

# PASTS AND FUTURES OF REWILDING SYMPOSIUM

## Pre-symposium Lectures

Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup>

Université Paris Cité  
Olympe de Gouges Building,  
Room 830, 8<sup>th</sup> floor

3.30pm-5pm

FLT/ Environmental Humanities Seminar

### **Burak SEZER (Technical University Dortmund): “Aesthetic Rewilding: On Bewilderment in American Literature.”**

“Rewilding” is chiefly discussed in frameworks surrounding, among others, ecological conservation (Soulé and Noss 1998), environmental anthropology (Bollig 2022), and geography (Lorimer et al. 2015), but its implications extend to affectual and aesthetic domains too. Drawing on the work of George Monbiot (2014), it is acknowledged that rewilding practices and discourses should not be restricted to landscapes but must also be applied to emotional states and conceptual apparatuses of humans in general. Against this background, the relevance to examine the metaphorical, symbolic, and psychological connotations of rewilding has been continuously emphasized ever since (Clayton 2019), but the role of the arts and aesthetics is noticeably missing in this framework.

I will argue that rewilding narratives can elicit such a rewilding through literary aesthetics in ways that are reminiscent of schemes of landscape or urban rewilding: pre-existing orders and categories are challenged in not only cartographical but also epistemological ways, and pragmatically useful ecological strategies are flanked by dimensions of affect and emotion. I propose the term “bewilderment” for this aesthetic rewilding: capitalizing on the fact that the “wild” slumbers therein, bewilderment denotes a hesitancy, a deep confusion of well-established but ultimately dysfunctional knowledge systems of lifeforms and ecologies, demanding a radical reevaluation of them in both the faraway wilderness and our most intimate urban or suburban surroundings.

In literary theory, this follows the tradition of a technique promulgated in Russian formalism called “defamiliarization” (Shklovsky 1917), which likewise seeks to dismantle the ossified preconceptions of the reader. In effect, bewilderment will lead to an aesthetic rewilding of what is – through custom, habit, fossilized narratives – erroneously regarded as insipid or mundane, expanding aesthetic and affectual ways of articulating life. In doing so, I will follow Gregory Bateson and Félix Guattari’s important interventions to the scientific notion of ecology in that both focus on the necessary dimension of the “ecology of mind” (Bateson 1972) and “ecosophy”, more specifically “mental ecology” (Guattari 2004). Using examples from American literature – from wilderness narratives to science fiction – I will show how spatial rewilding occurs in tandem with a mind-ecology of the wild through bewilderment.

5.30pm-7pm

**Tobias MENELY (UC Davis): “One Thousand and One Climate Futures: Models, Scenarios, Fictions” – Moderator: Thomas Dutoit (U. de Lille)**

In recent decades, new modes of representation have been developed to forecast planetary futures defined by specific degrees of climatic discontinuity. In this talk, I'll examine a wide spectrum of possible Earth futures, beginning with the quantitative climate models that underlie climate targets such as the 1.5°C and 2°C futures at stake in international climate negotiations. I'll then turn to scenarios such as the IPCC's Shared Socio-Economic Pathways, which integrate Earth System models with predictions about how societies and states might mitigate and adapt to global warming. Finally, I'll consider how climate fiction, as an emergent literary genre, has internalized epistemological features of modeling and scenario planning even as it also speculatively imagines implausible, nonlinear, and plural futures.

Each of these futurological modes seeks to represent feedback between Earth systems and social systems, including the role of planetary forecast itself in mediating decisions. The formal condition of such decision-making, I'll suggest, is the branching timeline, which represents the present as a node potentially leading to a variety of determinate futures. As I reflect on the proliferation of possible futures circulating in our tumultuous present—from solar communism to hothouse Earth—I'll focus on the position and identity of the auditor to whom these futurological forecasts are addressed, the sovereign, like Shahriyar in the *One Thousand and One Nights*, whose power is at stake in the multiplication of stories. Representations of planetary futures anticipate a new (geo)politics, a form of sovereignty adequate to an integrated yet self-differing planet that is the structuring condition of all (geo)political relations.

