally friendly ecosystems. The researcher investigated local actors from the Council of Breath by using in-depth interviews and observation of their practical activities and everyday practices. In addition, relevant published documents were analyzed and juxtaposed with the processes used by local actors, indicating mutual collaborations to tackle PM2.5 impacts. The results of this study indicate that the Council implemented policies and practices aimed at managing air pollution and creating green environments. This was achieved by establishing partnerships with regional public schools and universities, through training and raising critical awareness toward social and environmental justice amongst children, young people, and adults. This case shows how a pedagogical approach derived from eco-justice education was undertaken as the foundation for a civic and educational movement towards ecological sustainability and development.

Keywords: ecological subjectivity, eco-justice education, local-led organization, social movements, air pollution, Thailand

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Rong Hu

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Sustaining Ethnic Minority Literacy Through Culturally Relevant Pedagogy: The Case of a Public School in the Yunnan Border Area

Abstract: Situated in the southwest of China, Yunnan province is home to a wide variety of ethnic minority groups and is renowned for its rich cultural diversity. More than 25 minority ethnic groups live in the area, and each of these communities has its own distinct language and script, which are essential to maintaining their unique identities and cultural heritage. However, the increasing influence of Mandarin Chinese and modernization have raised concerns about the preservation and promotion of ethnic minority literacy in the region. A case study of a public primary school in this border area highlights the importance of incorporating the knowledge and cultural capital of students into school-based curriculum and culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP). Investigating the practices of the school's principal and teachers, the study revealed that teachers supported students' academic performance and empowered the unique identities of ethnic minority students by incorporating their cultural backgrounds, life experiences, and ethnic languages into the curriculum and pedagogy. These practices were supported by the principal through school administration, by avoiding potential cultural gaps and fostering a stronger sense of place and pride for the local heritage. Sustaining ethnic minority literacy through CRP can facilitate students' critical thinking, self-expression, and pride in their community's knowledge, while promoting academic success and long-term learning engagement. However, teachers, as curriculum and instructional gatekeepers, are key in transcending culturally relevant practices that are still human-centric towards more-than-human and nature-culture oriented approaches for maintaining ethnic minority literacy and building more sustainable and eco-friendly environmental education practices in public schools in Yunnan.

Keywords: ethnic minority literacy, public primary school, Yunnan border area, ethnic minority students

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Rong Hu is a PhD student at the Faculty of Education of Chiang Mai University, majoring in multicultural education. She is interested in culturally relevant pedagogy in ethnic minority regions in China.

Jason Paolo Telles

Monash University, Melbourne, Australia

University of the Philippines-Baguio, Baguio, Philippines

Displacement of Nature and Indigenous People in the 39th SEA Games in the Philippines: Towards an Ecocriticism of Sport Mega-Events

Abstract: Sport mega-events are significant international events that attract a multitude of participants and audiences worldwide. Such events cause significant negative environmental impacts. This paper argues that the hosting of sport mega-events and their environmental impacts reflect a host country's hegemonic view of, and relationship with nature and its indigenous people (IP). It focuses on the case of the 39th Southeast Asian (SEA) Games hosted by the Philippines in 2019, which aimed to sanitize the country's reputation and showcase the Philippines' hospitality and vibrant culture to a global audience. However, the construction of the athletics stadium in Tarlac caused the displacement of nature and the Aeta indigenous people from their ancestral lands. Using an ecocritical lens, the paper analyzes the narratives and images produced by Philippine media and official government documents shaping the discourses surrounding the SEA Games. It argues that the displacement of nature and the Aetas reflects the country's exploitative approach to nature and its IP. This approach reflects a worldview that privileges the needs and interests of dominant groups while marginalizing and erasing other/othered voices and experiences. This study foregrounds the interconnections between sport mega-events, nature, and indigenous people, highlighting the need for a critical rethinking of the ways in which these events are conceptualized, planned, and executed. A critical ecocriticism of sport mega-events can provide a framework for analyzing the complex interplay between nature, culture, and sport, offering a more holistic and inclusive approach to the planning and execution of sport mega-events.

Keywords: SEA Games, Philippines, indigenous people, displacement, sports

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Vickie Monthong

Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin, Germany

Posthumanism and Cross-species Alliances in the Thai Video Game *Timelie*

Abstract: Stressing an evolving-with ethics among species and an interconnected biosphere (Braidotti, 2013; Haraway, 2016), critical posthumanism has worked as a solid foundation for a non-anthropocentric worlding parameter. Such ethos is discovered in literature and cultural products that explore the biological likenesses and empathetic kinship between human and nonhuman animals (Magnone, 2016; Lindgren & Öhman, 2018). *Timelie* (2020) by Urnique Studio, for example, is a puzzle adventure game that demonstrates the interspecies companionship of a female protagonist and her feline companion. In this Thailand-based production, players are required to solve puzzles by coordinating the movement of both human and nonhuman characters under a time-manipulating mechanism. The gameplay design of the playable duo and the theme of cross-species alliances present the human-animal relation as interdependent assemblages, which align closely with the idea of the transversal subject “we,” as a critical response to the ecological crisis of the Anthropocene (Braidotti, 2019). Although choosing a domestic pet over other animals as one of the player characters might harbor suspicions of species hierarchy, the rising popularity of nonhuman animal game characters in a wider perspective shows the keen interest of players to experience the world through the eyes of nonhuman animals. Video games, which have been recognized for their empathetic and emotional impacts (Jones et al., 2014; Isbister, 2016), provide the creative space to reinvent or reinterpret the relationship between humans and animals through narrative modes and ludological means. Hence, by analyzing the gameplay design of *Timelie* and examples drawn from the genre, this paper investigates whether nonhuman animal games show affordances to perspective-changing experiences that encourage cross-species dialogues, and thereby foster players' empathy towards our earthly neighbors.

Keywords: nonhuman animal, video games, representation, empathy, becoming-animal, Thailand

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Vickie Monthong is a PhD candidate at Freie Universität Berlin. Her doctoral project, titled *The Posthuman Game/r and Affective Gaming*, explores posthuman narratives in video games and the relationship between affective game designs and player identification. Her research interests widely cover posthuman ethics, video games studies, ecological studies, East West comparative studies, and eastern aesthetics and philosophy (Taoism). E-mail: vickiem96@zedat.fu-berlin.de

Panel C4 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/073>

Paweenwat Thongprasop

BioThai Foundation, Nonthaburi, Thailand

The Hero's Journey in Green Pixels: Folk Ecologies, Topophilia, and the Environmental Legal Culture in the RPG Game *SanThai: New Legend*

Abstract: This paper explores the 2D side-scrolling RPG video game *SanThai: New Legend* through the lenses of game studies, affective ecocriticism, and critical legal studies, within the context of posthumanism in Southeast Asia. Using elements of Thai folklore, *SanThai: New Legend* incorporates unique mechanics and a narrative structure that immerses players in a world designed to cultivate a posthuman environmental consciousness. By engaging players with ecological affects and offering ways of dealing with ecologies in more sustainable ways, the game aims to foster what Yi-Fu Tuan coined as “topophilia” or an affective bond among its players with the environment. Through an analysis of the game’s mechanics, this research uncovers implications for environmental legal culture, illustrating how video games can shape players’ comprehension of environmental law and policy, and contribute to cultivating a posthuman environmental legal culture. Furthermore, the environmental narrative and the universal hero’s journey plot in *SanThai: New Legend* convey sustainability messages that transcend cultural boundaries, encouraging players to engage with posthuman environmental ethics and reimagine their relationship with the more-than-human world. This study highlights the transformative potential of digital games in cultivating a posthuman environmental legal culture, fostering ecological awareness, and inspiring alternative modes of environmental engagement and activism in Southeast Asia and beyond.

Keywords: affective ecocriticism, video games, critical legal studies, Thai folklore, environmental legal culture

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Paweenwat Thongprasop (LL.B. from Thammasat University) is an independent queer legal scholar and literary critic. His research focuses on Thai legal studies, law and humanities, comparative literature, constitutionalism, international economic law, and environmental law, often through posthuman and postcolonial lenses. In 2021, he received the M. L. Boonlua Thepyasuwan Award for Literary Criticism. Currently, he is affiliated with the BioThai Foundation and advocates for community rights, biodiversity, and food sovereignty as a researcher. E-mail: paweenwat.th@gmail.com

Panel C5 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/117>

Regie Amamio

Mindanao State University, General Santos City, Philippines

On “That Other Time”: Man, Nature, and Existential Mysteries in Asian Stories of the Past

Abstract: Stories of the past, regarded as a mirror to community’s cultural values and uniqueness, are also rich narratives that offer logical explanations about the existence of things and order in nature. These stories offer a window that connects humans to the past, allowing them to explore aspects of their behavior and connection to nature, to understand their part and deal with the forces that come with it. The earliest narratives from China, Korea, Philippines, and Japan depicted, not only the beauty of their culture, but their early attempts to quell human curiosity about existential mysteries through narratives that reveal the human part in the cosmos. Employing Mircea Eliade’s concept of “that Other Time or *illud tempus*,” this paper explores and discusses the idea of time and space of the past world in the sacred time manifested in the earliest narratives from these countries. Sacred time is the time of origins that makes the mystical and historical times possible. One can view the world of otherness as a manifestation of the presence of gods, their direct presence to the human, as a “hierophany.” The question of the role of humans in the cosmos is indeed linked to their connection/ relationship with nature. Ancient peoples and their stories, as depicted in these early narratives, regard nature entities as enemies (feared and loathed), allies (thanked and repaid with the same goodness), or deities (adored and revered).

Keywords: *illud tempus*, humans and nature, existential mysteries, Mircea Eliade, Asian folk narratives

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Niccolo Angelo Vitug

Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines

Towards Expanding the Literary Through Explanatory Notes in the Posthuman Era

Abstract: The author of this paper wrote a book review for a translation of poems by Julia Wong KComt. The translator Jennifer Shyue admitted in a short note that the title, *Vice-royal-ties*, came from an Internet Anagram Translator that generated the name among a number of possible translations of *Bi Rey Nato*. This admission enriches the reading of translations that are in themselves powerful manifestations that there is no separation between the technological and the human. This paper explores the possibility of notes and annotations, tools aligned with the goals of invitational rhetoric, creating a new way of approaching the writing of poetry in the posthuman age. Typically, poems and their translations are read without the need for explanatory notes associated with educational materials. However, these days, when boundaries between the technological and the human are being blurred, new rhetorical techniques might be needed to expand forms as they are currently known. The explanation, which might be seen as a lessening of literary merit, can now be viewed as integral to the creative work. Ultimately, this expansion helps people to come across through poems and other literary works and connect with one another. The increase in difficulty in poetry is a mark of the modernization of the form. However, poetry might now need to be simplified, which is really a mark of growing complexity because of rampant technological development.

Keywords: translation, posthuman, Internet Anagram Translator, invitational rhetoric, literature, creative writing

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Saripalli Ravikiran

Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India

Cockfighting in India and Bali: A Critical Posthumanist and New Materialist Exploration of Cultural Spectacle

Abstract: With deep roots in India, cockfighting today centers around Makara Sankranti in January, in the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh. Traditional matches near village temples have sacred symbolism, with blood spillage seen as ensuring fertility and protection. However, under British rule, cockfighting shifted toward entertainment and gambling. Post-independence contests continued despite being illegal. Since India's 1990s economic liberalization, the sport has become more commercialized and profit-driven, with betting amounts rising exponentially and breeding and training becoming more systematic. Yet, astrology continues to influence the choice of contestants. Despite being illegal, weak law enforcement enables the persistence of cockfighting, which still draws massive turnouts. Events revolve around kin/village rivalries and outcomes determine prestige. During COVID-19, old fertility beliefs resurfaced, underscoring cultural resilience. But tensions remain between the sacred aspects and the contemporary priorities of spectacle, gambling profits, and attending crowds. The evolution of this practice reveals both continuity and change in cultural significance. This paper attempts to understand such evolution by establishing a comparison with Geertz's understanding of Balinese cockfighting. It also aims to examine the extent to which the cultural spectacle of cockfighting challenges dominant humanistic or anthropocentric ontologies, based on theories like critical posthumanism and new materialism.

Keywords: critical posthumanism, new materialism, cockfighting, neoliberalism, post-decentralization

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Saripalli Ravikiran is a doctoral fellow under the supervision of Dr. Ajay Gudavarthy at the Centre for Political Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He has recently submitted his doctoral thesis on nonhuman animal sport spectacles and agrarian political economy. In this work, he explored the intersectionality of caste, class, gender, species, and religion. His areas of interest include modern Indian political thought, eco-ambedkarism, Dalit Bahujan environmental visions, spectacle sports, tantric religiosity, multispecies cultural politics/justice, decoloniality, posthumanism, new materialism, Dalit feminism, ecofeminism, intersectionality, and hermeneutics. E-mail: svrkiran1989@gmail.com

Vijayalekshmi Ramachandran

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Anantapur, India

Multispecies Modalities: Towards a Historiography of Posthuman Art from India, Southeast Asia, and Australia

Abstract: This paper examines illustrations, installations, sculptures, paintings, and photographs produced by contemporary artists from South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Australia. Rather than studying these works as part of the humanist heritage that constitutes the domain of high art, the study focuses on them because they are shaped in the crucible of an Anthropocenic posthuman sensibility where the boundaries across species and things, materials and modalities, genres and media, are deliberately redrawn in an (other) order of importance which is unprecedented in mainstream art historiography. While many cultural anthropologists are working on multispecies ethnography, multispecies modalities in art have not generated as much interest. Such a study requires changes in the perception of species, things, materials, modalities, genres, and media, based on the hierarchy of being that currently characterizes anthropocentric ontologies and epistemologies. This paper analyzes works by Smitha G. S. (an award-winning Indian painter), Ravi Agarwal (an Indian photographer, installation artist, and environmental campaigner), Therdkiat Wangwacharakul (an award-winning painter from Thailand), Heri Dono (a multimodal artist from Indonesia), Zarina Muhammad (a mixed-media installation artist from Singapore), Robert Zhao Renhui (a Singaporean multidisciplinary artist and photographer), and Patricia Piccinini (an Australian sculptor of human-animal hybrids).

Keywords: posthumanism, art historiography, contemporary art, multispecies, India, Southeast Asia, Australia

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel C6 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/009>

Rujeeluck Seelakate

Sorbonne University, Paris, France

Violet Rain's *Love InExtinct*: An Intriguing Case of Queer Ecology, Anthropomorphism, and De-extinction

Abstract: This presentation aims to discuss three aspects of Violet Rain's little-known novella *Love InExtinct*. (1) Queer Ecology: Questioning the supposed contradiction between the words "nature" and "queer," the study wishes to explore how the characters define their sexuality when they were animals compared to when they become human and mostly non-binary in this boy's love novella. (2) Anthropomorphism: Devastated by the death of a manatee in the Gulf of Thailand in 2016, Violet Rain penned this novella to raise public awareness about animal rights by telling a story from an animal's point of view. But the use of anthropomorphism in the novella is ambiguous. On the one hand, the animal characters seem to embrace inclusivity and criticize human-made catastrophes, patriarchy, and food insecurity. On the other hand, once the animal characters become human, they start to have less concern about the environment and other animals. (3) De-extinction: The novella features scientists who support de-extinction or the reintroduction of exotic extinct animals and present it as a form of "animal protection." As speciesism develops throughout the novella, the protagonist, who is a reincarnated extinct animal, becomes infatuated with one of the de-extinction scientists, presenting an intriguing case of scientific and ethical bias.

