



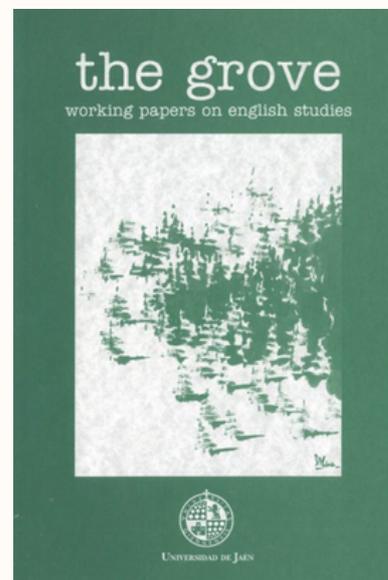
BEYOND POSTMEMORY

January 2026

Publications

Christina Howes on Ecological Postmemory and Reconstructive Metamodernism in Richard Flanagan's *Question 7*

We are pleased to announce that Dr Christina Howes has recently published an article titled "From war memory to planetary consciousness: ecological postmemory and reconstructive metamodernism in Richard Flanagan's *Question 7*." In her contribution to the journal *The Grove*, Howes examines Richard Flanagan's *Question 7* (2023) as a transformative work of postmemorial literature that fuses personal, historical, and ecological trauma within a metamodern framework.



Drawing on the theories of Marianne Hirsch, Martin Heidegger, and Charlene Spretnak, the analysis traces how the novel expands postmemory beyond familial inheritance to encompass planetary crisis and ecological interconnectedness. Through narrative fragmentation, ethical self-reflection, and a poetics of care, Flanagan's text models a reconstructive metamodernism that resists nihilism and affirms the profound communion of all life. Ultimately, *Question 7* offers an ethics of love and responsibility, inviting readers to dwell authentically and respond to contemporary crises with renewed relationality and hope.

Reference: Howes, Christina Angela. "From War Memory to Planetary Consciousness: Ecological Postmemory and Reconstructive Metamodernism in Richard Flanagan's *Question 7*". *The Grove - Working Papers on English Studies*, vol. 32, Dec. 2025, p. e9768, <https://doi.org/10.17561/grove.v32.9768>.



Conferences

DR NICHOLAS SPENGLER AT THE MLA 2026 CONVENTION

We are happy to share that Dr Nicholas Spengler participated in the MLA 2026 Convention. At the invitation of the Melville Society, Dr Spengler organised the panel “Melville and the Geopolitics of Reading,” focusing on Melville’s literary reception in the Global South during the Cold War. Against the nationalist readings of Melville that predominated in Cold War Americanist scholarship, and against the US government’s instrumentalisation of Melville and other canonical American writers as a “soft power” tool to promote US ideology, readers and writers outside the United States found in Melville’s work a resource for articulating their own experiences as marginalised subjects in a world shaped by colonialism, capitalism, and the armed conflicts precipitated by both. Against the backdrop of exile and migration, these readers have used Melville’s writing to reflect on the long-term effects and legacies of war, colonialism, and capitalism.

Donald Pease, the leading “New Americanist” scholar based at Dartmouth College, opened the panel by discussing his 2025 critical re-edition of Mariners, Renegades and Castaways: Herman Melville and the World We Live In, C. L. R. James’s radical reinterpretation of Melville’s work. Pease’s first critical edition of James’s book appeared in 2000, and the 2025 re-edition renews and celebrates the scholarly attention that James’s once-obscure text has attracted thanks to Pease’s sustained engagement.



James's vision of Herman Melville and *the World We Live In* is shaped by his experience as a leftist intellectual from Trinidad and as a migrant in the United States who resisted deportation. Written during his detention on Ellis Island in 1952, James's Melville book was both a plea for US citizenship and an idiosyncratic yet incisive interpretation of Melville's work as a warning about the rise of totalitarianism—not as a foreign threat, but as an internal development emerging from US democracy itself. In this way, James resisted the Cold War geopolitics that had placed him in detention as a migrant and suspected Communist. His reading of Melville was thus transgressive, challenging the chauvinist and nationalist interpretations of the time and attuning Melville's work to the global violence produced by capitalist and colonialist structures of power.

Next, Nicholas Spengler discussed two works that consider Melville from the perspective of the castaway, the exile, the migrant, and the refugee: Abdulrazak Gurnah's novel *By the Sea* (2001) and John Akomfrah's film installation *Vertigo Sea* (2025). *By the Sea* traces the intertwined lives of two refugees fleeing the violence of the Zanzibar Revolution who seek asylum in the UK and who share a deep attachment to Melville's "Bartleby, the Scrivener." Bartleby becomes both a figure for their precarious status as refugees and a point of connection that allows them to resist Bartleby's solitary fate. *Vertigo Sea* is a masterful audiovisual collage that juxtaposes still and moving images across three screens with sounds and texts drawn from a wide range of sources. The work offers a planetary vision of the sea as a space of human and nonhuman migration, conveying both its ecological richness and its complex, violent histories of navigation, trade, colonialism, capitalism, and war.





