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Utopia, Heterotopia and the Interstitial Ecotones of Migration: Towards a Transdisciplinary Approach

Judith Misrahi-Barak, Thomas Lacroix

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Utopia, Migration, Ecotone

Edited by / *Édité par*
Justine FEYEREISEN

In collaboration with / *Avec la collaboration de*
Sabrina PARENT



Presses universitaires de la Méditerranée

Utopia, Migration, Ecotone

Collection « Horizons anglophones »

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Jean-Michel GANTEAU, Fiona McMAHON, Judith MISRAHI-BARAK,
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La collection « Horizons anglophones » publie des recueils et des monographies en anglais et en français dans les domaines des littératures, arts, cultures et sociétés des pays anglophones. Elle se décline en quatre séries :

- *PoCoPages*, anciennement Carnets du Cerpac, a pour vocation d'étudier les littératures, arts et cultures dans la sphère des études postcoloniales.
- *Politiques et Sociétés* vise à observer les évolutions récentes des sociétés contemporaines dans une perspective pluridisciplinaire et comparative.
- *Present Perfect*, créée en 2005, publie des volumes qui ouvrent des perspectives originales sur la littérature et les arts britanniques du XIX^e siècle jusqu'à nos jours.
- *Profils américains* a publié entre 1991 et 2010 vingt-deux volumes dont chacun était consacré à un écrivain américain. Souhaitant ne plus se limiter à la critique littéraire, elle s'ouvre dorénavant aux autres domaines de la culture américaine (arts, cinéma, musique, etc.).

Cette collection, dirigée par des membres d'EMMA (équipe « Études montpelliéraines du monde anglophone »), a pour ambition de réunir des contributions de spécialistes du monde entier et de favoriser le dialogue dans ces domaines de recherche.

Collection « Horizons anglophones »
Série *PoCoPages*

Utopia, Migration, Ecotone

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2026

PRESSES UNIVERSITAIRES DE LA MÉDITERRANÉE

Série PoCoPages

General Editor/Responsable de la série : Judith Misrahi-Barak

Quelques pages ayant été tournées, *Les Carnets du Cerpac* sont devenus *PoCoPages*, édité par Judith Misrahi-Barak. Le terme *Poco* fera peut-être penser à un groupe de rock country américain, ou à divers rituels de possession associés à l'Afrique et à la Caraïbe. C'est pourtant à l'abréviation de postcolonial que référence est faite ici. Le terme, dans sa diversité, reflètera l'intérêt de *PoCoPages* pour les cultures et les littératures postcoloniales, diasporiques, trempées de métissage et de frontières traversées.

After turning a few pages, Les Carnets du Cerpac has become PoCoPages, edited by Judith Misrahi-Barak. Though the term Poco may stir up in the reader's mind images of some American country rock band, or again various possession rituals associated with Africa or the Caribbean, the reference here however is to the abbreviation of postcolonial. The term in its diversity is meant to reflect the interest of PoCoPages for postcolonial, diasporic cultures and literatures, steeped in métissage and crossed borders.

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In memoriam Jean-Pol Madou

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UTOPIA, HETEROTOPIA AND THE INTERSTITIAL ECOTONES OF MIGRATION: TOWARDS A TRANSDISCIPLINARY APPROACH

Judith MISRAHI-BARAK & Thomas LACROIX

An ecotone is a term initially defined to designate an ecological transition zone. Its etymological root is composed of *oikos* (household, home) and *tonos* (tension). It is a contact zone between two ecosystems, sea and land, plain and mountain, forest and savanna, etc.¹ It is a space of interpenetration, reciprocal adaptation, exchange, production of hybrid species, competition, disruption and relegation. Taking up this idea of interface, Florence Krall proposes to apply it to the analysis of spaces of cultural interactions:

[C]ultural ecotones are the pluralistic contexts out of which conflict and change emerge; they are places where society smooths the wrinkles in her skirt. [. . .] The ecotone, which, in the natural world provides a dynamics interchange, becomes exceedingly complex as a cultural metaphor and may represent a barrier that blocks some people from their rightful place in the scheme of things. (Krall 1994: 4-5)

Only recently have ecotones been introduced in the field of migration studies. The conference cycle 'Ecotones: Encounters, Crossings, and Communities'² (2018-2022) has been, in this regard, a key moment of cross-fertilizing dialogue between social scientists and researchers in

1. Koen HUFKENS, Paul SCHEUNDERS and Reinhart CEULEMANS, 'Ecotones in Vegetation Ecology: Methodologies and Definitions Revisited'. *Ecological Research* 24.5 (1 September 2009): 977-986. DOI: 10.1007/s11284-009-0584-7.

2. <https://emma.www.univ-montp3.fr/fr/valorisation-partenariats/programmes-europeens-et-internationaux/ecotones> (accessed on 21/08/2021).

humanities around this notion and its application for the study of the migration and diasporas texts and contexts. By its format (co-written by a social scientist and a postcolonial literature scholar) as well as its content, this chapter can be regarded as an offshoot of this programme. Our aim here is to outline what we understand as migratory ecotones. We contend that ecotones can be conceived as heterotopic sites where encounters shape and reshape a plural humanity. These theoretical considerations will be supported by three literary examples: a raft and a construction site as they appear respectively in 'Children of the Sea' and 'Without Inspection', two short stories by Edwidge Danticat, and a shop which serves as a microcosmic stage in Shani Mootoo's short story 'Out on Main Street' in the eponymous collection. In the last section, the essay wraps up the argument by relating the concept of migratory ecotone with Foucault's notion of heterotopia, in contradistinction to utopia.

Migratory Ecotones: Outline of a Concept

The notion of cultural ecotone was first applied for the study of insular spaces and literatures. It was used to encapsulate their unique ecosystems, between land and sea, between intimacy of isolated confines and maritime connections with far-flung harbours. These ecosystems foster archipelagic connections and creole hybridities, thus generating a space like no other. The first critical explorations of insular ecotones cast obvious bridges with migratory dynamics: 'To focus on cultural ecotones thus implies looking into the process of transculturation related to migration, the processes of diasporisation and creolisation'.³

For the sake of clarity, it should be stressed that an ecotone is not a specific site of immigration and settlement. It is rather to be understood as a lens for us to construe and understand any place affected by migration. Migratory ecotones can be a city, a raft, a border area, a neighbourhood, a camp, a squat, a shop, etc. Its peculiar etymology brings to the fore the encounter as a foundational process: the

3. Markus ARNOLD, Corinne DUBOIN and Judith MISRAHI-BARAK, 'Introduction. Borders, Ecotones, and the Indian Ocean'. In *Borders and Ecotones in the Indian Ocean. Cultural and Literary Perspectives*, Markus ARNOLD, Corinne DUBOIN and Judith MISRAHI-BARAK, eds. Montpellier: Presses universitaires de la Méditerranée, 2020: 9-26. DOI: 10.4000/books.pulm.6687.

encounter with people and its social, cultural, and political underpinnings; the encounter with things, be they manmade or natural. With this in mind, we propose the following definition of the migratory ecotone: a place of cultural, material and power dynamics elicited by the territorialisation of transnational migratory flows and their evolution over time. The section below explicates the different tenets of this definition.

Migratory ecotones are places where transnational flows territorialise. They are places connected with wider diaspora spaces where inflows of people, goods, ideas, money, etc. converge. These inflows territorialise by transforming the materiality, population, and culture of the ecotone. Conversely, ecotones and their specific configurations affect the flow traversing them. The encounter is a dual process affecting objects, subjects, and subjectivities. Ecotones are locales traversed by the ebbs and the flows of people, goods, monies, ideas, memories, coming from afar, not dissimilar from what Kamau Brathwaite calls *tidalectics*.⁴ While locally embedded, people retain connections with and legacies from distant horizons. Their presence connects ecotones with diasporic universes spanning beyond times and borders. Brathwaite's *tidalectics* refers to the successive migration waves, each one adjusting to the existing conditions produced by past encounters. In this oceanic worldview which explores the entanglement between past and present, water and land, diaspora and home, roots and routes, the Barbadian poet points to the specific and paradoxical temporality of migration as it is made of the sedimentation of the traces left by past migrations. As historical places, ecotones carry the memory of the presence of the groups that occupied them, of the conflicts and alliances that were formed in the past, and still permeate present social relations. They are also shaped in anticipation of forthcoming migrations, not deliberately so but in the nebulous hope that the space can be transformed into a better place. Ecotones are thus anchored in the past, the present and the future, crafting a space that is both memorial and utopian.

Migratory ecotones are places of cultural emergence. Early postmodern scholars have theorised and documented the countercultural dynamics generated by migratory encounters. These authors have put the emphasis on the emergence of hybrid cultures whose grammar borrows

4. Kamau BRATHWAITE, *ConVERSations with Nathaniel MacKey*. New York: We Press, 1999.

from multiple repertoires.⁵ The notion of ecotone rather insists on the plurality of juxtaposed presence. People's lives unfold simultaneously in two distinct but related plans of reality: the here and now of the ecotone, and the transnational social connections in which they are embedded. This is why a thorough and complete hybridisation cannot take place. Migratory ecotones favour instead the building of segmented identities, of what Bernard Lahire calls 'plural humans', i. e., people socialised in distinct social spheres (be they local, or diasporic, professional, gendered, sexual, or political...).⁶ The plural human is made of this aggregation of roles acquired along their life trajectories, when they grow up, get married, find a new job, adhere to a new cause, etc. People may re-assort their multiple lives to accommodate new encounters, but the latter never fully override the former. Not only hybrid cultural forms emerge from daily coping strategies but also ambivalent hospitality, mutual ignorance, competition, and segregation. Altogether, these ecotonal interactions build up a mosaic of people forged by the daily interactions of individuals living a multi-scalar life that is also paving the way for what is to come, potentially, in the future.

They are places where power and coercion are exercised. As noted by scholars of insular ecotones, the formation of ecotonal spaces is also driven by the existence of coercive powers. The colonial hierarchy of the plantation has given way in contemporary migratory ecotones to the administrative power of immigration authorities on the one hand, to capitalist forces on the other. Whether embodied by the physical materiality of police assemblages or imposed by the diffuse (but nonetheless violent) constraints of market relations, these powers contribute to hierarchising migrants along class, gender, racial, national, or religious lines, which, in turn, is underpinned by an unequal allocation of spatial, economic, and other kinds of resources. But ecotones are also platforms of political and cultural resistance, places where communities of suffering take shape by transcending communal belongings. In this regard and as we will see further down, they can be understood as a form of 'heterotopia',⁷ a space that would be radically *other* but from which utopia would not be totally absent.

