

THE RENAISSANCE OF THE EARTH
GRADUATE SEMINAR 891 — SPRING 2020
PROFESSOR MARJORIE RUBRIGHT

Tuesdays 1:00-3:30
Interdisciplinary Renaissance Center



Office Hours: by appointment @ Center —email: mrubright@umass.edu — phone 577-3602

This seminar stages a “collision laboratory” between literatures of the earth produced by Renaissance writers (1450 – 1750) and current popular, artistic, literary and scientific writings about the Anthropocene. It has two aims: first, to explore how seemingly current conversations regarding environmental disaster, sustainability, and resilience traffic in ideas, metaphors, and modes of thinking whose roots extend into the Renaissance; and, second, to consider how early modern habits of thought and practice might not only resemble the present but influence it, aiding in our challenge of imagining alternative forms of habitation and cultivation of the earth.

The seminar draws into conversation cross-disciplinary voices and moves across a broad transhistorical field of focus in the readings. We will regularly set primary material and criticism alongside the visual arts and/or scientific reporting on the Anthropocene. It surveys a decade of Renaissance eco-criticism that positioned Shakespeare’s world-view at its center in order to expand and explore the stakes of recent eco-feminist, eco-philological, and eco-cosmopolitan methodologies, as well as medieval ecocriticisms, premodern and ‘prismatic’ ecologies. We’ll read canonical drama alongside less well-known plays, fairy tales, georgic poetry, agricultural treatises on composting and soil amendment, a dictionary of the terraqueous globe, as well as prose works on: Europe’s ‘little ice age,’ earthquakes, fossils, and the rise of air pollution. Toggling geographically between Europe and the Americas throughout, we’ll arrive here, in the Connecticut River Valley, exploring recent work in trans-Atlantic colonial ecology. The final two seminars provide a diptych study of Paradise and Ruin.

REQUIRED BOOKS (IN THE ORDER WE’LL BE READING THEM)

Steve Mentz, *Break Up the Anthropocene* (2019)

Veer Ecology, Eds. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Lowell Duckert (2017)

An Ecotopian Lexicon, Eds. Matthew Schneider-Mayerson & Brent Ryan Bellamy (2019)

Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Translated by Arthur Golding.

William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus* (any scholarly edition will serve)

John Lyly’s *Galatea* (or *Gallathea*) (Revels Edition)

Peter Mancall, *Nature and Culture in the Early Modern Atlantic* (2018)

All other readings will be posted to Moodle or are available through our Library, online

HOW TO USE THIS SYLLABUS

This syllabus is designed both to convey information and spark questions and insights. Keep it at hand. Prior to seminar, always spend time with the images on the syllabus and think with them as you read. Given that we are an assemblage of talents—arriving from PhD, MA, and MFA programs—the syllabus operates like a garden built of many plots. Everyone is invited to read everything each week. PhD students must. For MA and MFA students, always read the primary literature or works marked ‘primary’. An asterisk after an author’s name indicates what I expect you to have read among the secondary readings for each seminar meeting.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

One thing is certain. None of us will come away feeling an expert in the ever-moving, open-ended, transhistorical, and crossdisciplinary questions that animate this seminar. Instead, we will *try* to think into the questions in ambitious, collective, and creative ways. Assignments for this course are, therefore, imagined as a series of tries. (See “Try” in *Veer Ecology*). Some things you will probably have tried before, others will be new for everyone.

Gather.	An Alvearie for the Anthropocene	10%
Pollinate.	Two Oral Presentations	20%
Participate.		20%
Curate.	Future Remains: A Cabinet of Curiosities for the Anthropocene	30%
Harvest.	End of Term Seminar Roundtable	20%

Assignment details appear at the end of the Syllabus & will be posted to Moodle

RESOURCES - All hotlinks require that you are logged in to your UMass library account

The Anthropocene Project. <https://theanthropocene.org/>

The Anthropocene Project is a multidisciplinary body of work from world-renowned collaborators Nicholas de Pencier, Edward Burtynsky and Jennifer Baichwal. Combining art, film, virtual reality, augmented reality, and scientific research, the project investigates human influence on the state, dynamic and future of the Earth.