Keywords: queer ecology, boy's love, anthropomorphism, speciesism, de-extinction

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Md Abu Shahid Abdullah

East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

“Survival Is Insufficient”: Imagining Utopia within Dystopia in *Station Eleven* and *Human Acts*

Abstract: Dystopian fiction may portray destruction, decay, and suffering but it also makes room for utopian imagination to sprout and grow. Mandel’s *Station Eleven* presents a world ravaged by a deadly pandemic while Kang’s *Human Acts* depicts the historical events of the bloody and chaotic May 1980 uprising in Gwangju, South Korea. Based on Kermode’s theoretical lens on apocalyptic fiction and Althusser’s theory of state control, this paper attempts to understand the existential dilemma of the characters in these novels immediately after the crises, and to reveal the inherent binary conflicts within the narratives. Through the theoretical perspectives of Albrecht’s “solastalgia” and Williams’s “salvage,” the paper sheds light on the survival mechanisms that aid the characters to overcome their post-crisis distress, to pick up the fragmented objects and ideas of value, and to transmit their knowledge, ideologies, and sociocultural concepts to the next generation. Finally, by utilizing Jameson’s theoretical framework on utopian fiction, the paper analyzes the fragmented utopian impulses in the two novels to prove that the characters’ individual and collective psyches drive the dystopian narratives out of their initial chaotic backdrops towards a more positive and uplifting tone, hence breaking away from the constraints of their preconceived narrative genre. The utopian impulses of the post-flu pandemic world in *Station Eleven* through collective actions and imaginations of the characters can easily be applied to post-Covid Southeast Asia narratives. Similarly, the collective yearning for freedom of the innocent Gwangju citizens against the military junta in *Human Acts* and their demonstration of a unique sense of unity can be associated with those novels that speak about trauma and survival in Southeast Asia, from the regime of the Khmer Rouge and the Vietnam War to Myanmar’s military coup, highlighting the act of giving voice to the voiceless and of re-humanizing the dehumanized and therefore envisioning and ensuring a peaceful future world.

Keywords: dystopia, utopia, pandemic, post-apocalypse, survival, solastalgia

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Md Abu Shahid Abdullah (PhD) completed his MA in English and American Studies and his PhD in English Literature at Otto-Friedrich University Bamberg, Germany. He is currently an Assistant Professor of English at East West University, Bangladesh. His research interests include trauma, alienation, memory, identity, marginalization, postcolonialism, eroticism and magical realism. He has published *Traumatic Experience and Repressed Memory in Magical Realist Novels: Speaking the Unspeakable* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2020) and *Trauma, Memory and Identity Crisis: Reimagining and Rewriting the Past* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2022).

Muhammad Syaukat Mustafa Kamal^{1,2} & Zainor Izat Zainal¹

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Reading Anthropocene Anxiety in Cecil Rajendra's Poetry

Abstract: Anthropocene anxiety is a form of distress caused by the Anthropocene, when human activities have caused a significant impact on the planet and desensitization to environmental problems. This form of anxiety has been expressed in various literary works which often deal with changes in the environment. Indeed, literary works that emphasize emotion or affect, can help us to comprehend the relationship between the Anthropocene and affective responses such as anxiety. Cecil Rajendra, a renowned Malaysian poet, has written numerous environmental poems charged with various emotions, shedding light on the emotional dimensions of the Anthropocene. This paper will study Anthropocene anxiety as an affect in Cecil Rajendra's poems from *Rags and Ragas: Selected Environmental Poems* (2000). Adopting Silvan Tomkins' "affect theory," two research questions guide this paper: What types of affects are evoked in the poems? How do these affects convey Anthropocene anxiety? This paper seeks to contribute to a growing understanding of Anthropocene anxiety and affective ecocriticism.

Keywords: Anthropocene, anxiety, Cecil Rajendra, affect theory, affective ecocriticism

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Catherine Diamond

Soochow University, Taipei, Taiwan

Theatre of Animals and Gods: Zoo Animals Perform Themselves to Educate Humans

Abstract: This presentation examines the potential of performance in Southeast Asian zoos, specifically, the controversial intersection between animals, Balinese performing arts, zoo culture, and conservation education at the Bali Safari and Marine Park. It questions the ethics of animal performance of any kind and whether the claim of education about endangered wildlife is sufficient justification for using animals to perform. Any animal performance that takes place in a zoo raises questions about both the treatment of performing animals and what the animals are used to mean in the performance, and whether they should perform if the purpose is to further human understanding of their lives. *The Gajah* (elephant) and *Harimau* (tiger) shows at the Bali Safari and Marine Park present dramatic plots that incorporate living animals to re-enact their species' survival skills, and the conflicts they face in the wild. These two shows are animal bio-dramas and suggest that the zoo can be a unique site for nature and culture integration through theatrical performance.

Keywords: Southeast Asian theatre, zoos, performing animals, Bali elephant shows, human-tiger relations

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Catherine Diamond (PhD) is a Professor of Theatre and Environmental Literature at Soochow University, Taipei, Taiwan. She is the author of *Communities of Imagination: Contemporary Southeast Asian Theatres* (2012), and the director/playwright of the Kinnari Ecological Theatre Project.

Kirstin Pauka

University of Hawaii, Honolulu, USA

Jaga Alam: Performance-based Environmental Education and Balinese Shadow Theatre

Abstract: This paper will present a performance-based environmental education program of the Asian Theatre Program at the University of Hawai'i. In collaboration with Balinese master artists, this program is conducting a multi-year project entitled Jaga Alam, an environmental performance project featuring Balinese folk tales and shadow puppetry. The project hosts Balinese artists I Madé Widana and I Madé Moja to develop new, environmentally themed performances and lecture-demonstrations for local schools in Hawai'i. The selected themes deal with environmental issues and concerns shared across Southeast Asia and the Pacific, such as deforestation, loss of biodiversity, plastic pollution, urban sprawl, and coastline erosion. The project started in 2021, with a short *wayang* shadow theatre piece entitled "Lutung, the Messenger", followed by "Pedanda Baka" in 2022, and "Lutung and the Bees" in 2023. All three shows were based on Balinese folk tales, integrating different environmental topics. The stories center on forest communities of animal characters impacted by habitat loss, urban sprawl, tourism, and climate change. Each of the shadow plays was performed live and recorded for streaming access for schools. This paper will discuss the pedagogical aims and present specific supplemental educational materials which were created for each play. The teacher guides provide background info on Balinese performance culture and specific environmental issues, with suggestions for lesson plans, teaching modules, and curricular activities tailored for elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Keywords: habitat loss, Balinese shadow theatre, educational outreach, folk tales, climate change

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Kirstin Pauka (PhD) is a Professor of Asian Theatre at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. Her primary area of specialization is theatre of Southeast Asia. She has produced and directed many Southeast Asian theatre productions at UH Kennedy Theatre, including several Balinese Wayang Listrik (shadow theatre) shows in collaboration with Balinese master artists. The most recent one was in early 2020: "The Last King of Bali," the last live show at Kennedy Theatre before the pandemic shut down performances around the world. She is the producer and director of the Jaga Alam project, a performance-based environmental education program. E-mail: pauka@hawaii.edu

Dennis Gupa

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Winnipeg, Canada

Performing Disasters and (Re)Interpreting Indigenous Ecological Knowledge as Post Disaster Mitigative Approach through Applied Theatre Practice

Abstract: When climate crises continue to destroy island communities in the Philippines and destruction becomes intense, this paper asks the question: To what extent can applied theatre informed by indigenous oceanic knowledge become a post-disaster mitigative approach? This paper is written from the perspective of an artist and scholar of performance studies interested in climate resilience and posthuman intervention. It offers a practice of community theatre at sites of precarity. Due to the warming waters of the Pacific, the Philippines has been attacked by strong weather events like super-typhoon Yolanda. Yolanda, which hit on November 8, 2013, was the deadliest typhoon ever recorded in the recent climate history of the Philippines. It devastated provinces in the central Philippines leaving many communities flattened. The result was more than 6,000 casualties, 4.1 million people displaced, and almost \$6 billion of damage to properties. The lack of disaster risk management and context-specific adaptation models has affected the lives of many Filipinos. This paper will propose applied theatre as a post-disaster intervention that highlights the persistence of indigenous oceanic knowledge relevant to informing a performance method that spurs the agency of community members in reflecting collectively about climate crises in local island communities. Using a vernacular performance framework informed by traditional fishing methods, the paper hopes to demonstrate climate resilience, foreground cosmologies of human and ocean relationality, and magnify local creativity in the aftermath of disaster.

Keywords: indigenous ecological knowledge, climate change, applied theatre, island communities, agency and creativity

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Panel D2 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/151>

Tran Ngoc Hieu & Tran Hoang Kieu Trang

Hanoi National University of Education, Hanoi, Vietnam

Posthuman Writing and Writing Posthumanism in Contemporary Vietnamese Poetry: The Cases of Nguyen Binh Phương and Nguyễn Quyến

Abstract: The concepts of “posthuman” and “posthumanism” are still not popular in the fields of humanities scholarship and artistic creativity in Vietnam. However, if “posthumanism questions how relations between humans and nonhumans operate within the environments where they are assembled” (Clarke and Rossini, 2017), then many aesthetic practices in Vietnam share this concern. This paper analyzes posthumanism in the works of two contemporary Vietnamese poets: Nguyen Binh Phương (born in 1965) and Nguyễn Quyến (born in 1975). The writings of these two notable representatives of Vietnamese poetry in the Reform period demonstrate an effort to break away from the poetics of socialist realism, which had been dominant for a long time, towards a poetics of modernism. The paper shows that posthumanism plays a role in their works, both as an ethical sensibility and an aesthetic ideal. It will first discuss the question: Can posthumanism emerge in the Vietnamese cultural and literary context? Religious and ideological traditions such as Buddhism and Lao Zhuang philosophy, as well as Vietnamese native culture, have many points in common with the current ideas of posthumanism. However, these traditional ideas were suppressed when the ideology of communism dominated. Socialist realism in art and literature amplifies the atheistic ideology of communism and promotes the image of the human as a giant subject. The paper analyzes the posthumanism of Phương and Quyến's poetry in three aspects: the imagination of the human ego, the poetic representation of nonhumans, and the ghost-like/child-like voices of the lyric subject.

Keywords: posthuman, posthumanism, Vietnamese contemporary poetry, modernism, nonhuman representations

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Tran Ngoc Hieu (PhD) is a Lecturer at Hanoi National University of Education. He earned a PhD in Literary Theory in 2012. His research interests include literary theories, contemporary arts, Vietnamese modern literature, and comparative literature. He has contributed to edited volumes, such as *Southeast Asian Ecocriticism: Theories, Practices and Prospects* (Lexington Books 2018), *Environment, Media, and Popular Culture in Southeast Asia* (Springer Singapore 2022), and *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Urban Literary Studies* (Palgrave 2022). E-mail: hieutn@hnue.edu.vn

Tran Hoang Kieu Trang teaches Vietnamese Literature at Vinschool Secondary and High School. She received a bachelor's degree in Philology and Education from Hanoi National University of Education. Her academic interests encompass Vietnamese modern poetry, comparative literature, and translation studies.

Panel D2 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/191>

Nanthanoot Udomlamun

Faculty of Humanities, Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand

Unraveling More-than-human Entanglements and Rethinking Planetary Resilience: A Material Ecocritical Reading of Tash Aw's *We, the Survivors*

Abstract: Tash Aw's 2019 novel *We, the Survivors* is set in modern-day Malaysia and tells the story of survivors. The narrative follows Ah Hock, the protagonist, as he negotiates the challenges of his life in a society that is undergoing rapid change. The novel examines issues of social injustice, class imbalance, and the search for one's identity in a changing country. When exploring Aw's novel from a posthumanist perspective, it is evident that the novel portrays not only the plight of the human characters in the rapidly changing neoliberal world but also that of their nonhuman counterparts. Aw's novel can be read as "climate fiction" in the Capitalocene. This paper is an analysis and discussion of the more-than-human entanglements and planetary resilience portrayed in Aw's novel. The paper proposes a critical and ethical reading of the novel through the lens of material ecocriticism to unravel the more-than-human entanglements in contemporary coastal and urban spaces and to rethink planetary resilience, which may have already/always been part of us, human and nonhuman alike, and of our survival.

Keywords: planetary, more-than-human, resilience, material ecocriticism, Tash Aw

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Nanthanoot Udomlamun (PhD) is a Lecturer in literature and literary theory at the Department of Literature, Faculty of Humanities, Kasetsart University. Her extensive body of work encompasses research articles exploring themes such as diaspora, migration, and critical analyses of colonialism, neoliberalism, and global capitalism. Her research interests lie in postcolonial theory, decoloniality, and environmental and planetary humanities. Her current projects include "Planetary Memory in 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami Literary Writings" and "Land, Capital, and Crisis in Contemporary Malaysian Literature." E-mail: nanthanoot.u@ku.th

Panel D2 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/100>

Rao Na^{1,2}, Florence Toh Haw Ching¹, Hardev Kaur¹, Diana Abu Ujum¹ & Hasyimah Mohd Amin¹

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²Guizhou University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Guizhou, China

Non-anthropocentrism and Environmental Ethics in Gary Paulsen's *Hatchet* (1986)

Abstract: Young adult books serve as important resources to educate the young on moral values, implicitly or explicitly. Young adult literature with a focus on nature presents various interactions between the human characters and the nonhuman entities within the fictional texts. Due to the simplicity of their vocabulary, however, these texts are often ignored in literary studies, particularly in the scholarship of ecocriticism. The American author Gary Paulsen's young adult wilderness survival fiction, *Hatchet* (1986), presents insightful human-nonhuman relationships between the protagonist, 13-year-old Brian, and the environmental entities he encounters in the green woods of North Canada. This study interprets the manifestations of non-anthropocentric human-nonhuman relationships and investigates the rules of non-maleficence, non-interference, and fidelity in environmental ethics in the selected text. Drawing on Paul Warren Taylor's concepts from *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics* (1986), the study reveals Brian's weakened human superiority when placed in a vulnerable position among the nonhuman entities within the environment where he temporarily dwells. The paper argues that, while most of Paulsen's books portray the common struggle of man against nature, the selected text depicts how man is forced to follow the laws of nature rather than fight against them. This study aims to contribute to the critical appreciation and understanding of Paulsen's *Hatchet*, as it adds to the scholarship of young adult literature in the field of ecocriticism.

Keywords: Gary Paulsen, *Hatchet*, young adult literature, non-anthropocentrism, environmental ethics

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel D2 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/166>

Thu Van Phan

Ho Chi Minh University of Education, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam

The World Is Not Only About Humans: Re-reading Vietnamese Poems from Before the 19th Century

Abstract: This paper examines from an ecocritical perspective Vietnamese poetry before the 19th century, that is, before Vietnam's Nguyen Dynasty. It aims to describe how nature is placed on the same level as humans, and how humans live alongside nature. Vietnamese authors have expressed a balanced view of nature through the comfort of the soul when immersed in natural scenery, the use of natural images to express human moods, as well as a discourse about the harmony between humanity, plants, animals, and insects. Vietnamese poetry also shows that Eastern thought on ecology is different from Western ecological criticism: nature is not an object to be exploited or protected, but a different shell of the inner and spiritual world of man.

