

# Interview: Feeling Land Sick with Nikolaj Schultz

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*On a Tuesday afternoon that is slowly bleeding into evening, the April sun is warming our digital faces on a video call with Nikolaj Schultz, PhD candidate at the University of Copenhagen and author of the recently published auto-ethnographic work Land Sickness. Later in this interview, the sociologist describes this text as ‘literary sociology’ rather than ‘sociological literature’, emphasising his academic training despite the fact that us literary f(r)iends were impressed with the ways in which the book is constructed narratively, weaving striking metaphorical imagery throughout. As the digital connection settles in, we are ready to travel with the scholar through the various terrestrial and theoretical places that the protagonist crosses in the novel and explore what being land sick might mean in the context of constant climate emergencies.*

*FRAME:*

First of all, can you tell us what *Land Sickness* is about? Why did you choose to write the book?

Schultz:

*Land Sickness* is an odd genre in the sense that it is what I call an ‘ethno-grafictive’ travelogue that follows me through a couple of days from laying sleepless in an overheated *canicule* apartment to trying to ‘escape’ the situation by going to Porquerolles, a little island in the South of France. But as soon as I arrived, I realised that these issues are still here, there and everywhere; the island is sinking and shrinking in habitability because of climate change and tourism. Staged in this context, *Land Sickness* is an inquiry into some of the sociological and existential issues that you as a human being are facing today when the territory is disappearing under our very feet, no matter if you travel, if you sit and drink a bottle of water like the one in my hand right now, if you take a shower, if you smoke cigarettes... In short, these issues are everywhere, and they show up in every aspect of our everyday existence.

Now, what I am interested in is: What are the affects of living in this situation, where we face a loss of world? What is the emotional landscape of this very odd situation where both the Earth is shaking and the human being is shaking simultaneously? That is what I try to pin down with the very title of *Land Sickness*, which is a nautical metaphor that I mobilise exactly to capture this double trembling of the life terrain of the human and that of the earthly conditions of subsistence that we are living off and thus destroying by our very way of being human beings.

*FRAME:*

Moving from the book’s content to the very process of creating it, was there from writing down an initial idea to seeing your words published in print anything that surprised you or that made you pursue the project differently?

Schultz:

This is an interesting question because indeed it was really a process of surprise. When I came to this island, I could not help but think that there were many heuristic resources for thinking and writing about these themes. So, once I got home from Porquerolles, I wrote a short essay that was only three, four pages long, first published in Danish and then in English and French about my experiences on the island, where I tried to play around with this genre somewhere between the personal and the academic, between the narratological and the theoretical.

And to my surprise, this little essay received many responses. It touched me that—for once—it was not only theoretically interested people from the social or human sciences who were interested in this essay that mobilised theory in a more literary way, but also friends and family members who normally care absolutely zero about my work. They were also touched by this more personal way of bringing forth the questions of theory. So, I realised that there was something about this genre of writing that allowed me to bring more readers into these, I believe, important questions.

However, it was not until my French publisher *Payot* [who published the essay in French] reached out to me and asked if I wanted to make it into a book-length essay, that I knew it was going to be a book. That was more or less the process of writing it, of course with a lot of coffee and a lot of cigarettes and a lot of awful situations, every time you write something it is absolutely awful!

As a final thought, this project is interesting to me because I have always tried to write sociology in a relatively nice way because academics can be awful at writing. But as a sociologist it took, of course, a lot of pain to transform my ideas into a narrative.

*FRAME:*

To stay with the hybridity of the novel in terms of writing, *Land Sickness* describes the protagonist's (affective) journey from Paris to Porquerolles. It does so through a first-person narrative. Since it is inspired by your own travels, this way of narration feels natural.

However, as the novel sets out to make space for non-human solidarity, we are curious to hear more about your decision to focus predominantly on a human perspective. Emphasising the (human) protagonist's feelings, mostly of guilt, creates a striking contradictory friction between staying with the human and moving beyond the human. Can you tell us more about this friction?

Schultz:

It is true that so much ecological theory from the last 50-20 years has been about distributing agencies, moving the narrative away from human beings towards non-human beings. While I consider myself to be part of the philosophical-sociological-anthropological tradition that through [Bruno] Latour, [Donna] Haraway and [Anna] Tsing, among others, has been thinking about wolves, octopuses, plants, mushrooms, and so on and so forth—which I do believe has probably been the most important philosophical turn we have seen in the last century, if not longer—I believe this cannot be the only kind of ecological theory we do.

