

Editorial Ecozon@ 5.1

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Welcome to Issue 5.1 of *Ecozon@*. The subject of the themed part of this number is “Translating Environmental Humanities.” We are pleased to present six essays, introduced and edited by Carmen Valero Garcés. These are followed by four further essays in the General Section, the usual Arts and Creative Writing Section, and book reviews.

In her introduction to “Translating Environmental Humanities,” Carmen Valero Garcés, who holds a chair in Translation and Interpreting in the Department of Modern Languages at the University of Alcalá, notes that the importance of translation for environmental studies has tended to be overlooked. However, translation plays a crucial role, not only as a vehicle of communication between different languages and systems, but also in articulating complementary perspectives on environmental topics. There is no such thing as an ‘innocent’ translation: the connotations of words shift from one discipline to another, from one area of study to another, and of course from one language to another. This applies particularly to words like ‘wilderness’ and ‘landscape:’ the natural environment is conceptualized in varying, inconsistent and overlapping ways depending on the discursive weight of implicit social and natural hierarchies. Besides “translation proper,” i.e. from one language to another, Carmen Valero reminds us that translation also takes place within a given language (“rewording”), and from words to non-verbal systems/ from non-verbal signs into verbal language (“interspecies translation”). The articles in this Section range from the examination of the transfer of concepts and environmental metaphors and their implications, to a review of the differences between the images generated by different cultures, and analysis of the translation of humanistic texts about nature and the environment and the tensions and difficulties generated when translating, to comparison of translations of scientific and humanistic discourse related to environment. Páez de la Cadena Tortosa analyses Petrarch’s famous letter recounting his ascent of Mont Ventoux in 1336, and argues that Petrarch’s experience can be understood as a “triple translation” of Augustine’s *Confessions*, transposing a model of spiritual progress to a personal situation, and to an empirical appropriation of nature. In the second essay, Charles Zerner investigates the translation of the same territory of olive groves, streams, footpaths, memorials, walls, and checkpoints into two distinctive national landscapes by Israeli and Palestinian writers. The third essay, written in Spanish by the Chinese Yu Zeng, examines how natural images serve as metaphors ‘translating’ the spiritual processes of Zen in the 9th-century poems of Hanshan. Isabel Duran and Katia Peruzzo seek to improve communication between Spanish and Italian ecologists by identifying mistranslations and the peculiarities of culturally embedded terms in a corpus of environmental texts. In

their essay “Meaning and Cultural Context of the Term Landscape,” Werner Bigell and Cheng Chang show how the term “landscape” has recently widened its meaning from vista to area of activity. Finally, in “From the Lake into the Mountain: The Translation of the Unamunian Tragic Sense across the Symbolic Value of the Cultural Landscape,” Manuel de la Cruz Recio analyses three translations into German of a novel by the Spanish philosopher, which raise the question what different historical and cultural connotations lakes and mountains possess in Spanish and German culture.

The General Section opens with an essay by Wendy Harding on how a report written by Frederick Law Olmsted in 1865 making recommendations for management of the Yosemite national park was ignored and lost, only to re-emerge a century later as a foundational text of the American environmental movement. Harding examines the text of the report, and shows that there were contradictions in Olmsted’s vision which have been ignored in the process of giving it its iconic status. In the second essay, Susanne Leikam discusses the representation of ecological crisis and environmental activism in T.C. Boyle’s novel *When the Killing’s Done*. She shows how Boyle reveals 21st-century imaginations of the true state of the California Channel Islands as pristine wilderness and as a haven for animals to be products of urban socialisation, and environmentally and ethically flawed, and argues that he seeks to stimulate readers’ own environmental imaginations. Jessica Maufort seeks to demonstrate that postcolonial studies and ecocriticism can enter into fruitful dialogue, in an essay on two novels by the Caribbean-born author Caryl Phillips. Her concept of “man-as-environment” envisions ‘man’ and ‘place’ as subjected Others, in a world where Otherness is spatialised, and environmental justice is intertwined and social justice. Finally, Walter Wagner introduces readers to the work of three major twentieth-century French authors: Jean Giono, Marguerite Yourcenar and Julien Gracq. His survey of ecological sensibility and the experience of nature reveals that while they all attempt to overcome the nature-culture dualism, they differ in the degree to which they demonstrate awareness of the complex interdependence of humans and their natural environment.

The theme of translation is taken up again in the Creative Writing and Arts section. It opens with an editorial by Isabel Hoving introducing the evocative marine landscape photographs of Françoise Lucas, who lectures in French literature and culture at the University of Applied Sciences in Nijmegen, and the watercolour seascapes of María-Luz González, who teaches English literature in Tenerife. Their artistic transpositions of landscape are followed by four poems by the Brazilian poet Izabel Brandão, translated by Terry Gifford, and a story by José Manuel Marrero Henríquez. “El mar de todos los mares” is accompanied by an English translation as “The Sea of All Seas,” by the author and Ellen Skowronski. Further poems follow: Julia Barella’s “Mujer azul” (which is translated into German, English and Portuguese), and a poem by Juan Ignacio Oliva Cruz which is also self-translated. The issue is rounded off with critical appreciations of studies in American ecocriticism, ecocinema, and Western and Chinese ecological praxis in the Reviews section.

We take this opportunity to also announce that *Ecozon@* now has an explicit institutional support of the University of Alcalá which will allow us to improve our

visibility and indexing. It has also recently been indexed by Latindex which has rated our editorial quality by acknowledging compliance of 35 out of 36 possible criteria. We would also like to express our regret that two members of the initial editorial board are leaving us. Margarita Carretero as Managing Editor and Isabel Hoving as Arts Editor, have decided to leave the front line of *Ecozon@* because of the demands of new positions which both have taken up. We are immensely grateful to both of them for all their hard work over the last five years and their role in launching the journal from its birth. At the same time, we are pleased to welcome the new members of the editorial board. Diana Villanueva, a founding member of GIECO and EASCLE, will be taking over the position of Managing Editor together with Imelda Martín who continues, and Roman Bartosch has just accepted the position of Assistant Editor in order to provide more support for upcoming Guest Editors. Likewise, Paloma Villamil who has collaborated with us in the past has accepted a longer term commitment as Editorial Assistant. We still do not have a substitute for the Creative Writing and Arts Editor and will shortly be calling for expressions of interest in taking up this demanding position. The journal, as it enters its fifth year, is growing and so its editorial board. As always, the *Ecozon@* editorial team hopes readers will enjoy and profit from this issue. We would be delighted to hear from you.