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Simone M. Müller, Matthias Schmidt, Kirsten Twelbeck

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Introduction

Simone M. Müller, Matthias Schmidt, and Kirsten Twelbeck

In 2021, the Central American nation of Belize faced state bankruptcy. Yet, just before foreclosure, the country received a loan from the US-based NGO The Nature Conservancy in a debt-for-nature swap scheme. Through this transaction, Belize not only recapitalized its national budget, thus lowering its foreign debt, but it also committed itself to spend about US$ 4 million a year on marine conservation until 2041, double its marine-protection parks, and continue conservation after 2040 through an endowment fund of US$ 23.5 million.[1] Worldwide, the scheme triggered new discussions and renewed hope on how the coupling of fiscal policy and nature conservation could be a way forward to respond to two great issues facing the majority of the world: environmental degradation and debt.[2] At the same time, the deal received no univocal praise. Working through the ambivalences of the scheme, Jonas Gamso, writing for the *Standford Social Innovation Review*, still posed the following question: "Debt-for-Climate Swaps Can Save the Planet. Why Aren't They?"[3]

Debt-for-nature swaps are the exchange of a debtor country's external obligations for the country's agreement to use that money to support conservationist projects.[4] They exist in two formats, either as a three-party swap, where an NGO buys the debt from a creditor country and then re-sells it at a discount to the debtor country, or as a two-country swap between a debtor and a creditor country. In a bilateral swap, the creditor country decides the policy agenda without extensive input from the debtor. This is also the source of the scheme's greatest critique. Heralded as a win-win for proponents, opponents target the scheme as a sell-out of national sovereignty with actors from the West telling "the rest" how to protect nature. Experiences have revealed the deals as being slow, cloaked in secrecy, and administratively inherently complicated. In the end, debt-for-nature swaps remain an ambivalent tool whereby both public and political assessments swing back and forth: is this a way to achieve both the environmental and fiscal stability of developing countries, or is it just another form of ecological imperialism?[5]

Set in motion by climate change, biodiversity loss, or planetary pollution, the call for socio-political and ecological transformations has become increasingly audible in political and public discourse, culminating in the persistent demand for

far-reaching measures to secure the survival of future generations. Initially, a wide variety of actors seem to agree on the necessity of radical socio-ecological changes to combat fatal environmental issues. Yet, this consensus crumbles once concrete measures are put on the table—such as debt-for-nature swaps as well as alternative schemes relating to energy, resource use, or waste disposal—as any change may entail unforeseen difficulties or create new contradictions, even among a coalition of the willing. In some cases, national implementation fails international consensus. In other cases, local urgency is obscured by the planetary scale or temporal dimension of environmental problems.[6] The great complexity of today's socio-environmental crises makes it difficult to take actions that are supported by as many people as possible. Often, serious tensions arise over costs, responsibilities, and accountabilities, also because their distribution among different stakeholders hinges on centuries of uneven growth and extraction. The ecological transformation is also a highly political endeavor, where not only different worldviews, but also different worlds seem to clash.[7] This, in turn, adds to widespread frustration and potentially reinforcing rhetorical defense tactics, narratives, and attitudes that also help modern societies circumvent the socio-environmental dilemmas that mark many of their actions. Ultimately, and particularly in line with the accusations of NGOs such as "Fridays for Future," "Extinction Rebellion," or the "Last Generation," humanity seems to achieve too little too late despite trying.[8]