Why? Well, because most people still consider themselves human beings! In terms of experience, we are still modern individuals. If we are to understand ourselves as part of larger lifeforms, of the Earth system, and as 'holobionts' and so on, I still think we might have to start from a human narrative, and then either fictionally or empirically, investigate how this human changes shape today. Many people in France get angry with me for saying this, because for a long time, people, including myself—you must not forget that I was educated by and with Bruno Latour—have been trying to take focus away from this human-centric perspective. However, I have become more and more convinced that in order to get away from the human—in the classic, modern sense—we might have to return to it and *from there* drag the description of what it means to be human today in another direction. In other words, we might have to go back to the human in order to get away from the human. I acknowledge that this is a dangerous argument. We should not only write like this of course; it would be completely catastrophic if we simply returned to

the old modern idea of what it means to be a human. Yet, we need narratives that allow us to capture how most people see themselves today and then describe the transformation of what it means to be human in the Anthropocene, when the Earth is shaking under your feet, and you are shaking with it.

This is something that I discussed a lot with Bruno [Latour] before he passed away because—surprisingly he actually agreed with me, at least partially—he recognized that there was a possibility that the new ecological theory would become a new kind of naturalism that only focuses on non-humans. I would never say that you should not do that kind of theory, that kind of inquiry—I think it is extremely important—but we also need something that attaches to the human being and then see how it is metamorphosing. Not least because we have left out too much of the affectual and existential aspect of the climatic mutations. So that is why I am interested in all these classical philosophical questions that most people today in that field find too traditional, too old-school. I am interested in the self, in freedom; I am interested in the human being. Why? Well, because no matter if you want to, many readers are still attached to these narratives. Maybe it is not a good narrative, not a good description, but that is still how a lot of people are considering themselves. Instead of just throwing those out with the bathwater, I say let us go back and try to show how humans are changing shape, which necessarily had to be done by going back to myself as a narrator.

**FRAME:**

So what you are saying is, since we are talking to humans about something that relates to more than humans we need to talk human language.

**Schultz:**

That is what I am trying to do. We need ecological analysis that starts closer to people's own life-worlds and their conceptual universe and tweak it into another direction by showing them how these concepts, these notions, these understandings, these existential principles

are attached to and being transformed in a climate-damaged world. My guess would be that this could perhaps make more readers interested in these questions, than if we focus too much on mushrooms, trees, et cetera. But again, we need both.

*FRAME:*

Strikingly, it was through recognizing their humanness that the protagonist was affected by their entanglements in the world. Following this recognition in the first few chapters was quite exhausting...

Schultz:

...It is exhausting to be a human being in the Anthropocene.

*FRAME:*

Exactly. It is not a good place to sleep, as you write in *Land Sickness*. In these first chapters you allow the reader to connect with the protagonist as they experience that the 'here' is always also connected to the 'there', how living, especially in the Global North, always means living *off* someone else's land. Since we arguably lack the language to properly account for this split, of one thing happening simultaneously in two places and times, do you think we need to invent a new language? And what would this language need to convey for us not to tumble, following the protagonist, in this depth of despair?

Schultz:

[Laughs]

*FRAME:*

It is a difficult question.

Schultz:

It is an impossible question. I cannot, and do not intend to, provide readers with escape routes from this despair. Instead, I try, theoretically and narratively, to work with a language that allows us to *stay* with these issues. If you read the book as a self-help manual, you are

pretty lost. However, what I feel we are all experiencing to some extent is this strange distancing of ourselves from climate emergencies, most of the time shutting it off. Sometimes, some of us feel it to an extent that is completely dreading, that makes you fear and tremble, as my old patriot [Søren] Kierkegaard would say.

What you have to do first is simply describe this crash, this life terrain, this realisation that you are dragging along another set of traces in this world that completely reshuffles the very question of what it means to be a human being. After all, living is a matter of different entities allowing each other to exist. The human is one of these nodes in this big network, destroying the very earthly conditions of existence that you yourself as a being need to exist. Of course, it will hurt somebody or something else first, but sooner or later it will come after you.

For this, we definitely need a conceptual language to describe these things, to catch these affects, to find out how this life terrain is splintered. Maybe then we can somehow recover our bearings, our anchor points, if we first at least accept, articulate, and understand that we have lost our horizons, that we are not the same beings as we were before. Think of an airport. When I was your age, early twenties, going through an airport meant being curious, discovering places, being a progressive who was seeing the world. Today, you go through an airport feeling awful because this world that you want to discover is disappearing, and that is partly because of you. The world is shrinking. It is a loss of world that we are experiencing and I do not think we have good enough descriptions of that yet.