5. This is beyond the scope of this chapter but it would be interesting to examine how the ecotone draws on Arjun Appadurai's 'ethnoscapes' (1995), Homi Bhabha's 'thirdspaces' (2004), and Edward Soja's 'thirthing' and 'heterotopologies' (1996).

6. Bernard LAHIRE, *L'Homme pluriel: Les Ressorts de l'action*. Paris: Armand Colin, 2011.

7. Michel FOUCAULT, 'Des espaces autres', *Conférence au Cercle d'études architecturales* (March 14, 1967), in *Architecture, Mouvement, Continuité* 5 (1984): 46–49. The text published in the French journal is based on a lecture given by Foucault in 1967. As pointed

Ecotones can therefore be perceived from three complementary angles. First, a geographical angle: they are all specific spaces, at the same time circumscribed places, endowed with an ecology and a history of their own, and open nodalities where links to distant spaces converge; second, a sociological angle: they are spaces of encounter where new social forms and identities are elaborated; third, a political angle: the ecotones are organized around power relationships that impregnate both the organization of places and the flows that traverse them. They are ambivalent spaces underlain by contradictory forces: a principle of encounter and cultural innovation, and a principle of power, conflict, distribution, and hierarchy; a self-contained space-time of social interactions and their sedimentation over time *and* a crossroads where transborder flows and linkages converge. The concept of ecotone adds to our understanding of migratory dynamics in three ways. First, by regarding encounters (with non-migrants, other migrants, objects, authoritative power, etc.) as the matrix of the territorialisation of migration flows; it bridges local processes with global dynamics. Second, the dual genealogy of the term, inherited from environmental and postcolonial studies, draws analytical attention to both material (environmental) and immaterial (cultural) features. Thirdly, by considering the sedimentation of migration memories and hopes for the future generations, the notion of ecotone encapsulates the temporal thickness of migration place-making. We will now use this triple analytical grid to examine two types of ecotones more closely: an ecotonal non-place, namely *the migration route*; the city and its interstices, namely *the market space and the workspace*.

Methodological Note: The Analysis of the Fictional Text as Support for Social Theory

The fictional text is another way to engage with migratory places, such as the migration route, the workspace, and the market space, as ecotones. We do not use it as mere illustration of a social and political reality but as another gateway to approach a complex reality, another

out on the website Foucault.info, the manuscript was only released into the public domain for an exhibition in Berlin in 1984 shortly before Foucault's death. <https://foucault.info/documents/heterotopia/foucault.heterotopia.fr/> (accessed on 12/05/2020). See the same page in English, 'Of Other Spaces (1967). Heterotopias.' Transl. by Jan Miskowiec. <https://foucault.info/documents/heterotopia/foucault.heterotopia.en> (accessed on 12/05/2020).

opportunity to grapple with the politics of the ecotone. Not only does the fictional text help us decipher what is at stake, it also diversifies the possibilities of engaging with the migratory ecotone as social, political, and psychological process, individually and collectively. It enhances our aptitude to shift our gaze and transform ourselves. Far from only operating at the level of representation, fiction also displays how a text can perform, problematize, and potentially modify for the better the dynamics at work in society.

The short story characters to be encountered here stand at different stages of the migration journey that has displaced them from their homelands (Haiti or Trinidad). 'Children of the Sea' opens Edwidge Danticat's first collection of interlinked short stories, *Krik? Krak!* (1991) which is situated in the wake of the 28-year-long Duvalier dictatorship and after Jean-Bertrand Aristide was ousted from power in 1991.⁸ The unnamed narrator of the story, who exchanges improbable letters with the lover he has left in Haiti, takes us back to the migration flows of the 1990s, when thousands of Haitians were pushed onto rafts, in the hope they would reach the US coast. 'Without Inspection' belongs to Danticat's third collection, *Everything inside* (2019). The main protagonist and centre of consciousness, Arnold, is a Haitian migrant who enters the US illegally, 'without inspection', thus condemned to remain an 'undocumented' worker, more of a *g-host* worker in the *g-host* country than a *guest* worker. 'Out on Main Street' is part of the eponymous collection of short stories by Shani Mootoo (1993). The unnamed female narrator and her girlfriend Janet are 'out on Main Street' Toronto, in a *meethai* (sweets) shop, far from Trinidad and even further away from their ancestors who left India as indentured labourers between the 1830s and the 1920s to work on colonial sugar plantations, replacing the enslaved Africans who were manumitted after 1833 in the British Empire and 1848 in the French Empire.

Whether it is the unnamed narrator lost at sea between Haiti and Florida, or Arnold, working in Miami as an undocumented worker, or the two women who are documented Canadian citizens, these characters all go through experiences of forced or voluntary displacement, hoping for a new *host* country that would not be *hostile* (see Derrida on the paradoxical filiation of *hospitality* and *hostility* through the concept

8. François Duvalier (1958-1971) was succeeded by his son Jean-Claude Duvalier until 1986 when he was overthrown by Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

of *hostipitality*).⁹ They force us to reinvent the way we imagine borders and migration in the 21st century, and the words we use to speak of the ones who cross them (or not). Emigrants, immigrants, migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced persons, involuntarily relocated persons, and returnees are brought to the fore in Danticat's and Mootoo's stories.¹⁰ We will prefer the phrase 'refugee seeker' to avoid the pernicious discrepancy between the administrative meaning of 'refugee' (the migrant who *has* obtained a refugee status) and its usage in common parlance (the migrant who *has not* obtained a refugee status).¹¹

The three figures of the refugee seeker, the undocumented worker, and the immigrant, travel the limbo spaces between spaces—the raft, the construction site, the shop around the corner. But all three stories

9. '[...] l'étranger (*hostis*) accueilli comme hôte ou comme ennemi. Hospitalité, hostilité, *hostipitalité*', Jacques DERRIDA, *De L'hospitalité* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 2014, loc. 709 of 1492). Something is already lost in translation since the English word *host* only refers to the person who welcomes whereas in French *hôte* can be either the person who welcomes or the one who is welcomed. Derrida reminds us that *hospes* and *hostis* both derive from the Latin verb *hostire*, thus drawing the attention to the ambivalence between the one who is *hosted* but could turn *hostile*, or to whom one could turn *hostile*. One can also be interested in Michel Agier's *L'Étranger qui vient: repenser l'hospitalité* (Paris: Seuil, 2018), where he revisits Derrida's conceptualization of hospitality to analyse it as enmeshed in a network of social, political, and legal conditions.

10. Many words speak of migration and of the one who leaves their native country: a refugee, an exile, a political asylee, an asylum seeker, a postcolonial *émigré*, a transnational corporate expatriate, an emigrant, an immigrant, a migrant, an Internally Displaced Person (IDP), an undocumented worker, an Involuntarily Relocated Person (IRP), a resettled person, a returnee, a stateless person, etc. If one refers to the UNHCR website, a refugee is 'a person who "owing" to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.' <https://www.unhcr.org/1951-refugee-convention.html> (accessed on 14/07/2021).

11. This tension was already at the heart of Hannah Arendt's seminal essay 'We Refugees' (1943): 'In the first place, we don't like to be called "refugees." We ourselves call each other "newcomers" or "immigrants." [...] A refugee used to be a person driven to seek refuge because of some act committed or some political opinion held. Well, it is true we have had to seek refuge; but we committed no acts and most of us never dreamt of having any radical opinion. With us the meaning of the term "refugee" has changed. Now "refugees" are those who have been so unfortunate as to arrive in a new country without means and have to be helped by Refugee Committees.' (Hannah ARENDT, 'We Refugees'. *Altogether Elsewhere. Writers on Exile*. 1943. Edited by Marc ROBINSON. Boston, London: Faber & Faber, 1994: 110.

describe displacement as it starts along the continuum before departure (Haiti or Trinidad) and continues after arrival (Miami or Toronto), in the process of leaving and arriving, of leaving and never arriving, of forever migrating and seeking refuge. This is what could be called the unfinished business of arrival. Those refugee seekers are separated on either side of the Atlantic Ocean, as the couple in 'Children of the sea'; they are commodified and fill in the poorly paid or dangerous jobs nobody else wants, as Arnold on the construction site in 'Without Inspection'; they are spurned as Janet and her friend in the sweets shop in 'Out on Main Street'.

We will use the lens of heterotopia and ecotone to understand what those real albeit in-between spaces *authorize*: we would like to posit that, in Danticat's and Mootoo's writing of those interstitial, ecotonal spaces, it is the 'plural humanity', the *humanness*, of the person that is re-*instated*, even as they have lost their national allegiance and are deemed to be what Guillaume Le Blanc would call *demonetized* ('*démonétisés*').¹²

Migration Routes: the Raft as a 'non-place' Ecotone

Migration routes have only recently received attention from researchers. Unlike cities and colonial islands, roads are places of passage that can be described as 'non-places' of migration (Augé 1992), places where the presence of migrants is sometimes fleeting, sometimes lasting, but always temporary. However, with the increasing complexity of migratory trajectories and the lengthening of arduous journeys, routes have become places that are saturated by different layers of memory and imaginary projection, that of the country one has left, of the country one dreams of reaching, of previous attempts at migrating that did not lead anywhere, and of all the ones to come. Migration routes also comprise circumstantial relationships made and broken as people cross paths in the interstitial spaces of migration. The refugee raft, for instance, is one such space, composed as it is of people who may not be linked by filiation nor even affiliation but who still form a community of sorts.

The different sections of 'Children of the Sea' can be read as the letters that are written, if neither sent nor received, by two lovers, or

12. Guillaume LE BLANC, *Dedans, dehors. La Condition d'étranger*. Paris: Seuil, 2010.

as diary entries, or, still, as log-book entries of a new genre, a sombre revisiting of the slave ship captains' logbooks. They epitomize the long-distance connections maintained by the lead character beyond the here and now of the setting, thereby revealing the raft as a nodal ecotone. The two different scripts on the page, bold and roman, highlight the separation of the two characters whose voices cannot be heard nor uttered in the same landscape or soundscape. Time loses its contours: 'I don't know how long we'll be at sea.'¹³ Space has both shrunk and expanded with the absence of bearings: 'I can't tell exactly how far we are from [America]. [...] There are no borderlines on the sea. The whole thing looks like one.' (Danticat 1996: 6). The raft is the very symbol of precarious space that has been banished from society and literally cannot be *documented* even though it is the direct product of the society that has removed it as far as possible, a speck lost in the immensity of the sky and sea.

