



Interpreting modalities of environmental discourse in select blue humanities writings

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Abstract

Environmental discourses are a way to think about the environment by examining how people use language to discuss environmental issues. This examines how language and discourse affect the environment and ecology, and in turn how language is used in the interactions between humans, other species, and the physical environment. As a subgenre of it, prismatic ecology entails the study of water in literature which is often called the "Blue humanities". This field of scholarship focuses on the centrality of ocean imagery in literature, and aims to re-establish a humanistic connection with the ocean. Blue Humanities attempts to re-read the flotsam of canonical literatures by re-visiting literary studies and looking at the wreckage through a blue lens. The ocean has long been a potent symbol in literature and art, evoking a wide range of feelings and ideas, from the sublime to the tragic. In this context, an attempt has been made in this paper to develop a qualitative data analysis on the discourse features of the texts of three literary types *viz.* poetry, drama and prose narrative foregrounding hydro-centric diligence leading to anthropogenic conscientious effects. Firstly, *Riders to the Sea* by J.M. Synge is a play that focuses on how the sea is a constant threat to the humans and ironically it is vested with the sources of life and death. The play explores how humans cannot control nature and they must serve and conserve it instead. Secondly, *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* by John Steinbeck details a six-week marine specimen-collecting boat expedition he made in 1940 at various sites in the Gulf of California that is also known as the Sea of Cortez reflecting on the author's thinking that provides the prototype for many of the pivotal characters in his fiction, and the insights it gives into the philosophies of life. Thirdly, it analyses the poem "Praise Song for Oceania" by Craig Santos Perez that explores the relationship between the ocean and humanity, and the need to acknowledge the destructive effects of colonization and European exploration. It is a song of praise of water for having hydrologic cycles, dilute heavy metals, greenhouse gases, sewage and radioactive waste pollutants seeking excuse and develop oceanoptimism and expresses obligation for determining the destiny of the earth. Perez uses irony to convey his point of view, such as by "praising" the ocean's ability to tolerate mistreatment. In all these, the sea has been presented as a ubiquitous presence with enormous story-upturning power. It is observed that the dynamic interactive forces constructed in contexts of the writings constitute a strong cognition relating to the manifestations of water. The language of all the three writings have been replete with hydro-centric perspectives.

Keywords: Discourse analysis, prismatic ecology, oceanoptimism, notions of water, hydro-centric perspectives

Introduction

1. Blue Humanities: An Overview

The blue humanities name a current of scholarly and artistic discourses that foregrounds human relationships with water. The thinking in these contexts are attempting to widen the focus to engage global, non-Western, and Indigenous materials. The field of Blue Humanities has become increasingly relevant in an era of climate change, rising sea levels, and the disappearance of oceanic biodiversity. It is a branch of the Critical Post- Humanities and the Environmental Humanities that explores art, literature, culture, and history through the lens of the Ocean. The Blue Humanities are a call to action for all humanity to think beyond the artificial boundaries that separate land and water and to acknowledge our mutual dependence and responsibility to safeguard our oceans.

Developments in Oceanic Studies have contributed to the rise of Blue Humanities in recent years. It has evolved to traverse a wide range of disciplines, including Blue Culture Studies, Maritime History, Marine Biology, and Coastal Sociology. Blue Humanities attempts to re-read the flotsam of canonical literatures by re-visiting literary studies and looking at the wreckage through a blue lens. The sea/ocean has long been a potent symbol in literature and art, evoking a wide range of feelings and ideas, from the sublime to the tragic. In the words of McKinstry (2019)^[5]:

"The sea gives us time to think about ourselves in terms of where we have been,

where we are now, and where we might be going. We can journey across the sea,

or we can travel mentally, guided and reassured by its ceaseless rhythm of tides

and waves in which each moment is individual, yet part of some greater cycle or

scheme." (p.3, *The Sea in the Literary Imagination*)

In Homer's *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*, the oceans are portrayed as unfathomable perilous deeps, full of monsters capable of overwhelming human characters. Shakespeare frequently uses the ocean as a metaphor for hope and change in his plays. As for the Romantic poets, the seas arouse nostalgia and longing. Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, J. M. Barrie's *Peter Pan*, Gabriel Garcia Márquez's *Love in the Time of Cholera*, and Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea* have fished for metaphors of life, destiny and the unknown in the sea. In addition, many poems, such as John Masefield's "Sea Fever" and Lord Byron's "The Isles of Greece" explore the power and grandeur of the sea. In postcolonial literatures, seas and waves were harbingers of a new regime, and faith. Throughout history, the oceans have stood as a symbol of supremacy for the great naval forces that mastered them and used them to their advantage. As a conduit for trade between far-flung countries and empires, the ocean helped to fuel incredible prosperity.