Drawing on the concepts of “decolonial ecology” (Malcolm Ferdinand) and “environmental postmemory,” Spengler argued that Gurnah and Akomfrah present nonhuman objects and agents as *lieux de mémoire* through which to narrate histories of violence that extend beyond direct survivors and their immediate descendants, producing long-term and diffuse effects across both human and nonhuman worlds.

Finally, Leyli Jamali, an independent Iranian scholar, examined Melville’s reception in Iran in relation to US influence in her home country during the Cold War. Jamali argued that the Iranian Revolution of 1979 was shaped in part by the political energy generated by theatrical adaptations and stagings of Melville’s *Billy Budd* in Iran during the 1960s and 1970s. She also recounted how her research on Melville and her collaboration with the Melville Society prompted the current Iranian government to accuse her of espionage and terminate her academic position at the University of Tehran. She is now working as an ESL instructor in Kingston, Ontario, and developing a book project that blends memoir and critical study, reading Melville through her own position as a refugee





Call for Papers

NATURE REMEMBERS: WAR, TRAUMA, AND ENVIRONMENTAL POSTMEMORY IN CONTEMPORARY ANGLOPHONE LITERATURE AND CULTURE

We are happy to share the Call for Papers for our upcoming collected volume “Nature Remembers: War, Trauma, and Environmental Postmemory in Contemporary Anglophone Literature and Culture.” In the same spirit as our homonymous October seminar, which showcased a variety of literary and cultural texts, critical approaches, and presentation formats, we welcome proposals that examine novel and interdisciplinary methodologies.

SUGGESTED THEMES AND TOPICS

We welcome contributions that address, but are not limited to, the following areas and questions:

- **Landscapes of Memory:** How do battlefields, nuclear test sites, or deforested war zones operate as *lieux de mémoire* carrying the scars of conflict?
- **Postmemory and Non-Human Witnesses:** What kinds of non-human witnessing do literary and cultural texts stage, and what do these perspectives disclose about loss, endurance, or responsibility?
- **Anthropocene and Slow Violence:** To what extent can narrative make the slow, long-term environmental harm of conflict legible—especially in relation to broader Anthropocene crises?
- **Intergenerational Trauma and Ecological Inheritance:** How is the memory of conflict passed on through damaged environments and the stories communities tell about them?
- **Postcolonial Ecologies and Environmental Justice:** What does environmental postmemory look like when reframed through postcolonial, Indigenous, or decolonial approaches to environmental justice?



- **Silenced Environmental Histories:** Which war-related ecological traumas remain marginalised or forgotten, and how do cultural texts bring them into view?
- **Resilience and Reconciliation with Nature:** How do texts imagine ecological recovery after conflict, and what ethical forms of care or reconciliation do they propose?

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

We would be grateful to receive contributions from POSTLIT members as well as colleagues outside our research group. Please submit an **abstract of 300-500 words**, outlining your proposed chapter's topic, approach, and main arguments, along with a tentative title and a **100-word-long author biographical note** listing affiliation, research interests, and key publications by **30 April 2026** at **ultrapostmemoria@gmail.com**.





News

BLOODSHED, REPRESSION AND OPACITY IN IRAN

The year 2026 was off to a violent start. In Iran, protesters have been met with repression, violence, and death. Demonstrations broke out on 28 December 2026 following a currency collapse, soaring inflation, chronic mismanagement of essential services such as access to water, and steadily worsening living conditions. Although the strikes began with shop closures, they quickly spread nationwide, calling for the downfall of the Ayatollah regime and demanding human rights, dignity, and freedom. In response, authorities unleashed lethal attacks marked by unlawful use of force, firearms, and mass arbitrary arrests, according to Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch.

There is still no access to precise figures on the dead and injured. Since 8 January, after twelve days of escalating anti-regime protests, Iran has been under an Internet shutdown. The blackout makes it impossible to assess the full scale of repression, but accounts from morgues and graveyards across the country estimate a toll exceeding 30,000 casualties—far surpassing official figures, which already acknowledge 3,000 deaths. The US-based Human Rights Activists News Agency (HRANA) has verified more than 6,000 deaths and has over 17,000 additional cases under investigation, bringing its estimate to roughly 22,000 murders.