Instead of despairing about this seemingly locked-in situation, one may look at it as typically human. Both individuals and groups perceive, experience, and react to a situation in surprisingly different ways. Social and cultural factors, individual experience and family relations, neurological processes, and even genetics[9] contribute to the construction of a reality that is, with regard to societies at large, multiple and selective and therefore intrinsically ambivalent. While awareness of the multivocality and inner, societal, and even global conflicts that go along with ecological crisis has made its way into different social science and humanities disciplines, the notion of ecological ambivalence has not yet been addressed systematically from an interdisciplinary viewpoint. Its possibly creative potential for imagining alternative futures has remained underexplored. This edited volume, *Ecological Ambivalence, Complexity, and Change: Perspectives from the Environmental Humanities*, seeks to fill this gap and inspire conversations, new approaches, and narratives across disciplines that capture the dilemma in which conflicting reactions, beliefs, or feelings toward public policies or private practices for "saving planet Earth" threaten to produce a stalemate. From the entry point of the critical and interdisciplinary Environmental Humanities paradigm, this book brings together scholars from a large array of research fields and institutions from the humanities and social sciences that are diverse in terms of archives, theories, and methods. Yet, those are joint together in their interest to not only tackle ecological ambivalences through interdisciplinary conversation and collaboration, but also propose ambivalence as an approach to being in today's world. In 13 contributions and concluding remarks that also survey the individual contributions, authors from fields ranging from Environmental History to Ecological Economics, and from Human Geography to Ecocriticism, investigate the dissonances and dilemmas—or,

as we say, *ambivalences*—wound up with environmental transformation processes, both conceptually (Part I) and empirically (Part II).

In the first part of the book, the authors work through ambivalences of socio-ecological transformation from their respective disciplinary vantage points and so provide the entry to the larger, more conceptual conversation between different disciplines of the book as a whole. The empirical studies in the second part of the book, in turn, tease out different constellations that produce and sustain dissonant modes of engaging with the planetary crisis and so study ecological ambivalences at work. Case studies range from wind farms in India through green mineral mines in Mexico, from chemical contamination in Denmark through Rocky Mountain Arsenal in Denver, USA, and from labor and environmental activists in Spain and Portugal through bioplastic in German schoolbooks. In so crisscrossing the globe, *Ecological Ambivalence, Complexity, and Change* not only provides a global perspective, but also teases out how ecological ambivalences are often situated between power dynamics and inequalities of a Global North-Global South constellation. Additionally, and with a focus on creative environmental communication and narratives—as in Philippe Squarzoni's graphic novel *Climate Changed* or G'Ebinyo Ogbowei's poetry—the contributions also extrapolate the particular contributions of literature and the arts to live with—and possibly overcome—a stagnant status quo and for imagining alternative futures. Not without critically engaging with the concept of ambivalence as such, authors are interested in how creating and experiencing art and literature, and thinking about these forms of human expression, can contribute to a better understanding of today's environmental challenges. In the end, *Ecological Ambivalence, Complexity, and Change: Perspectives from the Environmental Humanities* is as much an exercise in studying and living with dissonances as it is a field guide to engaging with them conceptually and creatively.

Ambivalence—More Than an Expression of Disorder and Difference

Ambivalence, i.e., the possibility of assigning an object or an event to more than one category, is foremost an expression of unresolved tension. Such tension is a feature of human communication because despite its classifying function, language fails to "achieve some sort of commodious filing cabinet that contains all the files that contain all the items that the world contains—but confines each file and each item within a separate place of its own."[10] In principle, such tensions accompany human action and being, and they are the result of conflicting desires, feelings, and thoughts existing side by side.

While ambivalence is a human reaction to contradictions, and complexity has always existed, the term itself did not emerge until the Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler established it in 1910 to describe behavioral patterns in schizophrenia.[11] A composite of the Latin terms *ambo* (both) and *valere* (worth, strong), ambivalence has since served not only to explain the collective psychology leading to ruptures in history and culture, but also as an approach and method to re-think potentially problematic, or outdated, societal norms and values. It is hardly surprising, then, that ambivalence has been a key element in the epistemic, ethical,

and aesthetic response of the humanities and social sciences to techno-economic modernity. While the natural and technological sciences, in line with a modernist mindset dominating the public discourse, promise to offer unequivocal concepts and unambiguous answers, the humanities and social sciences have cultivated alternative forms of thinking in relational, non-binary, and thus ambivalent ways that question monopolistic claims to truth and certainty via an awareness of their implications in pluriversal connectivities and complex power relations. However, this rich legacy of critical-reflective thinking in ambivalence has so far not been actively employed, let alone systematically addressed. It has only recently begun to find attention in view of the problems emerging from translating ecological ideas into transformative practice.[12]

