

Romantic Ecologies

The 19th international conference of the
Gesellschaft für englische Romantik (Society for English Romanticism)
will be hosted
by the Chair of English Literature of the University of Augsburg and held
as a residential conference at 'Haus Sankt Ulrich' in Augsburg.

Augsburg, September 29 – October 2, 2022

Haus Sankt Ulrich
Tagungshotel der Diözese Augsburg
Kappelberg 1
D-86159 Augsburg
<https://www.haus-sankt-ulrich.de>

Confirmed keynote speakers: **Jeremy Davies** (University of Leeds, UK), **Dewey Hall** (California Polytechnic Pomona, USA), **Timothy Morton** (Rice University, Houston TX), **Manfred Pfister** (Freie Universität Berlin, Germany), **Kate Rigby** (Bath Spa University, UK).

Call for Papers

Romanticism is characterized by a new understanding of nature and environment. Nature does no longer function as a mere purpose-oriented setting, but rather as an affective and emotional context of communication with the observing or experiencing subject. The numerous aesthetic ways in which this dialogical interrelationship between subjective experience and scenic object of nature is captured in Romantic literature / art makes Romanticism a 'proto-ecological' movement, and today, in times of a world-wide ecological and environmental crisis, Romanticism's critical explorations of the complex interdependencies between humankind, nature, the environment and aesthetics seem to be relevant as never before. Scrutinizing Romanticism's strong affinity towards environmental issues allows for an insight into the fragile and precarious networks between various ecosystems, human agency and (post-)industrial society in the Anthropocene.

This conference aims to address this new understanding of nature inherent to British Romanticism, explore its relevance for the discourse of environmental humanities in the twenty-first century, and also to reconsider the relation between humankind, nature / the environment / ecology and aesthetics in (and through) British Romanticism both in (meta-)theory and practice. With our focus on "Romantic Ecologies", understood as a wide and plural concept, we invite a multicentricity of theoretical approaches and readings. This broad conception of ecology may thus encompass political and socio-historical issues, such as the impact of ecology / the environment / biosystems in the contexts of (post)colonialism and (trans)atlantic dialogues alongside societal ideas in the light of a re-evaluation of the relationship between humankind, the environment, sustainability and capitalism. Further focus areas comprise the role of various biosystems together with their (inter)dependencies and symbioses as well as

aspects of non-human agency and materiality. Not least, we aim at reevaluating the formal-aesthetic level by encouraging readings and theories that center around the idea of sustainability and regeneration in / as art. This may include questions of autopoiesis, art as renewal (e.g. productive melancholia), sustainability / regeneration of genre(s), or aesthetic sustainability as manifested for example in structures of repetition and difference. We also invite reflections on the teaching of Romantic literature and on its uses and limits in sustainability education.

We invite proposals for papers in English of 20 minutes length. Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- eco-politics: (post)colonial and / or (trans)atlantic perspectives
- Romantic concepts of nature, ecology, (post)capitalism and (post)industrialism
- Romantic ecologies and ethics
- Romantic biosystems and their (inter)dependencies: animal studies, plant studies, urban ecologies, theories and practices of space / place
- ecology and materiality
- the body: disease, contagion, affect
- disease as deconstructive force
- beyond (ecocritical) theory: Romantic ecologies in the light of environmental humanities; Romantic meta-ecology; Romantic ecologies and poststructuralism
- sustainability and regeneration in aesthetics and art: autopoiesis, imagination, repetition and difference
- the sustainability / regeneration of genre(s) and form in Romanticism
- approaches to teaching Romantic literature in ecocritical contexts
- ...

Abstracts (300 words) for papers proposed should be accompanied by a short biographical note, plus full address and institutional affiliation. Deadline: **15 January 2022.**

Send to: Martin Middeke (martin.middeke@uni-a.de) and David Kerler (david.kerler@uni-a.de).

Local organisers:

Prof. Dr. Martin Middeke and PD Dr. David Kerler

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NB: By special agreement, members of BARS, NASSR, IABS, SERA, JAER, NARS and the Polish Society for the Study of European Romanticism do not have to become members of the German Society for English Romanticism to take part in this conference – they only pay the regular conference fee.