Milad telecommunication tower in Tehran
Source: The Guardian





Amid this climate of violence and uncertainty, tensions between Iran and the United States have intensified. Donald Trump has threatened to attack Iran if it does not limit its nuclear programme and halt the killing of protesters. The US Army has already approached Iranian maritime borders with the warship USS Abraham Lincoln. Negotiations appear stalled amid fears of a potential intervention—one that could escalate into a regional war.

SOURCES :

Amnesty International. "Deaths and Injuries Rise amid Iran's Renewed Cycle of Protest Bloodshed." Amnesty International, 2026, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2026/01/iran-deaths-injuries-authorities-protest-bloodshed/>. [Accessed 30 January 2026]

Beale, Jonathan. "US-Iran Relations: Is the US Preparing to Strike Iran Again?" BBC News, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cly5pd98z87o>. [Accessed 30 January 2026]

Down, Aisha. "Iran Plans Permanent Break from Global Internet, Say Activists." The Guardian, 17 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/17/iran-plans-permanent-break-from-global-internet-say-activists>. [Accessed 30 January 2026]

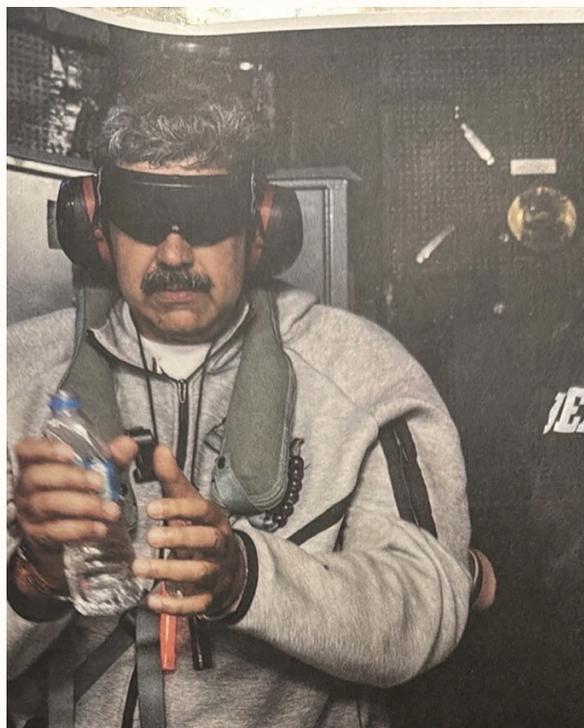
McClure, Tess, and Deepa Parent. "Disappeared Bodies, Mass Burials and '30,000 Dead': What Is the Truth of Iran's Death Toll?" The Guardian, 27 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2026/jan/27/iran-protests-death-toll-disappeared-bodies-mass-burials-30000-dead>. [Accessed 30 January 2026]

Plett Usher, Barbara, and Jack Burgess. "Iran's Supreme Leader Warns of Regional War if US Attacks." BBC News, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cx20z5nv9jxo>. [Accessed 30 January 2026]

Wintour, Patrick. "Trump Tells Iran: End Nuclear Ambitions and Stop Killing Protesters or Face US Military." The Guardian, 30 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jan/30/donald-trump-iran-end-nuclear-programme-killing-protesters-face-us-military>. [Accessed 30 January 2026]

US INTERVENTIONISM IN VENEZUELA AND GREENLAND

Breaking international law, on 3 January 2026 the US captured Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro and first lady Cilia Flores. The deposed presidential couple has been charged with drug-trafficking offences and is to face trial in New York. According to Venezuela's Defence Minister, Vladimir Padrino López, US forces killed a total of 83 people during the raids—40 of them civilians—and injured 112. The military operation immediately alarmed international leaders, including UN Secretary-General António Guterres, who warned that it sets a dangerous precedent. This concern has been echoed by others: as Brazilian President Lula da Silva notes, such patterns already exist in US history. The North American power has carried out dozens of military interventions in Latin America and the Caribbean over the past two centuries. Although many observers expected Maduro's abduction to result in a regime change, that may not be the course of events.



A photograph of Maduro posted
by Trump on Truth Social
Source: The Guardian



The Venezuelan Supreme Court has ordered Vice President Delcy Rodríguez to assume the presidency. Rodríguez has come under significant US pressure and has passed legislation opening the Venezuelan oil sector to foreign private investors. While nominally maintaining state control over oil production, the new bill grants private companies authority over production and sales, reduces taxes, and allows for independent arbitration of disputes. At the same time, the US administration has eased certain sanctions on the Venezuelan oil industry, and major US companies are already in the country conducting site assessments for potential operations. Since Maduro's capture, the US has exercised de facto control over Venezuela's oil exports and revenues for an indefinite period, ostensibly to ensure that Maduro's cabinet—still in power—complies with imposed foreign-policy objectives.