**PASTS AND FUTURES OF REWILDING  
SYMPOSIUM**

**Friday, March 21<sup>st</sup> – Saturday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>  
Université Paris Cité**

**Organized by Tobias Menely (UC Davis), Thomas Dutoit (Université de Lille) &  
Cécile Roudeau (Université Paris Cité/CNRS ECHELLES UMR 8264)**

Made possible by the EMERGENCE Idex project: “EcoHealthCultures: Ecologies and Health Humanities in the Literature and Culture of the Nineteenth-Century United States”

This symposium invites scholars to share research on rewilding as a socio-ecological practice. How should we understand rewilding as restorative or reparative but also as experimental or utopian? What pasts does rewilding seek to restore and what futures does it seek to create? How should we conceptualize rewilding in terms of the tensions between intervention and withdrawal, management and release? What forms of the human (or the Anthropos) are at stake in rewilding? What role does technology play in rewilding? How might we understand rewilding as a site of political struggle or geopolitical contestation? What meanings are at stake in wildness? What is the relation of wildness as a political category, implying willfulness or autonomy, and ecological justifications for rewilding related to resilience, functionality, complexity, and/or self-organization? How do cultural and literary forms shape rewilding practices? What are historical precedents for contemporary rewilding?

Friday, March 21<sup>st</sup>

Université Paris Cité  
Olympe de Gouges Building  
Room 830, 8<sup>th</sup> floor

10am-10.30am. Welcome and coffee

10.30am-12pm. Panel 1 – The Wild is Cultural (Chair: Tom Nurmi, NTNU)

**Antoine TRAISNEL (U. of Michigan) – “Biodiversity Must Be Preserved: Biopolitics After Climate Change”**

In a 1986 essay titled “The Millennium Ark,” American conservation biologist Michael Soulé, one of the pioneers of rewilding theory, outlined a strategy to protect biodiversity from the looming effects of human overpopulation. Concerned that humans would soon reach their projected peak of 10 to 12 billion people worldwide, Soulé warned that this “demographic winter” could last for up to 1,000 years, with catastrophic consequences for wildlife. To address this, he advocated the creation of a “millennium ark” in the form of an international network of captive breeding programs. Soulé meticulously calculated how many species would require protection, developing complex formulas to determine the threshold of “tolerable loss” below which a species’ genetic viability would be irreparably harmed. The proposal is striking in its blend of pragmatic logic and apocalyptic tone, infused with Biblical allusions. While the author expresses deep pessimism about the collective human impact on biodiversity, he maintains a certain faith in the technological and scientific abilities of humanity. One source of his optimism is the belief that “technologies for the storage and regeneration of embryonic cells” will soon be developed enabling species to be moved from resource-intensive “living zoos” to more compact “suspended zoos.” “If this scenario is correct,” he writes, “our descendants will be able to replace the millennium ark with a millennium freezer.”

Although Soulé positions rewilding and biobanking as complementary counterextinction strategies, it is important to note that they are grounded in distinct “logics of life” that underlie and drive divergent biopolitical agendas. Rewilding is based on a pragmatic-functionalist approach, where non-native proxies act as stand-ins for extinct or locally extirpated species. Biobanking, in contrast, adopts a speculative-essentialist stance, focusing on reserving the genetic material of extinct or endangered species in controlled environments until they can be reintroduced into safer habitats (or used to enhance the genetic diversity of dwindling populations). The former aligns with a pre-genomic form of biopolitics, which seeks to regulate populations in pursuit of homeostasis, while the latter corresponds to a post-genomic biopolitical regime, focused on managing species with an eye toward biostasis. Pre-genomic biopolitics is concerned with maintaining—and potentially restoring—dynamic ecosystems, whereas post-genomic biopolitics aims to secure—and potentially resurrect—individuated entities. In this presentation, I argue that it is crucial to understand the epistemic and ideological foundations of these two biopolitical models, as they shape the kind of future we are preparing for the planet and for ourselves.

**Tobias MENELY (UC Davis) – “Rewilding Multispecies Cultures”**

This talk is concerned with the ethological dimensions of rewilding, with a particular focus on procedures of behavioral rehabilitation in large-animal reintroduction projects. I’ll explore the ways in which *wildness*—a capacity for autonomy expressed within specific ecological relations—is a *cultural* accomplishment, passed on through intergenerational socialization or substitute forms of human-directed rehabilitation. Rewilding, I’ll suggest, involve not only the restoration of ecological relationships but also the rebuilding of multispecies “co-cultures.”

