



THEME COMMONS

SUB-THEME:

Environment, Ecology and Sustainability

TITLE OF WORKSHOP

Degrowth and Ecocriticism:

An ecological point of view on literature and
arts



PROPONENT:

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SEACHANGE AND METAMORPHOSIS: USEFUL IMAGES IN A DEGROWTH APPROACH TO THE ARTS?

Marco De Bernardo, Circolo di ecocritica di Roma, Italy

Paper Abstract

I shall discuss the literary motif of metamorphosis as a reflection of the ecological position of human societies; in particular, I shall deal with a kind of metamorphosis referred to as “sea change”: the transformation that occurs underwater, or, more generally, by agency of the sea. I shall refer to examples of literary metamorphosis across different historical contexts, from works by Homer, Ovid and Shakespeare, that will give us some necessary notion of the main antecedents in the treatment of this motif, to the work of the contemporary Anglophone writer Derek Walcott (Saint Lucia, Caribbean), whose poetry will be analyzed a little more closely.

Before discussing single works and authors, I shall propose some theoretical and historical background notes on the meaning and the development of the metamorphosis and sea change motifs: this exercise reveals consonances sometimes unsuspected between literary periods that are very distant temporarily. I am posing myself two main purposes.

The first purpose is an ambitious one: to advocate for the Degrowth movement to become interested in promoting ecocritical research on the subject of metamorphosis, both in the form of monographic studies on single authors, on single geographic or thematic areas, and with the scope of panoramic studies, that could aim at drawing a comprehensive picture of the development of the motif of metamorphosis, and of the related ideas of the human position in the biosphere.

The second purpose is possibly even more ambitious: contributing, through the analysis of the literary motif of sea change, to the better understanding of important aspects of the work of Walcott, one of the greatest poets and playwrights of our time.



ECOMUSICOLOGY: A KEY TO UNDERSTAND HUMAN HARMONY

Leonella Grasso Caprioli, Conservatorio di Musica di Vicenza, Italy

Paper Abstract

The perspective of scientific realism has the tendency to consider environmental problems leaving aside their ethical, historical and political context. On the contrary, the humanities, philosophy, literature, visual arts, music, help to develop a knowledge of the nature alternative to the one proposed by natural sciences, and often overflowing the limits imposed by rational thought and empirical method. New perspectives of analysis as the ecocriticism, and other related emerging areas of inquiry such as Ecomusicology, are based on the premise that environmental problems, even if analyzed by the standard of the evidence-based empirical science, are essentially generated by the set of ethical, historical, cultural and political values expressed by the civilization that, inhabiting it, modify that specific environment.

According to these assumptions, the issue of music seems to have a potentially crucial and highly topical role in the context of ecocritical studies, given its overwhelming diffusion in times of globalization and rash consumption. The music is also a unique instrument of knowledge for its capacity, intangible and osmotic, to absorb and reflect the reality in which it comes from and to shape the cultural and social environments where it is actually enjoyed.



TACKLED ISSUES:

- Introduction to ecocriticism, ecomusicology: origins, items
- General informations, bibliography
- Metamorphosis and sea change: works of authors like Ovidio, Sheaskeapeare, Calvino, and Walcott. Their value in a degrowth approach to the arts
- Political question in arts

GIVEN ANSWERS:

- Can art address to human thinking and human feelings at the same time?
Yes. Feeling is a way of thinking and thinking is a way of feeling. We are 100% nature and 100% culture (Edgar Moris)
- How literature landscapes could be tools for environmental consciousness?
It could be an instrument to discuss about a better urbanistic system.

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS MESSAGES AND COMMENTS:

- Silence as common (and landscape, and town typestras...)
- I suggest to consider folk music as a medium to consider bioregions and sense of place
- The capitalization of contemporary arts: how to focus the attention on a no capitalizing work art? Which role may play ecocriticism?
- Post human — analogical/digital chaos
- Immagini suggerite dal dibattito: frattali
- Art as a dialogue with otherness: political dimension
- INPUT everyone can recipe (information overload) and OUTPUT anyone can tell other people care.