Keywords: Vietnamese poems, pre-19th century, ecocriticism, nature, spirituality

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Thu Van Phan (PhD) obtained a PhD from Fudan University (Shanghai, China). She is a researcher and Lecturer of East Asian Literature, adviser for MA students in the Foreign Literature program, Chair of the Division of Foreign Literature and Vice-dean of the Department of Literature and Linguistics, at the Ho Chi Minh University of Education. E-mail: vanpth@hcmue.edu.vn

Karen Siu

Rice University, Houston, USA

Into the Nước: Submergence and Resurgence in Vietnamese Environmental Film

Abstract: Nước (Vietnamese, pronounced nyúk or \nú-äk\) is a noun defined as water that can be generally used to refer to a liquid or fluid. Metaphorically, the word means homeland, country, and nation. Nước refers to freshwater needed for rice cultivation which is central to Việt Nam. Climate change, however, threatens this understanding of nước. Nguyễn-Võ NghiêM-Minh's environmental film *2030* (original title: *Nước*), imagines a near future where Việt Nam, especially the south's low-lying coastal and river delta regions, suffers from rising sea levels. The film asks: what does nước become in an environmental future where saltwater is overabundant and freshwater is scarce? This presentation shows how the film complicates nước as a concept while scrutinizing capitalist enterprises that seek to exploit and commodify nature and water. It argues that *2030* feminizes nước by depicting a woman intimately connected with water who becomes the basis of survival, not technological progress or capitalistic pursuits. It claims that Nguyễn-Võ's film expands definitions of nước, refashioning the original mythological founding of Việt Nam in which a man, not a woman, is connected to and in control of nước. The presentation contends that *2030* produces a new ecofeminist creation myth of Việt Nam where water is not considered separate, an environment over there, or something alien as it has been in Western environmentalism. Ultimately, the film centers itself on a strong, rebellious, and subversive woman's connection to water to promote ecofeminist empowerment and resist the exploitation and commodification of nature.

Keywords: Vietnamese film, blue humanities, ecocriticism, water, ecofeminism

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Karen Siu is a PhD candidate in English at Rice University, working in Asian American studies, blue humanities, critical refugee studies, ecocriticism, and Vietnamese American cultural studies. Her dissertation project examines how water has come to give linguistic and cultural shape to the histories, experiences, and differences voiced and unvoiced in Vietnamese Anglophone cultural production. She has presented at conferences for organizations such as the Association for Asian American Studies, American Literature Association, and ASLE as well as the virtual ASLE-ASEAN conference.

Shibaji Mridha

American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB), Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Way of Water: An Elemental-Ecocritical Reading of Selected Literary Works by Rabindranath Tagore and Amitav Ghosh

Abstract: One of the signature marks of the Anthropocene is the systemic exclusion and negligence of the agency of nonhuman beings and things. Blue ecocriticism, a recent addition to the environmental humanities, has the capacity to speak the language of elemental matters, such as water, to recognize and value the aquatic omnipresence on earth. Water has been playing a crucial role in shaping both South and Southeast Asian cultural imagination and history since time immemorial. Nonetheless, transboundary water dynamics have become convoluted since the advent of the colonial era, which positioned waterscapes as extractive resources, navigating routes, or sites of mystery. The literary works of Rabindranath Tagore and Amitav Ghosh, two renowned authors from South Asia, are informed by the narrative of water's exploitation at the hands of privileged humans. However, they also unveil forms of resistance and hope in its boundless agency, presenting water as alive, dynamic, and metamorphosed. This paper seeks to trace the agency and materiality of aquatic presence in works like *Muktadhara* [Free Flow] (1922) and *The Hungry Tide* (2004), to explore the intertwined nexus between aquatic and human matters. Drawing on elemental ecocriticism, material ecocriticism, and contemporary water discourses, the paper points towards a water ethics that is relevant for both South and Southeast Asian ecologies in the Anthropocene, as a way to advance the politics of care and recognition espoused by blue ecocriticism throughout these interconnected regions.

Keywords: water, matter, materiality, elemental ecocriticism, blue humanities, Bengali literature

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel D3 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/188>

Pratiksha Pradhan & Vijayalekshmi Ramachandran

Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Anantapur, India

Rivers and Their Trusts with Humans in the Wastecene: A Study of Selected Documentaries on Teesta and Mekong

Abstract: This paper looks at the transboundary trajectories of two rivers as they meander through geographical regions, cutting across national boundaries. One is River Teesta, the life and spirit of the people who live in its basin in India and Bangladesh, frequently figuring in the oral narratives of communities whose cultural identities are inextricably linked with it. In recent times, there has been a spate of documentaries on the river and the communities that coexist with it, such as *Taming the Teesta* (Taylor Graham 2015), *Voices of Teesta* (Minket Lepcha 2016), *River Teesta* (Ronald Halder 2017), and *Tale of a Barrage* (Jahanara Nuri 2021). The second set of documentaries that the paper analyses relate to River Mekong, whose transboundary waters are entangled with the lives and livelihoods of the humans in Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and China. The documentaries analyzed include *Mekong* (Douglas Varchol 2012), *Mighty Mekong: Mother River of Southeast Asia* (Channel News Asia 2012), *Mekong: Soul of a River* (Animal Planet 2013), *The Mekong River with Sue Perkins* (BBC 2014), and *A River Screams for Mercy: Murdering the Mekong* (Tom Fawthrop 2022). The paradigm shift from the Anthropocene to the posthuman Wastecene through the Capitalocene has affected the destinies of Teesta and Mekong, dam(m/n)ing them up and changing the dynamics of their many entangled relationships from symbiosis to ecoprecarity. The theoretical lens of the Wastecene is extended here, as the shifting socio-ecological relations create not only wasted people and wasted species, but also wasted places and wasted waters.

Keywords: rivers, transboundary, documentaries, Teesta, Mekong, symbiosis, dams, ecoprecarity, Anthropocene, Wastecene

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Pratiksha Pradhan is a PhD scholar in English at the Department of Languages and Literature, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Andhra Pradesh, India. Her doctoral research focuses on ecology and media pertaining to literature from Northeast India and riverine oral narratives, testimonies, and documentaries. She is a recipient of the University Grants Commission's Savitribai Jyotirao Phule Single Girl Child Fellowship for doctoral research scholars. She has presented papers at international conferences such as IACLALS Conf-2023, SSSIHL DLL-E Lit-Treat Edition IV, and IITM INMS Conf-2023.

Vijayalekshmi Ramachandran (PhD) is an Assistant Professor of English at the Department of Languages and Literature, Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, Andhra Pradesh, India. She was a recipient of the Junior Research Fellowship by the University Grants Commission and Matching Funds Tuition Grant by the School of Criticism and Theory, Cornell University. Her research and teaching interests include multispecies curriculum designing and life-writing, ecological studies, popular culture studies, translation studies, and literary studies. Her publications include *Past Modernism: Aesthetics and Science of the Everyday in Poornachandra Tejaswi* and several essays.

Panel D4 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/125>

Nicolas Laine^{1,2} & Suriyawut Ketui³

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The Lua and their Buffaloes: The Interweaving of Ritual, Territory, and Interspecies Relations

Abstract: Based on a multispecies ethnography of the relationships between the Lua and their buffaloes in the Nan Province of Thailand, this presentation aims to explore the synergy of cultural and biological components in the management of a territory through ritual and its impact on animal mobility and interspecies encounters. The paper will describe the different stages of the ritual associated with the seasonal transhumance of buffaloes from the village to their forest pasture, as well as the various invisible and wild beings that visit the sacred place (*tu phi*). Held in the heart of the forest, such ritual aims to attract and appease spirits, aiding animal health and behavior. Locally, it is meant to help in creating and reinforcing the boundaries between cultivated land and forest areas, fostering interactions between humans and animals. The ceremony performed at the *tu phi* can thus be viewed as a center point within the grazing area to control animal movements, even though it also becomes a hub for interspecies encounters (bats, cows, dogs, buffaloes). The paper will discuss the flexible and dynamic nature of these ritualized boundaries and their impact on the movement of animals, highlighting how local knowledge and practices can inform discussions on wildlife/domestic animals, zoonotic diseases, and human-animal relationships.

Keywords: ritual, interspecies encounters, buffaloes, Lua, Nan (Thailand)

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Joseph Casibual

Western Mindanao State University, Zamboanga, Philippines

(Re)Affirming Ecological Dependence: Evidence from the Alternative Healing Narratives of Sibugaynon Folk Healers

Abstract: This paper aims to shed light on the continuous persistence of traditional healing practices in the age of modernism. It examines narratives that re/affirm the ecological dependence of local people in the Philippines, in spite of medical modernity and the discouragement of using traditional practices. The paper focuses on the collected narratives of three renowned folk healers of the community who have been practicing for a long time. It is based on indigenous methodology, *pakikipagkuwentuhan*, as described by Orteza (1997), which banks on using narratives as texts in framing ecological dependence among Sibugaynon folk healers. Employing narrative and thematic analysis, the study shows that the folk healers make use of elements from nature like ginger, *lana* (potion from reduced coconut oil), and salt. These elements are rhetorically present in their titles, as *mangluyahay* (ginger), *manghilotay* (potion), and *mangasinay* (salt). The healers largely depended on these natural resources as the main ingredient in the formulation of a medicine that is believed to cure certain illnesses and diseases. Owing to its topography, Sibugay has made these resources accessible, thus reaffirming the ecological dependence of these healers on their respective local resources, as they provide affordable and traditional therapeutic options to the Sibugaynon people.

Keywords: narratives, folk healers, ecological dependence, narratology, Sibugaynon

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Joseph Casibual (PhD) is an Assistant Professor at Western Mindanao State University- Philippines, where he teaches language, literature, and research-related courses. His field of specialization includes linguistics and literature, with most of his research focusing on gender, folklore, cultural studies, and applied linguistics. He has presented at local and international research conferences and has several publications under his name. He just finished a PhD in Literary Studies with a dissertation focused on queer studies, counter-narratives and their phenomenology. ORCID: 0000-0001-7839-233X. E-mail: joseph.casibual@wmsu.edu.ph

Rakesh Kumar Pankaj

Indian Institute of Technology, Ropar, India

Exploring Traditional Ecological Knowledge in India and Southeast Asia: A Posthumanist Study of Folk Culturalism

Abstract: This paper proposes a detailed and comprehensive analysis of folk culturalism in India and Southeast Asia to argue how an ecocentric ethics can contribute to the canon of traditional ecological wisdom. India and Southeast Asia are not only geographically close, but they also have many historical, cultural, and anthropological similarities. Against this backdrop, the paper aims to draw tentative conclusions about the role of their folk practices, especially those that are mainly influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism, in raising social and environmental awareness. In the last few decades, traditional ecological knowledge has attracted considerable academic interest. However, many of these ecological traditions have remained unnoticed in both India and Southeast Asia, which are home to many indigenous societies. Arguing that ritualistic practices attach divinity to various life forms, this paper aims to identify the inherent ecocentric and posthumanist philosophy in the discourse of indigenous ecological traditions. First, the paper provides an account of Indian indigenous communities that share a harmonious communion with nature. Then, it puts forward samples of Southeast Asian folk traditions and tries to understand them from a posthumanistic perspective. Hence, this paper aims to provide a comparative study of these historically similar yet geographically distant cultures.

Keywords: posthumanism, India, Southeast Asia, folk culturalism, ecocriticism, ecocentrism

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Maria Anjelica Wong¹ & Antonio D. Salazar Jr.²

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The Environment as Kapwa: An Exploration of the Three Ecologies and Interconnectedness in Hiligaynon Ecopoetry

Abstract: Ecocriticism in the Philippines examines environmental issues within the web of phenomena that include calamities, climate change, environmental injustice, and rapid urbanization. All these issues can be foregrounded in ecopoetry while allowing readers to be more aware of the space and place they occupy. This is because ecopoetry has a unique ability to, not only offer an aesthetic experience of nature through poetic language, but also submerge the reader into the world that is represented in the text (O'Brien, 2001). The three Hiligaynon ecopoems analyzed in this paper offer deep ecosophical messages that are useful in communicating environmental issues and possible solutions. This paper aims to uncover these ecosophical messages following a close ecocritical reading of the three Hiligaynon poems. The poems to be studied are “Ang Katapusan” [The End] by Alfredo Diaz, “Paghulat sa Ulan” [Waiting for the Rain] by Jelyn Odango Aliniajan, and “Si Gaya Sa Talamnan” [Gaya Along the Fields] by Alice Tan Gonzales. The paper also argues that the concepts of *pakikisangkot*, *pakikiisa*, and *kapwa* in Sikolohiyang Pilipino reflect the principles of ecosophy elaborated in *The Three Ecologies* by Felix Guattari, as well as the concept of interconnectedness in ecocriticism.

Keywords: ecopoetry, ecosophy, ecocriticism, sikolohiyang Pilipino, Hiligaynon poetry

Language: English / **Delivery:** Hybrid

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Christian Jil Benitez

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This Strange, Small Beast: On Apichatpong Weerasethakul's *Sud Pralad* (2004)

Abstract: This paper attempts to locate and assert the agency of nonhuman matters in Apichatpong Weerasethakul's *Sud Pralad* (2004), to arrive at another understanding, one that refuses its typical appraisals as "impenetrable," "incomprehensible," and "inscrutable." The paper first speculates on the film's titular strange beast (*sud pralad*) as the Plasmodium parasite, commonly carried in the salivary glands of Anopheles mosquitos and whose transmission into the mammalian body causes malaria. This tropical malady is harnessed here as a heuristic through which the peculiar, bifurcated structure of the film is reconsidered, wagering it instead to be continuous and singular, albeit seemingly halved by the film's performative transference of the malarial delirium through cinematic techniques. And yet, this diegetic disease is also obscured in the film by the imposing cinematic presence of the forest, whose interpellating verdure permits common sublimation of the film in often moralist terms. The forest and, by extension, Weerasethakul's film materialize as material assemblages in and through which the parasitic beast and its malady stealthily persist, if only to critique a world that is otherwise dominated by colossal matters. The paper underscores how such nature-culture entanglement is crucial, for it poses the possibility toward a "cure," so to speak, "for what ails a sickly film culture," if not the anthropocentric culture that disregards the participation of nonhuman matters in each instance of its discourse.