Célianne is also one of the 'Children of the Sea', fleeing Haiti when she discovered she was pregnant after she was gang raped by the *Tontons Macoutes*. She gives birth on the raft to a stillborn baby that is eventually tossed overboard, thus joining all the enslaved Africans who did not survive the Middle Passage. The limits of the boat are gradually blurred, just like Célianne's body with which it is fused. The physical environment permeates the very structure of the ecotone. The boat is leaking as Célianne's waters finally break, in a striking parallel that underlines how 'the boundaries of the boat and of the woman are crossed simultaneously so that the sea is configured as a kind of womb that is at once nurturing and deadly'.¹⁴ Glissant's slave ship as the 'matrix' of the Caribbean is never far away.

A refugee raft is also what brings Arnold to the US in 'Without Inspection'. As in the first story, everything points to (dis-)connection, severance, and loss. But the short story sheds a more comprehensive light on the power configuration in which the story unfolds. In 'Children of the Sea', the sheer violence of the authoritarian regime that expelled the protagonist is alluded to by the body of Célianne and her unborn baby. Women are particularly exposed along their journey. Rape is a common practice in detention centres where immigrants are enslaved, sold and killed at will.¹⁵ 'Without Inspection' tells us about

13. Edwidge DANTICAT, *Krik? Krak!* 1991. New York: Vintage, 1996: 3.

14. April SHEMAK, *Asylum Speakers*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2011: 75.

15. Camille SCHMOLL, *Les Damnées de la mer. Femmes et frontières en Méditerranée*. Paris: La Découverte, 2020.

these migrants deprived of their future in their homeland. It also tells us about the conditions of their crossing and the exploitative role of the smuggling industry that makes these journeys possible. In a striking parallel with Atlantic slavery, migrants are for smugglers a de-humanised commodity they do not hesitate to get rid of to maximise their income: they can be 'ditched in the middle of the sea and told by the captain to swim ashore'.¹⁶

When he lands on the beach in Miami, Arnold is luckier than his companions who have drowned or been picked up by the police patrols. He leaves the elusive ecotone of the raft to enter a new one at arrival, its power configuration marked by the appeal of job opportunities for illegal immigrants *vs.* the repulsive force of immigration enforcement authorities.

Urban Ecotones: the Workspace and the Marketspace

Borders closed by anti-immigrant policies (epitomised by the presence of police officers and their dogs waiting for illegal immigrants to be washed ashore) compel immigrants onto deadly routes. But people keep on coming, lured by the promise of safety and jobs. Cheap undocumented workforce has become a powerful resource for Western economies. Entering this job market, they face another form of de-humanisation as it deprives immigrants of their name and identity. Arnold uses the ID card of a Cuban to access the construction site, thereby signalling the anonymity and interchangeability of the workers. The construction site is an extension of the refugee raft but this time, it is a space of banishment situated *within* society itself, not outside it, and one that is essential to the functioning of that very society as it has been conceived. Arnold's employer happily benefits from Arnold working illegally, so does the whole of American society, which could not thrive without undocumented workers hired as cheap labour. Whether the scaffolding and the safety harness meet conditions of security or not is not their concern, as Arnold's free fall makes conspicuous at the opening of the story:

It took Arnold six and a half seconds to fall five hundred feet. During that time, an image of his son, Paris, flashed before his eyes: Paris,

16. Edwidge DANTICAT, *Everything Inside*, New York: Knopf, 2019: loc. 2358 of 2607. E-book.

dressed in his red school-uniform shirt and khakis the day of his kindergarten graduation. (Danticat 2019: loc. 2239 of 2607)

Those six and a half seconds during which Arnold falls from the scaffolding and into the cement chute constitute the story-time that gives the story its backbone and to which the reader is regularly taken back:

He was still falling, faster by the second. The wind felt increasingly resistant, each gust a hard blue veil to pierce through, even as the ground rose to meet him. His body veered farther left and directly below him was an open cement-mixer chute, attached to the truck, the kind that has always looked like a spaceship to him.

(Danticat 2019: loc. 2347 of 2607)

This image makes clear in the story that Arnold and all the other undocumented workers are perceived as less than human. Like the saltwater element on the raft, the cement of the urban ecotone possesses a dissolving power eroding the body. Yet, immigrants are, quite literally, the cement our societies are built with:

This landing was even more abrupt than his last one. His free fall ended as his body slammed into the drum of the cement mixer. He was being tossed inside a dark blender full of grout. Every few seconds, his face would emerge from under the wet, pounded sand and pebbles, and he would keep his mouth closed, trying to force air through his nose and push away the grainy mix that his body was trying to inhale.

(Danticat 2019: loc. 2453 of 2607)

Surprisingly, at the fringes of this oppressive embedding in urban ecotones, the possibility of a new humanity germinates. Arnold is rescued by Darline, who gives him back what she had been given by somebody else years before, when she had also arrived on a raft. A former refugee herself, Darline reminds the reader that urban ecotones are made of the sedimentation of successive waves of arrival. As the figure of host-refugee,¹⁷ she embodies this process of transmission at the core of ecotonal dynamics. This succession of encounters forms the memorial soil out of which immigrants can connect to a new community and contemplate the possibility that the terrain will have changed by the time others arrive eventually. By hosting Arnold, she manages to turn a site of exclusion into a site of hosting / hospitality, a site of

17. Elena FIDDIAN-QASMIYEH, 'Refugees Hosting Refugees'. *Forced Migration Review* 53 (2016): 25-27.

utopian possibility. She is the refuge seeker turned refuge, a host in the French double meaning of *hôte*, both hosted and hosting, as if one should always be a guest to know what a host should be like. In the chain of connection and relation, Arnold, in turn, adopts Paris, Darline's son, whose father drowned when Darline had to choose whom she would rescue, husband or son.

'Out on Main Street' sheds a different light on urban ecotones. The short story leaves behind the realm of illegality and highlights the cultural dynamics taking place in diverse ethnoscaapes. Cities are places of intercultural abundance and commercial dynamism. They are paradoxical places of both reproduction and constant reconfiguration of migrant cultures and identity. One thinks of the enclaves of American metropolises (Portes and Jensen 1989; Zhou 2004; Cedric Audebert 2006), of London's cultural mosaic, of the 'Asian', 'Turkish' or 'African' districts of Paris, Amsterdam, or Berlin. And this is not unique to the cities of the North. Kolkata lives on its 'para' neighbourhoods, where people from the same rural areas, castes or professions gather, sometimes throughout several centuries (Hillion 2020).

Mootoo's short story takes us to a *meethai* (sweets) shop, i.e. an Indo-Caribbean-Canadian variation of the shop around the corner, in one of the diasporic Indo-Caribbean neighbourhoods of Toronto:

Janet and me? We does go Main Street to see pretty pretty sari and bangle, and to eat we belly full a burfi and gulub jamoon, but we doh go too often because, yuh see, is dem sweets self what does give people like we a presupposition for untameable hip and thigh.

Another reason we shy to frequent dere is dat we is watered-down Indians—we ain't good grade A Indians. We skin brown, is true, but we doh think 'bout India unless something happen over dere and it come on de news. Mih family remain Hindu ever since mih ancestors leave India behind, but nowadays dey doh believe in praying unless thingsrealbad . . .¹⁸

To foreground the multistranded historical and social relations that immigrants and their descendants are involved in, Mootoo zooms in on the microcosmic space of the shop, one that immediately denotes sugar as the key product of the colonial trade but also invites into the same space the numerous generations of immigrants who do not situate themselves in the wake of the trade. The author brings to life these

18. MOOTOO SHANI, 'Out on Main Street', in *Out on Main Street*, Vancouver: Press Gang, 1993: 45.

'plural humans' populating urban ecotones. The general impression is that one never quite fits in—too Indian or not Indian enough, too Caribbean, or not Caribbean enough, too black, too white, or too brown. They always already exceed what they should be. Abdelmalek Sayad insists on the impossibility to dissociate immigration from emigration if one wants to understand the 'double absence', i.e. the feeling to be out of place the migrant suffers from in their native country and in their host country.¹⁹ Like the French sociologist, Mootoo raises questions about dis-placement (displaced, migrants never feel totally entitled to be where they are), of diaspora, and of the passive continuation, active reproduction, or deliberate disruption of *community*.

I used to think I was a Hindu *par excellence* until I come up here and see real flesh and blood Indian from India. Up here, I learning 'bout all kind a custom and food and music and clothes dat we ever see or hear 'bout in good ole Trinidad. Is de next best thing to going to India, in truth, oui! But Indian store clerk on Main Street doh have patience with us, especially when we talking English to dem. Yuh ask dem a question in English and dey insist on giving de answer in Hindi or Punjabi or Urdu or Gujarati. How I suppose to know de difference even! And den dey look at yuh disdainful disdainful—like yuh disloyal, like yuh is a traitor.

(Mootoo 1993: 47–48)

At the same time, Mootoo also suggests the possibility that never quite fitting in provides diasporan people with the ability to reshape and repurpose the spaces in which they interact with others. The story unfurls a series of encounters and incidents in the *meethai* shop that push to the surface the question of who gets to decide who is what. Here, status assignation does not come from an external authority, but is nested within interpersonal encounters. Caribbean, Indian, Indo-Caribbean, Canadian, Indo-Caribbean-Canadian, Fijian, Sikh, Hindu, Moslem, etc., and of course man, woman, or queer. On top of questions related to citizenship, religion, and gender, it is also the question of the space that is granted to second- or third-generation immigrants. Ultimately, who does it fall on to reproduce or reinvent community in the diaspora?