This comes back to Bruno Latour who believed very much in description. He wrote a book called *Où Suis-Je?*, which explored the existential question of ‘Where am I?’. What I am doing with *Land Sickness* is also to explore the question of ‘What am I?’—precisely because this very question has changed shape, being completely interconnected to where you are, what you do and so on and so forth. If you first have a description of the moral landscape of being a human today, then I think we can at least face the issues, somehow face ourselves, maybe even come to terms that we need to stay with the

trouble, as Donna Haraway would say. The goal of *Land Sickness* is not to feel awful about being in the world but I think we need to accept what we are, where we are, and where we will have to learn to be. Perhaps then we can find new ways of situating ourselves in these new processes.

*FRAME:*

Another aspect of trying to articulate and then stay with the trouble has also to do with the question of *with whom* can we speak about these issues. As the protagonist describes in your book, we have many difficulties talking about climate emergencies with our elders, the people who have been here longer than us. At one point, you write:

If my grandmother was silent, it was because she was the protagonist of a generational conflict centring on the colonisation of territory and time, conquest attacked by those who had had their soils and futures stolen, with the aim of superimposing both the worlds and the times you live in, and those you live off. (25)

Here the protagonist describes the difficult conversations, or perhaps the lack of conversation they have with their grandmother, about the general impact of climate destruction and how the grandmother remains silent, often being at a loss for words. While she understands what is going on, she is unable to put it into words. Do you think it is possible and/or necessary to create our new language in a way that enables us to talk about the climate crisis as an intergenerational issue, a language not solely spoken by young people? Might language have the capacity to help cross the generation rift?

Schultz:

This generational issue is an important part of the book, because the climate situation now is not just an ecological disconnection between the land we live *on* and the land we live *off* but also one that

is temporal, a timely dissociation and even colonisation. Precisely because my grandmother was not just living *in* the present but living *off* the future, there is this disconnection. Pursuing abundance, freedom, growth, Denmark's welfare state, my grandmother's generation thought they would carry their children and grandchildren into prosperity, too. However, her political biography, if you will, the prosperity that she believed in and has been fighting for, has instead caught her (grand)children, including me, in a spiderweb of ecological catastrophe. Of course, this is a very violent recognition to have, when everything you ever believed in is now threatening your children—that is too much to fathom. Nobody at the end of their life can accept that, I believe. I understand the deniers, those who look in a different direction.

To return to your question, then, if we at least find a way of articulating these things then we can create diplomacy. If we just act 'this is all of us together' then we will never get anywhere with the situation, because it leaves us in a deadlock of false peace. We have to first describe these conflictual lands. It would be soothing for both our and their generation to have sketched out honestly these principles of geo-historical exploitations. Some have been living off the soil of different generations. If we do not, in some form, describe what that means in terms of both interpersonal but also intergenerational positionings, then I think we are lacking something important.

*FRAME:*

As you described in earlier work with Bruno Latour, geo-social classes are distinguished by their access to habitable land, yet the temporality you just discussed seems to place our grandparents' generation in a different class, considering that they had land and resources that we no longer have or perhaps never had.

Schultz:

I would call them a geo-historical elite.

*FRAME:*

So, even though people are in the same economic class, they can be in different geo-historical classes... You also made a similar distinction in your book: people of the same island [Porquerolles] might be of different classes economically but they are in the same geo-social class. Perhaps it helps to turn to theory. Could you elaborate on your concept of ‘geo-social class’, a term you coined with Latour, and the extent to which you believe it encapsulates how class struggles have changed during/because of the climate crisis? Breaking down this theory, perhaps also in non-academic ways, might help us to somewhat cross the generational rift.

Schultz:

‘Geo-social classes’ is the idea that in a time of global climate change, when the territory is disappearing under the feet of everybody but in different degrees, we need a new way of thinking and theorizing class, one that maps these—not with reference to economic or cultural relations, but with reference to earthly or territorial relations and interests. Of course, class is understood through [Karl] Marx, who started his theory of class with a description of how a society reproduces and where people were positioned in this process, what conflicts people they engage in and so on. Marx here turned to “production”—production processes was what allowed societies to subsist. And in this context, people were differently positioned in the production process where they clashed together in conflicts over the means of production.