Delcy Rodríguez holds up the new legislation at a rally in Caracas
Source: The Guardian





Beyond consolidating influence over the Venezuelan oil industry, the US appears to be seeking access to Greenland's rare minerals and potential oil and gas reserves as well. Donald Trump has declared his intention to "acquire" the Arctic nation, jeopardising the US alliance with Europe. This moment has offered Greenlanders an opportunity to assert their sovereignty against Danish colonial domination. Yet this anti-colonial aspiration is being instrumentalised by another colonial power to legitimise its own territorial ambitions. Greenland residents have criticised Trump's statements about purchasing their land, noting how they echo colonialist discourse and reduce Indigenous territory to commodities and assets. In addition, Trump has threatened to impose 10% tariffs on EU exports unless the Union complies with his ambitions to seize Greenland. The EU has responded by formally suspending the ratification process of its trade deal with the US. Although the US president eventually retreated from his economic offensive, the European Parliament has suspended the agreement indefinitely.

SOURCES:

Al Jazeera and News Agencies. "Nearly 50 Venezuelan Soldiers Killed in US Abduction of President Maduro." Al Jazeera, 17 Jan. 2026, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2026/1/17/nearly-50-venezuelan-soldiers-killed-in-us-abduction-of-president-maduro>. [Accessed 2 February 2026]

Aratani, Lauren, and Andrew Roth. "Trump's Framework for Greenland Includes Tariffs and Threats." The Guardian, 21 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/21/trump-framework-greenland-tariffs-threats>. Accessed 2 February 2026.

Kassam, Ashifa. "Indigenous Views on Trump's Greenland Push: Inuits Speak from the Arctic." The Guardian, 2 Feb. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/feb/02/indigenous-views-trump-greenland-push-inuits-arctic>. [Accessed 2 February 2026]

Kirk, Ashley, Lucy Swan, Tural Ahmedzade, Harvey Symons, and Oliver Holmes. "Greenland: New Shipping Routes, Hidden Minerals and a Frontline between the US and Russia." The Guardian, 15 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/15/greenland-new-shipping-routes-hidden-minerals-and-a-frontline-between-the-us-and-russia>. [Accessed 2 February 2026]





Lykkeberg, Rune. "The Tragedy of Greenland: Independence, Denmark, and Trump's US." The Guardian, 20 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2026/jan/20/tragedy-greenland-independence-denmark-trump-us>. [Accessed 2 February 2026]

O'Carroll, Lisa. "EU Parliament Blocks US Trade Deal after Trump Tariff Threat." The Guardian, 21 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/21/eu-parliament-blocks-us-trade-deal-trump-tariff-threat>. [Accessed 2 February 2026]

Phillips, Tom. "Venezuela Attack: What We Know so Far as Trump Claims Maduro Captured." The Guardian, 3 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/03/venezuela-attack-what-we-know-so-far-as-trump-claims-maduro-captured>. [Accessed 2 February 2026]

Rogero, Tiago. "Venezuela Approves Bill to Open Oil Sector to Foreign Investment after US Pressure." The Guardian, 30 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/30/venezuela-approves-bill-to-open-oil-sector-to-foreign-investment-after-us-pressure>. [Accessed 2 February 2026]

Smith, David, and Tiago Rogero. "Trump Says US Will 'Run' Venezuela after Nicolás Maduro Captured and Taken to New York." The Guardian, 3 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jan/03/trump-venezuela-oil-industry>. [Accessed 2 February 2026]

Taylor, Harry, Tiago Rogero, and Sam Jones. "Global Outcry after US Launches Strikes on Venezuela and Captures President." The Guardian, 3 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jan/03/colombia-sends-armed-forces-venezuela-border-concern-refugee-influx>. [Accessed 2 February 2026]

POLITICAL UNREST IN THE UNITED STATES

Even though the US administration maintains a strong interest in exerting control over foreign territories, it remains markedly unwelcoming toward citizens arriving from abroad. The criminalisation of immigrants—regardless of their legal status—has intensified over the past year. Beyond detaining individuals with no criminal record and abducting children as leverage to arrest their parents, ICE agents have now begun to employ unlawful force against civilians.