Early English Books Online

<https://search-proquest-com.silk.library.umass.edu/eebo?accountid=14572>

Early English Books Online (EEBO) features page images of almost every work printed in the British Isles and North America, as well as works in English printed elsewhere from 1470-1700. Over 200 libraries worldwide have contributed to EEBO.

ARTSTOR <https://library-artstor-org.silk.library.umass.edu/#/>

The ARTstor Digital Library is a resource that provides over 1.5 million digital images in the arts, architecture, humanities, and sciences with an accessible suite of software tools for teaching and research. Access Artstor through UMASS library electronic resources. Register with Artstor and build file folders of the images that interest you.

Botanical Arts and Artists. <https://www.botanicalartandartists.com/herbals.html>

Biodiversity Heritage Library. <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/>

WEEK 1: PLURALIZING THE PROJECT, AN INTRODUCTION

JAN 21

Steve Mentz, *Break Up the Anthropocene*

WEEK 2: ANTHROPOCENE

JAN 28



Uralkali Potash Mine #2, Berezniki, Russia, 2017 © Edward Burtynsky, courtesy of Flowers Gallery, London/ Nicholas Metivier Gallery, Toronto.

THINKING THE ANTHROPOCENE WITH THE EARLY MODERNS

Steve Mentz*, “Enter Anthropocene, Circa 1610” in *Anthropocene Reading in Geologic Times* (2017): 43-58.

Philip John Usher*, “Untranslating the Anthropocene” *diacritics*: 44 no 3 (2016) 56 -77.

Vin Nardizzi*, “Environ” in *Veer Ecology* (2017): 183 -195.

THINKING THE ANTHROPOCENE

Dipesh Chakrabarty*, “[The Climate of History: Four Theses.](#)” *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 35, no. 2 (2009): 197–222.

Stacy Alaimo “Your Shell on Acid: Material Immersion, Anthropocene Dissolves” in *Anthropocene Feminism* Ed. R. Grusin (2017): 89-120. (a helpful response to Chakravarty, Thesis by Thesis)

Donna Harraway: “Introduction” to *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene* (esp. pp. 1-4) and Chapter 2. “Tenticular Thinking: Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Chyhulucene” (2016): 30 - 57.

Kyle Whyte, "Indigenous Climate Change Studies: Indigenizing Futures, Decolonizing the Anthropocene," *English Language Notes* 55 no 1-2, (Fall 2017): 153-62.

Robert Macfarlane*, "Desecration phrasebook: A litany for the Anthropocene." *New Scientist*, Dec 15, 2015. <https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg22830523-200-desecration-phrasebook-a-litany-for-the-anthropocene/>

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WEEK 3: GREEN DESIRE

FEB 4



Giuseppe Arcimboldi

"Vertumnus (Emperor Rudolf II), 1590. Oil on Wood.

Tales:



Helen Adelia Rowe Metcalf,
decorator, American, 1831-1895 (dish ca. 1885)

Fairy Tale: Jack and the Beanstalk

Myth: Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Trans. Arthur Golding
Story of Syrinx & Pan (Bk1); Daphne and Apollo (Bk1)

Poetry: Andrew Marvell, "The Mower against
Gardens" & "The Garden" & "To His Coy Mistress"

CRITICAL READINGS

Rebecca Bushnell*, *Green Desire: Imaging Early Modern English Gardens* (2003)

Introduction: 1-11

Chapter 1 "Composing Gardens": 13-48

Chapter 4 "The Ladies' Part": 108-131

Leah Knight, *Of Books and Botany in Early Modern England* (2009): Epilogue + pp. 13-28

Epilogue (read the epilogue first)

Chapter 2. "The Bookish Nature of Botanical Culture" (read through middle of page 28)

Marjorie Swann "Vegetable Love: Botany and Sexuality in 17th century England" in *The Indistinct Human in Renaissance Literature*, Eds. Jean Feerick and Vin Nardizzi (2012): 139-158.