While historically production was what allowed societies to reproduce, some things are changing today, in a time of climate change where the soil is slowly disappearing. What we realize is that production is no longer what allows society to reproduce—actually, the production processes today are threatening the subsistence of societies. And what Bruno Latour and I argued is that this has consequences for people’s class affiliations and class interests in society today. People are not simply ‘classed’ in their shared interest in

taking over the means of production or even fighting for fairer distribution; we are beginning to see people who might be from very different cultural classes, if you think with [Pierre] Bourdieu, or economic classes, if you think with Marx, but who are assembled around their collective interest of *fighting against the very production practices* and their very destructive consequences exactly because they realise that production is no longer engendering but *endangering* societies.

Returning to *Land Sickness*, I describe such a geo-social class landscape: on Porquerolles there is a socio-ecological kind of division and conflict emerging from these exact ruins of production, with people from different economic and cultural classes aligning to take care of the habitable conditions of the island they are living on. In the ecological ruins of the tourist economy of the island, where the waters, the air, the sea are completely disappearing and polluted, a division was forming—not only an economic or cultural division, but a division based on different collective interests in the land and the territory and how to inhabit it.

On the one hand, there are the people who wish to do business as usual, who wish to expand and develop the island's tourist business; on the other, there are those who wish to limit production practices because they have realised that the production of the tourist economy is ravaging the ecological conditions of the island's habitability. This is a good example of a geo-social class conflict, I would say. And it is a good example of what Bruno and I call 'the new ecological class', a class assembled around its fight against production practices.

*FRAME:*

Throughout *Land Sickness*, you map multiple antagonistic forces—for example, the cultural, the economic, the generational—that play a role in, perhaps even form, the geo-social class theory you just elaborated on. Mapping this antagonism can be quite discouraging. However, the book seems to end on a more hopeful, or at least determined, note, when the protagonist is leaving the island by boat, looking at the horizon, seemingly feeling a bit more calmed from his

land sickness on the waves. To what extent is this true? Is there still hope for the protagonist of *Land Sickness*?

Schultz:

While *Land Sickness* might not be supposed to be hopeful, it is nevertheless a book that I hope gives you certain resources or clues on how to stay with the problems, to accept that you are in a world that is transforming. Does that give hope? Maybe. Maybe not. I hope it gives a kind of soothing. I am a pessimist of the mind, but of course I am an optimist of the heart. And things will not go away, but again, maybe there are different ways of being with the issues and inhabiting both the very experience of what it means to be a human being and what it means to be a society. But for that, we need new descriptions of where and what we are—and that is what I try to offer in the book. [Dipesh] Chakrabarty wrote in the Postface that the book can actually be a manual for reconstructing or recovering the self in the Anthropocene, which is, of course, an argument that I am very happy about. What I do is, obviously, only to indicate the first steps to certain questions that have to be pursued. This is a very short book, but maybe it can bring along wider investigations of these topics. But actually, I should ask you that question; you might be better at answering that question. Did reading it make you hopeful?

*FRAME:*

With(in) *Land Sickness*, there is definitely some sense of hope, which we desperately need. It would not make sense to have a book that merely states that everything around us is dying.

Schultz:

Every time you write something, there has to be a kind of hope. It is a performative contradiction to write without hope. Even if it is a very pessimistic tonality that you bring forward, because even in describing the catastrophe, or—in the case of this book—what I like to call the fragmented life terrain, if you can at least see yourself in it, maybe there is a soothing in it. One thing you can say is that hope

becomes problematic if it disallows action. If hope is an inactive hope, then of course hope is ridiculous. You just hope things will go better by themselves. But if hope is something that you act with and if action is something you hope with or hope through, then I think it makes sense. Remember this beautiful quote by [Italo] Calvino in the final part of the book:

And [Marco] Polo said: “The inferno of living is not something that will be; if there is one, it is what is already here, the inferno where we live every day, that we form by being together. There are two ways to escape suffering from it. The first is easy for many: accept the inferno and become such a part of it that you can no longer see it. The second is risky and demands constant vigilance and apprehension: seek and learn to recognize who and what, in the midst of the inferno, are not inferno, then make them endure, give them space.” (qtd. in Schultz 123-24)

I think what I tried to do was to develop an analysis, a language, and a set of concepts that makes this second strategy possible—even if I dislike the idea of ‘escaping’!