Keywords: Thai cinema, forest, nature-culture entanglement, tropicity

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Christian Jil Benitez teaches at the Ateneo de Manila University, where he earned an AB-MA in Filipino Literature. Currently based in Bangkok, he is pursuing his PhD at Chulalongkorn University, working on a manuscript on the nonhuman under the Second Century Fund Scholarship. His essays on time, tropicity, and materiality have appeared in *Kritika Kultura*, *Rupkatha*, and *The Routledge Handbook of Literature and Ecofeminism*, among others. He is the associate editor for *Katipunan*, and a co-editor of the recent special issue of *eTropic* on tropical materialisms. His first book, *Isang Dalumat ng Panahon*, was published by AdMU Press. ORCID: 0000-0002-0654-1698. E-mail: cbenitez@ateneo.edu

Thuy Nguyen Thi Thu

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Disability, Animals, and Environmental Injustice in *The Way Station*: From Short Story to Film

Abstract: *The Way Station* (2017) is an art film directed by Hồng Ánh. Based on the short story with the same title by Đỗ Phước Tiến, it won three awards at the ASEAN International Films Festival and Awards (AIFFA). Many of the themes of the film have been identified or analyzed in the Vietnamese press, such as loneliness, love, sexuality, violence, and so on. Inspired by the book *Beasts of Burden: Animal and Disability Liberation* (2017) by Sunaura Taylor, this paper provides another reading of the film, exploring it from the perspective of feminist disability theory and animal rights. What do the forms of oppression and power imbalance that people with disabilities and animals endure have in common? Are disability and animal justice connected to each other in some way? How do women with disabilities endure prejudice and discrimination in a patriarchal male society? What are the repercussions of dual negation from without and within them? How do individual isolation and the barriers that keep them out of the workforce and the public sphere affect them psychologically? These questions will be considered in the paper based on an analysis of the plot of the film (as well as its source text). As Sunaura Taylor says, “if animal and disability oppression are entangled, might not that mean their paths of liberation are entangled as well?” The narrative about the disabled woman and the animals in *The Way Station* may help to advance further discussions about social and environmental justice in general.

Keywords: disability, feminist disability theory, animal, environmental justice

Language: Vietnamese / **Delivery:** Onsite

Thuy Nguyen Thi Thu (PhD) is a tenured lecturer in the Department of Foreign Literature and Comparative Studies at Vietnam National University in Hanoi. Her work focuses on Russian literature, Russian orientalism, spatial literary studies, and the theory of film adaptation. Her latest publications are “F. Dostoevsky’s ‘A Writer’s Diary’: ‘Oriental Questions’ and the Establishment of Russia’s Mission in the Eurasian Relationship” (*Literary Studies*) and “Defining Vietnam in Russian Travelogues: Landscape Experiences and Cultural Interactions” (VNU Publishing House 2023).

Panel D5 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/157>

John Jay Morido

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Into the Quest of Humans and Nature: An Ecocritical Analysis of Hayao Miyazaki's *Princess Mononoke*

Abstract: This study analyzes the Japanese film *Princess Mononoke* by Hayao Miyazaki from an ecocritical perspective. It utilizes formalism and ecocritical theories to examine ecological issues in the film's script. The ordeal of the main character, Ashitaka, the prince of Emishi, caused by the curse of a god-turned-demon for the abusive actions of humanity, shows the diverse realities of the different tribes who reside in the mountains and their destructive actions on the environment. The film's characters provide a tragic, meaningful, and inspirational understanding of the nature of human beings and their relationship with the environment. This study focuses on (1) nature as a moral orbit, (2) nature as a shelter for supernatural beings, (3) nature as an extension of human life, and (4) nature as cultural identity. The study concludes that the natural world has long been sacrificed for the interests of humans. Although connections between the two are undeniable and apparent, humans continue to intentionally destroy their environment, disregarding nature as an extension of one's life, orbit of morality, and cultural identity.

Keywords: Princess Mononoke, Japanese animated film, ecocriticism, human, nature

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Pham Thi To Thy

Tra Vinh University, Tra Vinh Province, Vietnam

Indigenous Knowledge in Khmer Folk Literary Works of Southern Vietnam

Abstract: The Khmer ethnic group is the most populous among the minority ethnic groups of southern Vietnam. Through long-term and stable settlement alongside other Vietnamese ethnic groups, the Khmer people of southern Vietnam have established a unique and diverse folk culture and art. One of the areas that contribute to this cultural heritage is Khmer folk literature. The folk literature of the Khmer people of southern Vietnam encompasses various genres, containing rich cultural values and traditional knowledge, intricately linked to the processes of production, adaptation, and transformation of the natural environment in the rivers and water regions of this region. Through the analysis of legends, proverbs, and folk songs, as well as in-depth interviews conducted with participants from the local Khmer communities of southern Vietnam, this paper aims to achieve two objectives: (1) identify the indigenous knowledge system of the Khmer of southern Vietnam, as expressed in folk literary works, and (2) recognize changes and innovations in the inherited indigenous knowledge system of the Khmer people of southern Vietnam in response to climate change affecting the Mekong Delta region.

Keywords: indigenous knowledge, Khmer people, Khmer folk literature, climate change, Mekong Delta

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Panel D6 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/172>

Thi Thoi Ha

University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Culture that Respects Nature: A Case Study of the Folklore of the Mnông and Stiêng Ethnic Groups

Abstract: The Mnông and the Stiêng are two ethnic groups belonging to the Mon-Khmer language family and living in the southern central highlands of Vietnam. Their traditional folklore reflects a culture of closeness, attachment, and nature worship. This case study of the folklore of the Mnông and Stiêng aims to analyze and clarify the relationship between traditional folklore and the natural-cultural understanding of mountain peoples. Using documentary research and fieldwork, the paper will illustrate this relationship through verbal folklore, especially Mnông and Stiêng epics and myths. The aim of the study is to present the beauty of the traditional folklore of these ethnic groups and their connection with nature from the perspective of environmental humanism.

Keywords: traditional folklore, Mnông, Stiêng, culture, nature

Language: Vietnamese / **Delivery:** Online

Thi Thoi Ha is a PhD candidate at the Faculty of Literature, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City. Her thesis topic is the folklore of the Mnông and Stiêng. She has been conducting fieldwork during 2022 and 2023. E-mail: missthoi.folklore@gmail.com

Hoang Thi My Nhi

Institute of Southeast Asia Studies, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences, Hanoi, Vietnam

The Value of Indigenous and Traditional Ecological Knowledge in “Xa Nu Forest”

Abstract: This paper examines the significance of indigenous and traditional ecological knowledge in the short story “Xa Nu Forest” by Nguyen Trung Thanh, employing the ecocritical theory of Glotfelty and Lawrence. Drawing upon the philosophical underpinnings of Eastern thought, which emphasize a harmonious and consensual relationship between humans and nature, the paper explores the portrayal and role of the natural environment, particularly the Xa Nu forest, in the story’s construction. It analyzes the content, method, and narrative structure of the story in relation to the unique characteristics of the Central Highlands, shedding light on the imagery, impact, and significance of Xa Nu plants in everyday life and in the protection of the nation. The author evaluates the dynamic and interdependent relationship between humans and Xa Nu trees as depicted in both the story’s content and its overall form. The study reveals that nature is not merely a backdrop, but an active participant and influential force in the lives and struggles for the survival of indigenous communities. Furthermore, it demonstrates how indigenous peoples closely observe and adapt to the natural world, highlighting their reliance on nature as a defining aspect of their identity and the culture of the Central Highlands.

Keywords: indigenous knowledge, human-plant relations, Vietnam, short story, ecocriticism

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Hoang Thi My Nhi (PhD) is a mid-tier researcher under the Department of Historical and Cultural Studies, Institute for Southeast Asia Studies, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS). She graduated with a bachelor’s degree from Hue University (2004), and a master’s degree (2008) and PhD (2018) from Vietnam National University, Hanoi. She worked as a research fellow at NUS (National University of Singapore) and NTU (Nanyang Technology, Singapore). Her research deals with comparative literature, focusing on psychoanalytic and ecocritical literary criticism. Additionally, she has conducted projects on ASEAN socio-cultural development cooperation.

Isaraporn Pissa-ard

Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Posthumanism in Prabda Yoon's *Basement Moon* and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*

Abstract: This paper examines two highly intriguing sci-fi novels: *Basement Moon* (2018) by Thai author Prabda Yoon, and *Klara and the Sun* (2021) by British author Kazuo Ishiguro. It argues that the two novels are comparable in three significant aspects: the characterization of nonhuman beings as both rivals and friends of humans, the dystopian settings that reflect the diminishing humanity of human society, and the central thematic concern that calls for a more considerate and equitable kind of relationship between human and nonhuman beings. The discussion in this paper is informed by key proposals in critical posthumanism that critique human desire for power and control over other beings, challenge the belief in human uniqueness and autonomy, and argue for the revocation of anthropocentric norms and practices that subject nonhuman beings to exploitation and maltreatment.

Keywords: posthumanism, science-fiction, dystopia, Kazuo Ishiguro, Prabda Yoon

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Panel D7 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/015>

Pimpawan Chaipanit

Faculty of Liberal Arts, Prince of Songkla University, Songkla, Thailand

(Re)imagined Bangkok: An Ecocritical Reception Study of a Thai Cli-Fi Novel

Abstract: Pitchaya Sudbanthad's *Bangkok Wakes to Rain* (2019) is a cli-fi novel with strong ties to Bangkok, a capital of the Global South. While it is interesting to interpret the author's anthropocenic imagination and dystopian worldbuilding, a reception study of online global reviews may be more constructive to discuss the urgency of the climate crisis. Beyond close reading the text and its representation of post-climate apocalyptic Bangkok, this presentation will explore how readers perceived and responded to the ecocritical themes in their online reviews on Amazon and Goodreads. It will also discuss whether cli-fi novels are effective agents of change or mere commodities in contemporary culture. The researcher hopes to demonstrate how reception studies should be practiced alongside traditional close reading and critical discussion of literary texts as part of an effort to connect texts with social reality.

Keywords: Bangkok, cli-fi, ecocriticism, global anglophone literature, Thai literature, reception study

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Pimpawan Chaipanit is an early career researcher and a Lecturer in English Language and Literature at the Faculty of Liberal Arts, Prince of Songkla University. Her research interests include global anglophone literature, ecocriticism, reception studies, and digital humanities. Her latest publication on the ecogothic and contemporary Thai fiction and film can be found in Universiti Malaya's *SARE: Southeast Asian Review of English*. ORCID: 0000-0002-7481-8249. E-mail: pimpawan.c@psu.ac.th

Tanvir Mustafiz Khan

East West University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Transcending the Transhuman: Exploring Empathy and Posthumanism in Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun*

Abstract: The role of empathy in the shift from transhumanism to posthumanism in Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl* and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Klara and the Sun* can be understood through the lens of Pramod Nayar's posthumanist theory. In *The Windup Girl*, the genetically engineered Emiko is portrayed as a victim of human exploitation and abuse, struggling to survive in a hostile world. However, in *Klara and the Sun*, the android Klara is portrayed as a loyal and compassionate friend, willing to sacrifice herself for the happiness of her human companion. This shift can be seen as a move towards posthumanism, where the boundaries between human and nonhuman are blurred, and all life forms are seen as interconnected and mutually dependent. Nayar's posthumanist theory emphasizes the constructed nature of "normalcy" in bodies and the singularity of species and life itself. This perspective allows for a reevaluation of traditional humanistic myths, such as the human as the center of the universe or the instrumental attitude toward other life forms and nonliving matter. In this light, the shift from transhumanism to posthumanism in these two texts can be seen as a move towards a more inclusive and interconnected vision of humanity and its relationship with technology and other life forms.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, human-technology interaction, posthumanism, identity boundaries, speculative fiction, Thailand

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Panel E1 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/013>

Nathan Snow

Utah Tech University, St. George, USA

Posthuman Ecoscapes: Synthetic Materiality and Distributed Cognition in Southeast Asian Animation

Abstract: This presentation extends posthumanism into the realm of animated films both set in and produced in Southeast Asia, postulating that such 3D computer animated narratives constitute a novel form of posthuman ecomedia reflective of the region’s unique cultural relationship to changing ecology. Through their creation of unreal, synthetic representations of the ASEAN landscape, Southeast Asian 3D animation technologies entangle the viewer’s experience in a mesh of non-indexical augmented ecoscapes, providing viewers access to versions of Southeast Asian biomes heretofore unimagined and decidedly non-anthropocentric. The resulting experience pivots our conception of ourselves as human subjects and spectators into a cyborg model of human cognition coupled with animated, synthetic materials that encourage the audience to construct their subjectivity as cinesthetic bodies, becoming a seamless part of a distributed system of cognition and ecomedia. In other words, applying posthumanism to Southeast Asian 3D animated films alters the fundamental concept of what it is to be a subject watching a film, resulting in a reciprocal relationship that posthuman “viewers” have with animated interpretations of ASEAN ecology. This work expands the scope of posthumanist theory and criticism to Southeast Asian 3D computer animation, advances a theory of cyborg vision and cinesthetic bodies, and ultimately argues that posthuman ecomedia in animation can encourage audiences to interact psychophysically with synthetic materials and remove empirical boundaries from our perception of ecoscapes.

Keywords: materialism, animation, cinesthetics, cognition, posthumanism

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Nathan Snow (PhD) is an Assistant Professor of Film and Media Studies at Utah Tech University in the United States. His research advances historical, contextual definitions for different forms of animation, and explains the critical significance of the shift from traditional to modern 3D computer generated techniques in terms of their effect on the spectator. As such, this research focuses on film history and theory specifically as they relate to theories of genre and spectatorship, identifying and expounding on the changing intersection between viewer and viewed. E-mail: nate.snow@utahtech.edu

Kiu-wai Chu

Nanyang Technological University, Jurong, Singapore

The Posthuman Umwelt: Multispecies Justice in Daisuke Igarashi's Manga World

Abstract: Focusing on Daisuke Igarashi's (五十嵐大介) speculative fictional manga series *Designs* (2015-19), this presentation examines the capacity of graphic narratives in representing posthumanist perspectives that tackle multispecies justice. Depicting a world of "humanized animals" (HAs), a species of genetically modified chimera used as a kind of living weapons created by an agricultural biotechnological corporation named Sanmonto (a fictional depiction of Monsanto), *Designs* offers philosophical contemplations on the ethics of blurring the boundaries between human and animal. How could humanized animals be understood in the course of human/nonhuman evolutions? By highlighting the enhanced senses and transhuman powers of the human-looking animals, the story problematizes and rethinks our understanding of species hierarchies, as well as notions of mutations and "illnesses." The stories also offer critiques of the global capitalist expansion and the growing multispecies injustice in the contemporary world. This paper examines Igarashi's experimentations in representing Jakob von Uexküll's concept of "Umwelten" of nonhuman species, and the inter-species subjectivities and the making kin among humans with the humanized frog girl, leopards, dolphins, and bats. Imagining multispecies worlds beyond anthropo-comprehension, the manga narratives depict multi-sensorial perceptions that connect us with the more-than-human worlds, extending one's scope beyond geopolitical and bioregional boundaries, and towards the wider cosmos, while re-asserting the importance of fighting for multispecies justice in this biotechnology-driven Anthropocene.

Keywords: multispecies justice, manga, Daisuke Igarashi, Umwelt, making kin

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Louise Jashil Sonido

University of the Philippines-Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines

Notes on Animating a Haunted City: Urban Ecocriticism and Netflix's *Trese*

Abstract: The Netflix animated series *Trese* adapts the Philippine comic book series of the same title by Budjette Tan and Kajo Baldesimo. It follows the story of Alexandra Trese, a detective of supernatural crimes involving creatures of folklore and myth residing in the dark underbelly of cosmopolitan Manila. The series is a study in urban ecocriticism in its emplacement of the city within an environment that is haunted by a persistent indigeneity, but which transforms this indigeneity in compelling ways in a place of multifaceted power struggles. The transmediation of *Trese* from graphic fiction to animation through an international collaboration of artists based in the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, and the United States also serves as a point of inquiry into the material conditions of the animation industry that inevitably rework the source text, and therefore also its discourse on indigeneity, cultural memory, and the city. Indeed, in probing the ways that the human and nonhuman interact in the series, this paper considers how animation is a medium in which technology translates human life, or brings the nonhuman to life, probing the unique ways that the distinct materiality of animation activates human-machine interactions into new manners of living and engaging with the world and with ourselves.