Nicholas Gamso's question as to why debt-for-climate swaps are not saving the planet illustrates how, in recent years, a particular kind of ambivalence, *ecological ambivalence*, has come to the fore in public and political discussions. The term refers to the disorder, ecological grief, global dissonance, and denial we—both as individuals and as members of society—feel, witness, seek to understand, or combat in the face of multiple and seemingly unresolvable planetary crises. As contributions in this volume illustrate, *ecological ambivalence* works on multiple scales and in multiple formats. It takes the form of the symbolic tree we plant when using transportation high on carbon emissions or of the organic grapes we purchase, delivered from far-flung, water-scarce regions. *Ecological ambivalence* travels with scholars engaged in environmental issues who still fly from all over the world to far-away in-person meetings. More generally, it is the state of inaction and paralysis in the face of environmental damage despite easily accessible knowledge and clear recommendations from the scientific community, alongside the string of new contradictions and difficulties that well-intended actions can easily cause given the complexities of both ecological and socio-political systems. On a systemic level, *ecological ambivalence* is the unresolved tensions attached to setting-up wind farms on indigenous territory, thereby destroying sacred sites and disrupting religious practices or the remediation of contaminated sites without thinking-through the absence of an "ultimate sink."[13] It is the engagement of the World Economic Forum in Davos with matters of climate change, or the involvement of oil-producing countries at COP28, hosted in Dubai, that have observers swaying between greenwashing and the green economy. Finally, it also is the necessary transition to alternative means of mobility, such as e-fuels, that represents a "solution" that opens up just another can of worms.

As we fail to make sense of such complex situations or to choose between alternatives that each represents a catch-22, ambivalence is often accompanied by anxiety and discomfort. In recent years, climate anxiety—*Klimaangst*—has become a studied mass phenomenon, particularly among the younger generations, as well as its counter-form, climate denialism.[14] The state of angst, inaction, and paralysis that affects societies while they should instead be taking action has created a conundrum that the social sciences have set out to solve in their studies on human behavior. Environmental psychologists, neuro-scientists, economists, scholars of communication and, to a degree, philosophers, together with sociologists,[15] are at

the forefront of unpacking why individuals and collectives do not attempt to mitigate climate change or even resist necessary transformations: after all, information about the facts is easily accessible, recommendations from the climate sciences are clear, there is a moral imperative based on knowing what is required, and having the freedom to change how we do things is a basic promise in democratic societies.[16] As this scholarship suggests, however, many people do not want to follow what appears to be evidence-based practice. Experimental studies show that those denying climate action often do so to protect their privileges or to avoid uncomfortable emotions, rather than for reasons of ignorance.[17] Additionally, scholars suggest, the human mind rather responds to the challenges of climate change with new narratives of evasion that help sustain old privileges, rather than with behavioral change. This deviation in narratology, in turn, some environmental scholars and activists seek to counter with yet other, perhaps more radically hopeful, narratives, ultimately creating a ping-pong between seemingly incompatible positions.[18]

The notion that transformation measures pose a major challenge to societies has become particularly obvious since the late 19th century, when technological innovation, secularization, and societal changes challenged cultural norms and the way of life in industrialized countries. The enthusiasm for the new and untried went along with deep-rooted anxieties concerning the future. In his elaborations on modernity, sociologist Zygmunt Bauman attests to European societies and politics yearning to diminish the ambivalences of modernization. Technological and cultural transformation processes, along with political instability, fueled the desire for clarity and order, ultimately defining the fight against ambivalence as a characteristic of that era. At the same time, art and literature, as well as other forms of cultural creativity, in their response to the challenges of modernity have emphasized the need to acknowledge ambivalence and ambiguity, not only as an irritable disturbance of logocentric control, but also as an intrinsic part of all human experience, thought, and action.[19] In the field of philosophy, the critique of modernity advanced in the theory of the "dialectic of enlightenment," as advocated by Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, exposed the Janus-faced nature of instrumental reason in its alienating effects on humans and their relationship with the natural world.[20]