Hillary Eklund, "Introduction: Toward a Renaissance Soil Science," in *Ground-Work: English Renaissance Literature and Soil Science*, Ed. H. Eklund (2017): 1-15 (read through page 15)

Patricia Seed*, Chapter 1. "Houses, Gardens, and Fences: Signs of Possession in the New World," in *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World 1492-1640* (1995): 16-40.

PRIMARY READINGS (IN WHICH TO START DIGGING AROUND...)



Cross-Pollination Session (5%)

Dig into any one of the early modern *Gardens* that interests you (linked & in Moodle).
Pluck something from your *Garden* that relates to a reading above.
Prepare a single slide to introduce us to what you've dug up & why.
Pollinate. You'll have 3 minutes to cross-pollinate with ideas in the critical readings by way of your *Garden*.

Thomas Hill [*The gardeners labyrinth containing a discourse of the gardeners life, in the yearly trauels to be bestovved on his plot of earth, for the vse of a garden*](#) (1577)

William Lawson [*New Orchard or Garden... Countrie Housewifes Garden*](#) (1631)

Hugh Plat, [*The Garden of Eden, or, An Accurate description of all flowers and fruits now growing in England*](#) (1654 ed).

Thomas Tusser, [*Fiue Hundreth Points of Good Husbandry Vnited to as Many of Good Huswiferie, First Devised \[and\] Nowe Lately Augmented with Diuerse Approued Lessons Concerning Hopps \[and\] Gardening.*](#) (1574 ed)

SUGGESTED

Botanical Arts and Artists: <https://www.botanicalartandartists.com/herbals.html>

Biodiversity Heritage Library: <https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/>

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WEEK 4: THE BOTANY OF RACE

Feb 11

PRIMARY READINGS

Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: "Procne and Philomela" Bk 6

Raymond Williams "Nature" in *Keywords*

William Shakespeare, *Titus Andronicus*

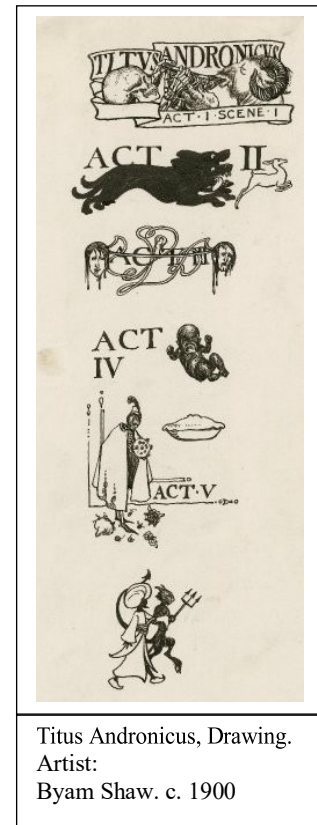
CRITICAL READINGS

Jean Feerick, "Economies of Nature in Shakespeare" *Shakespeare Studies*. Vol. 39 (2011): 32-42.

Jean Feerick*, "Botanical Shakespeares: The Racial Logic of Plant Life in *Titus Andronicus*" *South Central Review*. 26.1-2 (2009): 82-102

Jennifer Munroe, "Is it Really Ecocritical if it isn't Feminist?" *Ecological Approaches to Early Modern English Texts* (2015): 37-47

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WEEK 5: ECO-ENTANGLEMENTS: RUIN, GRAFTING, STRATIFICATION CA 920-2020 Feb 22 (Sat.)

Graduate Conference, Co-Organized by Melissa Hudasko and John Yargo

Saturday, February 22, 2020, 9:00 am—Kinney Center for Interdisciplinary Renaissance Studies



PRIMARY READINGS

From *Anthropocene Reading: Literary History in Geologic Times* (2017)

Introduction by Tobias Menely and Jesse Oak Taylor (1-24)

"Anarky" by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (25-42)

From *Veer Ecology* "Whirl" by Tim Ingold (421-433)

+ forthcoming offerings from Jean Feerick

Begin (this week) reading into Week 6 Materials: "Wor[l]ds"

CRITICAL READING

Mel Y. Chen, “Language and Mattering Humans” *Animacies: Biopolitical, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect* (2012): 23-55.