Keywords: urban ecocriticism, indigeneity, animation studies, transmedia studies, human-technology interaction

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Eunbi Ko

National University of Singapore, Singapore

Heterogeneous Territories in Cambodia's Resource Frontiers

Abstract: Over the past two decades, the detrimental social and environmental consequences stemming from large-scale land investments have sparked global concerns. Against this backdrop, the notion of indigenous territory has gained increasing acceptance as a norm in global land governance, especially when addressing dispossession in contemporary resource frontiers. However, the mainstream understanding of the term falls short of adequately explaining the land governance of non-settler colonial countries. In northeast Cambodia, where state-led enclosures, primarily driven by capitalist appropriation of space, remain incomplete and intertwined with new tenure systems and locally embedded ways of land use, the uneven application and assertion of indigenous territorialities by actors at multiple scales have intensified the fragmentation of land management. Drawing on the debates regarding politically contingent dispossession, this study sheds light on the mobilization of indigenous territorialities in non-settler colonial contexts and their impact on the uneven geographies of land dispossession in contemporary resource frontiers. To accomplish this, the paper initially examines how the idea of globalized indigeneity has been navigated and manifests itself in land and resource politics in Cambodia. Then, building upon year-long political ethnographic research in the Ratanakiri province of northeast Cambodia, the paper examines the governance of indigenous territory focusing on the Indigenous Communal Land Titling (ICLT) and on the resulting emergence of fragmented, heterogeneous territory at the village level. Ultimately, this grounded account suggests that our current understanding of indigeneity and territory requires new conceptualizations. This shift aligns with the decolonial turn in knowledge production.

Keywords: heterogeneous territory, resource frontiers, indigeneity, dispossession, Cambodia

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Eunbi Ko is a PhD candidate in Geography at the National University of Singapore. Her research is centered around the field of land and resource governance, particularly within the resource frontiers in Cambodia. She is keen to unravel the intricate connections between politics, ecology, and the dynamic forces shaping land use. E-mail: eunbi.b.ko@gmail.com

Panel E2 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/134>

Hang Thi Thu Truong¹ & Christian Culas²

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Forest to Live/Forest to Manage: Knowledge, Narratives and Actions in Nui Chua National Park (Vietnam)

Abstract: Since the 2000s, studies of natural protected areas (NPAs) in Vietnam have uncovered significant disparities between the practices and expressions of local populations and the discourses disseminated by experts and managers. The recurring divergence in knowledge and worldviews among different social groups poses major challenges for managing these areas in a way that respects the well-being of the local populations and ensures the effectiveness of natural environmental protection and the sustainability of NPAs. Ethnographic studies of the conceptions and representations of the forest among the Raglai indigenous people and the management practices of the Nui Chua national park (Ninh Thuan province), conducted in 2020-2022, have given the authors insights into these gaps. The conceptions of the forest of the Raglai are intertwined with both practical and technical knowledge. They are also inscribed in local symbolic, mythological, spiritual, sensitive, and perceptible representations. ANP managers, on the contrary, conceive the forest as a technical entity with a primarily economic value whose protection is based on technical-scientific principles that are not rooted in local realities. While Raglai populations have precise knowledge of the conceptions and actions of national park managers, their viewpoints are not always aligned. In contrast, ANP managers exhibit limited awareness of the practices and conceptions of the Raglai, which they often attempt to transform. How can these two divergent conceptions of the natural world be reconciled through dialogue? An anthropological approach facilitates meaningful exchanges and negotiations.

Keywords: natural protected areas, local knowledge, environmental management, anthropology, Vietnam

Language: English / **Delivery:** Hybrid

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Nguyen Thuy Trang

Faculty of Linguistics and Literature, Hue University of Education, Hue, Vietnam

Changing Forests in Vietnam's Southwest Border War: A Study of *The Wasteland* by Suong Nguyet Minh

Abstract: War and deforestation are essential topics in global studies. There is no denying the causal link between war and deforestation in Southeast Asian countries. This paper focuses on the conceptual shift of the meaning and symbolism of the forest in Southeast Asian culture during the wars in Vietnam and Cambodia. Suong Nguyet Minh's *The Wasteland* is a novel set in the wild forests of northwestern Cambodia, where the Vietnamese and Pol Pot's armies fought battles between 1978 and 1979. In this novel, the author outlined the oppositions, contradictions, and causalities in the thought and behavior of indigenous people in relation to the forest. Since ancient times, the forest was a source of nourishment as well as the guardian deity that protected humans. In many ways, the community worshiped and revered the forest, a relationship that was expressed through customs, beliefs, livelihoods, social culture, and politics. When war broke out, humans destroyed forests and violated other cultural-natural entities in the forest ecosystem. From the interdisciplinary perspective of cultural theory and ecological criticism, this paper points out the fundamental changes undergone by forests during this period. Through the study of Suong Nguyet Minh's novel, it focuses on the myths of the sacred forest and the harm caused by war on people, human values, and nature.

Keywords: deforestation, ecocriticism, Suong Nguyet Minh, Vietnamese novel, war

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Panel E2 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/150>

Johanna Götz^{1,2} & Carl Middleton¹

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Art as Political Ecology/Political Ecology as Art? Exploring Affect and the Ontological Politics of the Mekong River

Abstract: In recent decades, the Mekong basin has undergone significant changes from a largely free-flowing, local, mostly predictable river to one impacted by socio-ecological changes. Large hydropower dams and climate change, among other factors, have transformed life with and along the river. Plans and practices of “development” in the Mekong basin have been subject to various in/formal debates. These have included the critical viewpoint of political ecology researchers and a range of contemporary artists who have often allied with impacted riparian communities. The strength in their approaches lies in calling attention to the very politics embedded in the causes, processes, and consequences/outcomes of changes along the Mekong River. Thereby, the very relationality of the human and more-than-human is increasingly being re-centered. What remains less explored, however, is the role emotional dimensions play within these human/more-than-human processes from everyday being-with-the-river to more formalized Mekong River politics, as well as how they influence art and research praxis. Against this background and based on ongoing research that engages artists and political ecology researchers, this paper draws on conceptualizations of how affect and emotions are considered within (feminist) political ecology scholarship and recent (re)conceptualizations around ontological politics of water/s, as well as the way contemporary artists engage the emotional within their practices. The paper will argue that the “affective ontological politics” of the Mekong River remains little understood to date yet is crucial towards understanding human and more-than-human entanglements.

Keywords: emotional/affective political ecology, human/more-than-human relationality, ontological politics of water, contemporary art, emotional turn

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Johanna Götz is a doctoral researcher at Helsinki University. Currently, she is a visiting PhD researcher with CSDS and the UNESCO Chair in Resource Governance and Futures Literacy, Chulalongkorn University. She is curious to better understand how water and art, as distinct but related matters, are mobilized by social movements and how they can be utilized to form a more nuanced understanding of processes of democracy-in-the-un/making in contemporary Burma/Myanmar and beyond.

Carl Middleton (PhD) is Deputy Director of graduate studies in international development studies (MAIDS-GRID) and Director of the Center for Social Development Studies in the Faculty of Political Science of Chulalongkorn University. His research focuses on the politics and policy of the environment in Southeast Asia, particularly on humanity-in-nature relations, the political ecology of water and energy, and human mobility and climate change. He helped establish and now heads the Chulalongkorn University UNESCO Chair on Resource Governance and Futures Literacy. ORCID: 0000-0001-5327-3748.

Panel E3 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/041>

Theresia Enny Anggraini

Universitas Sanata Dharma, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Humanity and Humanness of Nonhuman Characters in *The Lunar Chronicles*

Abstract: *The Lunar Chronicles* by Marissa Meyer consist of four book titles: *Cinder*, *Scarlett*, *Cress*, and *Winter*. These are taken from the names of the main characters in the stories, coming from Earth (Earthen) or from Luna/moon (Lunars). Besides having human/earthen characters and lunar characters, these books also have nonhuman characters such as cyborgs, androids, and technological monsters. This paper discusses what it means to have humanity and humanness in the characters of the story. Do only human beings have the characteristics of humanity and humanness? Or are nonhuman characters even more human?

Keywords: humanity, humanness, nonhuman, cyborg, lunar, science-fiction

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Gayatri Pillai

National University of Singapore, Singapore, Singapore

The Posthuman in Contemporary Singaporean Speculative Fiction

Abstract: With the threat of climate change looming large, popular discourse in SE Asia has been increasingly preoccupied with explorations of human-nonhuman entanglements. In recent years Singaporean authors have frequently used speculative fiction to engage in posthumanist enquiries. Employing futuristic, supernatural and fantastic elements, these writers ask compelling questions about the future of humanity through depictions of fractured/alternate realities and apocalyptic ecologies. The publication of *Fish Eats Lion* by Jason Lundberg in 2012, touted as the first anthology of literary speculative fiction from Singapore, was a pioneering endeavor that caught the attention of the local literary community and readers. In 2013, Lundberg followed this up by setting up *Lontar: The Journal of Southeast Asian Speculative Fiction*. The journal was active until 2018 and gave local authors and speculative fiction enthusiasts a much-needed impetus. Another milestone was the publication of Nuraliah Norasid's *The Gatekeeper* (2016), which went on to win the Epigram Books Fiction Prize. Since then, a spate of publications in the genre has garnered popularity. These include *Kallang Basin Adagio* (2017) by Khor Kuan Liang, *Altered Straits* by Kevin Martens Wong, *Beng Beng Revolution* (2018) by Lu Huiyi, and *Lion City* (2019) by Ng Yi-Sheng. This paper explores the context of recent posthumanist articulations and how they challenge the status-quo through speculative imaginaries. The aim is to foreground the liberties the genre and its entanglements with the "more-than-human" accord authors in their engagement with a problematic present and the threat of a dystopian future.

Keywords: speculative fiction, Singaporean literature, ecocriticism, apocalyptic ecology, posthumanism

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Gayatri Pillai (PhD) is an instructor in the Department of English Literature, Linguistics and Theatre Studies at the National University of Singapore (NUS). She holds a PhD jointly awarded by King's College, London, and NUS. She was awarded the Maurice Baker Prize for her doctoral research on colonial South Indian literature. Her areas of research interest are ecocriticism, postcolonial theory, and South and Southeast Asian literature. She is co-researcher on a project for the National Arts Council,

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Panel E3 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/129>

Thu Ngo Bich

Vietnam National University, Hanoi, Vietnam

The Conflicts Between Humans and Robots in Viet Linh’s Science Fiction: An Ecocritical Study of *Strange Planet*

Abstract: From the perspective of ecological criticism, this paper focuses on analyzing and explaining the “strange planet” model in the work of the same title by Viet Linh, Vietnam’s most successful science-fiction writer. This model ensures a balance between natural and social ecosystems, allowing optimal use of natural and social resources. The risk of a conflict between humans and robots and the path to non-violent reconciliation between those two “races” are described in the story to convey the message that scientists should only invent robots when they can control them. The paper also aims at comparing and establishing a dialogue between Vietnamese science-fiction and science-fiction from other countries in Southeast Asia, identifying similarities and differences, as well as reflecting on the contribution of the genre to a posthumanist dialogue among Southeast Asian literatures.

Keywords: science fiction, ecocriticism, natureculture, humans, robots, Vietnamese literature

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel E4 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/051>

John Ray Hontanar

University of the Philippines-Visayas, Iloilo, Philippines

Locating the Ma-aram: Animism and Indigenous Memory in Kinaray-a Agi Poetry

Abstract: This paper analyzes Agi Poetry written in Kinaray-a, using the Panayanon concept of power (*gahum*) as its framework. Philippine gay literature has unfurled after the publication of the anthology *Ladlad* and continues to reach higher grounds. However, gay criticism has been too focused on the discourse of the Manila *bakla* and not much has been said about indigenous models of queerness in the regions. The *agi* is an indigenous articulation of homosexuality in Panay in Central Philippines. This paper traces the connection of the *agi's* attendant performance (*kaagian*) with the indigenous *ma-aram* tradition (also known as *babaylanism*). The strong presence of *ma-aram* imagery in *agi* poetry unravels the connection of *kaagian* with a pre-colonial form of power called *gahum*, which is deeply attuned with the animist spatiality of Panay. The *babaylan* or *ma-aram* is a shaman, culture bearer, and political leader that embodies physical and spiritual powers that go beyond the human realm. *Gahum* is best exemplified in the *ma-aram* tradition because it harnesses animistic forces that guide and safeguard indigenous communities. By exploring the interconnected concepts of *kaagian*, *gahum*, and *babaylanism*, this critical study reveals that there is power in pre-colonial belief systems that can be used to subvert colonial-imposed hegemonies in order to decolonize and liberate the *agi* identity.

Keywords: ecocriticism, animism, queer poetry, Philippine gay literature, decolonization

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

John Ray Hontanar is a literary scholar, visual artist, feminist, and LGBTQIA+ advocate. Born and raised in the magical island of Panay, he holds a master's in Comparative Literature and specializes in babaylanic studies, indigenous culture, and queer writing. He is currently teaching Literary Theory and Art Criticism as an Assistant Professor at the Division of Humanities in UP Visayas. E-mail: jahontanar@up.edu.ph

Panel E4 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/110>

Saran Mahasupap

Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand

Feeling Queer Posthuman: Affective Posthumanism in Randal Kenan's *A Visitation of Spirits*

Abstract: Queer and feminist thinkers have debated the topic of queerness and posthumanism for decades. Several questions have been raised such as: Has queerness ever been human? If not, what will it become? Is queerness considered posthuman? According to these questions, the ability to feel or affect is a crucial line that divides and marks the boundary between being human and posthuman. In Randal Kenan's novel *A Visitation of Spirits*, the main character, Horace, wants to escape being queer. After he is rejected by his community, family, and the people of Tim Creek, he attempts to transform himself into a bird. However, he is exorcised and controlled by a demon. Significantly, Horace's position or identity as someone exorcised by a demon is queerly delineated in the blurred or in-between spaces of being human and being unable to be defined as "human." This paper questions the privilege of the ability to "feel," which is believed to be reserved only for humans. By applying and connecting the concepts of affect theory and feminist posthumanism, it forges a new space for feeling to be read and found by posthumans and queers. Additionally, by becoming a queer posthuman, one can create a counter-narrative and phenomenological space to de-orient the concept of heterosexuality, reveal its ideal, and reorient queerness, as a way to understand the worldmaking of queer posthumans.

