

"Look again at that dot.
That's here. That's home.
That's us. On it everyone
you love, everyone you know,
everyone you ever heard of,
every human being who ever
was, lived out their lives."

Carl Sagan on 'Pale Blue Dot'

Letter from the Editor

When we began crafting this volume, we assembled a new team, envisioned new perspectives, and even coined a new term - *homeness*, an idiom trying to encompass "a plethora of unexplored emotions", exceeding the physical notion of the word "home".

As students of literature and culture, we consider words, books, and imaginary spheres as both a safe shelter to escape to and spaces that help us navigate our reality and make sense of the world around us.


Through these pages, we explore how our perception of home shapes us and how, in turn, we try to shape it: Offering perspectives on homeness as comfort and as discomfort, as a place of belonging and a space of exile, as an idyllic memory, a person, or a lost memory from childhood. For some, homeness carries the warmth of familiarity, while for others, it recalls grief, loss, and hostility.

Whether you find yourself longing for homeness, fleeing from it, or embracing it, I hope this volume invites you to reflect on the many forms homeness can take. These stories, poems, and academic research texts capture the courage, beauty, and often challenging reality of home in a world that feels increasingly transient.

In times of societal uncertainty and political movements that promote a restricting and nationalist understanding of home, homeness becomes a privilege and a fragile luxury.

May these words offer you a moment of shelter and a place to belong.

With love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Verena Meyer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, decorative initial 'V'.