Adjusting this dialectic to the era of the Anthropocene, the era when humanity's impact on the planet exceeds that of the sun, Ulrich Beck's concept of reflexive modernity thematized the severe repercussions of accelerated modernization. Beck's world risk society is faced with historically unprecedented risks accompanying its techno-economic advances, such as the threat of nuclear destruction, pollution, or unmanageable global waste.[21] As of the 1960s, and with increasing fervor, influential post-structural theorists such as Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, and Judith Butler exposed difference and ambiguity (which refers to something that can be understood in two or more ways or is open to interpretation, like Derrida's neologism "différance") as new ways of reading texts, history, or gender as fluid rather than as fixed entities. The destabilization of established binaries was equally the concern of postcolonial critic Homi K. Bhabha, whose notion of colonial mimicry undid the hierarchization between colonizer and colonized and established the "third space" concept as a site of creative tensions and the negotiation of cultural

hybridities.[22] Since the 2000s, an ongoing ontological turn has emphasized how both unity and diversity must be considered simultaneously if we are to understand how not only different worldviews, but also different worlds come into being.[23]

Ecological ambivalence is thus more than an expression of disorder and difference, or merely a critique of binary conceptual thinking. In an era of climate change, biodiversity loss, and planetary contamination, it is an intrinsic part of all human experience, thought, and action—an expression of the current Zeitgeist and logic. It works structurally on the individual as well as the societal level and ranges from cognitive dissonance to the seemingly incommensurateness of even institutions, ideologies, or worlds. To study the complexity of these variants of ambivalences that emerge whenever humans try to define and implement concrete measures to improve the environmental status quo, this volume, *Ecological Ambivalence, Complexity, and Change: Perspectives from the Environmental Humanities*, draws on a rich legacy of critical-reflective thinking in ambivalence. As its two-part structure illustrates, however, it does so, as a confluence of simultaneous developments in different disciplines, employing an interdisciplinary lens that brings contributions from many different disciplines into conversation.

Ambivalence as an Approach of Lived Interdisciplinarity

Many disciplines in the humanities and social sciences rely on sociological and philosophical conceptualizations of ambivalence, ranging from Adorno to Beck, to expose the problematic dualisms that reside in much contemporary thinking and action. With their focus on and consideration of different social groups, political perspectives, economic interests, and spatial dimensions, for instance, the social sciences, including Human Geography, inevitably encounter ambivalences. Individual interests and needs conflict with social necessities, and what is considered necessary at a global level can cause considerable damage at the local. Protecting the rainforest to safeguard biodiversity and mitigate climate change for the benefit of humanity often leads to violence and the displacement of local communities. The call for decarbonization, the use of remote areas as carbon sinks, or safeguarding the global gene pool are loudly articulated by the affluent societies of the Global North, but they are seen by the majority of the world as a form of encroachment on their sovereignty, or even as neo-colonialism.[24] Yet, so far, the scholarly discussion rarely explicitly focuses on ambivalence as a theoretical term that can open up new ways of thinking and instead attempts to explore conflicts that emerge in environmental transformation contexts. *Ecological Ambivalence, Complexity, and Change: Perspectives from the Environmental Humanities* seeks to propose ambivalence not only as a descriptive mode or a tool of analysis, but also as a perspective and an approach of lived interdisciplinarity and of engaging with the world.

Caspar Battegay's remark about the difference between ambiguity and ambivalence sets the tone for this lived interdisciplinarity and engagement: "[…] the observation that our world can be confusingly ambiguous and exhausting is banal. The fact that it is ambivalent, on the other hand, seems somehow interesting."[25]

Battegay is hardly the first to celebrate the invigorating potential of ambivalence. A century before the Swiss psychiatrist Eugen Bleuler coined the term ambivalence, poet John Keats admired William Shakespeare's "negative capability" and cast it as a creative method of "being in uncertainties […] without any irritable searching for fact and reason."[26] In literature, linguistics, and literary studies, the creative potential of ambivalence is actually commonplace—poetry in particular, but also straightforward forms of prose rely on the multilayered nature and ambiguity of language to defy the familiar and convey the idea that there is something other than what we have learned to accept as a given. Ambivalence as an approach, we argue in this book, puts this creative potential to use by highlighting contradictions without smoothing them out, by putting the dilemmas out there as something equally invigorating and disturbing. Only by fully recognizing ambivalence can it become a useful tool in the search for possible pathways that lead the way out of an impossible situation.

