

EVENT REPORT

“EcoAssemblages: New Perspectives on Environmental Humanities”

Between the days 2-6 of March 2026 we had the opportunity to attend various events that were celebrated at the University of Málaga in relation with the project “Eco-Storytelling: A Digital Toolbox for the English Classroom for Building a Climate-Just Future”, at the same time part of the project Erasmus + (KA220-SCH - Cooperation partnerships in school education). Three European universities participate in the program *EcoStories*: the University of Málaga (UMA), Ca’Foscari University (Venice, Italy) and the University of Graz (Austria, the coordinator of the project, led by Prof. Roberta Maierhofer).



Among the events that were carried out, on Thursday 5th and Friday 6th the international conference **“EcoAssemblages: New Perspectives on Environmental Humanities”** was celebrated and fostered by the University of Málaga, and in which diverse specialists and professionals in environmental humanities participated. The organisation of the conference was coordinated by Prof. Rosario Arias, counting with the collaboration of Dr. Manuel Hueso, Dr. María Torres and Ms. Lola Artacho (among other members of her team), all part of the Department of English, French and German Filology at UMA. This meeting is also the product of the collaboration between the project *Eco-Storytelling* and the research project “Re-orienting Assemblage Theory in Anglophone Literature and Culture” ([RELY](#)), funded by the Ministry of Science and Innovation in Spain (Ref. PID2022-137881NB-I00).



The conference coordinator Prof. Rosario Arias alongside Ms. Lola Artacho, Dr. María Torres and Dr. Manuel Hueso (from left to right).

Some information for those interested in knowing more about the project: “[EcoStories](#) wants to achieve the development of an Eco-Storytelling digital toolbox to support teachers’ implementation of a critical ecological pedagogy in the English Foreign Language classroom that promotes students’ development of climate, digital, and foreign language literacy skills in order to stimulate and cultivate the ability to imagine a greener and climate-just future”.

The site for the conference was provided by the building Link by UMA, a welcoming space for academic environmental discussion in which solidarity, awareness and open-mindedness are encouraged. The conference room also contained the exhibitions of the artists José María Escalona and Noelia G^a Bandera, alongside the audiovisual assemblages by Dámaris Pérez Delgado, pieces which aligned with the thematic scope of the conference, inspiring further introspection and reflection.



The first day of the conference began with Prof. Roberta Maierhofer delivering the keynote session of the two-day event, entitled “(Dis)Placing and (Un)Making: Tracing Individual and Collective Eco-Assemblages”, followed by a 30-minute coffee break. From 11:30 to 13:00, the conference continued with the section “Water and Land EcoAssemblages”, chaired by Dr. Juan José Martín. Each paper



counted with an average of 15 minutes, leaving time for a Q&A. During this section, we first heard Manuel Álvarez-Martí-Aguilar from the University of Málaga on his paper “Transgressive Marine Agency Across the *Longue Durée*: An Eco-Assemblage Perspective”. After that, Nicole Haring, Eva Bauer and Fabiana Fazzi, from the University of Graz and Ca’ Foscari University, shared their paper “Speculative Futures: Digital Eco-Stories as Multispecies Assemblages”. Lastly, the former speaker along with Michela Gronchi, both from Ca’ Foscari University, presented “Teaching in the Anthropocene: Symbolic Trees, Eco-Literary Imaginaries, and Rhizomatic Learning in ELT Teacher Education”.



After an hour and a half lunch break, at 14:30 the conference resumed with the section “Theoretical and Practical Approaches to EcoAssemblages”, chaired by Prof. Rosario Arias. It included the interventions of Anna Kwapisz (University of Wroclaw) with her paper “Digesting the Anthropocene: Critical Food Design in the Multispecies Assemblage”, and Ana Tejero (University of Salamanca), with her paper “Does assemblage thinking characterise climate fiction? A study of Samantha Harvey’s *Orbital*”. This section concluded with a Q&A, and it was followed by another coffee break before the last batch of speakers for the day, also chaired by Prof. Rosario Arias.

Lasting approximately from 16:30 to 18:00, this last section, titled “Literary EcoAssemblages (I)” had a more general conducting thread. It kicked off with Lucio De Capitani, from Ca’ Foscari University, speaking about his paper “Family Abolition, Ecofeminism and (Failed) Ecoassemblages in Anita Desai’s *Fire on the Mountain*”, followed by Juan Ignacio Oliva Cruz, from University of La Laguna and his paper “‘The Dragon in the Cave’: Rhizomatic Eco-stories for a Change in the Symbiocene”. The last speaker of the day was María Jesús Perea Villena, from Camilo José Cela University, who presented her paper named “Becoming-with the Wild: Eco-assemblages, multispecies entanglements and metamorphosis in Sarah Hall’s *Mrs Fox*”. The last Q&A of the day engaged the attendants in an interesting discussion about nature and the concept of Assemblage, wrapping up the first day.

The second day of the conference began with the section on “Literary EcoAssemblages (II)”, chaired by Dr. Manuel Hueso. We first listened to Sofía Muñoz Valdivieso from the University of Málaga on her paper “‘The isle is full of noises, sounds and sweet airs’: Eco-Assemblages in *The Tempest* and Margaret Atwood’s *Hag-Seed*”. After that, Francisco Muñoz Peláez from the University of Málaga presented his paper “Eco-trauma and Relational Mourning in Diane Cook’s *The New Wilderness*”. Lastly, Katarzyna Majca-Lipa from the University of National Education in Cracow gave her paper

“Poetic Photography in *Piach* by Urszula Zajaczowska”. Then we had some time for questions and answers and a coffee break.

After the coffee break, the conference continued with the section “Postcolonial and Non-Eurocentric EcoAssemblages” (chaired by Dr. María Torres), in which Alyssa Delarosa from the University of Graz delighted us with her paper “Indigenous Storytelling and Relational Value”. To end with this section we listened to Seyma Yonar from the University of Graz deliver her paper “Beyond the Human: Ecology, Voice, and Embodiment in Canadian Eco-Stories”. This ended with some questions and answers and was followed by a break for lunch.

After lunch, the conference started to get close to the end, with the last section of these two wonderful days, “Criticism and EcoAssemblages”. First, María Torres from the University of Málaga opened the session with her paper “Re-Imagining Extinction in the Fiction of the Anthropocene”. Afterwards, Manuel Hueso from the University of Málaga presented his paper “Assembling a Queer Ecology in Theodore McCombs’s ‘Uranians’ (2024)”. Lastly, Lola Artacho Martín from the University of Málaga delivered her presentation “Ecologies of Health: Environmental Illness and Planetary Thinking in Sandra Steingraber’s *Living Downstream*”.

Overall, the conference fostered an academic environment that encouraged an interdisciplinary dialogue surrounding the application of Assemblage Theory to the study of English literature and linguistics from an ecological perspective. We regarded our participation as interns as a valuable opportunity to familiarise ourselves with Assemblage Theory, and expand our social network thanks to the space provided by coffee and lunch breaks to socialise with a diverse array of brilliant researchers. It is always a pleasure to take part in the cultural activities organised by Prof. Rosario Arias and her team, and the University of Málaga.