PRIMARY: ECO-PHILOLOGY IN PRACTICE

Jack Turner [“Another Extinction: Words We Use to Describe the Natural World”](#)

Veer Ecology: A Companion for Environmental Thinking, Eds. JJ. Cohen & L. Duckert (2017)

Introduction

+ pick a single word you wish to read in relation to your interests

+ pick one word from the list of “Errata” to veer into as you wish

Prismatic Ecology: Ecotheory beyond Green, Ed. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen (2013)

Forward by Lawrence Buell

Introduction “Ecology’s Rainbow” by JJ. Cohen

“Greener” by Vin Nardizzi

& Onward “After Green Ecologies: Prismatic Visions” by S. Iovino and S. Oppermann

An Ecotopian Lexicon, Eds. M. Schneider-Mayerson & BR. Bellamy (2019)

Forward

Introduction

Visit the *Portfolio & Artists Statements* exhibition (between pages 152-153) & read corresponding word entries in the lexicon

PRIMARY: EARLY MODERN EXPERIMENTS IN ECO-PHILOLOGY

John Baret, [An Alveary or Triple Dictionary, in English, Latin, and French](#) (1580).

Title Page; “To the Reader”; & Prefatory poems

John Thorie, [The Theatre of the Earth](#) (1599).

Title page; & “What is performed in this Booke”

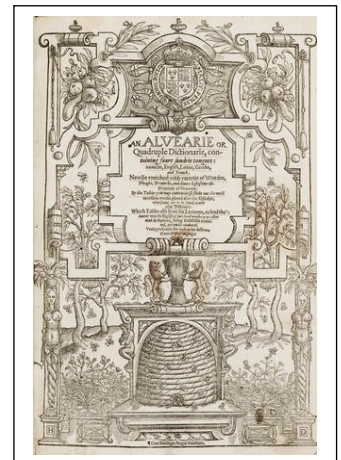
Roger Williams, [A key into the language of America](#), or, *An help to the language of the natives in that part of America called New-England* (1643)

Title page; & “To my dear...”

“Directions for the use of the Language”

“Helpe to the native Language of that part of *America* called New-England”

& “Observations” that follow



John Baret’s *Alvearie or Quadruple Dictionarie* (1580)

DUE, Monday @ Noon: Online Forum “ECO-PHILOLOGY” (See Moodle for Prompt)



Hendrick Avercamp, “Ice Scene” 1610 (oil on panel)

CRITICAL READINGS

R. Markley, “Summer’s Lease: Shakespeare in the Little Ice Age” *Early Modern Ecostudies* (2008):131-142.

Frances Dolan, “Biodynamic Viticulture, Natural Wine, and the Premodern” *Premodern Ecologies in the Modern Literary Imagination* (2019): 121-149.

L. Duckert*, Preface. “Shivering, Wet” & Ch. 2. “Going Glacial” *For all Waters: Finding Ourselves in Early Modern Wetscapes* (2017)

L. Duckert*, [“Speaking as the North”](#) Blog in *The Sundial*

C. Heuer, Introduction & Ch. 4. “Savage Episteme” *Into the White: The Renaissance Arctic and the End of Image* (2019)

PRIMARY READINGS

Shakespeare, Sonnets: 2, 6, 18, 33, 73

& SHORT SELECTIONS FROM:

George Best: [A true discourse of the late voyages of discoverie, for the finding of a passage to Cathaya, by the Northveast, vnder the conduct of Martin Frobisher](#) (1584)

John Davis, [The Worldes Hydrographical Discription](#) [sic] (1595)

Thomas Ellis, [A True Report](#) (1578)

