

## Conference

### GLOSSARIES OF SUSTAINABILITY Processes of translation and interfacing through arts

#### Séminaire Pré-Doctorat-PhD | Pre-Doctorate/PhD Seminar

##### Session 4

25,26,27 February 2013

Researching *cultures of sustainability* and their development implies a shift in focus, from the sciences of life and climate, as well as from the processes of international cooperation, toward the numerous practices emerging on the level of everyday life that are, in their own way, addressing the challenges of climate change, ecosystems degradation, and the problems of unsustainability. These micro-practical and micro-political orientations extend the notion of “practices of everyday life” to include certain kinds of art practices and “gestures,”<sup>1</sup> as well as new forms of intervention, activism, and collaboration between experts and non-experts. For instance new approaches to sustainable food production, such as “permaculture”; experiments in “post-carbon” community-building, such as the Transition Towns movement; collectives involving humans and non-humans” or interspecies collaborations (Bruno Latour 2012) suggest the transformation potentials involved. Such initiatives are diverse, globally dispersed, and reflect a multiplicity of articulations of aesthetic, ethical and political dispositions, which could be understood as processes of mitigation and adaptation from below.

With this in mind questions like the following ones arise: How far and in what ways do new articulations of aesthetical, ethical and political orientations observable in contemporary art practices and everyday life plausibly constitute emerging cultures of sustainability? How have these practical articulations responded to the intensification of scientific findings and public debates about climate change and ecological crisis over the last decade?

How, where and by what modalities do the practitioners of such articulations or emerging cultures interact with established forms of political debate and international governance, for example at the prominent summits on climate change held in Copenhagen (2009), Cancun (2010), Durban (2011) and Doha (2012)? What characterizes their practices of “cultural translation” and how are these different from those prevalent in mainstream media and government discourses?

What orientations toward ecology and ecological crisis are observable in practices of contemporary art? Do these orientations result in practices that are different from mainstream art practice? How do ecologically-oriented art practices illuminate and interact with emerging practices of sustainability in everyday life? How can interdisciplinary research and research through art contribute to public awareness and understanding of ecologically-oriented practical articulations and emerging cultures of sustainability?

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<sup>1</sup> This term is borrowed from Yves Citton, *Gestes d'humanité. Anthropologie sauvage de nos expériences esthétiques*, Armand Colin, Paris 2012 ; it also relates to the developments of Michel de Certeau in *L'invention du quotidien. 1. Arts de faire*, (1980), Gallimard, Paris 1990.



Programme Master de recherche/ Research-Based Master Programme  
Séminaire Pré-Doctorat/PhD | Pre-Doctorate/PhD Seminar

## Programme

### Lundi 25 février 2013

*Moderation Gene Ray and Aurélien Gamboni*

- 09 :00 - 09 :30 Catherine Quéloz *Welcome and Gene Ray Introduction*  
10 :00 - 11 :30 Anna Grichting *Thirdscapes: Three Ecologies, Third Landscapes, Third Natures. Symbiotic Systems and Ecological Agencies in Spatial Practices*  
11 :30 - 12 :30 Discussion  
12 :30 - 14 :00 Lunch  
14 :00 - 15 :30 Angelica Navarro *Mother Earth takes on Diplomacy. Cultural Political and Legal Constructions from a Bolivian Perspective*  
15 :30 - 16 :30 Discussion

### Mardi 26 février 2013

*Moderation Liliane Schneider and Sylvie Ramel*

- 10:00 – 11 :30 Gregory Quenet, *Narratives of Change and Adaptation to Climate Change*  
11 :30 - 12 :30 Discussion  
12 :30 - 14 :00 Lunch  
14 :00 - 15 :30 Eddie Yuen *Extinctions, Enclosures, and the Devouring of Nature*  
15 :30 - 16 :30 Discussion

### Mercredi 27 février 2013

*Moderation Gene Ray and Aurélien Gamboni*

- 09 :30 - 10 :30 Jenny Brown *Virtuous Allodoxia*  
10 :30 - 11 :30 Save as Draft (Aurélien Gamboni, Simon Ripoll-Hurier) *Atmospheres under Negotiation*  
11 :30 - 12 :30 Discussion  
12 :30 - 13 :00 Lunch  
13 :00 - 14 :30 Lunch  
14 :30 - 16 :30 *Workshop ECoS (Emerging Cultures of Sustainability)*  
(Aurélien Gamboni, Anna Grichting, Catherine Quéloz, Sylvie Ramel, Gene Ray, Simon Ripoll-Hurier, Liliane Schneider, Eddie Yuen)

### Jeudi 28 février 2013

- 10 :00 - 12 :30 *Workshop ECoS (Aurélien Gamboni, Anna Grichting, Catherine Quéloz, Sylvie Ramel, Gene Ray, Liliane Schneider, Save as Draft, Eddie Yuen)*

