

Open-call session proposal

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Ecopoetics and Eco-historicism: Ecocriticism after *The Song of the Earth*

These panels will assess the relationship between historicism and mythopoeia—or ‘facts and fantasies’—in current Romantic ecocriticism.

BARS 2019 takes place close to the twentieth anniversary of Jonathan Bate’s *The Song of the Earth*, the most influential of all avowedly environmentalist studies of Romanticism. Bate discerned a mythopoeic role for Romantic and post-Romantic literature and criticism. In his Romantic ecopoetics, visions of reconciliation between humankind and the natural world are inflected by a sense of inescapable disjuncture. Just under a decade later, Gillen D’Arcy Wood issued his manifesto for ‘eco-historicism.’ Wood called for an ecocritical ‘turn to history,’ focused on the reconstruction of past interactions between environments, climates and human culture.

The proposed sessions will examine the legacy of *The Song of the Earth* and its enduring significance as a point of departure in Romantic studies. In the most recent Romantic ecocriticism, broadly historicist methods are often to the fore. How might we reread Bate’s foundational work in ways that bear on current ecocritical concerns with colonialism, nationhood, climate change, animal studies, cultural geography, the history of science, and other topics? What is the place of ecopoetics in the future of environmental criticism?

Intending participants include Prof. Jonathan Bate (Oxford), Dr Jeremy Davies (Leeds), Dr Daniel Eltringham (Sheffield), Dr David Higgins (Leeds), Prof. Kate Rigby (Bath Spa) and Dr Tess Somervell (Leeds). Additional contributors, especially PGR and ECR colleagues, are warmly welcomed.