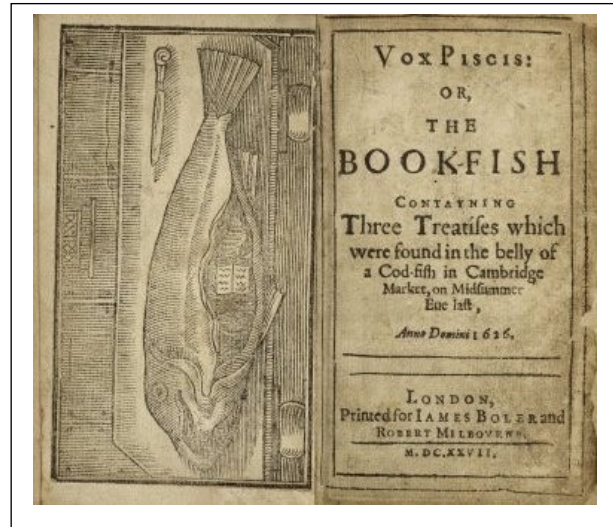
SUGGESTED: Watch: [Ice on Fire](#) (HBO) Documentary; and Visit <https://icebergfinder.com/>



The earliest known depiction of Inuit by Europeans, from a handbill printed in Augsburg, ca. 1567.



Ceyx's Death in Shipwreck (Ovid's *Met.* Bk 11)
Woodcut. German artist. 16th c.



PRIMARY READINGS

Myth

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. Story of Ceyx's shipwreck (Bk 11)

Poetry

John Donne, "The Calm"; "The Storm"
Andrew Marvell, "Bermudas"

Narrative

your choice of any one 'travel narrative' Mentz discusses in Ch 3. "Isle of Tempests"

CRITICAL READINGS

Stacy Alaimo*, "Unmoor" in *Veer Ecology*

Steve Mentz*, *Shipwreck Modernity Ecologies of Globalization 1550–1719* (2015)

Theoretical Preface, Narrative Preface

Ch 3. "Isle of Tempests"

Ch. 6 "Sea Poetry and Maritime Crisis"

Three Short Epilogues

Naomi Klein*, "Let Them Drown: The Violence of Othering in a Warming World" in *London Review of Books* 2 June 2016.

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Woodcut from a contemporary pamphlet (chap book) depicting the aftermath of the 1607 flood in the coastal lowlands of the Bristol Channel and Severn Estuary.

PRIMARY READINGS

Ovid *Metamorphoses*, Book 1 (339-54); “Iphis and Ianthe” in Bk. 9; “Acis & Galatea” in Bk. 13

John Lyly. *Galatea* (1588). Revels Edition.

CRITICAL READINGS

Patricia Badir*, “Coastal Squeeze: Environmental Metamorphosis and Lily’s Linconshire” in *Ovidian Transversions* (2019): 191-212

“[The Coastal Squeeze: Changing Tactics for Dealing with Climate Change](#) (in New England).”
Article by Michael Johnson*, *Greater Atlantic Region, Habitat Conservation Division* in NOAA
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (June 2019)

Hillary Eklund: “Wetlands Reclamation and the Face of the Local in 17th C England” in *Ground-Work* (2017): 149-170.

OPTIONAL (FOR DRAMA LOVERS)

Richard Brome, [Sparagus Garden](#)



Created by Crispin de Passe the Elder (Dutch, ca. 1565 - 1637). (late 16th century - early 17th century).
America, Series: The Four Continents. [Print]

Note:

This is a heavy reading week. Your goal is to work your way through this broad cross-disciplinary range of materials focused in various ways on settler colonialism. As you read, pluck primary materials you may wish to return to in your projects. Consider: how do various disciplines constitute their research subject(s) & what methodologies – implicit or explicit — are valued?

CRITICAL READINGS

“Sila” by Janet Tamalik McGrath in *Ecotopian Lexicon* (2019): 256-265

McGrath holds a PhD in Canadian Studies and Political Economy & grew up between Inuit traditional and modern influences in the 1970s Canadian Arctic

Leanne Betasamosake Simpson*, “Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*. Vol. 3, No. 3, (2014): 1-25

Simpson is a writer, activist, faculty member in Faculty of Arts at Ryerson University (Toronto) & member of Alderville First Nation, Ontario Canada

Peter C. Mancall*, *Nature and Culture in the Early Modern Atlantic* (2018)

