

Editorial, Vol 3, no 2

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Welcome to Issue 3.2 of *Ecozon@*. In the themed part of the number, which is devoted to ‘The Invention of Eco-Futures’, we are delighted to present a collection of essays introduced and edited by Ursula Heise. These are followed by an interview and two further essays in the general section, and the usual sections containing creative writing and artistic contributions, and book reviews.

In her concise but wide-ranging and thought-provoking introduction to ‘The Invention of Eco-Futures’, Ursula Heise (a founding member of EASLCE, now working at UCLA) traces the development of science fiction from a popular subgenre in the 1960s and 1970s to a mode of writing at home in mainstream fiction and film. Sci Fi typically envisions social futures and explores the impact of new technologies. Reflecting on its significance as a genre for ecological thinking, Heise identifies two different treatments of the present – as the past of an imagined future, and as an already partially materialised future – and shows how these have both been mobilised for engagement with environmental change. The essays by Jørgensen, Mehnert, Weik von Mossner, Hageman, Anderson, Otto, Agin Donmez and Prádanos which follow examine British, German, North American, Spanish and Turkish novels, films and TV series, drawing on a range of theorists to demonstrate the richness and subtlety of science fiction’s contribution to environmental discourse – whether it seeks to enhance environmentalist awareness, or to critique components of environmentalist politics.

The general section opens with an interview with Richard Kerridge, a founder of ASLE-UKI, who has played a key role in establishing ecocriticism in Britain. We are grateful to Isabel Pérez Ramos for speaking to Richard and transcribing their conversation, which continues our series of interviews with founding figures in the international ecocritical movement. This is followed by John Parham’s article ‘Hungry Unlike the Wolf: Ecology, Posthumanism, Narratology in Fred Vargas’s *Seeking Whom He May Devour*’. Parham explores the significance of posthumanism as a philosophical position decentring humans in their relation to nature. He shows how devices of genre, plot and narrative are used in this French crime novel to challenge and revise traditional conceptions, and to construct a posthumanist position on human/animal relations. The second essay, by Isabel Alves, is concerned with the work of the contemporary Portuguese poet, novelist, essayist and translator A.M.Pires Cabral. Alves shows how his attentiveness to place and the local people in his remote part of the country’s north-east finds expression in conversations with the non-human world and feeds into a vision of the implication of human destiny in the landscape. Pires Cabral’s work exemplifies the

potential of poetry to enhance environmental awareness and responsibility. Translations of four poems are appended to the article.

The creative writing/ art section is introduced by a brief explanation by Isabel Hoving how its contents relate to the theme of the issue. Catherine Lord's sci fi story is set in a future in which energy and water are running out. Government-controlled austerity triggers a protest which is nourished by the cultural heritage and creative imagination. The three poems by Terry Gifford are also concerned with past, present and future, interweaving these in images of the Spanish rural landscape. The art works in the section – sparse painting of wounded landscapes by the Spanish painter, José Albelda – also relate to the science fiction mode.

Finally, the reviews section contains critical appreciations of the collection *Ecocritical Theory. New European Contributions* (edited by Axel Goodbody and Kate Rigby); the second edition of Terry Gifford's survey of British environmental poetry, *Green Voices*; Greg Garrard's *Teaching Ecocriticism and Green Cultural Studies*; a collection of essays on Landscape, Science and Culture edited by SueEllen Campbell, a book by Lyn Thomas on religion, consumerism and sustainability, and Rob Nixon's *Slow Violence*.

As always, the Ecozon@ editorial team hopes readers will enjoy and profit from this issue. We would be delighted to hear from you.