

Wittgenstein's language games, but, rather, it shows how exhilarating it can be to survey the slippery, ambiguous territory between those camps, a strange land traversed by novelists, political economists, and scientists alike in the nineteenth century. Pain has no answers; pain changes things; and it is the merit of this book that it charts those changes with unremittingly intelligent attention.

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LISA OTTUM AND SETH T. RENO, eds., *Wordsworth and the Green Romantics: Affect and Ecology in the Nineteenth Century*. Durham: University of New Hampshire Press, 2016. Pp. viii + 253. \$85 cloth; \$40 paper.

The essays collected in *Wordsworth and the Green Romantics: Affect and Ecology in the Nineteenth Century* take seriously two Romantic preoccupations, feelings and nature, that have sometimes seemed indulgent, light, or evasive. These subjects were, of course, not trivial to many writers during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when ecology and sympathy were becoming the subjects of sustained and multifaceted inquiry. To such writers, emotions were not "mere products of ideology," and nature was more than an escape from political reckoning (p. 8). Editors Lisa Ottum and Seth T. Reno have positioned their volume at the vanguard of third-wave ecocriticism, loosely distinguished from earlier work in the field by its interdisciplinarity. By analyzing literary texts in tandem with historical discourses of science, philosophy, and medicine, recent ecocritical work navigates between the potential naïveté of first-wave Romantic ecocriticism, in many ways a reaction against New Historicist skepticism, and the suspicion of some second-wave criticism, like Timothy Morton's *Ecology without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 2007), which seizes on the ideological underpinnings of Romantic writers' natural visions. Some of the most exciting work in this third wave—including Theresa M. Kelley's *Clandestine Marriage: Botany and Romantic Culture* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2012), Robert Mitchell's *Experimental Life: Vitalism in Romantic Science and Literature* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2013), and Alan Bewell's *Natures in Translation: Romanticism and Colonial Natural History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2017)—has been written under the aegis of literature and

science. *Wordsworth and the Green Romantics* is similarly interdisciplinary, but its approach is original: in exploring and forging relationships between affect studies and environmental criticism, it suggests a productive new path for future work in ecocriticism.

Ottum and Reno's introduction presents three core insights that unite the subsequent chapters: Romantic "nature" is not usually a simple idealization but is constructed dynamically, in concert with scientific discourse; many different affects can be considered "green"; and these affects have the potential to change our understanding of Western environmentalism. (These insights are not the organizing principle for the book's chapters, which are instead arranged along an affective spectrum, beginning with more positive and pleasurable emotions and concluding with the more unpleasant ones.) As these three theses make clear, the stakes of this volume reside firmly in ecocriticism, and not in affect studies. Readers interested in Romantic-era writers besides William Wordsworth may also be disappointed, for although the subject would seem to be the Wordsworth circle—what the collection dubs the "Green Romantics"—seven of the nine essays are about Wordsworth. Such uniformity makes unclear the place of the two outlying essays in the collection. Considering Wordsworth's longstanding centrality to the study of literature and the environment, this focus is not surprising, but it runs the risk of replicating some first-wave ecocritical customs that the editors want to avoid, such as the association of Western middle-class masculinity with nature writing that Wordsworth has often seemed to encapsulate.

The collection begins with the good feelings. Love and "Tintern Abbey" are Seth Reno's subject as he navigates between two dominant readings of Wordsworth's poem: the feminist criticism of Wordsworth's use of Dorothy, and the New Historicist focus on Wordsworth's historical and political avoidances. The essay positions "Tintern Abbey" as a successor to Erasmus Darwin's "The Loves of the Plants," a poem whose analogies between plants and humans suggest that the love of the plants might become love *for* the plants, and then love for humankind. Reno sees this transformation—"love of nature leading to love of man"—fully realized and theorized in "Tintern Abbey," where the speaker's physiological and meditative responses to nature are the foundation for "ecological thought achieved through love" (p. 43). The descent into less pleasurable emotions begins in the subsequent essay, William Stroup's investigation of what he calls "uncool" Romantic visual art and the embarrassment it inspires in modern viewers. The canon is fascinating, replacing familiar works like Caspar David Friedrich's *The Sea of Ice* and J.M.W. Turner's

The Slave Ship with paintings that display unironic devotion: Friedrich's *The Cross in the Mountains*, Frederic Edwin Church's pro-Union *Our Banner in the Sky*, and Thomas Cole's *The Voyage of Life* series. Stroup suggests it would benefit our ecological awareness if we could put aside our disdain for such mawkish landscape art.