19. Abdelmalek SAYAD, *La Double Absence. Des illusions de l'émigré aux souffrances de l'immigré*. Paris: Seuil, 1999.

The Interstitial Spaces of the Refuge Seekers: From Utopia and Heterotopia to Ecotone

All three nodal spaces at the centre of the stories, the raft, the construction site and the *meethai* shop, could be read as heterotopias as defined by Foucault (1967, 1984). Even though the notion was not formalized by Foucault, it is highly relevant, as Noé Gross suggests, in the way ‘users have grasped this notion and, doing so, shaped it’.²⁰ We may even enhance this further and suggest it is the very fluctuations of the concept that make it prodigiously open and fertile in the ways it disturbs our comprehension of allegedly established spaces that would be easier to categorise. The nodal spaces of these stories function with their own laws and power configurations (survival laws, labour illegality, diasporic displacement), while they are also connected to the space outside them. Contrary to the utopian space that exists *nowhere* (*u-topos*),²¹ heterotopias exist in real space and time—Foucault uses the phrase ‘real utopias’—while they are simultaneously closed in upon themselves *and* connected to the outside. As spaces that are radically *other*, they tell us about ourselves, just as

20. Noé Gross, ‘Sur les hétérotopies de Michel Foucault.’ *Le Foucauldien* 6.1 (2020): 1–40. DOI: 10.16995/lefeu.72. Foucault distinguishes ‘crisis heterotopias’ from ‘heterotopias of deviation’. The former heterotopias are ‘privileged or sacred or forbidden places, reserved for individuals who are, in relation to society and to the human environment in which they live, in a state of crisis: adolescents, menstruating women, pregnant women, the elderly, etc.’ The latter ones are ‘those in which individuals whose behavior is deviant in relation to the required mean or norm, are placed. Cases of this are rest homes and psychiatric hospitals, and of course prisons, and one should perhaps add retirement homes that are, as it were, on the borderline between the heterotopia of crisis and the heterotopia of deviation.’ (FOUCAULT 1967).

21. We are relying here on an interpretation of utopia that emanates from thinkers such as Charles Fourier (1772–1837), Claude Henri de Rouvroy, comte de Saint Simon (1760–1825), or Étienne Cabet (1788–1856). If Thomas More (1478–1535) in his seminal work *Utopia* (1516 in Latin; 1551 for the first translation into English) did grant utopia a specific place on an island in the Southern hemisphere, the French tradition initiated in the late 18th and early 19th centuries shifted utopia to a distant future. What was at stake in the later developments of the cultural history of utopia, particularly in the socialist doctrines of the mid- to late 19th century, was the possibility of transforming a social and political system that was based on inequality and privilege. Foucault’s heterotopias as ‘real utopias’ feed on the diverse traditions that have shaped the protean notion of utopia. While they exist in the present time and space, they are *other* in the way they don’t provide a safe and secure space where one can be at home but, rather, a defamiliarising experience.

much as the imaginary spaces of our utopias tell us about the societies we have fabricated.

The three short stories selected for this chapter point to the creation of an alternative space of connection, transformation and, possibly, reinvention, not so much from a utopian perspective, not here and not now, but from an ecotonal perspective, here and now. Through the concept of ecotone, we can access the 'dynamic interchange' (see the etymology mentioned earlier: *'oikos'*, household, and *'tonos'*, tension) at work in those spaces, and how they are related to the space around them, in an unexpected, unpredictable way. Through the ecotone, we can also understand how the 'plural humanity', the *humanness* of the individual and of the group is recognized and *re-instated* symbolically. Systemic racism and daily encounters introduce seemingly irreconcilable fault lines between the different spheres of people's being. And yet, in these cracks, coping strategies and daily interactions fashion a plural humanity that comes together in a real space and time. What Papadopoulos and Tsianos call the 'frenetic fixation with security' and the 'obsession with governance' is 'challenged by the creation of common worlds of existence'.²² Danticat and Mootoo shine a light on those worlds in common that can still be created 'below the radar of existing political structures' (Papadopoulos and Tsianos, 2013). We would go as far as suggesting that they contribute to their emergence.

In 'Children of the Sea' the creation of such an alternative space germinates through the exchange of letters, words, and stories. Three examples, briefly. First, the text performs the call and response between the two voices that are brought together in a space that is infused with *tidalectics*. The letters may never reach their addressees, but the reader is the one that pulls them out of oblivion and into a plural relation. Second, the refugees at sea tell each other stories to pass the time on the raft, abiding by the Caribbean Krik? Krak! invitation that opens and closes the space of the narrative. And third, the reconnection happens *between* the stories, not only *in* them. For instance, the song 'Beloved Haiti' that is hummed on board the raft in 'Children of the Sea' is sung again open-throatedly in 'Caroline's Wedding', the last story in the collection. Thanks to the use of dramatic irony, the reader is the only one who understands that the funeral service is held for

22. Dimitris PAPADOPOULOS and Vassilis S. TSIANOS, 'After Citizenship: Autonomy of Migration, Organisational Ontology and Mobile Commons'. *Citizenship Studies* 17.2 (April 1, 2013): 178–196. DOI: 10.1080/13621025.2013.780736.

the pregnant girl, Célianne, that same girl who was on the raft in the opening story. Célianne will not be completely shrouded in silence and invisibility. Voice is used to connect the living, the dead and the living, the almost dead and the still alive, the ones here and the ones there—a ‘plural humanity’ beyond the fault lines.²³

In ‘Without Inspection’ the alternative space is crafted through the production of images and in the tension between story-time and text-time, *story* and *text*. The call and response of the letters is replaced by Arnold’s thoughts and memories in flux, endowing the text with the material reality of its rhythm. The metaphor of the construction site will not be lost on the reader. Arnold constructs his own space of transformation, another form of ‘plural humanity’. The power of imagination steers the text: ‘What if he made himself float out of the cement mixer?’ (Danticat 2019: loc. 2471 of 2607, my emphasis). While Danticat underlines the exploitation Arnold falls victim to, the power of imagination gives new contours to the *text* as it is written *against* the *story*: ‘He was back at the construction site. Not wounded but whole, just as he had been when he left home that morning. He was still wearing his bright-orange overalls and matching hard hat. Was time playing with him, or was he playing with time?’ (Danticat 2019: loc. 2543 of 2607).

The story is predictable, the text is not. ‘Without Inspection’ cannot be reduced to those six and a half seconds of story-time, when Arnold crashes into the cement chute. Braided with story-time, text-time is what gives Arnold the ‘kind of freedom he’s never had before’ (Danticat 2019: loc. 2463 of 2607). The freedom Arnold never had through *story* is granted back to him through *text*. Stretching the six and a half seconds of his fall through slow motion is an invitation for Arnold to remember, project himself, dream, reconstruct, giving the reader the time to take it all in. It is because of the relation that is reconstructed through thoughts, dreams, memories, and images that the plural and sedimented *humanness* of Arnold is *reinstated* and reclaimed, it becomes re-embodied in the text through the imaginary.

‘Out on Main Street’ also enables a reshaping of a space that is enclosed yet porous to the outer world, and to individual and col-

23. To read more about the aesthetics and politics of the short story cycles in Edwidge Danticat’s writing, see Judith MISRAHI-BARAK, ‘Reconstructive Textual Surgery in Edwidge Danticat’s *Krik? Krak!* and *The Dew Breaker*’, *The Bloomsbury Handbook to Edwidge Danticat*, Jana Evans BRAZIEL and Nadège T. CLTANDRE, eds. London: Bloomsbury, 2021: 41–61.

lective history. The story shows how new alliances are drawn up and how boundaries shift in the everyday experience of migration. Janet and her friend receive scorn for not being 'grade A Indians' and not knowing their *meethai*. But when ignorant racists enter the shop, the loyalties shift to support the humiliated shop-owners. In turn, when the shop-owners show a sexist attitude towards the female customers, they lose the support they had just earned. And when the lesbian couple of Janet and her narrator friend 'blow their cover' the same heterosexual women who had supported them against the white or brown racist or sexist men, turn against them. Conflict makes for strange bed-fellows, and new solidarities and allegiances are constantly formed in the ecotone. In the story, the alternative space takes shape through language, a 'nation language' to borrow Kamau Brathwaite's words, powerful enough to upset the normative discourse of race, religion, class, and gender, and it far exceeds the elements that compose it (Indian Ocean history, Toronto, India, the Caribbean etc.).

In conclusion, the figures of the refuge seeker, the undocumented worker, and the diasporic immigrant, as they feature in the short stories mentioned in this chapter, certainly point to the precariousness and vulnerability engendered by forced displacement and by the multiple forms of power relations. They point to the dynamics of encounter with people, whether hostile and/or hospitable and the materiality of things (water, cement. . .) and experiences (sharing the same space, speaking the same language but producing divergent meanings. . .). But the writing also points to the emergence of an alternative, ecotonal space that is imbued in the relationality of a dynamic interchange. The raft, the construction site and the shop around the corner also enable the characters to implement diverse forms of political dispute, of reconnection, of renewed cohesion and solidarity: through letters, words, and storytelling; through visual images and the friction between the constraints of story and the freedom of text; through language and the constant renegotiation of power dynamics. These new networks are ultimately activated by the reader who is the only one who can make the connections, reflect on what is still, or has already become, possible, and potentially turn to action. The reader is also the only one who becomes aware that the text, unexpectedly, *does* something in depth that is different from what it *says* on the surface—it describes the toxic effects of borders, discrimination, and displacement, but it creates bonding, inter-dependence and a 'plural humanity', an extended *humanness*. To clear the infection, the text creates its

own antibodies and does what Christina Sharpe calls ‘wake work’²⁴—it makes us awake again and gives us a new space to inhabit and share, in the plural, a ‘mobile commons’, in Papadopoulos and Tsianos’s words (2013). If Foucault’s concept of heterotopia has often been criticised for not giving enough value to the dynamic interchange between spaces,²⁵ the lens of the ecotone precisely provides such a relationality and emphasises the possibility of creating a shared space that would not be removed from the real world we live in but would have an embodied existence in the migratory ecotone, here and now.

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RÉSUMÉS / ABSTRACTS

Markus ARNOLD

Écotone et afrotopie : branchements conceptuels autour de Felwine Sarr et des Ateliers de la pensée

Dans *Afrotopia* (2016), Felwine Sarr dessine les contours d'une « utopie active qui se donne pour tâche de débusquer dans le réel africain les vastes espaces du possible et les féconder ». Ouvrage fondateur des Ateliers de la pensée, ses idées se déclinent aussi dans les apports des contributeurs à cette plateforme de recherche interdisciplinaire qui pense les enjeux d'une évolution positive des sociétés africaines et du vivre-ensemble contemporain global. Établissant un espace de réflexion, de réinvention, de possible transformation, cet incubateur épistémologique paraît donc comme une sorte d'écotone conceptuel où s'élaborent des visions et récits alternatifs au productivisme néolibéral et à l'« écomythe » développementaliste. Cet article identifiera et discutera les liens et branchements multiples et révélateurs entre l'écotone et l'afrotopie. Chez Sarr et certains penseurs des Ateliers s'observent en effet des résonances significatives avec cette notion complexe de l'écotone qui, déterritorialisée de son habitat premier (l'écologie), ouvre large les perspectives pour imaginer et penser les identités sociohistoriques et ethnoculturelles de notre contemporain. L'écotone et ses principales caractéristiques (l'interconnexion du vivant, la logique relationnelle, la tension du pluriel...) devient ainsi un outil critique pour lire et informer l'imaginaire et la visée du projet afrotopique : la « nouveauté radicale » du renouvellement épistémologique du continent, une véritable démocratie plurielle, l'hospitalité planétaire.