Mancall is a historian and anthropologist of the early modern Atlantic

Susan Scott Parrish, Chapter 1. “The British Metropolis and its ‘America’,” *American Curiosity: Cultures of Natural History in the Colonial British Atlantic World* (2006): 24-76

Parrish is an early Americanist and professor of literature

Strother E. Roberts “Hunting Beaver: The Postdiluvian World of the Fur Trade” in *Colonial Ecology, Atlantic Economy: Transforming Nature in Early New England* (2019): 21-57

Roberts is a historian of the environment and economy of early modern North America

WEEK 11: WOOD (OR, “NATURE”-AS-RESOURCE)

APRIL 7

(NOTE: FOR THIS WEEK & NEXT ALL SEMINAR MEMBERS READ EVERYTHING)

PRIMARY READINGS (*WHIRL BACK TO WHERE WE BEGAN*)

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. Daphne and Apollo, Bk. 1

Gerard’s *Herball* (refresh your memory)

CRITICAL READINGS

V. Nardizzi, “Shakespeare’s Globe and England’s Woods” *Shakespeare Studies* 39 (2011): 54-63

_____, “Epilogue: The Afterlives of the Globe” in *Wooden Os: Shakespeare’s Theaters and England’s Trees* (2013): 136-138

_____, “Wooden Slavery” in *Editor’s Column PMLA* vol 126.2 (March 2011): 313-315

_____, “Daphne Described: Ovidian Poetry and Speculative Natural History in Gerard’s *Herball*” *Philological Quarterly* 98. 1-2(2019): 137-56

V. Nardizzi & T.J. Werth, Introduction, “Oecologies: Engaging the World, From Here” *Premodern Ecologies in the Modern Literary Imagination* Eds. V. Nardizzi & T.J. Werth (2019): 3-24



Metamorphoses. Translation by Clément Marot, French Manuscript

Due Friday April 10 by Noon: 3 co-authored seminar questions for Prof. Vin Nardizzi.

Upload in ‘Forum’: Nardizzi (moodle)

Sunday: Vin will respond with a short reading drawn from his current work in progress.

Distributed on Moodle Sunday, read carefully for Tuesday.

Our goals:

- to collaborate with Vin: generate a triangulated conversation next Tuesday not between ourselves, our readings and Vin Nardizzi. Rather, *together with us*, Vin will puzzle through what answers lie in his new work that implicitly respond to questions that arose for us out of his previous work.
- to treat Vin’s new work as another ‘voice in the room.’ Your goal is to activate that voice to venture generous speculations and provisional answers to our collective questions.
 - to welcome Vin warmly as the author not the authority.

All readings & preparations will be posted to Moodle over the weekend

Ursula K. Heise, Afterward. "Environmentalism, Eco-Cosmopolitanism, and Premodern Thought" *Premodern Ecologies in the Modern Literary Imagination* Eds. V. Nardizzi & T.J. Werth (2019):282-288.



"The Garden of Eden" Textile Panel. Velvet worked with silk and metal thread. British. c.1575-1600

PRIMARY READINGS

John Milton, *Paradise Lost* Book 1; selections from books 4 & 5; Book 9
Genesis, King James Bible, 1- 3

CRITICAL READINGS

In *EcoFeminist Approaches to Early Modernity* (2011)

Lynne D. Bruckner, "N/nature and the difference 'She' Makes" 15-35

Jennifer Munroe*, "First 'Mother of Science: Milton's Eve, Knowledge, and Nature" 37-54

Wendy Furman-Adams and Virginia J Tufté, "Ecofeminist Eve: Artists Reading Milton's Heroine" 55-83

Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought* (Selections: pp 1-8 and 20-25)

Listen*: [Monsters, Marvels, and the Birth of Science](#) (an interview with Lorraine Daston)



Inaugurated in 1928, the 17th theater of the United Artists film studio – Detroit, Michigan in 2005

WELCOME MELISSA HUDASKO

PRIMARY READINGS

The Ruin (Old English Elegy) publ. 10th century

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* Deucalion and Pyrrha, Bk 1 & other stony metamorphoses of your choice