The "middle" affects—empathy, wonder, reverie—prove to be this collection's most fertile ground. Indeed, one of the volume's most valuable insights is the power of "feelings that might not at first seem conducive to the development of 'green' attitudes" (p. 3). We can easily imagine how fear or love might provoke our environmental care, but it is less obvious how dreaminess, for instance, might achieve the same effect. Kurt Fosso's contribution, "Of Asses and Men: Animals in Wordsworth's *Peter Bell*," broadens the scope of the collection's focus on ecology. Of particular interest to Fosso is the poem's association of Peter's moral development with his mild and gentle "animal within." Situating the poem in the context of Erasmus Darwin's physiological theory of sympathy from *Zoonomia*, the essay patiently argues that the "animal within" Peter is not evidence of mere likeness between man and animal, but of their shared being and mutual interdependence. Sarah Weiger's essay, on "phenomenophilia" and natural science, also begins in the animal realm with the flight of the hummingbird, an emblem of Romantic-era fascination with ephemeral and unclassifiable natural subjects. Gilbert White's dew-drenched cobwebs, Dorothy Wordsworth's moonlit clouds, and her brother's "shadow of a star" in *The Prelude*'s skating scene all describe indeterminate natural experiences without striving to explain or rationalize their existence. Rather, these writers act as witnesses or companions to nonhuman others whose temporalities—whether fleeting or cosmic—differ vastly from those of the observing subjects. In its attention to forms of affect that allowed writers to traverse the boundary between human and nonhuman, subject and object, agency and passivity, Allison Dushane's essay on Jean-Jacques Rousseau and reverie sounds a thoughtful counterpoint to Weiger's. Dushane positions Rousseau's *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* within a history of vitalism—roughly from Erasmus Darwin to Henri Bergson—in order to argue that Rousseau's reveries are not merely another Romantic-era portrayal of the self in nature, but rather constitute "a posthumanist ethical stance" reliant on "passive agency" rather than the force of intellect (p. 135). The state of reverie leads Dushane from Rousseau into Wordsworth's "spots of time" encounters in *The Prelude* and Percy Shelley's *The Triumph of Life*, poems similar in their willingness to grapple with the strange agency of nonhuman beings and forces.

The remainder of *Wordsworth and the Green Romantics* dwells on more unpleasant affects, beginning with Ashton Nichols's survey of fear in transatlantic nature writing. A range of examples, from Wordsworth's boat-stealing episode in *The Prelude* and Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" to Henry David Thoreau's reflections on Katahdin, leads Nichols to argue that fear of nature plays a central role in fashioning selfhood. Clare A. Simmons restores George Crabbe's *The Borough* to the tradition of Green Romanticism by seizing on the poem's representations of human and environmental loss, which make it seem less an Augustan throwback and more a work of Romantic medievalism. For Crabbe, one type of loss is not a metaphor for another, nor is human trauma distinct from natural degradation; rather, the two are inextricable, for "humans are natural history specimens too" (p. 166). Amanpal Garcha focuses on the modern environmental edict to value nature—to choose to act in an ecologically sustainable manner—and argues that such choice-making is the subject of the first book of *The Prelude*, which Garcha contends is one of the earliest dramatizations of how it feels to make a choice in a modern capitalist system. Like a consumer who frets about choosing among multiple, similar, simultaneously available products, Wordsworth has the sense that various options—where to dwell, what to write about—are comparable in value to each other and yet ultimately impossible to value definitively. In this context, *The Prelude* represents nature not because nature is irresistible, but because Wordsworth *chooses* nature.

Wordsworth and the Green Romantics closes with an eye toward the future in Lisa Ottum's thoughtful analysis of what role literature and other media should play in childhood environmental education. For first-wave ecocritics, the answer is a very small role; a high value on experiential learning means that time spent reading is time that cannot be spent outdoors, and many scholars of nature writing see mass media and internet culture as inimical to cultivating an attachment to the natural world. Ottum's argument, which analyzes Wordsworth's descriptions of his obsessive reading habits in *The Prelude*, is more subtle. Far from being enervating distractions, fantastical mediations of the natural world—from *The Arabian Nights* to *The Lord of the Rings*—may teach us to perceive beauty in "real" nature.

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