

Green and Blue Cartographies

Ecocritical and Oceanic Perspectives
in the Age of the Anthropocene



Chief Editor

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the Age of the Anthropocene*

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FOREWORD

The Oceanocene and the Blue Humanities

Prof. Steve Mentz

Professor of English and Originator of the Term Blue Humanities
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The research articles gathered in this volume titled *Green and Blue Cartographies: Ecocritical and Oceanic Perspectives in the Age of the Anthropocene* arise from a compelling intellectual juncture in contemporary environmental humanities. As global scholarship responds to climate disruptions and the physical and cultural challenges of life in the Anthropocene, it seems especially urgent to cultivate connections between different geographies, methodologies, and communities. *Green and Blue Cartographies* exemplifies this endeavour with remarkable clarity and depth.

The work undertaken here engages critically with the conceptual terrain of the Blue Humanities and related discourses such as the "Poetics of Planetary Water." These frameworks invite us to reconsider water not merely as an element or an ecological resource but as a dynamic, shape-shifting presence that permeates our histories, imaginaries, vulnerabilities, and futures. Water is never simply "blue": it is green with algae, brown with soil, white with turbulence, or translucent in its stillness. To think with water is to embrace a medium that is both intimate and profoundly alien—a force that binds human and nonhuman worlds while continually exceeding our grasp.

In this regard, the essays in this volume extend and complicate themes I have explored in works such as *Ocean* (2020) and *An Introduction to the Blue Humanities* (2023). What is most heartening, however, is how they push beyond familiar scholarly contours to open new pathways of ecocritical and oceanic thinking. Particularly notable is the emergence of vibrant, original research from India and other regions of the Global South, which enriches and diversifies the global conversation on ecocriticism, indigeneity, environmental justice, and the Anthropocene. I am thrilled to learn of many new projects emerging from the critical ideas I have helped to circulate. I am eager to see these and other projects come into the world of global environmental scholarship.

The contributions here traverse a wide range of texts, contexts, and conceptual lenses. They chart ecological memory, examine indigenous knowledges, revisit myth and cosmology, interrogate postcolonial environments, explore ecofeminist and posthuman narratives, and reflect on the ethical stakes of environmental crisis. Together, these chapters map an intricate terrain of green and blue imaginaries—cartographies that illuminate our entanglements with land, water, community, and planetary change.

It is my hope that readers will find in these pages not only rigorous scholarship but also the spirit of inquiry, generosity, and collaboration that animates the work of environmental humanities today. The ideas assembled here promise to contribute meaningfully to global ecological thought and to inspire further conversations across continents and disciplines.

I remain especially grateful to my colleague and the chief editor of this volume Prof. Manu Mangattu, whose generosity of spirit and scholarly invocation to Blue Humanities have helped create a space in which my work could enter into conversation with new perspectives and shared values. I also wish to acknowledge P. Sasikala of Sakthi College of Arts and Science for Women, whose meticulous efforts made my engagement with this intellectual community possible. Their contributions exemplify the collegiality and collaborative ethos that underpin the work represented in this volume.

I commend the editors and contributors for creating a volume that both honours and expands the intellectual energies from which it has grown. May these green and blue cartographies continue to guide our understanding of the world we inhabit—and the worlds we are still striving to imagine.

FOREWORD

Dr Mohammed Muharram

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The essays presented in *Green and Blue Cartographies: Ecocritical and Oceanic Perspectives in the Age of the Anthropocene* emerge from a vibrant constellation of ideas—conversations that continue to reshape how we understand the intertwined realms of land, sea, story, and the shifting planetary conditions we collectively inhabit. As someone who teaches the Anthropocene from a Blue Humanities perspective at the University of Bremen, I recognise in this volume a vital space where ecological thought, oceanic imagination, and cultural inquiry meet with urgency and depth.

The chapters assembled here remind us that literature is not merely a reflection of ecological crisis but a creative force capable of charting new routes toward more just, sustainable, and imaginative futures. These green and blue cartographies invite us to rethink our relationships with the land we inhabit, the waters that sustain us, and the stories that bind us to one another.

This collection owes much to the intellectual energies that have guided it. The work of Prof. Steve Mentz, whose pioneering contributions have shaped the global discourse on the Blue Humanities, resonates throughout these pages. His conceptual provocations and theoretical clarity offer steady currents that inform many of the ecocritical and oceanic explorations represented here.