**12pm-1.30 pm: Lunch break**

**1.30pm-3pm. Panel 2—Narrating Rewilding: The European Scene**

**Arnaud GANE (UCLouvain) – “Cybernetic Natures and Wild Natures: Exploring the Relationship between Conservation Science and Modernity through Ethnographies in French-speaking Europe”**

The ambition of this research project is to try to understand the contemporary tensions affecting conservation science on the basis of case studies that are in direct opposition to each other in terms of their relationship with modernity: some using technology to improve conservation in a sort of cybernetic-wild project, others trying on the contrary to prioritise the wild character of biodiversity. These two approaches seem to me to share a desire to respond to the inadequacies of modern conservation science by proposing a radical reform of both its means and its ends. At this stage, the research is structured around 3 main theoretical axes:

1. Breaking or continuing chronology: the position of these conservation projects in relation to history
2. Modernity as a quality: do these conservation projects continue or alter the modern gesture?
3. Revealing nature: what main role do these conservation projects give to conservation science, revealing nature or hiding it?

**Régis BARRAUD (U. de Poitiers) – “The Storytelling of Rewilding in Europe: Narrative Frameworks, Imagination and Agency”**

Since the early 1980s, the debate on the idea of wilderness has been accompanied by new proposals in the field of radical environmentalism. Among these, rewilding has gradually been incorporated into the operational palette of nature conservation. Rewilding has spread widely on an international scale. This geographical spread has led to the emergence of a wide variety of definitions and techniques. Starting as a radical concept, rewilding now tends to join the repertoire of plastic words (Jorgensen, 2015). As a result, many relatively traditional ecological restoration projects are now being reformulated in terms of rewilding. Institutions are taking a cautious approach to this term or related concepts (non-intervention, free evolution). In this respect, public action seems to be leaving the field wide open for NGO-led initiatives.

Europe is a particularly interesting area in which to analyse these initiatives. The aim of this paper is, firstly, to highlight the ways in which rewilding is narrated by these NGOs. Is there a common narrative framework? How are the imaginary, myths, temporal and spatial references mobilised in these narratives? Secondly, we will assess the agency of these narratives in the areas affected by rewilding initiatives. The analysis will be conducted through the prism of political ecology. Ultimately, this will allow us to highlight the potential discrepancies between the 'beautiful stories' that underpin the implementation of rewilding projects and the realities on the ground. These 'beautiful stories' of rewilding sometimes seem to compete with other stories and memories. These issues are particularly sensitive in Europe's peripheral areas, which are often characterised by agricultural decline and great fragility (economic, political). The research carried out shows that rewilding also creates friction and can produce winners and losers.

**3pm-3.30pm: Coffee break**

### 3.30pm-5.30pm. Panel 3 – Be-wild-ing (Chair: Tom NURMI, NTNU)

#### **Burak SEZER (Technical University Dortmund) – Texts of Bewilderment. Toward a Mind-Ecology of the Wild**

“Rewilding” is chiefly discussed in frameworks surrounding, among others, ecological conservation (Soulé and Noss 1998), environmental anthropology (Bollig 2022), and geography (Lorimer et al. 2015), but its implications extend to affectual and aesthetic domains too. Drawing on the work of George Monbiot (2014), it is acknowledged that rewilding practices and discourses should not be restricted to landscapes but must also be applied to emotional states and conceptual apparatuses of humans in general. Against this background, the relevance to examine the metaphorical, symbolic, and psychological connotations of rewilding has been continuously emphasized ever since (Clayton 2019), but the role of the arts and aesthetics is noticeably missing in this framework.

