

JRAAS CINEMA CYCLE

BLUE HUMANITIES



The World's First Underwater Portrait, taken in 1899 by Louis Marie Auguste Boutan

Blue Humanities: Cinema Cycle

Starting in November, the JRAAS team will be launching a cinema cycle centered entirely around Blue Humanities, with a specific focus on the ocean. Given our ongoing research and database development in this field, it felt only natural to align our new cinema cycle with our research.

This cinema cycle aims to highlight how the ocean shapes human experience, identity, and imagination. The selected films, drawn from one of our curated databases, showcase how the ocean is much more than just geographical space, as it emerges as a powerful cultural force that has shaped storytelling, art, and history across time.

Snippets



Crashing Waves:
Blue Humanities Database



Utopian Foodways
Alimentopia

The Blue Humanities database, which inspired this issue, compiles nearly 70 films we carefully selected for their connection to the sea. Explore our [interactive map](#) to learn more about these films. We welcome suggestions for additional films to be included in the database!

Alimentopia explored foodways in utopian and dystopian works. The database now includes over 100 entries, after we added new works and curated existing data. To learn more, visit the [Alimentopia website](#).

For more snippets on JRAAS projects, scan this QR code to subscribe to our Newsletter!



Figure of the Month



Steve Mentz

Steve Menz, an American academic and St. John's University English professor coined the term "Blue Humanities" in his book *An Introduction to the Blue Humanities*. The book was the first of its kind, exploring how humans engage with water through literature, culture, history, and theory. It introduced readers to water-centered thinking, drawing on global texts like *Moby-Dick*, *The Odyssey*, and *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. He is the author of over ten books, and his main research areas include blue humanities, Shakespeare, ecocriticism, and oceanic literature.

To learn more about his work and stay updated on his current projects, visit his website [here](#).

The Sea in Yonita

By Helena Cunha, a student of Anglo-Portuguese Studies.

A dove, arrives at a small fishing village by the sea. The sea ends up being the central figure in this story, not the bird or the fisherman. It is the link that connects the two, the narrative's common thread.

The dove reaches this land of rough and melancholic fishermen, and the sea immediately takes centre stage, serving as the canvas for a long description of the cradle of the setting sun and rocking boats. The sound of the waves accompanies the reader throughout the pages, like a calm and relaxing melody, while a tragic story unfolds. The dove and fisherman cross paths when the latter saves the bird from hungry dogs and decides to treat its wounds. On a stormy night, the dove is given the name, Yonita. According to the fisherman, “she is the most important figure in the village stories” and the sea once again claims a special place. “Legend has it that Yonita was such a beautiful woman that the God of the Sea [...] fell in love with her and dragged her with him to the depths of the ocean.” But humans can't breathe underwater and she drowns, much to the heartbreak of the God who wept for a thousand years. The world was submerged, and the human population built boats and drifted: this is how the first fishermen appeared, and how the fisherman's village was built.

So we see a dichotomy, a paradox, if I may, that this force of nature has in history. It is death, as Yonita drowns among its waves, and it is life, as humans have found a purpose. This dichotomy follows the reader throughout the narrative. It's the fisherman's livelihood to venture out into the waves, and just like his ancestor, Yonita, he too shall suffer the same inevitable fate: death.

Although a static and impassive figure, the sea assumes an almost divine and omnipotent condition for the existence of the characters and events in the narrative.

The short story will be published in the book *Livro de contos do Prémio Literário Manuel Alegre*.

Editorial

Welcome to the September issue of News from Everywhere. As we reach the end of September, we want to reflect on the collective efforts that have shaped our team's work and progress. When working on this month's newsletter, I was reminded of a line from Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*: “I try everything, I achieve what I can.”

This past month, the team has delved into the interdisciplinary currents of Blue Humanities - a field that examines the connection between bodies of water and human beings through literature, culture, and history. Much of our work has revolved around individual projects concerning the development and curating of databases and repositories, tasks which, though seemingly isolating, represent a collaborative effort to explore the unknown and piece together new insights.

Like Melville's protagonist, we too often find ourselves navigating uncharted waters in our work. Whether it's combing through extensive databases, creating our own, or indexing and synthesizing complex data, it can feel overwhelming at times. But we've learned that it's not about mastering everything or finding all the answers at once - it's about trying. We try everything within our reach, and it is precisely this dedication to the process that drives meaningful progress.

Each piece of research we conduct, each repository entry, and each database we curate becomes a small, yet vital contribution to an entire universe. We may not always see the immediate results of our work, but these efforts have the potential to aid those seeking knowledge long after we're gone.

This past month has served as a reminder of the importance of perseverance. By committing to the pursuit of knowledge, we make progress. Our collective efforts ripple forwards, creating a wave that will inform future research.

Joana Pinela

About

JRAAS (Junior Researchers in Anglo-American Studies) is a platform for junior/young researchers from CETAPS (Center for English, Translation, and Anglo-Portuguese Studies) based in the scientific research hub of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto (FLUP I&D). This Newsletter was created in collaboration with the Digital Lab.

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Team JRAAS PORTO
Joana Pinela, Joel Faustino, Lile Kobaliani, Raquel Souza, and Felipe Ferreira at the Digital Lab.

Scan here to download the digital version of the Newsletter from the CETAPS Repository.



Contribute

We welcome and encourage contributions to this project and website. If you have been inspired by anyone or anything in Literature, Art, STEM or Activism in Anglo-American Cultures, feel free to contribute to the newsletter.

Submissions can take the form of essays, reviews, poems, short stories, photographs and anything else that you might be interested in. All submissions must be in English.

Please submit your work to institucionaljraas@letras.up.pt.

Thank you for your interest!



Joana recommends
Moby Dick
(1851)



Lile recommends
So I came forth of the Sea...
(1948)



Raquel recommends
He's a Pirate
(2003)



Felipe recommends
Subnautica
(2014)



Joel recommends
Blackfish
(2013)

Upcoming Events

BOIL - CLIMATE FESTIVAL Serralves	4ª edição do Festival BANG	Dalí Cybernetics
25 and 26th of September	27, and 29th of September	2nd of October