Equally significant is the scholarly acumen and oratorical brilliance of Prof. Manu Mangattu, whose vision and generosity helped nurture the dialogues from which this volume has grown. His capacity to bring together diverse voices and to frame ecological and oceanic studies within expansive literary and cultural contexts has enriched this collection in immeasurable ways.

I also wish to acknowledge the dedicated efforts of Dr. P. Sasikala, Head of the Department of English at Sakthi College of Arts and Science for Women, whose commitment to fostering meaningful academic inquiry played a crucial role in shaping the intellectual environment that eventually crystallised into this volume.

In their collective resonance, I see a powerful testament to the possibilities of interdisciplinary dialogue—and a hopeful contribution to the expanding horizons of the environmental humanities.

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Green and Blue Cartographies

Ecocritical and Oceanic Perspectives in the Age of the Anthropocene

In the shadow of climate emergency and accelerating ecological transformation, *Green and Blue Cartographies: Ecocritical and Oceanic Perspectives in the Age of the Anthropocene* offers an incisive reimagining of how literature, culture, and collective memory respond to environmental crisis. This edited volume—framed by insightful forewords from Prof. Steve Mentz and Dr Mohammed Muharram—traverses the green landscapes of ecocriticism and the vast seascapes of Blue Humanities to chart a nuanced intellectual geography of the planet.

The essays bring together diverse critical orientations: ecofeminist interventions, Indigenous ecological thought, postcolonial environmental ethics, ecogothic hauntings, oceanic archives, and narratives of climate precarity. Through engagements with global and Indian literatures, children's ecological narratives, mythic traditions, and contemporary climate writing, the volume foregrounds the interconnectedness of land and sea, memory and history, and human and non-human worlds.

Thought-provoking and interdisciplinary, *Green and Blue Cartographies* invites readers to reconsider the Anthropocene as a space of entangled vulnerabilities and shared futures. It will serve as a valuable companion for scholars and students in environmental humanities, literary studies, cultural studies, and anyone seeking deeper insight into the ecological imagination of our times.



Ecofeminism: Woman-Nature Interface on Fostering Environmental Sustainability in Barbara Kingsolver's Fiction

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In contemporary literary theory, Ecocriticism is used to explore the relationship between Literature and Environment. This approach draws on a range of disciplines including philosophy, Environmental Science and Social Theory. It emerged in the 1990s almost three decades ago mainly in the United States then to the UK and other countries of the world. Ecocriticism often focuses on environmental issues such as Climate Change, Deforestation, Pollution and Loss of biodiversity. It posits that literature not only reflects the relationship between Human and Nature but also shapes it as an important role to play in the Environment. The word Ecocriticism was coined by William Ruckert in 1978 in his definitive essay "Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism". It includes dwelling, Pollution, Wilderness, Earth, Animal, apocalypse etc. A significant branch of Ecocriticism is "Ecofeminism" which is a social and political movement which links Ecology with Feminism. It emphasizes the ways in which the exploitation of nature is often linked to the oppression of women and marginalized groups, advocating equitable solutions to ecological problems. It argues that the exploitation of Nature and Women are interconnected and that society requires the empowerment of both Women and Nature. Ecofeminism emerged in the 1970s alongside Second-wave Feminism and the Green movement. Carolyn Merchant in her work *Death of Nature* (1974) traces the history of human perception of Nature. Karen J. Warren is one of the central theorists of Ecofeminism, emphasizing the connection between the exploitation of Women and Nature. In her 1990 essay "Power and Promise of Ecological Feminism", she explored how Women and the Environment are often seen as subordinate to male-dominated economic systems. Warren introduced a critical framework of "Gender Oppression" and "Ecological Exploitation" emphasizing not only environmental degradation but also Sexism, Racism, and Classism. Susan Griffin in her *Women and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her* (2000), summarizes Ecofeminist thoughts on the interconnection between Women and Nature. Aldo Leopold in his most famous work *A Sand County Almanac* (1949) formulated Land Ethic and advocates the basic holistic aspect of an Ecocritic's ethic. Kingsolver's novel *Animal Dreams* (1990) highlights the challenges a disconnected Woman faces hardship and struggle when she returns to live with her family in Arizona. *Flight Behaviour* (2012) is a climate change fiction which presents the arrival of millions of monarch butterflies and portrays the different reactions by the members of the community.