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#### **Michael JONIK (U. of Sussex) – “Rewilding and Degrowth: Re-reading Thoreau”**

Despite fifty years of scholarly and scientific work, there is scant evidence to show that greener innovation or seemingly ubiquitous sustainability discourses and practices have, as Adrian Ely and Adrian Smith write, “decouple[ed] economic growth from environmental and social collapse.” Degrowth, by contrast, has opened new purviews not only to envisage abundance without growth (Sohei, Demaria and Kallis, Pilling) but also has us reimagine the central importance of ecological autonomy and agency beyond the relentless growth imperatives of extractivism. Rewilding, then, entails more than the reintroduction of lost or decimated flora and fauna to back into their former environments, it also entails a rethinking of the collective agencies and intelligences involving both human and nonhuman actants, and indeed an understanding of sustainability that breaks with its tragic alliance with growth-based economics. This paper will turn to reread Henry David Thoreau’s comments on wildness, then, in the context of rewilding, and draw on his vast journals to offer examples for how to understand the pluriversal, collective agencies and intelligences that a rewilded world could require. We might thus revise Thoreau’s apothegm, “In wildness is the preservation of the world” to read, “In rewilding is the future of the world.”

#### **Thomas DUTOIT (U. de Lille) and Cécile ROUDEAU (U. Paris Cité) – “Of Palms and Plovers: W.S. Merwin in Hawaii”**

From the late 1970s to his death in 2019, poet W. S. Merwin transformed land defined administratively as wasteland unable to be cultivated into one of the two or three largest and most varied palm forests on the planet. The

poet gardener, established on the northern coast of Maui, Hawaii, thereby “saved” many species thought to be extinct or on the verge thereof. His original project was to cultivate native plants and trees, though he quickly abandoned it given the degree of ruined soil or earth and destroyed natural irrigation (Becker, 2020). Rewilding here means substituting palms from across the planet for the long-destroyed “original” biota. Merwin’s project continues today thanks to the Merwin Conservancy

This story is well-known. Less studied however is the way Merwin gardener speaks to Merwin poet, or Merwin (his-)story teller. To what extent is Merwin’s retelling of Hawaii’s history a re-story-ing (Kimmerer)? Our presentation will return to his poetic output from the late 1970s until 2016, in order to link his ambitious and early realizations of rewilding with his practice of writing as a form of rewilding, rewilding being here understood, it is our hypothesis, as geo-writing and re-story-ing.

**Saturday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Université Paris Cité**  
**Halle aux Farines Building,**  
**HF 027 C, groundfloor**

**10am-12pm: Panel 4 – Land and Agency (Chair: Tobias Menely, UC Davis)**

**Monica VASILE (Maastricht U.) – “Takahe Tensions: Interventions and Disturbance in Species Recovery Histories”**

In this presentation I will talk about the recovery of Aotearoa New Zealand’s takahē— a striking gallinule with iridescent blue-green plumage and a charming dinosaurian waddle, utterly ill-suited to survive in a landscape overrun by ‘pest’ deer and stoats. Thought extinct until its rediscovery in 1948, the takahē became the subject of one of the most intensive conservation programs in history, defined by both heavy-handed intervention and deep unease. Fieldworkers chased and banded the birds. Eggs were seized to force double-clutching, swapped between nests, and hatched in incubators. Chicks were raised by puppets and foster parents. Tussock grasses on mountain tops were fertilized for better nutrition. Deer were gunned down from helicopters, while stoats were trapped. Yet these acts of ‘management’ and control were haunted and often held back by the fear of doing irreparable harm to the birds. Based on archival research and interviews conducted in 2023, I examine a series of moments when interventionism collided with the dread of disruption. I explore how researchers understood and grappled with the changes their interventions caused to individuals or to the ‘species,’ and how they sought to erase their presence, maintain a light touch, or ‘repair’ the harm. These moments reveal the uneasy relationship between humans and the species they strive to rescue. In tracing these tensions, I hope to illuminate broader frictions in endeavors to avert extinctions, restoration and rewilding.

**Linde DE VROEY (U. of Antwerp) – “Who Owns the Wild? Land Ownership, Global Narratives and Local Agency in Scottish Rewilding”**

This talk addresses socio-economic structures of land ownership and land access in rewilding projects in relation to different meanings and narratives of ‘land’, ‘wilderness’ and ‘nature’. Starting from several case-studies in Scotland, where rewilding equally generates a lot of support and pushback, I distinguish between different ‘rewilding models’. These models show how economic structures are connected to cultural narratives, revealing different drives behind rewilding, and showing important correlations between land ownership, local agency, and concepts of wild(er)ness. I then propose these models as a way to distinguish between rewilding as business-as-usual and rewilding as transformative change. In order to guarantee sustainable and democratic rewilding in the long run, I conclude that rewilders, scientists and scholars should pay due attention to these underlying structures of land ownership and land access.