SECONDARY READINGS

Heide Estes, “Ruined Landscapes” in *Anglo Saxon Literary Landscapes* (2017): 61-87

Jon Beasley-Murray, "Vilcashuamán: Telling Stories in Ruin" in *The Ruins of Modernity* Eds. Hell & Schönle, (2010): 212-231

J.J. Cohen*, "Time: The Insistence of Stone" in *Stone: An Ecology of the Inhuman* (2015): 75-126

Andrew Hui, *The Poetics of Ruins in Renaissance Literature* —short selections

Ruin Porn “What ‘ruin porn’ tells us about ruins – and porn”

<https://www.cnn.com/style/article/what-ruin-porn-tells-us-about-ruins-and-porn/index.html>

Detroit as Ruin

<https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2018/08/16/detroit-ruin-porn/979984002/>

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

GATHER (10%)

An Alvearie for the Anthropocene

As we linger in and over language in every seminar, it will be useful to gather and compile our terms. Following the cue of early modern lexicographer John Barret, who imagined his dictionary as Beehive pollinated by many contributors, we will collectively compile a living glossary. Add at least one entry per seminar from our readings. Your entry may add a word or a usage to our glossary. It may come from a primary or secondary source. In addition, you may add ‘outside’ voices to our Alvearie, bringing in usages you gather from beyond the seminar’s readings (news stories, poets, popular culture). Like the *OED*, we’re building a dictionary of usage—words in motion, not words we fix. Entries should follow this form until we decide otherwise:

WORD. Provisional definition. Short example of its use. Author[s] last name[s]. Year.
+ contributors can add examples of use, expand the definition, or expand citations

Google Doc will be set up starting Week 2 & everyone should post that week

POLLINATE (20%)

Conveying the ideas of others clearly and with generosity is the only sure way to pollinate across fields. Prepare one brief (five-minute) presentation of a critical reading on the syllabus. **[15%]** You should prepare your presentation in advance, structure it with goals in mind, and practice it in advance. The first goal is to convey what another critic sets out to do on their own terms and *in their own terms*. This is the most important step in critical critique. The second goal is to avoid ‘in group’ speak. Remember, our strength is that we are an assemblage of disciplines in this seminar.

Structure

Offer an overview of the intervention (you may pluck a short passage or sentence for us to consider as you also synthesize the author’s method and argument); identify the thesis most relevant to this seminar; lead us into a discussion of the piece with one question about the article/chapter itself and a second question that connects it with another reading from the day.

DUE: THIS ASSIGNMENT WILL BE SCHEDULED ACCORDING TO YOUR INTERESTS. SIGNUP: WK 2

***NOTE:** AN ADDITIONAL “CROSS-POLLINATION” ASSIGNMENT OCCURS WEEK 3, ON SYLLABUS **[5%]**

PARTICIPATE (20%)

COMPOST WHAT’S LOCAL.

What is going on at UMass Amherst in departments beyond your own? What might you might collect and compost for the purposes of enriching this course? Post announcements to our “Compost” Forum on Moodle, at least twice this term, and bring announcements to the seminar. We’ll share at the top of each hour.

DIVE IN. NOW.

Everyone in the room is a fish out of water in this seminar. So, best dive in. Talk in every seminar meeting. We need every voice in the room.

SWIM, EVEN WHEN THE WATER FEELS ‘ABOVE YOUR HEAD.’

Fortuitously, our course dovetails with the Eco-Entanglements Graduate Conference. Speaking up *is* participating at academic events. Doing so also signals to speakers that their ideas interested you. Prepare the readings in advance of the conference. Venture at least one question aloud to a conference participant during Q&As.

SPECULATE.

Infrequent, informal, low stakes, ‘warm ups’ for the seminar conversation. Occasionally, I will ask you to post on Moodle “Forum” speculations regarding connections between the readings prior to the seminar. One appears, scheduled, Week 6.

CREATE.

