

Call For Laments

This call for laments—similar to but different from a call for papers—seeks poetic responses to environmental and social crises linked to ecological degradations for a book with the working title, *Climate of Lament*. We are looking for scholars from across the disciplines to write a short lament and subsequent commentary inspired by their own solastalgia/tierratrauma/ecological grief. Contributions should expose the author’s grief concerning a beloved component of Creation that is suffering. Contributors do not need to be people of faith, but the audience for this volume is intended to be religious communities who may be familiar with lament, but who struggle with language to grieve the current state of the climate, biosphere, or Creation in general.

Contributions of poems up to 750 words and subsequent reflections of up to 500 words are sought to elucidate specific contemporary crises involving the loss of biodiversity, consequences of climate change, social injustices and other laments associated with execrable situations in the biosphere. Poems of lament can take many forms, including an acrostic (such as the Biblical book of *Lamentations*), sonnet, haiku, free verse, or another form inspired by the author. Whatever the genre, submitted poems should themselves be laments—poems of deep grief, anguish and loss from authors who are discontented and distraught. The poems should draw the reader to pain, sorrow and suffering manifested in the environment as a result of anthropogenic processes, imperialism, colonialism, and denial. Authors should have first-hand knowledge of the subject of the poem, and in the best cases the poem of lament will provide an opportunity for an academic studying the deterioration of a part of the world to personally lament their object of study through the writing of the poem. We hope these poems will serve collectively to evoke “facts on the ground” realism into cultures of denial, especially religious communities, and to model lament to communities less familiar with large-scale grief and suffering.

In addition to the poem, we ask each author to provide perspective about the lament in the form of a reflection of roughly 250-500 words to illuminate and elucidate the milieu of the poems by providing scientific and personal context. These can be in first-person and should explain the biophysical or social background of the submitted poem, as well as detail why the lament is meaningful to the author and how the author approaches grief in the context of their work. Anthropogenic forces that caused species loss or suffering, biophysical decline, or human environmental injustice are of particular interest. If there is hope that the subject of the poem (a particular species, ecosystem, people group, etc.) can be restored or renewed this can be highlighted. However, the focus of the poems and reflections should be loss, grief, despair and brokenness, with the perspective that embracing the full gravity of such loss and acknowledging the ideologies that create it is in itself hopeful. We are not asking authors to explain the poems, but rather their context and associated emotional processing of ecological grief.

All submissions should be emailed directly to BOTH editors: Dr. Michael Ferber, Associate Professor of Geography and Environmental Studies, at michael.ferber@kingsu.ca and Dr. Philip Mingay, Associate Professor of English, at philip.mingay@kingsu.ca, by November 15, 2021. As this is an untraditional form of a call for papers, questions and clarifications before submission are welcome.