**Gala MORRIS (U. of Glasgow) – “Echoes of the Land: Reimagining Rewilding Through Multisensory Connections”**

My presentation will explore how engaging with landscapes through multisensory experiences, particularly music, can help untangle colonial narratives and reimagine how we use the past in conservation management. By focusing on sound and music as a means of connecting with environments, I examine how sensory engagement can challenge the



entrenched nature-culture divide and foster decolonised approaches to rewilding. Through case studies in Scotland and Aotearoa New Zealand, I highlight the role of creativity and imagination in reshaping conservation and heritage management, emphasising the interconnectedness of people, history, and the natural world.

**12pm-1.30pm**

**Lunch & Discussion: Towards European Environmental Humanities?**

**1.30pm-3.30pm: Panel 5 – Speculative Rewilding (Chair: Valentine ALLOING, U. Paris Cité)**

**Peter SANDS (U. of York) – “Rewilding and Ecotechnology: Between Hopepunk and Misanthropy”**

Critiques of rewilding often focus on its preoccupation with a return to a fantasy state of nature imagined as existing prior to human influence on planetary systems. Yet the forms of rewilding proposed by advocates for species revival (see [Colossal](#)) centre the role of technology in producing desired ecological states. This paper examines how, in several examples from recent speculative fiction, rewilding is imagined as a form of ecotechnology whereby ecological systems are rendered malleable to the dreams and desires of their managers. It will trace the ways in which different constructions of ecotechnology both centre and displace the role of the human in rewilding initiatives, generating both optimistically ecomodernist and satirically misanthropic visions of ecological futures.

**Ben DE BRUYN (UC Louvain) – “Homewaters: Marine Sanctuaries in Blue Anthropocene Fiction”**

How do twenty-first-century novels depict nonhuman homes in threatened oceanscapes? That question is the starting point of this paper, which develops existing research on biodiversity narratives (Heise, Callaway, McHugh) by comparing several examples of Blue Anthropocene fiction. The paper contextualizes these stories via critical summaries of so-called Blue Growth discourse and the UN agreement colloquially known as the High Seas Treaty, which is supposed to protect and rewild marine life in areas beyond national control, on the “outlaw ocean” (Urbina). In addition, it sketches creative legal solutions to biodiversity loss proposed by legal scholars, including the counterintuitive idea to assign property rights to wildlife (Bradshaw). Yet even established notions like “marine protected areas” create complications on a warmer planet, as scholars have pointed out (Bakker). These paradoxes and discourses return in literary thought experiments that examine particular ocean habitats in a context of global heating, industrial fishing, and species extinction, including Ray Nayler’s *The Mountain in the Sea* (2022) and Laline Paull’s *Pod* (2022). These narratives do not just highlight the plight of particular species and ocean habitats, this paper will argue, but prompt larger questions about convivial geographies as we head towards 2030, a year that is supposed to function as a milestone in terms of global conservation initiatives.

**Sarah BEZAN (U. of Cork) – “Aging, Epochalization, and Rewilding World-Flesh in Matt Bell’s *Appleseed*”**

Examining patterns of aging and epochalisation in the post-apocalyptic environments of Matt Bell’s widely acclaimed speculative thriller *Appleseed* (2021), this paper considers how “world-flesh” (Merleau-Ponty) is rewilded in Bell’s narrative through a magical realist temporal paradigm that furnishes new meanings of bodies and species across rapidly shifting anthropogenically-engineered environments. I draw together insights from ageing studies