Robin COHEN

The Heuristic Possibilities and Limits of Social Science Fiction: The Case of Refugia

In response to the rise in mass displacement in many parts of the world, my colleague Nick Van Hear and I designed a utopian solution we called 'Refugia'. We envisioned a networked archipelago of sites where displaced people could create a transnational polity. It was difficult to get this idea across and, as explained in this chapter, we turned to social science fiction to help us. We note the revival of utopianism in the social sciences more generally, before turning to the use of social science fiction. Can this genre be liberated from the techno and masculinist assumptions of early science fiction? The switch to feminist and, to a considerably lesser degree, post-colonial perspectives is considered. Particular examples of social science fiction that influenced us are discussed. The persistent association between islands and utopian thought in the wider literature was not helpful and served only to confuse the debate. A social science vignette is reproduced. While affirming the heuristic possibilities of social science fiction, the paper concludes by questioning whether the strategy we adopted—mixing conventional social and political theory with fictional projections—was optimal.

Isabelle DONEUX-DAUSSAINT

Laurent Gaudé, là où l'écriture constitue une forme d'utopie détruisant les frontières

Cet article se propose d'analyser dans une optique de pragmatique narrative l'œuvre intitulée *Eldorado* de Laurent Gaudé. Le titre convoque par mention l'utopie de Voltaire et la quatrième de couverture la notion de frontière par cette phrase extraite du roman « aucune frontière ne vous laisse passer sereinement. Elles blessent toutes ». Dans cette œuvre, Laurent Gaudé dans une forme de dialogisme au sens Bakhtinien du terme (convocation récurrente de différents genres littéraires, mélange de formes d'écriture propre à l'épopée, aux mythes, aux légendes, enchevêtrement des histoires, des personnages...) tente d'abattre les frontières dans une forme de modernisme où l'écriture s'utilise elle-même pour tenter d'être acteur de ce qu'elle dénonce. « Le dire devient un faire. » Laurent Gaudé place, par ses mécanismes d'écriture, ses textes en réseau — *Nous, l'Europe banquet des peuples* et *De sang et de lumière*, par exemple, font résonance à *Eldorado*. Mais le

pouvoir performatif de l'œuvre pourrait s'avérer peu efficace si cette déconstruction par l'outil littéraire ne s'adressait qu'à une élite cultivée. Aussi Gaudé tente-t-il de toucher un public scolaire, notamment en se rendant dans les écoles. Par cette incursion dans le champ scolaire, il est possible que Gaudé puisse faire de l'écriture une vraie arme de changement du monde et rende de ce fait complètement obsolète la vision du rapport de la littérature au monde en termes de reflet ou d'anti-reflet.

Isabelle ÉLIZEON

Pour une esthétique du déplacement dans les espaces de l'entre-deux

Par une approche anthropologique du corps en scène, alliée à une approche esthétique et philosophique, cet article a pour projet de repenser la notion de déplacement en s'appuyant sur la pièce *Issé Timossé* (1997) du chorégraphe Bernardo Montet, en collaboration avec l'écrivain Pierre Guyotat. Il s'agira d'envisager les dynamiques de déplacement en tant que poïétique capable de créer des espaces utopiques où peuvent être repensées les notions de corps, d'écriture et de langage. Mon hypothèse est que l'expérience du déplacement matérialisée dans l'œuvre de Bernardo Montet pourrait ouvrir à de nouvelles modalités de rencontres, d'échanges et de mutations, et permettre ainsi la création d'espaces propices à l'acceptation de l'altérité pour un renouvellement fécond de nos imaginaires.

Éric FABRI

Les non-dits des non-lieux : l'utopie comme écotone et l'ontologie naturaliste

Approcher l'utopie comme un écotone permet de mettre en exergue le fait que le discours utopique se compose d'un subtil équilibre de *continuités* et de *décalages*. Pour que l'utopie puisse assurer sa fonction de contrepoint critique du réel, elle doit à la fois lui ressembler suffisamment pour que les destinataires du discours utopique s'y reconnaissent, et en même en différer d'une manière qui rende les décalages introduits signifiants et désirables. Alors que les approches classiques de l'utopie concentrent leur attention sur les décalages introduits par le discours utopique, ce chapitre se propose d'explorer ce que l'étude des *continuités* permet d'apporter à la philosophie de l'utopie. La première partie analyse la structure du discours utopique pour clarifier le rôle de ces continuités et examine de quelles manières elles

peuvent devenir fécondes. La seconde partie illustre l'intérêt de cette approche en pointant comment une représentation qui traditionnellement constituait un élément de continuité du réel à l'utopie — l'ontologie naturaliste — devient dans les dernières décennies du vingtième siècle un élément à *décaler*, révélant ainsi la problématique croissante du rapport préréflexif des modernes à leur environnement.

Justine FEYEREISEN et Louis-Philippe DALEMBERT

Les migrantes existent aussi. À propos de *Mur Méditerranée*

Au fil de cet entretien autour de son roman *Mur Méditerranée* (2019), Louis-Philippe Dalembert, écrivain haïtien, revient sur les trajectoires de trois femmes en exil, fuyant des crises climatiques, politiques ou guerrières, pour survivre. Il interpelle le terme « migrant », qui fige ces individus dans une identité permanente et occulte la réalité des femmes, souvent victimes de violences au cours de parcours migratoires longs et périlleux. Inspiré par des archives journalistiques et des rencontres à Lampedusa et dont il relate l'expérience, Dalembert imagine un « bateau-monde » symbolisant les inégalités sociales, religieuses et raciales, tout en soulignant l'humanité partagée de ses personnages. L'écrivain interroge en outre les conséquences du dérèglement climatique sur les migrations humaines et les murs, physiques et symboliques, qui s'élèvent dans le monde.

Justine FEYEREISEN and Nuno ESCUDEIRO

**'We helped to change or to complexify the narrative of the border crossing'
The Valley (2019)**

In this interview, Portuguese film director Nuno Escudeiro explains how *The Valley* (2019) documents the human rights crisis unfolding at the French-Italian border, in the Roya Valley, where local communities—like activist Cédric Herrou—openly defy state policies to help migrants navigating treacherous mountain routes and apply for asylum. Escudeiro's documentary exposes how state actions, not local solidarity, violate legal and ethical norms, shifting public discourse from the legality of aid to the moral duty to act. Inspired by his own witnessing of border violence and grassroots resistance, Escudeiro captures the tension between hidden humanitarian efforts and overt civil disobedience, revealing how communities reclaim agency through legal literacy and collective action. The documentary also highlights the emotional and political complexities among activists, fostering recon-

ciliation and reinforcing the shared struggle for justice. Ultimately, *The Valley* underscores the power of local mobilisation to confront systemic injustice and redefine the ethics of border crossing.

Francisco FUENTES ANTRÁS

Inhabiting Utopia. A Literary Re-Imagination of Cuban Borders in Lien Carrazana's 'Una planta tropical en un invernadero de Madrid'

This article explores the way in which the narrative voice of a Cuban refugee in Spain builds her own borderland in the flash fiction 'Una planta tropical en un invernadero de Madrid' (A tropical plant in a greenhouse of Madrid) (2015), written by Lien Carrazana and published in her blog *La China fuera de la Caja* (The Chinese out of the box). The image of a tropical plant in a greenhouse represents a utopian act, since not only does it criticize the politics of the current Cuba, proposing a political alternative to Castroism, but it also reimagines national borders (specifically the Cuban), and aims for an identity freed from political limitations. In fact, by using her narrative to expand the island's national boundaries and vindicate her Cuban identity, the author challenges the tyrannical elite that governs Cuba since 1959, which deprives its opponents and exiles from their *Cubanness*. The greenhouse constitutes, indeed, an in-between space for political action, a utopian borderland created outside dominant political structures, and that permits the narrator's insurrection of the self. In this sense, this analysis informs a close relation between utopianism, fiction literature, and political activism because the construction of this utopian space at a narrative level involves 'thinking and acting to prevent the foreclosure of political possibilities in the present and the future.'

Marion GRANGE

Pour une utopie reterrestrante : voyage en ciel migrateur avec Kossie Efoui et Patrick Chamoiseau

Au croisement des pensées de l'écologie et d'une réflexion sur les migrations et les frontières, le présent article s'attache à éclairer la fécondité poétique et politique de la figure de l'oiseau migrateur en littérature, au travers de deux œuvres francophones contemporaines : *Volatiles* de Kossi Efoui (2006), et *Les neuf consciences du Malfini* de Patrick Chamoiseau (2009). L'enjeu de la réflexion est de circonscrire l'espace de l'utopie ouvert par les migrants, en même temps que de proposer une définition du geste écopoétique tel qu'il s'élabore dans

les textes. Ainsi, si les oiseaux d'Efoui et Chamoiseau nous font bien voyager dans un espace autre, contrepoint rêvé de l'expérience migratoire humaine, cet ailleurs n'est pourtant pas un « lieu de nulle part » : le ciel des migrateurs, c'est en réalité toujours la terre, et les oiseaux ne sont pas le « tout autre », mais bien nos frères en migration, pris dans la même loi du vivant. Ce que proposent alors nos textes, c'est une sorte de « nouvel esprit utopique », accordé au plus juste aux défis de notre époque de déterrestation : une utopie reterrestree et reterrestrante, nourrie d'une écoute ravivée des êtres et phénomènes terrestres. Pour qui sait ainsi en poète déchiffrer pour nous les « rêves de la terre », elle devient un formidable réservoir d'utopies petites et grandes pour renouveler nos imaginaires des migrations et des frontières, et ouvrir l'horizon d'un monde plus hospitalier.