Keywords: queer, posthumanism, affect, feeling, queer phenomenology

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Alexandra Bichara

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Entangled Invisibilities: Nature in *Tingle: Anthology of Pinay Lesbian Writing*

Abstract: In the introduction to *Tingle: Anthology of Pinay Lesbian Writing* (2021), its editor, Jhoanna Lynn B. Cruz, points out the absence of lesbian literature and the marginalization of lesbian writers in mainstream narratives in the Philippines, as well as the lack of critics interested in the works of lesbians, thus contributing to their “invisibility.” She writes that “they do not enter the literary discourse, thus rendering them mute.” It is interesting, then, to examine the voices of others who have also typically been rendered mute. This paper aims to present an ecofeminist reading of the forty-nine works (both prose and poetry) in *Tingle* to identify the connection, if any, between women and nature as represented in the anthology. Studying the interconnection of women and nature means acknowledging the existence of various races, classes, and all categories in between. In other words, women share the same perspectives, advantages, and disadvantages of their respective groups as well as what they share with other women. This study aims to listen to the environment in the text and answer the question of how the concepts of gender and nature are represented in the writings of Pinay lesbians. How do these non-heteronormative perspectives perpetuate or deconstruct ecological beliefs in the Philippines? The study will accomplish this using the lens of “emancipatory strategies,” as coined by ecofeminist Patrick Murphy and explored by Gretchen T. Legler. Thus, it will categorize encounters between women and nature as cases of “remything,” the erasure of boundaries between inner and outer landscapes, and re-eroticizing.

Keywords: Philippines, environment, lesbian literature, ecocriticism, ecofeminism

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Min Seong Kim

Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Post-Marxism and the Pluriverse: Antagonism and Universality Across More-than-human Worlds

Abstract: In recent years, theorists such as Mario Blaser, Marisol de la Cadena, and Arturo Escobar have pointed to “ontological politics” as the mode of politics called for by the condition of the pluriverse, that is, the Anthropocene considered as composed of “many worlds” in contradistinction to the unitary world imposed by a Western-centric modernity. Although the aspirations of ontological politics for more inclusive and less hierarchical relations between humans as well as between humans and nonhuman beings appear commendable, it has received criticism for both its theoretical underpinnings and its political implications. For instance, Kate Soper and Saito Kohei have questioned the aim of posthumanist theorizations and “flat” ontologies—versions of which tend to inform pluriversal thought—to overcome subject/object and culture/nature dichotomies, while a series of interventions by Erik Swyngedouw, who draws from Badiou and Rancière, has highlighted potentially depoliticizing implications of the notion of the “more-than-human” pluriverse. Largely absent from the debates around ontological politics has been the post-Marxist thought initiated by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe—a surprising absence, given that post-Marxist theorists have been the most consistent proponents of an “ontology of the political.” This paper seeks to bring post-Marxism and ontological politics into dialogue. It will show that, although post-Marxism’s emphasis on discursive articulation and the construction of hegemonic universality may seem incompatible with the ethical and theoretical presuppositions of ontological politics, certain Laclauian notions—including antagonism and heterogeneity—do allow for a more productive encounter between the two.

Keywords: post-Marxism, pluriverse, ontological politics, antagonism, hegemonic universality

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Tania Roy

National University of Singapore, Singapore

The Island of No Extinction: Singapore and the Aesthetics of Late Liberalism

Abstract: In her influential reformulation of sovereignty under conditions of “late liberalism,” Elizabeth Povinelli proposes the idea of “geontopower.” Sovereignty has been associated through the modern state with authority and the affordances to govern life and death. Under conditions of late liberalism, the exercise of sovereign power shifts to adjudications of the distinction between Life and Nonlife, the grounds upon which differences and markets are governed. As such, geontopower brings the articulation of difference and the limits of multicultural recognition into conversation with the regulation of markets, at a moment when the accumulation of wealth through deep-earth/ocean extraction coincides with the anthropogenic anxiety of extinction. This paper resituates the periodicities of Povinelli’s account of late liberalism and postcolonial imaginaries, which introject foundational national mythologies of sovereign emergence into the exercise of geontological power. To this end, the paper examines the work of contemporary visual artists from Singapore. Charles Lim’s multi-modal project SEA STATE is an unfolding, episodic chronicle of the Straits of Singapore and Johor. Through Lim’s engagements, the littoral waters around the city-state of Singapore emerge as a thoroughly legislated space, or, in effect, a “landed” extension of the city’s built environment over the island’s shoreline. The paper discusses Singapore’s governance of the difference between land and sea (Lim), which links the geophysical engineering of Singapore’s shoreline with histories of communal displacement and the production of an ethnicized national minority.

Keywords: late liberalism, geontology, Singapore, aesthetics, terraforming

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel E5 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/152>

Swapnit Pradhan & Madhav Dubey

Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee, Roorkee, India

Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Environmental Justice, and the Capitalocene in Suchen Christine Lim's *The River Song*

Abstract: This paper delves into the intersections of traditional ecological knowledge, environmental justice, and the concept of the Capitalocene in the context of the novel *The River's Song* (2014) by Suchen Christine Lim. The novel offers a nuanced exploration of Singapore's rapid urbanization, capital-driven expansion, and its socio-environmental consequences. Through a scrutiny of the narrative, characters, and settings, the paper elucidates the presence of traditional ecological knowledge and indigenous practices as integral components of the characters' identities and their relationship with the environment. Further, the paper examines the instances of environmental injustice depicted in the novel, highlighting how marginalized communities disproportionately bear the brunt of ecological degradation. The essay problematizes the inequitable distribution of ecological benefits and burdens among various classes of human beings. It also investigates the advent of the Capitalocene in terms of commodification and the boundless exploitation of nature, resulting in the alienation of individuals from the land. The critical base of the paper is informed by postcolonial ecocriticism and sociopolitical theories. By intertwining literary analysis with ecological and sociopolitical issues, this study aims to contribute to the discourse surrounding the intricate interplay between nature, culture, and posthuman societal structures, prompting us to reflect on the urgency of sustainable and equitable environmental stewardship.

Keywords: traditional ecological knowledge, environmental justice, Capitalocene, ecocriticism, environmental racism, Singaporean literature

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Madhav Dubey is a doctoral researcher working in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences at the Indian Institute of Technology. His works are published in international journals, and he has presented at many international conferences. Graphic novels, migration, trauma, and memory studies are his areas of interest.

Le Ngoc Phuong

University of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam

The Cognitive Transformation of the Environment in South Vietnamese Literature from 1954 to 1975

Abstract: Binh Nguyen Loc and Son Nam were two famous writers of South Vietnamese literature in the period 1954-1975. They both showed strong writing power in many genres such as novels, short stories, and essays. In their work, they share a deep love for nature and a great concern for the living environment and the relationship between humans and ecology. The works of Binh Nguyen Loc and Son Nam clearly express the image of people migrating to the South to live and settle down. The process of migration and relocation forced them to become stronger, yearning to conquer wild nature. In that process, people also gradually realized the important role of ecology and understood the philosophy of living in harmony with nature. People also foresaw the consequences of exploiting to exhaustion the sea and the forest without recognizing how to cherish and protect nature. The works of Binh Nguyen Loc and Son Nam show a transformation in ecological awareness and express the philosophy of the people of south Vietnam in the post-colonial literature. This paper analyzes the causes and meanings of this change in ecological awareness in the case of these two writers as well as the aesthetic and ideological value of their work.

Keywords: Binh Nguyen Loc, Son Nam, cognitive transformation, environment, South Vietnam

Language: Vietnamese / **Delivery:** Online

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Trinh Dang

Hung Vuong University, Phu Tho, Vietnam

Urbanites, Intellectuals, and the Wave of Urban Ecology in Vietnamese Novels in the Early 21st Century

Abstract: In the field of urban ecology, theorists research the relationship between human beings and their city surroundings. With the rapid rate of industrialization and urbanization, urbanites and intellectuals have experienced severe environmental changes. This is clearly shown in early 21st century novels by Do Phan, Nguyen Viet Ha, Do Bich Thuy. Urbanites and intellectuals must deal with many difficulties and challenges caused by natural changes, but they also suffer from psychological trauma brought about by urbanization. When nature in urban areas is destroyed, people, especially the urban class and intellectuals, also suffer physical and mental pain, and can even fall into a state of corruption under the power of money. Examining the loss and trauma of urbanites and intellectuals in the context of ecological urbanization, this paper explores the association of natural protection with the preservation of the values of life.

Keywords: urban ecology, people urban, urbanites, intellectuals, Vietnamese novels in the early 21st century

Language: Vietnamese / **Delivery:** Online

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Jennifer Rebecca Ortuoste

University of Santo Tomas, Manila, Philippines

Ecofeminist Discourses in Mindanao: Unraveling Critical Entanglements of Memory and Lived Experience

Abstract: This paper examines how selected essays authored by women from Mindanao, inspired by core memories that intertwine personal experience and knowledge, challenge, and reshape our understanding of environmental issues in the Philippine context. The state of the Philippine archipelago's environment and ecology has been the subject of intense scholar and social concern. Mindanao, known for its rich biodiversity and complex socio-environmental dynamics, becomes a particularly illuminating context for this investigation. In Jeneen R. Garcia's "Snapshots from Samal," Lolita R. Lacuesta's "Ata Rice," Jeena Rani Marquez's "Gahum," and Ma. Elena Paulma's "Where I Write From," narrative extends beyond mere appreciation of nature's beauty. These essays underscore how the interplay of memory and ecological consciousness contributes to the broader discourse of ecological communication. Using the post-structuralist concept of the rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980), this paper interrogates how these women's voices, whether examining lived experiences or personal memories, critically position themselves in the ecological discourse, rejecting the tendency to essentialize nature as a passive entity and recognizing it as a dynamic partner in human existence. This leads to an unraveling of the ways in which conceptual networks are created that foster a deeper connection with the environment, inspiring a reevaluation of our relationships with nature and advocating for a more inclusive and equitable environmental discourse.

Keywords: ecofeminism, ecological communication, feminist ecocriticism, memory studies, Mindanao

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Jennifer Rebecca Ortuoste (PhD) teaches communication and creative writing at the University of Santo Tomas. She has written opinion, sports, and book review columns for the *Manila Standard* since 2008. Her essays, short stories, and visual art have been published in Philippine magazines and anthologies. She is a Palanca Award-winning essayist and author of *Fictionary* (2007), a collection of prize-winning short stories. Currently, she is working on a book about Philippine horseracing culture and communication. While Manila is her birthplace and hometown, she grew up in a household rooted in the cultures and languages of Central Mindanao and Western Visayas. ORCID: 0000-0002-1977-4458. E-mail: jlortuoste@ust.edu.ph

Soolmaz Moeini

University of Guilan, Rasht, Iran

Ecocriticism in the Works of Mahmud Doulatabadi

Abstract: Mahmud Doulatabadi's literary works stand as a poignant testament to the intersection of ecology, character development, and narrative structure. In his works, the environment emerges as a pivotal character, exerting a profound influence on the story's protagonists. This paper delves into the significance of ecocriticism in Doulatabadi's oeuvre, highlighting how it shapes both characters and plotlines, while also exploring the presence of ecofeminism and postcolonialism within his narratives. Doulatabadi's keen ecological awareness is evident in his meticulous portrayal of natural landscapes. His narratives are infused with the sights, sounds, and rhythms of rural and urban environments in Iran. Through these vivid descriptions, the environment becomes a dynamic force that not only frames the characters' lives but also influences their decisions and destinies. Characters in Doulatabadi's works grapple with ecological challenges, such as droughts, deforestation, and pollution, which serve as metaphors for their internal conflicts and moral dilemmas. Furthermore, Doulatabadi's engagement with ecofeminism is discernible in his exploration of the gendered aspects of environmental degradation. His female characters often bear the brunt of ecological crises, reflecting broader issues of societal inequities. Doulatabadi skillfully intertwines the fates of women and the environment, drawing attention to the interconnectedness of gender and ecology. Moreover, the specter of postcolonialism looms large in Doulatabadi's narratives, as he confronts the historical legacies of foreign exploitation and domination. Through his characters, he underscores how environmental degradation can be linked to colonial and neocolonial forces, shedding light on the enduring consequences of imperialistic endeavors. The implications of this study extend beyond Doulatabadi's works themselves, offering valuable insights for Southeast Asian ecocriticism and scholarship. It highlights the universality of ecological themes and their potential to reveal the intricate connections between literature, environment, and sociopolitical contexts. This paper argues that Doulatabadi's approach serves as a compelling case study for scholars seeking to explore similar intersections in the literature of Southeast Asia, ultimately enriching the discourse on ecocriticism in the region.

Keywords: ecocriticism, ecofeminism, postcolonialism, environment, crisis

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Soolmaz Moeini (PhD) obtained a doctorate in Persian Language and Literature, specializing in ecocriticism and environmental humanities, from the University of Gilan, Iran. She is a researcher at the University of Granada, delving into the intersection of language, literature, and environmental consciousness. ORCID: 0009-0005-9448-1048. E-mail: Soolmazmoeini@yahoo.com

Elvis Galasinao

De La Salle University, Manila, Philippines

“How I Remember”: Sense of Place and Nostalgia for Homeland in Barbara Jane Reyes’s Poetry

Abstract: This paper investigates the sense of place and nostalgia for the motherland in the work of Filipina-American poet Barbara Jane Reyes (born 1971). It looks into the construction of meaning in her poetry in relation to attachment to place in five collections, *Letters to a Young Brown Girl* (2020), *Invocation to Daughters* (2017), *To Love as Aswang* (2015), *Diwata* (2010), and *Poeta en San Francisco* (2005). Reyes’s poetry reflects nostalgia for the northern region of the Philippines. Reyes expresses her attachment to place through a poetics of nostalgia, incorporating her childhood memories of myths, places, trees, bodies of water, and rural life. Important for her Filipina identity is the sense of place conveyed in her poetry, in addition to her conception of nature as a mother who nourishes and keeps people’s memory. As Reyes articulates in her poetry, a natural and rural life is the traditional Filipino way leading to freedom.

Keywords: Barbara Jane Reyes, poetics of nostalgia, sense of place, Filipina-American poetry, memory

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Panel E7 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/115>

Aaron Philip Dela Cruz

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Logging Into the Virtual Cockpit: Defining the Neoliberalization of Philippine Cockfighting through an Ethnography of E-sabong

Abstract: Online cockfighting or e-sabong is a franchise owned by Pitmaster Live under the gaming and casino company Lucky Star 8 Quest Inc. The game rose to popularity at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 until it was suspended on 3rd May 2022 by former President Rodrigo Duterte due to the menace it brought to society. This paper defines and positions online cockfighting as a neoliberal iteration of Philippine cockfighting. Through ethnography, it shows how this profit-driven philosophy reflects the Pitmaster gambling portal's operational management and user interface. This research offers a meditation about the role of accelerative technologies in shaping cultures and systems by telling the story of the rise and fall of e-sabong in the Philippines.

Keywords: e-sabong, cockfighting, technology, neoliberalism, human-animal studies

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Panel F1 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/048>

Elaine Monserate

University of the Philippines Visayas, Iloilo City, Philippines
Ateneo de Manila University, Quezon City, Philippines

Finding the Ecofeminist Voice in the Palanca Winning Short Stories of Alice Tan-Gonzales

Abstract: This study shows the deep connection of women and nature through an ecofeminist lens. The study looks at the Palanca winning short stories of Alice Tan-Gonzales and identifies spiritual and cultural ecofeminist perspectives in the stories “Sa Taguangan sang Duta” and “Baha.” This paper also theorizes that the value of ecofeminism in Gonzales’ short stories can help shed light on female struggles within Western Visayan society. It identifies the various ecofeminist elements of the stories, specifically the characters and the setting, and illustrates why they are relevant for ecofeminism. It also problematizes the selected works of Alice Tan Gonzales and categorizes her position as a defining writer in West Visayas literature. Ecofeminism is present in Gonzales’ short stories as illustrated by the characters’ revelation of ongoing female struggles in the region. The study reveals that, through characters and setting, the embodiment of reality in Alice Tan Gonzales’ literary work separates her from other writers in the Western Visayan region. This should help to raise awareness about the real plight of women and nature in the region and contribute to its mitigation.