(Barry, Woodward), literary ecocriticism (Garrard) and extinction studies (Grusin, Wolfe) to explore how the temporal markers of the corporeal life cycle become undone in the face of climatological crises. I argue that these new world-fleshing narratives present posthumanist and transhumanist visions of seemingly endless iterative cycles of hybridized and quasi-technological beings (such as the half-man/faun character Chapman and the character/s of the regenerative robot C\* and its offshoots). As such, how these characters navigate earthly and bodily life cycles illuminates the extent to which environments come to be defined through the contingencies of who or what is perceiving or being perceived as externally placed, and yet internally cohesive, aspects of the natural world under scrutiny. In my examination of the technocapitalist corporation EarthTrust, for example, I pay particular attention to how Bell's figuration of de-extinction as a "Loom" (a 3D bioprinter that replicates extinct species) melts down world-flesh and absconds more natural life-cycles, in turn presenting a challenge to the authenticity of the species or individuals it is so faithfully attempting to revive, and therefore to capitalize upon. As a critique of literary biomimicry and genetic modification of plant and animal species on the brink of extinction, this reading of the novel opens up a line of inquiry into the role of life-cycles and anthropogenic recreation in speculative post-apocalyptic fiction.

## Bios

**Régis Barraud** is Professor of Geography at the University of Poitiers. His research, carried out as part of the research team "Memories, Identities and Marginalities in the Contemporary Western World" (MIMMOC UR 15072), falls within the fields of environmental social geography, political ecology and environmental humanities. His work focuses on socio-environmental controversies (dam removal, rewilding). His current research aims to understand how rewilding projects are narrated and implemented in Europe. More specifically, R. Barraud aims to uncover the social and spatial effects of reinvesting the idea of wilderness in peripheral European spaces.

**Sarah Bezant** is Lecturer in Literature and the Environment in the School of English & Digital Humanities at University College Cork, Ireland, where she is also a founding member of the Radical Humanities Laboratory. Her work broadly focuses on the entangled social and ecological dimensions of species loss and revival in contemporary literature and digital media/arts.

**Ben De Bruyn** teaches English literature at UCLouvain, Belgium. He is the guest editor of a special issue on "sacrifice zones" for *Textual Practice* (2023) as well as the author of *The Novel and the Multispecies Soundscape* (Palgrave, 2020) and several shorter publications on climate literature and biodiversity narratives.

**Linde De Vroey** is a PhD candidate in environmental philosophy at the University of Antwerp, funded by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO). Her research project focusses on the philosophy, history, and cultural aspects of rewilding, acknowledging the relevance of history, memory, tradition, and place-based culture in ecological restoration. Taking a field-based approach to philosophy, she combines global frameworks with ethnographic research in local rewilding initiatives, mainly in Scotland.

**Thomas Dutoit** is Professor of Literature in the English Department at Université de Lille. With Cécile Roudeau, he published *Un temps au jardin* (Fanlac 2022), their French translation of W.S. Merwin's 2016 *Garden Time*, which includes their essay "L'éblouissement de l'ombre: écrire à l'approche du crépuscule" [*Shadow's Dazzle: Writing as Twilight's Approach*], as well as *Veiller en crise: lire Un temps au jardin* [Stay Awake in Crisis: Reading *Garden Time*] de W.S. Merwin" (*Poésie* 2023). They edited the latest issue of *Transatlantica* titled *Merwin Re-collected: Echo-Futures With or Without*

*Us* (*Transatlantica*, <https://journals.openedition.org/transatlantica/23378>). Other recent publications have read Herman Melville's last poetry, "Since hearsed was Pan': Marvel Mellville Underground" (*Analecta Hermeneutica* 2024), and Jacques Derrida's developments of photography and ideality, "Derridathenian Developments" (*Mondes méditerranéens*, ed. C. Bobas et al. [Peter Lang 2022]).

**Arnaud Gane** is a PhD student at UCLouvain. His work focuses on the European re-wilding movement in its relation with conservation science and the nature/culture dualism. He holds to master's degrees in ecology—one in philosophy (from Université Lyon III), the second from Sciences PO Toulouse.