Timea GYIMESI

Écotone et intercession : formes de résistance empathiques chez Marie Darrieussecq et László Krasznahorkai

Située dans le contexte de la géophilosophie de Gilles Deleuze et de Félix Guattari, l'étude poursuit une double visée qui consiste, d'une part, à élaborer un champ conceptuel susceptible d'agencer utopie, écotone et littérature, et, de l'autre, à s'interroger à travers *La mer à l'envers* de Marie Darrieussecq et *Le Dernier loup* de László Krasznahorkai, sur le rôle que la littérature par le biais de la fiction et de la fabulation, peut jouer dans la construction imaginaire de l'écotone en tant que milieu d'intercession, de devenir, de modulation dans la mise en relation de l'imaginaire avec le réel. Si la littérature contribue à la réflexion sur l'écotone, c'est que les recherches formelles qu'elle ne cesse de renouveler pour faire milieu (écotone narratif), participent aussi d'une écosophie plus vaste d'ordre éthique, voire *po(i)ét(h)ique*, en mettant à disposition une gamme considérable d'émotions morales (attentionnelles et empathiques) en vue d'apprendre comme habiter ou cohabiter autrement le monde.

Manon HOUTART

Écrire en migration : la poésie comme espace utopique de parole

En réaction à la méfiance dont ils font l'objet, face aux formes de dépossession du langage auxquelles il se heurtent (arbitraire des désignations et de l'octroi des droits afférents, obsession de la preuve,

injonction à un récit de persécution crédible), certains migrants tentent de recouvrir un mode de parole adéquat pour dire leur exil. C'est le cas de Hassan Yassin, Youssif Haliem et Mohammed Nour Wana : migrants soudanais « illégalisés » résidant à Paris, ils ont fait de leur parcours migratoire et de leur révolte un matériau poétique. Au-delà de mettre au jour le caractère mortifère des frontières étatiques et certaines apories de la procédure d'asile, leurs poèmes tendent à dénoncer un certain mode discursif et à réclamer un espace de parole alternatif. En prenant appui sur l'analyse d'un corpus d'une quinzaine de poèmes, articulée à une attention à leur contexte d'émergence, nous verrons comment, tant par le contenu de leurs textes que par les gestes qu'ils accomplissent en écrivant, ces trois migrants-poètes contribuent à dépasser ce qui est trop souvent présenté comme indépassable, à savoir la frontière illusoire de l'altérité. Leur démarche se révèle en cela animée d'une forte « impulsion utopique », qui se manifeste tant par la puissance critique des poèmes que par leur propension à ébaucher de nouveaux possibles.

Jean-Pol MADOU †

Tout-Monde, terre, utopie

Poète des archipels et des mangroves, philosophe, Édouard Glissant représente, depuis ses premiers essais, l'acte même de penser comme le déploiement d'un paysage. La pensée jaillit toujours d'un lieu, s'installe dans le monde, déploie un paysage. « Agir à sa place, penser avec le monde », tel est le destin de tout lieu. Un lieu n'est pas un point abstrait fixé sur une carte, mais en lui-même une relation vivante avec d'autres lieux avec lesquels il forme un archipel, et d'archipel en archipel avec tous les lieux du monde. Le paysage n'est pas une donnée objective, un cadre neutre que l'objectif d'une caméra peut fixer, mais un personnage, un agent dans le processus de Relation, une totalité vivante porteuse de mémoire et d'utopie. Les lieux et les paysages sont appréhendés dans et par cet imaginaire archipélagique dont les schémas sont issus de la géographie torturée des Caraïbes. Même si les concepts d'écologie et d'écotones n'appartiennent pas au lexique glissantien, son souci de l'environnement et de l'habitat, dont témoignent ses romans et ses essais, détermine non seulement le contenu de l'œuvre mais surtout sa forme, ses modalités d'écriture.

Jean-Pol MADOU †

Trace, frontière, passage dans le Tout-Monde d'Édouard Glissant
[posthume]

Il n'y a aujourd'hui d'œuvre où le lien entre la frontière, la migration et l'utopie soit le plus affirmé que celle d'Édouard Glissant. Du *Discours antillais* (1981) à *Philosophie de la Relation* (2009), l'œuvre de Glissant s'est construite sur des frontières qu'elle n'a cessé d'outrepasser et de déconstruire sans pour autant les effacer : frontières entre les genres (roman, poésie, théâtre, essais), entre la pensée et le poème, entre l'art et la philosophie, entre l'oralité et l'écriture, entre les langues et les cultures que viennent transgresser les processus de créolisation, entre les États-nations que traversent les flux migratoires, sans oublier les frontières maritimes qui passent entre les continents et les archipels, les presqu'îles et les rochers. Et que peuvent bien être ces frontières qui traversent les archipels, se demande Glissant non sans ironie, sinon des tracés dérisoires au regard de ces couloirs de lave sous-marine qui courent d'île en île, de volcan en volcan, de Soufrière en Soufrière ?

Valérie MAGDELAINE-ANDRIANJAFITRIMO

Le retour des pensées indianocéanes et des rêveries lémures : d'autres paradigmes pour une « utopie émancipatrice » de l'océan Indien ?

Pour redonner du sens à leur histoire, les îles du sud-ouest de l'océan Indien se veulent reliées selon un principe fédérateur, corallien (Aubry), qui mettrait en exergue des inspirations communes (Rabea-rivelo). C'était déjà ce que proposait le mythe de la Lémurie, repris par de nombreux artistes de l'océan Indien, proposé en son temps par les « fous » scientifiques ou artistes Jules Hermann et Malcom de Chazal. En un sens, ce qui est perçu comme un fondement unifié des îles, c'est bien un monde utopique, perdu, dont les traces qui en subsistent sont des îles condamnées aux temps noirs de l'Histoire. Les « utopies réelles » (Wright), telles que Libertalia, se sont elles aussi soldées par un échec, comme si les îles résistaient à une utopie qui les a pourtant fondées dans l'imaginaire occidental — et dont *Paul et Virginie* est certainement le parangon — mais qui, toutefois, pourrait toujours rester à faire de manière relationnelle, comme Le Clézio s'en fait l'écho (Bing). Les littératures des îles elles-mêmes ont opté pour une réécriture de l'espace qui leur offre, à travers sa dimension magmatique et océanique, la possibilité d'une utopie « éc(h)opolitique » et « éc(h)opoétique » (Magdelaine) sauvant de la perte les voix et les

récits pluriels qui les ont construites comme chez les poètes réunionnais Gamaleya ou Girodou. C'est à l'un de ces dispositifs de la pensée de l'espace et des sociétés que nous nous intéresserons ici en observant la constitution de ce qui pourrait être un écotone à part entière : le concept d'« indianocéanisme ». Après les tâtonnements des Mauriciens Camille de Rauville ou Jean-Georges Prosper qui ont donné naissance à cette notion, nous verrons comment la période contemporaine, à la lumière de Glissant, veut proposer la mise en place d'une pensée archipélique dont témoignent aussi les arts visuels (Compan). Pourtant, à ce qui semble une utopie archipélique se confronte la violence d'une réalité politique, migratoire sans appel (Ntsindami). Nous nous pencherons alors, dans un dernier temps, sur la façon dont le Malgache Raharimanana, dans *Tisser*, renonce à penser l'indianocéanisme pour se diriger vers une proposition plus proche de celle de Sarr dans *Afrotopia*, refondant des routes largement coupées entre Madagascar et l'Afrique et proposant de la sorte une véritable « transformation interstitielle » (Wright) émancipatrice des littératures de l'océan Indien.

Judith MISRAHI-BARAK and Thomas LACROIX

Utopia, Heterotopia and the Interstitial Ecotones of Migration: Towards a Transdisciplinary Approach

Drawing on an interdisciplinary dialogue between social scientists and researchers in the humanities, this chapter proposes to contribute to the reflection on utopia and migration by promoting the concept of the migratory ecotone as a contact zone between populations coming from different horizons. These ambivalent spaces are informed by contradictory forces: imbued in the principles of encounter and cultural interaction, they are also underlain by the principles of power, conflict, distribution, and hierarchy; a self-contained space-time of social interactions, they are also constituted by their sedimentation over time. By articulating the three notions of utopia, heterotopia and ecotone, this chapter foregrounds the ecotone as a lens that grants us more clarity into the dynamics at play in places affected by migration, anchored as they are in the past, in the present and in the future. To understand how the migratory ecotone encapsulates the thickness of place-making processes, the concept will be related to Foucault's notion of heterotopia, in contradistinction to utopia. These considerations will be supported by the analysis of two short stories by Edwidge Danticat, 'Children of the Sea' and 'Without Inspection', and one short story by Shani Mootoo, 'Out on Main Street'. The writing of the refugee raft,

the construction site and of the sweets shop, respectively, shines a light on heterotopic sites where encounters shape and reshape a 'plural humanity'.

Emmanuel Mbégane NDOUR

La métaspora comme une nouvelle utopie migratoire dans *La Brûlerie* d'Émile Ollivier

La Brûlerie d'Émile Ollivier, dernier roman de l'auteur Québécois d'origine haïtienne publié en 2004, raconte l'exil d'intellectuels, d'hommes et de femmes au Québec, marronnant la dictature et les violences politiques en Haïti. L'intention poétique de ce roman est faire de ce roman, « un livre-univers, un livre-monde », et ainsi de cartographier les manières dont des fragments d'existences migrantes malléent les lieux dans un élan éthique porté par l'imaginaire. L'objet de cet article est de montrer que comment des « corps utopiques » (Foucault) investissent des spatialités et des temporalités closes, qui s'inscrivent dans la poétique romanesque pour figurer une nouvelle logique utopique que Joël Des Rosiers appelle « métaspora ». Il s'agit également d'étudier la manière dont les exilés transforment leur vécu en expériences existentielles qui proposent une nouvelle conception des frontières. Partant, l'utopie du corps servira dans cet article de point de départ et de métaphore d'une diversité et d'une porosité des espaces et des frontières physiques, textuels et imaginaires.

Ilay Romain ORS

Aegean Migrations: Dreaming of European Utopias in Dystopian Hotspots

This chapter presents an ethnographic interference to Aegean migrations through a prism construed by emic meanings attached to the concept of utopia. Uttered by migrants crossing the Aegean, these variations on the theme render several reflections of utopic worldviews while their beholders are in fact going through temporal and spatial experiences resembling dystopia. That the ethnographic material was collected during the dystopic time of the pandemic poses a further level of disenchantment with the utopic spatiality of fieldwork that was only partially possible to attain, bringing to the fore the question of diversification of sources as a means to foster an ethnographic engagement with multilayered meanings of utopia and dystopia. Through acknowledging the variety of emic conceptualizations towards enriching cultural theory, the aim is to develop a critical understanding to

address inquiries such as: How are migration experiences shaped by multiple utopian discourses and imaginative practices? What can we learn about migration through a focus on border experiences as expressed through narratives of crossing and imaginations of beyond? What does the term utopia mean to the migrants themselves? The discussion evolves around three concepts, namely EUtopia, e-utopia, and ou-topia, which are derived from verbalized migratory experiences that correspond and contribute to interdisciplinary debates involving etic formulations of utopia towards approaching the complexity of migration practices in the ecotone of the Aegean.