The Environmental Humanities as a critical and interdisciplinary field, furthermore, provide a particularly suitable framework to undertake such an intellectual endeavor. With its many different scholarly and institutional points of departure, accompanied by journals, conference, and research initiatives (such as the International Doctoral Program Um(Welt)Denken. Rethinking Environment, in the context of which this book emerged), the field took off as a global phenomenon around the turn of this millennium. Those who have since joined the experiment share a critique of the limited focus of earlier environmental histories, its essentialism toward nature and declensionist narratology, and challenge the persistent anthropocentric bias of dominant ethical and political theories. A key and ongoing conceptual point of critique is the nature-culture divide that puts humans outside of and in control of "nature."[27] Importantly, however, Environmental Humanities did not emerge proposing a new object of study, a new humanistic perspective on not-humanistic fields, or a particular set of methods. It emphasized the need to work collaboratively from the humanities and social sciences to adequately respond to the complexity of ecological crises with constructive knowledge and criticism.[28]

As an interdisciplinary field committed to complex modes of analysis, we argue, Environmental Humanities are hence perfectly placed to embrace ambivalence as an approach that recognizes the simultaneity of difference and unity, without leveling global inequality. It can do so in two important ways: first, by fully playing out the field's mindfulness of different methods, approaches, theories, and archives and, second, by placing particular emphasis on its critical ontological approach that seeks to move beyond an understanding of differences to facilitate collaboration and nourish compromise. Everyday practice in the interdisciplinary Environmental Humanities involves not merely describing difference, but also engaging in the ongoing practice of listening to and connecting with the other and finding a joint or compatible methodology, approach, or even solution. The contributions in Part I of this book are living testimony to this process of interdisciplinary collaboration where disciplinary entry points—ranging from vocabulary to citation practices—are introduced and discussed. Contributions in Part II of this book, then demonstrate how scholars from the Environmental Humanities are particularly prone to

identifying the inter-connectivity between mental states, economic developments, and socio-ecological transformation processes and the powerful role of ambivalence as both a risk and an opportunity for finding solutions in the face of global ecological threats, collective ignorance, and individual depression. Chapters exemplify how conflicts and perspectives clash between the Global North and the Global South, or how powerful actors engage in greenwashing or condone environmental damage in the pursuit of profit while ignoring the interests of marginalized groups. What comes to the fore are the seemingly irresolvable contradictions between the need for decarbonization and the desire for security and prosperity, along with the question of solidarity and impossible alliances between labor rights and environmental protection. Lived experiences collide with business strategies and the dark sides of taken-for-granted consumerism. What all authors bring to this book helps in maintaining its disciplinary specificity and distinct methodological borders while hoping to cross-pollinize ideas, inspire conversations and new collaborations across the boundaries that exist between academic fields, and secure their respective scholarly standards. This claim positions this book as a contribution to a field that envisions itself as always "in the making" while creating and maintaining a space for scholarly controversy, interdisciplinary encounters, and fruitful ambivalence.