The complexities of our evolving relationship with our planet's water bodies is the domain we find ourselves in, at this conference on Blue Humanities. As sea-explorers say, more is known about the dark side of the moon than is known about the depths of the oceans. In studying the sea, we return to our beginnings. Between technological advances, scientific discoveries, artistic endeavours and the changing planet, the sea lurks now in our dreams and nightmares, now more than ever.

2. Environmental Discourse

Environmental Discourse refers to a shared way for people to understand the world around them. This form of understanding can be rooted in the language that we use. It occurs as there is a social aspect with regards to environmental issues. Environmental discourse is linked to environmental cognition and the deep ecological awareness determines the language of such writings. What's more, in such writings, the writers express their nostalgic feelings over the past and present of the natural ambiance that we have. Some of them attach human body and soul to the living entities of nature. Some others lament the loss of the natural components of biome, and thus envision the disastrous consequences of the world as a consequence of destructive activities of human being and climate change.

Research Design

On a random selection basis, the present paper takes into a critical consideration of three contemporary literary writings of the three distinct literary types *viz.* poetry, drama and novel. In poetry, "Praise Song for Oceania" By Craig Santos Perez; in play, *Riders to the Sea* by J.M. Synge; and in sea voyaging narrative, *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* by John Steinbeck. Through a qualitative method and textual data analysis, the research insights focus on how the discourse of such writings have been designed empathetically engineered blue cognition through the fabric of hydro-centric perceptions with a potential backdrop of loss of blue habitat.

Rider to the Sea: Staging the Power of the Sea

Irish playwright J.M. Synge's *Riders to the Sea* was published in 1904. It shows us the power of the sea. Set on an island west of Ireland where countries of isolation have produced a unique and rugged culture dependent on wrestling a livelihood from the sea. The sea pervades the lives of the islanders and the prevailing atmosphere is that of despair. The details of the play are utterly naturalistic. The picture of the place and life of the people dwelling in the island reveals the harshness of their realities. The play details the struggles of the dwellers of the island against the forces of nature, which are beyond their control.

"Nora: Middling bad, God help us. There's a great roaring in the west, and it's worse it'll be getting when the tide's turned to the wind." (p.19, *Riders to the Sea*)

The people cannot live without the sea, even though the sea holds a disaster for them. The paradox is that the sea is their major means of survival and, at the same time, their death trap. Maurya, an old woman, loses her father-in-law, husband, all her sons to the sea, and the wind and the dark night. She loses two of her six sons, Stephen and Shawn, to the great wind; they are later found in the "Bay of Gregory of the Golden Mouth". Her husband lost his life in a dark night and his corpse was never recovered. Her fourth son Patch drowned in the sea. Michael, her fifth son, also drowned and no one found his corpse. A young priest later presents Nora a bundle containing a shirt and a plain

stocking believed to be Michael's. His death is such an inglorious one after his entire struggle for survival in the harsh environment, he dies with no one to lament his demise. Bartley, Maurya's youngest son insists on going to Connemara to sell their horses in order to eke out a living. He is so serious and confident about his duties that he failed to realize the devastating power of wild nature, especially the vast sea. At a primary level, the conflict in the *Riders to the Sea* is physical, for it involves a direct confrontation between humanity and its surrounding environment between men and nature, between the islanders and the sea. Man has to venture out into the sea in order to procure food, something necessary for his physical existence. The sea often retaliates by taking away the physical existence of man.