Thomas TELIOS

On *Koinotopia*: Reconstructing Utopia in the Age of Neo-Liberalism, Political Ecology, and Intersectionality

In the fourth thesis of his *Tübinger Einleitung in die Philosophie* (1963), translated as *A Philosophy Of The Future* (1970), Ernst Bloch introduces the notion of a 'multiverse', that opposed to a unilinear understanding of history, is 'broad, flexible and thoroughly dynamic' (Bloch, 1970: 143). This notion was recently reappropriated by Massimiliano Tomba (2019) in his *Insurgent Universality. An Alternative Legacy of Modernity* in order to criticize Western universalism and argue for the existence of different emancipatory forces that corresponding to their particular historical and temporal contexts (*chronotones*) cannot be subsumed under one, unifying paradigm. Notwithstanding, I begin my paper by arguing, that this move does not suffice in liberating us from the vanguard thinking of a unique force that is capable of functioning as the distinctive historical agent of its time. Rather, what we need is an understanding of history that is *inclusive* and brings to the fore the emancipatory necessity of the interplay of the various forces that are at hand and need to be taken into account at each and every time. In this light, also the notion of the ecotone needs to be readdressed. An ecotone can be 'a transitional area between two or more distinct ecological communities' if, and only, if it includes, accounts for, reflects, and echoes the different life-forms it consists of; that is to say if, and only if, it is transformed to a social-ontological *echotone*. The latter has a pivotal character when it comes to reconceptualizing the concept of utopia. While I object to the assumption that the notion of utopia has run out of steam, I agree with Eva Kreisky (2000) according to whom in order for utopia to reclaim its critical character, it needs to forfeit its unifying and homotopic character and become equally inclusive

and holistic. As I conclude, if recalibrated as *koinotopia*, i. e. as a project that aims to realize the holism of the different life-forms, utopia is still very well capable of orienting political actions and practices.

Dénètem TOUAM BONA

Rizofora metaverse

Ce conte philosophique est une riposte de l'imagination politique aux narratifs eschatologiques que brandit le bio-capital pour mieux se présenter en sauveur.

NOTICES BIOGRAPHIQUES / BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES

Markus ARNOLD is Associate Professor of French and Francophone Studies and Director of the School of Languages and Literatures at the University of Cape Town (UCT). His research covers post-colonial theory, Indian Ocean and African literatures in French, text-image relations and graphic literature. He has authored the monograph *La littérature mauricienne contemporaine* (2017), co-edited the books *L'image et son dehors* (2017), *Borders and Ecotones in the Indian Ocean* (2020), and *Reconfiguring the Postcolonial City: Urban Ecotones in the Global South* (2024), as well as two special issues: on African literary and artistic manifestos (2021), and 'Afrotopian poetics' (2023). Markus is chief-editor of the journal *French Studies in Southern Africa*, a member of several international research projects ('Thanatic Ethics', 'Norms of Life', 'The Refugee Graphic Novel', 'Configuration EthoSpatiale'), and a fellow of UCT's '2030 Future leaders' cohort.

Robin COHEN is Emeritus Professor in Development Studies and Senior Research Fellow, Kellogg College, University of Oxford. His books include *Frontiers of Identity: The British and the others* (1994), *Global diasporas: An introduction* (third edition, 2022), *Migration: The movement of humankind from prehistory to the present* (2019), *À la rencontre de la différence: Traces diasporiques et espaces de créolisation* (with Olivia Sheringham, 2020) and *Refugia: Radical solutions to mass displacement* (2020). His interests lie in migration, diasporas, globalization and creolization. He has started working on the revival of utopian thought, looking at what might emerge from a post-Trumpian world.

Louis-Philippe DALEMBERT (Port-au-Prince) a publié depuis 1993 chez divers éditeurs, en France et en Haïti, des nouvelles, de la poésie, des essais et des romans. *Mur Méditerranée* (Sabine Wespieser, 2019) a été lauréat du prix de la Langue française, du prix Goncourt de la Suisse et de la Pologne et finaliste du prix Goncourt des lycéens. Pensionnaire de la Villa Médicis (1994-1995), écrivain en résidence à Jérusalem et à Berlin, professeur invité dans des universités étasuniennes et suisses, l'auteur a également vécu et travaillé à Rome pendant une dizaine d'années.

Isabelle DONEUX-DAUSSAINT est maître-assistante et chargée de cours à la Haute École Robert-Schuman (Virton, Belgique). Linguiste et spécialiste de l'œuvre durassienne, elle est l'autrice d'une thèse de doctorat en sciences du langage à l'université Lumière Lyon 2, intitulée *Le dialogue romanesque chez Marguerite Duras, essai de pragmatique narrative*, ainsi que de nombreux articles, notamment parus dans la *Revue de sémantique et pragmatique* ou la *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire*.

Isabelle ELIZÉON — Docteure en science de l'art et arts de la scène, chercheuse indépendante en humanités environnementales, spécialiste des dynamiques transdisciplinaires arts performatifs/sciences de l'environnement, elle développe des travaux de recherche collaborative autour de « l'entre-deux », des « communs » et des « territoires existentiels ». Ses récentes publications sont : « De l'art créolisé au trans'art : un art émancipé » (*Théâtre Public*, 2025) et « Corpi di Piave — les territoires existentiels d'un fleuve » (« Acque Contese : un glossario per le Grave di Ciano », 2025).

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Justine FEYEREISEN est docteure en langues et littératures françaises de l'université libre de Bruxelles et de l'université de Grenoble avec une spécialisation en philosophie et théories politiques ainsi qu'en relations internationales. Elle a mené des projets de recherche postdoctorale sur les notions d'espace, de migration et d'utopie depuis les littératures des Suds en langue française par le prisme de la philosophie politique et des humanités environnementales à l'université de Berkeley, à l'université d'Oxford et à l'université de Gand. Elle est l'autrice de *Renouer avec la terre extatique* (Classiques Garnier, 2024) et de plusieurs dizaines d'articles. Elle est également la (co-)éditrice de cinq ouvrages collectifs bilingues, dont *Home : Les sens d'une maison* (PULM, 2024). Elle est présidente de l'association des Lecteurs de J.M.G. Le Clézio et co-éditrice en chef des *Cahiers Le Clézio*. Elle a été la curatrice scientifique de l'exposition *Catherine, Kiambé, Surya* d'Elisa Moris Vai au Photo Oxford Festival 2021.

Francisco FUENTES ANTRÁS is a full-time Lecturer in the Department of English Philology at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. He is interested in the study of English literature and world literature studies from an interdisciplinary and transversal perspective. His research focuses on the representation of diasporic identities, borders, and transcultural connections in the twenty-first century literature written by migrants. He is the principal investigator in the CIVIS European project 'Migrant Storytelling on Home and Belonging as Transformative Tools.'

Marion GRANGE est agrégée de Lettres Modernes et docteure en littérature. Sa thèse, menée à l'EHESS (CRAL) sous les directions de Marielle Macé et Xavier Garnier, s'intitule « Une Terre en migrations. Enquête dans les littératures francophones contemporaines ». Ses recherches interrogent les nouveaux récits et

imaginaires de la Terre à l'heure de la double « crise » écologique et migratoire, tout en sondant les héritages coloniaux, et en élargissant la réflexion sur la migration aux vivants autres qu'humains. Avec Bronwyn Louw, elle a co-dirigé l'ouvrage *Les Migrations des plantes* (Manuella éditions, 2024). Entre autres articles, elle a publié « Débarquer en Terre inconnue. *Crusoé et L'Esclave vieil homme* de Patrick Chamoiseau » (*Nouvelles Études francophones*, 2023), et « Mémoire et résistances au jardin créole » (*Jardins*, 2024).

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Manon HOUTART est docteure en Langues et littératures françaises et collaboratrice scientifique à l'UNamur (Belgique). Ses travaux portent essentiellement sur les productions littéraires qui circulent en marge des circuits traditionnels de l'édition. Sa thèse, menée sous la supervision de Denis Saint-Amand dans le cadre d'un mandat d'aspirante du FNRS, s'intitule *Surréalisme et radio : une même longueur d'ondes ? Étude sociohistorique et audiopoétique (1924-1969)* (à paraître aux Presses du réel). Elle est membre du Namur Institute of Language, Text and Transmediality (NaLTT), des comités de rédaction des revues *CONTEXTES* et *Textyles* et du carnet de recherche en ligne *Radiophonies littéraires*.

Thomas LACROIX is CNRS director of research in geography at the Centre for International Studies at Sciences Po Paris. His research focuses on immigrant transnationalism and its multilevel relations with the state and cities. He published *The Transnational Society. A social theory of cross border linkages* (Palgrave, 2023) and *The Transnational State. Governing Migratory Circulations* (Palgrave,

2024). He is associate fellow at the Maison Française d'Oxford and fellow of the Institut Convergence Migrations in Paris.

Jean-Pol MADOU (né à Gand, 1943-2023) était professeur émérite de philosophie à l'université de Savoie. Spécialiste des rapports entre la philosophie et la littérature, la poétique et l'esthétique, il est l'auteur de l'une des approches les plus délicates et les plus aigües consacrées à l'œuvre d'Édouard Glissant : *Édouard Glissant. De mémoire d'arbres* (Rodopi, 1996) et *Errance et épopée. Glissant, Segalen, Walcott* (Passages, 2016).

Valérie MAGDELAINE-ANDRIANJAFITRIMO est maîtresse de conférences en littératures françaises et francophones à l'université de La Réunion, directrice adjointe du laboratoire Laboratoire de recherche sur les espaces Créoles et Francophones et directrice des Presses universitaires indianocéaniques. Francophoniste spécialisée dans les littératures de la diaspora indienne et dans les littératures des îles du sud-ouest de l'océan Indien, elle explore les questions de dominations et de résistances face aux formes de colonialité du pouvoir. Elle travaille sur les intersections entre « races, nations, classes » qu'elle lie aux études de genres, aux représentations des vies précaires, des exodes et des migrations. Développant une étude sur les « écorécits » indianocéaniques, elle s'attache à une lecture des paysages et des océans dans une perspective à la fois écopoétique et politique. Son dernier ouvrage collectif, publié en 2024 avec Magali Compan, *Convergences océanes, ces océans qui nous habitent*, explore ces questionnements.