Keywords: ecofeminism, women, nature, short story, psychoanalysis

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Deirdre Byrne

University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa

“The weaving of hidden dimensions / through ours”: Jane Hirshfield’s Poetry about More-than-human Nature and Amanda Lee Koe’s Eco-stories

Abstract: The celebrated American poet, Jane Hirshfield, and Singaporean author, Amanda Lee Koe, are both keenly interested in more-than-human nature. Hirshfield does not write from an explicitly ecofeminist perspective, but many of her poems recognize the link between women’s experiences and the encounter with more-than-human nature. This paper compares Hirshfield’s poems about the environment in *Ledger* (2020) with Koe’s deployment of the more-than-human Singaporean biome as both setting and character in her stories in *Ministry of Moral Panic* (2013). While Hirshfield insists on the preciousness of what humanity has destroyed and is destroying, in terms that we would do well to heed, Amanda Lee Koe’s collection of short stories, *Ministry of Moral Panic* takes a more skeptical, even postmodern approach to the more-than-human world. For Koe, the entanglement of human and more-than-human provides the setting for the interpersonal, cross-gender, and interspecies relationships that she investigates in her stories, such as “Every Park on this Island” and “Siren”, which engage with the more-than-human Singaporean biome as well as its irreducible cultural hybridity. By setting these two contemporary authors in dialogue with each other, this paper suggests that the Anthropocene has become a feature of culture that we can no longer ignore.

Keywords: Jane Hirshfield, Amanda Lee Koe, environmental writing, eco-poetics, ecofeminism, Zen Buddhism, Singapore

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Deirdre Byrne (PhD) is a full Professor of English Studies at the University of South Africa (Unisa). She is one of the co-editors of *Scrutiny2: Issues in English Studies in Southern Africa*, and has guest edited two special issues of *Feminist Encounters: A Journal of Critical Studies in Culture and Politics*. She has published research on the writing of Ursula K. Le Guin, as well as on women’s poetry, and poetry in education. She is the Director of ZAPP (the South African Poetry Project). ORCID: 0000-0002-4436-6632.

Panel F1 – <https://asleasian.mfu.ac.th/index.php/179>

Anh Nguyet Tran Thi

Faculty of Language and Literature, University of Danang, Danang, Vietnam

Questioning Male Dominance: An Ecofeminist Reading of *River* by Nguyen Ngoc Tu

Abstract: Ecocriticism explores the role of literature in the face of the current ecological crisis. One of its research directions is ecofeminism. Ecofeminists denounce the network of assumptions and closely related dualistic constructs, especially the dualism of reason and nature, or humanity-culture and nature. The purpose of this paper is to read *River* (2012) by Nguyễn Ngọc Tú from the perspective of ecofeminism. The author of this novel chose a gay character to talk about a trip on the Di River, writing about the sadness of a world that is in danger of disappearing. The novel describes the south of Vietnam with an anti-romantic and de-mythologizing view. The adventure trip on the Di River is a journey that reveals the loss of nature, the barrenness of the landscape. The main character recognizes the impact of climate change on the fates of the women who live there. This study will investigate the novel with an ecofeminist focus, by (1) showing parallels between male domination over females with human domination over nature, (2) providing a summary of male dominance in history, and (3) questioning dualism through the gay storyteller.

Keywords: demythology, ecofeminism, male dominance, Nguyễn Ngọc Tú

Language: Vietnamese / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel F2 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/126>

Noe John Joseph Sacramento

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Thou Shall Not Touch: Central Philippines' *Mari-it* in Posthumanist Discourse and Environmental Protection Policy

Abstract: Central Visayan families in the Philippines would always remind young people to be mindful of their actions, as they may harm the unseen and the *mari-it*. Little that the young people know, these gentle reminders cut across communities and, at some points, led to more significant impacts in preserving traditions, forging community social action, and protecting the environment. This study draws from the case of the Central Philippines' Panay-Guimaras region, where communities commonly articulate the concept of *mari-it*. Peculiar as it may sound, some local governments have established local ordinances and resolutions legitimizing the protection and preservation of some places identified as *mari-it*. The paper contends that, even within the highly empiricist traditions of technocratic expertise, policymakers always have an open potential to decenter the discourse from evidence-based science to a more posthumanist understanding encompassing beliefs and values. Decentering the debates and understanding of a phenomenon can lead to legitimizing beliefs of the unseen, supporting the idea that humans should co-exist and co-evolve, and putting the protectionist policies in place. These explorations are often unappreciated in the highly empiricist traditions of policy science; however, this work navigates the peculiarities of critical policy studies with the hopes of opening interesting angles for future investigations.

Keywords: critical policy studies, environmental policy, local government, Philippines, posthuman

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Fabio Calzolari

Mae Fah Luang University, Chiang Rai, Thailand

An Ecocritical Analysis of Thai People's View of Air Pollution in Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai

Abstract: This paper analyses the perspectives of 24 adult-aged Thai people living in Chiang Rai and Chiang Mai's provinces on seasonal air pollution. The author adopted as an interpretative framework what philosopher John Passmore calls “problems in ecology” and “ecological issues,” with the former being anchored to scientific hypotheses of a phenomenon and the latter, though not wholly eschewing science, more linked to social/cultural assumptions. Results demonstrate that narratives concerning haze in Thailand move around human cultural values about stability and disturbance, especially the concept of fire. Based on the interview transcripts, the term reveals various meanings: natural element, condition to agricultural management, power over nature, and tribal rights. For the respondents, farmers adopt crop burning to accelerate harvesting. Allegedly, they do so to save money and because of the lack of infrastructure, with the government taking a “soft” approach toward their behavior. Besides, the practice is shared by hill tribe villagers, who consider it an element of their traditions. Despite choking from smog, according to the interviewees, most individuals in their country, especially older generations, have no incitement to completely free their thoughts from outlooks that historically have been the most favored ones: profit/economic survival and the superiority of cultural heritage over public needs. Consequently, society is burdened with seemingly intractable problems (anthropolitics vs. ecological realism).

Keywords: haze, Thailand, ecological realism, anthropolitics, youth and young adults

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Chaya Vaddhanaphuti

Chiang Mai University, Chiang Mai, Thailand

Governing a Voluminous and Volumetric Atmosphere: A Case Study of Forest Fires and Haze Pollution in Northern Thailand

Abstract: The seasonal forest fire/haze pollution events in northern Thailand have repeatedly reanimated experiences of hazy skies, invisible mountains, burning mountains, as well as breathing difficulties. The atmosphere in which we live is never empty. Rather, it is always a material and affective atmosphere. Over the past decade, the province of Chiang Mai has come up with various strategies to minimize adverse socioeconomic, environmental, and health issues. Many of these strategies are rooted in technological and territorial governance, from surveilling and controlling access to forests, banning and regulating burning, arresting those who break the bans, modelling and predicting pollution patterns, and issuing quotas for “hotspots.” While forests and the atmosphere have become a biopolitical concern to be regulated and politicized, evidence shows that these strategies have failed to govern human activities, fires, and the emissions of particulate matter, which continue to flow, leak, and seep vertically and horizontally. This article suggests a new understanding of forest and particulate matter as a “fluid-solid,” a leaky and affective materiality enveloped in the modern atmosphere, a voluminous and volumetric entity on which life is heavily dependent, but which is now more complex, fragile, and unstable. Governing a transboundary environment requires rethinking the materiality of forests and atmosphere.

Keywords: forest fires, haze pollution, Chiang Mai, governance, volumetric

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Chaya Vaddhanaphuti (PhD) is a Lecturer at the Department of Geography, Faculty of Social Sciences, Chiang Mai University. He is interested in the human dimensions of climate change, political ecology, the Anthropocene, science and technology studies (STS), and more-than-human geographies. He focuses on the cultures and histories of weather and seasons, haze pollution, and particulate matter, as well as climate change knowledge and policy in terms of justice and governance. He holds a PhD in Human Geography from King’s College London. ORCID: 0000-0002-1660-9262.

Tsutomu Takahashi

Kyushu University, Fukuoka, Japan

“Cursing Modernity”: Michiko Ishimure’s Creative Nonfiction of Minamata

Abstract: In 1973, the Ramon Magsaysay Foundation, a Philippine-based organization, distinguished Michiko Ishimure’s creative nonfiction *Kugai Jodo* [Paradise in the Sea of Sorrow] with its eminent award, as “the voice of her people in the struggle against industrial pollution.” Since then, Ishimure’s work has attracted much critical attention both domestically and internationally. Karen Thornber of Harvard University, for instance, discussed her work extensively in *Ecoambiguity: Environmental Crises and East-Asian Literatures* (2012). *Kugai Jodo* (1969) is based on the historical incident of Minamata Disease, a case of organic mercury poisoning caused by polluted industrial runoff which took place on the coastline of southwestern Japan in late 1950s and 1960s. Despite its apparently realistic account of the incident as a historical record, however, Ishimure’s narrative dramatically brings into focus the question of modernity in a local transitional society, a universal theme that also holds relevance to the communities of Southeast Asia. As a local spiritual “voice cursing the incursion of the modern,” Ishimure’s narrative derives its power from sharply contrasted scenes and motifs surrounding the local fishermen’s memories and dreams, family relations, and communal and natural bonds before and after the incident. This paper discusses the thematic importance of water in *Kugai Jodo* (incidentally, the topic for the 2023 UN Water Conference), elaborating especially upon its communal spiritual meanings along with the deadly implications of pollution, as a way to illustrate Ishimure’s symbolic quest for what is truly human.

Keywords: Michiko Ishimure, Minamata disease, pollution, toxic discourse, water

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Tsutomu Takahashi (PhD) is a Professor Emeritus at Kyushu University, Japan. He completed a PhD in Comparative Literature at Pennsylvania State University and has since then been teaching American literature and environmental studies at Kyushu University. His publications include *Concord Jeremiad: Thoreau’s Rhetoric of the Age* (in Japanese, 2012) and *The Grammar of the Wild: Thoreau, Muir, and Gary Snyder* (in Japanese, 2021). He also coauthored *Ecoambiguity, Community, and Development* (Lexington Books 2014). E-mail: tsu2758@flc.kyushu-u.ac.jp

Ming Panha

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The Early 20th-century Dutch East Indies in Sherlock Holmes' Anthropocene Unconscious in "The Dying Detective" (1913) by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Abstract: The story "The Dying Detective" (1913) by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle suggests that British imperial authority, in the form of Sherlock Holmes, overcomes the contamination of British subjects in the Dutch colonies, which is represented by the character of Culverton Smith, a British planter from Sumatra. Thus, the short story reveals British and Dutch imperial rivalry. It begins with Smith's attempt to kill Holmes with a germ of "tapanuli fever," which he collects from his plantation and cultivates inside bottles in London. Holmes pretends to be infected, raving feverishly about coins and oysters, and deceives Smith into confessing his crime before arresting him. Even though Holmes tells Watson that the disease is highly contagious, he manages to defeat the criminal and appears to be uninfected by a germ that spreads in Malay and Chinese communities in London. Despite his victory over the highly contagious Sumatran disease and the British planter who plots against him, Holmes fails to escape from the ecological entanglement of the Dutch East Indies. Employing Mark Bould's concept of the Anthropocene unconscious, this paper argues that Holmes's victory shows the suppressed concern of imperial manipulation of the environment. Holmes's defeat of the tropical disease in London contrasts with his desire for the tobacco produced by the plantations of colonial Sumatra, which are the hotbed of the epidemic.

Keywords: Anthropocene, Dutch East Indies, tropical diseases, animal studies, ecology

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Graham Huggan

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Swan Dreamings: Refugees, Revenants, and the Stakes of World Literature in Alexis Wright's *The Swan Book*

Abstract: Alexis Wright's speculative novel *The Swan Book* (2013) has aptly been described as "teem[ing] with songs, stories, images and fragments of culture [from] across the planet." It is certainly an Aboriginal Australian text, just as Wright is an Aboriginal Australian author, but its frame of reference is planetary, and the stories it tells have their provenance in Europe, Asia, and many other parts of the world. Many of these stories revolve around swans, including those which, well known across South and Southeast Asia, belong to the Buddhist Jataka tradition. Several of these tales are cautionary in nature, offering reminders that while swans are reputed to be able to change shape and/or move between worlds, they may not be at home in any world. Such also seems to be the case with many of the novel's human characters, all of whom – albeit in different ways – are refugees from global climate wars. These characters' stories loop back on themselves, creating ghostly patterns that indicate the ambivalent presence of an unfinished past. The paper plays between the twinned figures of the refugee and the revenant to reflect on what Gayatri Spivak calls "the stakes of World Literature," which she sees as inhabiting the gap between "experiencing beings" and their "presupposition of a world." World Literature wants to fill the world, but is unable to do so; this gap, which Spivak identifies with dreams, turns World Literature into a series of cautionary tales. This is one context among others in which *The Swan Book* can be read, and it helps explain the melancholia that infuses it – a melancholia expressed in the various swan dreams and Dreamings that shadow the text.

Keywords: Aboriginal literature, world literature, refugees, revenants, climate wars, jatakas

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Graham Huggan (PhD) is a Professor at the School of English, University of Leeds, UK. His research straddles three fields, postcolonial studies, tourism studies, and environmental humanities, all of which are brought together in his latest monograph, *Colonialism, Culture, Whales* (Bloomsbury 2018). His latest book is the co-authored study *Modern British Nature Writing, 1789-2020* (Cambridge University Press 2022), while earlier work includes the monograph *The Postcolonial Exotic* (Routledge 2001) and, co-authored with Helen Tiffin, *Postcolonial Ecocriticism* (Routledge 2010). E-mail: g.d.m.huggan@leeds.ac.uk

Maryanne Moll

University of the Philippines, Quezon City, Philippines

When the Land Itself Metes Out Justice: Corruption, Retribution, and the Haunted Island in Caroline Hau's *Tiempo Muerto*

Abstract: This paper analyzes Caroline Hau's 2019 novel *Tiempo Muerto* in terms of the haunted wilderness that houses human pain and its eventual resolution in a manner that questions the stability of power structures and the concept of justice in a postcolonial country. Place has its own dominance in the unfolding of human lives, even during the exercise of human agency. Spectrality is used as a framework for analysis. It looks for the "spectral turn," the point where the non-dominant binary (the haunted) reveals itself to be the dominant binary, or the foundation for the dominant binary (the haunting). The novel is set in a fictional island called Banwa, in the real-life province of Negros in the Philippines, a victim of postcolonial corruption. Things that happened on the island years before were the root of the current crisis undergone by the main characters. If it were not for the island, these people's situation would not have existed, and their intentions would not have been carried through. The haunted wilderness is a facet of literary study that is apt for Asian settings, as stories in this region are often rooted in the natural characteristics of place but also steeped in postcolonial pain. But more than being a mere backdrop, the wilderness carries its own power that does not stem from any human hand. Humanity's attempts to subdue wilderness does not always succeed, and sometimes it is because the wilderness is just more powerful. It is time to talk about that power.