But at a deeper level, the war rages within the soul of the man. The struggle of the family against the sea signifies the struggle of the peasants against their harsh environment when Nora asks, "Didn't the young priest say the Almighty God won't leave her destitute with no son living?" (*Riders*, p.11). Maurya responds that "It's little the like of him knows of the sea ..." (*Riders*, p.11). This shows that the peasants are the only ones vulnerable to disaster. Maurya heart-wrenchingly comments, when the corpse of her youngest son is brought on a plank, "There are all gone now, and there isn't anything more the sea can do to me.... They are all together in this, and the end is come." (*Riders*, p. 13). There is a blend of desperation and audacity in Maurya's comment. It implies that her sorrows have reached their zenith where all fears and anxieties and the efforts to avert them are over. The play ends with total submission to fate. The two most potent and natural symbols are enshrined in the title itself: the "sea" and the "rider". The sea plays an important role in Irish folklore and the rider is an archetypal symbol, for many rider's ride to their death in warfare.

Ecocritical perspectives give a lot of importance to the landscape in the play. The occupation of the islanders is closely associated with the sea. The keening of the woman in the funeral is a practice unique to the people of Aran Island. In *Riders to the Sea*, Maurya advises her son not to go into the sea as she is sure it will lead to his death and she will be left with only two daughters and no son in the world. The play focuses on the importance of woman in absence of their male protectors. Nora is married to Dan Burke, a farmer, not out of love, but practical considerations. They live in a cottage in County Wicklow. The boring life in the glen can by no means satisfy Nora. Nora Burke in this play is more aware of her identity and more daring to pursue what she wants, which is evident in the way she deals with men and the landscape. Actually, Nora Burke is no ordinary woman willing to sacrifice herself for the sake of family, nation and the nature. The pretence of death by Dan Burke throughout most part of the play may well signify the symbolic death of her husband, for the home is virtually supported by Nora alone. In *Riders to the Sea*, Maurya is forced to reconcile with what fate has to offer her, yet Nora Burke here exhibits her independence as to which way to go and what life to live in the future. Nora's self-assertiveness as a woman is significantly shown at the end of the play when she reprimands her husband and then accepts the Tramp's proposal.

The Aran Island forms the major locale for most J.M. Synge's plays, and Synge speaks of several incidents in the book which have contributed to the main theme of his plays. He focuses on the central conflict of man in community against the forces of nature. The conflict between staying and leaving in Synge's plays has so far attracted a great deal

of critical notice. It has become commonplace that has main characters face a crucial choice: either to stay within the boundaries of a certain community or to abandon it for wandering or for death. At the same time, the fear of loneliness and transience of love have repeatedly been connected to this choice.

The subtle paganism is constrained to face the unbeatable force of nature. The sea not only helps developing a blue cognition among them but also helps develop adaptability to the dual realities.

The Log from the Sea of Cortez: A Live Documentation of the Oceanic Realities

The oceanic narrative is a useful work of travel literature, and it is a pioneering work of intertidal ecology, though it was written a full three decades before Earth Day turned environmental thinking into one of our national pastimes.

“Man might be described fairly adequately, if simply, as a two-legged paradox.

He has never become accustomed to the tragic miracle of consciousness. Perhaps,

as has been suggested, his species is not set, has not jelled, but is still in a state of

becoming, bound by his physical memories to a past of struggle and survival, limited

in his futures by the uneasiness of thought and consciousness.” (p.58, *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*)

The book details the journey and scientific expedition of Steinbeck and his friend Ed Ricketts as they explore the Sea of Cortez, collecting marine specimens and observing the natural world. Steinbeck reflects on the interconnectedness of all life forms and the relationship between humans and the natural environment, highlighting the beauty and complexity of marine life. The narrative delves into philosophical discussions about the nature of existence, the purpose of life, and the human condition, including non-teleological thinking. Then, it focuses on the deep friendship and intellectual partnership between Steinbeck and Ricketts, emphasizing the value of companionship and teamwork in scientific endeavors. It details descriptions of marine life and the process of scientific inquiry are key elements, showcasing the importance of careful observation and documentation. Steinbeck raises awareness about the impact of human activity on the environment, touching on themes of conservation and the need for ecological balance. Also, the narrative includes interactions with local Mexican communities, offering insights into different ways of life and perspectives on modernity and tradition.

In the beginning, the crew try to settle into the rhythm of life at sea, adjusting to the boat's movements, organizing their living spaces, and taking on their roles. The narrative captures the beauty and tranquility of the ocean, with descriptions of pelicans flying in formation and a curious sea lion observing their boat. It highlights the beginning of the voyage, the crew's adaptation to life at sea, and the excitement of starting their journey into the unknown waters of the Sea of Cortez. The crew continues their journey, observing the rich marine life and the ecological balance of the regions they visit. They document various species and their interactions, noting the abundance and diversity of marine organisms. It also highlights the importance of understanding these ecological relationships and the role of each species in maintaining the balance of the marine environment.

