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Call for Papers

Special Issue: The Plantationocene

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This special issue focuses on the Plantationocene, which pertains to aspects of Western colonialism, geological discovery, massive deforestation, agricultural harvesting, and plant cultivation. It explores related theories and literary narratives of the Plantationocene from the angle of plant(ation)s in English and American literature. We particularly center on the 16th century after the Age of Discovery, when the West met the East, when the Western empires embarked on plant expeditions, plant collections, plant cultivations, and plant transactions from the Caribbean, the Americas, to Asia and Oceania, giving rise to plantation agricultural economy. We intend to reflect upon the effects of this huge-scale plantation production system with regard to colonial power, the natural environment, and literary writings.

Recently, the Anthropocene discourses have tackled the repercussions of anthropocentrism imposed on the environment, but have met with criticism. Anthropologist Anna L. Tsing and biologist Donna Haraway point out that there are at least three aspects they are concerned with: First, the Anthropocene monotonizes the concept of “the human,” neglecting various differences in race, gender, class, sexuality, ableism, etc. Second, the Anthropocene accentuates the temporal dimension, overlooking dissimilarities across the spatial, as humans differ between the East and the West, and between the Global North and the Global South. Third, that the Anthropocene Working Group (AWG) heavily rely on the big data from Earth Science System (ESS), an innovative science methodology which enables a comprehensive system of measurements, but resulting in the surveillance of the planet via surface statistics. It ignores the complication in facets that has long existed across the agricultural almanac of the plantation.

In her book *Allegories of the Anthropocene* (2019), postcolonial eco-scholar Elizabeth DeLoughrey criticizes the Anthropocene, arguing that the discourses pertain mainly to the North while leaving out the Global South, thus resulting in a lack of representation of the Indigenous and island ecologies from a postcolonial perspective (1-10). Like Tsing, DeLoughrey points out the homogeneity of the Anthropocene, while it only concerns the Planetary based on Earth System Science, instead of the Place. Along with postcolonial Indian historian Dipesh Chakrabarty, they both accentuate the need “to provincialize” (7) the Anthropocene in order to critique the rupture and destruction caused by Western imperialism and colonialism (8).

Moreover, DeLoughrey’s postcolonial concern about “provincializing” the Anthropocene resonates with French eco-philosopher Bruno Latour. In his book *Down to Earth? Politics in the New Climate Regime* (2018), Latour argues that humans do not live on the same planet under the ecological crisis; the inequality of modernization has politicized the climate ethics. Latour postulates that we humans ought to retrace ourselves through “the terrestrial” (40) to tackle the neglected aspect of “the Place,” other than “the Planetary” privileged by the Anthropocene.

There is a plethora of plantation narratives in Anglo-American and Anglophone literature—for example, English novel *Jean Eyre* (1848) features Mr. Rochester’s sugar cane plantations in Antigua; Caribbean postcolonial novel *Wild Sargasso Sea* (1966) is set in a slave plantation in Jamaica; American novel *Tar Baby* (1981) sees a temperate garden

cultivated by plutocrats from Maine, New England. Furthermore, Shu-mei Shih uses the notion of “the plantation arc” to connect three literary texts of different places in her article “Relational Comparison” (2014,) in which she contextualizes William Faulkner’s *Absalom! Absalom!* (1936), Caribbean writer Patricia Powell’s *The Pagoda* (1998), and Malaysian Sinophone writer Chang Kuei Hsing’s *Monkey Cup* (2000) to showcase the colonial violence in the Global South. These examples, taken together, could be considered “the allegories of the Plantationocene,” launching us to explore the relationship between the cultivation of plant(ation)s and the planetary crises.

This special issue welcomes submissions that explore how Anglo-American and Anglophone literature represents or responds to the massive production of plantations by Western imperialism. Topics include but are not confined to the following:

- Race representations in plantations
- Colonial violence in plantations
- Sexual performance in plantations
- Multispecies imagination in plantations
- Biopolitics in plantations
- Plant narratives in plantations
- Land policies and plant economy in plantations
- The human/nonhuman dual constructivism in plantations
- Globalism in plantations
- Plant mania, plant gothic, plant expeditions, plant medicine, plant sensory or more

- ◆ Please submit the manuscript online at <https://www.eala.org.tw/zh-hant/comment/online-submission>, or email it to realtaiwan@gmail.com. The manuscript should be in Word format and well paged, include a Chinese and an English title, a Chinese abstract (350 to 400 words), an English abstract (200 to 250 words) as well as Chinese and English keywords (3 to 5 items). A cover letter should be attached, stating the author’s Chinese and English name, name and the address of his or her affiliation, as well as the corresponding contact information, address, email, and phone/ fax number.
- ◆ A submission in Chinese should be no more than 20,000 words. A submission in English should be between 6,000 and 12,000 words (including **works cited** and **footnotes**). The paper should follow the 8th edition of the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. All submitted papers will go through double-blind review process. There must be no indication of personal identity or other related information. If the paper contains any copyrighted material (such as photos or pictures), the author is solely responsible for obtaining written permission for the material.
- ◆ The same manuscript should not be submitted to more than one journal; papers having been published elsewhere shall not be submitted. A paper which has been published previously in another language will not be accepted even if it is translated into Chinese. *REAL* will consider submissions containing material that has formed part of an unpublished PhD or other academic thesis, but the author should check relevant policies regarding graduation requirements or applications for promotion and MOST grants.
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