Integral Role of Women and Impact of Climate Change on Avian Migration in *Flight Behaviour*

Kingsolver's climate change fiction *Flight Behaviour* (2012) centered on the life-altering experience of a young woman, Dellarobia Turnbow, frustrated, young woman and a placid housewife from a small rural town in a southern Appalachian community in Tennessee. Offers a rich narrative to explore Ecological Consciousness, Ecofeminism, Environmental crisis and Woman-Nature interconnection. The story is set in a Tennessee rural town in the Appalachian Mountains. The protagonist Dellarobia Turnbow, a 28-year-old woman disillusioned by her unfulfilling married life with Cub Turnbow, often judgmental farming family. Dellarobia sets out for a secret affair with a man Jim, while climbing up a mountain hill she encounters millions of migrated monarch butterflies. The arrival of migrated butterflies defies the natural disaster which signals a larger environmental crisis. Dellarobia's personal life intertwines with environmental themes. She struggles with an unfulfilling marriage to her husband Cub and raising two young children. Because of her pregnancy, Dellarobia was forced to leave behind any aspirations she had of going to college or pursuing a career. Dellarobia struggles with balancing the social pressures of her small, conservative town, Cub's family and her own desire to break out of her domestic life. While attempting to escape her troubles, she encounters millions of monarch butterflies which are supposed to migrate from Mexico City due to a change in the pattern of the season. Dellarobia's discovery attracts the attention of a group of scientists, including Dr. Ovid Byron, a researcher and an entomologist who studies the butterflies' unexpected migration pattern. Dellarobia's father-in-law Bear represents the man-nature disconnections determined to

the forest area where the monarchs have taken the refuge. Kingsolver explores the themes of Climate Change, Environmental Disaster, and the tensions between Rural Communities and Scientific understanding. Dr. Ovid Byron the scientist initiates Dellarobia's transformation of conscience as she starts working with him. Her interaction with Byron makes her realize the intertwining of scientific knowledge and ecological values of life that is essential to nurture nonhuman nature. The arrival of the butterflies attracts Ovid Byron, who explains that the colony of the species have been displaced from their traditional Mexican wintering grounds due to Environmental Degradation. Dellarobia's decision to continue her college studies and to divorce Cub shows her essential survival of from a placid and in-concerned life. Dellarobia learn more about the broader implications of Climate Change, and involved with Dr Ovid Byron, her scientific knowledge begins to increase through her Scientific observation, hypothesis, and Analysis. Through her interaction with Byron, Dellarobia starts learn about how Climate Change is affecting Ecosystem. she is devastated by the natural calamities that have occurred both in Mexico and in Tennessee. Dellarobia connection with the monarchs and the land takes an Ecofeminist turn. Dellarobia's transition from ignorance to activism underscore the potential for women to take a turn in both domestic and Ecological sense. Dellarobia learn to accept the power of human agency that has continuously abused nature. For Dellarobia the Butterflies appearance in Tennessee is a call to the fact that the nature's rhythm have been disrupted, much like the hardships she faces as a woman in a patriarchal Society. Through the lens of Ecofeminism Kingsolver highlights the changing role of women in the society and Dellarobia's awakening to the Environmental Crises and her growing sense of agency are central to the novel's Ecofeminist insights. Through Dellarobia's journey, Kingsolver provides a exploration of personal and Ecological crises are intertwined and lead to broader Environmental and Societal Change.