Conceptually grounded in the Environmental Humanities, and contributing to the self-understanding and the definition of the field, *Ecological Ambivalence, Complexity, and Change* is a multifaceted, highly informed conversation between experts from the humanities, including the humanities-minded social sciences, and economics. The book asks how the humanities *and* the social sciences can work together to help humanity develop and cultivate the individual, collective, and organizational skills that our societies need to overcome paralysis and engage in practical action—all of which needs to be done in a prudent and responsible manner. Each author engages in "writing across the border" of their discipline, thus illustrating a special awareness vis-à-vis related, and less related, fields. This makes this book an exercise in building intellectual pathways between theoretical approaches and case studies, thereby connecting knowledge and insights from anthropology, cultural studies, economics and management research, environmental ethics, history, Human Geography, literary studies, political science, postcolonial studies, and sociology.[29]

Notes

1 The Nature Conservacy, "Case Study. Belize Blue Bonds for Ocean Conservation," 2023, www.nature.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/TNC-Belize-Debt-Conversion-Case-Study.pdf; Naturevest, "Belize Debt Conversion Case Study," last modified May 17, 2022, www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/who-we-are/how-we-work/finance-investing/naturevest/belize-debt-conversion-case-study/.

2 Xiaoyi Jiang and Hao Cao, "Implementing the Debt-for-Nature Swaps for Marine Protected Areas: Case Studies from Seychelles and Belize," *Humanities & Social Sciences Communications* 11, no. 1 (2024): 331–339, https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-02855-3; Nicholas Owen, "Belize: Swapping Debt for Nature," *IMF Country Focus*, May 4, 2022, www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2022/05/03/CF-Belize-swapping-debt-for-nature.

3 Jonas Gamso, "Debt-for-Climate Swaps Can Save the Planet. Why Aren't They?" *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, August 15, 2023, https://doi.org/10.48558/RK2K-BS67.
4 Michael Occhiolini, "Debt-for-nature swaps," *Policy Research Working Paper Series* 393 (1990).
5 Georgie Wilson, "Debt-for-nature swaps: The right kind of climate finance or not?" *The Climate Reality Project*, last modified March 13, 2024, www.climaterealityproject.org/blog/debt-nature-swaps-right-kind-climate-finance-or-not; Gamso, "Debt-for-Climate Swaps Can Save the Planet."
6 On the intersectionality of time, space, and body see Simone Müller and May-Brith Ohman-Nielsen (eds.), *Toxic Timescapes. Examining Toxicity across Time and Space* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2023).
7 Here, the influence of the ontological turn and the works of Bruno Latour, Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, and Philippe Descola are important.
8 See, for instance, Greta Thunberg, "Speech at The U.N. Climate Action Summit," September 23, 2019, Transcript by NPR, www.npr.org/2019/09/23/763452863/transcript-greta-thunbergs-speech-at-the-u-n-climate-action-summit.
9 Red-green colorblindness is a particularly good example to exemplify that people can "color their world" very differently.
10 Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and Ambivalence* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), 2.
11 Eugen Bleuler, "Ambivalenz," *Zentralblatt für Psychoanalyse* 1 (1911): 266–268, last modified May 6, 2019, www.sgipt.org/medppp/gesch/ambiv-g.htm.
12 See for instance Ayushi Dhawan and Simone M. Müller (eds.), "Hazardous Hope. Repositioning Troubled Research (and Researchers) in Times of a Troubled Planet," *Environmental Humanities* 16, no. 2 (2024): 433–440, https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-11150123.
13 Joel A. Tarr, *The Search for the Ultimate Sink: Urban Pollution in Historical Perspective* (Ohio: University of Akron Press, 1996).
14 See, for instance, Christian Jakob, *Endzeit: Die neue Angst vor dem Weltuntergang und der Kampf um unsere Zukunft* (Berlin: Christoph Links Verlag, 2023); Bern Rieken and Reinhold Popp, *Eco-Anxiety – Zukunftsangst und Klimawandel: Interdisziplinäre Zugänge* (Münster: Waxmann, 2021); Joshua Trey Barnett, *Mourning in the Anthropocene: Ecological grief and earthly coexistence (East Lansing:* Michigan State University Press, 2022); Lee Zimmermann, *Trauma and the discourse of climate change: Literature, psychoanalysis and denial* (New York: Routledge, 2020).
15 See Debra J. Davidson, "Rethinking adaptation: Emotions, evolution, and climate change," *Nature and Culture* 13, no. 3 (2018) 378–402; Jordi Xifra and Almiron Núria (eds.), *Climate change denial and public relations: Strategic communication and interest groups in climate inaction* (New York: Routledge, 2020).
16 Michael Hulme, *Why We Disagree on Climate Change. Understanding Controversy, Inaction, and Opportunity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Kari Marie Norgaard, *Living in Denial. Climate Change, Emotions, and Everyday Life* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011); George Marshall, *Don't even think about it* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014); Andrew J. Hoffman, *How Culture Shapes the Climate Change Debate* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015); Dale Jamieson, *Reason in a Dark Time. Why the Struggle against Climate Change Failed – And what it means for Our Future* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).
17 Marlis Charlotte Wullenkord, "From denial of facts to rationalization and avoidance: Ideology, needs, and gender predict the spectrum of climate denial," *Personality and individual differences* 193 (2022).

