

Environmental Scotland II

Webinar

22 April 2024

17:00-19:00 GMT

Following the Environmental Scotland webinar organised by Carla Sassi (University of Verona) in September 2021, Environmental Scotland II gathers various viewpoints and approaches toward a topic that has long been central in Scottish literatures.

The invited panelists are **Timothy C. Baker** (University of Aberdeen), **Léna Ferrié** (University of Western Brittany), **Peter Mackay** (University of St Andrews) and **Camille Manfredi** (University of Western Brittany).

Organised and chaired by Monika Szuba (University of Gdańsk)

Zoom Link:

Environmental Scotland II

Rejoindre Zoom Réunion

<https://univ-amu-fr.zoom.us/j/87148976065?pwd=RmZsVUFZelYwYUxjTUVLR2VPZm1ZQT09>

ID de réunion: 871 4897 6065

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Industrial and marine forces of the North Sea in Peter Iain Campbell's photography

Léna Ferrié and Camille Manfredi, University of Brest (Western Brittany)

This joint paper will focus on aesthetic and social constructions of energy transition in Scotland, with particular attention to Peter Iain Campbell's photographs of post-industrial landscapes and oil rigs in the North Sea. Campbell's survey of landscapes in the process of being decommissioned tends to convey a petromelancholic aesthetics (LeMenager, 2011) and depicts a series of tensions and interplays between industrial and marine forces. At times, the images move away from and challenge different aesthetic principles such as the technological sublime (Nye, 1994) and extractive poetics (Campbell, 2019). Instead, the resistance of the sea turns into an elemental, marine poetics, with the sea being given agency and becoming a participant in the creative process of the photographs.

Crisis and Utopia: Scotland in the Anthropocene

Timothy C. Baker, University of Aberdeen

In 1996, Cairns Craig famously characterised Scotland as 'out of history'. Thirteen years later, Dipesh Chakrabarty influentially argued that anthropogenic climate change collapsed the distinction between natural and human history. Looking at a range of contemporary texts by both Scottish and non-Scottish writers, including work such as Jenni Fagan's *The Sunlight Pilgrims*, Karine Polwart's *Wind Resistance*, Anne-Marie MacDonald's *Fayne*, and Sarah Hall's *The Wolf Border*, this talk examines the way Scotland continues to be positioned as a place apart, where environmental change

may have different effects than elsewhere, but also the way questions of current global crisis offers new visions of community.

Cornucopia; or not talking about the *Iolaire*

Peter Mackay, University of St Andrews

We might be more accustomed to images of the Highlands of Scotland as wild, uncultivated and unruly, but from the 16th century onwards (and up to *Brigadoon* and beyond), the Highlands have also been portrayed as a cornucopia, a land of bounty and plenty, ripe for harvesting. This talk – based on a literary non-fiction essay – explores various ways in which the Highlands have been represented in literature and film, and takes an uneasy approach to some quirks of language and image associated with the Highlands, and ways in which culture, tourism and military activity intermingle.

Timothy C. Baker is Professor in Scottish Literature at the University of Aberdeen. He is the author of several books of literary criticism, including *George Mackay Brown and the Philosophy of Community* (EUP 2009), *Contemporary Scottish Gothic: Mourning, Authenticity, and Tradition* (Palgrave 2014), *Writing Animals: Language, Suffering, and Animality in Twenty-First-Century Fiction* (Palgrave 2019), *New Forms of Environmental Writing: Gleaning and Fragmentation* (Bloomsbury 2022). He has also published a memoir *Reading My Mother Back: A Memoir in Childhood Animal Stories* (2022).

Léna Ferrié is a PhD Candidate at the University of Brest (Western Brittany). Her current research focuses on the aesthetics of energy transition through photographic representations of British and American petrocultural landscapes. These include the depiction of fossil energy and extractive infrastructures (quarries, mines, oil rigs, power plants, pipelines, nuclear test zones) as well as contaminated landscapes resulting from these activities (evaporation ponds, environmental catastrophes, oil spills). Léna also looks at post-petrocultural landscapes with the question of waste, residue, ruins, and the decommissioning of such fossil resource structures, along with the depiction of renewable energies (inshore and offshore wind farms, solar power, tidal or wave energy). She aims to study the processes of aestheticisation at stake in the photos and to investigate the possible connections between the energy transition and a landscape aesthetic transition.

Peter Mackay is a Senior Lecturer in Literature in the School of English. Originally from the Isle of Lewis, he is an expert in Scottish and Irish literature from 1800 onwards, and especially in Scottish Gaelic literature. He has written two monographs, *This Strange Loneliness: Heaney's Wordsworth* (McGill-Queen's 2021) and *Sorley MacLean* (RISS 2010). An anthology he edited with Iain S MacPherson, *An Leabhar Liath: 500 years of Gaelic Love and Transgressive Verse* (Luath 2015) won the Donald Meek Prize for Gaelic literature and the Saltire Scottish Research Book of the Year; another anthology co-edited with Jo MacDonald, *100 Dàn as Fheàrr Leinn / 100 Favourite Gaelic Poems* won the Duais Ruaraidh MhicThòmais in 2021. His poetry collections *Gu Leòr / Galore* (Acair 2015) and *Nàdur de / Some Kind of* (Acair 2020) were shortlisted for the Saltire Scottish Poetry Book of the Year; *Nàdur de* was also longlisted for the Highland Book Prize. An AHRC / BBC Next Generation Thinker, he is a frequent broadcaster on Radio 3 and BBC Radio nan Gàidheal.

Camille Manfredi is Professor of Scottish literature at the University of Brest (Western Brittany). Her most recent publications include the monograph *Nature and Space in Contemporary Scottish Writing and Art* (Springer, 2019), the collective volume *Scottish Writing after Devolution : Edges of the New*, (with Marie-Odile Hédon and Scott Hames, Edinburgh University Press, 2022), the thematic issue of *E-Rea* "Understanding, Acknowledging, Representing Environmental Emergency" (with

Sylvie Nail, <https://journals.openedition.org/erea/12174>, 2021), and the chapter “Our Oil’: Our Waves? Environment, Energy Transition, and Art in Twenty-First-Century Scotland”, in *British Art and the Environment: Changes, Challenges and Responses Since the Industrial Revolution* (eds. Charlotte Gould and Sophie Mesplède, Routledge, 2021). As part of the “Hands across the Sea” project with the University of the Highlands and Islands, she is currently working with Dr. Lindsay Blair on a thematic issue of the online journal *Angles* on “Re-viewing and Re-imagining Scottish Waters in word and image”, to be published in 2024. She is the director of the research centre HCTI, Héritage et Création dans le Texte et l’Image.