*FRAME:*

We might also find this complicated relationship between hopeful and hopeless in the book’s title. Since there are many layers to the title of *Land Sickness*, weaving in and (through)out the book’s chapters, we would like to ask you how you came up with this title. What different significances of land sickness are incorporated?

Schultz:

As I was sitting in a cafe in the harbour of Porquerolles, I told my friend Victor that I felt like the earth was shaking under me. And he said, “Ah, this is normal. If you have been on a boat too long, and you step onto land again, you have land sickness, you feel as if the earth is moving. When you are back on the boat, you will be better.”

Of course, I thought it was too good of a metaphor not to use. There is an affectual, aesthetic component to notions, including the titles, and I thought it was a brilliant metaphor, exactly to understand this kind of double shaking: the land is sick, you are sick. You are both shaking, together. It is a double movement, a double fragmentation. Can you learn to stitch back together that life terrain? Maybe. But if so, it means understanding again that you have changed shape, that your grandmother changed shape, that the old woman on the beach [an islander of Porquerolles mentioned in *Land Sickness*] is changing shape, that the very boat is changing shape... If you ask [Gilles] Deleuze, the role of philosophy is to create concepts that describe certain things that are changing in the world. And I think they can even have, again, a soothing effect. That is why we name things: to be able to orient ourselves in the world in terms of political principles, in analytics, or in terms of individual, personal, existential, emotional landscapes.

*FRAME:*

Moving to another term you use, it is ‘soothing’ to name things, but also a useful way of illustrating them. At one point, you write that the potable water of Porquerolles has been colonised, describing the tension between Indigenous islanders and invading tourists. While imagining European tourists as colonisers generates a strong image, can we, in ethical terms, consider this process as colonialism? After all, as Chakrabarty writes in the Postface, colonialism is not between Europeans colonising Europeans, historically speaking.

Schultz:

Sometimes you take old concepts and you put them in a new context because it can enlighten something. Other times, you have to take completely new concepts. But indeed, it is another kind of colonisation: it is a weird situation where Europeans are colonising themselves, where my grandmother is colonising me. I use it because it is a good description that already has certain connotations to it

now of describing a violent process of living off somebody else's land, off somebody else's future, of somebody else's way being in the world.

Basically, I am trying to find a language—narratively and conceptually—that reminds us of all of the violence in the process. As long as we are just speaking about it as a couple of tourists coming over to see a beautiful little island, then they go away, then we cannot exactly fathom or understand it as an ethical question or as a question of justice. It is always problematic to reuse concepts, but at times it is also very important because some concepts have connotations that allow us to already be affected by. Never underestimate the affectual aspect of notions! The same thing with class: when you say class, people understand that this is a war, this is a battle; this is not just all of us together in the same boat. Such is the whole history of sociology, the history of philosophy: we have always been reinventing the meanings of different concepts to describe new realities. Sometimes it is useful to use completely new concepts, which I also do a little bit in the book. I think that is also the job of philosophers to a certain extent: to make the concepts and redevelop them in a world that is transforming, shaking, changing, shrinking even.

*FRAME:*

Your narrator moves from Paris to the island of Porquerolles, which was bought by the French state in 1971, and ends by leaving the island again, which somewhat mirrors the way of old and new colonisers, perhaps even mirroring colonising elites fleeing Earth on their spaceships. Considering that your travelogue is (semi)fictional, why did you decide on this particular structure? Why not start from the end as your travel companion Victor suggested to you in the final chapter (124)?

Schultz:

It is very important what non-modern writers are doing, trying to completely reshuffle the tradition, this way of completely re-imagining how to do narratives in a time of long scale ecological catastrophe. But sometimes the kind of narratives that we are

attached to, even if they are problematic, even if they come with bad connotations, are still something that allows us to understand something new. That is what I tried to say earlier with the necessity of sticking to modern narratives, even if you try to bring forward ideas and affects that transcend modernity.

However, what you also see is that certain times in the book, I tried to get away from that idea. For example, after the chapter of freedom, I have not been freed by understanding a new narrative of freedom. I am still with the issues. It is not like I ended up being completely emancipated and liberated. But it is true that I tried to use a modern narrative and reshape it somewhat because I think it creates strong heuristic resources. Yet at the same time, I also try to puncture it a little bit here and there.

In Chakrabarty's Postface, he says that we do not know if it is a real journey. This is an interesting idea: the narrator could have woken up from a dream. It would have been very interesting if he actually woke up at home. But then, of course, the whole problem would have been that he could have gone on with his normal life! That would have been a very modern way of writing it. Yet, it is not that I reach a new land at the end of that boat trip; I am still in the storm. I have not been freed. I cannot find my freedom on this island. The new understanding of freedom can no longer be experienced on this island because the island is disappearing.