The crew faces challenges in collecting and preserving specimens. They reflect on the significance of their work and the difficulties involved in maintaining the integrity of

their samples. They observe marine animal behavior and interactions, documenting the complex relationships within the marine community. They note the roles of different species in the ecosystem and the delicate balance that sustains marine life, and focuses on the intricate dynamics of marine ecosystems and the importance of each species in maintaining ecological stability. They note variations in marine life due to geographical differences, discussing the distribution of species across different regions of the Gulf. They document the presence of unique species and their adaptations to specific environmental conditions.

“Nights at anchor in the Gulf are quiet and strange. The water is smooth, almost solid,

and the dew is so heavy that the decks are soaked. The little waves rasp on the shell

beaches with a hissing sound, and all about in the darkness the fishes jump and

splash. Sometimes a great ray leaps clear and falls back on the water with a sharp

report. And again, a school of tiny fishes' whisper along the surface, each one, as

it breaks clear, making the tiniest whisking sound. And there is no feeling, no

smell, no vibration of people in the Gulf.” (p. 55, *The Log from the Sea of Cortez*)

The team faces new challenges at different collecting stations, documenting a wide range of species and their ecological roles. They encounter unique marine organisms and note their behaviors and interactions. The chapter highlights the ongoing process of discovery and the continuous learning involved in marine exploration. They navigate various challenges, observing the effects of human activities and natural phenomena on marine ecosystems. They emphasize the need for conservation and sustainable practices, highlighting the fragility of marine environments.

The crew documents marine animal behavior and interactions, noting the presence of unique species and their adaptations. They emphasize the importance of studying marine biodiversity in various geographical contexts to understand ecological diversity. It continues their exploration, encountering unique marine organisms and documenting their behaviors and interactions. They reflect on the significance of their work and the importance of preserving marine biodiversity. They explore intertidal zones, observing species adaptations and ecological relationships. They document interactions between organisms and environmental factors, highlighting the importance of intertidal habitats in the broader marine ecosystem. Then, they arrive in Guaymas, a town with more modern amenities and communication facilities. They reflect on their journey and the contrast between their current environment and the remote areas they previously visited. The chapter highlights their mixed feelings about returning to civilization, as they have grown accustomed to the simplicity and immediacy of their expedition life. They also note the changes in Guaymas due to modernization and its impact on the local culture and environment.

The crew sails out of Guaymas, feeling a bit tattered and tired. They visit a Japanese fishing fleet and observe the systematic and destructive dredging of shrimp fisheries.

The chapter details the crew's interactions with the Japanese fishermen and their observations of the wasteful practices that deplete valuable marine resources. They collect specimens from the dredge loads and reflect on the broader implications of such fishing practices on marine ecosystems and food supplies. It underscores the need for sustainable fishing practices and the importance of understanding the

ecological impact of human activities. They continue their journey, exploring the Estero de la Luna, a large estuary with a rich estuarine fauna. They document various species and their ecological roles, noting the unique adaptations of organisms in this habitat. The chapter describes the crew's experiences and observations in the estuary, including interactions with local fishermen and the challenges of navigating the area. They reflect on the significance of estuarine environments and the importance of preserving these habitats for the health of marine ecosystems.

Finally, the crew sails towards their final collecting station, Agiabampo, reflecting on their journey and the experiences they have had. They document the marine life and ecological interactions in the area, noting the importance of each species in maintaining the balance of the ecosystem. This shows the crew's dedication to their scientific mission and their appreciation for the beauty and complexity of the marine environment. As they prepare to return home, they reflect on the knowledge they have gained and the importance of continuing efforts to understand and protect marine biodiversity.

1. Philosophical Reflections

As they journey through the Sea of Cortez, Steinbeck and Ricketts engage in deep philosophical discussions. They ponder over the nature of life, the interconnectedness of all living things, and the human relationship with the environment. These conversations are interspersed with their scientific observations, creating a unique blend of marine biology and existential philosophy.

Steinbeck also reflects on the impact of human activity on the environment. He expresses concern about the over-exploitation of natural resources and the potential consequences of human actions on the delicate ecological balance of the Sea of Cortez. These reflections foreshadow the environmental themes that would become more prominent in his later works.