Many of you arrive to this class as creative artists and writers. Bring your creative minds and skills to our conversations. How do the creative arts help us into the questions of the course? This may mean that you bring art to class, ask us to make art in class, propose an earthworks project for the Center’s garden or grounds, or take us outside to connect our seminar what is just outside the window.

CURATE (30%)

Future | Remains : A Cabinet of Curiosities for the Anthropocene

‘Engaging with curious objects is a task of art and science . . . Curation is a skill for . . . justice and for the wider world. The curious juxtapositions and connectivities of the *Wunderkammer* are suggestive of ways of thinking differently for our strange and uncertain times.’ – Libby Robin (2018)

Using Libby Robbin’s chapter “*Anthropocene Cabinets of Curiosity: Objects of Strange Change*” and the “Preface” to *Future | Remains* as inspiration, curate your own cabinet of curiosities that speaks in some way to the project of *The Renaissance of the Earth* seminar. Begin by adopting a rare book from the Center’s library. Become both familiar with and estranged by it. Curate a Cabinet of Curiosities inspired by some aspect of your book. Your Cabinet may take the form of a material display, an online exhibition, powerpoint, or something else. You may elect to work with one other person on this challenge but you must work together twice on the project before you confirm it. Your Cabinet should offer visitors/viewers thoughtful ways of engaging so that questions, ‘ways of thinking’, or interactions arise that are not wholly random but inspired by your curation skills.

You may work with any rare book in our collections that you wish. Below are a few suggestions made by our Librarian, Jeff Goodhind. He will work with you individually to help you find works that draw your curiosity.

John Ray, *Three Physico-Theological Discourses*, 1693

John Woodward, *Natural History of the Earth*, 1695

John Swan, *Speculum Mundi*, 1635

Thomas Browne, *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, 1658

Robert Boyle, *Philosophical Transactions*, 1666

Francis Bacon, *Sylva Sylvarum*, 1685

Georg Andreas Agricola, *Experimental Husbandman and Gardener*, 1726

Walter Raleigh, *Historie of the World*, 1628

Peter Heylyn, *Cosmographia*, 1658

DUE: THIS ASSIGNMENT WILL BE DUE IN A ROLL-OUT SCHEDULE, BEGINNING WEEK 8

HARVEST (20%)

The single most powerful intervention one can make in the academy is to pose an interesting, open, informed, creative/critical, and timely question. (In 1977 Joan Kelly famously asked, ‘Did Women Have a Renaissance?’ thereby catalyzing decades of feminist scholarship and debate.) By now, you are all skilled at generating critical arguments. This is what happens all around you. Most often, this is what you hear at academic talks; and arguments fill the pages of criticism that you read. We’ll hold a final ‘roundtable’ in the week or so following our last seminar meeting (timing TBA). For that roundtable, you’ll each present (10 minutes) a new question for The Renaissance of the Earth. You will turn in your presentation, via email, at the end of that day. Your “Harvest” might take the form of a scholarly presentation, a blog for Paperbark, or an interview with a scholar or activist; for MA and MFA students, it also may be the presentation of creative work whose genesis was a question. More details about what you will turn in for different projects will follow on Moodle.



This Central Andean ritual watering vessel is called a paccha in Quechua, the Inka language. It was made entirely in clay to imitate several objects placed together symbolically to encapsulate the stages of growing maize (corn), from planting to harvest and consumption of the most important foodstuff in the Inka Empire. The hooked and pointed portion represents the traditional Andean foot plow, known as a tacla, used to punch a hole in the soil for planting. Atop the shaft is an ear of corn molded directly from nature; the smoothed side seams remain visible. It represents the successful harvest. Finally, above the hook is a miniature urpu, the long-necked storage jar for fermented corn drink (asua). However, Andean art is rarely -if ever- truly complete without activation through ritual. Wear on the tip of this entirely hollow object shows that it was itself "planted" in the ground during rituals. Scientific tests on residue left in the hooked part of the tacla proved that corn beer was poured through it into the earth.

[-Artstor](#)

Chancay/Inka. Inka Paccha (Ritual Watering Vessel)

Ceramic. 1440 - 1540 AD.

Creation Site: South America, Central Andes.