**Michael Jonik** is Professor of American Literature and Philosophy at the University of Sussex. He is the author of *Herman Melville and the Politics of the Inhuman* (Cambridge 2018), and several essays on pre-1900 American literature, philosophy, politics and ecology. He is finishing a new monograph, *Thoreau's Radical Ecologies: Philosophy, Politics, Collective Agency*. With Jennifer Greiman, he is co-editor of *The Oxford Handbook to Herman Melville* (Oxford summer 2025), and editor of the Oxford World Classic edition of Herman Melville's *Billy Budd and Short Fiction* (Oxford summer 2025), the *New Cambridge Companion of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (hopefully 2025), and preparing, with Cecile Roudeau and Thomas Constantinesco, the volume *Melville Extracted*. He is Book Reviews and Special Issues Editor for the journal *Textual Practice*, and co-founder of the British Association of Nineteenth-Century Americanists (BrANCA).

**Gala Morris** is a PhD researcher and composer based at the University of Glasgow. Her work explores how soundscapes and archaeology can inform conservation initiatives, reimagining human-environment relationships in the face of climate change. With a background in archaeology and conservation biology, she is particularly interested in how narratives of the past shape heritage and land management strategies. Her research brings together digital storytelling, music, and soundscape studies to rethink conservation through an interdisciplinary lens. Her musical compositions explore the sensory experience of the natural world, fostering connection and inspiring action in the conservation of heritage and landscapes.

**Tobias Menely** is Professor of English at the University of California, Davis. He is the Chair of the Environmental Humanities Designated Emphasis and a recent winner of a Distinguished Teaching Award for Undergraduate Teaching. Menely is the author of *The Animal Claim: Sensibility and the Creaturely Voice* (Chicago 2015) and *Climate and the Making of Worlds: Toward a Geohistorical Poetics* (Chicago 2021), which was awarded the Michelle Kendrick Memorial Book Prize and the Warren-Brooks Award. With Jesse Oak Taylor, he co-edited *Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times* (Pennsylvania State, 2017). Menely's essay, "The Present Obfuscation': Cowper's *Task* and the Time of Climate Change" (*PMLA* 127:3), was awarded the Modern Language Association's William Riley Parker Prize. He is currently writing a book about megafauna conflict and conservation in the Anthropocene. Tobias Menely is invited professor at Université Paris Cité in March 2025.

**Cécile Roudeau** is Professor of US Literature at Université Paris Cité. Her work focuses on the articulation between literature and politics in the long nineteenth-century and has appeared in a number of academic journals as well as in edited volumes such as *Crossings in Nineteenth-Century American Culture* (Edinburgh UP, 2022) and *American Literature in Transition: The Long Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge UP, 2022). She is now at work on a book provisionally titled *Beyond Stateless Literature: Practices of Democratic Power in the Nineteenth-Century United States*. At Université Paris Cité, she is convener with Thomas Constantinesco of the A19 seminar on nineteenth-century US Literature, and the founder of the Environmental Humanities workshop. She is also PI of the two-year project "Ecologies and Health Humanities in Nineteenth-Century US Literature and Culture." With Thomas Dutoit, she translated

*Garden Time* (W.S. Merwin's latest collection of poems) into French, and coordinated the latest issue of the online journal *Transatlantica* titled *Merwin Recollected: Echo-Futures With or Without Us* (2024).

**Peter Sands** is a Research Fellow in the Leverhulme Centre for Anthropocene Biodiversity and Department of English and Related Literature at the University of York, UK. His work examines the role of animals in Cold War technoculture and contemporary speculative fiction. He is the co-editor of *Animality and Horror Cinema* (Palgrave, 2025) and "The Art and Science of Species Revival" (2025), a double issue of *Configurations*.

**Dr. Burak Sezer** is assistant professor of the chair of American Literature and Culture at Technical University Dortmund, Germany. In 2015, he graduated from the University of Rochester, New York, with an MA in Comparative Literature. In 2017, he obtained a *Staatsexamen* in English, Mathematics, and Educational Sciences at the University of Cologne. As a scholarship holder of the a.r.t.e.s. Graduate School for the Humanities in Cologne, he then finished his PhD in American Literature with a dissertation on the role of mathematics in the work of Thomas Pynchon in 2022, forthcoming with Camden House. Shortly after his role as academic program manager of MESH Cologne, he now pursues a habilitation project on the aesthetics of bewilderment in pre-19th century American literature. He currently co-edits a special issue in *Amerikastudien* and a book in the *Anglia Book Series* on ecological protest and ecoterrorism.

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