2. The People and Places

Throughout their journey, Steinbeck and Ricketts interact with the local people, including fishermen and pearl divers. They are struck by the simplicity and resilience of these communities, who live in harmony with the sea. The duo also visits various islands and coastal towns, each with its unique culture and natural environment.

Steinbeck's vivid descriptions bring these places to life, painting a picture of the Sea of Cortez as a region of great ecological diversity and human richness. He captures the beauty of the landscape, the abundance of marine life, and the distinct character of the people they encounter.

3. The Specimens and Their Stories

As they collect marine specimens, Ricketts shares his deep knowledge of marine biology with Steinbeck. He explains the ecological significance of each species and their role in the local ecosystem. Ricketts' passion for his work is evident, and his teachings leave a lasting impression on Steinbeck.

Steinbeck, in turn, infuses the specimens with life in his writing, giving them individual stories and personalities. He emphasizes the importance of understanding and appreciating these creatures, not just as scientific specimens, but as integral parts of a complex and interconnected web of life.

4. Reflections on Return

As their journey in the Sea of Cortez comes to an end, Steinbeck and Ricketts reflect on their experiences. They are deeply affected by the beauty and fragility of the marine environment they have explored. They recognize the need for responsible stewardship of the natural world and the importance of preserving its diversity.

“Praise Song for Oceania”: The Poetics of Blue Humanities

Craig Santos Perez (1980-) is a poet, essayist, former university professor, American publisher (USA) from the Chamorro people, born in Mongmong-Toto-Maite, Guam Island. His poetry has received multiple awards, including the 2023 National Book Award, a 2015 American Book Award and the 2011 PEN Center USA Literary Award for Poetry.

Perez praises the generosity of the ocean for giving life amidst its deep darkness of water. This symbolizes the mystery of creation. He praises its vastness and beauty extended to the distant horizon. The ocean is the source of everything and possesses endless biodiversity. The poet glorifies it saying:

“praise your capacity for birth
fluid currents and trenchant darkness
praise our briny beginning
source of every breath” (Lines 5-9, “Praise Song for Oceania”)

It can create and destroy; can rise to the height of the clouds; can link with rivers, lakes, ice sheets and glaciers; very much found amidst the watersheds and hydrologic cycles. Not only this, the ocean is an epitome of tolerance, yet it reacts to the enemies with violence. Its grandeur cannot be measured in terms of latitudes and longitudes; cannot be engineered to plunder its resources to increase its economy. It has made the sailors and voyagers venture into it and explore the immense power and find the means of survival. They have seen both its depth, beauty and ferocity. In addition, it has all generosity as the poet reflects:

“praise your capacity to dilute
our heavy metals and greenhouse gases
sewage and radioactive waste
pollutants and plastics” (Lines 14-17, “Praise Song for Oceania”)

The ocean has the capacity to dilute our sewage and radioactive wastes; it absorbs our pollutants and plastics; our heavy metals and greenhouse gases. We are unable to tolerate its violence for some moments, it however tolerates our daily life violence. Not only this, the ocean is the witness of all our rises and falls. It sees how we get absorbed in war and bloodshed; it has the capacity to bury the dead soldiers, terrorists, immigrants and refugees. So also, it is associated with our pious and cultural beliefs as it helps us dip to relieve us from sin and accepts the ashes and bones of our loved ones for immersion in order to provide salvation.

The ocean contributes to the stories of human being in multiple ways so that a library can be formed with a number of books. There are museums to showcase its treasures. It has given the routes to the migrants in order to sail all along with a dream of transforming life. It also provides roots to the submarines so that they can go to explore the deepest recesses of it.

The sea can raise tides; can be the bed of rising storms and towering tsunamis. It can give life to the schools of aquatic creatures and also save them from human cruelty. The plight

of the sea increases as the environmental threats gets multiplied by the irresponsible activities of humans done with the sea for several decades. It seems to have been overflowed with debris and chemicals released from human inhabitations. The oceans gradually run short of food and shelter for the sea creatures. The poisonous effects change the colour of the corals, stop their productivity and make them deceased. They get choked for the unavailability of oxygen and carbon dioxide.

