

Editor's note

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The editors of *Ikhtilaf*, Journal of Critical Humanities and Social Studies are pleased to present to the readers the first issue which we chose to devote to what is probably the most crucial problem humanity has ever had to address, i.e. the Environmental Crisis. The theme of this issue was prompted by the 22nd UN Conference of Parties (COP) held at Marrakech in 2016, and it is also very significant that the journal appears at the same time that the 23rd COP is taking place at Bonn, Germany. This is our tribute to the international campaign to do something about the Environment, for as scientists maintain, we are the last generation that can still do something to stop global warming. And if we go on acting as if nothing is going on, we are undermining the future of our children and that of humanity. Chances are it's already too late. Here then is our modest contribution to the debate. At a time of global environmental and economic challenges, there is an urgent need for the humanities to address the question of climate change, to explore the ways the intersections of history, culture, science, politics, literature and art can help us address the complex question of the dramatic global changes, euphemistically referred to as 'climate change' and open up new ways of thinking about the subject. Indeed, only the cross-disciplinary endeavor that is at the heart of the humanities can give some confidence so that the men and women of our generation take the ultimate leap of faith, and accept that unless we change our ways, we are going at high speed on a collision course. Contrary to the general assumption, climate change is not just a matter of sciences, economics, or politics; it is also closely related to our ontological connection with the world. It is urgent to consider the close link between global corporate capitalism, the generalized and standardized consumerism and the dramatic global changes of the recent decades. The utilitarian relation we have with time and space has largely contributed to damaging the environment by using up resources at an extremely high rate. Enormous environmental and spatial injustices have been generated by many decades of economic restructuring and neoliberal globalization. To confront climate change and its dangerous consequences, like global warming, desertification, rising sea levels, increased frequency of severe storms, droughts, alteration of species, spreading of disease, we must reconsider our relationship with nature and face our material and moral responsibility in bequeathing disaster to our own descendants.

Each of the papers in this issue raises questions of fundamental relevance to the role of the humanities in addressing the current ecological crises. The first paper, "Traumatized Ecology: Ecocritical Study of Scholastique Mukasonga's Writings" is about Rwandan genocide literature and the attention it pays to environmental issues. Richard Oko Ajah uses postcolonial ecocritical theory to assess the Rwandan ethnic conflict and its ecological implication as represented in the writings of Scholastique Mukasonga. According to the author, *Inyenzi ou les cafards* and *La Femme aux pieds nus* (novels by Mukasonga) offer important examples of the destroying impact of the Rwandan genocide not only on the Rwandan people and society, but also on the natural environment. The second paper, "Morrow Lindbergh's *North to the Orient: An Account of an Aviator's Emerging Environmental Consciousness*" by Rinni Haji Amran provides an excellent example of the role of aviation in increasing environmental consciousness in the early twentieth century. The paper explores the way Lindbergh's aerial view of the changing natural landscape contributed to her awareness of environmental issues. The focus of the third paper, "Women, The Environment, and the Ability to Act in Morocco: Gentle Effervescence" by Soumia Boutkhal shifts to two different but interconnected issues related to the environment: on the one hand, the feminization of the forest engineering profession and the

impact it has on the effort of forest management and conservation or lack thereof, and on the other, the land rights movement led by the *soulaliyate* women who are protesting against their exclusion from collective lands. In a paper entitled, “An Ecocritical Reading of Poetry from India’s Northeast,” Neeraj Sankan and Suman Sigrha use Ecocriticism as a literary tool to delve into human-environment relationships in the writings of two poets from Northeast India, Temsula Ao and Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih. The authors explain how the two Indian poets use their poems to raise concerns about the endangered environment. “Poetry as Resistance: an Ecocritical Reading of Sameh Derouich’s Haiku” by Chourouq Nasri is another paper which develops an ecocritical approach to poetry. The paper shows that Sameh Derouich’s haiku poetry is a subversive ecological project based on the recognition of the interdependent nature of the world. In “Recalibrating the Humanities for the Times: New Humanities 3.0 and Climate Change Denialism,” Uzoma Chukwu highlights the importance of narrative to address ecology problems. He argues that retooling typical humanities inquiry methods and including narrative inquiry approaches can influence human capacity to perceive and cope with environmental change. Mostafa Shoul’s paper, “*Disposable Culture? Worse: Disposable Culture*” investigates the intricate relationship that exists between culture and human basic needs, and the expression of the community’s identity that results from this relationship. “(Un)Green and Filled with Malls, the New “Consumptional Identity” of the Moroccan City as Imaged in the Photographs of Yto Barrada” by Chourouq Nasri investigates photography as a form of political resistance to dominant structures. The paper shows that Yto Barrada’s photographs replace the folkloric touristic images often associated with Morocco and address questions related to the Moroccan city and its inhabitants. Nasri argues that Barrada’s photographic projects highlight various forms of spatial and environmental injustice which result from a distorted conception of the city.

In sum, then, this issue shows that addressing the complex environmental problems depends on cross-disciplinary collaboration among researchers. It provides very insightful examples of the ways the humanities can contribute to the development of creative solutions to current environmental challenges.

Acknowledgements

The editors would like to thank the contributors and reviewers for all of their efforts and hard work.

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