18 Peter Friederici and Kathleen Dean Moore, *Beyond climate breakdown: envisioning new stories of radical hope* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2022); Christof Mauch, "Slow Hope. Rethinking Ecologies of Crisis and Fear," *RCC Perspectives: Transformations in Environment and Society* 1 (2019): 1–43, doi.org/10.5282/rcc/8556.

19 In literary studies, for example William Empson's *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930), one of the most influential works of literary criticism in the 20th century develops an elaborate system of different kinds of ambiguity for describing the response of art and literature to the complexities of the modern era, thus offering thinking in ambiguity as an alternative to reductionist techno-economic conceptions of modernity.

20 Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, Dialektik der Aufklärung. Philosophische Fragmente*,* in *Max Horkheimer: Gesammelte Schriften,* Band 5, ed. Max Horkheimer (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1987).

21 Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society: On the Search for Lost Security (Frankfurt am Main:* Suhrkamp, 2007).

22 See Caspar Battegay, "#Ambivalenz: Der Nutzen des Nicht-Entscheidens," *Geschichte der Gegenwart*, last modified January 25, 2023, https://geschichtedergegenwart.ch/ambivalenz-der-nutzen-des-nicht-entscheidens/.

23 Annemarie Mol, *The Body Multiple: Ontology in Medical Practice* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2002); Marisol de la Cadena and Mario Blaser, *A World of Many Worlds* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2018); Anna Tsing, *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection* (Princton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

24 David Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); Ramachandra Guha and Joan Martínez-Alier, *Varieties of Environmentalism. Essays North and South* (London: Earthscan, 1997).

25 Battegay, "#Ambivalenz."

26 John Keats, *The Complete Poetical Works and Letters of John Keats* (Boston and New York: Houghton & Mifflin, 1899), 277.

27 William Cronon, "The Trouble with Wilderness or Getting Away with the Wrong Nature," in *Uncommon Ground. Rethinking the Human Place in Nature*, ed. William Cronon (New York: Norton, 1995): 69–90; Sverker Sörlin, "Environmental Humanities. Why Should Biologists Interested in the Environment Take the Humanities Seriously," *BioScience* 62, no. 9 (2012): 788–789; Elizabeth M. DeLoughrey, Jill Didur, and Anthony Carrigan (eds.), *Global Ecologies and the Environmental Humanities: Postcolonial Approaches* (New York: Routledge, 2015); Astrida Neimanis, Cecilia Asberg, and Johan Hedrén, "Four Problems, Four Directions for Environmental Humanities. Towards Critical Posthumanities for the Anthropocene," *Ethics and the Environment* 20, no. 1 (2015): 6797; Deborah Bird Rose et al., "Thinking through the Environment, Unsettling the Humanities," *Environmental Humanities* 1 (2012): 1–5.

28 Ursula Heise, "Planet, Species, Justice—and the Stories We Tell about Them," in *The Routledge Companion to the Environmental Humanities,* ed. Ursula K. Heise, Jon Christensen and Michelle Niemann (London: Routledge, 2017): 1–10; Robert Emmett and David Nye, *The Environmental Humanities: A Critical Introduction* (Boston: MIT Press, 2017).

29 A full survey of the individual contributions can be found in the concluding remarks of this book, authored by Hubert Zapf.