Thus, the poet asks for the forgiveness of the grand reservoir of natural habitat for humans possessing nuclear arms, naval bodies, concrete dams, cabling veins, deafening sonar and lustful aqua-tourism. Further, the poet begs excuses for humans for making invasive drilling, deep sea mining, making extractions and trespasses. He seeks the mercy of the ocean for allowing us to fish; control the rain on the earth; to spare our fragile farms, fruit trees, low-lying islands, atolls, coastal villages and cities. He further asks for allowing us to use its body to pass from one land to the other safely.

Further, he praises saying that the sea can sustain rainbow warrior, sea shepherd, arctic sunrise, flotillas of hope, marine stewardship councils, sustainable fisheries, radical seafarers, native navigators, sacred water walkers, activist kayaks and canoes, ocean conservancies, surfrider foundations, aquanauts and hydrolabs, coastal cleanups, google oceans, whale hunting, shark finning bans, sanctuaries, no take zones, pharmacopeia of new antibiotics, wave and tidal energy, oceanoptimism, and echo location. Finally, the poet speaks of the unity of water of this world having cosmic might that flow in and out of every living as well as non-living things. He says that:

“praise our endless saga
praise your blue planet
one world ocean
praise our trans-oceanic
past present future flowing
through our blood.” (Lines 22-25, “Praise Song of Oceania”)

He goes on enlisting the emotional outburst by mentioning that the ocean forms our vision; it is a metaphor of our imagination; it flows in our blood since time immemorial; gives us the ideas of blue planet.

Here, the poet's hydrocentric concerns coincide with the Vedic voice as in the Rig Veda, it is said, "May the Waters, the mothers, purify us." The Atharva Veda says, "O Waters, you are the source of all happiness, give us strength so that we may contemplate the great delight," and in Shatapatha Brahmana, it is mentioned that water is the foundation of this universe, from which all beings are born. water is considered extremely sacred, often referred to as "Apah" (meaning "waters") and is seen as the life-giving force, a purifier, and the foundation of the universe.

Critical Discussion and Conclusion

The three writings of the three different genres across the ages viz. poetry, drama and factual narrative focus on the different dimensions of blue humanities. An ecological study of *Riders to the Sea* would primarily focus on the portrayal of the sea as a powerful, almost sentient force of nature, which simultaneously sustains the lives of the islanders on the Aran Islands while also acting as a constant threat, taking their loved ones through treacherous storms, essentially highlighting the complex and often destructive relationship between humans and their environment. The play touches on themes of human hubris, the limits of

human control over nature, and the need for acceptance of natural forces. Apart from documenting the rich marine life, *The Log from the Sea of Cortez* touches upon the subjects of technology, war, peasant life, miraculous apparitions, marine hunting, marine conservation, and the esoteric mysteries of the sea. It is not just a travelogue or a scientific expedition report. It is a profound exploration of the relationship between humans and the natural world. Steinbeck and Ricketts' journey in the Sea of Cortez becomes a metaphor for the broader human experience, prompting us to reflect on our place in the intricate tapestry of life. Perez's "Praise of Oceania" projects the unity of the waterbody of the world that ranges from a drop of water to the largest body of ocean full of life larger than the inhabitants on the earth. These water bodies are home to millions of species. Its grandeur, blue beauty, life-giving power and the ability to sustain hazards are immense. It provides blue cognition to the human insight. The threats as a consequence of climate change and human made environmental hazards lead to unspeakable plight of it and of the planet as a whole. Here, the lines from Steve Menz (2024) ^[6] is worth quoting:

“As seas rise, glaciers melt, and warmer air absorbs more moisture, the blue Humanities will have much to say and do in our changing ecological conditions.” (p.xviii)

It is noticed that primarily, the sea has been romanticized for its beauty and wonder what is called or contextualized by the authors from different natural and mythological perspectives. But, slowly, these idealizations get subverted with the complex and often destructive aspects of both the sea in the form of natural force and the human interaction with water bodies, particularly regarding issues like overfishing, pollution, and colonial exploitation of marine environments, with the continuation of 'greenwashing'. Some argue that Blue Humanities still might inadvertently perpetuate anthropocentric views by focusing primarily on human interactions with the ocean, potentially downplaying the agency of non-human marine life. However, Blue Humanities calls for raising awareness of the critical role oceans play in human lives and encourage action towards sustainable practices.

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