## Participants

**Jenny Brown**, is an artist, currently a recipient of the German Academic Exchange Service (D.A.A.D.). For the last twenty-five years she has worked in education and training, arts and culture, and broadcasting regulation. She was employed as the cultural development coordinator for Blue Mountains City Council during 2011 and 2012, and previous roles include strategy positions at the UTS Empty Spaces Project, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre and dLux Media Arts; and cultural development for the 1.9 million people of Western Sydney (2007-2010). Her sustainability concerns involve large and small scales distributed practice that explore possibilities from within and outside the art field. She is undertaking a Doctorate of Philosophy at Sydney College of the Arts at the University of Sydney, is the Australian correspondent for Cultura21 and the International Summer School of Arts and Sciences for Sustainable Social Transformation, and a committee member of the University of Sydney SCA Graduate School Gallery.

**Abstract**

***Virtuous Allodoxia** My practice aims to encourage others to foster cooperation and invest resources in devising, promoting and adopting strategies that assist with the expansion of the protection of the commons and to explore more equitable ways of doing things. Pierre Bourdieu's work provides a theoretical base for this activity and his concept of allodoxia provides the opportunity to venture a type of art practice that can be seen as a positive allodoxia, a 'virtuous' contaminant or vaccine. My community collaborations and those undertaken by others that aim towards sustained change will be used to illustrate this type of practice.*

**Dr. Anna Grichting** is an architect, urbanist and musician and holds a Doctor of Design from Harvard University. Her research on Liminal Landscapes in territories of conflict connects the physical rifts with the psychological barriers, and explores the ecological evolutions in these confined spaces as catalysts for mediation and reconciliation and for the visioning of new and sustainable futures. Her prospective research looks at borders and buffer zones worldwide, but is particularly focused on the Green Line Buffer Zone in Cyprus, and she is currently editing a book on Social Ecologies in Border Landscapes as well as working on Digital Atlas of Ecological Cooperation. Her current position is Assistant Professor at Qatar University, Doha and working on new paradigms of urban design based on Food Security and Productive Landscapes in Drylands.

**Abstract**

***Thirdscapes: Three Ecologies, Third Landscapes, Third Natures. Symbiotic Systems and Ecological Agencies in Spatial Practices** This presentation looks at new forms of ecological spatial practices based on symbiotic systems and ecological agencies. In particular, it examines how the paradigms of climate change and resource depletion are inducing new ways of practicing and visioning space as well as creating a need for new tools for interdisciplinary collaborations. The work will present a series of different approaches, which will include – experiential environmental peacebuilding in the Balkans, speculative designs on Food Urbanisms in Qatar, a global digital and dynamic Atlas of Ecological Cooperation, and a collaborative initiative for the Green Line of Cyprus.*

**Angelica Navarro** is ambassador – permanent representative of Bolivia to the United Nations and other international organizations. An important figure of Bolivian diplomacy, she has been involved over the past years in the negotiation process on climate change, including the 2009 Copenhagen summit COP15. She took a prominent role in negotiating for the recognition of “climate debt” and the historical responsibility of Western industrial countries, as well as promoting the use of non-Western cultural notions such as indigenous Andean cultures in the context of the summit.

**Abstract**

***La Terre-Mère à l'assaut de la diplomatie. Cultural, political and legal constructions from a Bolivian perspective***

*Shortly following the example of Ecuador, Bolivia has officially allowed rights to nature in 2009, by recognizing a legal status to Pachamama (Mother-Earth) in its new Constitution. Building from the calls of Bolivian social movements, and carried by the new government of Evo Morales, this recognition bears a revolutionary significance in terms of environmental politics. This talk will focus on the historical process of translating ancient knowledge from Andean indigenous peoples, into legal and political objects adapted to a Modern conception of Rights. Notions such as Pachamama, but also suma qamaña (meaning living well, as opposed to living better), are also at the core of the « Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth » proclaimed in*

2010. Furthermore, Bolivian diplomacy has played an active role in the negotiation summits context to promote the use of these notions and open up the Western-based culture of international diplomacy to other forms of « cosmovisions ».

**Gregory Quenet** is professor of environmental history at Centre d'histoire culturelle des sociétés contemporaines, Université de Versailles, St-Quentin en Yvelines. Holder of a PhD on the history of natural disasters in modern time, his research itinerary comes within the scope of a continuity of historical questioning about the politics of nature considered according to different scales and time frames—from the catastrophic event that breaks continuity and creates a local field of experience and management, to, on more global scale, the emerging processes of new political, scientific, media-related objects able to give birth to new kinds of risks.

