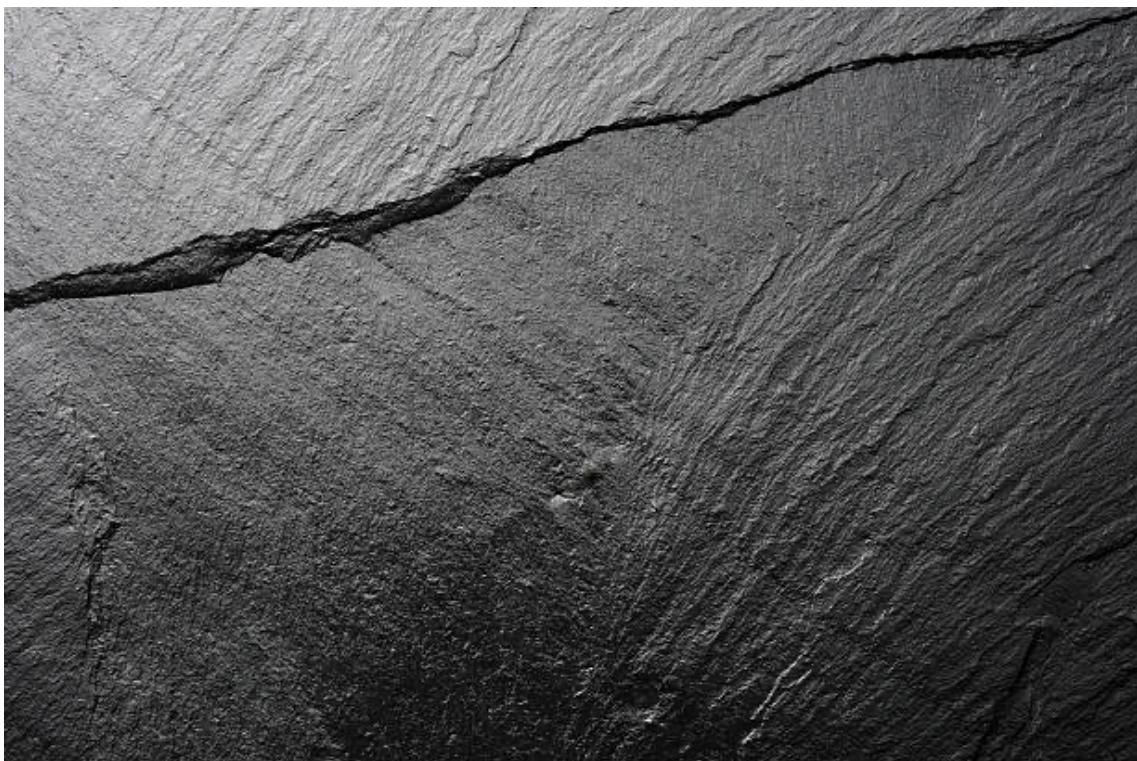




CALL FOR PAPERS

Ecopoetics of stone in ancient literature and its reception





PANEL ORGANIZATION:

ORGANIZER 1:

name	Leila Williamson
e-mail	leila.williamson@ugent.be
affiliation	Ghent University
country	Belgium
biography	<p>Leila Williamson is a PhD researcher at the University of Ghent working on the project 'Coming After: Late Antique EcoPoetics', with a focus on late Latin poetry and the themes of landscapes, things, and temporality. She is also interested in ecocriticism and its relationship to studying ancient literature more broadly. In 2021 she completed a Master of Studies in Latin and Greek Languages and Literature at the University of Oxford; prior to this she obtained a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) at the University of Sydney in 2018.</p>

ORGANIZER 2:

name	Jason König
e-mail	jpk3@st-andrews.ac.uk
affiliation	University of St Andrews
country	Scotland
biography	<p>Prof. Jason König is professor in Classics at the University of St Andrews. He is the author of <i>The Folds of Olympus: Mountains in Ancient Greek and Roman Culture</i> (2022), and the editor of the volume <i>Mountain Dialogues from Antiquity to Modernity</i> (2021). He is also co-director of the St Andrews Centre for Ancient Environmental Studies. His current projects include a book on images of the earth and the surfaces of the earth in the literatures of the Roman empire; an impact project including further publications on the mountains of Greece; a biography of the controversial antiquarian and travel writer Edward Daniel Clarke (1769-1822); and a new research project on <i>Alciphron's Letters</i>.</p>



PANEL SYNOPSIS:

Stone is raw, brute matter: inert, lifeless, unmoving. Yet somehow, stone can also be lively, with its own agency and capacity for narrative, as demonstrated by Jeffrey Jerome Cohen in *Stone: An Ecology of the Inhuman* (2015). This panel seeks contributions that explore the eco poetic potential of stone in ancient literature and its reception. We are interested in the stone of landscape features such as mountains, cliffs, caves, and volcanoes, and also in human interventions such as statues, monuments, inscriptions, and tombs. How has the materiality of stone impacted the aesthetics of ancient texts and their reception? For example, can we find in depictions of stone a sense of impenetrability, monumentality, endurance over time, or erosion? Stone also archives long human and geological histories that undoes or overwhelms human scales of history and time: encountering a ruin or a statue brings us into contact with centuries past, and encountering a mountain brings us into contact with aeons past. How do texts (either in antiquity or its reception) engage with these confrontations of temporal scale, through the mediation of stone?

The panel seeks papers that investigate how stone has interacted with ancient literature and its reception, taking seriously the agency and vibrant materiality of stone. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- A material ecocritical investigation of stone in literature: agency, vibrancy, 'storied matter' (Iovino & Opperman 2012), stone as lively and/or dead...)
- Stone in myth (Sisyphus, Niobe, Medusa...)
- Literary-artistic representations of stony physical environments (mountains, caves, cliffs, volcanoes...) and human interventions (extractive mining, landscaping, building...)
- The interplay of geological time and human time (e.g., encountering the geological history of a landscape feature)
- The materiality of stone in the reception of antiquity and ancient literature (statues, monuments, ruins, archaeology...)
- Stone and aesthetics - e.g., the 'jewelled style' of late antiquity

Select bibliography

Cohen, J. (2015). *Stone: An Ecology of the Inhuman*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Iovino, S. & Opperman, S. (2012). 'Material Ecocriticism: Materiality, Agency, and Models of Narrativity'. *Ecozon@* 3(1), 75-91.

König, J. (2022). *The Folds of Olympus: Mountains in Ancient Greek and Roman Culture*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Roberts, M. (1989). *The Jeweled Style. Poetry and Poetics in Late Antiquity*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Schliephake, C. (ed.) (2017). *Ecocriticism, Ecology, and the Culture of Antiquity*. Lanham: Lexington Books.

Telò, M. & Benjamin, A. (eds) (2024). *Niobes. Antiquity, Modernity, Critical Theory*. Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press.

16th Celtic Conference in Classics

Coimbra 2025

July 15-18 Faculty of Arts and Humanities · University of Coimbra



Observations:

The deadline for panel contributions is **February 20, 2025**.

To submit an abstract for consideration, please fill in the ‘Proposal Template’ found here: <https://www.uc.pt/cech/16-ccc/calls/call-for-papers/> and email it to leila.williamson@ugent.be.

We look forward to your submissions!