Minneapolis became the site of two killings committed by ICE officers during ongoing protests. On 8 January, Renee Good, an unarmed US civilian, was shot three times in her car while attempting to drive away from agents. Roughly two weeks later, on 23 January, ICU nurse Alex Pretti was shot and killed after running to assist a woman who had been pepper-sprayed. In both cases, officers claimed to have acted in self-defence, alleging that the victims were domestic terrorists. Amid mounting public scrutiny, the administration sidelined Bovino and appointed Tom Homan to oversee Operation Metro Surge—the ongoing initiative aimed at capturing and expelling undocumented immigrants from the United States.



Demonstrators clash with police during a protest against ICE in Los Angeles on 30

January 2026

Source: The Guardian



Rather than de-escalating, ICE officers have intensified their crackdowns. Agents have begun confronting civilians directly, attempting to intimidate legal observers by threatening to include them in a database of domestic terrorists or physically assaulting protesters, as in the case of a 70-year-old veteran pushed to the ground in Chicago. These incidents, widely reported and emblematic of a broader pattern, contribute to a climate of escalating violence that aligns with a long history of criminalising protest. By rendering public demonstrations increasingly dangerous, the administration appears to be discouraging civilians from expressing solidarity and dissent in the face of injustice.

SOURCES:

Bauck, Whitney. "Criminalizing Protest: A History of Dissent under Threat." The Guardian, 3 Feb. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/feb/03/criminalizing-protest-dissent-history>. [Accessed 3 February 2026]

Epstein, Kayla. "Los Angeles Border Agent on Trial over Deadly Shooting." BBC News, <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cp80ljjd5rwo>. [Accessed 3 February 2026]

Gedeon, Joseph, Lauren Gambino, and George Chidi. "Gregory Bovino: Minneapolis Police Shooting of Alex Pretti under Scrutiny." The Guardian, 27 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jan/27/gregory-bovino-minneapolis-minnesota-alex-pretti-shooting>. [Accessed 3 February 2026]

Laughland, Oliver. "A Week of ICE and Outrage in Minneapolis: The Turmoil of the Days Leading Up to Alex Pretti's Death." The Guardian, 27 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jan/27/a-week-of-ice-and-outrage-in-minneapolis-the-turmoil-of-the-days-leading-up-to-alex-prettis-death>. [Accessed 3 February 2026]

Levin, Sam. "Los Angeles Border Agent Faces Trial in High Profile Shooting Case." The Guardian, 18 Sept. 2025, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/sep/18/los-angeles-border-agent-trial>. [Accessed 3 February 2026]

Luscombe, Richard. "Renee Good Autopsy Raises Questions about ICE Conduct in Minneapolis." The Guardian, 22 Jan. 2026, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/jan/22/renee-good-autopsy-ice-minneapolis>. [Accessed 3 February 2026]





Don't Miss...

RELATS DE GUERRA I VIOLÈNCIA

18 - 19 FEBRUARY, 17:00 - 20:15H
PALAU MACAYA, PG. SANT JOAN, 108, BARCELONA



*Click on the image to
enroll!*

L'Escola Europea d'Humanitats hosts a series of presentations from 18 to 19 February 2026 that aim to offer new insights on how war narratives determine, justify and often catalyse new ruptures. The talks will offer broader perspectives on mechanisms and media that configure the cultural and political view of indirect witnesses on past and current wars.





STEPAN BANDERA: HISTORY, POST-WAR AND THE POLITICS OF MEMORY

GRZEGORZ ROSSOLIŃSKI-LIEBE (FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BERLIN)
SALA DE GRAUS, FACULTAT DE FILOSOFIA I LLETRES, UAB

Organised by Emanuele Felice and hosted by Javier Rodrigo and Steven Forti, and as part of a series of keynotes hosted by the BA in History, Politics and Economics, the Professor Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe will give a keynote lecture on **26 February 2026** at 12:30 in the Sala the Graus of our faculty. Rossoliński-Liebe, professor at the Freie Universität Berlin and specialist in Holocaust history, fascism, and memory politics, is the author the book *Stepan Bandera: The Life and Afterlife of a Ukrainian Nationalist: Fascism, Genocide, and Cult* (2014).

It is the first comprehensive academic biography of the Ukrainian nationalist politician Stepan Bandera. The publication offers a critical and rigorous examination of a highly controversial historical figure and of his memory after 1945. Rossoliński-Liebe's research contextualizes these different memories within their political, social, and historical dimensions, paying attention both to the Ukrainian diaspora and to the politics of memory in the USSR and Poland.

Invited Lecture

Bachelor Degree in Contemporary History, Politics and Economics



Stepan Bandera: History, Post-War, and the Politics of Memory

Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe
Freie Universität Berlin

Dijous 26 de febrer, 12:30h

Filosofia
i Lletres
UAB

Sala de Graus
Facultat de Filosofia i Lletres

Departament d'Història
Moderna i Contemporània