#### **Abstract**

***Narratives of change and adaptation to climate change** Why do we resist the truth of climate change? Many reasons have been extensively studied including climate scepticism, lobby influences, controversies and uncertainties of climate change, lack of scientific knowledge, and psychological resistance to costly change. However, most the central reason may be related to the difficulty of connecting such global changes to our daily life experience.*

*A joint program University of Versailles - Unesco decided collectively to explore all potentialities of storytelling and narratives in order to embed the global phenomenon of climate change into human experiences and identities. Our hypothesis is that narrative is an efficient translation tool to connect environmental changes to societies through building new communities, and an essential contribution to the development of a real capacity for adaptation.*

**Save as Draft** (Joffrey Becker, Aurélien Gamboni, Axel Meunier, Simon Ripoll-Hurier, Sandrine Teixeira) “Save as Draft” is an artists and researchers collective, leading since 2011 an investigation on climate change representations. Initially formed in the Programme of experimentation in arts and politics (Speap) at Paris Institute of Political Studies, the collective was commissioned to conceive a performative intervention and a protocol of observation for the large re-enactment/simulation of the Copenhagen summit of negotiation on climate change, which was held in Science Po Paris in 2011 with nearly 200 students. This project is now being further developed with installations, performances and talks in both exhibition and academic contexts, and the investigation on representations has been re-designed from a Geneva perspective, in collaboration with Programme CCC and Utopiana foundation.

#### **Abstract**

##### ***Atmospheres in negotiation***

*Global climate change is not only a complex process, it is also a nexus of multiple issues interrelated, involving projections and controversies, negotiations and conflicts, and implying innumerable consequences on natural and social systems that are (for the most part) not yet visible. In this context, the mere possibilities to provide representations of climate change –be it from a scientific, political or artistic perspective– appears to be a crucial issue. Save as Draft thus started to collect these representations –in the form of graphs, concepts, movies, slogans, negotiation drafts, logos, and so on–, and to constitute an archive of interviews held with numerous actors who are, in their own field, giving a form to climate change: such as researchers (climatologists, geologists, mathematicians, anthropologists), actors of the negotiation processes (negotiators, consultants, ambassadors), and creators (filmmakers, graphic designers, artists and activists). The aim of this research is both to get a better understanding of how these representations are being elaborated, and to experiment new ways of translating complexity. Developed since 2011, this research is now focusing on the Geneva context, and will lead to a public event at the end of 2013 in collaboration with students of Programme CCC.*

**Eddie Yuen** is a writer, editor, and radio producer who is researching the political economy and cultural significance of extinction, both of species as well as of language and cultures. This project draws on research on the use of endangered species in Chinese food and medicine. His most recent work is a piece on the discourse of environmental collapse in the book *Catastrophism: The Apocalyptic Politics of Collapse and Rebirth*, edited by Sasha Lilley *et al.* (2012, PM Press). Yuen has co-edited two books on Globalization and “anti-globalization” social movements and is an editor for the journal *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* and teaches in the Urban Studies

Department at the San Francisco Art Institute. He is also a contributing producer for the radio program *Against the Grain* [www.againstthegrain.org](http://www.againstthegrain.org)

### Abstract

#### **Extinctions, Enclosures, and the Devouring of Nature**

*This talk reviews the history and science of mass extinction events in the earth's history and summarizes some recent approaches to current global losses in biodiversity. The role of market forces, and in particular processes of privatization and enclosure, are considered. Finally, current forms of catastrophic narrative and politics in the apocalyptic key are reviewed and critically discussed, and propositions offered about the future role of social movements in the ongoing effort to mitigate and adapt to ecological change.*

**Gene Ray** teaches critical studies in the CCC Research-based Master Program. He writes about the cultural politics of terror and the sublime, the intersections of art and radical politics, and, most recently, responses to biospheric meltdown. He is currently collaborating with a team of junior researchers, associate researchers and Alumni of Research-Based Master Programme of Geneva University of Art and Design on ECoS, a project researching emerging cultures of sustainability. Such cultures, and the communities of practice that correspond to them, may prefigure a paradigm shift in thinking about and enacting the complex interactions between natural and social systems.

Research, studies and works related to issues of ecology, ecosophy, such as studies on organic biotopes, botanical genealogies, climate change refugees, gardens open to interspecies developments, domestic biodiversity, ecological and sustainable economy, bioperformative actions – are in progress or accomplished by CCC students and Alumni, among whom **Valerio Belloni, Hannah Entwisle, Sylvain Froidevaux, Aurélien Gamboni, Adla Isanovic, Klat (Jérôme Massard, Constantin Sgouridis, Saini), Luz Munoz, Maria Adelaida Samper, Janis Schröder, Kate Stevenson.**

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issus de la plupart des disciplines de l'urbain : elle favorise le croisement des savoirs et la confrontation entre des travaux académiques et des expériences de terrain liées au monde professionnel, politique ou associatif. *Métropolitiques* est une revue internationale : s'appuyant sur un réseau de correspondants en France et à l'étranger, elle accueille des textes rédigés dans leur langue d'origine et traduit en anglais une sélection significative de contributions.

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