*FRAME:*

To a certain extent, the protagonist is still in bed at the end of the novel because he is still troubled. In that sense, the narrative can be understood as circular, rather than traveling from A to B, a circularity that is similar to climate emergencies that are continuously unfolding.

Schultz:

Yes, I would say that he still has land sickness, but he is learning more about how to navigate this existential fearing and trembling. Again: He has learned a soothing language to stay with the issues.

One thing, though: all your questions about narration are very interesting, but I have to remind you that I am not a literary writer. I am a sociologist who tries to experiment with how we tell scientific stories. I try to try to play around with the literary shape of sociology, so to say. Of course, there has been philosophical literature or sociological, social-realistic literature. But that is not how I see this book. Yes, it is a hybrid genre, but I would rather say that it is literary sociology than sociological literature. It is a literary philosophy rather than a philosophical literature. I would say it is written in a hybrid way but that it probably tilts a bit more towards the theoretical than towards the literary. In any case: if you read this book as a novel, it is absolutely awful, and if you read it as a theory book, it is absolutely awful. But if you accept that it is a kind of hybrid thing in between, then maybe it works, somehow.

*FRAME:*

Thank you, Nikolaj. What is next for you? Are there any (academic) projects you are currently working on? And where can we follow you on your academic travelogue?

Schultz:

I continue, of course, to work on the questions of geo-social classes, in the heritage and the continuation of my collaboration with Bruno. For example, I just recently signed a new book with a publisher in France about rich people going to space, which will not be in the same genre [as *Land Sickness*]. Different questions need different tonalities. But I also consider these questions of the affectual and existential issues of the Anthropocene to be something that needs to be developed further.

On this topic, something I have been trying to write about is my home city of Aarhus, Denmark, more concretely, its beach and coastline where I grew up. I was born by the sea. My first experiences as a human being are sitting on that beach, close to where me and my parents lived. Right now, my beach is also disappearing! My childhood memories, the land that brought me my identity, exactly

like the old woman in *Land Sickness*, is also disappearing! Why? Not simply because of rising sea levels, but because an expansion of the industrial harbour means that the parts of the shoreline, part of the view, the water's biodiversity, et cetera, will be ruined.

So, I would like to write something where I am the one seeing my soil disappear beneath my feet, and not something where I am the executor, as I was being a tourist on Porquerolles—even if, of course, in this climatic situation, one is in a sense always both executor and victim. To phrase it differently: what I experienced [on Porquerolles] was me taking away other peoples' land. That is one aspect of land sickness. But at home [in Denmark], I am in the same situation as the old woman because I am seeing the very sand that encapsulates my identity being attacked. There is no easy solution to what you are, coloniser or colonised. Still, we must describe how we are divided in so many different ways. I completely believe in descriptions of these sorts of divisions, no matter how weirdly shaped they are.

But generally, I am interested in coasts these days. Think about it on the level of cultural imagination. I spoke about this in another interview I did recently: the image and the dream of the coast and the beach is so culturally embedded, so emblematic, that it almost represents the very idea of dreaming oneself away altogether. That is how it used to be. But now, coasts are the first places that are disappearing, that are turning into Anthropocene laboratories of biodiversity crises, water and sea pollution, land erosion and so on. What happens to a culture when the place that used to encapsulate the dream is the very first place that disappears? This must do something to your orientation, collectively, existentially, individually, to your imagination, to your very being in the world. The beach and coast used to represent escape, freedom, distance from the problems; now these places have metamorphosed into another kind of narrative, one telling us that we are stuck with an earthly territory that is reacting more and more violently to how we are living on it. This is just another example of the loss of the world, of the loss of aesthetics, of the loss of images. To sum up; coasts really are laboratories

for both geosocial class struggles and the existential agonies of land sickness, in my opinion. So yes, we will see. Maybe I will try to write something about my little beach.

### **Biography**

Nikolaj Schultz is a sociologist, and a PhD Candidate at the University of Copenhagen, where he is currently finishing his thesis on what he calls 'geo-social classes'. With late French philosopher Bruno

Latour he is the author of *On the Emergence of an Ecological Class* (Polity Books 2022), translated into 10 languages. He is also the author of *Land Sickness* (Polity Books 2023), translated into 6 languages.