Ecological Consciousness of Women-Nature Relationship in *Animal Dream*

Animal Dream (1990) by Barbara Kingsolver explore the theme of intersection of personal and environmental history. Codi Noline or Cosima protagonist of the novel who lives in small town in the American Grace County, from southwest. Codi return to her home town of Grace, Arizona to care for her ailing father Dr Holmes who suffers from Alzheimer's Disease. He is a local doctor in the town of Grace. In Grace, Codi stays in her friend Emelina Domingo's guest house. Codi's sister, Hallie moved to Nicaragua to assist with sustainable practices. Codi left Grace years earlier, she feels disconnected from her past and her sense of belonging, grapples with her struggles, and with her maternal guilt. As the two women talk, Codi's high school relationship with Lloyd Peregrine is revealed. Lloyd friend of Emelina's husband J.T., still works in town. Re-visiting Grace County feels like an outsider after many returning. Codi and Hallie's mother died shortly after Hallie's birth. At the age of fifteen, Codi became pregnant with and then miscarried Loyd's child. They continue to see each other and he teaches her about Native American Cultures. Meanwhile the town of Graces faces a terrible threat to its Ecosystem. The town of Grace faces an Environmental Threat from a mining Company. The mine, which was the town's primary source of employment has left with Environmental Degradation. Being employed as a biology teacher she recognizes the Mining company's operation affected both the Natural Landscape and the people of Grace focusing on the issues of sustainability and the exploitation of natural resources. The Local Black Mountain Mine has been dumping sulfuric acid and other chemical into water supply for years. The Copper Mining operation is portrayed as destructive not only to the physical Landscape but also to the social and cultural Community. Codi easily identifies herself with the *Poisoned Grounds* of Grace County that is also turning *infertile* because of mine pollution. Thus, Kingsolver weaves Codi's loss, miscarriage, maternal guilt, separation from the nature and landscape. The polluted river affects the Whole Ecosystem, and health of the Orchards. Codi joins the "Stitch and Bitch Club" an organization protesting the annihilation of their environment. For Codi, "Stitch and Bitch Club" offers her sense of belonging and understanding of herself. Illustrating on the gatherings of a space for transformation and healing. Codi's eventual role in helping to restore Grace's polluted environment represents a broader theme in Ecofeminism that the health of the women and environment are interconnected. Codi becomes an active participant in addressing the Environmental concern in grace, particularly in the contamination of water from nearby waste dump. She starts to heal herself, her past wounds and the toxic nature of Grace County. The end of the novel explores on shutting down of mines marks a critical moment where the town takes its past actions and begins to move toward a more sustainable Environment. Kingsolver explores the theme of belonging, healing, and interconnectedness of personal and Environmental challenges.

Barbara Kingsolver has depicted the crucial issue of Environmental Degradation brought in by the patriarchal society and how it has affected the lives of Women. It is in this context that Ecofeminism gains importance as a

radical movement. Kingsolver's female characters involved in the Political, Social and Economic movements. She often portrays woman as intrinsically connected to the land, where the environment is not just a backdrop, but a space that shapes their identities and responsibilities. She critiques the capitalist and patriarchal systems that prioritize profit over people and the planet. Through her characters and settings Kingsolver portrays critiques on Environmental Degradation and patriarchal structures emphasizing the importance of Women's agency, Collective action, and the interconnectedness of ecological health and social justice. The patriarchal structures in the novel *Animal Dream* contribute to the degradation of both Women and the Environment. The protagonist Codi's struggle for Ecological identity shows deep spiritual connection with the land. Codi's connection to the Arizona landscape, her learning of traditional remedies from the Stitch and Bitch Club and her growing awareness of poisoned river highlights her Ecological Consciousness towards the Environment. This connection represents an Ecofeminist ideal on growing up traditional Ecological Knowledge and land stewardship are often associated with women in indigenous cultures. Kingsolver's narratives emphasize the need for a more holistic and interconnected understanding of the world, that values both feminine and natural. She also explores how the exploitation of women and the natural world are linked and healed to create a sustainable world. Through the character Dellarobia Turnbow in *Flight Behaviour* Kingsolver subtly draws the parallel between exploitation of the Environment and marginalization of women within the patriarchal structures of the rural community. She also highlights the importance of women in both understanding and confronting Environmental challenges. Dellarobia's character embodies Ecofeminist principles. Her growing awareness of the monarch butterfly phenomenon symbolizes the larger Climate Change affecting the Ecosystem and active participant on Environmental Advocacy. She takes the role as a mother, wife and daughter-in-law and her roles traditionally associated with nurturing the Earth. She emerges as a catalyst for change in her community. Barbara Kingsolver highlights the central role women play in both the novels in understanding and addressing Environmental Crises. Dellarobia's journey is one of awakening Environmental consciousness advocates the potential for women to become powerful tool for Environmental protection. Through these two works, Kingsolver explores the Social Responsibility, women's awareness and engagement with Environmental issues can lead to personal transformation and Collective action. The Ecofeminist perspectives through these two novels asserts true Environmental and Societal progress.

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