Keywords: spectrality, haunted wilderness, power structures, postcolonial, justice

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

Maryanne Moll is the author of four books. Her short story "At Merienda" won the third prize in the 2005 Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards for Literature, and her other short stories have also been included in anthologies in the Philippines and abroad. Her first novel, *The Maps of Camarines*, was published by Penguin Random House SEA, and is available worldwide as a paperback and as an e-book. She is studying for an MA in Comparative Literature, with a major in literary theory, and is slated to undergo her final thesis defense in 2023.

Paloma Chaterji

St Xavier's University, Kolkata, India

Contextualizing Identity through Environmental Consciousness in Southeast Asian Fictions

Abstract: The human-nature interface is constantly altered in response to rapid environmental changes along with socio-political developments. The ecologies of Southeast Asia are also politically charged spaces engaging with colonial, postcolonial, and neocolonial interferences that impact the place-specific behaviors of their inhabitants. Although divided by interregional differences, the countries within this geographical milieu remain connected in the spatial construct called “Southeast Asia.” The literary texts set in this region often collaborate on multiple levels as they deal with ecological consciousness vis-à-vis social changes. Dealing with spatial and identity crises, the negotiations of characters with their environments reinstate selfhood in relation to ethnicity and gender. Reading a selection of texts from Merlinda Bobis (Philippines), Tan Twan Eng (Malaysia), and Easterine Kire and Temsula Ao (Northeast India), this paper asks if ecological consciousness has the potential to challenge power structures like patriarchy, colonialism, and globalization. The paper adopts a postcolonial approach to locate the “othering” of communities and/or individuals, interrogating the layers of complex functioning amongst human, nature, society, culture, and tradition. Revisiting the connection between ecology and feminism, the paper attempts to reassess the collapse of the nature-culture binary to evaluate the repositioning of gender in traditional communities. Exploring the multiple cultures and histories within these texts, the paper analyzes the struggle to retain one’s identity, as characters navigate from displacement to emplacement, often nurturing an ethics that dismantles human hubris and questions the anthropocentric social order.

Keywords: postcolonialism, women, ecology, identity, Southeast Asia

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel F4 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/038>

Hamoud Mohsen & Mazura Mastura Muhamad

Sultan Idris Education University, Perak, Malaysia

Living Land and Landscape in Malaysian Literature: An Ecological Reading of Selected Works

Abstract: This article aims to highlight the representations of landscape ecology and ecological sustainability issues in contemporary literary works by selected Malaysian writers who have charted the miscellaneous landscapes throughout the country to promote the transformation of ecological consciousness. It is mainly focused on the analysis of the representations of the ecological issues embodied throughout the selected literary works and the implications and reflections they raise, in their effort to increase awareness of ecological sustainability and the current global attention to landscape ecology. The analysis shows that, despite the varied setting and ecology of the selected works, they all aim to foreground how Malaysian landscape ecology promotes a rock-solid relationship with humankind to maintain ecological sustainability. It also shows the vital role of literature in widening the scope of ecological sustainability and promoting ecological values related with the cohabitation of humans and nonhumans in a Malaysian context. Recognizing that the representation of ecological sustainability and landscape ecology has become a leading theme in contemporary literary studies, the paper argues that the ecological approach of the selected works can be a step towards transforming the literary representation of ecological sustainability and landscapes, to broaden its scope and provide insights into different perspectives.

Keywords: ecocriticism, landscape ecology, ecological sustainability, literature, Malaysia

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Panel F4 – <https://asleasean.mfu.ac.th/index.php/064>

Kan Rattanachote

Mae Fah Luang University, Chiang Rai, Thailand

Ecocritical Symbolism in Veeraporn Nithiprapha's *The Blind Earthworm in the Labyrinth*

Abstract: At present, human beings are concerned about anthropogenic climate change. Literature is a way to either indirectly or directly reflect on how climate change will affect humanity. *The Blind Earthworm in the Labyrinth* by Veeraporn Nithiprapa is an award-winning Thai novel that reflects on the connection between human activities and nature. It is a great example of raising awareness about the environment through storytelling. The story has a richness of symbols related to the environment. The symbols in the story are mostly plants and flowers with hidden meanings. This study is meant to elucidate the connection between humans and nature from an ecological perspective, especially in the context of the Anthropocene. The study analyzes major literary elements in the novel, including plot, setting, characters, and symbols. It then uses the concept of the Anthropocene and an ecocritical approach to interpret the story. The study shows how humans have a bond with nature and need to rely on each other. In spite of this bond, humans tend to ignore their environment and fail to care for it. Because humans often raise themselves higher than nature, the environment is starting to collapse. *The Blind Earthworm in the Labyrinth* uses aspects of Thai culture to represent how humans are now living differently from the past. Thai culture teaches everyone to aid and care for each other. While humans change, nature never changes, unless humans interfere with it.

Keywords: Anthropocene, ecocriticism, humans, Thai literature, Veeraporn Nithiprapha, plant symbolism

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Hyun Sohn

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The Same Moon in Science and Poetry: An Ecofeminist Analysis of Galileo Galilei's *Dialogue* and William Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads*

Abstract: While revisiting Snow's discussion on the "two cultures" might appear inconsequential in the current era of posthumanism, which strives for the natural coexistence of humans and machines, the enduring psychological gap between science and literature remains substantial. This study seeks to bridge this divide by examining the shared ecofeminist attributes within the scientific and the literary discourses about the moon. Specifically, the study aims to scrutinize Galileo's *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems* (1632) and Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) through an ecofeminist lens focused on lunar discourse. Despite emerging with a temporal separation of approximately two centuries, *Dialogue* and *Lyrical Ballads* stand as pivotal works that contributed, respectively, to the inception of modern science and modern (Romantic) literature. Moreover, they individually epitomize contemporary responses to the issue of the "two cultures" within their distinct cultural contexts: *Dialogue* addresses the duality of geocentrism and heliocentrism, while *Lyrical Ballads* pertains to the realms of science and poetry. Hence, these two texts provide a consequential viewpoint for reevaluating the dual-culture predicament of our contemporary era. The author contends that within the two texts both the scientist and the poet exhibit feminist leanings as they unveil their distinct "subjective destitution" linked to the moon. As a result, they embrace an ecological approach that prioritizes the object over the subject of discourse. Ultimately, the scientist and the poet align in purpose, not erasing but accentuating the materiality of the object as fragmented, feminine subjects. The paper will conclude by briefly discussing how this perspective may be applied to the moon poems of Eastern Asian poets, using examples from Sunthorn Phu (Thailand) and Li Bai (China).

Keywords: science and poetry, moon, ecofeminism, Galileo, Wordsworth

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Bratati Barik

Vidyasagar College, Calcutta, India

Blurring of Boundaries in Selected Short Stories of Tagore and Bao Ninh: A Posthumanist Perspective

Abstract: The aim of this research paper is to analyze how the short stories of Tagore and Bao Ninh exhibit subtle human-nature bonds. Human civilization has long ignored these bonds and it has often attempted to push them to the periphery, devaluating them by diminishing nature, along with its rich flora and fauna, as the “other.” From this anthropocentric perspective, nature retains some value only as long as it satisfies human needs. The study explores how Tagore’s short stories, “Hungry Stones” and “Chutti: The Homecoming,” highlight the significance of bringing flora, fauna, and the natural environment back into the domain of human existence. This differs from the destructive and authoritative representation of nature in Bao Ninh’s “A River’s Mystery.” In this work, the Vietnamese writer presents nature as a ferocious force that victimizes human beings. However, anthropocentrism is questioned in the three stories. This study uses content analysis to reveal the different ways in which human beings affect nature as well as the different ways in which nature affects human beings under varied circumstances and situations. The study also reveals how nature takes revenge and expresses its destructive authority over human beings irrespective of class, gender, or identity. In conclusion, the study shows that the actions, reactions, and responses of human beings to nature and vice-versa confirm the theoretical relevance of posthumanism, even if they do so in different ways with respect to the short stories of Tagore and Bao Ninh.

Keywords: posthumanism, speciesism, environment, anthropocentrism, boundary, Southeast Asia

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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Zawiah Mohamad Rasep

National University of Singapore, Singapore

Posthuman Animism and Contemporary Malay Anthropomorphic Literature

Abstract: Anthropomorphism is highly controversial within the field of ecocriticism and animal studies, with many critics denouncing it as inherently anthropocentric and rhetorically self-defeating. By using the language of humans (*anthropos*) to shape (*morphos*) nonhuman consciousness, we risk exemplifying the humanist fallacy of holding humans as the standard against which all other life is to be understood and measured. Yet, it is not hard to imagine anthropomorphic literature, especially in Southeast Asia, as evolving from a premodern animistic worldview where animals can and do communicate. Premodern beliefs in human-spirits interrelations and transspecies communication threaten the fundamentals of human exceptionalism by destabilizing the boundaries between humans and nonhumans. This mythopoeic philosophy is congruous with posthumanism's move to subsume humans into a shared, fluid, and boundary-less space. Thus, analyzing nonhuman communication through an animistic lens can undermine the anthropocentric characteristics of anthropomorphic literature while contributing to the discourse surrounding posthuman animal studies. This paper argues a case for anthropomorphism, as a narrative device derived from biocentric traditions which can heighten the interconnectedness between humans and nonhumans. The paper mobilizes current theoretical debates in posthumanism and animal studies, supported by readings on animism, as a conceptual framework to study anthropomorphism in contemporary literature by Singapore's Malay authors. The stories chosen in this paper include Fairouz Ahmad's *Interpreter of Winds* (2019), Nazry Bahrawi's *Tujuh* (2021), as well as *Bovine* (2017) and *Rats* (2017) by Mohamed Latiff Mohamed.

Keywords: posthumanism, animism, animal studies, ecocriticism, Singapore literature

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Hoang Thi Quynh Trang

Hue, Vietnam

A Universal Brotherhood in *The Diary of a Cricket* by To Hoai

Abstract: Tô Hoài is a famous member of the modern Vietnamese Literary Circle of the 20th century. Among his works, *The Diary of a Cricket* imagines a universal brotherhood of all the animals living in the same world, even though they are of different species, such as crickets, mice, grasshoppers, amphibians, and birds. The plot hinges on an arrogant cricket, who thinks he is the king of the grassland and always looks down on the other inhabitants. This leads to the death of a small, black, weak, ugly, and sick cricket. After some adventures and struggles, the arrogant cricket learns how to become a better animal. He recognizes that the world is fair and that all animals have a right to live and play their role. This recognition creates a universal brotherhood, not only for animals but also for human beings.

Keywords: universal brotherhood, environment, animal rights, human rights, To Hoai, children's literature

Language: English / **Delivery:** Onsite

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Arka Mukhopadhyay & Nutan Kotak

Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, India

Ecology, Historicity, Narratives: Tracing the Location of Culture in the Mythical Desert of Buddhist *Jātakas*

Abstract: The mythical desert is a place where culture and temporality intersect, reflecting the complexities of the Anthropocene. The Doomsday Clock anticipates the end of human planetary reign based on a Christian logic of divine judgment, but the final fate of the world remains uneven. The complex nature of climate change and its compounding threats to humans and nonhumans prompts a re-evaluation of temporality, including historical materialist, historicist, and climatic notions. If we must reconfigure temporality out of its anthropocentric context, it must happen through the mediation of human narratives. This paper will analyze different modes and theories of temporality across Eastern and Western cultures, particularly in the religion-economic contexts of Buddhism and Christianity. By applying these findings to desert narratives drawn from Buddhist *Jātaka* cosmology and comparing Buddhist and Christian visions of the apocalypse, the paper seeks to understand how the post-apocalyptic space of the desert, seemingly devoid of human agency, drives forces of production and redefines the line between nature and culture.

Keywords: mythical desert, Doomsday, Buddhism, temporality, Anthropocene

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

Arka Mukhopadhyay is a PhD research scholar and junior research fellow at the Department of English, USOL, Gujarat University. After pursuing a Master of Arts in English from Delhi University, he worked as an entertainment journalist, but climate anxiety forced him to leave his job and look for more meaningful engagement. His research entails assessing representations of South Asia in Anthropocene literature. When he is not busy understanding the ongoing climate catastrophe through a critical posthuman lens, he makes rock n' roll music with his friends, indulges in world cinema and photography, and pets stray dogs. E-mail: arkaarka16@gmail.com

Nutan Kotak (PhD) is a Professor at Gujarat University's Department of English, specializing in African American women's writing. She has a PhD in Alice Walker and has been a part of the US State Department's IVL Program. She has received a scholarship from the US Embassy to participate in a course on 'Exploring Web 2.0,' and another from the US State Department on 'Teaching English to Young Learners.' She has translated plays, poetry, and non-fiction articles from Gujarati to English and has published the book *Womanism: Its Application and Contemporary Relevance*. Her research areas include gender studies, ELT, and ecology.

Rangga Mahaswa & Siti Murtiningsih

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Revisiting Education in the Anthropocene: Insights from the Posthuman Turn

Abstract: The discourse of the Anthropocene and education offer two intriguing layers of exploration. The emergence of the Anthropocene epoch prompts a fundamental reassessment of humanity's position in relation to the Earth. While humans claim a unique and dominant role as a geological force, the Anthropocene can also be interpreted as a manifestation of species narcissism, particularly evident within educational contexts. Several researchers have tried to tackle the challenges posed by the Anthropocene and the ways that education can contribute to addressing this crisis by safeguarding humanity in the future. This paper argues that it is nevertheless crucial to shift the focus of Anthropocene pedagogy. Education should not be limited by an anthropocentric perspective, as an absolute and massive geo-power. Rather, it should explore the complexities surrounding multispecies and nonhuman entanglement. Questioning human superiority through the lens of posthumanism is an alternative standpoint that shows that humans have always lived and are still living in uncertain landscapes. Thus, education in the Anthropocene is not simply about experiencing the crisis, but also caring about the displacement and devastation of the nonhuman.

Keywords: Anthropocene, education, posthumanism, nonhuman entanglement, multispecies

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Katarzyna Ferworn-Horawa

University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

**Aisthesis from a Non-anthropocentric Perspective:
Artistic Research in the Context of Situated
Production of Knowledge**

Abstract: The subject of this presentation is the category of aisthesis, in the Aristotelian meaning of the faculty of embodied, sensual perception, from a non-anthropocentric perspective. The presentation explores posthuman aesthetic standpoints in the non-binary continuum of natureculture, human and nonhuman. It shows the benefits of affirmative posthuman knowledge strategies which include situated methodologies (Haraway, 1988), often inspired by art (Bennett, 2010; Braidotti & Hlavajova, 2018; Braidotti, 2019, 2022). As an artist and philosopher, the author entangles aesthetic questions with her own situated experience, which includes memories of childhood years spent in Southeast Asia. Using as a case study her own artistic practice of painting with her body on large format canvases, she discusses the ethico-epistem-ontology of opposing realist approaches in an aesthetical context. The philosophical analysis is based on the speculative realism of Graham Harman’s object-oriented ontology (OOO) and the relational ontologies of Rosi Braidotti (posthuman subject) and Karen Barad (agential realism). Although these philosophers tend to oppose each other, it is possible to “meet halfway” as in Barad’s *Meeting the Universe Halfway* (2007). This paper stresses the importance of critical and creative intersectional research in the posthumanities (Braidotti, Jones, Klumbytè, 2022).

Keywords: aisthesis, posthuman, non-anthropocentric, relational, art

Language: English / **Delivery:** Online

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