Judith MISRAHI-BARAK is Professor in Postcolonial Studies at the English Department, Paul-Valéry Montpellier University / UMPV, France. Her prime areas of specialisation are Caribbean and Indo-Caribbean literatures in English, as well as Dalit literatures. Her monograph is entitled *Entre Atlantique et océan Indien : les voix de la Caraïbe anglophone* (2021).

Emmanuel Mbégane NDOUR est Senior Lecturer à l'université du Witwatersrand, où il enseigne les littératures francophones. Il a également enseigné dans plusieurs établissements d'enseignement supérieur, notamment au Québec, à l'université de Johannesburg et à l'université de Cape Town. Docteur en Langue et

Littérature française de l'université Paris-Est, il a effectué des recherches postdoctorales à l'université du KwaZulu-Natal, à Pietermaritzburg. Il est aussi diplômé en pédagogie de l'enseignement supérieur de l'université du Québec à Montréal. Ses recherches et publications portent principalement sur les littératures caribéennes, africaines et canadiennes d'expression française. Il les explore à travers les prismes du transnationalisme, de la modernité, des théories postcoloniales et décoloniales, ainsi que des réflexions philosophiques sur les phénomènes métasporiques et les écritures migrantes. Il est co-directeur du numéro *Manifestes littéraires et artistiques en Afrique francophone : formes et enjeux* (2021).

Ilay Romain ORS is an Associate Professor in Social Anthropology and a faculty member at the American College of Greece. She received her Joint PhD in Anthropology and Middle Eastern Studies from Harvard University. In addition to her specialization on the Greek Orthodox community of Istanbul (Rum Polites), her academic work centers on Greek-Turkish relations, migration, diaspora, cultural identity, social movements, urban studies, cuisine, and everyday life in the Aegean region. Among her publications is the single-authored book titled *Diaspora of the City: stories of cosmopolitanism from Istanbul and Athens* (Palgrave, 2018). Her research on Aegean migrations is funded by the Independent Social Research Foundation. She is currently an Honorary Research Fellow at the School of Policy and Global Affairs at the City University London, a former Research Affiliate at the University of Oxford, and a recent Fellow at the Center for Hellenic Studies of Harvard University.

Sabrina PARENT est professeure à l'université libre de Bruxelles au sein de la Faculté de Lettres. Elle est l'autrice de trois monographies (*Poétiques de l'événement*, 2011 ; *Cultural Representations of Massacre*, 2014 et *La Poésie de François Jacqmin à la lumière de l'événement*, 2022) et de plusieurs dizaines d'articles. Ses recherches passées et actuelles ont comme dénominateur commun la transcription littéraire d'événements et situations historiques — tels que les guerres mondiales ou la colonisation belge et française. Plus récemment, les perspectives post- et décoloniales qu'elle a abordées dans ses cours l'ont amenée à réfléchir aux problématiques écologiques et à la nécessité de penser ensemble l'écologie,

le décolonial et la littérature / les arts. Avec Jade de Cock, elle a obtenu un projet de recherche financé par le FNRS « Narrative and Imaginaries of Climate Action » (PDR, 2025-29) et par le Département de la recherche de l'ULB (FER, 2025-27).

Thomas TELIOS is Senior Lecturer of Philosophy at the University of St Gallen, Switzerland. He works on topics in Social and Political Philosophy, Social Ontology, Practical Philosophy, and Political Theory. His research covers themes like subjectivation, collective agency, solidarity practices, the foundations of social critique and utopian imaginaries. To do so he engages a broad spectre of theories from Western Marxism, the Frankfurt School, Post-War French Philosophy, Queer Theory, Intersectionality, and Decoloniality. He just submitted a book manuscript (*Common Sense: A Declaration of Dependence*) where he redefines the common in common sense as 'the articulation of differences to a collective'. Recent publications: 'A Relational-Psychoanalytic Analysis of Ovid's "Narcissus and Echo"'. Toward the Obstinate Persistence of the Relational' (*Open Philosophy*, 2025); 'Overdetermined Solidarity: Solidarity as Form of Agency, Set of Practices, and Normative Principle' (*Genealogy & Critique*, 2025).

Dénètem TOUAM BONA — Philosophe et artiste (dramaturgie), il s'attache à repenser la question du refuge. Face à l'extinction des espèces vivantes et du droit d'asile, face à l'empire croissant des algorithmes sur nos vies, il appelle à la réactivation des arts marrons du camouflage et de la fugue créatrice. Il est notamment l'auteur de *Fugitif, où cours-tu ?* (PUF, 2016) et de *Sagesse des lianes. Cosmopoétique du refuge 1* (Post Éditions, 2021). En 2021-2022, au Centre d'art et du paysage de Vassivière, Dénètem Touam Bona a conçu l'exposition afrodiasporique « Sagesse des lianes » et l'œuvre collaborative « Spectrographies, contes de l'île étoilée » (performances, films VR, sculptures). Porté par la Compagnie (Marseille), « Éloge de la submersion », son dernier projet (2024-2025), déploie des perspectives transe-océaniques.

« Horizons anglophones »

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Judith MISRAHI-BARAK

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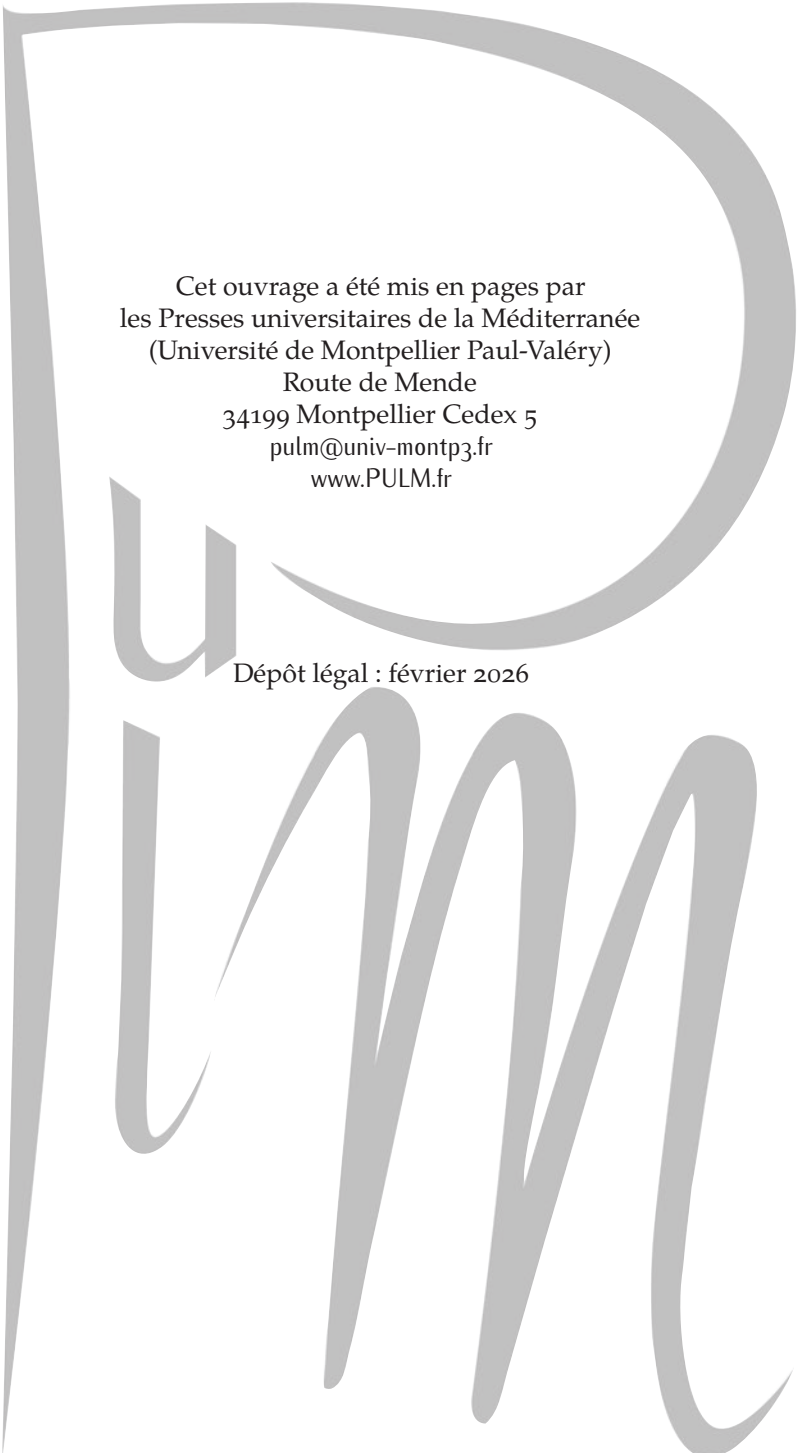
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- V. S. Naipaul: a World in Tension. Une Œuvre sous tension.* Ed. Judith MISRAHI-BARAK, 2004.



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THIS book offers a transdisciplinary reflection between literary studies, philosophy, and social sciences on the actualization of the concept of utopia from ecotones in the face of the habitability crisis. How do contemporary literature and theory conceive of utopia in inhospitable times, where borders, migration, and coexistence are described in terms of crisis? Can they renew our conception of utopia from places where reciprocal and non-alienated relationships between humans and the world are formed, places of temporal-spatial interrelation of cultures, that is, 'ecotones'?

CET OUVRAGE propose une réflexion transdisciplinaire entre les études littéraires, la philosophie et les sciences sociales autour de l'actualisation du concept d'utopie depuis les écotones face à la crise de l'habitabilité. Comment la littérature et la théorie contemporaines pensent l'utopie en des temps inhospitaliers, où frontière, migration et vivre-ensemble sont décrits en termes de crise ? Peuvent-elles renouveler notre conception de l'utopie depuis des lieux où se nouent des rapports réciproques et non aliénés entre les humains et le monde, des lieux d'interrelation temporo-spatiale des cultures, c'est-à-dire des « écotones » ?

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